

1937-38.

NEW ZEALAND.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

REPORT OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND ON THE EIGHTEENTH
ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, HELD AT GENEVA IN THE YEAR 1937

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

EIGHTEENTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

New Zealand Government Offices,

SIR,—

415 Strand, London, W.C. 2, 25th October, 1937.

I have the honour to submit to you this, my report on the Eighteenth Assembly of the League of Nations, which opened in Geneva on Monday, the 13th September, 1937. The first and second meetings, which were held on the morning and afternoon of that day, were of a formal nature. There was a short speech by M. Juan Negrin, the Spanish Prime Minister, on whom, as President of the Council, then in session, devolved the duty of opening the proceedings. He made a passing reference to the unhappy state of his own country, dealt briefly with the difficult international situation, and, at the same time, paid tribute to the usefulness of the League, citing particularly the settlement of the Alexandretta question, and expressed admiration at the willingness of a great power to submit its case on Palestine to the Permanent Mandates Commission.

Before recording the preliminary steps and the appointment of officers, which are a necessary prelude in a session of the Assembly, I would say a few words about the conditions under which the Assembly met. The civil war in Spain had recently culminated in a direct threat not only to certain States whose shores are washed by the Mediterranean Sea, but to nations regularly using that sea as a highway. Although belligerent rights had not been accorded to the two sides, merchant ships of neutral countries were being searched and attacked by submarines whose nationality it was difficult to establish, and, indeed, there had arisen a state of piracy which the British and French Governments were determined to stamp out. Some days before the opening of the Assembly, the Mediterranean powers, including Italy, and also Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, had been invited to a conference at Nyon, a short distance from Geneva, to consider the steps to be taken to deal with the outrages. Both Italy and Germany declined to attend, but the other powers met, and after deliberations lasting two days there emerged an agreement acceptable to the States represented. This is not the place to deal with the agreement, as it had no direct connection with the Assembly, but it deserves passing reference.

The Spanish question, involving the activities of another Mediterranean power, had already come more than once before the Council, and it had again been raised in a more acute form by a further appeal by the Spanish Government to the League.

On the afternoon of the 13th September delegates were notified of an appeal which had been received from the Chinese Government under Articles 10, 11, and 17 of the Covenant in connection with Japanese aggression.

Here were two major issues, the gravity of which it was impossible to overestimate, and possessing elements capable of affecting a great part of the world.

Prior to the delivery of his opening speech, M. Negrin had proposed the membership of the Credentials Committee. His recommendations having been accepted, the Committee met, and, shortly after M. Negrin's speech was concluded, its Chairman read the report on the credentials of the delegates. Most of the credentials were found to be in order.

This year saw the adoption of a new procedure in connection with the appointment of officers of the Assembly. Some delegates had grown tired of the rather haphazard way in which nominations had been made, and last year's Assembly determined to try a new experiment. On reference to my report on the Seventeenth Assembly you will find mention of a new Committee—the Nominations Committee. This Committee of eleven members was set up and requested to report in time for the afternoon meeting. At the next meeting M. Hambro (Norway), who had been elected Chairman of the Nominations Committee, was invited to mount the platform. He announced that his Committee had unanimously agreed to propose as Chairman of the Assembly His Highness the Aga Khan, who had for several years led the Indian delegation. As procedure required that the Chairman be elected by secret ballot, delegates were invited to register their votes, but that this was a merely formal proceeding was shown by the result. Fifty votes were cast, and forty-nine were in favour of the Aga Khan, who was unanimously elected. The remaining vote was found to be blank.

The Assembly Committees were then constituted. They number six: the Third Committee, which deals with disa mament questions, was not called into being, but there were signs of proposals that it should be constituted at a later date. Indeed, at the meeting on the 15th September, the President recommended that the Third Committee be constituted, and his recommendation was accepted. The delegate of Hungary made a statement to the effect that his delegation would abstain from taking part in the work of the Committee, since the principle of equality of rights in respect of armaments was still unrealized. The following table shows how the President distributed the items of the Agenda amongst the Committees:—

Committee No. 1.—Constitutional and Juridical Questions—

- Item 4: Rules of Procedure of the Assembly; Maintenance of the Rule Relating to the Convocation of the Finance (Fourth) Committee of the Assembly.
- Item 13: Status of Women.

Committee No. 2.—Technical Questions—

- Item 7: Nutrition.
- Item 8: Raw Materials.
- Item 9: Emigration.
- Item 10: Urban and Rural Housing.
- Item 15: Economic and Financial Work.
- Item 16: Communications and Transit.
- Item 17: Health Work.

Committee No. 4.—Organization of the Secretariat and the Finances of the League—

- Item 5 (a): Supervisory Commission.
- Item 5 (b): Administrative Board of the Staff Pensions Fund.
- Item 14 (a): Audited Accounts for the Eighteenth Financial Period (1936), and Auditor's Report thereon.
- Item 14 (b): Budget of the League of Nations for the Twentieth Financial Period (1938).
- Item 14 (c): Report of the Supervisory Commission.
- Item 14 (d): Contributions to the League: Report of the Special Committee on Contributions.
- Item 14 (e): Amendments to Article I of the Financial Regulations (Composition of the Supervisory Commission); Report of the Committee set up by the Assembly in 1936.
- Item 14 (f): Report of the Administrative Board of the Staff Pensions Fund.

Committee No. 5.—Humanitarian and Social Questions—

- Item 18: Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs.
- Item 19: Social Work.

Committee No. 6.—Political Questions—

- Item 6 (a): The League of Nations, and Modern Means of Spreading Information utilized in the Cause of Peace.
- Item 6 (b): Report of the Secretary-General.
- Item 11 (a): Refugees—Report of the Nansen International Office for Refugees.
- Item 11 (b): International Assistance to Refugees.
- Item 20: Intellectual Co-operation.

Two items were for the moment reserved—i.e., No. 5 (c), Commission of Inquiry for European Union, and No. 12, Application of the Principles of the Covenant of the League of Nations and Problems connected therewith.

On the remaining item, No. 3, Election of Non-Permanent Members of the Council, it was for the Assembly to take action at a later date.

In the course of the early proceedings of the Assembly further items were added to the agenda, such as "Mandates," the "International Relief Union," and the "Reports of the Committee of Twenty-eight dealing with the Application of the Principles of the Covenant." Some of these subjects will be included in the account given in this report of the work of the Committees.

This is a convenient stage at which to refer to the composition of the New Zealand delegation. As sole delegate for New Zealand, I nominated myself for all Committees, such an arrangement making it possible for me to attend any meeting at which I felt my presence was required. At the same time I nominated as substitute delegates for

Committees 1 and 2	..	..	Mr. R. M. Campbell.
Committee 3	..	..	Mr. R. M. Campbell and Mr. C. A. Knowles.
Committees 4 and 6	..	..	Mr. C. A. Knowles, and
Committee 5	..	..	Miss J. R. McKenzie.

The delegation was completed by my personal assistant and typiste, Miss E. M. Hannan.

As to the remaining officers of the Assembly, the Nominations Committee proposed as Vice Presidents the first delegate of the United Kingdom, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Poland, Turkey, and the Irish Free State, and as Chairmen of Committees:

No. 1	..	..	..	..	M. Politis (Greece).
No. 2	..	..	..	..	M. Osusky (Czechoslovakia).
No. 3	..	..	..	..	M. Holsti (Finland).
No. 4	..	..	..	..	M. Guani (Uruguay).
No. 5	..	..	..	..	Countess Apponyi (Hungary).
No. 6	..	..	..	..	M. Santos (Colombia).

The Nominations Committee also proposed the appointment of M. Motta, President of the Swiss Confederation, as Honorary President.

The rules of procedure provided for the election of these officers, but in the case of the Honorary and the Vice-Presidents the Assembly dispensed with this procedure. As to the election of the Chairmen of Committees, it was left to the Committees themselves to ratify the appointments on the following day.

The above-mentioned officers, with the addition of M. Spaak (Belgium), Chairman of the Agenda Committee (a Committee of seven members which was constituted later on the proposal of the President), formed the General Committee of the Assembly, sometimes referred to as the Bureau.

On the 20th September the Assembly proceeded to the election of non-permanent members of the Council. Two days previously there was circulated a paper (A. 38, 1937) showing that Spain and Turkey, whose term was about to expire, had applied to be declared re-eligible. Before the election proper it was necessary to test the feeling of the Assembly on this question of re-eligibility, and a vote was taken, first on the Spanish application, and then on that of Turkey. To be declared re-eligible a two-thirds majority of the votes cast is required. Fifty-two States voted. In the case of Spain, twenty-three votes were cast in her favour, and in that of Turkey twenty-five. These two candidates having been unsuccessful in their applications, there were then in the field only two other candidates, with three vacancies to be filled. On the point whether the election of two members should take place at the next meeting, and the third at a later date, or whether all three members should be elected at a subsequent date and at the same time, the Assembly favoured the first course, and accordingly an election was held on the afternoon of the 20th September. Here again fifty-two States voted, Iran receiving forty-eight votes and Peru forty-six. As a simple majority only is required in such an election, the results may be considered eminently satisfactory to both countries, who then took the seats formerly occupied by Turkey and Chile. Spain's seat remained to be filled.

On the 28th September the Assembly filled the remaining vacancy on the Council by electing Belgium. Fifty-two States voted on this occasion, and Belgium, which was the only candidate, received forty-seven; the remaining voting-papers were either spoiled or left blank.

