

1931.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

REPORT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND ON THE ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, HELD AT GENEVA, IN THE YEAR 1930.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

## ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

New Zealand Government Offices,  
415 Strand, London W.C. 2, 31st October, 1930.

SIR,—

### OPENING OF PROCEEDINGS.

I have the honour to inform you that the Eleventh Assembly of the League of Nations was opened at Geneva on Wednesday, the 10th September, by M. Zumeta, the representative of Venezuela on the Council, and the Acting President of that body. The first and second meetings were formal, and devoted to the consideration of the report of the Credentials Committee (set up to examine the credentials of the delegates), the election of the President, the examination and adoption of the agenda (with the apportionment of the various items amongst the six committees which deal in detail with the great bulk of the work of the Assembly), and the election of the six Vice-Presidents who, with the President of the Assembly, the Chairmen of the six committees, and the Chairman of the Agenda Committee (referred to later), form the General Committee of the Assembly.

For President, the Assembly's choice fell on M. Titulesco, the principal delegate of Roumania, a man well known in both diplomatic and League circles, and one thoroughly familiar with the organization and work of the League.

The following delegates were elected Vice-Presidents: Mr. Henderson (United Kingdom), M. Matsudaira (Japan), M. Briand (France), M. Curtius (Germany), M. Quinones de Leon (Spain), M. Adolfe Costa du Rels (Bolivia).

The following were elected Chairmen of committees: First Committee, M. Scialoja (Italy); Second Committee, M. Colijn (Netherlands); Third Committee, M. Politis (Greece); Fourth Committee, Count Carton de Wiart (Belgium); Fifth Committee, Countess Apponyi (Hungary); Sixth Committee, Sir Robert Borden (Canada).

An Agenda Committee of seven, to which is referred in the first instance any new items proposed in the course of the Assembly for decision regarding procedure, was appointed, and the Assembly honoured me by electing me a member of this committee.

It will not be out of place here to refer to the improved conditions under which the Assembly worked this year. The Salle de la Réformation, which, I am given to understand, was far from ideal, was abandoned, as a hall of meeting, for the Bâtiment Electoral, and this was temporarily fitted to meet the peculiar conditions governing an assembly. Even if only by reason of its superior acoustics, the change to the Bâtiment Electoral was well worth while. This year's experiment will be repeated until the new hall is ready for occupation.

## THE AGENDA.

This is Document A. 2 (1), and the items were apportioned as follows:

First Committee—Legal and constitutional questions: Items 8 (amendments to the Covenant), 19 (codification of international law), 20 (ratification of international conventions), together with the proposal of the Government of Finland to confer on the Permanent Court of International Justice the jurisdiction of a tribunal of appeal in respect of arbitral awards established by States.

Second Committee—Technical organizations of the League: Items 11 (Economic and Financial Organization), 12 (Organization for Communications and Transit), 13 (Health Organization), 17 (intellectual co-operation), 26 (international reciprocity in the care of the sick).

Third Committee—Reduction of armaments: Item 21 (work of the Committee on Arbitration and Security) and questions affecting disarmament.

Fourth Committee—Budget and financial questions: Items 6 (organization of the Secretariat, the International Labour Office, and the Registry of the Permanent Court of International Justice), 22 (Budget for 1931), 25 (proposed amendment of Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Financial Regulations).

Fifth Committee—Social and general questions: Items 14 (traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs), 15 (traffic in women and children), 16 (child welfare), 18 (penal administration).

Sixth Committee—Political questions and questions concerning refugees: Items 9 (slavery), 10 (refugees).

Items 4 (Assembly arrangements), 5 (proposed increase in the number of Vice-Presidents), 7 (election of members of the Supervisory Commission), and 23 and 24 (election of Judges of the Permanent Court of International Justice) were reserved for preliminary consideration by the General Committee of the Assembly.

During the course of the Assembly the following new items were proposed:—

(1) Inviting the Governments of the European States members of the League of Nations, acting as a Commission of the League, to pursue the inquiry into the scheme for collaboration between European Governments (the Briand scheme). (See Documents A. 46 and A. 52.)

(Such a Commission has been set up, with the Secretary-General of the League as secretary, and it is intended that a report should be made to next year's Assembly. (See Document C. 565, M. 225.) )

(2) To refer to the Third Committee that part of the report on the last year's work dealing with the reduction of armaments.

(3) To refer to the Sixth Committee the papers dealing with mandates.

(4) To refer to the Sixth Committee that part of the report on the last year's work dealing with minorities.

(5) Requesting the Council to devise means of accelerating the work first undertaken by the League a long time ago with a view to an international settlement of the problem of the most-favoured-nation clause.

## REPRESENTATION OF NEW ZEALAND.

As three committees sit at the same time (Nos. 1, 2, and 6, and Nos. 3, 4, and 5 alternatively) it would have been impossible for me to take part in the work of all. I therefore resolved to devote myself to Committees Nos. 1 and 3, and to sit on Committee No. 6 whenever it dealt with the question of mandates; and I nominated my Private Secretary, Mr. C. Knowles, to act as substitute on Committees Nos. 2 and 4, and Mr. C. B. Burdekin, Librarian of my Department in London, to sit in the same capacity on Committees Nos. 5 and 6.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION.

The debate on the report to the Eleventh Assembly on the work of the League since the last session of the Assembly began on the morning of the 11th September with a speech by Sir Robert Borden, who, although he had represented Canada at the Peace Conference in 1919, when the Covenant was drawn up, had not hitherto taken part in the work of the League. He compared the feeling of depression in 1919 with the present atmosphere of good will, understanding, and co-operation, but he asked why the renunciation of war had not been followed by a like renunciation of armaments. He was followed by M. Briand, who made one of his characteristic speeches. It was known that he had a communication to make in regard to his project for a European federation, and he was listened to with the closest attention. That communication was to the effect that at a meeting of representatives of European States assembled at Geneva on the 8th September it was decided to place on the agenda of the Assembly the question of the organization of a system of European federal union, it having been recognized that such a union could be established only within the framework

of the League. M. Briand, with his great wisdom and experience, must have foreseen difficulties, but even he had to confess that there were some which he had overlooked. He said he came before the Assembly in order to tell it, on behalf of twenty-seven European nations, that they had recognized, after long and serious inquiry, that their collaboration in international activities in the form of a union was of primary importance for the maintenance of peace, but that when it came to the point of taking a definite decision to establish a federal union between Powers which were confronted by so many other problems it was essential to act prudently and not to take any step which would jeopardize the undertaking in future.

It is unnecessary to summarize the references by subsequent speakers to M. Briand's scheme, since all the speeches are given in the *Journal*; but the following quotation from a speech made on the morning of the 13th September by M. Motta, the delegate of Switzerland, deserves to be recorded here :—

“How was concrete shape to be given to this idea of European collaboration? In his view, the important thing to secure was a policy or state of mind rather than an autonomous organization. Those who spoke of a United States of Europe had not only anticipated a work which would require centuries of effort, but actually spoiled the prospects of a practical solution. A federal bond might be possible if it were understood that this bond, which would be of a moral character, would respect the sovereignty of States, but care should be taken to avoid advancing at this stage any idea of a federation or league.”

I think, perhaps, it would be as well to give here a non-European point of view as set forth by the Maharaja of Bikaner, principal delegate of India, who, in the Assembly, said :—

“Is there not a danger, in these early years of the League, that a plan for the closer union of Europe may give rise to misconception outside Europe itself as running counter to the basic foundation that the League exists not for Europe, not for Asia, but for the world.”

It was a note of warning to Europeans to proceed with great caution, and was, I am sure, not without effect.

The world economic crisis loomed large in the debate; indeed, at least two speeches were devoted solely to that crisis and to economic affairs. The results achieved by the League through the World Economic Conference of 1927 and the smaller Conference which met early this year and drew up the convention known as the “Tariff Truce” are almost negligible.

Addressing the Assembly, Mr. Graham, President of the Board of Trade, asked what were the prospects of future negotiations. Eighteen countries had signed the convention referred to above, and twenty-three countries had signed a protocol under which future negotiations would take place. In view of the gravity of the economic depression, however, it was feared by some delegates that tariffs would move upwards, and that certain countries, notwithstanding the Tariff Truce (which truce, by the way, has yet to be ratified), would still further increase their duties in the near future. He added that, so far, Great Britain could not suggest that any step had been taken by any country in derogation of the convention, and it was hoped that all countries concerned would approach the negotiations with a sincere desire for practical results and tariff-reduction.

I have left till last the few League political questions which are of importance to New Zealand, in common with other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The debate in the Assembly was merely in the nature of a prologue to the discussion in Committee, and it will be in those sections of this report dealing with the work of the First and Third Committees that I shall go into some detail. It suffices here to draw attention to the speech which Mr. Henderson, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, made in the Assembly on the afternoon of the 11th September. It is well summarized in No. 3 of the *Journal* of Friday, the 12th September.

After stating, in reference to M. Briand's scheme for a European federal union, that the British Government hoped that any final decision would be taken on the authority of the League, and that such a course would make it possible for the various Governments to satisfy themselves that the final plan was wholly consistent with the international obligations of the League, and that it would facilitate the disarmament policy of the Assembly, Mr. Henderson went on to say that the British Government stood for the acceptance by all States of the principle that disputes of every kind should be settled by peaceful means, and that it was hoped that the Covenant would be so amended as to bring it into line with the Pact of Paris. He therefore trusted that during the course of the present Assembly there would be drawn up an instrument bringing into force amendments based on the report made by the special committee which was constituted for the purpose of considering such amendments. (Document A. 8.)

