

SANCTIONS AND LEAGUE REFORM

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You will have noted press despatches this morning on the above subject.

Regarding immediate policy as to extending, continuing or dropping sanctions against Italy, Mr. Eden was non-committal; Austen Chamberlain definitely in favour of immediate ending; Labour and Liberal speakers favoured maintenance and extension of sanctions. You will also have noted General Hertzog's speech in a debate in the South African House yesterday, urging the maintenance of sanctions against Italy, for years, if necessary. He stated that the South African representative at Geneva would be instructed to support to the utmost any measures necessary to maintain the League's prestige. General Smuts took much the same position. South Africa, of course, is concerned not only over the League's standpoint, but because of the threat which Italian control of Abyssinia contains to other African countries as regards communications and the raising of black armies.

Regarding future League policy, it will be noted that Mr. Eden stated the British Government would demand careful and thorough stocktaking. In the light of the past seven months' experience, every Government represented at Geneva must re-examine its responsibilities. He gave no indication of the line to be taken, but he did add that the first step would be "immediate consultation with the Dominions so that the British Empire nations could stand together at Geneva during the coming months".

W.L.M. King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1933-1939  
W.L.M. 26, J 4, volume 192, pages C134623-C135248

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