The debate on the work of the League was opened by M. Edwards, the first delegate of Chile, at the meeting held on the 14th September. The speech was largely a plea for a universal League. It seemed that in citing the effective co-operation between Latin-American States which, with one exception, are Spanish speaking, he desired to put forward an example to be followed, but I think that an experienced diplomatist such as M. Edwards would be the first to admit the circumstances which make comparison difficult. As he showed, even in Latin America there are two schools of thought—that which believes that the League can wait for a more propitious time to extend, and that which considers that a League which is not universal not only cannot render effective service, but is a danger to its members. It was perhaps unjust to say that the League has been completely sterile in its political activities (the solving of the Alexandretta question proves the reverse), and M. Edwards was on safer ground when he stressed the success of the technical activities of the organization, although one would perhaps question his contention that success in the technical sphere was due to universality of the technical organs. It is true that States non-members of the League co-operate in some of its technical activities, but it is to be doubted whether so-called universality is a cause of success in the one sphere, and lack of that quality of the want of success in the other. Later in the session M. Litvinoff had some hard things to say on the subject of universality as a cure for the League's ills. It is only fair to the Chilean delegate to state that he has consistently pursued his ideal. In spite of difficulties, he would invite at once non-member States to give their views on the reform of the Covenant. All who have the interests of the League at heart, all who believe that the League should be made the corner stone of effective international co-operation in the cause of peace, would welcome an institution universal in membership and application; but there are doubts in the minds of some who suggest that the price to be paid for universality would be too great, since it would imply a League so weakened or shorn of its power that it would be a hindrance rather than a help. But perhaps M. Edwards was

thinking mainly of the American States, including Brazil, which no longer belong to the League. At any rate, he made his position quite clear in his brief analysis of the functions of the League—whether they should be coercive, non-coercive, or limitatively coercive. He thought that the third hypothesis was more in line with the desires, anxieties, and hopes of the majority of States, especially since it was in agreement with his conception of regional ententes.

Early in the session of the Assembly the delegation of Chile had made two proposals :—

- (1) That the Committee appointed to study the question of the principles of the Covenant should be required to submit its reports to States members of the League instead of to the Assembly : and
- (2) That that Committee should be empowered to consult non-member States with a view to ascertaining the observations and suggestions they might desire to make on the problems connected with the application of the principles of the Covenant (see Documents A. 37, 1937, VII : A. 42, 1937, XII ; A. 49, 1937).

The proposals were sent to the Special Committee, which was then in session, and examined, with the result that the Assembly had before it at its meeting on the 4th October a letter from the Chairman of the Special Committee stating that, on the first point, the Special Committee would not fail to examine the proposal with all the care which it deserved, and, as to consultation with States non-members, setting out a draft resolution, which the Assembly was invited to pass. This resolution reads :—

“ The Assembly—

“ In consideration of the Chilean delegation’s proposal :

“ Appreciating the fact that it has been inspired by the desire to strengthen the authority of the League of Nations :

“ In consideration of the opinion expressed by the Special Committee appointed to study the application of the principles of the Covenant :

“ Whereas it would be eminently desirable for the League of Nations to associate the greatest possible number of States with the application of the principles on which it is based :

“ Whereas, being anxious to neglect nothing which would promote such a development of international co-operation, the Special Committee would be glad to know the observations and suggestions which the non-member States and the States that have announced their withdrawal from the League might think fit to make in order to assist it in its studies ;

“ Requests the Council to examine the conditions in which such information should be obtained as and when opportunity offers, in order to be placed at the said Committee’s disposal.”

Immediately the item had been announced by the President of the Council, M. Edwards mounted the platform. During the Seventeenth Assembly M. Edwards had been very insistent on the desirability of the universality of the League, and had spoken on several occasions both in the Assembly and in the Special Committee, whilst M. Litvinoff, on the other hand, viewed the question with great caution, voicing an opinion, held in many quarters, that a League as at present constituted, but without universality, was better than a League universal in membership but emasculated in constitution. It would seem that on this question M. Edwards set out to show that M. Litvinoff had himself once been an advocate of a universal League, for he quoted the Soviet statesman as having said, when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was received into the League in 1934 : “ Can there be a nobler aim than the organization of peace, or one that calls for the co-operation of all nations in a more practical or more urgent manner ? ” M. Litvinoff, however, would not let that pass. He followed M. Edwards, and stated categorically that his country would be the first to invite any nation now outside the League to become a member if it were known that that nation was ready to join without conditions. He, however, was not prepared to invite nations to enter on their terms, and he added that the work of the Special Committee had been much hampered during its last session by the time spent in a discussion on universality, which, I might mention, remained a discussion and led nowhere. M. Litvinoff indicated that he would not stand in the way of the Council’s considering the conditions under which information might be obtained from non-member States for the use of the Special Committee, but he would certainly abstain from voting. The resolution was adopted, with the abstention of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

A proposal which is connected with the much-debated question of universality, but conceived on a different plane, is that of the Argentine delegation regarding the co-operation, in given circumstances, of non-member States with member States. The proposal was embodied in the form of a draft declaration in a letter sent by the first delegate of the Argentine Republic to the Chairman of the Special Committee for the Application of the Principles of the Covenant (see Document A. 55, 1937). The proposal was duly considered by the Special Committee, which drafted a resolution for submission to the Assembly. The resolution, which is as under, speaks for itself. It was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 4th October. It was supported by one of the delegates of Chile in a short speech, and, after it had been passed, M. Cantilo, the first Argentine delegate, spoke a few words of thanks.

Resolution :—

“ Whereas the covenants of a universal tendency aiming at the pacific settlement of international disputes, by which the States members and non-members of the League of Nations are mutually bound, such as the Treaty for the Renunciation of War signed at Paris on 27th August, 1928, and the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Conciliation signed at Rio de Janeiro on 10th October, 1933, on the initiative of the Argentine Republic, are designed, like the League Covenant, and in accordance with Article 21 thereof, to ensure the maintenance of peace ;

" And whereas the Inter-American Conference for the Consolidation of Peace which met at Buenos Aires on 1st December, 1936, on the initiative of President Roosevelt, was actuated by the desire to supplement and strengthen the League's efforts to prevent war :

" The Assembly declares that—

" In the event of war, or a threat of war, the League of Nations, while not delaying for that purpose its own action in virtue of the Covenant, shall take suitable steps and shall establish such contacts as may appear to be necessary to associate in its efforts for the maintenance of peace those States which are not members of the League, but are mutually bound by the above-mentioned covenants, the common aim of which is to maintain peace." (Document A. 69, 1937.)

I have interrupted my account of the general debate in the Assembly in order to deal with the action taken by that body on certain proposals made by M. Edwards. The Chilean delegate was followed by several other speakers.

Mr. Wellington Koo devoted his speech entirely to his own country, and I do not think I can do better than quote the very brief résumé of that speech which I have given in my report on the Ninety-eighth Session of the Council. After referring to the Japanese occupation of certain parts of China involving operations by land, sea, and air, and quoting from accounts of eye-witnesses, he said that the situation in the Far East was one of the gravest character. He was of opinion that Japan was not out to conquer because of the necessity for finding an outlet for her dense population (seeing that the territory she had already conquered had attracted comparatively few of her people), but because of the lack of raw materials within the home-land : yet most of her needs were supplied not from China, but from the United States of America, the East Indies, countries of the Pacific, Canada, and Scandinavia. He concluded by stating that, if there was a will to co-operate, something could be done ; and he cited the success of the recent Nyon Conference on the Mediterranean Sea. China had appealed to the League. It was for the Council to decide whether to proceed itself to consideration, laying the question before the Assembly at the same time, or whether, in the first instance, to refer the appeal to the Advisory Committee on the Sino-Japanese conflict set up by the Assembly of February, 1933.

General Tanczos, the chief Hungarian delegate, devoted part of his speech to the work of the Special Committee on the Application of the Principles of the Covenant. He expressed anxiety at the slowness of progress, and criticized such preliminary work as had been done on the ground that it was too closely attached to the past and to the ideas of the past. The past was a burden which should be thrown off, and unless the Committee looked rather to the future it might be unable to carry out its work.

It should be recorded that the Hungarian delegate made the comparison between the minority clauses of some of the Treaties concluded after the Great War and the provisions respecting the treatment of minorities contained in the Fundamental Law of the Sanjak of Alexandretta, provisions which have been approved by the Council. He inferred that the Council now professed more liberal ideas in the matter of the protection of minorities. The duties devolving on the Council in respect of the protection of minorities have nearly always been a theme in the Hungarian delegate's speeches to the Assembly, and on this occasion General Tanczos considered that the question deserved the current Assembly's earnest attention.

The Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was the chief delegate of his country, devoted almost the whole of his speech to Palestine. The speech was temperate in tone, but it contained a special plea against the policy of partition advocated by the British Royal Commission. He admitted the good will of the United Kingdom and the sincerity of the Royal Commission, but said that partition would merely result in greater confusion, in maintaining discord, and in stirring up hatred.

The Foreign Minister of Iraq also dealt briefly with the problem of Palestine.

M. Koht, the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, dealt with a number of matters, including the weakness of the League in the face of aggression, the problems of disarmament, the treatment of refugees, and the appeal of Spain to the League. On the Spanish question he followed somewhat the line that I had myself advocated in the Council. He said :

" We consider that national questions can best be decided by the free vote of the citizens of the country concerned. Could not the League invite the parties in Spain to accept an armistice, in order that a referendum might be taken under the authority of the League on the question of the constitution of that country ? I do not underestimate the difficulties of such an undertaking : they are only too evident. Accordingly, I will make no formal proposal : but I felt I could not omit to lay before the Assembly this idea of pacific intervention. I shall now await the statements of other members of the Assembly, and shall be prepared, should occasion arise, to support any proposal on the lines I have indicated. If the League were to lend its authority to such a procedure, there might be some chance, however slight, of bringing to an end the cruel strife which is now laying waste unhappy Spain. The suggestion is not a new one, and I venture to leave its consideration to the Council, at whose last meeting this very question was raised by the representative of New Zealand."

M. Koht was followed by M. Negrin, the Prime Minister of Spain. As, however, the questions raised by the Spanish appeal were to be considered by the Sixth Committee, I will leave them to be dealt with in that section of this report devoted to the Sixth Committee.

Mr. Eden, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the United Kingdom, spoke in the Assembly on the 20th September. After a few words of congratulation to His Highness the Aga Khan on having been appointed President of the Assembly, Mr. Eden said :—

“We are met at a time of profound international anxiety. Though the peoples of the earth want peace, they seem as far as ever from attaining to it. In two parts of the world at least—in the south-western corner of Europe and in the Far East—war is being waged as fiercely as at any time in history, while to the age-old bitterness of strife is added the deadly power of modern armament.