There had been some reference in the English press during the summer to the possibility of Great Britain adhering to the General Act for the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes, drawn up by the Assembly of 1928, and Mr. Henderson's pronouncement of his Government's policy on this point was awaited with considerable interest. He said that the British Government had always been favourably disposed towards the principles of the General Act, but that it had made it clear that in a matter of such vital concern it must proceed in close accord with the other members of the British Commonwealth; and he indicated that the Imperial Conference about to meet would consider “what further contribution the British Commonwealth could make to the cause of disarmament and world peace.”

Mr. Henderson referred to the acceptance by the British Government of the Treaty for Financial Assistance, but added that acceptance of that treaty and of the amendments to the Covenant was dependent on the carrying-through of a general treaty for the reduction and limitation of national armaments.

In conclusion, Mr. Henderson referred to the contribution which the London Naval Conference of this year had made to the cause of disarmament, and he said that it would never be possible to fulfil the purpose for which the League had been created unless its members were prepared to carry through a scheme of general disarmament by international agreement.

The debate on the report of the work of the previous year was brought to a conclusion on the evening of the 16th September.

#### ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL.

On the morning of the 17th September the Assembly proceeded to the election of the countries to fill the three non-permanent seats on the Council to be vacated by Canada, Cuba, and Finland. Before voting, however, the Assembly had first to give a decision on the application of China to be considered re-eligible under the Assembly's resolution of 1926. China, which has not sat on the Council since 1928, failed to secure the number of votes necessary for re-eligibility, and in consequence her candidature for a seat for a further term could not be considered this year.

The result of the voting for the three non-permanent seats was as follows: Guatemala, forty-one votes; Norway, thirty-eight votes; and the Irish Free State, thirty-six votes. This is the second time that an Overseas Dominion has become a member of the Council, and the Irish Free State is to be congratulated on having been elected. Guatemala was the choice of the Central and South American Republics.

#### ELECTION OF JUDGE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

It was also on the morning of the 17th September that the Assembly elected Mr. F. B. Kellogg to succeed Mr. C. E. Hughes as a Judge of the Permanent Court of International Justice, Mr. Hughes having resigned his seat owing to his having been appointed Chief Justice of the United States. Mr. Kellogg secured thirty votes in the Assembly and the unanimous votes of the Council.

#### ELECTION OF THE NEW BENCH OF JUDGES OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

The Documents are A. 14 and four bearing the number A. 31. The present Bench will cease to function on the 31st December next; consequently the Assembly and the Council, acting as an electoral college, were called upon to elect a new Bench, with a mandate for nine years, beginning on the 1st January, 1931.

The result of the first ballot was the election of the following fourteen candidates: M. Adatci, 49 votes; M. Anzilotti, 40 votes; M. Fromageot, 40 votes; Sir Cecil Hurst, 40 votes; M. Altamira y Crevea, 38 votes; M. van Eysinga, 38 votes; M. Guerrero, 38 votes; Baron Rolin-Jaequemyns, 38 votes; Mr. Kellogg, 35 votes; Count Rostworowski, 34 votes; M. Schücking, 34 votes; M. Wang Chung-Hui, 32 votes; M. de Bustamante y Sirven, 31 votes; M. Negulesco, 30 votes.

For the fifteenth Judge, the ballot-box was resorted to again and again owing to the failure of any one candidate to obtain a majority, and finally to the failure of the Council and the Assembly to elect the same person. The eleventh ballot resulted in M. Urrutia obtaining the necessary majority, and, as the Council also had elected him, he was declared elected.

The election of the Deputy Judges was also a somewhat lengthy process, but at length the Court was completed by the election of M. Erich, M. da Matta, M. Novakovich, and M. Redlich.

#### ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS.

The General Committee's Report on Assembly Arrangements (Item 4 of the agenda) was passed by the Assembly on the 25th September. (See Documents A. 22, A. 47, and A. 60.)

#### SIGNING OF CONVENTION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

On the 2nd October the President of the Assembly announced that Australia and Lithuania had already signed the Convention on Financial Assistance (a subject which is treated in that part of this report devoted to the work of the Third Committee), and he invited other delegations to sign. There was a roll-call, and delegates of the following States appended their signature: Abyssinia, Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Great Britain, Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Irish Free State, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Persia, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Spain, Sweden, Yugoslavia.

#### SIMON BOLIVAR.

It was also on the 2nd October that the following motion, of which notice had been given earlier in the session by delegates of a number of Central and South American Republics, was laid before the Assembly:—

“The Assembly, recalling that, on the 17th December next, the centenary will take place of Simon Bolivar, who by his initiative and his efforts to ensure the reign of justice and peace between peoples was a precursor of the League of Nations, expresses its gratitude and admiration for the memory of Bolivar and associates itself with the tribute which the American republics will be paying him.”

A number of eulogistic speeches were delivered, and a resolution in the terms of the motion was enthusiastically passed by the Assembly.

## GUSTAVE STRESEMAN.

On the morning of the 3rd October the President of the Assembly rose on the termination of the debate on the Report on Intellectual Co-operation, and reminded those present that it was the anniversary of the death of Gustave Stresemann. He then proceeded in few but well-chosen words to pay a fine tribute to the memory of the great German statesman. At the conclusion of the speech the Assembly rose and stood in silent homage. Count Bernstorff replied on behalf of the German Delegation.

The Assembly closed on the morning of Saturday, the 4th October.

## COMMITTEE No. 1.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

Last year's Assembly gave its approval to certain amendments to the statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. When this year's Assembly met it was found that the protocol embodying the amendments lacked the ratifications necessary to bring them into force. Consequently a rather unfortunate position arose, since a new Bench was due to be elected this year, and the amendments provided, *inter alia*, for an increase in the number of Judges from eleven to fifteen and the abolition of the posts of Deputy Judges. The Assembly and the Council had power, under the unamended statute, to increase the number of Judges, but not to dispense with the four Deputy Judges. The First Committee considered the position, and then recommended the Assembly to elect fifteen Judges and four Deputy Judges. The documents are numbered A. 45 and A. 57. The resolutions contained in the latter were passed by the Assembly on the 25th September, and the Council and the Assembly immediately afterwards proceeded with the election of the new Court. An account of the financial consequences is given in Document A. 58.

## PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE AS APPEAL TRIBUNAL.

As there was insufficient time to consider carefully the proposal of the Finnish Government, to confer on the Permanent Court of International Justice the jurisdiction of a tribunal of appeal in respect of arbitral awards, the delegate from Finland agreed to the question being inscribed on the agenda of next year's Assembly. (See Document A. 80.)

## INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF VICE-PRESIDENTS.

I give the text of the First Committee's report, approved by the Assembly on 3rd October:—

"At its tenth ordinary session the Assembly considered and referred to the present Assembly a proposal to increase the number of Vice-Presidents from six to eight. The question came before the First Committee this year, and was discussed at the meeting on 20th September, 1930. Several delegates, who last year had supported the proposal to amend Article 7, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, now stated that they had changed their views. On being put to the vote, the proposal was rejected. The First Committee accordingly proposes that it should not be put into effect."

(Document A. 63.)

## RATIFICATION AND SIGNATURE OF CONVENTIONS.

I make only brief mention of the report (Document A. 10) of the Committee appointed to consider the question of ratification and signature of conventions concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations. The machinery of modern Government is so complicated, since not only a number of State Departments, but various interests also, have often to be consulted; so much of the time of Parliament is taken up with purely domestic questions, that surprise need not be expressed at the apparent poverty of results achieved in the field of international conventions. Nevertheless, many countries make quite a good showing (see Document A. 20), and the machinery proposed for future conventions should be of assistance.

The First Committee's report came before and was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 3rd October. (See Document A. 83.)

## CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

The Conference for the Codification of International Law, the preparatory work for which occupied some years, was held at the Hague in March and April last. The subjects under discussion were nationality, territorial waters, and responsibility of States.

The Conference produced a Convention on certain questions relating to the Conflict of Nationality Laws, three protocols—one relating to military obligations in certain cases of double nationality, the second to certain cases of Statelessness, and the third concerning Statelessness—and a final Act. With regard to territorial waters, the Conference noted that the discussions had revealed in respect of certain fundamental points a divergence of views which for the present rendered the conclusion of a convention on the territorial sea impossible, but it recommended that the work of codification should be continued. A committee set up by the Conference to consider the question of the responsibility of States for damage caused on their territory to the person or property of foreigners was unable to report to the full Conference.

The First Committee, which had before it the reports of the Conference, together with convention, &c., were divided in opinion. Had the Conference been a failure? a partial failure? a success? or a partial success? Should preparatory work be continued with a view to future Conferences, or should it be postponed? So varied were the views and the motions resulting from them that the First Committee decided to recommend the Assembly to adjourn the question to next year, and a resolution on these lines was passed by the Assembly on the 3rd October. (See Document A. 82.)

#### AMENDMENTS TO THE COVENANT.

It will be recollected that last year the British delegation proposed to the Assembly the amendment of the Covenant of the League of Nations in order to bring it into harmony with the Pact of Paris. Indeed, draft amendments were put forward and were sent to a special committee created to examine and report. It was this committee's report (Document A. 8) which came before the First Committee.

