

REFORM OF THE CALENDAR.

The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presented his report (C. 258, 1937, VIII) on this subject, during which he made reference to Document C. 234, 1937, VIII, covering a communication from the representative of Chile, asking that the question of the reform of the calendar be placed on the agenda of the May session of the Council. M. Litvinoff suggested that the question be held over till the next session in September. The Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit were in the meantime to study the draft Convention in the light of such observations as Governments might submit, and with reference to the resolution of the International Labour Conference of June, 1936.

The representative of Chile said that his purpose in asking that the question be placed on the agenda of the May session was with one object only, to make sure that the report of the committee would be presented to the Council at its September session.

As was pointed out in my last report on the proceedings of the Council at its January session, unless the proposed reform is put into force on 1st January, 1939, it cannot be applied until about 1950, as the suggested calendar requires, among other things, that 1st January shall fall upon a Sunday.

The Council took note of the observations of the representative of Chile, and the report was duly adopted.

CONFERENCE ON THE INTERNATIONAL REPRESSION OF TERRORISM.

The President (taking the place of the Rapporteur, the representative of Italy, who was absent) presented the report (Document C. 255, 1937, V). He referred to the work of the Committee of Experts who had revised the two draft Conventions for the prevention and punishment of terrorism and for the creation of an International Criminal Court. The revised texts were duly circulated to members of the Council and to Governments in Document C. 222, M. 162, 1937, V.

The Council's next step was to make arrangements for the contemplated conference, and the date suggested was Monday, 1st November. It was important that the Governments should have sufficient time to examine the drafts and prepare the instructions to be given to their delegates at the Conference. Besides the States members of the League the Governments of the following countries are to be invited: Germany, United States of America, Brazil, Costa Rica, Free City of Danzig, Iceland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino.

M. Antonesco, as representative of the Little Entente on the Council, emphasized the importance of the report submitted on this question. In his opinion it constituted the final phase of the action undertaken by the League with a view to settling the grave problems laid before it on 22nd November, 1934, by the requests of the Governments of Yugoslavia, Roumania, and Czechoslovakia. The League of Nations, however, had another duty to perform—that of preparing a draft the object of which should be to ensure, on the international plane, the prevention of the terrible scourge which is constituted by terrorism. It was necessary to take all measures for the purpose of ensuring loyal co-operation between nations with a view to the repression of acts of terrorism, crimes which prejudice the interests of all civilized States and which are thereby offensive to all human sentiment. Roumania was prepared and willing to give the fullest possible co-operation in the work to be undertaken by the League. Through her representative she had put before the Committee of Jurists set up by the Council two draft conventions which the committee had adopted as the basis of its work. M. Antonesco paid tribute to the members of the Committee of Jurists for the proposals which had been made by them.

The representative of Sweden, in view of the fact that there had not been time to study the text in detail, wished to reserve the attitude of the Swedish Government in regard to the question.

The Council, after taking note of the reservation made by the representative of Sweden, adopted the report and the resolution embodied therein.

TREATY OF MUTUAL GUARANTEE BETWEEN GERMANY, BELGIUM, FRANCE, GREAT BRITAIN, AND ITALY.

The Council received the declaration made by the British and French Governments on the neutrality of Belgium, which reads:—

“The preparatory exchange of views which has recently been taking place between the signatories of the Treaty of Locarno with a view to the negotiation of a new Western European Security Pact to replace that instrument has shown on the one hand that in any new Treaty Belgium would wish to give no guarantees to other States and on the other hand, that the other four Governments concerned in the negotiations would be prepared to agree that Belgium should not undertake to guarantee other States in the new Treaty. In view of the delay experienced in negotiating the new Treaty it was decided to give effect to the wish of the Belgian Government to be released in advance from their remaining obligations under the Locarno Treaty and the arrangements of 19th March, 1936.

“The joint note addressed by the Government of the French Republic and by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to the Belgian Government on this subject has been registered in accordance with the terms of the Covenant. In this note the French Government and His Majesty's Government declare that they consider Belgium released from all obligations towards them resulting from the Treaty of Locarno and the arrangements of 19th March, 1936, and that they have taken note of certain views expressed by the Belgian Government relating to their fidelity to the Covenant of the League of Nations and their determination efficiently to organize the defence of Belgium against any aggression or invasion.

“This exchange of notes in no way affects the obligations of any other country but Belgium. It is indeed expressly stated therein that neither the undertakings of France and the United Kingdom towards Belgium, nor the existing undertakings between the United Kingdom and France are affected.

“The Government of the French Republic and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom regard the arrangement thus concluded as a means of facilitating with the collaboration of the other interested Powers, the settlement of those problems, the solution of which is essential to the peace of Europe.”