“The influence of these events is felt everywhere. Even those of us here whose nationals are not engaged either directly or indirectly in either of these conflicts, even the most peace-loving amongst us, are now spending a vast proportion of national wealth upon armaments.”

Mr. Eden then proceeded to give some figures to illustrate the degree of rearmament which had been forced upon the United Kingdom after the efforts made in the early post-war years to set up a new international order, of which the League was to be the foundation, had failed. He deplored that the lessons of the Great War had not been fully learned. Until they had been learned the League could not play its full part, yet, in his opinion, there was no dispute between nations which could not be settled by peaceful means. The United Kingdom was prepared to use peaceful means in connection not only with policy, but also with armaments, but for the moment collective action depended upon the extent of co-operation of other States, whether members of the League or not. He then referred to Spain, and derived some comfort from the fact that the conflict had not spread beyond the Spanish frontiers. He added :—

“We are ready enough to take our full share, and more than our full share, of responsibility for the policy of non-intervention. We have consistently supported that policy. If non-intervention now has to be discarded, it will not be for lack of patience on the part of its original sponsors. Let us not, however, conceal from ourselves this patent fact : if the policy of non-intervention is abandoned, Europe will be swept into deeper and more dangerous waters. A leaky dam may yet serve its purpose, but we alone cannot decide the fate of this policy. Whatever that fate may be, there is one pledge that I can unequivocally give to this Assembly—that the Government I represent will spare no endeavour to prevent war from engulfing Europe.”

Mr. Eden then devoted a few seconds to the Nyon Conference. He regretted that certain powers had not been represented, but justified the elaboration of a plan without consultation with the absentees on the grounds of speed and efficiency.

A few short sentences having reference to the Far East were followed by a defence of the United Kingdom's adoption of the policy of protection. He then spoke on the problem of raw materials, which he emphasized was, in the opinion of the League Committee which had studied the subject, not primarily or even substantially one of colonial possessions. On this problem he said :—

“Acting in the spirit which promoted our policy in this respect, and wishing to give effect to the recommendation of the Committee on Raw Materials, His Majesty's Government is ready, as part of the efforts now being made to effect economic and political appeasement and to increase international trade—but without prejudice to the principle of colonial preference—His Majesty's Government is ready, I repeat, to enter into discussion with any powers which may approach it for an abatement of particular preferences in non-self-governing colonial territories where these can be shown to place undue restriction on international trade.”

The speech of the Portuguese Foreign Minister was devoted almost entirely to the Spanish conflict. The following quotation from the speech is of interest :—

“It is undoubtedly a fact that we earnestly desire the triumph of Spanish nationalism—we desire it to-day more eagerly than ever—for the simple reason that we all know the absorption of Portugal by Spain to be one of the ambitions of Iberian communism. We do not fear that we shall be absorbed ; we fear only the anxiety and the disorders which naturally result from such an ambition.”

Of the other speeches made I would mention two only, that of Mr. Bruce, the first delegate of Australia, and that of M. Litvinoff, the first delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The first part of Mr. Bruce's speech dealt with the conflict in the Far East. During somewhat lengthy remarks concerning the scope of the Articles of the Covenant which might be invoked in the case of the Chinese Appeal, he said :—

“Nothing could be more fatal to the prestige and future welfare of the League than that we should attempt, by some meaningless formula, to postpone or sidestep facing the issues involved and defining the League's attitude and position. Moreover, honour and the permanent interests of the League itself demand that China should not be misled into believing that she can rely on forms of assistance which may not be forthcoming.”

Mr. Bruce also dealt rather fully with the economic work of the League, including the subject of nutrition.

M. Litvinoff spoke on the recent cases of aggression, on the desirability which had been expressed in several quarters for universality of the League, and on the Reform of the Covenant. His remarks on the assertion that the aggressors both in Europe and in Asia had intervened in order to fight communism were very pointed, and the following is worthy of quotation :—

“I am sure that all sensible people understand perfectly the stupidity of the anti-Communist slogan and the aggressive intentions which it hides, but that they listen to or read the nonsense in silence, out of considerations of politeness, perhaps out of place in the circumstances. The danger is that this silence may be understood by the aggressor as agreement that his aggressive intentions or actions are justified, with all the sad consequences that follow for the cause of peace.

"I think the time has come to make an end of this dangerous propaganda weapon of aggression, that it is time for those to whom the interests of peace are really dear to tell the parrots in high places that nonsense repeated day by day does not cease thereby to be nonsense, that a spade should be called a spade and aggression aggression, with whatever slogan it decorates itself, and that whatever the meaning of anti-communism—be it mineralogical, commercial, strategic, or any other—there is no international justification for aggression, armed intervention, invasion of other States, and breaches of international treaties which it cloaks.

The item "Commission of Inquiry for European Union" may be looked upon as a hardy annual which does not flower. The Assembly, on the proposal of its General Committee, passed the following resolution on the 30th September:—

"The Assembly—

"Having consulted its General Committee on the procedure to be followed with regard to the question appearing on the agenda for the session as item 5 (c) (Commission of Inquiry for European Union):

"Notes that circumstances have been such that the Commission has been unable to meet since the last session;

"And decides, such being the case, to renew the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry for European Union for the coming year and to place the question on the agenda for the next session of the Assembly." (Document A. 59, 1937, VII.)

However, before the motion was actually put to the vote M. Politis (Greece) expressed on behalf of himself and some colleagues the hope that the Commission might be able to meet before the close of the Assembly. I believe the Commission did meet, but as New Zealand is not a member no representative of the Government was present at the meeting.

FIRST COMMITTEE: CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL QUESTIONS.

New Zealand Delegate: Mr. W. J. JORDAN. Substitute: Mr. R. M. CAMPBELL.

RULE RELATING TO CONVOCATION OF FOURTH (FINANCIAL) COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Assembly in 1933 authorized the President of the Council to convene the Finance Committee one week or less in advance of the first meeting of the ordinary session of the Assembly. This authority was extended to cover the period up to the end of the Eighteenth Assembly (1937), and, although not so far exercised, it was considered to be one that should still be held in reserve. The intention is to summon the Fourth Committee early if its agenda is so heavy that the proceedings of the Assembly would be delayed if such a course were not taken. On the First Committee's recommendation, the Assembly accordingly resolved that the existing rule be retained for its 1938 and 1939 Sessions (Document A. 43, 1937, V).

POSITION, IN REGARD TO THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS, OF CERTAIN STATES WHICH HAVE WITHDRAWN FROM MEMBERSHIP OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

An important question is involved here. The countries may be divided into two categories, those with whom an arrangement has been made for the payment spread over a number of years of arrears of contributions and those with whom no such arrangement exists but who are in arrears. The countries in question are Honduras, Nicaragua, and Paraguay (Guatemala and Salvador are also involved), and details will be found in Document A. 1/5, 1937, which is a letter from the Chairman of the Fourth Committee to the Chairman of the First Committee submitting a question raised in the report of the sub-committee on Contributions. The question was framed as follows:—

"The Committee, considering that the case of Paraguay presents certain features requiring the careful consideration of the Assembly, suggests that it would be desirable for the Assembly to examine the question whether, having regard to the terms of Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Covenant, the withdrawal of a State from the League can take effect at the end of the prescribed period of two years' notice if the State has not paid the contributions, including arrears due down to that date, or whether the State continues to belong to the League and to incur liability for additional contributions until it regularizes its financial position."

Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Covenant reads:—

"Any member of the League may, after two years' notice of its intention so to do, withdraw from the League, provided that all its international obligations and all its obligations under this Covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal."

It is assumed that the payment of contributions towards the expenses of the League of Nations is an international obligation incumbent upon a State member, but if this obligation has not been performed by a State which has given notice to withdraw from the League, and if it is thought that it will not be performed, is that State to be regarded as belonging to the institution after the expiration

of the notice, with the consequent accumulation of unpaid contributions? As one member suggested, such a State would cease to be an honourable and become a dishonourable member. Again, of how many States who have already left and have fulfilled the obligation to pay can it be said that they have fulfilled all of their international obligations? It is not many years ago since a nation which had been declared by the Assembly as having violated the Pact gave notice of its intention to withdraw, and at the expiration of such notice, having fulfilled its financial obligation towards the League, was deemed to have ceased to be a member. And here there was a question of the application of paragraph 4 of Article 16, which reads:

“Any member of the League which has violated any covenant of the League may be declared to be no longer a member of the League by a vote of the Council concurred in by the representatives of all the other members of the League represented thereon.”

On the other hand, it has been suggested that a State which has not been so branded, but merely wishes to leave the League, shall continue to be a member until its financial obligations have been fulfilled. I should here remark that this argument has not so much force in the case of those States who have made a special arrangement to pay arrears and which are keeping to that arrangement.

It was perhaps unfortunate that in some quarters there was an attempt to consider as having the effect of a resolution, and therefore binding, a passage in a report submitted to the Assembly of 1935, and reading:—

“The Government of Paraguay has given notice of withdrawal from the League. Before withdrawal, it will be required, in accordance with Article 1 of the Covenant, to fulfil all its financial obligations to the League up to the actual date of withdrawal . . .”

On a legal point the Permanent Court of International Justice can always be asked to give an advisory opinion, but that proceeding did not appeal to the majority of the Committee, even to the lawyers, and it was thought desirable that the Assembly itself should decide. At the close of the discussion the Chairman adopted a suggestion which had been made by a member at the outset that the question be considered by a sub-committee, which, when deliberating, should take into account the tendencies of the debate.

At the meeting on the 30th September the Committee had before it a reply which had been drafted by the sub-committee stating that after considering the question in all its aspects it had reached the following conclusions:—

“(a) The case of Honduras:—

Honduras can be permitted to continue to pay instalments on consolidated contributions for seventeen years after leaving the League.

“(b) The case of Nicaragua:—

The Assembly can grant a reduction of debt to a State which has given notice of withdrawal.

The withdrawal of such a State can become effective at the end of the period of two years, although it has not then paid off its debt in full.

“(c) The case of Paraguay:—

1. It is clearly the duty of a member of the League to discharge all its financial obligations towards the League of Nations before its withdrawal becomes effective.