The debate in the First Committee had hardly begun before it became apparent that the proposed amendments would undergo rigorous examination and dissection.

We may dismiss the question raised by the Japanese delegate at the outset—whether it was desirable to amend the Covenant. That question has been settled already. What was required was to harmonize the Covenant, which permits war in certain contingencies, with the Pact of Paris, which forbids war.

The amendments proposed by the special committee will be found on page 10 of its report. They follow generally the amendments drafted last year by the British delegation, but with some important variations. The main line of attack on the special committee's proposals was that, if adopted, the cases in which the sanctions provided for in Article 16 of the Covenant could be applied would be increased. Doubtless this is so; but it was contended by the British delegate that the practical effect would be to diminish the possibility of sanctions having to be applied, since the amendments should decrease the chances of war. Some delegates stated quite frankly that their Governments could not accept an extension of sanctions when literally nothing had been done in the field of disarmament (because, perhaps, the measure of security necessary for disarmament had not been provided); when no definite rules for determining the aggressor had been formulated; and when one had always to reckon with the possibility of the Council being divided into equal groups of about equal strength on the merits of a case under examination. Indeed, the uncertainty which must necessarily prevail in the matter of sanctions cannot but have caused delegates to be hypercritical of amendments bearing on sanctions.

The Pact of Paris condemns the recourse to war for a solution of international troubles, and renounces it as an instrument of national policy; but one cannot help reflecting on the declarations which were made at the time of adherence to the Pact by many of the signatories, and I am doubtful whether these declarations had been taken sufficiently into consideration by the committee which framed the amendments. It was a point which I felt bound to raise in the committee, and I asked whether it was desirable that the essence of these declarations should be included in the amended Covenant. One speaker suggested that these declarations, whilst not affecting the Pact of Paris, modified its application. And what of the Pact of Paris? A few delegates supported their argument that it had only a moral value, by reference to the absence of sanctions to enforce it. Why, they said, should it be necessary, when endeavouring to harmonize the two instruments, to extend the cases in which sanctions provided by the Covenant could be applied? Could not the two instruments well exist side by side, each having its value and force? On the other hand, has not the Pact of Paris a legal as well as a moral strength? Some who held this view contended that new obligations must not be inserted in the Covenant without sanctions being attached to them. How easy it would be for States to break with impunity obligations which had not sanctions to enforce them!

I cannot but regret the attempt to hasten a decision on this question. Most Governments have learned bitter lessons from hasty drafting. The provisions of Article 16 have never been brought into operation. Consequently, when once we begin to consider amendments such as those proposed, we enter the realm of hypothesis, and it is only a constitutional lawyer who fully realizes the difficulty of finding a formula which will cover every hypothetical case and bear only one interpretation.

The debate was becoming lengthy, and a decision was as far off as ever, when it was proposed that the amendments should be sent to a sub-committee for examination and report. This sub-committee consisted of one delegate each from France, the United Kingdom, China, Finland, Germany, Uruguay, Japan, the Netherlands, Roumania, Italy, Greece, Norway, Belgium, and Sweden. It worked hard during the few days which remained, but the task was impossible of achievement. It did, indeed, make modifications of text which it was hoped would go far to meet the various views. But the conflicting views on the application of sanctions to the new obligations were still held, and the doubt as to the incompatibility of the amended Covenant with the declarations made by some Governments when adhering to the Pact of Paris still persisted. The sub-committee, therefore, could not bring itself to recommend the First Committee definitely to accept the amendments, and a resolution to postpone a decision for one year was passed with only two dissentients.

In two respects the text, as amended by the sub-committee shows a decided improvement. The amendment to paragraph 6 of Article 15 as proposed by the Committee of Eleven was of such a nature that there was an appearance, at any rate, of committing all the members of the League in advance to take action recommended by the Council, whereas surely it was the intention of the draftsmen to bind only the parties to a dispute. The draft as it emerged from the sub-committee removes any doubt as to its meaning. The additional paragraph (7 *bis*) to Article 15, proposed by the Committee of Eleven, giving power to the Council, when examining a dispute, to ask the Permanent Court of International Justice for an advisory opinion on points of law, and without a unanimous vote by the Council, was suppressed.

You will note it is proposed to make a slight change in the text of Article 16, paragraph 1.

There were a few who deplored what they considered to be a waste of time and the missing of a golden opportunity, but I cannot range myself with the number. Action in this matter has been far too hasty. Governments situated at a great distance from the League had not the time to consider carefully the report of the Committee of Eleven and to instruct their delegates. The Covenant is the Constitution of the League. Serious consequences might be involved in amending it. A delegate can but represent his country's views. He cannot, without precise instructions, bind his Government to something which may involve questions of national policy. Time has not been wasted. We have now a text, evolved in the light of a discussion entered into by the representatives of a large number of Governments, and if that text does not meet all points of view it is, at any rate, in some respects an improvement on that which it displaces.

All Governments now have the opportunity, which some did not possess before, of careful consideration and sufficient time within which to make their observations.

## COMMITTEE No. 2.

### HEALTH ORGANIZATION.

It has been said that the creation of the League of Nations was worth while, if only to provide a central clearing-house for the reception and dissemination of information. However that may be, it is certainly in the field of health that the League has found scope for work truly international and of the greatest value. Many of the reports issued by the Health Organization make the heart of the specialist rejoice, and the opportunities afforded for co-operation between various national administrations cannot but make for understanding.

The report of the Rapporteur, Miss Susan Lawrence, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, serves as a useful introduction to the work of the organization, whilst the Annual Report of the Health Organization (Document A. 9) and the additional information contained in Documents A. 6 and A. 6 (a) give in some detail an account of the past year's work.

There is no need here to mention the numerous activities of the organization, but I would draw your attention to the brief reference on pages 24 and 25 of Document A. 9 to the survey of health conditions in certain islands of the Pacific.

The Report of the Second Committee (Document A. 56) came before the Assembly at its meeting on 29th September, when the following resolution was passed:—

“ The Assembly, recognizing the importance of the work of the Health Organization to the League as a whole, and the value of that work in connection with problems of development in all countries—

“ Expresses the hope that the experience gained by this organization may be made available in increasing measure to member States of the League ;

“ Notes with satisfaction that the activities of the Health Organization continue to extend to countries in all parts of the world, and that during the past year they have been specially exercised in certain countries which have invited the technical advice of the League in the development of their public-health services ;

“ Approves the work carried on by the organization since the last session of the Assembly ; and

“ Expresses its appreciation to the members of the Health Committee, as well as to the different health administrations and individual experts who have contributed in so large a measure to the success of their activities.”

The proposal regarding international reciprocity in the care of the sick (Item 26 of the agenda) was referred to the Health Organization of the League.

### CONFERENCE WITH A VIEW TO CONCERTED ECONOMIC ACTION.

This Conference, convened by resolution of the Assembly of 1929, was held in Geneva in February and March, 1930, and may be said to have been almost negative in its results so far. It is true that a convention was drawn up and signed by a small number of States ; but that convention provided for no more than a relative stabilization of the tariff situation, as it merely involved an undertaking to prolong until April, 1931, existing commercial agreements. A protocol supplementing the convention contains a programme of future negotiations which shall begin before the 31st March, 1931. Meanwhile the crisis has grown in magnitude. Tariffs continue to rise, and it is even stated that there is more frequent administrative evasion of the most-favoured-nation clause—such, for instance, as the imposition of increased Customs duties on wheat and other agricultural products, the increase being adjusted by the admission of special quotas at the old rate. Great Britain will ratify the convention, but there appears to be little likelihood of its coming into force. It is understood that ratification will not prejudice any negotiations in the economic sphere which may be undertaken during the Imperial Conference.

It should be understood that the “ Tariff Truce ” Conference was entirely a European Conference. Nevertheless, in the final Act which it adopted, recognition is given to the importance of overseas markets for the economic life of Europe ; and the Economic Organization of the League is recommended to study the means whereby close co-operation may be established between Europe and overseas countries.

A brief account of the Conference will be found on pages 57-60 of Document A. 6, and it was this which was before the Second Committee of the Assembly.

## ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION.

The Economic Organization of the League is an admirable body, which is able to make use of some of the best brains in the economic world ; yet can it be truly said that this work has in any considerable measure influenced national policy ?

In August representatives of a number of countries in eastern Europe, whose prosperity depends solely or chiefly on the marketing of agricultural produce, met at Warsaw in an effort to arrive at co-operation. Several resolutions were passed designed to eliminate competition ; to arrange for an exchange of statistical information ; to press for an international convention for the abolition of direct and indirect bounties on the export of agricultural produce ; to improve the health of live-stock, and to regulate its movements from one country to another ; to make regulations in respect of agricultural credits ; and, finally, to provide for those countries represented at the meeting, which had not already done so, to declare themselves in favour of preferential treatment being granted by European importing countries to cereals and agricultural produce of European origin. This last resolution concluded as follows :—

“ The Conference desires to point out that, although such preferential treatment is obviously inconsistent with the most-favoured-nation clause, it cannot injure the interests of oversea countries, as the latter will always remain the principal sources of supply for the European market, European sources being inadequate. Moreover, although such preferential tariff treatment will enable the European agricultural exporting countries to benefit by the margin between the general duty and the preferential duty, it will not run counter to the protectionist policy of countries whose agricultural output is insufficient, seeing that it will always be the general duty that affects prices. Again, the introduction of such a system will improve the economic position of the agricultural exporting countries by increasing their purchasing-power, and will thereby confer indisputable benefit on both European and oversea countries.

