

tion of the League of Nations was the cause of humanity's tragic failure. That failure was due rather to the statesmen and peoples of the League of Nations that contented themselves with lip-service, that could not face the lesser sacrifices to avoid the greater, and to those peoples and States which foolishly imagined they could be lookers-on. That will be the verdict of history, simplified though it may appear in the welter and tangle of international relations."

The discussion of the Report was opened by the Acting President of the Council, Mr. Costa du Rels, delegate of Bolivia, who recalled a statement made by him in June 1940 that the events of that time, however great a misfortune they bring, must not lessen faith and trust in certain principles of international co-existence. "We are going to transfer to the United Nations something more than a beautiful palace. We are going to transfer to them, together with the fruits of twenty-five years of effort and toil, a sacred trust, the redoubtable honour of preventing suffering and of men killing and hating each other".

The most notable speech was made by Viscount Cecil of Chelwood. All present had in mind his long years of devotion to the League of Nations and the principles for which it stood. He described his own speech as a few words of farewell to an institution with which he had been connected since its birth, and even before its birth. "The work of the League is plainly and unmistakably printed on the social, economic and humanitarian life of the world. But for the great experiment of the League, the United Nations could never have come into existence. There is no safety except in peace."

The delegate of China argued that the League, despite its imperfections, might have spared the world the tragedy of the last few years had it fulfilled the provisions of its Covenant properly during the Japanese aggression in north-eastern China in 1931. The delegate of Czechoslovakia, Mr. Kopecky, concurred in the views of the delegate of China that the failure of the League to take action against aggression in the Far East and later in Europe had weakened the League itself and had been the cause of its ultimate failure to preserve the peace.

The delegate of South Africa, Mr. Leif Egeland, expressed the view that the Secretary-General's Report was a vindication of the wisdom of the decision to carry on the non-political activities of the League, despite the crippling exigencies of the war years. He paid a tribute to Mr. Sean Lester, Secretary-General, and to Mr. Seymour Jacklin, the Treasurer, a tribute which was repeated by other speakers, including the delegate of Canada.