

It would be, I think, of interest to hon. members of the House to have a statement made at once by the government as to Canada's position as communicated to the Secretary General of the League of Nations, and also to the British government, some days ago. These communications have I believe been made public in Geneva to-day in accordance with our understanding with the British government. It was agreed that communications were not to be made public until after the Hon. Mr. Chamberlain the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had made his statement to the council. The statement is as follows:

Ottawa, March 9, 1925.

Sir ERIC DRUMMOND,  
Secretary-General,  
League of Nations,  
Geneva.

In response to your communication of October twenty-seventh, nineteen twenty-four enclosing certified true copy of protocol for the pacific settlement of international disputes, and noting that it is open for signature by representatives of all members of the league, the government of Canada desires to state that after careful examination of the subject it has come to conclusions which may be summarized as follows:

First—that Canada should continue to give whole-hearted support to the League of Nations, and particularly to its work of conciliation, co-operation and publicity.

Second—that we do not consider it in the interests of Canada, of the British Empire or of the league itself to recommend to parliament adherence to the protocol and particularly to its rigid provisions for application of economic and military sanctions in practically every future war. Among the grounds for this conclusion is the consideration of the effect of the non-participation of the United States upon attempts to enforce the sanctions and particularly so in the case of a contiguous country like Canada.

Third—that as Canada believes firmly in the submission of international disputes to joint inquiry or arbitration, and has shared in certain notable undertakings in this field, we would be prepared to consider acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the permanent court in justiciable disputes with certain reservations, and to consider methods of supplementing the provisions of the covenant for settlement of non-justiciable issues, including method of joint investigation, reserving ultimate decision in domestic issues and without undertaking further obligations to enforce decisions in case of other states.

Fourth—that Canada would be prepared to take part in any general conference on reduction of armaments which did not involve prior acceptance of protocol.

W. L. MACKENZIE KING,  
Prime Minister and Secretary of State  
for External Affairs.

I beg to move:

That six hundred copies in the English language, and three hundred copies in the French language, of the protocol for the pacific settlement of International disputes drawn up in Geneva during the fifth assembly of the League of Nations, 1924, with report of committees, and the covenant of the League of Nations as amended be printed forthwith and that rule 74 in relation thereto be suspended.

Right Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN (Leader of the Opposition): Would the Prime Minister say whether the documents embodying the protocol laid on the table comprise any account of the position taken by Canada's representative in relation to the production of the protocol and concurrence therein at the Geneva Conference?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The documents are the official documents that were before the league in the form in which they have been sent to us from the league. They do not contain the information concerning which my right hon. friend has just inquired.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I should like to ask that a report be given of the proceedings so that the House will be informed of the position Canada's representative took from the beginning.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Just before the motion is put, Mr. Speaker. I notice that I have not included in the motion the letter from the Secretary-General communicating the protocol and of the reply of Canada to the Secretary-General tabled to-day. That should, I think, be inserted in the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: By unanimous consent. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Mr. MEIGHEN: I suggest that the information I have asked for might well be provided and printed with the other documents rather than that there should be two sets of documents.

Hon. ERNEST LAPOINTE (Minister of Justice): The representatives of Canada, as well as the representatives of the other countries, merely adopted a resolution agreeing to the submission of the protocol to the various governments. They did not accept the protocol for Canada, they were not authorized to do it, nor did any other country approve of the protocol. They merely approved of its submission for the consideration of the various members of the League of Nations.

Mr. MEIGHEN: What I am asking is that the record of the conduct be submitted to parliament. This country had a representative at Geneva. There certainly is, or should be, a document that embodies the record leading up to the evolution of the protocol. It is the production of that document which I should like.