“ While admitting the importance of the most-favoured-nation clause in international trade, the Conference is bound to observe that in the peculiarly serious position of agriculture the only effective and practical remedy for the agricultural depression is to make an exception to the clause for agricultural produce of European origin.”

(See Document A. 51.)

Early in the proceedings the Indian delegate introduced the following motion :—

“ The Assembly is impressed by the seriousness of the present situation, by the general recession of employment and trade, by the constant recurrence of such periods of economic depression, and the failure up to the present to discover any concerted means for averting the losses incurred.

“ It resolves, therefore, that the Economic and Financial Organization of the League, which has already been studying the causes of fluctuations in the purchasing-power of gold and their effect upon the economic life of the nations, should undertake the study of the course and phases of the present depression and the circumstances which led up to it.

“ For carrying out this object it should put itself in touch with national organizations, whether consultative or planning councils or research institutions, concerned with this matter, and should further, with their aid, consider by what means the work now being conducted on the problem of the recurrence of periods of economic depression may be co-ordinated.

“ Believing also that the restoration of prosperity in the countries which are mainly concerned with agriculture and the production of raw materials is not only an object to be aimed at in itself, but that it will also contribute to the restoration of prosperity in other countries, the Assembly desires that the programme and researches recommended by the agricultural experts who met at Geneva in January, 1930, will receive special attention in the course of the comprehensive inquiry on the world economic depression which it has now recommended.”

The French delegate introduced a motion covering a number of points, including a recommendation for the creation of a permanent organ of conciliation and arbitration to which might be referred disputes among States arising from the interpretation and application of commercial conventions, whether bilateral or multilateral ; and there were other motions, including one on dumping.

There was a long and exhaustive debate, which is admirably summed up in the Second Committee's report to the Assembly. (Document A. 79.)

It was felt that there was no need to undertake a special inquiry into the causes of economic depression, since this was already covered by the Economic Organization, but the need for research and serious study of facts and special factors was stressed.

Regarding the Warsaw proposal quoted above, a proposal which would mostly affect certain grain-exporting countries, it is unfortunate that it was brought under the notice of the League, which could hardly be expected to give its blessing. There was considerable dissent, and I draw your attention to the third and following paragraphs of Section 4 of the Second Committee's report,



where account is taken of the views to which the oversea dominions principally concerned gave expression. In this connection I refer you to the concluding paragraph of Section 4 of the Second Committee's report :—

“ The Second Committee therefore believes that the proposals of the agricultural countries which met at Warsaw come within the scope of the economic reorganization to be discussed between States signatories of the Protocol of Future Negotiations of 24th March, 1930, always provided, however, that, in accordance with the Tenth Assembly's resolution, the non-signatory States may be asked to participate ; and, further, that the result of all such negotiations shall be brought before a Conference which all States, without distinction, will be asked to attend.”

I would draw your attention to the account of the work of the Economic Committee on the Exploitation of the Riches of the Sea, and to the draft convention drawn up by the Committee for the Regulation of Whaling. (See Document C. 353, M. 146.)

The only other point which I desire to mention is the International Conference, held this year, for the unification of laws on bills of exchange, promissory notes, and cheques. Copies of three conventions drawn up by the Conference have doubtless reached you, but further copies accompany this report.

The introduction into the Assembly of the Second Committee's report gave rise to a lengthy debate on lines familiar to those who had taken part in the committee's meetings. As the debate is well summarized in the issues of the *Journal* of the 2nd and 3rd October, it would serve no useful purpose to recapitulate here the various points which were made. The resolutions with which the report concludes were passed by the Assembly on the 2nd October. (See also Document E. 609.)

#### COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT.

Particulars of the work accomplished by the Organization for Communications and Transit are given in Documents A. 6 and A. 6 (a). It will be observed that the Organization is now concerning itself with civil aviation. As you are aware, one of its duties is to prepare for International Conferences on questions within its sphere. The next Conference, which will deal with buoyage and the lighting of coasts, will be held this year in Lisbon.

The Second Committee's report (Document A. 65) came before and was passed by the Assembly on the 29th September.

#### INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION.

The report of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation is Document A. 21. Pages 23 to 36 are devoted to the report of the Committee of Inquiry set up last year. Following on the recommendations contained in the report, the international committee has decided on far-reaching reforms.

The Second Committee's report to the Assembly (Document A. 67) was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 3rd October.

#### WORK OF THE FINANCIAL ORGANIZATION.

Many of the great tasks undertaken by the Financial Committee have come or are coming to an end—the financial reconstruction of Austria and Hungary, the resettlement of Bulgarian and Greek refugees, for instance. But the Financial Committee still has much in hand, and of its reports I desire to draw attention to that entitled “ Interim Report of the Gold Delegation of the Financial Committee ” (Document A. 29). The delegation comprises a number of eminent bankers, and includes Professor Cassel, the world-famous economist. The report repays perusal, and one looks forward with great interest to further reports on the subject.

The Second Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 68. It was agreed to at the meeting of the Assembly held on the 29th September. (See also Document A. 41.)

#### COMMITTEE No. 3.

I am afraid it is not possible this year to report much progress in the field of disarmament. The papers before the committee were—

- (1) Those sections of the report on the work of the League (Documents A. 6 and A. 6 (a)) which refer to the reduction of armaments, and arbitration and security ;
- (2) The report of the Committee on Arbitration and Security (Document A. 11) dealing with the Draft Convention to strengthen the Means of preventing War, the Draft Convention for Financial Assistance, and with communications affecting the work of the League of Nations in time of emergency (see also Document A. 39) ; and
- (3) Document A. 15, which is solely concerned with the Draft Convention on Financial Assistance.

## PROPOSAL TO AMEND ARTICLE 18 OF THE COVENANT.

A few sentences will suffice for the proposal made by the Peruvian Government, that the following paragraph be added to Article 18 of the Covenant:—

“The Secretariat of the League of Nations may not register any Treaty of Peace imposed by force as a consequence of a war undertaken in violation of the Pact of Paris. The League of Nations shall consider as null and void any stipulations which it may contain, and shall render every assistance in restoring the *status quo* destroyed by force.”

This proposal was studied by the Committee on Arbitration and Security, and also by the Committee of Eleven appointed to consider amendments to the Covenant designed to harmonize it with the Pact of Paris, but the Third Committee did not consider it desirable to examine the question, and on the 30th September it so reported to the Assembly. (Document A. 72.)

## DRAFT CONVENTION ON FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

It was the Government of Finland which some years ago proposed that the League should render financial assistance to any member menaced by war. The question had been exhaustively dealt with in the past, particularly in 1929, when a convention which had been drafted by the Financial Committee of the League was under examination by the Third Committee. The Assembly last year directed that the Financial Committee, in conjunction with the Committee on Arbitration and Security, should draw up a text which could be submitted to Governments for consideration. It is known that after the close of the Tenth Assembly the question received the close attention of a number of Governments, so that when the Committee on Arbitration and Security met in April and May last it had before it not only a text, but a number of suggestions from various Governments. These will be found in Document A. 15, whilst Document A. 11 contains the text for which the Tenth Assembly had asked and a useful introductory note.

As to the principle itself—to arrange for financial assistance to a State wrongfully menaced by war, with the guarantees of States members of the League—no one disputes that it is fully worthy of thought and consideration. It was, however, the method of application of the principle which had to be determined, and the Committee therefore considered the draft article by article.

I will not attempt to summarize the debate, but Article 35 was inserted in order to meet the attitude of those Governments which, although favourable to the principle of the convention, would not be prepared to accept its obligations until a Disarmament Convention had been framed and put into force. An attempt was made in the course of the discussion of the Third Committee to obtain the deletion of the paragraph and to substitute a paragraph providing for a committee of the High Contracting Parties meeting immediately after the General Disarmament Conference, in order to determine the date on which the Convention for Financial Assistance should come into force. The Italian delegate, in advocating the retention of the article, stated that in his opinion Governments could not bear the burden of guaranteeing financial assistance unless the other burden of armaments were diminished. The British delegate maintained that the suppression of the article would put the whole convention in danger, since, in that event, many countries would not sign.

After an adjournment the British, French, German, Italian, and Netherlands delegations submitted a new text with a view of obviating difficulties of interpretation. In introducing it Lord Cecil stated that it was the Council's duty, under Article 8 of the Covenant, to formulate plans for disarmament, and that (under Article 35) the convention would not come into force until the signatories had accepted such plans. The amended text met with more general acceptance, and was finally adopted.

The report of the Third Committee to the Assembly is Document A. 70. It contains not only the text of the convention as drawn up by the committee, but a useful commentary. The report was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 29th September, when it was decided to open the convention immediately for signature by all members of the League.

As stated earlier in this report, the representatives of a number of countries, including Great Britain, signed the convention.

