

ENTRY OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS INTO THE LEAGUE

The question of Soviet admission first came before the Assembly on September 17th when the President communicated to it the text of a telegram sent two days earlier to the Government of the Soviet Union, on behalf of the delegations of Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, France, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, India, Iraq, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, New Zealand, Persia, Poland, Roumania, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, Uruguay and Yugoslavia, inviting it to join the League of Nations and give the League its valuable collaboration in the task of maintaining and organizing peace.

At the same time, the President placed before the Assembly a letter addressed to the Council by the first delegate of Sweden, on behalf of his own delegation and of the delegations of Denmark, Norway and Finland, pointing out that the Governments of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland had informed the Soviet Government through the ordinary diplomatic channel of their decision to vote in favour of its admission to the League and adding that the delegations in question would have been authorized to associate themselves with an invitation to that effect had such an invitation been issued by the Assembly itself.

The reply of the Soviet Government, after acknowledging the telegram and the letter under reference, set forth its willingness to become a member of the League in the following terms:—

“The Soviet Government, which has made the organization and consolidation of peace the main task of its foreign policy, and has never been deaf to proposals for international co-operation in the interests of peace, considering that, coming as it does from an overwhelming majority of Members of the League, this invitation represents the real will to peace of the League of Nations, and their recognition of the necessity of co-operation with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is willing to respond to it, and become a Member of the League, occupying therein the place due to itself, and undertaking to observe all the international obligations and decisions binding upon members in conformity with Article 1 of the Covenant.

“The Soviet Government is especially glad to be coming into the League at a moment when the question of the amendment of the Covenant in order to bring it into harmony with the Briand-Kellogg Pact, and to banish completely international warfare, is being considered by it.

“Since Articles 12 and 15 of the Covenant leave it open to States to submit disputes to arbitration or judicial settlement, the Soviet Government considers it necessary to make it clear that, in its opinion, such methods should not be applicable to conflicts regarding questions arising before its entry into the League.”

The question of the entry of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into the League of Nations was referred to the Sixth Committee, where, following a discussion which is briefly summarized in the section of this Report dealing with the proceedings of that Committee, a decision was reached to recommend its admission.

The following day the question again came before the Assembly in plenary session, and, after a brief discussion, largely recapitulating points of view already advanced in the Committee, the Assembly, by 39 votes to 3, with 7 abstentions, adopted the recommendations of the Sixth Committee that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics be admitted to the League.

The Soviet delegation, headed by M. Litvinoff, the Soviet Foreign Minister, thereupon occupied the seats allotted to it upon the floor of the Assem-