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

GENEVA, SEPTEMBER 7-29, 1931.



OTTAWA
F. A. ACLAND
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
1932

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Dept. of External Affairs
Min. des Affaires extérieures

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Report of the Canadian Delegates to the Twelfth Assembly of the League of Nations, Geneva

The Right Honourable R. B. BENNETT, K.C., M.P.,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
Ottawa.

SIR,—We have the honour to submit the following report on the proceedings of the Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations which was held in Geneva from the 7th to the 29th September, 1931.

ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSEMBLY

Fifty-two of the fifty-four States Members of the League were represented at the Assembly. This number was later increased by the admission of Mexico to membership in the League, and by the participation in the work of the Committee considering proposals for an armaments truce of five non-Member States: Brazil, Costa Rica, Egypt, Turkey and the United States of America.

The Canadian delegation consisted of the Honourable Hugh Guthrie, Minister of Justice and Attorney-General; the Honourable C. P. Beaubien, Senator, and Mrs. Henry Pemberton Plumptre, Member of the Board of Education, Toronto, with the following as alternate delegates: the Honourable Philippe Roy, Minister for Canada in France; the Honourable Martin Burrell, Parliamentary Librarian, and Dr. W. A. Riddell, Dominion of Canada Advisory Officer accredited to the League of Nations.

After the President of the Council, M. Lerroux (Spain), had opened the proceedings with a brief review of the work of the League during the past year, the Assembly proceeded to the election of its President. M. Titulesco (Roumania), who had presided acceptably over the Eleventh Assembly, was re-elected President with twenty-five votes; twenty-one votes were cast for Count Apponyi (Hungary).

The election of the six Vice-Presidents and the Chairman of the six Committees, who together constituted the General Committee of the Assembly, resulted as follows:—

Vice-Presidents

M. Briand (France),	M. Yoshizawa (Japan),
Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire),	Dr. Curtius (Germany),
	Count Apponyi (Hungary),
	M. Restrepo (Colombia).

Chairmen of the Committees

First Committee (Legal and Constitutional Questions): M. Scialoja (Italy).
Second Committee (Technical Organizations): M. Janson (Belgium).
Third Committee (Reduction of Armaments): M. Munch (Denmark).
Fourth Committee (Budget and Financial Questions): M. Politis (Greece).
Fifth Committee (Social and Humanitarian Questions): Khan Alâ (Persia).
Sixth Committee (Political Questions): M. Motta (Switzerland).

The Canadian Delegation was represented on the six Committees as follows:—

First Committee:

Hon. Hugh Guthrie,
Hon. Philippe Roy.

Second Committee:

Dr. W. A. Riddell,
Mrs. H. P. Plumptre.

Third Committee:

Hon. Hugh Guthrie,
Hon. C. P. Beaubien.

Fourth Committee:

Hon. Philippe Roy,
Hon. Martin Burrell.

Fifth Committee:

Mrs. H. P. Plumptre,
Dr. W. A. Riddell.

Sixth Committee:

Hon. C. P. Beaubien,
Hon. Martin Burrell.

On the proposal of the President, the Honourable C. P. Beaubien was appointed by the Assembly as a member of the Agenda Committee.

PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY

The situation in which the Assembly met was entirely dominated by two events, the economic crisis and the forthcoming Disarmament Conference. Aspects of international co-operation unrelated to these urgent questions, if not ignored, were for the moment unregarded. This concentration on the vital and immediate problems of international politics characterized the general discussion, in plenary session, of the League's activities in the twelve months which had elapsed since the Eleventh Assembly. A brief review of the statements of policy made by the spokesmen of the principal Powers may usefully introduce the more detailed record of the proceedings of the several committees which will be found in subsequent chapters of this report.

Signor Grandi (Italy), in opening the general debate, took advantage of the occasion to explain fully Italian policy in regard to the principal enterprises in which the League was concerned. He felt that the proposals to amend the Covenant of the League, in order to bring it into harmony with the Pact of Paris, were put forward prematurely and were perhaps ill advised. In counselling caution, he argued with force that nations should scrupulously fulfil existing obligations under the Covenant before contemplating an extension of obligations which might be reluctantly accepted and imperfectly honoured. In particular, the provisions of Article VIII (the Disarmament Article) had not yet been carried out and Italy hoped that the forthcoming Conference would see the realization of the undertakings given by the Members of the League twelve years before. He believed that peace could rest only on national security and that security could result only from the harmonious development of two factors: the peaceful settlement of disputes and the general reduction of armaments. Signor Grandi then put forward, tentatively, a proposal that, taken up and developed in the Third Committee of the Assembly, emerged as the "Armaments Truce" to which all States participating in the Disarmament Conference have since subscribed.

"My idea is," he said, "that we should here and now conclude a genuine and effective armaments truce to last, at least, as long as the Conference itself is in progress. A general and immediate agreement between all States with a view to the postponement of the execution of programs for new armaments would not only give our people an immediate proof of goodwill but would invest the Conference with a calmer and more confident psychological and political atmosphere, which would do more than any declaration of principles to promote the successful progress of its work."

Lord Cecil, who spoke on the following day, welcomed the Italian proposal warmly and commended it to the consideration of the Assembly with a view to its translation into a formal and binding obligation upon the States

taking part in the Disarmament Conference. Naturally, Lord Cecil's speech dealt largely with the preparations for the Disarmament Conference and the necessity that it should arrive at unmistakable success. But another question of equal urgency was emphasized by the spokesman for the United Kingdom. The economic crisis was already international in its effects and in its causes. The strangulation of trade, the suspension of capital movements, the hoarding of money metals all reflected a general mistrust; the depression, in its current phase, was largely a "crise de confiance" and the restoration of confidence was a problem of politics as well as economics. He thought that every possible measure should be taken to counteract the atmosphere of international mistrust and suspicion in which the world laboured, and appealed to the representatives of France and Germany, in particular, to compose the differences that still separated them.

M. Briand responded to Lord Cecil's appeal for increasing co-operation between France and Germany, but did not take up M. Grandi's friendly challenge to suspend the construction of additional armaments. He referred to the interchange of visits between M. Laval and himself and Dr. Bruening and Dr. Curtius and was hopeful of results from the projected economic rapprochement with Germany. He then proceeded to restate the familiar French thesis regarding the relation which should exist between security and disarmament and reviewed the steps that France had taken in recent years to reduce her armed strength by reductions in the term of service, and stressed the extended acceptance of peaceful procedure involved in accession to the General Act and acceptance of the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court.

Dr. Curtius (Germany) defined once more the German position on the question of disarmament; he confirmed the objections to the draft disarmament convention which had been voiced by German representatives on the Preparatory Commission and announced that Germany would ask the Disarmament Conference to establish formal equality of treatment, for all States, in the method of the limitation of armaments. He said that Germany had looked forward for years to the convocation of the Conference and expressed the belief that the fate of the Conference would determine the fate of the League itself.

The balance of Dr. Curtius' speech was devoted to the economic situation. He concurred in Lord Cecil's analysis of its causes and prescription for its remedy but developed, in some detail, the connection between the burden of debt and reparations and the prevailing business depression. He thought that closer economic co-operation between European States was a condition of any permanent recovery of prosperity and defended the proposed preferential regime for European cereals as a transitional measure which would afford relief to some of the more distressed agricultural countries. He reciprocated M. Briand's expression of friendship and believed Franco-German economic rapprochement would facilitate the settlement of the political problems that still awaited solution.

Mr. Guthrie expressed the conviction of the Canadian Government that the arrangements already in force for the pacific settlement of international disputes, coupled with the guarantees of national security embodied in the Covenant, the Pact of Paris and such regional accords as Locarno, permitted the attainment of general disarmament upon a very extensive scale. He reviewed the progress in recent years of efforts to outlaw war and ensure the peaceful settlement of international disputes, and endorsed the proposed amendments of the Covenant which would completely eliminate the right to resort to war. Referring to the various proposals that had been put forward for the establishment in European grain importing countries of a preferential regime for Danubian cereals, Mr. Guthrie reserved Canada's right (subsequently exercised in the Second Committee) to examine freely the projects which had been considered by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

M. Madariaga (Spain) formerly Chief of the Disarmament Section of the League Secretariat, advocated a stricter observance by Members of the League of the obligations accepted by them in the Covenant, some of which certain Members of the League have shown a tendency to explain away. He hoped the Disarmament Conference would realize a drastic measure of disarmament including the direct limitation of military material and the internationalization of civil aircraft. M. Madariaga observed that "if each State Member of the League had sent to Geneva a sum equal to five per cent of its naval and military expenditure in the year 1930, and if that sum had been invested by the League Treasury at five per cent interest, the income accruing would have maintained the League for ever on its present scale of expenditure."

Entry of Mexico into the League

A resolution, adopted by the Assembly on the 8th September, 1931, invited Mexico to accede to the Covenant; this resolution was communicated to the Government of Mexico from whom a reply accepting the invitation was received on the 10th September and on the 12th September Mexico formally entered the League of Nations.