2. But Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Covenant does not oblige the League to treat as a member a State which has resigned from the League but has not paid its debts to the League.

3. Accordingly, without seeking to give an authoritative interpretation applicable in all cases, the First Committee is of opinion, in view of the facts of the particular case, that Paraguay may be considered to have ceased to be a member of the League of Nations, notwithstanding its undoubted default as regards its financial obligations towards the League.

4. Paraguay will, however, remain liable to discharge the full amount of its debt, as well as to discharge all its other obligations towards the League of Nations. The League is free to recover the amount due to it by all the means at its disposal.”

The conclusion in regard to Paraguay was at once contested by the representative of Bolivia, who, after explaining that a local settlement of a dispute which his country had had with Paraguay was pending before a tribunal which was an emanation of the League of Nations, stated he was opposed to a method of dividing the various obligations arising out of the Covenant. He added that if the sub-committee's view were adopted he would reserve to himself the right to discuss the question in the Fourth Committee and even in the Assembly. The representative of Bolivia was followed by other speakers, and more than one suggestion of a way out of the difficulty was made. Finally, the Chairman made an ingenious proposal to the effect that this section of the draft reply dealing with Paraguay should be replaced by a passage to the effect that “the First Committee thinks that it is not desirable to give a reply at the moment to the question put.” I feel bound to say that the majority of the Committee seemed to favour the original draft.

Although the final act rightly belongs to the Fourth Committee, it will be convenient to dispose of the matter here. When the draft report on the Budget was under discussion the drafting of the passage relating to Paraguay was challenged by the representative of Bolivia, on the ground that sufficient stress had not been laid on the legal position as defined in paragraph 3, Article 1 of the Covenant. M. Hambro and others asserted that the draft was precise and did not prejudice the legal position. However, a slight amendment was proposed by a member of the Committee which gave satisfaction to the representative of Bolivia, and the draft as amended was adopted (Document A. 76, 1937, X).

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE UNIFICATION OF PRIVATE LAW (ROME).

The current work of this Institute, one of the League's organs located in a centre other than Geneva, was noted in the First Committee. Its scope will be sufficiently indicated by mentioning subjects, all relating to draft uniform laws or legal practice, that are being dealt with in some form or other: Civil liability of motorists and compulsory insurance of motorists; innkeepers' liability; sales (international trade being involved); contracts between absent persons and contracts concluded by agents; enforcement of maintenance obligations abroad; international loan contracts; assistance to indigent foreigners; protection of authors' rights, and establishing a standard publishers' contract.

The Assembly, at the First Committee's suggestion, decided that the work of the Institute shall be placed on the Assembly's agenda every year. The First Committee and the Assembly also looked to the Institute for collaboration in the work that forms the subject of the next succeeding paragraphs in this report (Document A. 64, 1937, V).

STATUS OF WOMEN.

The persistence of many women's international organizations, anxious that women's status should be discussed and national progress in this connection brought under comparative review at the League of Nations, was amply rewarded in 1937. The subject was given by far the greatest part of the time of the First Committee, a body which, like all the main Committees of the Assembly, includes representatives of all States members of the League.

Representatives of fifteen Governments, New Zealand being one, in September, 1936, requested that the whole question of the status of women be included in the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly. This request being granted, the way was open for a general discussion. It was facilitated by the communications from Governments and women's international organizations received in 1936 and 1937 (League Documents A. 33, 1936, V; A. 14, 1937, V; A. 14 (a), 1937, V; A. 14 (b) (c), (d), 1937, V). Reference to these and to the record of discussions in the First Committee will show the diversity of conditions in different countries and, not less striking, the substantial progress that is being made towards the goal of full equality of the sexes. It is needless for me here to cover the ground in detail.

"Is the matter one that concerns the League of Nations?" was a first question raised—or, if it was not abruptly asked at Geneva, it may properly suggest itself. The French representative's reply, "The League has the right to say that any matter of human interest concerns it directly, and that nothing which affects mankind could be regarded as being outside its sphere of action", if it expresses a sentiment to which no exception will be taken, leaves unanswered the reasonable question as to what precisely the League might do to further the no doubt admirable aspirations of the women's international organizations. Nor, it must be admitted, did the prolonged discussions in the First Committee very usefully answer the question. Do they not rather confirm the impression that for the most part the problems that are raised call for attention in each country separately rather than in Geneva?

It is, on the other hand, fairly arguable that the League of Nations can properly function as a clearing-house for the exchange of information on this as on other matters of universal but mainly domestic concern, and that periodically a review of such matters by the Assembly and its Committees is justified by its bearing on action taken in various countries.

A due balance between the latter view and that which would underline the modest rôle of the League in matters of domestic concern is struck by the resolution recommended by the First Committee and accepted by the Assembly. This recognizes that the collecting and publishing of full information is the extent of the League's possible contribution, that the services of existing organs of the League should mainly be used in so doing, and that there should be consultation with women's international organizations as the bodies most anxious and most competent to advance the cause. The text of the resolution follows:—

"The Assembly:—

"(1) Having regard to the information concerning the question of the legal status of women, more particularly the political and civil status, which has been collected by the Secretary-General in accordance with the resolution of the Assembly adopted on September 27th, 1935;

"(2) In view of the fact that in general the trend is for law to develop in the direction of equality between the sexes:

"(3) Considering it to be desirable that a comprehensive study should be prepared and published giving full information on the legal status enjoyed by women in the various countries of the world as the result of the provisions of national law and the application of these provisions;

"(4) Considering that, by its resolution of 27th September, 1935, the Assembly recognized 'that the question of conditions of employment, whether of men or women, is a matter which properly falls within the sphere of the International Labour Organization,' and expressed the hope that that Organization 'will, in accordance with its normal procedure, undertake an examination of those aspects of the problem within its competence—namely, the question of equality under labour legislation—and that it will, in the first place, examine the question of legislation which effects discriminations, some of which may be detrimental to women's right to work';

"(5) Considering that the International Labour Organization is engaged in the study contemplated by the Assembly's resolution and that the comprehensive study now in view should not cover matters which have been recognized to fall within the scope of the International Labour Organization;

“(6) Considering, furthermore, that this comprehensive study should also not extend to questions of the nationality of women, in regard to which the Assembly maintains the decisions which it has already taken ;

“(7) Considering it desirable that the study of the other elements of the question should be entrusted to the competent scientific institutions, which should be given instructions enabling them to co-ordinate their work ;

“(8) Considering that, for private law, the League of Nations possesses in the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law an organ well qualified to carry out such a study of comparative law ; and that for other aspects of the question it would be desirable to have recourse to other competent scientific institutes ;

“(9) Considering that a small committee of experts, comprising members of both sexes, should be set up for the purpose of determining the exact scope of the contemplated comprehensive study and of distributing the work among the various scientific institutes, and that this committee should, so far as necessary, maintain contact with the institutes during the progress of the study and examine and settle the final form and content of the resulting documents, with a view to the preparation of a synthetic survey, which should accompany the documents when they are published by the League ;

“(10) Considering that this committee should have power to consult women's international organizations and invite their co-operation in any form which it thinks advisable ;

“(11) Asks the Council to appoint a committee of experts of both sexes for the purposes above mentioned, and expresses the hope that the committee will receive the co-operation necessary for the successful execution of the present resolution.”

Document A. 54. 1937, V.

SECOND COMMITTEE : ECONOMIC, FINANCIAL AND OTHER TECHNICAL QUESTIONS.

New Zealand Delegate : Mr. W. J. JORDAN. Substitute : Mr. R. M. CAMPBELL.

Keeping in mind the issues of peace and war, of life and death, that challenged attention during the 1937 League Assembly, it will be appreciated that the League's efforts, its ample documents, and delegates' speeches on the problems that fall within the province of the Second Committee seemed somewhat removed from the rank of first urgency. These problems relate to what is called “the work of the technical organizations of the League” : they cover economic and financial matters, including access to raw materials, migration, communications and transit, housing, health and nutrition.

That such subjects should be discussed at Geneva, and the greatest possible measure of international co-operation secured, is clearly all to the good. Just as clearly, the contention that “the League can regain in the economic sphere the prestige it has lost in the political sphere”—the “political sphere” here meaning the task of ensuring peace and collective security—is nonsense. Better by far recognize that all our strivings after human betterment will be vain unless we do collectively secure peace. This is the proviso that one feels bound to add to any commendation of the worthwhileness of the League's technical work.

As a fair sample of the value and the limitations of the League's technical work, reference may be made to the comparatively new subject of nutrition. This has been on the agenda of the last three Assemblies ; it has been before the International Labour Conference, the permanent organization of which has collaborated in preparing reports ; and the considerable output of published material has been both a cause and a result of widespread interest in the subject. In 1937 the League had before it the final report of its Mixed Committee (so-called because it included agricultural, economic, and health experts), entitled “The Relation of Nutrition to Health, Agriculture, and Economic Policy.” This report is a mine of useful information ; and even if it invites the retort that the obvious is somewhat laboriously proved—as that food consumption varies with income, or that farmers suffer through consumers' poverty—this is answered by remarking that the obvious is commonly neglected.

The report brings to an end the special activities of the League in the sphere of nutrition : but the Second Committee recommended, and the Assembly resolved, that the permanent organizations of the League should maintain interest in the subject and publish summaries of progress.

A specific recommendation that may suitably call for action in New Zealand is that a National Nutrition Committee be set up by the Government in each country. The reports and discussion agreed that such bodies can do useful work.

The Assembly also requested “Governments to furnish to the League of Nations annual reports on the action taken by them to study the state of national nutrition and to improve nutritional standards.” These recommendations, together with the liquidation of the League's *ad hoc* committees on nutrition, seem properly to place the emphasis where it belongs—that is to say, they admit the essentially national and governmental responsibility for effective action, enabling people to enjoy the improved nutrition which their health requires and which production makes so abundantly possible.

