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DOMINION OF CANADA

REPORT
OF THE
CANADIAN DELEGATES
TO THE
EIGHTH ASSEMBLY OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEPTEMBER 5 to 27, 1927



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PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
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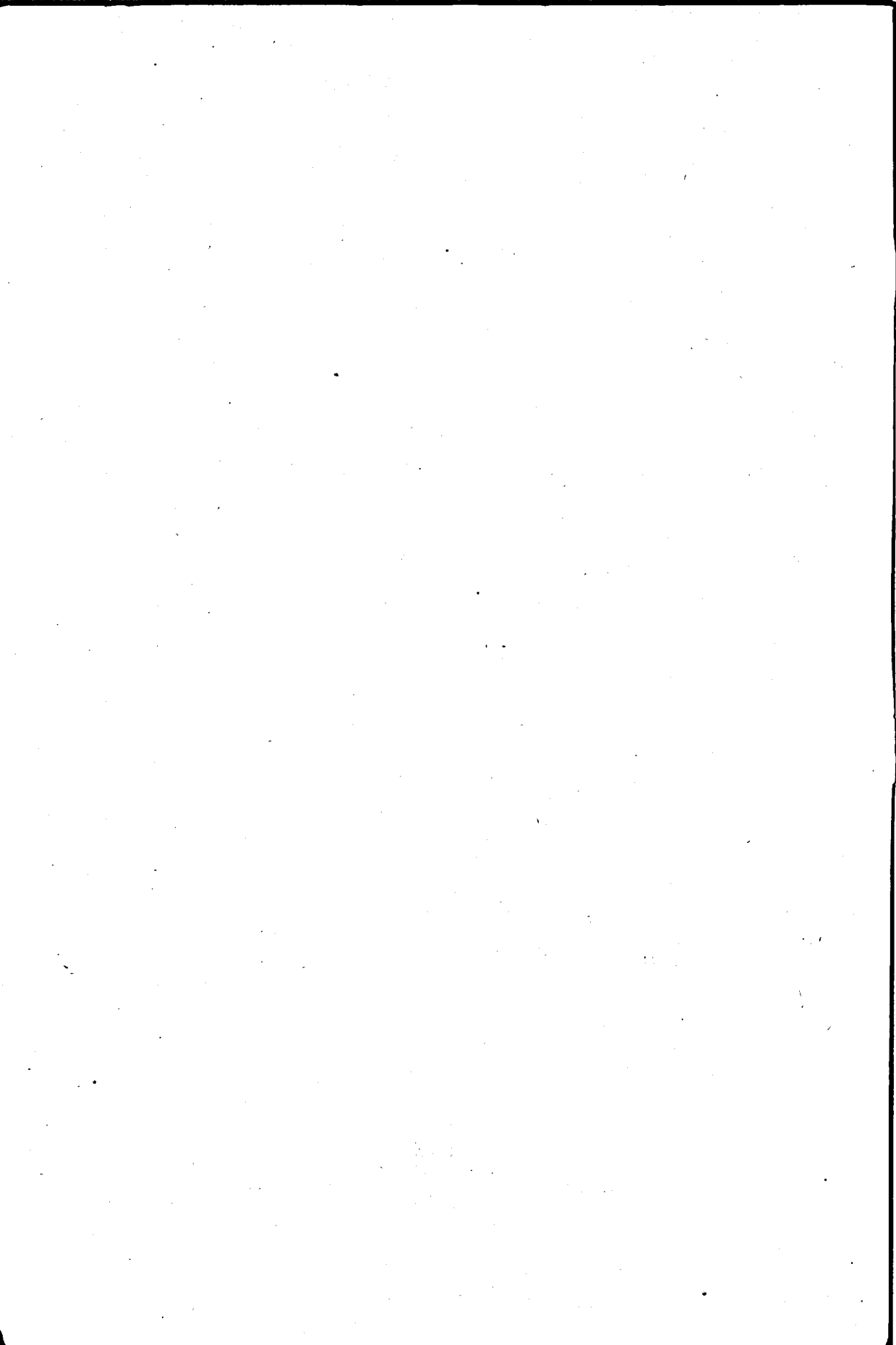


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REPORT OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATES

TO THE

EIGHTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

To His Excellency the Governor General in Council:

The Eighth Ordinary Assembly of the League of Nations was held in Geneva in September, 1927, from September 5 to September 27.