This departure from the normal procedure established by Article I of the Covenant governing the entry of States into the League, is, it was carefully explained, not to be construed as a precedent but as simple reparation for the omission of Mexico from the list of States named in the annex to the Covenant.

Elections to the Council

The three non-permanent seats on the Council, vacated by the retirement of Persia, Venezuela and Spain, were filled on the 14th September, 1931, by the election of China and Panama and the re-election of Spain for three years ending in 1934.

Presentation of Portrait of Senator Dandurand

A portrait in oils of Senator Dandurand, President of the Sixth Assembly, was formally presented to the League of Nations by Mr. Guthrie in the course of his address to the Assembly. The painting by Jules Baschet, who was commissioned by the friends of the Senator, was exhibited in the Library of the Secretariat during the meetings of the Assembly. In accepting it on behalf of the League, M. Titulesco expressed the hope that it would initiate the establishment of a portrait gallery of past presidents of the Assembly.

FIRST COMMITTEE

(Legal and Constitutional Questions)

Amendment of the Covenant

The First Committee considered the question of inserting in the Covenant of the League of Nations the general prohibition of recourse to war embodied in the Pact of Paris.

During the previous discussions the fear had been occasionally expressed that certain difficulties might result from the fact that some members of the League had not acceded to the Paris Pact, and that some signatories of that Treaty were not Members of the League. The First Committee expressed the view that, at the present time, there need be no further apprehensions on either point. On the one hand, some Members of the League which had not acceded to the Paris Pact had acceded or announced their intention of acceding since last year. On the other hand, as regards States signatories of the Paris Pact which were not Members of the League, obviously no decision could be taken in their absence as to the scope they should give to their obligations, but the task undertaken by the League had the same end in view as the Paris Pact, and reinforced the authority of the principle formulated therein.

If most of the delegates were in favour of bringing the Covenant into harmony with the Pact of Paris, they were not agreed as to the best means of achieving that object. Mr. Guthrie confirmed the Canadian Government's approval of the amendments drafted by the sub-Committee of the First Committee of the last Assembly and expressed its desire that the Covenant be brought into harmony with the Pact of Paris at the earliest opportunity. Divergencies of opinion, however, were expressed on several points, in particular on the right of self-defence, the organization of pacific methods of settling disputes and the extension of sanctions. Although these divergencies were considerably reduced, they were not absolutely cleared up. The Committee therefore suggested to the Assembly that the question of framing a final text should be postponed, the work being referred to a temporary Committee which would meet during the Disarmament Conference. This proposal was adopted.

In its report prepared by M. Rolin (Belgium) the First Committee noted that no objection of principle was now made against the idea of formulating in a single Article of the Covenant (Article 12) and in the simplest terms, without any attempt at interpretation or restriction, the prohibition of recourse to war.

In the opinion of the Committee, this prohibition did not in any way exclude the right of self-defence. Legitimate defence was a general principle of law, the *non adempti contractus* clause. A State which had disregarded the clause forbidding war could not demand that a State attacked by it should observe that clause. This was provided for in the Covenant though not expressly so. The concept of self-defence defied definition in advance in abstract terms. The use which a State claimed to make of the right of self-defence could, however, be discussed by the other States concerned and, in the case of Members of the League, would be subject to the decision of the Council. In judging the facts before it, the Council would have to be guided not only by the general principles of law, but also by any special engagements for preventing war undertaken by the parties to the dispute.

A second point to be determined was whether provision was to be made in order to except from the prohibition to resort to war the legitimate assistance given spontaneously by a Member of the League to another Member, which has been the victim of a flagrant aggression. The Committee agreed that no such exception should be specified expressly. Here again it was not so much a question of an exception as the simple application of the principle of law. The State which violated its undertakings was not entitled to demand the execution of those undertakings by the other parties to the Covenant. Interventions of this kind would, however, in their turn be subject to the appreciation of their character by other Members of the League and by the Council, and to the opinion of the latter the State which had intervened would be obliged to conform.

On the other hand, it was admitted that the proposed amendment of the Covenant would deprive the Members of the League of the right to resort to war in execution of an arbitral award or a unanimous decision of the Council. As a counterpart, the task which devolves upon the Council of considering the measures necessary to ensure execution will become particularly imperative. The Council might have, in the last resort, to authorize military measures. These measures, if prescribed, would lose their character of recourse to war and assume a character of social defence.

The Committee noted the desire of the Chinese and Finnish Governments to meet the dangers resulting from a country creating what is in effect a state of war, while not officially recognizing that war exists. The Committee did not feel able for the moment to enter upon a discussion of this question.

Logic compelled many delegates to say that from the moment when the prohibition of resort to war was absolute, resort to arbitration or judicial settlement must be equally so. As things stand, the Covenant allows States the choice

between arbitration or judicial settlement, on the one hand, and recourse to the Council on the other. Arbitration or judicial settlement implies findings which are binding upon the parties and to which effect must be given. Recourse to the Council, even when the Council is unanimous, produces only a limited effect. In the Covenant as it stands, war is prohibited against a State which complies with the unanimous recommendations of the Council, but the Covenant does not provide for any obligation to carry out these recommendations and the Council has no means of guaranteeing such execution.

To place the problem of the pacific settlement of disputes on a plane with the principle of prohibiting recourse to war, two methods seemed feasible. The first and simpler was to extend arbitration or judicial settlement by means of contractual undertakings. In this direction considerable progress has been made through the acceptance of the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court and the General Act of 1928. The Committee, nevertheless, considered that it would be premature to seek at present to embody in the Covenant the rigid obligation to resort to arbitration or judicial settlement for all disputes.

The second solution contemplated was at least to provide in the Covenant that Members of the League must carry out in good faith the unanimous recommendations of the Council, and to entrust to the latter the duty of proposing suitable measures to ensure that such recommendations were carried into effect. The discussions indicated that an amendment of this character would not command the necessary ratifications. A number of States in favour of compulsory arbitration were not prepared to grant to the Council arbitral or judicial powers or to give its decisions executory and compulsory force, even with the guarantee that the Council could, by a majority vote, apply for an advisory opinion to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

As regards the hypothesis of the Council being divided, the Finnish delegation proposed that, in such a case, the Council should by a majority vote suggest the best procedure to be followed in the circumstances and should recommend it to the parties. The Committee decided that this proposal might usefully be accepted as a basis for subsequent discussion. If a prohibition of recourse to war is embodied in the Covenant, the number of cases liable to sanctions (Article 16) will be increased. The question arose—and in this regard it seemed impossible to reconcile the points of view—whether the obligations under Article 16 could not be restricted to cases where the Council had been unanimous, to the exclusion of those cases in which it was divided either on the question as to who was the aggressor or as to the provisional measures which should be recommended to the parties.

Those in favour of a distinction of this kind argued that the function of the League was not to be a repressive judge. Its function was to bring about peace. The opinion prevailed, however, that any distinction ought to be rejected. The Covenant enjoined upon the Council to concern itself with any war or threat of war; if, in certain cases, Members of the League were at liberty to stand aloof, the Council would find itself without any means of action. To say that Members, after taking note of the violation of the undertaking, could wash their hands of the whole matter would be to undermine the force of the prohibition of recourse to war. It would diminish the guarantees the Covenant affords. The obligations under Article 16 were not subject to the condition that the Council must have taken a decision as to who was the aggressor. Similarly, it seemed absurd to claim that Members of the League which considered that common action was possible should abstain from carrying out the obligations under Article 16 for the sole reason that unanimity had not been obtained in the Council. Such a condition was too rigid. There might be on the Council, besides the aggressor State, another State secretly allied with it or not sufficiently alive

to its obligations as a Member of the League. In theory, there might perhaps be an extension of intervention; in practice the likelihood of intervention would be reduced. The Council had means for achieving unanimity by adopting provisional measures and avoiding in public defections which, obviously, were more likely to occur at secret meetings. In the hypothetical case of the League failing in its mission so completely that no common action was possible, the whole social edifice would naturally collapse and individual undertakings would undergo the same fate. Just as no constitution provided for revolution, so the Covenant could not be expected to provide for the contingency of defections outweighing allegiance.

The resolution adopted by the Assembly on this question reaffirmed the intention of inserting in the Covenant a general prohibition of recourse to war thus endorsing the resolutions approved by the 10th and 11th Assemblies.

System of Election to the Council

At the suggestion of the British delegation the Council was invited to appoint a Committee to inquire into the method of electing non-permanent Members to the Council. It was generally recognized that the existing allocation of non-permanent seats among more or less organized groups of powers had produced an unsatisfactory situation in which certain States were, for all practical purposes, excluded from election to the Council.

Jurisdiction of Permanent Court as Tribunal of Appeal

All the delegates who took part in the discussion approved in principle the Finnish proposal to confer on the Permanent Court of International Justice jurisdiction as a court of appeal in respect of alleged excess of jurisdiction by arbitral tribunals established by States. The Finnish Government had specified two possible grounds of appeal—when the tribunal had been incompetent to deal with the matter and when the tribunal had exceeded its powers. The Committee of Five Jurists which had examined the original proposal at the request of the Council had added a third ground—an essential flaw in procedure. Several delegations expressed their readiness in the First Committee to admit a fourth reason—a false application of the law. A great number, however, were against enumerating the causes which may render an award invalid. They thought it prudent to leave determination of the causes to be effected by successive judicial decisions. In so doing, of course, they exposed themselves to the criticism that the door would be left open to an indeterminate number of causes of invalidity.

