

4. The session of the Plenary Conference on Monday [April 28] was not notable for any incident of importance. Indeed onlookers were impressed by a certain sense of unreality. Very important changes had been made in the Covenant but these elicited no relevant discussion of importance. This was doubtless due to the fact that the new draft had been considered by the Delegation of each of the Powers who, on the whole, preferred to have the Covenant as it is rather than no Covenant at all. M. Léon Bourgeois<sup>1</sup> made a very long speech which tired everyone in French and exhausted them in translation. It was merely a prelude to the announcement by M. Pichon<sup>2</sup> that France would not insist on the amendments which M. Bourgeois has proposed. Panama and Honduras lifted up their voices at some length and a fiery lawyer delegate from Portugal made what was probably a good technical point with regard to the inclusion of Spain among the nations represented in the Council. At one time there were no less than four motions before the Conference none of which were in amendment and all of which, except the first, were entirely out of order according to our conception of practice in such cases. Two of them were by President Wilson, one by M. Bourgeois and one by the gentlemen from Honduras. Mr. Balfour, in reply to an inquiry by Sir Robert Borden as to whether delegates were expected to speak to all or to one or to more than one or to none of these motions, replied that according to French ideas everything seemed to be proceeding along right lines. "Heaven only knows" he said "whether the motions will be put collectively or separately at the end". Mr. Clemenceau solved the difficulty by declaring the two motions proposed by President Wilson to have been carried; the others he ignored. There is a speedy simplicity about his methods which attracts much admiration.

5. On Sunday the 27th, Sir Robert Borden finally succeeded in securing agreement between the representatives of the various nations as to the form of the nine Articles respecting labour which are to be inserted in the Peace Treaty.<sup>3</sup> After the League of Nations Covenant had been adopted, Mr. Barnes proposed the original draft and Sir Robert Borden moved the new draft in amendment. He was supported by Mr. Vandervelde<sup>4</sup> and the sitting closed with the usual formula by Mr. Clemenceau "Adopté. La séance est levée". The question as to discussion of the proposed Articles respecting punishment of the Kaiser, etc., had solved itself with the kind assistance of M. Bourgeois and of the gentlemen from Honduras and Panama. There was no time for further debate.

6. In pursuance of a request from President Wilson, conveyed through Mr. Lloyd George, Sir Robert Borden had an interview on Tuesday 29th

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<sup>2</sup> Ministre des Affaires étrangères de France; plénipotentiaire de France à la Conférence de la Paix.

<sup>3</sup> Document n° 119.

<sup>4</sup> Ministre de la Justice de Belgique; ministre d'État; plénipotentiaire de Belgique à la Conférence de la Paix.