

Administrative and Financial Questions

Discussion of League finances usually serves as an opportunity for criticizing the administration. This year proved no exception to the rule, the debates being unusually long and candid.

The budget for 1929, as submitted, amounted to 26,871,244 francs, the increase of roughly 5 per cent over last year's budget being due to fresh work being undertaken as a result of the Economic Conference, to further work of the Transit Organization, to the proposed Conference on the Codification of International Law, and to the expenses of the Central Board provided for under the 1925 Opium Convention.

During the general discussion the tendency to enlarge the budgets was attacked by the British, Indian and Norwegian delegates. The budget of the Permanent Court of International Justice was adopted without objection, but those of the General Services of the Secretariat and of the International Labour organization, came in for considerable criticism.

The Secretary-General of the League, Sir Eric Drummond, made a convincing defence of the budget as submitted, showing that the increase was due only to the new work which the Assembly had decided it was essential to undertake. He confessed that he saw something inconsistent in the British proposal to reduce the budget by one million francs, when less than a week before the British delegate on the Council had proposed an opium inquiry which would cost anything up to half a million francs. Eventually, however, a resolution was adopted requesting the other Committees to revise the program of Conferences and to suggest any other methods by which economies might be effected.

The Budget of the Labour organization was vigorously defended by its Director, M. Thomas, who assured the committee that there was no extravagance and that the proposed increased expenditure was necessary. Three resolutions to reduce the Labour Office vote were all defeated.

In the end the general budget was adopted substantially as it stood. It amounted to 27,026,280 gold francs and was sub-divided as follows:—

Secretariat and Special Organizations.	14,713,085
International Labour Organization.	8,612,640
Permanent Court of International Justice.	2,255,555
Buildings at Geneva.	1,445,000

Of this total amount, Canada is assessed for 35 units out of a total of 986, which brings the amount of her contribution to 959,350.70 gold francs. From this must be deducted Canada's share in the surplus for the financial year 1927, amounting to 38,712.73, and also her share of 31,917.80 devolving from the Building Fund to those States which, by the prompt payment of their contributions up to the end of 1925, had contributed to the formation of the capital set apart for the construction of the new buildings. Thus the net contribution of Canada to the League for 1929 amounts to 888,720.17 gold francs, or approximately \$170,000.

The administrative services of the League were also criticized in the Fourth Committee, principally by the delegates from Holland and Norway. The chief criticism was that nationals of a certain group of Powers filled too large a number of posts on the Secretariat, and that there was a growing tendency for the higher officials to be members of the diplomatic services of their respective countries.

Sir Eric Drummond in an effective reply, stated that he based his appointments on the principles of the Balfour report of 1920, in which it is laid down that in making appointments, the Secretary-General has primarily to secure the best men and women for the duties to be performed; but, in doing so, it is