The review of the League's health work in general, including the studies and discussion on housing, served again to illustrate the active and widespread interest in ways and means, and the inescapable responsibilities of modern government, for improving conditions of life. A New Zealand representative may perhaps be pardoned if he feels some satisfaction at the references to the relatively favourable mortality rates that the Dominion has achieved, rates that commonly serve as an ideal to which others aspire. But, at the same time, when current governmental efforts and plans in so many other countries are under review, nobody from even so favoured a country as ours can be insensible to the fact that we cannot be content to rest on our laurels. Were we inclined to complacency, a study of other Governments' activities in the sphere of health should be a useful corrective. In this connection it will be of interest to New Zealand to follow the proceedings of the Conference on Rural Hygiene to be

held under League auspices in Mexico City in December, 1938. So far, the Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Peru, the United States of America, Uruguay, and Venezuela have expressed their intention of taking part in this Conference.

Migration was discussed at the Second Committee, but not to any considerable extent or to lead to any positive conclusions. As in 1936, the subject was raised by Poland, a country that feels the need of emigration-openings for agricultural people. The representative of India explicitly, and all other representatives implicitly by their silence, took the view that emigration does not afford a solution of a country's problems or that it is not a subject towards which League of Nations discussions can make a useful contribution. The Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee, did no more than decide that the subject of international migration should be placed on the agenda of its next ordinary session, and that meantime its organs, and the International Labour Office, should study this and allied problems.

Raw materials, with particular reference to the question of equality of access thereto, were before the 1937 Assembly in the form of the report by the Special Committee set up pursuant to a resolution of the 1936 Assembly. This resolution, it will be recalled, arose mainly from the complaints of certain States, not being members or at any rate not active members of the League, and not possessing colonial territories, that the hardships of their people are due to their being deprived of raw materials through not having sovereignty over such territories. Substantially, these complaints were shown by the Committee's report (League Document A. 27, 1937, II (b)) to be baseless. It noted, however, the growth of preferential tariffs, and observed that "any preferential system must tend to have some adverse effect in the countries to which it does not apply"; and it made also the pertinent comment that "the difficulties in procuring a number of raw materials have been increased by the heavy expenditure on armaments incurred by most countries."

General "economic and financial matters" were again reviewed by many Governments' representatives, at greater or less length, and with always the consciousness, as I mentioned at the outset of this part of my report on the Second Committee's work, that more urgent problems were pressing on the attention of the League and the world. Almost all representatives, and the published documents of the League, agreed in showing some anxiety lest the recovery so far made from world depression, incomplete as this recovery still is, will not be long sustained. That there are grounds for this anxiety nobody who is honestly observant of the nature of the recovery, or of its dependence to at least some extent on nations' feverish rearmament activity, will for a moment deny. But that is not the whole story. If Geneva is a watchtower from which some events may be objectively regarded, and if account be taken as best it can both of the dangers and of the brighter possibilities ahead of us, we can quite positively say that material progress and increasing security are within our grasp. That these rights are denied to so many, and are enjoyed by others with a sense of fear for what the future may hold, is due to man-made conditions, which can be changed. These conditions are indeed being changed before our eyes. The excuse for inaction, "no country can do much—or no Government can do anything—to improve the purchasing-power of its people, for thus its competitive power in the world will be damaged," is seen for the flimsy thing it is. This is not to suggest that such bogeys are not still resurrected in Geneva, as in other centres of government. But, fortunately, these fearful imaginings are more and more being offset by the substantial achievements of people, who are, in fact, through their Governments, collectively bettering their material conditions. It is no small contribution by the present Government in New Zealand that they are taking their part in bringing high ideals into reality; nor can the wide significance of this service be anywhere more adequately appreciated than at the League of Nations review of the world's economic and financial problems.

The documents covering the discussions of the Second Committee are:—

- A. 46, 1937, III: Urban and Rural Housing.
- A. 48, 1937, III: Work of the Health Organization.
- A. 57, 1937, II (b): Nutrition.
- A. 58, 1937, VIII: Work of the Communications and Transit Organization during the Year 1936–37.
- A. 72, 1937, II (b): Economic and Financial Questions.

THIRD COMMITTEE.

New Zealand Delegate: Mr. W. J. JORDAN. Substitute Delegates: Mr. R. M. CAMPBELL; Mr. C. A. KNOWLES.

As already mentioned, the Third Committee was set up by the Assembly on the 15th September. I understand that prior to the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments the Committee played an important part in the deliberations of the Assembly. No one can dispute the opinion held by all competent organs of the League that the general political and economic situation is not such as to ensure the success of a resumption of work on all questions coming within the orbit of the Conference. The calling together of the Third Committee was little more than a gesture to the world, but it was an outward sign that hope still lingered, and that once there existed a better frame of mind the material was at hand for a resumption of the discussions from which much was expected in the early years of the present decade.

The Committee met twice. The first meeting was opened by the Chairman with a speech which summed up the existing situation. After referring to decisions taken by the Third Committee of the Seventeenth Assembly and to the Council action which had resulted in the convocation of the Bureau of the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments for the 31st May last, he stated that,

whilst in the opinion of the Bureau the general political and economic situation was not conducive to a resumption of all the work of the Conference, there was a draft Convention, framed by the Conference, on Publicity for National Defence Expenditure and the Working of an Organ of Supervision and Co-ordination which might be suitable for agreement even in existing circumstances. In execution of a decision of the Bureau a report was communicated to Governments with an inquiry whether they would be prepared in principle to accept a system of publicity based on the draft. Several replies have been received, and others are expected. Further, the Secretariat is engaged in collecting information on the present position in regard to the national control of the manufacture of and trade in arms in the principal countries. In due course the Bureau will meet again for the purpose of considering the replies from Governments, discussing the draft Convention on Publicity for National Defence Expenditure, and deciding upon appropriate measures. I would here refer you to that part of the Secretary-General's report which deals with disarmament. The Chairman then laid before the Committee a motion entered in the names of the delegations of Belgium, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland. It read:—

“The Assembly—

“Considering it desirable that a first step should be taken towards the conclusion of a General Convention for the reduction and limitation of armaments, and that accordingly use should be made without delay of the work done by the Disarmament Conference,

“(1) Recommends the conclusion of an international Convention on the publicity of national-defence expenditure ;

“(2) Recommends the members of the League to establish, each in so far as it is concerned, national supervision over the manufacture of and trade in arms, ammunition, and implements of war, on the basis of the work done by the Special Committee of the Disarmament Conference, and asks Governments to inform the Secretary-General of the League of Nations of the steps taken for this purpose ;

“(3) Requests the Secretary-General to communicate the present resolution to the States not members of the League of Nations.”

Dr. Lange, of Norway, who has been associated with the Assembly since 1920, at once dealt with the motion. He said it was not only desirable, but a duty under the Covenant to conclude a General Convention for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments. The world was living in a state of war, although war had not been declared ; but something could be done. He then proceeded to dissect the motion, and added that technical committees were in existence and there was material available which would be invaluable in making for progress, given the will in the right direction. The Chairman, having intimated that the discussion need not be limited to the subject-matter of the resolution, Dr. Lange was followed by other speakers. M. Sandler, Sweden, said that speeches were not enough. More was required, and the draft resolution, whilst it did not ask too much of Governments, did raise the issue in definite terms. It was clearly understood that all that could be done at the present moment was very modest preparatory work, pending an improvement in the general atmosphere. Budgetary publicity, acknowledged by treaty, enforced and controlled, was not in itself a means of reducing or limiting armaments ; but it was one of the indispensable bases of action designed to arrive at such reduction or limitation. Similarly, national control over the manufacture of and trade in arms would neither reduce nor limit the level of armaments ; but it was a necessary preparation which States must make in order to be in a position to accept and apply international control as and when the general position permitted. It was true that the motion, if accepted by the Assembly, would not imply immediate execution, but it would amount to a decision in principle entailing measures of application.

M. Politis, speaking not only for his own country (Greece), but as President of the Bureau of the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, said that the question of disarmament was still the focal point of those who believed that there could be no peace without international organization and no international organization without a reduction and limitation of armaments. The peak of spending on armaments was not far off, for peoples would not submit to increases in armaments at the expense of crying social needs. When it was realized that armaments were useless mankind would be forced to the opinion that the principle of international co-operation would have been better. The Conference was not dead, and he agreed in principle with the resolution, subject to slight amendments of form.

The speech of M. Paul Boncour (France) was most interesting. In his opinion, the setting-up of the Third Committee affirmed the continuity of the efforts of the League of Nations in the pursuit of one of its essential aims, perhaps the most important, provided reduction and limitation of armaments were taken in conjunction with their necessary complement in the shape of the organization of mutual aid and collective security. He believed that the draft resolution, subject to amendment, was a satisfactory synthesis of the limits which the situation indicated and of the extensive possibilities which were still open. He added:—

“But, if there could be no question for the moment of limitation or even reduction of expenditure, it was possible at once to proceed to a frank exchange of information as to the existing position. Uncertainty was one of the factors that went to aggravate the situation by its effect in inducing each power to increase its own expenditure and its own armaments for fear of not keeping pace with its neighbours. A Convention of the kind proposed in the resolution appeared to be the very best means of meeting the requirements of the moment.

Mr. Elliot, United Kingdom, said that, whilst the intentions of the draft resolution had the full sympathy of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, he doubted whether the replies which had been received from Governments regarding budgetary publicity gave sufficient ground for thinking

that a meeting of the Bureau at the present time to discuss the Convention further would have useful results. It seemed to be agreed by all that, while it was desired to keep the ideal of disarmament alive, it was not desired to bring about a further discouragement amongst the peoples of the world by convening disarmament meetings, the favourable outcome of which must be extremely doubtful. He gave some account of the measures which had been taken by means of the London Naval Treaty of 1936 and subsequent agreements to effect a limitation of naval armaments, and he added that twenty-seven Governments had given formal notification of their adherence to the rules governing the action of submarines with regard to merchant ships contained in Part IV of the 1930 Naval Treaty. Qualitative limitation, at any rate in naval arms, was being effected in widening circles, and the United Kingdom Government would spare no effort to continue and to accelerate their efforts in this direction. He concluded: "Meanwhile, until a remedy can be found, men must work under the spell of those long dumb cylinders of steel, guns, or aero-engines which have become for too many the idols of the present time—idols which return nothing but death to those who bow before them, when at last they speak. It is for those I am addressing to prove themselves realists and to break that spell."