The whole matter was referred to a Sub-Committee, which prepared a draft recommendation and a draft Protocol. These new texts formed the subject of an important discussion in the full Committee. The discussion showed that there was still uncertainty on many points, and it was therefore decided to adjourn the question for examination to a later assembly.

Revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court

Although the Protocol of September 14, 1929, concerning the Revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court, did not enter into force on the date originally contemplated, the Assembly last year accepted the view that it could subsequently come into force if the necessary ratifications were received.

At the time of the Twelfth Assembly thirty-eight Members of the League had ratified the Protocol. The ratification of Cuba was subject to reservations respecting the condition governing the entry into force of the Protocol and the establishment of the Court on a basis of permanent session. The other Governments concerned, having been invited to state whether they could accept these reservations, replied for the most part that they were unable to accept the reservation relative to the new text of Article 23 of the Court Statute.

In a spirit of conciliation, which the Assembly appreciated, the Cuban Government, through its representative on the First Committee, intimated that it contemplated the withdrawal of its reservation respecting the duration of the Court sessions and would invite the appropriate bodies to take the necessary steps to this end. The Committee took note of this declaration, recommended that States which have not yet ratified the Protocol should do so as soon as possible, and requested the Secretary-General to present to the Assembly, for consideration at its next session, a statement showing the ratifications received by that time.

General Conventions

The First Committee re-examined Part IV of the Resolution adopted by the Assembly on October 3, 1930, on the procedure to be followed in all cases in which States desired to conclude a convention under the auspices of the League. The Committee took account of the observations submitted by the Governments and by the technical organizations of the League. It also discussed what changes were required in the text in order to bring it into conformity, as far as possible, with the procedure proposed for the codification of international law.

As a result of this examination, the Committee adopted an amended text, which will be substituted for the text adopted in 1930.

Progressive Codification of International Law

The 1930 Assembly expressed its conviction that the codification of international law initiated in 1924 should continue, subject, however, to some revision of methods. This revision of methods was effected by the First Committee of the 1931 Assembly.

After a general discussion, the Committee decided to adopt and recommend to the Assembly, with minor modifications, a resolution submitted by the delegations of Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Japan, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. This resolution provides that a proposal of any subject for codification by international convention presented by the Government of a Member of the League or non-Member State should, in the first instance, be referred to the Assembly for consideration. The Assembly, if it considered the matter *prima facie* suitable for codification, would refer it to a Committee of Experts to be constituted by the Council, which would prepare a draft Convention and a report to be submitted through the Council to a subsequent Assembly. If this further Assembly, after considering the draft convention and the report of the experts, decided that the subject should be provisionally retained as a matter for codification, the Secretary-General would then submit the draft Convention and report to the Governments for their comments; and on receipt of replies from the Governments a subsequent Assembly would take a final decision as to the convocation of a Codification Conference. In the event of the Committee of Experts desiring to amend their draft Convention in the light of the comments of Governments, there is to be a second consultation of Governments on the revised draft before the Assembly takes its final decision.

The First Committee also made two recommendations endorsing the views expressed by the Codification Conference of 1930. The first is designed to secure the collaboration of international and national scientific institutes with the League in the future work of codification. The second suggests that the work of codification undertaken by the League of Nations should be carried on in concert with that of the international conferences of American States.

Nationality of Women

On the proposal of the representative of Guatemala, the Council had placed on the agenda of the Assembly the question of the nationality of women,

and had made the necessary arrangements for the consultation of certain international women's organizations.

The main point to be decided was whether the League should re-open the inquiry into the question of the nationality of women or whether the results of the 1930 Conference on Codification should be taken as the maximum at present realizable by international agreement.

The First Committee, after examining the report of the Secretary-General and the proposals of the Committee of Representatives of Women's International Organizations, considered that neither the Assembly nor itself could, at the present stage, express any opinion as to the merits of the question.

The resolution which the Committee presented to the Assembly on this subject had for its object the preparation of the ground for consideration of the question by the Assembly at its next session. To this end it was proposed that the Council should transmit to the Governments the documents which were officially placed before the Assembly by decision of the Council, the letter of the International Union of Leagues of Catholic Women of August 19, 1931, together with the Minutes of the discussions in the First Committee. The Governments will be asked to submit their observations on the whole matter, including their views regarding the Hague Nationality Convention of April 12, 1930. It was further proposed that the Assembly should receive and consider any observations which the Committee of Representatives of Women's International Organizations might wish to put forward.

SECOND COMMITTEE

(Technical Organizations)

Economic Problems

The discussions in the Second Committee were devoted to the prevailing economic depression.

The report of the Committee, prepared by M. Rollin (France), recognized first of all, the necessity for international economic co-operation along the lines laid down by the World Economic Conference of 1927. It emphasized the part played in the depression by the psychological factor of confidence. Lack of confidence tended to paralyse all forms and retard all phases of economic life. It meant not only reluctance to lend, but also refusal to enter into long-term undertakings. The result was the postponement of programs already decided upon, the limitation of the purchase of raw materials to daily requirements, the dismissal of workers, excessive caution instead of productive activity, stagnation instead of progress. This truth should be brought home to all Governments, Governments should teach it to their peoples.

Translating this general prescription into concrete terms, the Committee urged that States should conform to the principles embodied in the Commercial Convention of March, 1930, thereby avoiding an element of instability in commercial relations.

Approval, however, was not given blindly. While welcoming the fact, for instance, that Europe was endeavouring to bring about the restoration of her economic situation, the Second Committee did not fail to consider the repercussions such effort might have on other continents. With regard to preference for Danubian wheat, in particular, a lengthy discussion arose. A number of delegations requested the Assembly to express approval of such preference. Others, while not wishing to oppose directly the carrying out of the plan suggested, objected to the League of Nations endorsing it. The former affirmed,

on the one hand, that they had no wish to infringe the most-favoured-nation principle, their efforts being directed solely towards securing a temporary and limited exception, which they claimed was urgently necessary.

The latter replied, on the other hand, that there were enough forces at work encouraging discrimination without the League lending a hand. The League must seek ever to secure equal rights for all and special privileges for none. It would be most unfortunate that the first efforts of that institution to help agriculture should be such as would divide agriculturists instead of uniting them. Further, security for the European food supply came from the overseas surplus-producing countries. The policy of discouraging overseas production might easily destroy such security.

As a result of this diversity of opinion, the Second Committee thought it preferable not to commit itself on the matter of preference for European-grown cereals. It decided simply to take note of the report drawn up by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

Similarly, when asked to implement the recommendation of the Commission for European Union that the possibility of extending preference to agricultural products other than cereals, such as tobacco, raisins, etc., should be considered, the Second Committee observed that the proposed extension had equally given rise to anxiety on the part of certain delegations.

Again, if the Committee agreed with the Economic Conference of 1927 and the Commission for European Union that the development of international agreements might reduce the risk of over-production and exercise a beneficial influence on the organization of industry, agriculture and trade, it took great care to point out that these agreements might, on the other hand, involve certain dangers. They might tend, for instance, to create monopolies and crystallize unsatisfactory existing conditions. The Committee therefore urged that the interests of consumers should not be disregarded nor States be left without means of protecting themselves against an influence which might become too powerful. Any combine should be able to improve its processes and give the economic life of the various countries legitimate scope for expansion.

In the discussion the following commodities were mentioned as being likely to fulfil most satisfactorily the conditions for the purpose of cartelization: cereals, wine, cork, hemp, coal, wood, paper, artificial silk, leather, hides and skins, electrical material, motor cars and chemical products.

The labour aspect of the crisis was not overlooked. The Committee thought it desirable, in order to lessen unemployment, to contemplate the execution, in the immediate future and on an international scale, of large public works. The problem, it noted, had already been approached by the Commission for European Union, and the competent organs of the League were dealing with it. The Assembly was invited to take the necessary steps with a view to examining the various programs submitted to it.

Realising the connection between economic policy and peace, the Committee expressed the view that the study of economic tendencies liable to influence world peace initiated by the Economic Conference of 1927 should be pursued, account being taken of the Soviet proposal for a Pact of Economic Non-Aggression.

As regards the proposals put forward in the Committee regarding the closer co-operation of national economic councils in the work of the League, the Committee noted a suggestion that this aim might be achieved by a suitable modification of the existing Economic Consultative Committee.

The Second Committee also approved the final draft of a Convention for the regulation of whaling. This Convention was immediately signed by South Africa, Australia, Canada, Great Britain, France, India, New Zealand and Norway. The entry into force of the Convention is subject to the ratification

or accession of eight countries, including Norway and Great Britain. It may be revised at the request of two contracting parties and on the Council's decision. The main object of the Convention is to secure the adoption by the greatest possible number of countries of certain rules intended to prevent the destruction of a source of wealth available to all. The Convention applies to all the waters of the world, including both the high seas and territorial waters. This does not imply any restriction of the sovereign rights of States within the territorial waters, for which they may enact any provision they consider useful. Each contracting party will take the appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the Convention and the punishment of infractions by its nationals and by vessels flying its flag.