ORGANIZATION

Forty-nine states members were represented. Bolivia, Honduras, and Peru were, as usual, not represented; Brazil and Spain, which gave notice of withdrawal from the League in 1926, did not send delegates; and the Argentine Republic, which has abstained since the Second Assembly, was not represented, though it is now making its contributions to the League. A German delegation was present for the first full session. The delegates to the Assembly included one president, two prime ministers, and twenty-one foreign ministers. Canada was represented by Hon. R. Dandurand, Leader of the Government in the Senate; Hon. C. Stewart, Minister of the Interior; O. D. Skelton, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs; Hon. Philippe Roy, Commissioner-General of Canada in France; and W. A. Riddell, Canadian Advisory Officer, League of Nations.

The Assembly elected M. Guani of Uruguay as President, and the following as Vice-Presidents:—

- M. Scialoja (Italy).
- M. Briand (France).
- Sir Austen Chamberlain (Great Britain).
- M. Stresemann (Germany).
- M. Nemours (Haiti).
- Count Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein (Austria).

Upon adoption of the agenda, the various questions were divided among the usual six committees through which the greater part of the work of the Assembly is done, and chairmen were elected as follows:—

First Committee, Legal and Constitutional Questions: M. Adatei (Japan).

Second Committee, Technical Organizations: R. Dandurand (Canada).

Third Committee, Reduction of Armaments: E. Benes (Czechoslovakia).

Fourth Committee, Budget and Financial Questions: W. J. M. van Eysinga (Netherlands).

Fifth Committee, Social and General Questions: C. J. Hambro (Norway).

Sixth Committee, Political Questions: J. Bech (Luxemburg).

The chairmen, in addition to presiding over the deliberations of their respective committees, are by virtue of their office Vice-Presidents of the Assembly, and form, along with the President and other Vice-Presidents, the General Committee of the Assembly.

The Canadian delegation was represented on the six committees as follows:

- Hon. R. Dandurand, Second and Third.
- Hon. C. Stewart, First and Fourth.
- Dr. O. D. Skelton, First and Fifth.
- Hon. Philippe Roy, Second and Sixth.
- Dr. W. A. Riddell, Third and Fifth.

PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY

(a) *General Debate*

The Assembly held twenty-two plenary meetings. The opening sessions were devoted to a review of the work of the League during the past year and to discussion of proposals for future activity. In some respects the discussion corresponds to the debate on the Address in a Canadian Parliament. On the present occasion it was marked by an unusual degree of continuity and of direct reply, with a corresponding gain in frankness and reality. The discussion was shared in by representatives of every continent and covered a wide range, but the main interest was concentrated on criticisms of the slow progress of disarmament, proposals for reviving or modifying the principles of the Geneva Protocol, criticism and defence of the procedure of the Council or rather of the larger powers represented on the Council, support of the findings of the Economic Conference, and advocacy of a forward step in the codification of international law.

When the Assembly opened there was apparent a considerable measure of disappointment over the failure of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission of the League to attain unanimity in its spring meeting and the breakdown of the Geneva Conference for the Reduction of Naval Armament, though this latter was not a direct League responsibility. The Continental states which had supported the Geneva Protocol most enthusiastically were not reconciled to the view that the opposition particularly of Great Britain and the Dominions presented insurmountable obstacles to its revival. In addition there was some complaint among the smaller countries against an alleged tendency of the larger powers or Locarno group to settle matters in private conversations rather than in full Council or Assembly. All these views found vigorous expression in the opening days. The Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, Jonkheer Beelaerts van Blokland, urged the Assembly to take up again the study of the fundamental principles of the Geneva Protocol; the Polish delegation were known to be preparing a resolution for the outlawing of all wars; the Foreign Minister of Latvia protested against Europe's failure to reduce armaments; while the President of the Norwegian Chamber of Deputies, Mr. C. J. Hambro, speaking in English, criticized the growing tendency to send professional diplomats to Geneva as representatives, and the tendency of an inner circle within the Council to take the settlement of affairs into its hands. M. Motta, President of the Swiss Confederation, repeated the latter point.