## MODEL TREATY TO STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF PREVENTING WAR.

In 1929 the Assembly resolved that the draft model treaty should be sent to the Committee on Arbitration and Security with a view of considering the possibility of establishing a draft general convention on the lines of the treaty. The Committee on Arbitration and Security, which held a session in April and May, 1930, when examining the draft, was confronted with problems of great difficulty; indeed, some members of the Committee doubted the wisdom of converting a model treaty into a general convention. Various points of view held in regard to some of the problems were met, but so divergent were the views on other problems that the draft convention which was ultimately produced by the Committee on Arbitration and Security contains alternative texts of two articles. These alternatives, known as A and B, concern the degree of compulsion to be exercised in regard to military measures recommended by the Council, and the supervision of those measures; and the vexed question of sanctions. In short, the view of certain delegates was that the convention should make contractual the moral obligation contained in Article 11 of the Covenant, but should not provide for an extension of sanctions under Article 16 of the Covenant. This view is represented by alternative B. Other delegates, however, sought a rigid formula, designed to meet all conceivable contingencies. This view is embodied in alternative A.

The report of the Committee on Arbitration and Security is Document A. 11, and it was this report which came before the Third Committee. In the committee there was a general discussion, and, on the whole, it was agreed that a convention was desirable; but there was no hope of making headway in full committee, so the Chairman proposed a Committee of Conciliation, consisting of the delegates of Norway, Czechoslovakia, the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, and France, and himself. This Conciliation Committee, which held one meeting, reported—

- (1) The draft treaty should be transformed into a draft convention.
- (2) On Article 1 there was unanimity.
- (3) The convention should ensure the integral application of Article 11 of the Covenant by making compulsory the acceptance of recommendations of the Council for avoiding contact between opposing forces when there was a threat of war.
- (4) The convention should provide for the supervision of measures recommended by the Council.
- (5) The convention being limited to the prevention of war as envisaged in Article 11 of the Covenant, the application of Article 16 of the Covenant should remain intact, but the convention should result in facilitating the application of this Article.
- (6) The Assembly should ask the Council to appoint a special committee to continue the study of the draft convention.

The Third Committee's report to the Assembly is Document A. 71, and it was adopted by the Assembly on the 30th September. The special committee is to be instructed "to draw up a report in sufficient time for submission to the Twelfth Assembly."

#### PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE.

In considering disarmament and the measure of progress which has so far been made by the Preparatory Commission we must not forget that, whilst nothing has been done in regard to Land and Air Forces, an important treaty for the reduction and limitation of naval armaments was signed in London in April last by the representatives of the British Commonwealth of Nations, the United States, Japan, France, and Italy. The President of the Conference, Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald, in reporting its results to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, said :—

"The London Naval Conference represents an advance made on the results heretofore achieved in this particular field. It is our earnest hope that the Preparatory Commission will find in the results of our work a contribution which will have the effect of facilitating its future labours."

The Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference has been summoned to meet in November this year. The problem of the reduction and limitation of armaments bristles with difficulties. It is argued that we cannot have security without disarmament, or disarmament without security. Which is to precede the other? Here is a field for the exercise of mutual toleration and of good will. We will, however, hope that the labours of the Commission will be animated by that spirit of conciliation which characterized so many of the deliberations of the Naval Conference, and that the report of the Commission will be of such a nature as to warrant the Council of the League calling a Disarmament Conference with a prospect of success.

The Third Committee decided against recommending a date for the Disarmament Conference, and the resolution which it proposed the Assembly should pass, and which it did pass, reads as follows :—

"The Assembly has noted with satisfaction the results obtained at the London Conference, and communicated to it by a letter from the President of that Conference, dated 21st April, 1930.

"It considers that these results are of a nature to facilitate a general agreement on the occasion of the next meeting of the Preparatory Commission regarding the methods to be applied in the matter of the reduction and limitation of naval armaments.

"It trusts that negotiations, pursued in a spirit of conciliation and mutual confidence, and with the determination to arrive at practical solutions, will make it possible to complete and extend the work of the Naval Conference.

"The Assembly accordingly expresses the conviction that during its session next November the Preparatory Commission will be able to finish the drawing-up of a preliminary draft convention, and will thus enable the Council to convene, as soon as possible, a Conference on the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments.

"The Assembly decides that the proceedings and the report of the Assembly regarding disarmament shall be forwarded to the Preparatory Commission."

The report to the Assembly is Document A. 74.

In addition to the question of the reduction of armaments, the report deals with the Draft Convention on the Supervision of the Private Manufacture and Publicity of the Manufacture of Arms and Ammunition and Implements of War; the supervision of the international trade in arms and ammunition and in implements of war; and statistical information on the trade in arms, ammunition, and implements of war. For information on these questions, which occupied the Committee but a short time, I refer you to the Committee's report.

When the Third Committee's report came before the Assembly on the 30th September, there was a debate in which a number of delegates, including M. Briand, took part. The debate is reported in the *Journal* of the 1st October, and to this I refer you.

## COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS IN TIME OF CRISIS.

I refer you to pages 23 and 24 of Document A. 11 and to Document A. 39. Acting on the suggestion made by the Committee on Arbitration and Security, a draft resolution was prepared by the Third Committee for submission to the Assembly, the object of such resolution being to enable the Secretary-General to take the necessary action with a view of ensuring communication with Geneva by aircraft and motor transport in times of emergency.

The resolution is given in Document A. 73, and was passed by the Assembly on the 30th September.

## COMMITTEE No. 4.

The Audited Accounts for the year 1929 (Document A. 3) were formally passed, and the committee, before examining the draft Budget of 1931, gave consideration to the Swiss Government's proposal to amend paragraph 3 of Article 1 of the Financial Regulations (see Document A. 19). This article deals with the Supervisory Commission and the method of appointment of the members. The amendment was designed to prevent re-eligibility on expiration of appointment, except after a period of three years, and therefore follows, to an extent, the principle which governs the election of non-permanent members of the Council. Such amendment, whilst having the advantage of allowing nationals of every member of the League to take part in turn in the important work of financial supervision, has the disadvantage of depriving the League for three years of the services of a man whose assistance it can ill afford to lose.

There was general acceptance of the principle of the amendment, although many delegates contended that it might on occasion be desirable to retain the services of a member of the Supervisory Commission for a second period of three years without interruption. The amended paragraph as it emerged from the Committee, and as it was passed by the Assembly, reads as follows:—

“On retiring from the Commission on the expiration of their term of office, members shall only be eligible for re-election for a single period of three years. This rule shall not prevent subsequent election of the same persons after the expiration of at least three years from the end of their last term of office.”

This amendment will not take effect until 1931.

The Assembly approved the suggestion of the Fourth Committee that the latter should submit to the former, for the election of the Supervisory Commission, a list of names equal to the number of seats to be filled. (See Documents A. 62 and A. 53.)

The Fourth Committee recommended the appointment of M. Osusky and M. Reveillaud as members, and M. Modzelewski and M. Ottlik as substitute members, of the Supervisory Commission, and the recommendation was accepted.

## FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE LEAGUE.

For the financial position on 31st August last see Document A. 32.

## BUDGET.

The Budget of the Secretariat and special organizations of the League as presented to the Fourth Committee is Document A. 4 (three papers), whilst there was a supplementary Budget Document (A. 4 (c)).

The figures show an increase over last year's estimates of about one million gold francs. In conjunction with these documents should be read the report of the Supervisory Commission (Documents A. 5 and A. 5 (a)).

The British delegate, early in the proceedings, dealt with the report by the Medical Adviser on hygienic conditions of work in the Secretariat of the League (Appendix 1 of Document A. 5), from which he gave quotations, with the result that any impulse which some members of the committee might have had to endeavour to obtain reductions in a few of the items was considerably weakened—for instance, item No. 10, showing an increase of some 70,000 francs on last year's figure for headquarters, an increase largely due to the acquisition of an additional annexe. It was known, however, that little saving, if any, could be effected, since orders by the Assembly, involving augmentation of staff, have to be executed. There are considerable increases in the vote of the Economic and Financial Organizations, caused by additional work, ordered by the Assembly; and in that of the Health Organization, due to expansion of work in the Eastern Bureau at Singapore and to certain undertakings in the Far East. There is a new provision of 200,000 gold francs, contribution to a fund for the upkeep and running-expenses of the League wireless station. It may here be observed that the station will be used not only by the League, but for commercial and news purposes. The authorities look for an ultimate profit, and it is to be hoped that the station will eventually pay for its keep. I understand that the original estimate of 1,600,000 gold francs for the cost of construction of the station will be exceeded by about 700,000 gold francs, the increase being due to the insistence of the experts on the latest equipment being provided.

Could one with reason have charged the Secretariat with extravagance in the preparation of the Budget, one would have been justified in protesting against the increases, in the face of international depression, reduction of salaries of Civil servants, and dismissal of officers in various national services; but delegates in the Fourth Committee are helpless if their fellow-delegates introduce in other committees resolutions involving new work, and consequently further expenditure.

During the discussion which preceded the examination of the items there were many protests, which I am informed are made every year. With one of these I am in complete sympathy, if only on the grounds of economy—i.e., the protest against holding Conferences convened under the auspices of the League in cities other than Geneva.

The supplementary credits, as modified by the Supervisory Commission, were passed by the Fourth Committee, and the considerable addition to the Budget entailed by the committee's action was also voted. The Budget for 1931, as it emerged from the Fourth Committee, shows a grand total of 31,637,501 francs for the Secretariat, the International Labour Office, and the Permanent Court of International Justice. This figure, compared with that of 28,210,248 francs for the current year, shows an enormous increase.

I draw your attention to Document A. 55, relating to the construction of the new Assembly Hall, Secretariat, and Library, which was before the Fourth Committee.

The report of the Fourth Committee (Document A. 84) was passed by the Assembly on the 3rd October.

#### CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS.

In addition to arrears, small in amount, of current year's contributions, six States owe the League more than 11,000,000 francs, and, unfortunately, arrears are increasing.

The sub-committee which examined the question believes in following a policy of patience in regard to countries suffering from temporary political instability and economic depression.

#### SECRETARIAT.

It will be recollected that for some time past there has been doubt whether the international spirit which was said to permeate the members of the Secretariat in the early years of the League was being maintained. These doubts became vocal in 1928, and last year, by resolution of the Assembly, a committee of thirteen persons was appointed to "examine what steps could be taken to ensure in the future, as in the past, the best possible administrative results." The committee held two sessions, and the results of its labours are embodied in several documents bearing the number A. 16. (See also Document A. 23.) It will be observed that on some points the committee did not reach unanimity, and that on these points the views of the minority are given in a separate report.

The Fourth Committee approved, after some discussion, Chapter 1 (dealing with the "General Obligations of the Staff") of the report of the Committee of Thirteen, on the understanding that there should be inserted in the Staff Regulations an article requiring all officials entering the service of the League in future, to make the following written declaration: "I solemnly undertake to exercise, in conformity with Article 1 of the Regulations, in all loyalty, discretion, and conscience, the functions which have been entrusted to me as an official of the Secretariat of the League of Nations."

The Fourth Committee then turned to the subject of "Duration of Engagements" (Chapter 2). There was a long discussion, but ultimately the committee approved the proposals contained in the majority report regarding both permanent and temporary appointments, age-limit, terminations of appointment, and voluntary resignation.

When Chapter 3 ("Principal Officers of the Secretariat") came up for consideration it was deemed advisable to take first the proposal, contained in the minority report, that the Under-Secretaries-General should form a select committee, which the Secretary-General would be bound to consult. Sir Eric Drummond, in a few words, condemned the proposal. A vote was taken, and the proposal was negatived.

The Norwegian delegate then proposed the abolition of the posts of Under-Secretaries-General. This proposal eventually emerged in the form of a draft resolution reading as follows:—

"The Assembly decides to constitute a committee to go into the question of the maintenance or the suppression, the increase or the decrease of the posts of Under-Secretary-General together with the consequences following therefrom. The committee will be requested to make a report at latest by 1st May, 1931, in order to leave time enough for its conclusions to be considered by the members of the League and submitted to the next Assembly."

This resolution was carried unanimously.

For some years a Provident Fund has been in existence. It has always been understood that it was but a prelude to a scheme of pensions similar to the schemes in force in the various national services. Part 4 (pages 24-26) of the report of the Committee of Thirteen deals with pensions, and accompanying this was a series of draft regulations (Document A. 25). The Fourth Committee approved the principle of granting pensions, but took exception to some of the conditions, so the draft regulations were remitted to a small sub-committee, with directions to produce a new draft amended in the light of the debate.

Of the various points which were examined I will deal with two only—pensionable emoluments, and the method of applying the scheme to Division II of the locally recruited staff. The rate of remuneration of most grades of officers (with some exceptions which I will deal with later) is probably the highest in the world. It includes a sum (which varies) termed "expatriation allowance." Quite properly, the Committee of Thirteen had recommended the exclusion for pensionable purposes of all emoluments other than salary and the value of the occupation of any residence attached to the post or of allowance in substitution of such residence. Some members of the Fourth Committee felt that the expatriation allowance also should be excluded, and personally I felt such exclusion was justified; but the point was not pressed.

The second point related to the locally recruited staff. The remuneration of most of these is that which they could command in Geneva; consequently it does not include "expatriation allowance." Their pensions, based on such remuneration, would therefore be lower than those of officers of similar rank not natives of Geneva or the adjoining French territory, and injustice would result. A formula had to be found to meet the case. The sub-committee recommended that local officials of the Second Division should be allowed to contribute on the basis either of their actual emoluments or of the emoluments of an international official of corresponding rank, and the recommendation of the sub-committee was approved by the majority of the Fourth Committee.

The Staff Pension Regulations as amended by the Fourth Committee are set out in Document A. 25 (1). When the last paragraph was reached the Swiss delegation moved that the regulations be recommended to the Governments for favourable consideration, with a view of the Twelfth Assembly coming to a final decision, on condition, however, that the scheme, if approved, should have retrospective effect from the 1st January, 1931. I felt considerable sympathy with the motion. The Committee of Thirteen, although appointed by last year's Assembly, did not report until the 28th June, 1930. As the report was not despatched until the middle of July, it could not have been received in New Zealand until the middle of August, and the Assembly opened on the 10th September. How can States situate at a great distance from Geneva be expected to give careful consideration to important schemes, far-reaching in their effects, when so little time is afforded? But the principle of pensions had been conceded; indeed, it was the New Zealand delegate who, in 1920, had initiated the proposal to grant them, and it would not have become New Zealand to support an action which would have delayed the putting into force of a measure promised ten years ago. The motion was lost.

The pensions scheme involves considerable expenditure. Provisional figures will be found in the report of the Committee of Thirteen. It seemed to me that already the Fourth Committee had been generous—more generous than the financial situation of many countries warranted. When, therefore, Chapters 5 and 6 came up for consideration my representative on the Fourth Committee felt that a halt should be called, and he made the following brief speech:—

"I will detain the Committee only a minute. The New Zealand delegation has voted for the pension scheme, and has done so gladly, for I well remember (having been present at the First Assembly) that it was the New Zealand delegate who, in 1920, initiated the proposal to grant pensions. But I now wish to point out that the report of the Committee of Thirteen is dated the 28th June, and that it was despatched from Geneva under cover of a note dated the 15th July. The document could not have reached New Zealand before the third week in August, when any delegation proceeding from New Zealand would already have left for Europe. Yet the Government of a State situate twelve thousand miles from Geneva is apparently expected to give careful consideration to a report containing recommendations of a far-reaching character, and to instruct in time for the Assembly its delegates, who at the date of the receipt of the report are already far from their home-land. It is true that the New Zealand delegation came from London, but that does not alter a position which is almost intolerable.

"We in New Zealand are suffering in consequence of the economic crisis. The Fourth Committee has been sufficiently generous for one year. I will not put in a formal motion, but I suggest that it would meet the convenience of far-distant countries to postpone until next year the consideration of those sections of the report, not already dealt with, which entail additional expenditure."

The Chairman then asked my representative whether he desired to move the previous question. My representative replied that he would press his proposal only in so far as recommendations involving an increase of expenditure were concerned. He was prepared, however, to consider purely administrative proposals, even those involving a slight expenditure.

The paragraphs of the report were taken one by one. Some were reserved for consideration next year, but others, necessitating additions to the Budget, were voted by the majority of the committee although my representative had the support of several countries. Chapter 8 having been considered and approved, and the Director of the International Labour Office having given an undertaking that the structure of the International Labour Office would be adapted to any decisions of the Fourth Committee regarding the Secretariat, my representative did not press for a vote to be taken on Part III, as he felt that advantages conferred on the staff of the Secretariat by the Fourth Committee could not be denied to the staffs of the International Labour Office and the Permanent Court of International Justice. There is no doubt that there were injustices requiring to be remedied, but I cannot help deploring the prevalence of an attitude which at a time like the present can only be characterized as one of extravagance.

I think the Government should remind the Secretariat that New Zealand is not part of Europe, and state that proposals requiring decision by the Assembly or other competent body should be in the Government's hands from two to three months before the date of the meeting at which the proposals are to be considered.

The Fourth Committee's report (Document A. 86) was approved by the Assembly on the 3rd October.

## COMMITTEE No. 5.

## HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS.

The subjects assigned to this committee for consideration were penal administration reform, child welfare, traffic in women and children, and opium and other dangerous drugs.

The special interest which women have in such questions was very suitably recognized by the appointment of a woman as Chairman of the committee. This was, I believe, the first occasion on which a woman has been appointed to such a position on a League Committee.

## PENAL ADMINISTRATION.

This was the first occasion on which this subject was considered by the Assembly. It had, however, been brought before the Council in January, 1930, in a petition from the Howard League for Penal Reform and other similar bodies, and the Secretary-General's report (Document A. 26) sets out the steps taken with a view to enabling the Assembly to deal with the matter. The resolution on the subject adopted by the Assembly (Document A. 64) provides for the circulation to all Governments of copies of a set of Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, drafted by the International Prisons Commission, and for an invitation to Governments to submit their comments thereon with reference to prison administration in their own countries. Meanwhile, the rules are also to be considered by the International Labour Office and various committees of the League, and by unofficial organizations, so that a future Assembly, when considering the question, may have the benefit of full data. The Standard Minimum Rules are contained in Document A. V/2, 1930, forwarded herewith.

I took the opportunity of informing the committee that in New Zealand our prison administration conformed to all the rules set out in this document, and in many respects went considerably beyond them, and I specially stressed the very highly satisfactory results achieved in our Borstal institutions. From remarks made to me afterwards by various delegates it was evident that they were much impressed by the fact that only 8 per cent. of boys who had passed through such Borstal institutions returned to crime. I further stated that I felt sure New Zealand would be pleased to furnish full information on the subject, which might, on some points at any rate, prove not only interesting but also helpful.