Financial Problems

The financial collapse which threatened to follow the economic crash and cause a breakdown of currencies could not be regarded with equanimity by the Second Committee. It hastened to consider the remedial action which the circumstances required.

The crisis, it was suggested in a remarkable speech by Sir Arthur Salter, was due to a gap in the balance of payments between creditor and debtor countries which was not being bridged by continuous credits. Debtor countries were in danger of being unable to meet their obligations in any of the possible ways—in goods and services, in gold, or out of the proceeds of new loans or investments.

The gap in the balance of payments was estimated at some two thousand millions of dollars and ascribed to four causes acting jointly. Firstly, much of the international debt represented no corresponding productive investment yielding an annual return. A part represented damage done and expenditure incurred in a past war; a substantial further part represented money recklessly devoted to unproductive work.

Secondly, the fall in world prices had increased the real burden of the debt. The prices of the main products of most of the debtor countries—agricultural products and raw materials—had fallen further and faster than the general level of prices.

Thirdly, the flow of investment from creditor to debtor countries had been abruptly arrested in the autumn of 1929 when the speculative boom suddenly collapsed and the investor switched from excessive rashness to extreme prudence. Debtors had thus been forced to part with their gold and to borrow on short term. Both of these expedients had since been exhausted.

Fourthly, the disequilibrium in the balance of payments, instead of being corrected by the gold standard, was only registered by it in the form of a maldistribution of gold. This maldistribution had resulted in one-third of the world's monetary gold being in a form that prevented it from having its normal effect on prices.

After reviewing the causes of the disequilibrium in the international balance of payments, the Committee considered the possibilities of remedying it. Not much could be done, it was observed, by further movements of gold, since all the gold in the debtor territories amounted to some 2,500 millions of dollars, the amount required to bridge the gap in a single year, and the great bulk of this gold was legally affected as the cover of national currencies.

What remained? Debtor countries could, to some degree, improve their foreign trade balances, but this could be done in time only by drastic reduction of their imports. This reduction would mean a still further lowering of the standard of life in debtor nations, a further fall in world prices and progressive stagnation of international trade.

If banks were to put fresh money into circulation in the creditor countries by buying securities until prices rose and until the balance of trade were in favour of the debtor countries, the discrepancy would be reduced. This method might entail, however, some danger of the credit putting up stock-exchange values unduly instead of raising commodity prices.

The gap could be reduced by a reduction in Reparations and Allied Debts, but the sum of these debts amounted only to a little more than four hundred million dollars or one-fifth of the total gap.

Whatever was done in these and other ways, the greater part of the gap would still remain to be bridged. And it could only be bridged by means of loans and credits from countries in a position to export capital. The Committee came therefore to the question of how international investment could be resumed.

Before any appeal was made for new credits, it was urged, a check would have to be put on the withdrawal of existing short-term credits. The financial crisis had been precipitated by the run on these credits in Germany. Afterwards conditions would have to be created on which new lending and investment, particularly on a long term basis, would be possible. These conditions were a restoration of confidence by the improvement of political relations, and an early settlement of governmental debts on a basis within the capacity of the debtor.

If confidence could not be sufficiently restored by these methods to attract the investing public, a remaining means existed in the governmental resources of creditor countries being made available as security for loans to debtor countries. Of course, the governments of the creditor countries would act as guarantors of such loans only if a prolonged atmosphere of peace were to prevail and if there were guarantees that the countries benefiting from the arrangement would not use their credits in order to relax their internal financial discipline or to allow themselves the luxury of foreign investment. With a view to the success of these loans, the Committee recommended that the Assembly should urge governments to do all in their power to promote international understanding and such domestic, social and political conditions as would facilitate the movement of capital.

The Committee welcomed the proposed extension both in scope and in method of the League's work in helping and guiding loan schemes. The League must not only reinforce the reconstruction already undertaken of Austria, Hungary and some other countries; wherever emergency aid or advice was required, the League must be prepared and equipped to give it. The necessary resources for this purpose must be put at its disposal.

The Second Committee further welcomed the fact that the League was now authorized to give help to schemes not only of reconstruction of public finances but of economic development as well. It expressed its appreciation of the work already done in that direction, noting with special satisfaction the Convention for setting up an International Agricultural Mortgage Credit Company.

The Committee requested the competent organs of the League to consider, with the assistance of the author, another proposal, submitted by M. Francqui (Belgium), to establish an institution for long- and medium-term credits, and, in the event of any practical scheme being recommended under the auspices of the League, to ensure that, as requested by overseas representatives, it would be open for all countries to participate on an equal footing.

With regard to this question of international loans, several delegates urged one point very strongly indeed. This point was that it will be just as important in the future to discourage borrowing for wrong purposes as it is to help borrowing for purposes that are in the public interest. In this connection it was suggested that the Financial Committee should draw up and publish the principles which should govern public borrowing and that the principal financial

markets should see that the investing public was not tempted to lend for purposes that were inconsistent with such principles. A second point which was equally emphasized was that if creditor countries were asked to restore credit for productive purposes it was first necessary to liquidate losses arising from credit inflation and to exercise the spirit of inflation itself. A third point was that great care should be taken that the production of additional goods with the borrowed money would not cause a greater slump in prices than has actually occurred.

These considerations, the British delegation pointed out, apply to emergency measures that might be concerted in the immediate future. But need for removing the causes of the recent financial crisis and preventing its early recurrence is fundamental in character. In this connection, the question of the gold standard was of primary importance and it would have to be dealt with by a Conference with very wide instructions. The Gold Delegation of the Financial Committee should accordingly present its final report with its practical conclusions as soon as possible, and the enquiry into the present depression conducted by the Financial Section should be continued and directed to that end.

The Second Committee approved the proposal that the study of the course and phases of the economic depression should be continued, but the idea of calling a conference for the purpose of bringing about a redistribution of the world's supply of monetary gold was opposed by the French delegation and omitted, on its recommendation, from the report of the Committee to the Assembly.

Lastly, the Committee briefly referred to the immense value of the work of research, classification and analysis of financial and economic facts which has been built up in these last ten years by the Secretariat of the League of Nations and of which the valuable study just circulated on "The Course and Phases of the World Economic Depression" is the latest example.

Communications and Transit

The Second Committee took note of the work undertaken by the Organization for Communications and Transit since the last Assembly and in particular of the success achieved by the conference for the unification of buoyage and lighting of coasts, the conference for the unification of river law and the conference on road traffic.

The conference for the unification of buoyage adopted an agreement concerning maritime signals, an agreement concerning manned lightships not on their stations, and a number of recommendations on buoyage regulations. On buoyage, the Conference could not draw up a convention. Nevertheless progress was made in the preparatory work, and, in the Second Committee of the Assembly, the British delegates announced that their Government were now preparing fresh proposals which would promote a solution as universal as possible of the question.

The conference for the unification of river law adopted a convention concerning collisions in inland navigation; a convention on the registration of inland-navigation vessels and on rights *in rem* over such vessels; and a convention on the administrative measures to attest nationality of vessels employed in inland navigation. The first two conventions in particular were signed by representatives of the majority of the Governments concerned.

In regard to river navigation, the Transit Organization has also been able to undertake the study of social questions, particularly of questions relating to conditions of employment. The Second Committee in its report to the Assembly expressed the hope that the studies on which the experts are now engaged will enable concrete proposals to be drawn up on this subject.

The conference on road traffic adopted a convention on the unification of road signalling, and a convention and an agreement intended to do away with certain formalities and charges to which motor tourist traffic is at present liable. The conference also had before it a draft convention on international commercial motor transport. Owing to the great and steady growth of commercial motor traffic in the past few years, a great many delegations considered themselves unable to form a correct idea of the legal consequences of a convention on this subject, and the conference decided that it would be better to hold over for a later conference such solutions as it might be desirable to adopt internationally, after the further necessary enquiries into the legislation of the various countries had been completed.

The Second Committee, in its report, briefly referred to the work carried out by the Transit Organization with regard to the preparation of the Fourth General Conference on Communications which was to meet on October 12. This Conference was to examine, *inter alia*, the expediency from an economic and social standpoint of fixing movable feasts and reforming the calendar.

The Transit Committee had felt unable to deal with the question of the transport of agricultural products, to which its attention had been drawn by the Conference for Concerted Economic Action, until the policy of co-operation between agricultural countries was sufficiently fixed. The Second Committee, however, was of the opinion that, pending such time, certain aspects might already be considered, for instance, the reduction of railway tariffs and Customs dues on agricultural products. The International Institute of Agriculture was prepared to give the Transit Organization the benefit of its collaboration and documentation.