Under these circumstances the speeches of the representatives of the Locarno powers attracted special attention. M. Briand protested his devotion to disarmament, and defended the settlement of questions at issue by private meetings as a means of eliminating unnecessary difficulties. He asserted the need of sanctions for the enforcement of League decisions, and referred to the recent judgment of the Permanent Court of International Justice in the *Lotus* case as an illustration of France's readiness to settle disputes by arbitration or judicial means rather than by force. Herr Stresemann denounced war as the parent of misery and anarchy, protested against the assumption that no steps could be taken towards disarmament until perfect security was attained, and announced

that Germany had decided to sign at once the Optional Clause of the Permanent Court, which provides for compulsory acceptance of arbitration in certain matters of law and fact. Sir Austen Chamberlain in a particularly vigorous address, after associating himself with M. Briand's defence of private conferences, answered the implication that Great Britain had taken no steps toward disarmament, had held back from arbitration, and had made no sacrifices to guarantee the security of other powers; challenged any other state to do as much as Britain had done in Locarno, and insisted that it would be impossible and would involve disrupting the British Empire to undertake further unlimited guarantees.

A warning from M. Politis, representative of Greece and one of the chief authors of the Protocol, against too great haste in endeavouring to force it through; a reminder by M. Scialoja of Italy, the only representative present who had taken part in the framing of the Covenant of the League, that over-anxiety to reinforce the Covenant by Assembly resolutions and similar proposals might weaken public faith in the authority of the Covenant itself; a resolution presented by M. Sokal of Poland, modified to denounce and renounce not all wars but merely wars of aggression; a strong endorsement of the work and findings of the Economic Conference by Sir Edward Hilton Young, of the British delegation; an appeal from Count Apponyi of Hungary that the former victors should disarm as had been promised when the defeated powers were forced to disarm; a defence by Sir George Pearce, leader of the Australian delegation, of voluntary as opposed to compulsory arbitration, whether in labour disputes or in international disputes; and a plea from Senator Dandurand for tolerance toward minorities as a means of effecting moral disarmament and genuine security, along with a reference to Canada's previous announcement that it was in sympathy with arbitration though opposed to the Protocol; these were among the more significant features of the remainder of the debate. The various proposals made and modified in the course of the debate, as well as the original agenda, were then referred to the appropriate committees for more detailed consideration.

(b) *Election of the Council*

The Council, which has become practically the executive organ of the League, consists, since the reorganization effected in 1926, of five permanent members (Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, and Germany) and nine temporary members, three being elected each year for a three-year term. Further to ensure a reasonable measure of rotation, it was provided that a retiring member should not be eligible for re-election for three years, unless the Assembly specifically declared it re-eligible by a two-thirds vote.

The 1927 Assembly was the first in which the new system was fully applied. The retiring states were Belgium, Salvador, and Czechoslovakia. Belgium announced its wish to have a vote taken on its re-eligibility. Respect for the distinctive part Belgium had played in the Council ever since the League had been established was countered in some degree by the belief that on this first test it was desirable to insist on the principle of rotation adopted last year after long debate. The vote in favour of re-eligibility was 29 to 19, but the requisite two-thirds majority was lacking. Belgium's good League spirit was at once made evident in a statement by its Foreign Secretary, M. Vandervelde, recognizing that the vote had been based on questions of principle, and assuring the League of Belgium's continued strong support.

For the three vacant seats there were half a dozen serious candidates. In accordance with instructions from the Canadian Government, the delegation announced Canada's candidacy. It was felt that Canada, sufficiently detached from European complications to be impartial and sufficiently in touch to be interested, might contribute something of value to the work of the Council; and

that the Dominions and India, contributing more than one-seventh of the League's revenues, constituted a group from which representation might reasonably be selected. When the Covenant of the League was being drafted, during the Peace Conference in Paris, Sir Robert Borden had secured from the "Big Three" a definite statement that in their view the Dominions were eligible for a Council seat.¹ During the Assembly of September, 1926, Sir George Foster, speaking for the Dominions and India, stated: "So far as my country and the other members of the British overseas countries are concerned, we have not hitherto made and are not now making any claim for a seat on the Council of the League. But it is pertinent, and I think it is right at this stage to say to this Assembly and to the League itself, that we consider that we have equal rights to representation on the Council and otherwise with every one of the fifty-six members of the League of Nations, and that we do not propose to waive that right." The Irish Free State, on the same occasion, announced its candidacy at the last moment, not anticipating election but desiring to establish the principle. By 1927 it had become apparent that unless the principle was definitely asserted, a rotation would become stereotyped from which the Dominions would be excluded. The announcement of Canada's intention received support from all the other British Commonwealth members and from many other quarters in Europe, Asia and Latin America, though the competing claims of other states and some surviving misapprehensions as to the relation between the members of the Commonwealth operated in the contrary direction. The vote resulted in the election of Cuba, which had been selected as the Latin-American representative, Finland, as a Northern European state, and Canada, with Greece and Portugal following in that order.