At the conclusion of the debate a sub-committee, consisting of five members, was appointed to review the text of the draft resolution in the light of the observations made at the meeting, the sub-committee to have power to ascertain the views of delegations which had not spoken.

On the 25th September the Committee met for the second time, when Dr. Lange, Chairman of the Drafting Committee, submitted a report and an amended draft resolution. He explained the scope of the report and the amendments to the draft resolution, and said that though the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments had failed politically, as all must regret, it was able on the technical side, following on the work of the Preparatory Commission which began in 1926, to get together a great deal of thorough and extremely valuable documentary material on the various aspects of the question of disarmament. There were certain gaps in this material: one of these, which was particularly regrettable, was in the case of air armaments. But, apart from this gap in the available material, it might almost be said that nothing remained to be done, once the political conditions made action possible, except to complete by a session of a few weeks or months the initial work already accomplished by bringing into being a General Convention on the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments. They all hoped that the moment for such action was approaching. By approving the modest resolution now before them the Third Committee would be doing what it could to keep alive the sacred flame of the idea of reduction and limitation of armaments. The survival of that idea was an indispensable condition of the continued operation of the League itself and of the continuance of the prosperity of the peoples and of the maintenance of normal relations between countries.

Dr. Lange was followed by other speakers, and ultimately the report with slight amendments and the draft resolution were approved by the Committee for submission to the Assembly. It was brought before that body on the 30th September, when it was passed. It reads:—

"The Assembly—

"Considering it desirable that a first step should be taken towards the conclusion of a general convention for the reduction and limitation of armaments, and that accordingly use should be made of the work done by the Disarmament Conference:

"(1) Recommends, in pursuance of the resolution of the Bureau dated 31st May, 1937, the conclusion of an international convention on the publicity of national defence expenditure and the working of an organ of supervision and co-ordination:

"(2) Recommends the members of the League, each in so far as it is concerned and to the extent that this has not already been done, to examine the possibility of adopting internal measures with a view to the effective supervision of the manufacture of and trade in arms, ammunition, and implements of war, on the basis of the work done by the Special Committee of the Disarmament Conference, and asks Governments to inform the Secretary-General of the League of Nations of the action taken on this recommendation:

"(3) Requests the Secretary-General to communicate the present resolution to the States not members of the League of Nations." Document A. 53, 1937, IX.

FOURTH COMMITTEE: FINANCIAL QUESTIONS.

New Zealand Delegate: Mr. W. J. JORDAN. Substitute: Mr. C. A. KNOWLES.

The experience which the Secretariat has gained in the seventeen years of the League's existence has resulted in a vastly improved financial administration. It is not only that the administration has improved, but the percentage of the collection of contributions is sufficiently high to give ground for satisfaction, even although in 1936 there was a slight falling-off from the peak year of 1935. The devaluation of the Swiss franc, which took place in September, 1936, was of considerable benefit to all States members, since its effect was to reduce the amount of League expenses expressed in terms of gold, with almost corresponding reduction of contributions. For New Zealand, the number of whose units of contributions was reduced this year from ten to eight, the drop in the amount of money to be found for the League must have caused satisfaction.

The audited accounts for 1936 are shown in a series of documents numbered A. 3. The only comment called for is one on the extraordinarily large surplus, amounting to no less a sum than 5,592,101 gold francs, of which sum no less than 1,250,000 gold francs accrued to the League in the shape of profits on contributions paid after the devaluation of the Swiss franc. The balance of the surplus is made up of arrears of contributions and considerable savings on the credits voted. Part of the surplus (1,875,394 gold francs) is returnable to States members, whose contributions for 1938 will be proportionately reduced. To complete the story of the surplus, I may well anticipate the decisions of the

Fourth Committee arrived at towards the close of the session, by saying that the remainder is to be distributed as follows, the monetary unit on this occasion being expressed in Swiss francs:—

New wings to the International Labour Office	..	..	..	27,491·72
Renovation Account	..	..	..	1,000,000·00
Estate Account	..	..	..	3,000,000·00
Guarantee Fund	..	..	..	250,000·00
Reserve Fund	..	..	..	977,241·29

The estimates as presented to the Fourth Committee are comprised in a series of documents numbered A. 4, the document numbered A. 4 (*d*), dated the 17th August, containing certain supplementary estimates. The estimates were carefully scrutinized, but they presented no very great difficulties—indeed, the speed with which the Committee was able to dispose of most of the items was noteworthy for a Committee which is regarded as perhaps the most hard worked. Last year's innovation of showing expenditure in Swiss francs and income in gold francs was maintained. It is perhaps a little bewildering to be faced with a Budget expressed in more than one currency (the administration of the Permanent Court of International Justice entails expenditure in Dutch florins), and in this connection I would draw your attention to the remarks of the Supervisory Commission contained in paragraphs 64 to 67 of its first report (Document A. 5 (*a*)). This report of the Supervisory Commission is mainly concerned with the examination by that body of the estimates, and it is not out of place to draw attention here to the general considerations, contained in paragraphs 13 to 15, which guided members in their examination. Since, however, certain changes were made during the progress of the estimates through committee, it is hardly necessary to note at this stage the comparisons made by the Commission between the figures for 1937 and those for 1938.

But the Supervisory Commission had to face some difficulties, such as the drying-up of the Rockefeller grant (which had hitherto been expended on health services) necessitating an increase in the vote for health, and the uncertainty of future work in reference to refugees. It had also to fix the lump-sum deduction in accordance with custom, and to determine the amount to be allocated to the Guarantee Fund, on which the Secretariat and autonomous organizations may find it necessary to draw for expenditure on purposes authorized by the Assembly. Indeed, it is the existence of this Guarantee Fund which has made possible lump-sum deductions. Why lump-sum deductions, it may be asked? If services are to be rendered, cannot those services be estimated in terms of expenditure? The answer is that the Assembly meets normally in session once a year. The normal provision for the succeeding calendar year must be made in the course of that session. It follows that all work which the Assembly at that session or during any previous session has determined on must be provided for in terms of expenditure. At the same time, however, it is known that certain branches of work may not be undertaken, so to prevent swollen Budgets recourse is had to lump-sum deductions. Should, for instance, a conference now standing adjourned be unexpectedly called together, thus entailing an expenditure which, if foreseen, would have necessitated an increase in the estimates, recourse can be had to the Guarantee Fund. I have devoted these few words to the Guarantee Fund because I desire that it should be distinguished from—(1) the Reserve Fund, which, as its name implies, is a general reserve only to be drawn upon in exceptional circumstances, and (2) the Working Capital Fund, which comes into operation early in the year when contributions fall short of expenditure. One further difficulty which had presented itself to the Supervisory Commission was the uncertainty of the future purchasing-value of the franc consequent on depreciation, and a sum of 1,300,000 Swiss francs was provided in the estimates under this head. This proposed credit was defended vigorously by the Secretary-General on the ground that once a League Budget was passed there was no opportunity of putting through a supplementary Budget to meet unexpected expenditure. As a result of discussion the principle was maintained, but the amount was reduced by 260,000 Swiss francs, corresponding to an amount lying idle in the Guarantee Fund.

During its sittings the Fourth Committee reviewed requests for supplementary credits made by other committees and in one case by the Council. Particulars will be found on pages 4 to 10 of the Supervisory Commission's third report (Document A. 5 (*b*)). The requests emanating from the committees amounted to 542,231 Swiss francs, and amount which was reduced during the examination of the items by the Supervisory Commission to 424,781 Swiss francs, which sum was approved by the Committee and incorporated in the Budget. Of the items comprised in this total, one only, that for refugee work (104,081 Swiss francs), was the subject of a debate of any length. As I have devoted considerable space to "refugees" in the section of this report describing the work of the Sixth Committee, I do not propose to deal with the matter here. On the item "Technical Collaboration with China: Campaign against Epidemics" I must say a few words. The early history of the item, in so far as it affected the Eighteenth Assembly, is to be found in my report on the Ninety-ninth Session of the Council, but in order that a complete picture may be made available here I would state that the Council at its meeting on the 1st October considered a report by the Chairman of the Council Committee on Technical Collaboration between the League of Nations and China (a standing Committee which has functioned since the Assembly has made available funds for the purpose). As a result of such consideration the Council passed the following resolution:—

"Recommends the Secretary-General to provide at once all the necessary available funds in order to assist the Chinese authorities in the immediate organization of anti-epidemic measures possibly as part of but without awaiting the initiation of any wider scheme that may eventually be decided on.

"Draws the attention of the Council to the gravity of the situation which threatens, if assistance is not promptly forthcoming, to involve adjacent and even distant territories;

"Requests the Council to consider whether it would not be desirable to invite the Assembly, during its present session, considerably to increase the credits that it is customary to vote each year for technical collaboration with China, so as to make available the funds necessary to carry out a scheme to be drawn up as soon as possible by the Health Committee or by a committee specially appointed for the purpose, on which, if necessary, expert advisers could be co-opted."

The Assembly, at its meeting on the following day, transmitted the resolution to the Fourth Committee, which, in turn, entrusted the Supervisory Commission with an examination of the question. The Fourth Committee, however, did not wait for official communication to it of the resolution, but proceeded, on the morning of the 2nd October, to discuss it on the proposal of the Secretary-General. This procedure was, of course, out of order, but time was precious, and the discussion was treated as unofficial. I myself had spoken in the Council, and I felt the greatest sympathy towards the proposal—indeed, had any delegate suggested that a grant by the League should be supplemented by grants from State exchequers, I should have telegraphed you for instructions, but no such proposal was made. The speakers who took part in the debate expressed every sympathy with China, including the delegate of the United Kingdom. I was, however, somewhat surprised to note that he did not contemplate an addition to the money available plus that which would normally be voted. He suggested that the balance required should be found from that part of the surplus of 1936 which had so far not been allocated. It may reasonably be pointed out that such an arrangement, if accepted, would have entailed an addition to the contribution by each member of the League in so far as the contribution for 1938 was not reduced by the proportion of the surplus devoted to China. Several delegates felt uneasy, and M. Hambro made one of the best speeches he has ever delivered. He was very trenchant in regard to a hint made by another delegate that perhaps part of the Reserve Fund might be utilized. I quote the following from the brief account of his remarks as given in the provisional minutes of the meeting, which, however, do not adequately convey all that he said:—

"He pointed out that the Reserve Fund had been created to enable the League to meet special difficulties which might arise owing to events he need not discuss there, and not to meet special requests arising out of the difficulties of a particular State in a particular year. If they drew on it for that purpose, might they not be ruining an edifice they had taken considerable trouble to build up? Moreover, they would not be making any sacrifice."

