

bly and was welcomed by the President, who declared that the day marked a decisive point in the history of the League, which had been strengthened by the admission of a new Member bringing into the scale of international co-operation the weight of a population of a hundred and sixty millions of people, playing an extremely important part in the life of two continents.

M. Litvinoff, in reply, said that the entry of the Soviet Union derived its significance from the circumstances in which it took place, and the evolution of the relations between the Soviet Government and the League of Nations which led to it. Had Soviet representatives taken part in drawing up the Covenant of the League, they would have objected to certain of its Articles. In particular, they would have objected to the provision in Articles 12 and 15 for the legalization, in certain instances, of war, and that was the reason he had expressed, in his letter to the President of the Assembly, satisfaction at the proposals to alter these Articles. Further, the Soviet Government would have objected to Article 22 on the system of Mandates. It deprecated also the absence in Article 23 of an understanding to ensure race equality. These objections, however, had not been important enough to prevent the Soviet Union from entering the League, especially since any new member of an organization can be morally responsible only for decisions made with its participation and agreement.

In conclusion, M. Litvinoff referred to the question of disarmament. Thirty delegations had just declared that the mission of the League was to organize peace, and that the success of that mission required the co-operation of the Soviet Union. The failure of the Disarmament Conference, he considered, compelled them to seek more effective means of averting war than "paper obstacles." Nor would he overrate the opportunities and means of the League for the organization of peace, knowing how limited these opportunities were, and that the League did not possess the means for the complete abolition of war. A great deal could be done, however, to diminish the danger of war breaking out. The Soviet Government, he concluded, had come to combine its efforts with those of other States and its will to peace would make itself felt.

The procedure followed with respect to the entry of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into the League represented to some extent a departure from the normal procedure under Article 1 of the Covenant governing the admission of States into the League. The normal procedure, however, had been varied in recent years in connection with the admission of Mexico and Turkey, when the Assembly, by unanimous resolution, invited these States to accede to the Covenant and waived the customary examination followed in the admission of new Members. The opposition of several Member States to the admission of the Soviet Union made a unanimous invitation impossible and, in the circumstances, rendered necessary the procedure adopted.

#### THE ADMISSION OF AFGHANISTAN

The Kingdom of Afghanistan was admitted to membership in the League by the unanimous vote of the Assembly.

#### ELECTIONS TO THE COUNCIL

The three non-permanent seats on the Council, made vacant by the retirement of China, Panama and Spain on the expiration of their three years' term of office, were filled on September 17th by the election of Turkey and Chile and the re-election of Spain for the three years ending in 1937. The following day, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics having been named a Permanent Member of the Council in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 of the Covenant, M. Litvinoff took his place at the Council table.