The Second Committee noted with satisfaction that the Transit Organization, which had at first been obliged to attach special importance to questions of principle relating to the legal settlement of international difficulties in respect of communications, was now co-operating more and more in the work of economic reconstruction and was "placing an impartial service for the study of the great economic and technical questions of communications and public works at the disposal of all nations." The Second Committee expressed its appreciation, in particular, of the co-operation recently established with the National Government of China for the study of questions of public works. Likewise the Committee expressed its confidence that the Transit Organization will endeavour to take suitable steps to comply with requests for advice which it may receive from Governments, such as the requests for advice in respect of public works referred to in the report of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

Health

The work of the Health Organization was reviewed by the Second Committee, which noted that this work is becoming more and more systematized and is being extended to an ever-growing number of countries in all continents.

The Health Organization has co-operated during the past year with (1) the Czechoslovak Ministry of Public Health and Physical Education, with a view to survey of health conditions in certain districts; (2) the Greek Government in the creation of a health centre; (3) the Bulgarian Government in the campaign against endemic syphilis; (4) the Roumanian Government in organizing an enquiry into the causes and prevention of infant mortality; (5) the Liberian Government in studying the problems raised by Liberia's request to the League for assistance; (6) the Bolivian Government in the training of a certain number of public health officers, in a study of disease conditions in certain tropical and sub-tropical regions, and by advising the Government on a plan of re-organization; (7) the Argentine, Brazilian, Chilean and Uruguayan Governments in organizing enquiries regarding infant mortality; (8) the

Uruguayan Government in organizing a conference on different methods for the serological diagnosis of syphilis; (9) the Brazilian Government in the creation of an international leprosy research centre at Rio de Janeiro; (10) the Chinese Government in the organization of a central field health station at Nanking, the constitution of a national hospital, also at Nanking, the re-organization of the health services and of the quarantine services, and a program of teaching.

The Second Committee noted with interest the results of comparative studies of immunization against diphtheria and scarlet-fever undertaken in several countries; of the progress made by the Permanent Commission on Standardization, which achieved particularly important results both from the scientific point of view and for the testing of the innumerable preparations on the market; of the studies made by the Malaria Commission, which have led to the definition of a standard product of the total alkaloids of cinchona, approximately as efficacious as quinine.

Reviewing the results of the European Rural Hygiene Conference, the Second Committee expressed the hope that the work undertaken in this field would be extended, so that the rural population of all countries might benefit by it in the near future.

Spontaneous unanimity was displayed in the discussion regarding China, whose people have been the victims of an appalling flood. A resolution described the danger of the spread of epidemics and loss of life in the Yangtse Valley as a humanitarian problem of the first magnitude and a matter of international concern, recalled the assistance rendered in similar circumstances by the Health Organization in Poland and Greece, invited all States to respond, as far as lay in their power, to any request for measures of relief in co-operation with the League, and requested the Council to take the necessary steps to render such co-operation effective.

THIRD COMMITTEE

(Reduction of Armaments)

Armaments Truce

In the course of the general debate in the plenary sessions of the Assembly five ex-neutral States had submitted a draft resolution inviting the Council to urge the Governments convened to the Disarmament Conference to abstain, pending its result, from increasing the present level of their armaments.

The Third Committee, to which the draft resolution was referred, proposed that Governments not represented in the Assembly, but invited to the Conference, should take part in the discussion. Accordingly, the President of the Assembly invited the following States to be represented: Afghanistan, Argentine, Brazil, Costa Rica, Egypt, Ecuador, Salvador, Turkey, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, and the United States of America.

The following States accepted the invitation: Costa Rica, Egypt, the United States of America, Turkey, and Brazil, the last named being represented by an observer. The Government of the Soviet Union stated that, in view of the short notice, it was unable to send a delegate, but explained that it would be disposed to associate itself with a scheme for an armaments truce, provided it were adopted in a form obligatory for all countries and covering all classes of armaments.

The idea of an armaments truce met with general assent, but opinion was divided as to methods of giving practical application to the principle.

After two days' debate, the Italian representative, in support of his contention that the scheme put forward by the ex-neutral States was inadequate presented one of his own. The Italian proposal was that each Government should undertake for a period of one year dating from November 1st, 1931:—

(a) Not to increase the expenditure on *land forces* already authorized for the current financial year, and not to exceed the total of such expenditure during the next financial year until the expiry of the truce;

(b) Not to place any *warship* on the stocks, provided always that vessels under construction might be continued and completed;

(c) To suspend the construction of additional military *aircraft*, except to replace machines which are placed out of commission during the truce.

The Italian proposal contained a more precise idea than the neutral Powers' resolution. Its greater precision consisted in transforming the proposed recommendation by the Council into a definite declaration by the Governments, and in giving definite form to the limitation to be carried out in regard to the three kinds of armaments—air, land and sea.

In the ensuing discussion it became clear that some preferred the recommendation, while others preferred the declaration. Some desired a general form of obligation and others a precise and technical form of limitation.

The Canadian delegate, Senator Beaubien, endorsed the principle incorporated in the resolution of the five neutral states and the declaration proposed by Italy. In the circumstances, Canada was not committed to either of the proposed methods of effecting the suggested truce, but deeply concerned in disarmament, she was willing and anxious to help to its conclusion by all means at her disposal. "If the nations failed to stop the progressive increase of armaments," he asked, "how could reduction be envisaged as a possibility at the impending Disarmament Conference?"

Canada was very deeply concerned in this most vital problem of the League. Petitions already covered by hundreds of thousands of signatures actually were being circulated throughout Canada, requesting a limitation and reduction of armaments. These petitions would be presented to the Disarmament Conference.

The Committee strove to combine the advantages of the different proposals. This method proved successful, for, on September 28th, the Third Committee adopted unanimously a compromise text which the following day received similar approval from the Assembly.

The resolution adopted incorporates the idea of a truce—a truce in armaments for a period of one year—and the idea of a moral undertaking, to which all States will be invited to subscribe. The formula is sufficiently elastic to allow States to adapt these ideas to their own individual practice.

Certain delegates made a point of stating explicitly that they did not regard the normal carrying out of legal enactments relating to effectives, the regular execution of programs for the upkeep and renewal of land, naval, or air material, or fortifications and the constitution of the corresponding stocks as incompatible with their undertaking to accept a truce in armaments.

Improvement of Means of Preventing War

The Third Committee succeeded in establishing the final text of a Convention to improve the means of preventing war which are placed at the Council's disposal by the Covenant of the League of Nations.

In virtue of Article 11 of the Covenant, in the case of threat of war, the Council may take conservatory measures, but it can only take them by a unanimous vote of its members, and subject to the agreement of the parties to the dispute. While this condition of unanimity obviates the risk of a

refractory State defying the Council, it may, in given circumstances, result in the atrophy of the Council's authority. It possesses the drawback, moreover, that it depends on the goodwill of the parties.

It is this drawback that the Convention is designed to remedy. The States accepting the Convention undertake voluntarily in advance to comply with the unanimous recommendations of the Council acting in virtue of the provisions of Article 11 of the Covenant.

The idea of such a previous undertaking originated in 1928, when, at the suggestion of Germany, the Committee on Arbitration and Security prepared a draft treaty that might serve as a model for bilateral engagements. This was approved by the Assembly which expressed the hope that it might be taken as a basis by States desirous of negotiating regional agreements. In 1929, on the proposal of Great Britain, the Assembly instructed the Committee to examine the possibility of transforming this model treaty into a general convention. In 1930, the Committee submitted to the Assembly a preliminary draft which, on essential points, contained two alternative texts. The Assembly succeeded in reconciling various points of view, but found it impossible to reach an agreement on the draft as a whole. For that reason a Special Committee was appointed in 1930 to reconsider the question. The Committee succeeded in framing a single text, and it was this text that the Third Committee of the Twelfth Assembly had before it and to which, with certain amendments, it gave its approval.

The most important of these amendments consists in separating more clearly the provisions relating to a threat of war from those relating to incidents whose nature it is more difficult to define *a priori*. This amendment met the Polish delegation's objection that the original text might imply that all cases of invasion would *a priori* be regarded as mere threats of war, when treaties already existed which considered invasions as acts of war. A Convention designed to prevent war could not be applicable when war had broken out. For that case, other measures and sanctions were provided by the Covenant.

The question of the moment at which war actually breaks out of course gives rise to difficulties of a theoretical and practical nature. It did not seem to the Third Committee that any more valuable guide in this important matter could be given than the Brouckere report to the Council (1926) defining the conditions which may be regarded as establishing "resort to war."

Another amendment specifies that there shall be equivalent treatment for land, naval and air forces as regards both preventive measures of the first class (evacuation) and measures of the second class (fixing of lines not to be passed by troops). As States regard their territorial waters as part of their territory, those waters must be evacuated by any forces that may have entered them or may be flying over them, just as the territory itself must be evacuated.

Certain doubts were expressed as to the possibility of ensuring in practice equality of treatment between air forces and the other forces, as regards measures of the first category, since the mobility of aircraft renders it easy to fly back over foreign territory during or after evacuation. In this connection, the Third Committee calls attention in its report to the provision according to which the contracting parties agree to give strict orders to the commanders of their forces, if the Council so recommends, to take all necessary precautions to avoid incidents. It is obvious that the latter provision will enable the Council to recommend particularly that the order not to fly over the territory or territorial waters of one party should be given to the air forces of the other party. Moreover, any raids by aircraft would, like those by land or sea forces, if necessary be verified or reported to the Council by the Commissioners which it had sent to the spot.

