

Report of the Canadian Delegates to the Fifteenth Assembly of the League of Nations

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL:

The Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations was held in Geneva from September 10 to September 27, 1934.

Fifty-four of the fifty-seven States Members of the League were represented at the opening of the Session, those absent being Germany, Japan, and Salvador. During the course of the Assembly, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Afghanistan acceded to the Covenant of the League, while Ecuador advised the Secretary General of its accession on the day following the adjournment of the Assembly.

Canada's delegation was headed by the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable R. B. Bennett. The other Canadian delegates were Dr. O. D. Skelton, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, and Dr. W. A. Riddell, Dominion of Canada Advisory Officer accredited to the League of Nations. Mr. Jean Désy, Counsellor of the Canadian Legation at Paris, and Mr. J. S. Macdonald, Second Secretary in the Canadian Advisory Office, Geneva, acted as alternate delegates.

The proceedings of the Assembly were, in accordance with precedent, opened by the President of the Council, M. Eduard Benes, delegate of Czechoslovakia. In his opening speech, M. Benes frankly set forth the view that the world is passing through one of the greatest crises which mankind has ever known—a crisis in ideas and in morals, as well as in economic and social affairs—and that, in such a period, abnormal international relations are inevitable. Enumerating, as facts of exceptional gravity, the items generally held to constitute the debit side of the League's account—the withdrawal of Germany and Japan, the Manchurian problem, the unsettled Chaco dispute, and the failure of the Disarmament Conference, for which, however, he thought the League could not be held responsible—he held that a survey of the world situation served to make clear the innate strength of the League. Against failure in the Chaco could be placed the success of the League in settling the dispute between Peru and Colombia. Mention could also be made of the success of the League in the negotiations concerning the Saar Plebiscite. Several Great Powers and a large number of smaller States had recently shown greater attachment to the League than ever before and the co-operation of the United States of America was much closer than in former years. Moreover, a number of regional pacts concluded within the year constituted measures of essential importance for the safeguarding of peace. In these difficult times, he maintained, the task of the League is to carry on steadily and patiently all the practical work it can do and to sustain in every way the constructive forces that are available.

ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSEMBLY

The election of the officers of the Assembly resulted as follows:—

President: Mr. M. R. J. Sandler (Sweden)

Vice-Presidents

Sir John Simon (United Kingdom)

Baron Aloisi (Italy)

M. Barthou (France)

M. Schuschnigg (Austria)

Aga Khan (India)

M. Yevtitch (Yugoslavia)