

CONFERENCE OF CENTRAL AUTHORITIES IN EASTERN COUNTRIES.

The report on the conference, held at Bandoeng, Java, from 2nd to 13th February, 1937, was circulated to Council members, together with the report of the Committee on Social Questions relating to that Conference (Documents C. 288, M. 164, 1937, IV, and C. 235, M. 169, 1937, IV).

Among the subjects discussed was one relating to the abolition of licensed houses, the Conference passing a resolution to the effect that it declared itself in favour of abolition as a final objective, and recommending that educational measures be taken for the formation of a favourable public opinion in those countries in the East in which tolerated brothels still exist, and that abolition should in all cases be anticipated or accompanied by administrative, medical, and social measures in order to guarantee the permanence of its success.

The Conference also suggested the creation of a League of Nations' Bureau in the East for the purpose of receiving regular reports from all participating countries in regard to traffic in women and children, which would act as a liaison office between the central and other interested authorities.

There was no discussion on the report, the Council passing the following resolution (Document C. 242, 1937, IV):—

“The Council notes the report of the Conference of Central Authorities at Bandoeng and the Advisory Committee's observation on the report.

“It expresses its appreciation of the results of the Conference, which, in so far as they raise budgetary or administrative questions, come within the purview of the Assembly.”

FINANCIAL COMMITTEE.

The Council considered the report on the work of the sixty-fourth session, held from 26th to 30th April, 1937 (Document C. 221, M. 161, 1937, IIA). The committee dealt with three questions submitted to it by the Council, together with the financial situation in Austria, Bulgaria, and Hungary.

One of the questions dealt with was a proposed Convention for the suppression of counterfeiting securities. Governments had been communicated with, and as a result of the evidence placed at the committee's disposal it was felt that international action to prevent fraud was likely to prove of value. The committee therefore suggested that a small committee of jurists might be appointed, together with one or two members of the Financial Committee, in order that a detailed report might be prepared and, if possible, a draft convention or a protocol to the existing Convention for the Suppression of Counterfeiting Currency. When their report was later presented the Council would be in a position to decide whether Governments should again be asked for their further comment (Document C. 243, 1937, IIA).

Following on the Council's acceptance of the above report, the representative of Sweden, at a meeting of the Council on the 27th May, presented a further report, Document C. 247, 1937, IIA, in which he submitted the names of persons to be invited to undertake the work of preparing a report and, if possible, a draft convention or protocol relating to the suppression of counterfeiting securities:—

M. Servais, Minister of State, Honorary Public Prosecutor at the Brussels Court of Cassation; His Excellency M. Vespasien V. Pella, Roumanian Minister at The Hague; and Sir John Fischer Williams, C.B.E., K.C., United Kingdom.

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

At the last meeting of the Council the question of the proposed conference on rural life was referred to the Financial Organization and certain other technical bodies for the purpose of a preparatory study. As a result the Financial Committee suggested that an inquiry into agricultural credit systems, covering mortgage legislation, co-operative credit systems, and agricultural insurance would no doubt prove of value, and it was left to the Council to make a decision on the point.

The committee also considered the invitation to establish suitable collaboration with the Economic and Health Committee with a view to preparing a report on urban and rural housing for submission to the next Assembly. It was decided that one of its members be requested to assist the Economic Committee in this work.

The report was adopted.

COMMITTEE OF STATISTICAL EXPERTS.

The representative of Sweden, acting as Rapporteur on this subject, presented the report of the committee on the work of its Sixth Session, which was held from 19th to 24th April, 1937 (Document C. 217, M. 158, 1937, IIA).

The committee had prepared, in accordance with a recommendation of the Statistical Conference of 1928, certain proposals with regard to the statistics of occupied population in view of the fact that the next censuses would be taken in most countries in 1940 or 1941. The committee thought that, though Governments may wish to maintain their national definitions and classifications for national requirements and for purposes of comparison with previous censuses, they should be asked to provide within their national system such details as would allow of the compilation of supplementary tables complying with a uniform international scheme. A definition had therefore been prepared of the “gainfully occupied population.”

The committee had also prepared an international minimum nomenclature of branches of economic activity and a classification by personal status to serve as a basis for the grouping of occupied persons. It was now desired to obtain the observations of Governments on the suggested programme, and no doubt the comments of our Government will be received in due course. The information asked for should prove of value both nationally and internationally.