

FIRST COMMITTEE

(LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS)

Progressive Codification of International Law

During the past year, the Committee of Experts had continued its preparatory work in connection with the questions considered as being ripe for codification, namely: nationality, territorial waters, and responsibility of States for damage done to the person or property of foreigners in their territory. Questionnaires dealing with the various phases of these questions have been forwarded not only to the States Members of the League but to other States as well, and, from the replies received, it is hoped that the Committee of Experts will be enabled to progress further with the preparatory work for the forthcoming Codification Conference.

Owing to the need for economy and to the possibility that the Disarmament Conference may meet in 1929, no definite date was decided upon for the codification meeting. It will, however, be held not earlier than 1930 unless the Disarmament Conference fails to meet during 1929; in such a case the Codification Conference would be held in 1929. It was further decided that, since the question of nationality is of great interest to women, the Governments, in naming their delegates to the Codification Conference, might consider the desirability of taking this fact into account.

A new questionnaire dealing with the subject of Domicile has been drawn up by the Committee of Experts and transmitted to the Governments by the Secretary-General. The committee further decided that when it next meets it should examine whether it would be possible and desirable to endeavour, by the procedure of codification, to formulate a declaration of the fundamental rights and duties of States. Two other questions, the legal position and functions of consuls, and the competence of courts in regard to foreign States, were considered ripe for codification, but were reserved for subsequent conferences.

The First Committee discussed the question of a systematic survey of the whole field of international law, and recommended the Council to entrust to a Committee of Three named by the Committee of Experts the task of distinguishing, if possible, between the subjects which should be reserved for the technical organizations of the League or for international conferences initiated by particular Governments, and those which appear capable of being dealt with by conferences of jurists. Emphasis was placed on the value of assembling, in the form of a code, according to a methodical classification, the various general international conventions which are open to acceptance by States in general, and of publishing such conventions as an accompaniment to the Treaty Series.

Question of the Revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice

On behalf of a number of delegations, the French delegation submitted a draft resolution on this subject. M. Fromageot (France) pointed out that, in two and a half years' time, it would be necessary to renew the mandate of the members of the Court, and that it was possible that some changes or improvements might be necessary. The procedure to be followed would be that envisaged by Article 14 of the Covenant: the Council would prepare a plan and submit it to the Assembly, which, after approval, would embody the changes in the form of a Protocol which would be open to all States for signature.

M. Uden (Sweden) mentioned the difficulties of bringing about a revision, and stated that Article 30 of the Statute furnished the means of introducing changes in the internal regulations of the Court. If the Assembly felt it abso-