

the Convention from the financial point of view, that this side of the question will not be amplified here, particularly as the discussion centred round the political side to the almost total exclusion of the financial. The Committee, feeling hardly competent to discuss technical considerations, accepted, practically without comment, the financial dispositions of the draft Convention prepared by the Financial Committee. The political problems raised, however, were very important, and, in some cases, of a delicate nature.

Sir Henry Strakosch informed the Committee that the draft Convention had been passed by the unanimous vote of the Financial Committee, a body composed of hard-headed men whose very calling compelled them to look at things from a realistic point of view. He did not suggest that they were impervious to idealism, but he thought that the past record of the Financial Committee was sufficient proof that they would not allow their sense of the real to be carried away by idealism. He said this in order that they might appreciate the atmosphere in which the plan was conceived, elaborated and finally approved, and in order also to counteract a possible misconception, due to some criticism of the plan that it was the result of a bout of frenzied idealism on the part of a few cranks.

In the beginning it appeared rather as if, generally speaking, the Delegates favoured the plan for financial assistance: the impression grew, however, as the discussion went on, that there was little real enthusiasm for the scheme: certainly no one cared to have it put into force at once.

Count Bernstorff was lukewarm in his appreciation, and said that in any case the German Constitution made it necessary for the German Government to pass a law by a two-thirds majority before it could adhere to the Financial Assistance Convention—which certainly would be impossible before the Disarmament Convention was in force.

Dr. Munch (Denmark), who did not like the scheme, believed that the creation of a large fund for the purchase of war material might, in certain cases, be too great a temptation for the large industrial firms which manufactured war material. They would be tempted to regard this fund as their certain prey: with the resources at their disposal they might endeavour to bring about a situation which could be characterized as a threat of war.

Lord Cecil was the only strong supporter of the draft Convention; he was the one who spoke in the warmest terms about the good it might do. He thought that a Convention like the present one would render it unnecessary, particularly for some of the smaller Powers, to lay up stores of munitions to enable them to meet a national crisis. The argument, however, which carried most weight with him was that the possession of this power in the hands of the Council might be of capital importance when a great crisis arose. He could conceive of a case where one Power was obviously aggressive and was determined to rush, by the exercise of great force, against a smaller power, thus presenting the world with a *fait accompli* before anything could be done. The fact that the Council was recommending the granting of a loan to the smaller Power might make just the difference in the action of the supposed great and piratical Power.

Sir George Foster considered that, in dealing with financial assistance, there was another method which had not been discussed in the Committee. The underlying idea, as was obvious, in the draft Convention, was that a war was possible and might eventuate; but might not something be gained by approaching the matter from what might be called the negative point of view? Instead of agreeing to give to victims of aggression financial assistance, upon the details of which the Delegates did not appear to be unanimous, it might not be difficult,