## CHILD WELFARE.

In addition to the Committee report to the Assembly on this subject (Document A. 59), I am enclosing the report of the Special Committee on Child Welfare, which meets annually, and whose report furnished the basis of the discussion in the Fifth Committee (Document C. 223, M. 110). As this latter document contains very full information on the work being carried out by the League in regard to child welfare, I will draw attention to only one or two special points.

No great progress appears to have been made with the two draft conventions mentioned in last year's report. As only twenty-two Governments have so far submitted their remarks with regard to the draft convention concerning the return to their homes of children and young persons who have escaped or been removed from their homes to another country, the question will again appear on the agenda of the committee at its next session, by which time it is hoped that a larger number of replies will have been received. The second draft convention, relating to assistance to foreign minors, has not met with an altogether favourable reception, as the British and some other Governments deem it wiser not to attempt to separate this subject from the general question of assistance to indigent foreigners. However, it appears possible that the matter may be satisfactorily settled by means of bilateral or multilateral agreements between countries more particularly concerned with this problem, which does not, of course, affect New Zealand to any extent. Of more direct interest to the Dominion, perhaps, are the efforts being made by the committee with a view to promoting international agreements enabling maintenance orders to be enforced in foreign countries. Such agreements would doubtless follow on the lines of those already in force as between England and the various Dominions for the mutual enforcement of maintenance orders.

## TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

Fortunately this is one of those subjects which is of little practical importance to New Zealand. That the necessity for active work still exists in some countries, however, there can be no doubt, and it is equally beyond doubt that the machinery of the League is particularly helpful in co-ordinating the efforts being made in various countries to deal with this infamous traffic, which is largely international in character.

Arrangements have been made for a Commission of Investigation to proceed, in the latter part of this year, to a number of countries in the Far East, to investigate the extent to which this traffic is still carried on in that part of the world. The cost of this inquiry is being paid by the American Bureau of Social Hygiene, which made a grant of 125,000 dollars for the purpose.

As will be seen from the report of the special committee (Document C. 216, M. 104) and the report to the Assembly (Document A. 76), the movement towards the abolition of the system of "licensed houses" continues to make headway, though there are a considerable number of countries which still consider it undesirable to abolish it. Though this is more particularly a domestic question, it is held by many that the system encourages the international traffic in women and children, and thus rightly comes within the orbit of the committee's activities. A similar reason is advanced in support of the action taken by the committee in requesting all Governments to furnish particulars, in regard to the year 1929 only, with regard to obscene publications.

## TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.

Whereas in the earlier years of the League's existence discussion on this subject related, for the main part, to opium, this phase of the subject, while still remaining of great importance, is more and more being overshadowed by the question of the illicit trade in narcotic drugs generally. The fact that, as mentioned in the report of the Advisory Committee (Document C. 138, M. 51), the number of drug-addicts in Egypt alone is estimated officially at five hundred thousand out of a total population of only fourteen million is all the more startling in view of the fact that the drugs, such as heroin, which are principally responsible for this tragic state of affairs were practically unknown in Egypt until after the war. Nor is the danger confined to non-European countries, for important seizures of illicit consignments both of opium and of cocaine and other drugs have been made in various European countries, and also in the United States, Canada, and even Australia, while the illicit traffic to South American countries is believed to have reached large proportions.

Very material assistance has been given by the organs of the League concerned in this matter to the Police and Customs authorities of various countries, by supplying information which has led to the seizure of large quantities of drugs, and has facilitated the tracing of the channels of supply. Unfortunately, the work has been considerably hampered by the fact that many States have failed to co-operate with the League organs by furnishing *full* particulars of seizures made by them, and have also failed to reply to various questionnaires, &c., sent to them. It is with a view to endeavouring to effect a marked improvement in this respect that the Assembly adopted the very specific resolution set out on page 4 of Document A. 78. I am glad to know that New Zealand has no cause to reproach herself with regard to these points. Though there is still much room for improvement in many quarters, the publicity given by the League discussions and inquiries is gradually bringing the delinquents into line by arousing public opinion in their own countries.

It is pleasing to be able to refer also to another side of the picture where much progress has been made—namely, the great reduction in the amount of opium grown in India, and also, to some extent, in Persia, though there still exists a very considerable traffic in Persian-grown opium between Persian Gulf ports and China. Five years ago the Indian Government put into force a plan for reducing the export of opium by one-tenth each year, and thus in another five years the export of opium from that country, formerly one of the greatest suppliers, will cease entirely.

Despite the pressure exerted by the League, the system of "import certificates," issued by Governments, for the purpose of enabling a country which does not manufacture narcotics to obtain the drugs required for legitimate purposes is still not strictly enforced in some countries, and in others a more careful scrutiny of the activities of firms licensed to manufacture such drugs is required. Further, a grave difficulty has arisen owing to the recent establishment of drug-factories in Turkey by foreign firms. As Turkey is not a member of the League nor a signatory to either The Hague or the Geneva Opium Conventions, it is particularly difficult to deal with this new menace, but, as you will see from the report of the committee (Document A. 78), a special appeal has been issued to Turkey by the Council of the League, calling attention to the dangers involved, both to herself and to the rest of the world, should she continue to tolerate the manufacture of large quantities of drugs which almost certainly are destined for the illicit traffic, and asking for her co-operation in controlling the menace.

In the report on the Tenth Session of the Assembly last year special mention was made of the decision that an International Conference should be convened to deal with the question of limitation of manufacture—which had been decided upon in principle—and also to deal with the cognate subjects of the total amount of narcotic drugs required to meet the medical and scientific needs of the world, and the quotas to be allocated to the various manufacturing countries. In considering the methods of limitation to be adopted special care has also to be taken to guard against an increase in the price of drugs required for legitimate purposes. During the past year the Advisory Committee on Opium has drawn up a plan for the direct limitation of manufacture of narcotics (see Appendix 5 to Document C. 138, M. 51), but, owing to the necessity for securing as complete data as possible in order to ensure the success of the Limitation Conference, that Conference has not yet been held. It has been definitely decided, however, that it shall meet on the 27th May, 1931. In addition, the British Government has invited the principal drug-manufacturing countries to participate in a preliminary Conference in London in October of this year, in order further to prepare the ground for the general Conference.

Though very definite results are hoped for from these Conferences, the committee emphasize in their report that the limitation of manufacture is not intended to *replace* the system of supervision now in force, as laid down in the conventions, but is to be *added* to and supplement it.

One point in the report to which I would draw special attention is that regarding the penalties for breaches of the laws in regard to opium and narcotics, and the recommendation that all Governments should consider whether it might not be advisable to strengthen their laws in this respect by providing heavier penalties.

Some advance has been made during the past year in the number of ratifications of the Geneva Opium Convention, but there are still a considerable number of States—particularly South American ones—which have failed to ratify, and a special appeal is to be made to them to rectify the omission as soon as possible.

During the past year a Special Commission of Inquiry into the control of opium-smoking in the Far East conducted lengthy investigations in various Asiatic countries, and the report of this Commission will be issued very shortly. A separate Conference on this subject is also to be held next year, attended only by those States directly interested. It is therefore to be held in one of the Asiatic countries, and the principal delegate of Siam, at the Assembly meeting on the 1st October, extended an invitation for the Conference to be held in his country, and stated that, in that event, his country would be prepared to find the sum of £6,000 towards the expenses.

For further information on this important subject I would refer you to the very full particulars contained in the two reports to which I have several times alluded in the foregoing remarks, and in Document C. 518, M. 213.



## COMMITTEE No. 6.

## POLITICAL QUESTIONS.

From the New Zealand point of view the most important of the subjects referred to this committee for consideration was that of mandates. The other subjects dealt with were refugees, minorities, and slavery.

## MANDATES.

This subject was brought before the committee as the result of a resolution proposed in the Assembly on the 12th September by the Norwegian delegation (Document A. 48). It was discussed by the Committee at its fifth meeting, on the morning of the 23rd September.

Fairly lengthy sections of the Report on the work of the League are devoted to the subject of mandates (Document A. 6, pages 49 to 56, and A. 6 (a), pages 15 to 22), and particulars of the work of the Permanent Mandates Commission are there set out in some detail. The terms of reference to the committee, however, were quite general, and the discussion, similarly, dealt with general principles rather than with any particular mandate or any specific points dealt with in the documents I have mentioned. Samoa was not referred to in any speech, except the one which I myself delivered, and which was very fairly summarized as follows in the *League Journal* of the 24th September:—

“ Sir Thomas Wilford (New Zealand) said that all three political parties in New Zealand regarded the mandate for Samoa as a sacred trust and he was confident that, given time and patience, Samoa would be brought into no less satisfactory a condition than prevailed in New Zealand and in the Cook Islands. The inhabitants of the mandated territories were ethnologically the cousins of that Maori section of the Polynesian race, alongside of which he, as a New-Zealander, had grown up. The ‘father’ of the New Zealand Parliament to-day was, in point of fact, a Maori. The progress which had thus in less than one hundred years been realized in New Zealand had within his own lifetime been repeated in the Cook Islands, where relations between the white traders and the Native communities had undergone recent remarkable improvement. In Samoa the Government was still faced with great difficulties. As would be fully explained to the Permanent Mandates Commission at its forthcoming session, much trouble had been given by passive resistance among the Natives. Referring to certain alleged contradictions between the reports of two successive Commissions of Inquiry sent by the New Zealand Government to Samoa, he pointed out that any apparent discrepancies were due to differences in the terms of reference of the two Commissions. While the second had been specifically concerned with administrative questions, evidence on such topics had rightly been excluded by the first Commission as irrelevant to its task. He desired also to observe that the financial burden of such mistakes as had occurred had fallen not upon the Samoan people, but upon the New Zealand ratepayers. New Zealand was grateful to the Permanent Mandates Commission for its recognition of the progress that had been made. She was fully conscious of the respect due to the League as the source of the mandates, and he ventured to believe that the day was not far distant when Samoa would be accounted the shining jewel amongst the mandated territories.”

