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2) PRESENT POSITION OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The League unfortunately has ceased for the present to play any important part in the conduct of international affairs.¹ To explain the reasons for this would involve a review of the whole course of European and world affairs for the past ten years. Whatever may be the inherent merits of the principle of collective security - and certainly a strong case can be made - the events of the last few years have made it painfully apparent that the assumption that every country would be prepared to fight on behalf of any other country anywhere if it were attacked, does not correspond to present facts. 8 There has never been any clearer case of aggression than that launched by Germany. There is not one member of the League outside the Allies which has even considered the application of military or political sanctions. This was so apparent that it was not even considered worth while to hold the ordinary regular meeting of the League Assembly last September.

When the Soviet Union attacked Finland, there was a temporary revival of collective interest and the situation was considered at a meeting of the Assembly and Council in December. A resolution was passed condemning the Soviet action and Russia was declared by the Council to be no longer a member of the League, but there was no suggestion from any quarter

1 See telegram from Joseph AVENOL (Late Secretary-General): copy in Appendix A (below)