The selection of Canada is to be regarded as an evidence of trust and goodwill on the part of the other member states and a definite answer to the doubts expressed some years ago as to whether all seven members of the Commonwealth represented in the League could be full-fledged and equal members. It also involves increased responsibilities during the three-year term of office: representation on the quarterly Council meetings, representation on the Preparatory Disarmament Commission and certain standing organizations such as the Permanent Advisory Committee as well as on temporary committees, with a consequent greater need of preparation and study of the problems which come before the Council and Assembly for decision.

After Canada's election, Senator Dandurand took his place in the Forty-Seventh Session of the Council, in which differences between Rumania and Hungary over expropriation of estates in the territories ceded by Hungary to Rumania, between Poland and the Free City of Danzig as to the status of the Westerplatte peninsula and the right of Poland to maintain a munitions depot on it, and between Greece and Germany as to delivery of the cruiser *Salamis*, were discussed, and steps also taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly.

¹ "The question having been raised as to the meaning of Article IV of the League of Nations Covenant, we have been requested by Sir Robert Borden to state whether we concur in his view, that upon the true construction of the first and second paragraphs of that Article, representatives of the self-governing Dominions of the British Empire may be selected or named as members of the Council. We have no hesitation in expressing our entire concurrence in this view. If there were any doubt it would be entirely removed by the fact that the Articles of the Covenant are not subject to a narrow or technical construction.

"Dated at the Quai d'Orsay, Paris, the sixth day of May, 1919.

"(Signed) G. CLEMENCEAU
WOODROW WILSON
D. LLOYD GEORGE"

FIRST COMMITTEE

(a) Progressive Codification of International Law

The chief question before the First Committee was the progressive codification of international law. It is a question at once difficult and important. The establishment of international tribunals has progressed more rapidly than agreement upon the principles and rules of law which these tribunals are to apply. Over a century ago the first proposals for codifying international law came from Great Britain, a country which in general has been somewhat reluctant in codifying its domestic law. In the generation preceding the war, a considerable measure of progress was made in special fields by diplomatic conferences, but the progress was spasmodic and uncertain. The establishment of the League of Nations made it appear that a more systematic and continuous effort could be made through this agency. In 1924 the Assembly of the League adopted the proposal of the Swedish delegation that steps should be taken to inquire into the possibility of progressive codification. A committee of experts was duly appointed, and interim reports made to the Council.

The First Committee came to the conclusion that the time was ripe for proceeding with the codification of a limited number of fields, and that the effort should be made under the auspices of the League, rather than of the Netherlands Government, as had been suggested in some quarters. Three subjects were selected for immediate consideration; first, nationality, including the tangled questions of double nationality and statelessness and the effect of marriage and widowhood upon the national status of women; second, territorial waters, including such phases as the width of the coastal zone, the territorial character of bays and straits, and differentiation of jurisdiction according to the object sought; and third, the responsibility of states for damage done in their territory to the person or property of foreigners. A further question, the regulation of the exploitation of the resources of the ocean, particularly whaling, was referred to the Economic Committee of the League for preliminary inquiry.

The First Committee proposed, and the Assembly agreed, that an International Conference should be held, probably in 1929, to draw up a convention covering the three subjects noted, and that a small Preparatory Committee should be set up to prepare a detailed agenda and secure the views of the members of the League. The Council has since appointed a committee of five members. The United States Department of State has indicated its intention to accept the League's invitation to participate in the Conference. If this preliminary effort is successful, further subjects will be brought under review and gradually agreement and a firm basis for arbitral procedure attained throughout the whole range of international law.

(b) Nansen Arbitration Proposal

Consideration was given, in conjunction with the Third Committee, to the arbitration proposal submitted by Dr. Nansen.

(c) Adhesion to Treaties

The First Committee also debated the more technical question whether the innovation in treaty procedure adopted in connection with certain treaties drafted under the auspices of the League, of giving adhesions subject to ratification, should be endorsed. The committee considered it should not be ruled out, but held that unless specifically stated to the contrary, adhesions should be assumed to be final.