"What the members of the Supervisory Commission wanted to know was what sums the Council had in mind, and where it was thought they should be obtained—from an increase in the Budget, the 1936 surplus, or the Reserve Fund. The Committee was faced with a practical question which must be discussed from a businesslike and not a sentimental standpoint."

When, at a later state, the Fourth Committee had before it the report of the Supervisory Commission, it was found that the latter had contrived to find money without entailing an addition of much more than 3,250,000 Swiss francs to the budget, because it proposed to devote to the work the Chinese contribution to the League for 1937, amounting to 1,369,335 Swiss francs. As, however, the contribution had not then been received, and as money was urgently required, the Fourth Committee agreed to request the Assembly to authorize the withdrawal of any sums necessary before the 1st January, 1938, from the Working Capital Fund. Further particulars will be found on pages 8 and 9 of the Supervisory Commission's third report (Document A. 5 (b)).

A decision of the Fourth Committee approving of the regrading of certain sections of staff of the Secretariat needs no more than passing reference, especially as it implied increase of neither staff nor estimates.

There is little to add to what was contained in my report on last year's Assembly on the Staff Pensions Fund. The difficulty of finding safe investments bearing adequate interest rates is still apparent, and more than half of the fund's assets are still in gold. Further, the fund has become burdened with membership by some who were allowed to join late in life, a proceeding which is not to be encouraged. But all who have had experience in the supervision of staffs know the difficulties with which it is beset.

Below I have devoted a few paragraphs to the Supervisory Commission and to the subject of Contributions to the Expenses of the League, and the section of this report which deals with the First Committee contains a statement of the action of the Fourth Committee in regard to contributions of States which have given notice to determine membership.

No special comment is required on the estimates for the International Labour Office or the Permanent Court of International Justice.

On the 5th October the Assembly considered the reports of its Fourth Committee (Documents A. 76, 1937, and A. 76 (a), 1937) and approved the Budget for 1938, amounting to 32,273,251 Swiss francs for expenditure and 22,682,148 gold francs as income.

Before concluding, perhaps I should comment on one or two of the items on which part of the 1936 surplus will be spent.

The sum of 1,000,000 Swiss francs earmarked for the Renovation Account will be used for renovations which it is anticipated will be required during the next few years, apart from ordinary running-repairs. The building which houses the Secretariat, the Library, the Council Chamber, the Assembly Hall, and the various Committee-rooms is of immense size, and it is reasonable to suppose that there may become necessary renovations and alterations not covered by the building contract. It is wise to set aside money unexpectedly available for a purpose which might, in the words of the Supervisory Commission, upset "the equilibrium of the Budget."

Estate Account, 3,000,000 Swiss Francs.—The grounds surrounding the League of Nations building have been laid out to good effect, and although the area devoted to League purposes appears to be sufficiently large, and the building is situated outside the city, there is a risk of building developments in the immediate vicinity which might spoil the amenities of the site. Certain experts were consulted on the problems presented by the layout of the Place des Nations, from which access is gained to the building, and as a result of such consultation the Secretariat has negotiated for the acquisition of certain adjoining properties. The future of the properties so to be acquired has not yet been determined, but any disposed of will be resold subject to restrictive covenants, and all transactions will be entered in a separate account. Some particulars are given on pages 2 and 3 of the Second Report of the Supervisory Commission (Document A. 5 (a)).

I should add that the design of the building, although on simple lines, is impressive, and the situation affords a magnificent view of Mont Blanc, some forty miles away. Many of the rooms are beautifully fitted with gifts from States members. The room of the President of the Council, which has been panelled with New Zealand timber in a most pleasing style, does not suffer by comparison with larger rooms which have been similarly panelled. I should add that the new Assembly Hall, although not yet completed, was used for the last few meetings of the Assembly.

No credits were asked for this year on account of the new building contract, but some figures relating to costs given in Document A 5 (a) will be found of interest.

SUPERVISORY COMMISSION.

The Supervisory Commission, which is so important an element in the administration of the finances of the League and in the consideration of matters relating to organization, has been operating for many years. New Zealand may reasonably claim to have had a voice in the organization of the League's internal economy through its first representative of the Assembly, the Honourable Sir James Allen, who was an original member of the Commission. The Commission has been very fortunate in its membership not only by reason of the quality of the members, but also because some of them have been members from its inception. Last year two were due to retire under the rule that a member elected for a period of three years, and re-elected for a further like period, should not be re-elected a second time until after the expiration of at least three years of non-membership. The Fourth Committee of the Seventeenth Assembly was not in a mood to lose the services of these two members, the Chairman, M. Osusky, and the Rapporteur, M. Réveillaud, so the Seventeenth Assembly was recommended (and accepted the recommendation) to suspend the rule governing election, and to appoint a small committee to examine the method of election. Further, an additional member of the Supervisory Commission was appointed. The small Committee (of three members) met early this year and examined the problem submitted to it, which was to devise a scheme of election which should have due regard to the Supervisory Commission's containing at all times members having a sufficient practical experience of the financial administration of the League to ensure the continuity of the work of the Commission and the proper exercise by it of its task, while maintaining the principle of its renewal at regular intervals. The Committee seems to have considered the problem thoroughly in all its bearings, for it produced a report (A. 7, 1937, X) which found ready acceptance. The discussion which followed the introduction of the report in the Fourth Committee was concerned not so much with the recommendations it contains as with the losses which their adoption entailed. The recommendations are a little complicated, and they can only be understood by reference to the report itself. Their adoption involved the loss of the talented and popular President, M. Osusky, and the less-known (in Geneva, at any rate) but equally valuable member, Lord Meston of Agra. To both men fine tributes were paid by members of the Committee, especially those associated with the Supervisory Commission. The Report was adopted by the Fourth Committee, and accepted by the Assembly at its meeting on the 30th September, when the following resolution (Document A. 52, 1937, X) was passed:—

“The Assembly—

“Adopts the conclusions of document A. 7, 1937, X, dated 9th April, 1937, in regard to the amendments to Article I of the Financial Regulations referring to the composition of the Supervisory Commission and the renewal of its members;

“Warmly thanks M. Stefan Osusky and Lord Meston of Agra for the inestimable services they have rendered to the League of Nations in the last fifteen years as members of the Supervisory Commission.”

The Assembly having come to a decision, it only remained for the Fourth Committee to fill the two vacant seats. Voting took place at the meeting on the 2nd October, when Sir Cecil Kisch (United Kingdom) and M. Harri Holma (Finland) were elected.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EXPENSES OF THE LEAGUE.

The League financial year is the calendar year, a twelve-monthly financial period which does not obtain to any extent in States members of the League. Indeed, the financial year varies very considerably, and as League receipts depend upon the passing of national Budgets the Secretariat is much hampered. Some States do not pay until towards the close of the calendar year. This is an important aspect of the problem of contributions. Another aspect is the uncertainty caused by the non-payment either of current contributions or of arrears, or of arrears consolidated under special resolutions of the Assembly. But the financial position is on the whole favourable, and the report of the Sub-committee on Contributions, Document A. 16, 1937, X, is not depressing. As the Committee indicates, the position is not satisfactory, but in view of the improvement recently shown it thinks it unnecessary this year to take powers to ensure prompter payment. Arrangements have recently been concluded with a few States regarding payment of arrears, particulars of which are contained in the report. A problem, legal in character, was raised by the notice to withdraw from the League presented

by the Governments of Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Paraguay. Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Covenant provides that a member of the League may withdraw after two years' notice provided that all its obligations both international and under the Covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal. The First Committee was asked to consider the problem raised in this connection by the non-payment of contributions. The question of Salvador was not included in the list of States, seeing that it had given an undertaking to liquidate its obligations.

In my report on the Seventeenth Assembly I wrote, when dealing with the allocation of expenses and the new scale which was adopted by that Assembly, —

“While in the opinion of the Allocation Committee the new scale has elements of permanence, the question is by no means settled, and there is little doubt that it will have to receive further serious consideration in a few years' time.”

Last year I did not think it possible that the question would be raised until 1938 at the earliest, but it was mentioned by the delegate of Mexico, who was supported by other delegates, and it was even suggested that the Special Committee on Allocation of Expenses should be resurrected. This was resisted, and the Mexican delegate invited to state his views in the form of a motion. He was content to supply the following formula, which was accepted by the Committee and approved by the Assembly : —

“Considering that the present scale for the allocation of expenses will cease to be in force on 31st December, 1939 ;

“Considering that in these circumstances the next Assembly should reconstitute a body to consider the question anew in 1939 ;

“Considering that it would be desirable to begin the preliminary consultations forthwith ;

“The Assembly—

“Having been informed that the principal data hitherto taken into account comprise the population, production, trade and banks, transport, and budgets of States ;

“Requests the Secretary-General to ask the Governments to communicate to him any suggestions calculated to help the 1938 Assembly and such body as that Assembly may set up to determine the future scale.”

FIFTH COMMITTEE : HUMANITARIAN AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS.

New Zealand Delegate : Mr. W. J. JORDAN. Substitute : Miss J. R. MCKENZIE.

SOCIAL QUESTIONS.

As mentioned in my report on the 1936 Assembly, the former Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, which was divided into two Committees—the Traffic in Women and Children Committee and the Child Welfare Committee—has been reorganized, and in substitution a new Advisory Committee on Social Questions has been set up. The Committee's terms of reference are the same as those of the former Advisory Commission. As a result of the reconstitution, the question of the organization of its future work was considered by the Advisory Committee, who decided to take up as one of its first subjects for study the principles adopted in the administration and organization of welfare work among the young, including social assistance, showing the part played by public authorities and by voluntary organizations respectively. There has been an increase in the number of Governments represented on the Advisory Committee, and collaboration with international associations has also been placed on a new basis.

