

you, and I think that the world is asking you to-day, whether the result, up to the present time, has been commensurate with the effort. So far as I understand the present situation it is proposed in the Preparatory Commission that, for the limitation of armaments, there shall be merely publicity of budgetary appropriations, and that the number of trained reserves shall not be taken into account. I confess that to me this seems no limitation at all. With all respect, I express my profound conviction that it does not in any measure fulfil the supreme purpose expressed in the Covenant. The Report speaks of mutual confidence. We have renounced war, have we not, by solemn engagement? To what end does the maintenance of enormous armaments still continue? Our engagement was solemn and sincere, was it not? Shall it not find expression in something more enduring than words, something more effective than what has been proposed up to the present?

Ladies and Gentlemen, I say, with all respect, that in this regard the League of Nations stands to-day at the bar of public opinion. The burden of armaments is intolerable; their continuance is a perpetual menace to world peace. Do not forget that many voices call us to act. A great Irishman more than a century ago said that the nation consists not of the living alone: it consists of those who have passed away, of those who still live, and of those who are yet to be born. Is there not a voice that calls to us from the dead?—the vast unnumbered fallen of all the warring nations who sleep on the plains of Europe, united in the great brotherhood of the dead. Is there not a voice from the living who still mourn; and shall we transmit a war-burdened, a war-cursed world, to those who are yet to be born?

It is my most earnest hope that the confidence expressed in the Report with respect to the work of the Preparatory Commission at its next session will be fully justified. It may be, and I recognize this fully, that the progress hitherto made is more real than apparent. I entirely agree with the view expressed by Viscount Cecil of Chelwood in the Committee that it is most undesirable to approach this subject in the Disarmament Conference until such thorough preparation shall have been made as will render its conclusions effective. However that may be, I have spoken to you what is in my heart. I only wish that I possessed the eloquence of some of the distinguished orators who from time to time address the Assembly, to put it more convincingly, but as it lies in my heart I have said it. Let us pray with all the fervour imaginable that the Conference, and the Council and Assembly after it, may soon accomplish this, one of the supreme purposes for which the League of Nations was created.

The Committee in its resolution expressed the conviction that, during its session next November, the Preparatory Commission would be able to finish the drawing up of a preliminary draft Convention, which would enable the Council to convene, as soon as possible, a Conference on the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments.

The Delegate of Germany would not accept the wording of the resolution which stated that the Disarmament Conference should be convened *as soon as possible* because since 1927 the Committee had been repeating the same thing; he feared that the confidence of people would be destroyed. He would therefore abstain from voting. The Austrian and Hungarian Delegations associated themselves with the German Delegation to request that the date of the Conference be inserted in the resolution: they also abstained from voting.

The Committee decided to insert in the *report* but not in the *resolution* that the Committee desired to see the General Conference convened during 1931.