SECOND COMMITTEE

Economic Conference

The most important question before the Second Committee was the report of the Economic Conference held at Geneva in the previous May. General agreement was expressed with the recommendations of the Conference, which was a body of experts not in any way binding the governments of the countries from which they came. Particular emphasis was laid upon the recommendations against tariff increases and tariff instability, against import and export restrictions and prohibitions, and in favour of uniformity of customs nomenclature—an important point in the operation of the most favoured nation clause in commercial treaties—as well as on the approval of rationalization and of arbitral awards in commercial cases. In the Assembly discussion M. Loucheur and Herr Stresemann both stated that the work of the Conference was in large measure responsible for the conclusion of the recent Franco-German commercial treaty, the first negotiated in sixty years, and Major Elliott called attention to the fact that Great Britain had one of the lowest tariffs in the world, 98 per cent of her imports entering free. The Committee, and subsequently the Assembly, recommended the resolutions of the Economic Conference to the favourable consideration of all governments.

The increasing importance of economic questions in the League's activities led to proposals for a radical re-organization of the existing machinery for dealing with them. A compromise solution was reached, in the retention of the existing Economic Committee of some fifteen members, meeting quarterly, and the setting up of a Consultative Committee of thirty-five members, meeting once a year, and including representatives of the International Labour Office, the International Chamber of Commerce, and the International Institute of Agriculture.

A Finnish proposal to include investigations into alcoholism in the League's activities, and to adopt the International Bureau against Alcoholism of Lausanne as a League agency, met with some support but more opposition; the view expressed in the previous Assembly as to the doubtful expediency of the League scattering its efforts over subjects not clearly within its province found an echo in this connection. General agreement was, however, expressed that some phases of the question were within the competence of the League, and it was finally agreed to place on the agenda of the Ninth Assembly an amended resolution, calling for the appointment of a committee of experts on alcoholism, to study such aspects as came within the competence of the League and could be the subject of scientific or practical work.

A proposal, arising from the Third General Conference on Communications and Transit, held in Geneva in August, to establish an information centre for collecting and tabulating data on transportation, was approved by the Committee, but postponed on financial grounds.

A phase of transportation affecting the League itself was considered. The necessity of rapid communication in the event of a crisis led to recommendations for setting up a League wireless station at Geneva and for providing aeroplane service for the members of the Council in case of an emergency meeting such as dealt with the Greco-Bulgarian crisis in 1925.

The refugee settlement schemes in Greece and Bulgaria, the success of the League's aid in rehabilitating the finances of Estonia and the possibility of similar assistance to Bulgaria, and the extension of the activities of the Health Section to South America, were other questions before the Committee, illustrating the practical and constructive scope of the League's activities.

THIRD COMMITTEE

Reduction of Armaments

To this committee fell the most important task of the Assembly, a solution of the conflicting views as to the next step in the campaign for disarmament.

The Polish resolution against wars of aggression; the Dutch resolution calling for restudy of the principles of disarmament, security and arbitration; a French resolution on the same lines but more detailed, put forward by the unfaltering champion of the Protocol, M. Paul Boncour; a Finnish proposal for financial guarantees to the victim of aggression, and a Norwegian proposal for study of a comprehensive plan of judicial settlement of legal disputes and conciliation in other disputes, provided the subject-matter of the Committee's discussion.

The points of view from which the subject was approached were equally varied. The champions of the Protocol, including the majority of European states and particularly the victors or offspring of the Great War, emphasized as the end, peace on the basis of the status quo, and as the means, "security". Disarmament could come only if states could be assured that a substitute for their own armed force could be found in firm guarantees by other powers to come to the aid of the victim of aggression or disturbance of the status quo; and aggression could be determined only by setting up an elaborate machinery of arbitration which would ensure that if war came, the party which rejected this means of settlement would stand branded as the aggressor, whereupon all the guaranteeing powers would automatically be called upon to apply economic or military pressure against the outlaw: thus disarmament through security, and security through arbitration backed by sanctions or guarantees. The German view was that disarmament must precede security; that armaments bred rivalry and fear, and that if the guarantees of the Covenant and of Locarno did not yield France and Belgium sufficient security against a disarmed Germany, no heaping up of further guarantees could give this unattainable perfection of security. The Scandinavians emphasized arbitration, not as a test of aggression and a means of ensuring that if war came all other states would band against the aggressor, but in order to prevent war and remove its occasions. The British stood against any further general guarantees or general commitment to arbitration, and emphasized the necessity of other powers being given an opportunity to offer limited regional guarantees such as they had undertaken on the western borders of Germany.

