

decided to refer the observations of Governments to the Committee for advice before the Council and the Assembly could take further action in the matter. Some Governments were in favour of a multilateral convention, and others preferred the conclusion of bilateral agreements. Certain replies indicated that, owing to the diversity of the conditions of emigration in different countries, it would be difficult to arrive at a satisfactory text for an acceptable multilateral convention. The Committee therefore decided to convene a meeting early in 1938, and will make proposals as to any measures which, through international action, would be practicable to improve the precarious situation of indigent foreigners.

The Committee of Experts was also entrusted with the study of the Execution of Maintenance Obligations Abroad. As the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law at Rome had already gone thoroughly into this question, the Committee decided not to take action at present. The Secretariat of the League was in touch with the Institute, and later a meeting of experts was held in Brussels in August, 1937. The Secretariat was represented at this meeting, which had before it a set of principles which might form the basis for an international convention. The Committee is to meet again early in 1938 to draft the final text, and this the Institute will submit to Governments.

The Fifth Committee in the two matters referred to expressed the hope that practical proposals might result from a further study.

TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.

In its discussion of this subject the Fifth Committee had before it several documents.

M. de Matta (Portugal), Rapporteur, opened the discussion with a review of the League's noteworthy achievements from the signature of the Geneva Convention of 1925 down to the Convention of 1936 in suppressing illicit drug traffic.

Two points in his aide-memoire and in the report of the Advisory Committee called for comment—the ratification of the 1936 Convention and the preparation of a new international conference. The 1936 Convention for the Suppression of the Illicit Drug Traffic had been signed by thirty-two States, but up to the present had been ratified by only one—India. “There was little consolation in the fact that the United Kingdom, Canada, China, Japan, and Yugoslavia were taking steps to ratify the Convention, since this could not, under Article 22, come into force before being ratified or acceded to by ten States, whether members of the League or not. The strict regulation introduced by the Conventions of 1912, 1925, and 1931 could not be completely effective unless the 1936 Convention were applied. That Convention carefully enumerated all the acts to be regarded as offences, and made any wilful participation in these punishable. In many countries the penalties for which provision was made in national legislation were excessively light. The Convention provided for imprisonment.”

The need for international co-operation to ensure that offenders were punished was stressed. The 1936 Convention provided for extradition, for the treatment of second and following offences irrespective of the country in which the first was committed, and for dealing with extra-territorial offences.

The Rapporteur also referred to the establishment of a central office to supervise and co-ordinate the prevention of offences against the Convention.

PREPARATORY WORK FOR A CONFERENCE TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF LIMITING AND CONTROLLING THE CULTIVATION OF THE OPIUM POPPY AND THE PRODUCTION OF RAW OPIUM.

The Advisory Committee have made considerable progress in its preparatory work for the Conference. It was felt that limitation in production of the raw material for narcotic drugs would strike at the root of the evil. The alarming spread of clandestine manufacture made such limitation all the more necessary.

The Chinese delegate said that his Government attached great importance to the preparatory work for the proposed Conference, which Conference was to consider the possibility of limiting production of raw opium to what was needed for scientific and medical purposes, no allowance being made for consumption of opium-smokers. He also dealt with three aspects of the general problem of narcotic drugs. In the first place, there was the application of existing conventions with a view to reducing the output of manufactured drugs to the level of legitimate requirements. Secondly, there was the limitation of poppy-growing. Thirdly, there was the situation in the Far East, which was generally recognized to be a menace to the whole world. In each of the three aspects he had mentioned the Committee was faced with obstacles. The application of the conventions was hindered by clandestine manufacture. Poppy-growing could not be limited if the proposed Convention was not to be applied in certain territories. As regards the situation in the Far East, the Chinese Government was doing all it could, but there were traffickers to whom Chinese laws did not apply and many for whom the penalties provided by their national laws were inadequate. He further stated that in all three cases the responsibility lay with Japan. All the documents of the Advisory Committee showed that most of the clandestine manufacture in China took place in territories that were not under the control of the Chinese Government. Reference was made to Manchuria, Jehol, the leased territory of Dairen, the Japanese concession in Tientsin, and the demilitarized zone in Hopei under Japanese influence.

The Chinese delegate replied to allegations that there were territories not under Japanese influence—such as Fukien and Hopei—in which clandestine manufacture continued. In the case of the former, he said that it was difficult to suppress smuggling from the adjacent island of Formosa, the smugglers not being of Chinese nationality. On the other hand, the demilitarized zone of Hopei was not under purely Chinese influence, and the Chinese Government could not therefore accept full responsibility. He recognized that there was clandestine manufacture in territories controlled by