

*Budget for 1935*

The Supervisory Commission, in agreement with the Secretary-General, decided to present the Budget for 1935 in a new form to bring it into harmony with the development which has taken place during the past few years in the financial organization and administrative practice of the League.

It will be recalled that the main feature of the Budget for the years 1922-1934 was that, in addition to the estimate for the general services of the Secretariat—including personnel, maintenance and office expenses—there was provided for each of the main activities of the League a separate Budget covering meetings of committees and conferences, printing, staff and incidental expenses, necessitating elaborate calculations to ascertain the cost of given categories of expenditure for the whole of the organization. Under the new arrangement, the estimated expenses are grouped not only according to their nature but also according to the degree of responsibility assumed for their origin and operation. Thus, all travelling expenses are grouped under one sub-head, all removal expenses under another, and cablegrams and telegrams under a third. Again, the items which owe their creation to explicit decisions of the Council or the Assembly are shown separately; and all expenses for which the Secretary-General is directly responsible and which can be accurately estimated are also dealt with separately. In order, however, to enable the Assembly to ascertain the cost of the various activities undertaken by the League, auxiliary budgets in respect of each of the special organizations appear as Annexes to the main Budget.

The Fourth Committee considered that the new structure of the Budget presented distinct advantages over the old one. The general opinion, however, which was shared by the members of the Supervisory Commission, was that further improvements might be made when the 1936 Budget was prepared, particularly by giving fuller references, in the summaries of items, to the details shown in the various auxiliary Annexes.

The Secretary-General, in submitting the estimates, called the attention of the Committee to the fact that, since 1932, the estimates submitted to the Assembly had shown a steady reduction. The figures were as follows: 1932, 33,687,000; 1933, 33,429,000; 1934, 30,827,000; and 1935, 30,461,000 gold francs.

Turning to the estimates for the Secretariat, he pointed out that the reduction was even more marked than that in the general estimates, although account had been taken of the annual statutory increments and provision had been made for the transfer of the Secretariat to the new League buildings. The chief reduction had been on salaries, fifty-eight positions having been abolished.

Certain delegates expressed the opinion that the margin between the 1933 actual expenditure and the 1935 estimates might have been still further reduced. In reply to these observations, the Chairman of the Supervisory Commission explained that it was the Supervisory Commission's duty to fix the estimates for meetings on the basis of a maximum length and attendance. Further, the estimates included two large credits in respect of unforeseen expenses which successive Assemblies had decided to keep at the present figure in order that the Council should not be prevented through lack of means from taking action in the case of emergency.

The Committee, when examining the salary credits of the Secretariat, considered the question of the recruitment of the staff and particularly of Members of Section. On the proposal of the delegate of the Netherlands, the Committee recommended that, as a general rule, new officials should always be appointed at the minimum salary of their category unless no candidate having the necessary qualifications and prepared to accept service on those conditions can be found.

As regards the staff of the International Labour Office, the Committee recalled that, in last year's report to the Assembly, the Supervisory Commission