Out of these conflicting views, patience and goodwill brought a remarkable degree of agreement. The Committee first dealt with several minor issues: the necessity of keeping the development of civil aviation distinct from that of military aviation; measures to facilitate rapid meeting of the Council in time of crisis; and the desirability of further sympathetic study of the Finnish proposal for financial aid to states victims of aggression. On the major issue it recognized in a measure the need of pooled security as a basis of disarmament, urged the early reassembling of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, provided for establishment by the Commission of a special committee on arbitration and security, and set forth as means to the desired end, first, action by the League in promoting special or general agreements on arbitration and security; second, a further exploration of the obligations and consequent procedure of the Covenant as it stood; third, regional agreements for mutual aid; and fourth, the giving to all members of the League an opportunity to state precisely what aid, if any, they could give, over and above the obligations of the Covenant, in the event of a conflict breaking out in a given region.

The main resolution in full ran as follows:—

RESOLUTION No. V.

The Assembly,

Noting the progress achieved in the technical sphere by the Preparatory Disarmament Commission and by the Committee of the Council towards enabling the Council to be rapidly convened and to take decisions in case of emergency;

Being anxious to bring about the political conditions calculated to assure the success of the work of disarmament;

Being convinced that the principal condition of this success is that every State should be sure of not having to provide unaided for its security by means of its own armaments and should be able to rely also on the organized collective action of the League of Nations;

Affirming that such action should aim *chiefly* at forestalling or arresting any resort to war and *if need be* at effectively protecting any State victim of an aggression;

Being convinced that the burdens which may thereby be imposed on the different States will be the more readily accepted by them in proportion as

(a) They are shared in practice by a greater number of States;

(b) The individual obligations of States have been more clearly defined and limited:

1. Recommends the progressive extension of arbitration by means of special or collective agreements, including agreements between States members and non-members of the League of Nations, so as to extend to all countries the mutual confidence essential to the complete success of the Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments;

2. Recalls its resolution of September 24, 1926, which reads as follows:—

“Being desirous that the investigations, in regard to which the Assembly itself took the initiative in its resolution of September 25, 1925, should be brought to a successful conclusion as soon as possible, it requests the Council to call upon the Preparatory Commission to take steps to hasten the completion of the technical work and thus be able to draw up, at the beginning of next year, the program for a Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments corresponding to existing conditions in regard to regional and general security, and it asks the Council to convene this Conference before the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly, unless material difficulties render this impossible.”

Accordingly requests the Council to urge the Preparatory Commission to hasten the completion of its technical work and to convene the Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments immediately this work has been completed;

3. Requests the Council to give the Preparatory Commission, whose task will not be confined to the preparation of an initial conference on the limitation and reduction of armaments, and whose work must continue until the final goal has been achieved, the necessary instructions for the creation without delay of a committee consisting of representatives of all the States which have seats on the Commission and are members of the League of Nations, other States represented on the Commission being invited to sit on it if they so desire.

This committee would be placed at the Commission's disposal and its duty would be to consider, on the lines indicated by the Commission, the measures capable of giving all States the guarantees of arbitration and security necessary to enable them to fix the level of their armaments at the lowest possible figures in an international disarmament agreement.

The Assembly considers that these measures should be sought:

In action by the League of Nations with a view to promoting, generalizing, and coordinating special or collective agreements on arbitration and security;

In the systematic preparation of the machinery to be employed by the organs of the League of Nations with a view to enabling the members of the League to perform their obligations under the various articles of the Covenant;

In agreements which the States members of the League may conclude among themselves, irrespective of their obligations under the Covenant, with a view to making their commitments proportionate to the degree of solidarity of a geographical or other nature existing between them and other States;

And, further, in an invitation from the Council to the several States to inform it of the measures which they would be prepared to take, irrespective of their obligations under the Covenant, to support the Council's decisions or recommendations in the event of a conflict breaking out in a given region, each State indicating that, in a particular case, either all its forces, or a certain part of its military, naval or air forces, could forthwith intervene in the conflict to support the Council's decisions or recommendations.