It is understood that the State whose territory has been invaded will not be required to withdraw its forces behind the lines fixed by the Council until its territory has been completely evacuated by the alien forces.

Certain delegations recommended the generalization of the system of permanent demilitarized zones, but the Committee considered that such generalization might be brought about by way of bilateral agreements and not by a general convention.

The Polish delegation desired that the Convention should have included a clause specifying that in the event of the violation of an international obligation concerning the state of a contracting party's armaments, the Council should invite the party concerned to restore the situation in accordance with the said obligation. The Third Committee considered that the question did not come within the scope of the Convention, and the Polish delegation reserved its right to submit the matter to the Disarmament Conference.

The Third Committee unanimously accepted the text of the Article proposed by the Special Committee for the supervision by Commissions of the execution of measures of a military character prescribed by the Council. It was understood that the Commissioners might not make a more extensive inspection than would be necessary to verify the withdrawal of the forces, works or military establishments. In no case could they inspect naval or air bases.

The rules to be followed for the composition and working of Commissions of inspection will be embodied in executive regulations which will be prepared by the competent organs of the League of Nations so as to enter into force at the same time as the Convention.

As regards sanctions, the Third Committee succeeded in achieving unanimity, the Netherlands delegation having renounced the reservation which it had asked to have inserted in the report of the Special Committee. The contracting parties will consider that the violation by another contracting party of the supplementary obligations which it has freely entered into under Articles 2 and 3 of this Convention constitutes *prima facie* evidence, if war breaks out, that the said party has resorted to war within the meaning of Article 16 of the Covenant. It is understood that this is only *prima facie* evidence, which does not preclude proof to the contrary.

A provision was added to the effect that parties to the Convention undertook to ensure by means at their disposal such publicity as the Council might think fit for its proceedings, decisions and recommendations. This clause is aimed at preventing public opinion as far as possible from receiving inaccurate, incomplete or biased information.

At the request of the British delegation, a clause was added indicating that the measures contemplated in the Convention would not affect the right of free passage through the Suez Canal provided for in the Convention of 1888.

The Convention will remain open for signature until February 2, 1932, the date of the meeting of the Disarmament Conference. After that date any State may accede to it. For its entry into force ten ratifications or accessions will be necessary.

A proposal was put forward to insert a clause making the entry into force of the Convention conditional, apart from the number of ratifications or accessions provided for, on a declaration by the Council accepting the responsibilities laid upon it by the Convention. After consideration, it was thought that such a declaration was superfluous; the Convention having been approved by the Assembly, it was recognized that the Council would have to apply its provisions.

The draft general Convention was unanimously adopted by the Assembly and signed at once by Austria, Colombia, Spain, Greece, Lithuania, Norway and Uruguay.

Co-operation of Women and of the Press in the Organization of Peace

The co-operation of women and of the press in the organization of peace was discussed by the Third Committee on the basis of draft resolutions submitted by the delegations of Spain, Sweden and Poland. The sponsors of the resolutions explained that, in their opinion, an effort was required to ensure that the work of maintaining peace was carried out in a good moral atmosphere, and that two of the most important factors in the creation of this atmosphere were, in their view, the action of women and the action of the press.

As regards women, the Committee did not deal with the question of admitting women to positions either in the League or connected therewith, this question having already been settled by Article 7 of the Covenant. Nor did the Committee raise the question of the composition of delegations taking part in the various conferences and committees of the League of Nations, as this was a question within the competence of each individual Government. It was only concerned on this occasion with the unofficial co-operation of women in the maintenance of good understanding between nations. With these considerations in mind, the Committee adopted a resolution requesting the Council to examine the means whereby such co-operation could be promoted and intensified.

As regards the press, the Committee considered that the problem of the spread of false news presented only one aspect, although a very important one, of the general question of moral disarmament, which is dealt with in detail in a memorandum drawn up by the Polish Government for the use of the delegations to the Disarmament Conference. It accordingly confined itself for the time being to proposing that the Assembly should bring this problem to the notice of the Council which, if it thinks fit, will examine with the help of experts the possibility of ensuring that press information shall be as impartial and complete as possible.

The Committee noted with satisfaction a statement by the delegate of Denmark that his Government would welcome to Copenhagen the heads of official press bureaux and thus give them an opportunity of discussing means of establishing a regular liaison between them, which might, to some extent, promote the objects in question. It, nevertheless, expressed the view that the examination of this problem should not be confined to a meeting of representatives of official press bureaux, but should be supplemented by a consultation of those newspaper groups which could give valuable advice on the subject.

*Communications of Importance to the League of Nations at times of
Emergency*

The Third Committee noted that the information communicated by the Secretariat indicated that the regime which the Eleventh Assembly desired to apply to aircraft and motor vehicles effecting transport of importance to the working of the League at times of emergency could be put into operation immediately.

The Committee also noted with satisfaction that the wireless station was expected to be in operation at the latest by the beginning of 1932.

A technical report concerning the layout of an aerodrome near the seat of the League which would be of service to the League at times of emergency, had been submitted to the Third Committee. While the technical examination of the question appears to be concluded, some administrative problems affecting the Swiss Federal Government and the Secretariat of the League have not yet been settled. In these circumstances the Third Committee considered that the discussion of this question should be postponed until the next session of the Assembly, in order that the Assembly might be in possession of all the information required for its decision.

FOURTH COMMITTEE
(Budget and Financial Questions)

The Budget for 1932

The general discussion on the budget was particularly thorough and detailed. More than thirty members spoke, and all except the Spanish and Lithuanian delegates emphasised the necessity of economy, laying special stress on the fact that, at a time when each State was making every effort to reduce public expenditure, the League should adopt the same policy.

It was generally recognized that the increase in the budget of the League was due to appropriations voted for the Disarmament Conference in 1932, and that these appropriations should not be affected by any measures of economy that might be taken. Further, it was agreed that the proposed economies should not interfere with the essential work of the League, which, in 1932, would have to concentrate its efforts on disarmament and the problems presented by the economic depression.

The draft budget was referred back to the Supervisory Commission who made a detailed study of every item of the budget and then submitted to the Fourth Committee proposals providing for a reduction of 2,604,999 gold francs from the first estimate of expenditure.

The Commission's report made it clear that the proposed reductions were not to be regarded as implying that the estimates for expenditure entered in the original budget were superfluous or extravagant. The revised budget was designed to meet the abnormal conditions which had developed, and provided, in many cases, for the postponement of work rather than for its abandonment.

As regards conferences and meetings, the Commission was guided by the following principle: Whenever a meeting originally fixed for 1932 could, without serious inconvenience, be postponed to a subsequent year, the credits provided should be suspended. Similarly, when credits had been appropriated for two or more meetings of a committee during the year, it should in many cases be possible to re-arrange the schedule of meetings with a view to reducing expenses. In other cases, it was agreed to reduce the length of the session and the number of experts, etc., to be invited to take part in it. All committee minutes, except those of the Assembly, the European Union Commission and the Permanent Mandates Commission, should be discontinued.

When unanimously approving the Supervisory Commission's report, the Fourth Committee thought it advisable to examine chapter by chapter the budget as modified. During this discussion, interesting suggestions were made by several speakers, some of which will be followed, the Secretary-General or the Chairman of the Supervisory Commission having declared themselves in their favour. The latter stated, for example, that the Supervisory Commission proposed to consider, before the next Assembly, the question of the League's branch offices in certain cities other than Geneva. Further, the Secretary-General agreed to a proposal that a clause should in future be embodied in the contracts of the staff to the effect that salaries might be varied by decision of the Assembly.

The budget as voted amounts to a total of 33,687,994 gold francs or a little under seven million dollars (as against 31,637,501 gold francs in 1931), subdivided as follows:

	Gold Francs
Secretariat and special organisations	19,174,317
International Labour Organisation	8,792,290
Permanent Court of International Justice	2,663,702
Nansen International Office for Refugees	297,763
Buildings at Geneva	1,148,899
Pensions	1,011,023

The net contribution of Canada for 1932 is 1,143,353.80 gold francs or 220,613.94 gold dollars (as compared with 1,062,867.99 gold francs or approximately 205,000 gold dollars in 1931).

Construction of the New Buildings

The question of the new League buildings was considered by the Fourth Committee, which noted that the estimates were steadily on the increase. In 1927, the Assembly agreed that the sum to be expended should be approximately 19,500,000 francs. In 1930, the total estimates for the Assembly Hall, the Secretariat buildings, and external work amounted to 23,633,150 francs, with a margin of 759,553 francs for unforeseen expenditure. The cost of the new library buildings, which is to be met out of the Rockefeller grant, was estimated at 4,250,000 francs. In 1931, the estimates showed a new increase of 2,771,845 francs for the Assembly Hall and the Secretariat, the estimate for the Library remaining unchanged. The revised estimates included no margin for unforeseen expenditure, and contemplated certain economies which were impracticable. When the architects were invited to submit a revised calculation they furnished a new estimate of 29,925,494 francs.

