

The General Assembly is the governing body, having the right to approve or disapprove of any detail of the program prepared by the Permanent Committee with reference to the organization or internal economy of the Institute.

It is charged with the ultimate control of all expenditures and the authorization of the budget prepared by the Permanent Committee, as also with the responsibility of presenting to the adhering Governments, for their approval, all modifications of any kind involving increase of expenditure or extension of the powers of the Institute.

The General Assembly is empowered to fix the dates for the holding of its own sessions and to lay down its own rules of procedure, but, in order to render its deliberations valid, there must be present at each meeting delegates representing at least two thirds of the votes of the adhering countries.

The executive powers of the Institute are entrusted to the Permanent Committee, which, under the direction and control of the General Assembly, prepares all matters for the consideration of that body and puts its deliberations into effect.

The Permanent Committee elects, from among its members, for a period of three years, a President and a Vice-President, who are eligible for re-election, makes its own rules of procedure, votes on budgets of the Institute within the limits of the sums placed at its disposal by the General Assembly and appoints and dismisses employees.

The Secretary-General of the Permanent Committee performs the duties of Secretary of the General Assembly. The protocol also stipulates that the Institute is to be strictly international in its scope and that all questions relative to the economic interests, legislation or administration of any particular country are to be excluded from its sphere.

It also carefully defines and delimits the operations of the Institute and specifies the exact lines of work in which it may engage.

This protocol was submitted through the proper diplomatic channels to the Governments of the various adhering countries and duly ratified by each, but as these negotiations and the selection of suitable delegates occupied some time, it was not until May, 1908, that it was found possible to call the first meeting of the Permanent Committee.

The meeting was held in the magnificent palace which, through the generosity of the King of Italy, had been erected within the grounds of the historic Villa Borghese. This building, which was at the time scarcely completed but which was practically finished for the later meeting held in November of the same year, is an exceedingly handsome and commodious structure. From an architectural point of view, it leaves nothing to be desired, while it is sumptuously furnished and decorated throughout with fine specimens of modern Italian art. Its situation is excellent, commanding a beautiful view of St. Peters' and the hills across the Tiber.

Although only sovereign powers has been invited to attend the preliminary convention of 1905, that body, on the motion of the British delegates, had agreed that, on demand of the countries to which they owed allegiance, colonies should be admitted to full membership in the Institute.

It thus fell out that, as the first Canadian member of the Permanent Committee, I found myself associated with a small but compact group of British delegates representing the mother country and the Dominions