

*Refugees*

The Fifth Committee noted the progress that had been made in the work of refugee settlement by the High Commissioner for Refugees (Dr. Nansen) and by the International Labour Office.

Considering that a complete solution of the refugee problem can be reached only by the return of the refugees to their country of origin or by their assimilation by the countries in which they are residing, and realizing that the first solution is in many cases impracticable, the Committee recommended that refugees should have all possible facilities for acquiring the nationality of their country of residence.

As the Governing Body of the International Labour Office had proposed that the refugee work at present undertaken by the Labour Office should at the end of 1929 be transferred to the League, the Fifth Committee recommended that the Assembly invite the Council to appoint as soon as possible an Advisory Commission to be attached to the High Commissioner; this Commission to submit before the next session of the Assembly a general report on the possibility of reaching a final solution as soon as possible and on the means by which this object might be attained.

*Traffic in Opium*

The Report of the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and other dangerous drugs was, as usual, the occasion of a very full discussion of the problem of narcotics. The Fifth Committee noted with satisfaction that legislation had been adopted in Persia providing for an opium monopoly, and in Spain instituting a monopoly system for the trade in drugs. It once more emphasized the necessity of strict enforcement of the provisions of the 1912 and 1925 Conventions, and of co-operation between Governments in their efforts to stamp out the illicit traffic and particularly in investigations as to the identity of persons engaged in smuggling narcotics.

The Fifth Committee considered that the most important recent development in this connection is the coming into force (on the 25th September 1928) of the Opium Convention of 1925. Canada is a party to this Convention, which should prove a powerful instrument in the suppression of the traffic. The system of import and export certificates for which it provides is, if strictly applied, an effective method of Government supervision of the trade in drugs.

The coming into force of the Convention will also result in the setting up by the Council of a Permanent Central Board whose duty it will be to watch the international trade; for this purpose it will receive from the States Parties to the Convention statistics of production, manufacture, consumption, import and export of the narcotic substances covered by the Convention. If, from the information in its possession, the Board concludes that a country is in danger of becoming a centre of the illicit traffic, it has the right to ask for explanations; and, in default of satisfactory explanations, to bring the matter to the attention of the Council of the League and of the States Parties to the Convention, and to recommend that no further exports of narcotic substances shall be made to the country concerned until the Board is satisfied as to the situation.

The Fifth Committee also considered a proposal of the British Government, referred to the Assembly by the Council, that a small Commission of Enquiry should be sent to the Far East to enquire into the difficulties encountered by the Governments in their efforts to control the use of opium prepared for smoking. The Committee proposed that the Assembly recommend the Council to appoint such a Commission to report on the situation in those countries which agree to such an enquiry.