Seriously concerned at these increasing estimates, the Fourth Committee declared that it was resolved in principle to keep within the estimates adopted in 1930, and recommended to the Assembly that the Supervisory Commission should be instructed to submit to the Council as soon as possible a program complying under the best possible conditions with the decisions taken, without excluding the possibility of reconsidering the contract concluded with the architects.

Allocation of Expenses

In 1928 the Committee on Allocation of Expenses was instructed by the Council to submit to the 1932 Assembly a revised scale of contributions of States Members. In view of the present economic situation, however, the Committee came to the conclusion at the beginning of 1931 that it would be extremely difficult to draw up a new scale with permanent scientific value. It therefore considered that the question should be deferred until 1934.

In the Fourth Committee delegates of several States emphasized the disadvantages which would result for their countries from an adjournment. Agreement was, however, reached on the proposal of the Committee on Allocation.

Re-organisation of the Secretariat

In 1930, the Assembly appointed a Committee of thirteen members to consider such questions as the possible abolition of the posts of Under-Secretary-General; the salaries and conditions of engagement of the Secretary-General, the Directors, the Treasurer and the Chiefs of Section. The Committee of Thirteen submitted a report, the main conclusions of which were adopted by the Fourth Committee.

As regards the first point, it was agreed that the existing organization of the higher staff should be retained for the present, and that, in three years' time at latest, the Council and the Assembly should consider the question afresh.

The Fourth Committee also adopted the suggestions of the Committee of Thirteen with regard to the term of office of the Secretary-General (which should not exceed ten years), and the Under-Secretaries-General (which should not exceed seven years), the entertainment allowances granted these officials, and the salaries of directors. It decided to give the Treasurer the rank of Director, it being understood that he would receive no increase in salary for 1932.

As regards the Registrar of the Permanent Court of International Justice, some discussion took place on the application of Article 32 of the Statute

of the Court, which states that the salary of the Registrar shall be decided by the Council upon the proposal of the Court. Some delegates and the Chairman of the Supervisory Commission, while recognizing with the Committee of Thirteen that this provision is not open to objection, maintained that it does not invalidate the sovereign right of the Assembly on budgetary matters. This right had, moreover, been recognised and respected by the Council. The Fourth Committee confirmed the above interpretation. At the meeting during which this question was taken up, the Registrar of the Court spontaneously renounced the amount entered in the supplementary budget for 1932, thus allowing the credit to be cancelled.

Moved by the same spirit of economy, the Committee postponed until next year its examination of the salaries of counsellors, the new scale of salaries applicable to the Chiefs of Section, and also the question of septennial leave for officials of the first division.

FIFTH COMMITTEE

(Social and Humanitarian Questions)

Penal Administration

The Council requested the Eleventh Assembly to consider in what way the League might co-operate with the International Prison Commission (Berne) and other interested organisations in their examination of the international aspects of prison administration. It was decided to ask Governments for their observations on a set of standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners drawn up by the Berne Commission. Certain organs of the League and certain international organisations were also consulted.

During the discussion in the Fifth Committee of the Twelfth Assembly, certain delegates suggested that the question of penal administration should be studied from the point of view of the progressive unification of penal law and international co-operation for the prevention and suppression of crime. It was also proposed that the Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People should be asked to study the whole matter. Other delegates, among them the Canadian, pointed out that the only question before the Fifth Committee was prison administration, and that the consultation which had taken place showed that further study by experts on this question would be necessary before any useful action could be taken.

It was finally decided to consult a number of international organisations, and then to ask the States Members whether they desired the League's assistance in regard to the larger questions mentioned above. The standard minimum rules are to be reconsidered by the Berne Commission in the light of the observations made on them, and the Governments will then be asked whether the League should set up a special committee to study the question of the treatment of prisoners, or should co-operate with the Berne Commission.

Child Welfare

The Fifth Committee took note with satisfaction of the preliminary work done on the principal questions recently studied by the Child Welfare Committee: the return to their homes of minors who are in a foreign country against the will of their parents or guardians, assistance to foreign minors, and the recognition and enforcement of maintenance orders abroad. A draft convention on the first question has been prepared and submitted to the Governments, to be used as a model for agreements that may be concluded. It was recognised that the second and third questions exceeded the competence of the Child

Welfare Committee, and the Council decided to set up a special committee to consider them. The Governments of the following States have been invited to nominate experts for this committee: Argentine, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland.

Several speakers pointed out the danger to adolescents, from the standpoints of health, education, and employment, constituted by the world economic depression, and emphasized the necessity of measures to counteract its effects, to prevent juvenile delinquency, and to deal adequately with the juvenile delinquent. The Fifth Committee expressed appreciation of the study of the juvenile court system now being carried on by the Child Welfare Committee, and recommended that countries where no such system exists should set up juvenile courts and associate women in their work.

Traffic in Women and Children

The Canadian Delegate (Mrs. H. P. Plumtre) was appointed Rapporteur for this question.

During the discussion, particular emphasis was laid on the necessity for international action to suppress this traffic, which is organized on an international basis, and on the opportunities afforded to its agents by the unemployment and economic distress existing at the present time.

The Fifth Committee noted with satisfaction that there were already 38 parties to the Convention of 1921 for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children, and expressed the hope that further ratifications would be registered in the near future.

For some years the Traffic in Women and Children Committee has been studying the measures taken against souteneurs. A summary of national legislation on this point has been prepared, and the Governments are being consulted as to the possibility of adding to the 1921 Convention a number of provisions dealing with this question. In this connection, it was pointed out that in Canada souteneurs may be punished by ten years' imprisonment, with the lash for a second offence. The question is to be studied further in order to ascertain, if possible, the results of the penalties, with special reference to the recurrent conviction of habitual offenders.

In presenting the Fifth Committee's Report to the Assembly, the Rapporteur said:—

“The work upon which the Fifth Committee has reported clearly demonstrates the importance of a central body, like the League, whose humanitarian operations are not confined within national barriers. The traffic in women and children is only one manifestation of a world-wide network of underground criminal activities in which are interwoven the illicit traffic in habit-forming drugs, the circulation of obscene publications of all kinds, the issuing of counterfeit money, and varied forms of smuggling. In all these activities the risks are great, but the potential gains are greater in the eyes of the dangerous criminals who are engaged in them. To make the risks greater than the rewards required the united efforts of the legislative, judicial and police forces of the world, supported by an informed and intelligent public opinion; and the abstention of Members of the League from the Conventions seriously weakens the international offensive against these criminals.

“In the discussions of the Fifth Committee, it was emphasized that the need for complete international co-operation against these evils—and especially the traffic in women and children—is particularly urgent at this time, when economic pressure and widespread unemployment are forcing many to seek new methods of earning money. Money is hard

to get; everyone has to work harder than usual to earn it; and, therefore, among others, the agents of this traffic will be particularly active and persistent. On the other hand, unemployment, with consequent suffering from cold and hunger, may predispose many women and girls to consider ways of earning money and to listen to proposals which, in easier times, would be utterly repulsive to them.

"We would, therefore, through this Assembly, respectfully urge all States Members of the League which have not already done so to accede to the various Conventions of the League; and, by implementing to the full the responsibilities which all signatories have undertaken, to do their share in safeguarding those who, hard pressed by poverty and discouragement, are in peculiar need of friendship and protection."

Traffic in Opium

The chief event of the past year in the League's campaign against the illicit traffic in narcotics was the adoption of a convention for limiting the manufacture and regulating the distribution of narcotic drugs. Many members of the Fifth Committee drew attention to the importance of this international agreement, and the Committee, in its Report to the Assembly, said: "The Convention marks an entirely new and highly important development in international co-operation, since this is the first time that an industry has been brought under international regulation, and that manufacture in its economic aspect has been wholly subordinated to higher humanitarian and moral aims." The Committee noted that the Convention had been signed by 36 States, and expressed the hope that it would soon be widely ratified.

Now that the question of limitation of manufacture has been dealt with by means of an international convention, the question of limiting the production of raw materials inevitably arises. The Committee therefore asked the competent organs of the League to undertake the preparatory work for a conference on the limitation of the production of opium and the cultivation and harvesting of the coca leaf.

While noting with satisfaction the results of the efforts made with a view to the suppression of the illicit traffic in narcotics, the Committee drew attention to the fact that quantities of narcotics greatly in excess of the medical and scientific requirements of the world are still being produced and circulated. It expressed the view that wider ratification of the 1925 Convention (to which there were already 47 parties), strict application of its provisions and of the administrative measures recommended by the Advisory Committee, and early ratification and enforcement of the 1931 Convention, would all contribute to the suppression of the illicit traffic.

SIXTH COMMITTEE

(Political Questions)

The Commission of Enquiry for European Union

The Sixth Committee had to examine the question of the constitution of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union and its methods of work; in particular it had to decide as to the advisability of continuing the Commission's work during the year 1932.