The first speaker in the Committee discussion was the Hon. F. Brennan, M.P., Attorney-General of Australia, who complimented the Permanent Mandates Commission on the work performed by it, but emphasized the necessity for the Commission to keep within the limits prescribed by the Covenant and by the terms of the mandates, and urged that it should not concern itself unduly either with details of administration—with regard to which the Mandatory was in the best position to judge—or with considerations of a purely legal or theoretical nature. He further suggested that questions reflecting adversely on the Mandatory should not be raised without the source of the complaint being disclosed, as a guarantee of good faith and responsibility. He then analysed at some length the exact rights and duties of a Mandatory, as set out in the Covenant and in the mandate itself, and particularly emphasized the rights of the holders of “C” mandates to administer the territories entrusted to them as an integral part of their own territories, provided that the moral and material welfare and social progress of the inhabitants are adequately safeguarded. While declining to admit that the mandate gave the right to any person or authority outside Australia to pursue inquiries in detail into the administration of the law in the mandated territory, he gave the assurance that information would not be arbitrarily withheld.

The principal theme of the speech made by the British delegate was that the principle of “trusteeship” definitely set out in the Covenant with regard to mandated territories, should equally be the guiding principle adopted by all nations in the administration of all colonies peopled by peoples in a backward stage of development. His speech led to some misunderstanding, particularly on the part of the Portuguese delegate, who apparently thought that a proposal had been made to extend the mandate system to all such colonies; but at a subsequent meeting the British delegate made it clear that his remarks referred only to the application of the principle of trusteeship, and that he had not advocated any actual extension of the mandate system.

Of the other speeches I need only refer to the remarks of the German delegate, who stressed the necessity, from his point of view, of the Mandates Commission keeping a close watch with regard to the question of economic discrimination.

I should perhaps also mention that, though the South African delegate in the committee merely pointed out the peculiar difficulties of administration in South West Africa, General Hertzog, in his speech in the Assembly on the 12th September (see Verbatim Record of Fifth Plenary Meeting) referred somewhat pointedly to the risk of friction and irritation arising from the Mandates Commission, or the Sixth Committee, concerning themselves with abstract questions such as where sovereignty resides or the permanency of mandates.

The committee's report to the Assembly and the relative resolutions will be found in Document A. 69 (1). This report and the resolutions were adopted by the Assembly without debate on the 30th September.

#### REFUGEES.

At the commencement of proceedings the Chairman, Sir Robert Borden (Canada), paid tribute to the work of the late Dr. Nansen, and various delegates also spoke of his great work on behalf of the refugees. The committee had before it reports from the Secretary-General of the League (Document A. 28) and from the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission (Document A. 34), which both recommended that, instead of the League Secretariat controlling the whole of the refugee work, as was arranged as an experiment last year, a new Office should be set up to control the humanitarian side of the work. These recommendations were endorsed by the committee in its report (Document A. 75) and approved by the Assembly, and in future the Secretary-General of the League will deal only with the political and legal protection of refugees (*i.e.*, with such matters as their status while they remain without nationality). The new Office, which is to have its seat in Geneva, is to consist of representatives of the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission, the interested private organizations, the League, and the International Labour Office. It is to be under the direction of M. Max Huber, President of the International Red Cross Committee and former President of the Permanent Court of International Justice. Although it will act as an autonomous body, it will be required to submit its accounts and annual report to the League. Its duties will be to carry on the work performed by the late Dr. Nansen, as High Commissioner for Refugees, with regard to providing relief and assisting to find work for refugees. The main portion of its funds will be derived from contributions from private organizations and from the sale of "Nansen stamps." These "Nansen stamps" have to be purchased annually by refugees in connection with the renewal of the certificates required by them as identity papers while they remain without nationality. The League will, however, continue to subsidize the new Office to the same limited extent to which it has in recent years subsidized Dr. Nansen's work, but no additional cost to the League is involved. The reasons which led up to the decision to divide the work were partly that experience gained during the experiment last year had shown the difficulty of working a system under which the Secretary-General had to be responsible for the expenditure of funds in various countries and for the assistance of individual cases, and partly because, while it was decided last year that the relief work must be wound up within a maximum period of ten years, the protection of refugees as regards political rights and status will probably require to be continued for a considerably longer period.

Interesting information regarding the present position in regard to refugees is contained in Document A. 28, and particularly in Appendix No. 1 to that document, in which is set out the number of refugees in each country and the proportion who are unemployed. The number of Russian refugees is set down as 950,399, and the number of Armenians as 154,231, of whom 114,115 and 63,244 respectively are shown as unemployed, and an additional 47,916 and 16,556 respectively as incapable of earning their living (disabled ex-service-men, young children, &c.). These figures take no account of former refugees who had become naturalized in the countries in which they now reside. A particularly difficult problem is furnished by the 38,834 Armenian refugees in Greece—mostly unemployed. That country has absorbed the enormous total of one and a half million Greek refugees from Asia Minor, but finds itself unable to assimilate the Armenian refugees, and the new committee is specially directed, by the resolutions adopted by the Assembly, to give early attention to this problem.

#### SLAVERY.

The British Government, whose proposal last year that the Temporary Commission on Slavery should be reconstituted was not adopted by the Tenth Assembly, returned to the charge this year with an even stronger proposal—*viz.*, that a Permanent Slavery Commission should be established and a special section of the Secretariat created to deal with the subject. While sympathizing with the desire of the British Government to ensure more effective action being taken to stamp out not merely slave-trading, but the whole institution of slavery, the majority of the committee were not prepared to support the setting-up of the proposed new organization, which would have involved a considerable increase in expenditure. When its original proposal was defeated the British delegation reverted to the proposal it made last year, that the Temporary Commission on Slavery should be revived; but it was unable to obtain acceptance for this proposal, or even for the still more modest suggestion that an Advisory Committee of Experts should be set up. As will be seen from Document A. 77, the committee, while admitting the inadequacy of the information sent to the Secretariat last year, recommended that the present procedure be continued for another year, in the hope that this year States concerned will amplify the information furnished by them not only with regard to the position in their own territories, but also as to the general position in regard to slavery. In the Assembly, at its eighteenth plenary meeting, on the 30th September, Viscount Cecil deplored this decision, stating that during the last year the results of the present procedure were absolutely nil, and that no better results could be hoped for this year, as it was too much to expect that States in which slavery still exists would be so self-denying as to supply any adequate information regarding the subject, whilst it would place a State in an extremely invidious position if it were to supply information regarding the shortcomings of any of its neighbours.

I must admit to considerable surprise at Viscount Cecil's statement that all competent authorities agreed that the number of slaves in the world to-day ran into millions, and that he believed personally that there were at least five million. While this certainly strengthens greatly the case for doing something of a definite nature, if possible, to improve the situation, I fail to see that the setting-up of a League Commission is likely to effect this end. I am afraid that the only effective action the League can take is by informing public opinion and focusing it on the States concerned, who are by no means insusceptible to the condemnation of their fellows, though the age-old customs die hard. The documents on this subject, besides A. 77 already referred to, are A. 13; A. 13 (a), (b), and (c); A. 17, A. 17 (a) and (b); and A. 54.

#### MINORITIES.

Though not of direct concern to New Zealand, by far the most important as well as the most controversial subject dealt with by the Committee, from the world standpoint, was that of the treatment of minorities. Any one who followed the three lengthy debates in the committee on this subject could hardly have failed to be impressed by the depth of feeling evinced in the speeches by the representatives of the two contending schools of thought, despite the efforts made to express them in as conciliatory a form as possible. On the one hand, the representatives of Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria pleaded for greater consideration to be extended to those of their fellow-countrymen now forming minorities in the so-called "minority States," and for improvement in the procedure with regard to minority petitions; and, on the other hand, the representatives of these States (Roumania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia) strongly resented the insinuation that their treatment of minorities gave ground for any legitimate criticism, and condemned the suggestion that anything further should be done to encourage minorities to believe that they possessed special privileges exempting them from loyal obedience to the laws of the States in which they are now incorporated. The spokesmen for the minorities admitted that the alterations in procedure regarding minority petitions adopted by the Council during its Madrid session, about a year ago, had effected an improvement from their point of view, but urged that the bulk of petitions sent in were still rejected by the Secretariat as "unreceivable" on technical and other grounds, and that, of those few which *did* reach the Council, only an infinitesimal proportion were decided in favour of the petitioners, so that the feeling had become prevalent among the minorities that it was useless to send in petitions, which might only lead to increased severity towards the petitioners. It was generally felt by the members of the committee not directly interested that it would be, at any rate, premature at present to alter procedure so recently adopted and which admittedly had effected some improvement. At the same time, there is no getting away from the fact that the bitter feelings kept alive in Central and Eastern Europe by this question constitute an everpresent threat to peace, and are therefore of concern to the whole world.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS M. WILFORD,

High Commissioner for New Zealand.

The Right Honourable the Prime Minister, Wellington, New Zealand.

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