It remains to be seen how far the Preparatory Commission and its Security Sub-committee can develop this modified and more flexible version of the doctrine of the linking of disarmament with security and arbitration into a practical and acceptable working plan.

FOURTH COMMITTEE

Budget Questions

The Finance or Budget Committee found itself faced by several difficult problems.

First came the question of the adequacy of the annual appropriations for the support of the League, the International Labour Organization and the Permanent Court of International Justice. The work of the League is growing much faster than its revenues. The nations of the world contribute less in a year for the maintenance of the body which is the chief bulwark against another world catastrophe than they spent on destruction in a single morning or afternoon in the later years of the World War. Yet the feeling of the Assembly as a whole and particularly of the Fourth Committee has been that a tight rein should be kept upon expenditure and the necessity of any fresh enterprise amply proved before being sanctioned. The total budget was accordingly set at 25,333,817 gold francs, or approximately \$4,890,000; this sum is about \$150,000 more than the budget of the previous year. This total was later reduced by \$160,000, representing half the surplus of the preceding year, and a further sum of \$280,000 has been taken from the Building Fund to reimburse those States which had been contributing to the League's maintenance before 1926, thus ensuring an even distribution of the burdens between new and old members, and between those in arrears and those in good standing. With these adjustments, Canada's net contribution for 1928 amounts to slightly less than \$156,000.

The question of arrears in payments received its annual share of consideration. The chief debit entry is that against China, but in view of civil war and financial chaos it was apparent that no immediate improvement could be expected. The remaining arrears are for minor amounts, and chiefly in the case of some of the smaller Latin-American States.

A conflict of views on two appropriations raised in acute form the question whether the opinion of the Committee concerned with the general policy of a certain proposed expenditure or the opinion of the Fourth Committee is to prevail in case of difference. Recommendations from the Second Committee for a Transportation Information Bureau and from the First Committee in connection with further researches into international law codification were disallowed by the Fourth Committee. The first conflict was solved by a joint conference in which it was agreed to postpone the credit for this year at least; the second came before the Assembly, which proved evenly divided, and was finally settled by a proposal of the Secretary General that the Council might transfer funds for this purpose from any unexpended remainder.

The New League Building

The chief financial question of the year, however, was how to ensure the construction of the new League building. The Assembly at present meets in a badly-planned and badly-ventilated hall on one side of Lake Geneva and the Secretariat, or Civil Service of the League, and the committees work in what was formerly a hotel on the other side of the lake. Proposals for constructing an adequate building have accordingly been under consideration for several years; an excellent site beyond the present Secretariat, and incidentally within convenient distance from the quarters of the Canadian Advisory Officer, has been acquired, and an international architectural competition held. Unfortunately, between the limitation of funds and the excess of competitors, the jury of architects was unable to pronounce any single plan adequate: nine plans of first merit, nine of second, and nine of third were indicated, and the problem passed on

to the Assembly. It was agreed, after much consideration, to increase the maximum outlay authorized from 13,500,000 francs to 19,500,000, or approximately \$3,760,000, and to empower a committee of five laymen to select one plan, or rather one architect, and proceed with the work. Announcement was made at the same time of the gift of \$2,000,000 by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., for library purposes, preferably half for building and half for endowment; with the construction of a separate Library, the main building fund will come nearer to providing adequate housing for the League's other activities.

FIFTH COMMITTEE

The Fifth Committee dealt as usual with the social or humanitarian questions of international interest included in the League's activities.

Traffic in Narcotics

The traffic in opium and narcotics generally received much attention. First came the question of tackling the problem at the source by restricting poppy growing. India had undertaken a ten per cent annual reduction; China was unfortunately not in a position to cope with the question because of internal chaos, but Persia, the third great source, had expressed its willingness to make a beginning if the economic difficulties of the shift to other crops could be met. Accordingly a League Commission had made an investigation, suggesting possible lines of action, and the Persian Government agreed to undertake a ten per cent per annum restriction, after three years of preparation in improving the country's internal economic position and agricultural methods, subject to review of the whole situation in six years. Next was the question of the ratification of the Opium Convention and of the observance of existing State obligations. It was pointed out that ratifications had been slow in coming, but hope was expressed that a sufficient number would be secured within the coming year to bring the Convention into effect; the Canadian representative intimated that the Canadian Government proposed to submit the Convention for ratification at the next session of Parliament. Attention was called in the Committee, and later by Lord Lytton of the Indian delegation in the Assembly, to the fact that the governments of some narcotic manufacturing countries which had agreed to adopt the import and export certificate system, which requires a certificate from the Government of the importing country that the drug is needed for legitimate purposes, had failed to carry out their obligations effectively in this respect; as there were only thirty factories or so in the world where narcotic drugs were manufactured, supervision of the export traffic was not difficult if the will was present. The probable ratification of the Convention made it necessary to provide for the Permanent Central Board, which is to supervise the reports made by the parties to the Convention as to the international trade in narcotic drugs. The discussion turned largely on whether the members should be paid: the Committee recommended, and the Assembly agreed, that the tradition of gratuitous services by members of League boards of review should be maintained.