All the delegations agreed that the Commission's mandate should be renewed. The delegations also agreed that the general principles laid down by the Commission as regards its constitution were in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Assembly on September 17, 1930. These organic principles

may be summarized as follows: The Commission is a body of the League of Nations seeking to draw closer bonds of solidarity between the European States. It submits its reports to the Assembly every year. It has as its Secretary the Secretary-General of the League. The Commission can have recourse to the technical organs of the League. The extra-European States Members of the League have the right, if they so desire, to take part in the meetings in order to submit their observations. The Commission can further invite to share in its work the Governments of States which are not Members of the League.

To allay the criticisms advanced by several delegations against the Commission's methods of work, and particularly, against the number of committees and sub-committees it had set up, the Sixth Committee considered that the Commission for European Union not only could, but, as a general rule and apart from certain special cases which might arise, should have recourse to the technical organs of the League, and thus avoid overlapping.

The Sixth Committee also requested the Commission to refer directly to the League any problems which it might have examined, but which ought to be considered on a more elaborate scale than that involved by the continent of Europe alone.

Pact of Economic Non-Aggression

The proposal which was submitted by the Soviet Government to the European Commission with a view to drawing up a Pact of Economic Non-Aggression is one of the questions which overstep the frontiers of the European continent and should, according to the general rule, be treated by the League itself and by its technical organs. Nevertheless, for special reasons, which all the delegates finally accepted, the Sixth Committee was of opinion that the question of the Pact should be considered by a special committee which the European Commission had decided to appoint subject to the approval of the Assembly.

Since, however, this subject is of a world-wide character, the Sixth Committee proposed that the special committee should be extended to include the following non-European States: the United States of America, Australia, Canada, Chile, China, India, Japan and Uruguay.

Protection of Minorities

The League's work on the protection of minorities since the last Assembly was discussed by the Sixth Committee. The German representative gave a general analysis of the application of the system during the past year, and indicated the direction in which he desired it to develop. In his view, it would be advisable that minority committees of five Members of the Council should be constituted more frequently, that the committees should ask the petitioners more often for information and that means should be found for ensuring that the petitioners would be in a position to take note of the contents of the observations sent by the Governments concerned on the subject of their petitions, though that would not necessarily imply any recognition of their status as parties in a procedure in which both sides were to be heard. The speaker emphasized the importance of securing the publicity of the result of the examination of questions by minorities committees in the largest possible number of cases. He pointed out, in particular, that under the present system it was impossible to know in which cases the non-publication of these results was due to the fact that the committees did nothing in the matter, and in which cases the initiative of the committees did not meet with the approval of the Government concerned.

Speaking on behalf of Czechoslovakia, Greece, Poland, Roumania and Yugoslavia, the Roumanian delegate pointed out that these States had had an opportunity in 1930 to state their point of view on the question. They had

nothing to add to the declarations which were then made, it being understood that they were opposed to any extension of the Council resolution of June 13, 1929.

Senator Beaubien, the Canadian representative on the Sixth Committee, pointed out that the minority question was not an exclusively European one and that it had effects in distant countries, among others in Canada where there were considerable minorities faithfully attached to their countries of origin. The Canadian delegate maintained the view previously taken up on this question. While expressing satisfaction with the progress accomplished he considered that there was room for considerable improvement in procedure. The Canadian delegation considered that a Permanent Consultative Committee might render useful service in this connection.

The delegate of Spain, after emphasizing the psychological side of the minorities problem, drew attention to the fact that his country was now engaged in settling the Catalan problem in accordance with the principles enunciated by the League of Nations.

Mandates

The work in connection with mandates forms one of the most important tasks entrusted to the League. It consists in supervising the administration of the mandated territories, and noting how far and by what means the mandatory Powers are performing the task entrusted to them of helping those countries, which might be described as minors, and educating them in preparation for independence.

The object of the institution of mandates is, in the case at least of A Mandates, the eventual acquisition of independence, and this year the problem has arisen in the case of Irak of determining under what conditions a country should be recognized as having reached the stage in its development at which it can cease to be a mandated territory and acquire independence.

The Permanent Mandates Commission studied this question with great thoroughness, and the Sixth Committee expressed its appreciation of its work. In the conditions defined by the Mandates Commission, the Council now possesses a criterion for determining, in individual cases, whether a country is ready to pass from the status of a mandated territory to that of independence.

Like the Mandates Commission, the Sixth Committee considered that the emancipation of the territories covered by Article 22 of the Covenant should be made dependent on the fulfilment of certain *de facto* conditions, and on the existence of certain guarantees stipulated in the interests both of the territories concerned and of the international community. The guarantees relating to the safeguarding of the rights of foreigners, the effective protection of racial, linguistic and religious minorities and the maintenance of the principle of economic equality were, in the Sixth Committee's opinion, of quite special importance.

The Sixth Committee was also concerned with the development of the public health services in the mandated territories. It expressed the opinion that the recommendations put forward in this connection by the Mandates Commission seemed likely to contribute largely to the success of the work of civilization undertaken in the mandated territories under the auspices of the League of Nations.

Lastly, the Sixth Committee noted that order had not again been disturbed in Palestine since the regrettable incidents of 1929, and associated itself with the hope expressed by the Mandates Commission that the efforts made by the Mandatory Power to facilitate the establishment of a Jewish National Home without infringing the rights of the Arab population would be crowned with success.

Refugees

The Sixth Committee heard a statement by the Chairman of the Governing Body of the Nansen International Office for Refugees, who explained that plans were being made to wind up the work of the Office by the end of 1938. The Committee requested the Governing Body of the Office, in consultation with the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees, to examine the advisability of preparing a convention to ensure the protection of the refugees on completion of the Office's work.

The Office was requested to devote particular attention to the situation of some 100,000 Russian refugees in China. Note was taken of the progress made in the settlement of Armenian refugees in Syria, which it is hoped to complete by the end of 1933. The Committee learned with interest that it might be found possible to settle some thousands of Armenian refugees (chiefly from Greece and Bulgaria) in the Armenian Republic of Erivan.

Slavery

It is an admitted fact that, despite the campaign instituted more than a century ago by Great Britain, slavery is still found in many places. It is rife in certain countries not represented on the League, and unfortunately there are also countries which do belong to the League where it still exists in various forms.

That is why the British delegation, this year, proposed that the former Temporary Commission set up in 1923, which had never concluded its work, should be reappointed.

In the Sub-Committee appointed to examine this proposal, the delegate of the Netherlands put forward, in the form of an amendment to the British text, a suggestion that, instead of the Temporary Commission, a Committee of three experts should be appointed, to be chosen exclusively on the grounds of their personal qualifications and competence.

The Sixth Committee finally requested the Council to appoint, for one year, a small committee of experts to examine the material on slavery supplied by Governments since the signature of the 1926 Convention. This Committee will, in the first place, inquire to what extent the Convention has succeeded in putting an end to slavery and what obstacles exist to further progress. It will also be called upon to make suggestions as to measures of assistance for countries which have agreed to abolish slavery, and which may request such assistance.

Intellectual Co-operation

The discussions in the Sixth Committee revealed the profound and universal interest that is taken in questions of intellectual co-operation. The unanimous impression was that, in this field, the League had made progress, and that it was now in a position to facilitate intellectual relations between countries and thus help them to understand one another better. In the words of the Rapporteur, the work of intellectual co-operation becomes the nucleus of a great undertaking, in which not only the Ministries of Education and Fine Arts and the national official institutions are collaborating but also private organisations interested in questions of culture and education.

True the work undertaken is still in its initial stages, but the Sixth Committee was already in a position to submit to the Assembly definite achievements and a program of action.

Among the fresh tasks undertaken should be mentioned a projected study of educational broadcasting. The use of wireless in schools, and its utilization in the teaching of adults and more generally for bringing about the rapprochement of nations, are subjects which have engaged the attention of the Committee

on Intellectual Co-operation and to which it will revert next year in the light of the information obtained from the competent official departments and the appropriate international organizations, and especially from qualified educational experts. The observations of the British and French delegations strongly emphasized the importance of this question.

Mr. Burrell, who represented Canada on the Sixth Committee while questions relating to intellectual co-operation were under consideration, stressed the value of intellectual understanding and co-operation in scientific matters as elements in progress and guarantees of peace. He endorsed the changes in the structure and functions of the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation and hoped they would result in its more effective influence in future.

Special mention should also be made of a conference, summoned by the International Museums Office, which will shortly be held at Athens. This Conference will study the important question of the conservation of artistic and historical monuments. New technical methods have recently been introduced. These will be compared and the best of them noted and generalized.

Several delegations on the Sixth Committee were gratified to find that the often-debated question of school textbooks was beginning to take a practical shape. A report has been drawn up which relates all the measures taken in the different countries to remove from school books passages harmful to friendly international relations. It outlines the methods employed and the results obtained. A committee of historians and educational experts will study the report and draw the necessary conclusions which will be submitted to the Assembly next year.

HUGH GUTHRIE,
C. P. BEAUBIEN,
ADELAIDE M. PLUMPTRE,
MARTIN BURRELL,
PHILIPPE ROY,
W. A. RIDDELL.

