

GUTHRIE BELIEVES LEAGUE WILL END MANCHURIAN EVIL

Minister of Justice Says Set-
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POSITION ANALYZED

Non-Membership of U.S. Re-
gretted — Chief Points of
Last session Outlined—
Hopes for Coming Parley

Toronto, October 26.—Expressing the firm conviction the League of Nations would settle amicably the Manchurian problem, Hon. Hugh Guthrie, Minister of Justice and head of the Canadian delegation to the recent assembly at Geneva, today addressed the local Canadian Club. It was "only those border incidents that sometimes grows into serious problems;" both Japan and China, he said, had grievances, but through the intervention of the council of the League of Nations, a settlement seemed imminent. "I believe the League will settle it to the satisfaction of the world and itself," declared the Minister of Justice.

While admitting the existence of many critics of the League and the fact that prospects for world peace seemed very dark at times, Guthrie nevertheless expressed implicit faith in the eventual triumph of the principles of arbitration and conciliation. "If the League," he exclaimed, "can remove from the minds of the people the fear of war and the weight of armaments from the weary multitudes, it will have done more for mankind than anything since Christ was born in Bethlehem."

The path to world peace seemed very dark and discouraging at times, admitted the Minister of Justice. Armaments were piling up despite the solemn treaty obligations of nations to reduce them. The world was spending more today on armies and navies than in August, 1914. France was spending annually £110,000,000 for its army and navy; Italy £68,000,000; Great Britain, £108,000,000; Japan, £52,000,000; and United States, £145,000,000. Twenty per cent of the total revenue of nations was being expended on armaments and instruments of war.

This condition was "provocative and menacing," but the pending armament conference at Geneva next February pointed the way to a solution. After viewing the League in session and sounding out the opinions of the delegates, Mr. Guthrie was confident of the success of the conference. The problem of armaments could not be settled with one flourish of the pen but "if a reasonable start be made, I think the whole world will rejoice."

POINT IN DISPUTE

Returning to the Manchurian question, Mr. Guthrie said Japan and China, prompted by the League Council, had arrived at an agreement on all but one point. The remaining issue was when Japan should withdraw its troops from the occupied territory. The situation presented a challenge to the League and its aims and was being treated as such by the council. In the ultimate settlement of the dispute, Mr. Guthrie had explicit faith, and this, more than anything else, would be the effective answer to the critics of the League.

Although the inception of the League was conceived by the late President Wilson of the United States, one of its main weaknesses was the failure of the republic to become a member, said the Minister of Justice. "We all hope the time will come, and come soon, when that great peace-loving nation will take its proper and fitting place in the council of the nations," he added. Along with Russia and Turkey, the United States was the one conspicuous nation refusing to become a member of the League. Brazil had withdrawn and possibilities existed of Argentine following this lead.

In a detailed account of the accomplishments of the last assembly, the head of the Canadian delegation stressed three points as being the most important. A draft treaty for the pending disarmament conference was prepared, with the schedules for each nation left blank. The economic union of Europe was discussed and due to a certain extent to Canada's objections to one clause of the report, the matter was held in abeyance. Championed by Aristide Briand, French Foreign Minister, the scheme would form Europe into an economic unit. Among other things, it was suggested the countries agree to purchase no wheat from outside countries until the stocks in the Balkans and Central Europe be consumed. On behalf of Canada, the Minister of Justice protested against this recommendation on the ground the League was formed for the good of the whole world and not one nation or group of nations. He was backed by Norway, Sweden and the South American republics, with the result a special committee was established and finally recommended no action be taken.

DISARMAMENT TREATIES.

The third important accomplishment of the League this year was the discussion of the anomalies existing in the various disarmament and anti-war treaties. For instance, the covenant of the League, with arbitration and conciliation as its basis, sanctioned armed force against any nation which did not comply with the edicts of the League. On the other hand, the

Briand-Kellogg pact renounced and outlawed war in its entirety. The United States, incidentally, was a signatory to the latter treaty.

The Briand-Kellogg pact possibly was more important than the League covenant, but how to reconcile the two was a major problem. For months, committees of the League had been studying the question of bringing the pact into line with the covenant and "if that be done, I should have no objection to signing on behalf of Canada." Pending the disarmament conference, this question was stood over until next September.

A concrete suggestion of armament reduction pending the conference was advanced by Italy, proceeded Mr. Guthrie. Great Britain agreed, France was inclined to accept, but, when the United States was sounded, that country pointed out it was constructing several navy boats to aid unemployment.

Many other subjects were reviewed: unification of criminal laws, health, child welfare, employment and labor, narcotics and slavery. Inclined at first to criticize the League for spending too much time on these lesser problems, Mr. Guthrie finally concluded the discussions led to better understandings between the nations. They brought the nations together, opposite views were determined and common ground reached.