Traffic in Women and Children

The recent report of a special League Committee on the Traffic in Women, and Children came up for review. As the publication of the second part of the report, dealing with conditions in specific countries, had not then been authorized—the issue of this part has since been determined—the discussion dealt mainly with general questions, and particularly the possibility of suppressing

licensed houses of prostitution, which had been shown to be an essential factor in the international "white slave" traffic. The representative of Hungary declared that licensed houses had been abolished there; the Rumanian, that it was anticipated this end would be reached within a year; and the German, that licensed houses would be abolished after October 1, 1927, "except in the area occupied by Allied troops". The French delegate intimated that there was some doubt as to the measure of success actually attained in the abolitionist countries. The Canadian representative stated that abolition had been an accepted success from both hygienic and moral standpoints.

Child Welfare

The more constructive side of the League's interest was instanced in the discussion of the report of the Child Welfare Committee. A year ago the Council criticized the programme of work outlined by this committee, on the ground that some of the questions proposed for study appeared to be of national rather than international concern. The Seventh Assembly agreed generally with the conclusions of the Council, and the Child Welfare Committee had therefore, as the rapporteur pointed out, "endeavoured to make a judicious choice of the questions to be placed on its agenda, in order to concentrate its attention on the problems whose study and solution are of practical value to governments". It had decided in particular to pursue the inquiry into the effects produced on children by the cinematograph and, in collaboration with the International Labour Office, the inquiry into the effects of family allowances on the welfare of children, and to study the position of the illegitimate child in the various countries. It had also decided to retain on its agenda the question of blind children and the question of mental and physical recreation. The representatives of Canada, Great Britain, South Africa, Belgium, Italy, and Norway commented favourably on its report.

SIXTH COMMITTEE

Slavery, which, as many people first realized from the League's inquiries of the past three years, still prevails in open form in one Christian country, Abyssinia, and several Mahommedan countries, and in disguised or modified form in other states, was the first subject on the Sixth Committee's agenda. It was noted that reports on progress in abolishing slavery had been received from Burma, Abyssinia, Portugal, and the Sudan, but that the majority of members of the League had not yet ratified the Convention drafted last year. At a later stage a British representative announced that the Legislature of the Sierra Leone Protectorate had passed the first reading of a law to end the surprising legal recognition of slavery in that territory implied in a recent court judgment.

Mandates proved of interest as usual. The friction which had existed earlier in the year between the Permanent Mandates Commission and several of the mandatory powers over what the latter were inclined to consider the unduly inquisitorial character of the Commission's inquiries appeared to have been lessened. The Dominions were much to the fore in the discussion, between New Zealand's troubles with its wards in Western Samoa and South Africa's contention as to possessing "sovereignty" over the mandated territory which was formerly German Southwest Africa. Note was taken of the Council's action in appointing a German member to the Mandates Commission, and further regulation of the liquor traffic in the B and C mandated areas was urged.

A report on the Conference of Press Experts held in Geneva during the past summer, in which the press of Canada was represented by Hon. Frank Carrel, led to support of the proposals to facilitate execution of the Conference's recommendations on press telegraph and telephone rates, the improvement of communications, visas and identity cards for journalists, and other matters. An incidental discussion arose as to the alleged propaganda character of the work of certain European news gathering agencies.

The final subject on the Committee's agenda was a Norwegian resolution urging the adoption of proportional representation in the form of the single transferable vote, in connection with the election of the non-permanent members of the Council. The discussion revealed an increasing measure of support for the proposal, but the majority of the Committee concluded that it was advisable to give the present system of election a further trial.

The recommendations of the various committees were adopted by the Assembly in plenary sessions without substantial change, and the Eighth Assembly came to a close on September 26.

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