Another subject to which the Advisory Committee decided to give priority is the training of persons engaged in social work. During the discussions in the Fifth Committee several further suggestions were made, including the proposal that the study of family desertion should be proceeded with.

PUBLICITY.

Much discussion centred on the proposed issue of a bulletin or review, which would enable those interested to follow the progress of social-welfare work. The Fifth Committee was in general agreement that such a review would serve a useful purpose, and several delegates urged that in addition to its being printed in the two official languages—English and French—it should be published in other languages. Representatives of South American countries in particular laid great stress on the desirability of publication in Spanish. The Fifth Committee recommended that a review, the title of which might be “The League of Nations Review of Social Questions,” should be issued quarterly, and this suggestion the Assembly adopted.

LIAISON WITH OTHER BODIES.

The need for maintaining close liaison between the Advisory Committee and other organs of the League was strongly emphasized during the discussion in the Fifth Committee, especially in connection with the Bureau of the Health Organization, which was at present preparing a European Conference on Rural Life, as it was fully realized that the problems of hygiene, social welfare, and economics in rural life are interdependent.

CHILD WELFARE.

The Fifth Committee noted with satisfaction the work undertaken by the Advisory Committee in regard to child welfare, following on the inquiries by the former Child Welfare Committee into the organization and functioning of juvenile Courts, institutions for neglected and delinquent children, child welfare councils, &c., reports on which have been published. The Committee agreed that a separate inquiry into the subject of the organization and functioning of institutions performing duties which in other countries are entrusted to juvenile Courts should not be undertaken at present, but that the Advisory Committee should include it later in its programme.

CINEMA.

As a result of information available to the Advisory Committee, a complete documentation on this subject is to be prepared in time for discussion at the 1938 Assembly.

THE PLACING OF CHILDREN IN FAMILIES.

Difficulties were seen in the separating of child welfare from other social questions, and the Advisory Committee proceeded on its study of this question on more general lines. Its views are to be placed before the 1938 Assembly.

CHILDREN BORN OUT OF WEDLOCK.

The same remarks apply to the report on the question of children born out of wedlock. Several aspects of this question have been studied in the past, and the material available will be presented in the form of a final report at a later session,

ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT AS AN INFORMATION CENTRE FOR MATTERS CONNECTED WITH CHILD WELFARE.

The Information Centre transmitted to members of the Fifth Committee a summary of the annual reports by Governments concerning their activities in the sphere of child welfare (Document C. 316, M. 212, 1937, IV).

TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN: PROGRESS OF INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION.

Fifty countries have ratified the 1921 International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children, and the Fifth Committee recorded its satisfaction with this progress, as also with the position in regard to the 1923 International Convention for the Suppression of the Circulation of and Traffic in Obscene Publications. The hope was further expressed that more countries would soon adhere to the Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women of Full Age, concluded at Geneva in 1933.

Regarding the draft Convention for the Suppression of the Exploitation of Prostitution, several delegates expressed their agreement with the recommendation of the sub-committee of the Advisory Committee that, instead of making reservations, the regulationist countries should, at the time of signature, make a declaration that they are in agreement with the principles of the Convention. This report has been transmitted to Governments, and if the proposals meet with general agreement it is hoped that it will be possible to take a decision at the Assembly of 1938 for convening an inter-Governmental conference to conclude the Convention.

ANNUAL REPORTS OF GOVERNMENTS ON THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN AND ON OBSCENE PUBLICATIONS.

The Fifth Committee expressed its regret that the position in this matter was not satisfactory—only fourteen member States and two non-Member States submitted reports for 1935–36. A new questionnaire had been suggested, and it was hoped this would induce a greater number of countries to submit reports.

ABOLITION OF LICENSED HOUSES.

A considerable advance was made in various countries within the past year towards the abolition of licensed houses. The Governments of the Argentine Republic, Uruguay, and France took legislative action aiming at the prevention of venereal disease. The Fifth Committee considered that the developments within the last year constituted the greatest advance achieved in any year since the beginning of the movement for the abolition of these houses.

REHABILITATION OF PROSTITUTES.

The Fifth Committee agreed with the importance assigned to the study of this question, especially as to the sections on the antecedents of prostitutes and on social services for treatment of venereal disease. It was felt that the publication of the information already to hand would be of great service to countries starting or extending such services, enabling them to take account of methods used elsewhere.

CONFERENCE OF CENTRAL AUTHORITIES IN EASTERN COUNTRIES.

The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the League gives an outline of the work accomplished by the above-mentioned Conference, which took place in Bandoeng in February last, and which is considered to be the most important international event in connection with the campaign against traffic in women and children since the last Assembly. The most striking results achieved were its declaration in favour of the abolition of licensed houses as a final goal, and its proposal that a special League Bureau should be created in the East to assist Governments in the fight against traffic in women and children.

The Fifth Committee was unanimous in the desire to create a Bureau to carry out the functions contemplated by the Conference of Central Authorities in Eastern Countries, and much discussion centred around an examination of the manner in which the work of the Bureau was to be carried out and upon the degree of confidence it succeeded in inspiring in Governments. As to the location of the Bureau, Shanghai, Singapore, and Hong Kong were mentioned; as the scheme would in some degree be experimental, it was suggested that the Bureau should be established in the first instance for a period

of ten years. The Fifth Committee decided that the details of the scheme could best be worked out by direct consultation with the competent authorities of the Governments interested, and that the League of Nations should take the initiative by sending an expert adviser to discuss the matter on the spot with these authorities.

The Assembly adopted the resolutions and conclusions of the Fifth Committee on Social Questions (Document A. 65, 1937, IV.).

PENAL AND PENITENTIARY QUESTIONS.

In 1936 the Assembly decided to institute an inquiry—(1) into the number of prisoners over eighteen years of age in the different countries, and (2) into the measures taken in different countries during recent years with the object of reducing the number of prisoners. The International Penal and Penitentiary Commission was accordingly asked to conduct this inquiry, but, only about half of the Governments having replied, it was decided to postpone preparation of a detailed report until next year.

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

The Governments of the Free City of Danzig, Siam, Finland, France, British India, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, and Sweden submitted to the Secretary-General during the past year reports on the treatment of prisoners in their countries. Since the Assembly recommended to Governments in 1934 standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners, more than forty Governments have sent in similar reports. As a result of the circulation of these rules, many Governments have scrutinized their penitentiary systems, and various States have promulgated new decrees or laws, in many cases following the lines laid down in the Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners.

The treatment of witnesses and persons awaiting trial was under review. Concern was felt^t at the reported prevalence in certain parts of the world of practices which are inconsistent^t with the Standard Minimum Rules and contrary to the principles of rational treatment of prisoners. The Fifth Committee, with a view to later discussion of this question, recommended that the Secretary-General be asked to seek the advice and suggestions of the seven technical organizations referred to below on measures to protect against physical or mental constraint witnesses and persons awaiting trial.

During the course of the debate the French delegate submitted a report on this aspect of the question, and the Fifth Committee was pleased to note that in 1936 a Bill had been introduced in the French Legislature for the suppression of the Guiana Convict Settlement, and for the reform of the penal servitude and deportation system. Owing, however, to certain difficulties, mainly of a financial character, the Bill has not yet been passed, but it is to be proceeded with. Since 1936 no prisoner convicted in France has been sent overseas.

The Secretary-General's report to the Assembly (Document A. 23, 1937, IV) summarizes the 1936 activities of five international organizations which are independent of the League of Nations—*i.e.*, the International Penal Law Association (Paris), the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law (The Hague), the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission (Berne), the International Criminal Police Commission (Vienna), and The Howard League for Penal Reform (London). Many penal and penitentiary questions are now being studied by these organizations, and close contact with the League of Nations is maintained, as also with the International Law Association and the International Penal Law Union.

A memorandum transmitted to members of the Fifth Committee by the Howard League for Penal Reform concerning the position of "the accused" is of particular interest, as this constitutes a part of the general question of the treatment of prisoners.

POSITION OF ALIENS RELEASED FROM PRISON.

A resolution dealing with the moral re-education and social readaptation of delinquents passed by the Second International Congress of Comparative Law, which met at The Hague in August last, was brought to the notice of the Fifth Committee. This reads:—

"(1) While recognizing that penalties and precautionary measures by which individuals are deprived of their liberty fulfil in the first place the requirements of social defence against crime, the Congress considers that their application is of a nature to ensure in many cases the moral re-education and social readaptation of delinquents.

"(2) It is desirable that since short-term sentences by which individuals are deprived of their liberty may contribute to the spread of crime, they should be replaced by such measures as pardon by the Court, conditional suspension of sentence of probation, house confinement, &c.

"(3) The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners drawn up by the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission and recommended to States by the League of Nations constitute a minimum which should be attained in all countries in order to maintain those elementary hygienic, sanitary, material, and moral conditions that are indispensable to human life.

"(4) The specialization of penitentiary institutions should be effected, particularly by the creation of institutions for abnormal youthful delinquents, for recidivists, and by the grouping, as far as possible, of delinquents according to the motives of their crime. The officials of penitentiary institutions should receive a professional training.

"(5) Though it is recognized that the life of prisoners in penitentiary institutions must be essentially different from a life of freedom, in order to preserve the punitive character of the penalty, the penitentiary system must be organized in such a manner that defects in the instruction and moral education of the delinquent should be remedied. The selection of prisoners capable of being rehabilitated should be made according to scientific and practical standards, depending upon the personality of the individual delinquent. Competent persons, and particularly doctors, should co-operate in this work. An organization of prisoners' work, having as its principal aim vocational training, is an essential factor of social readaptation.

"(6) Continuous supervision of the conditions of rehabilitation of prisoners is necessary, in order to ensure a progressive lightening in the application of the penalty, and thus to enable the transition to be made from prison life to a free life.

"(7) Discontinuity in the application of a sentence cannot be recommended, as it hinders the work of rehabilitation, in so far as it is in contradiction to the punitive character common to all penalties depriving individuals of their liberty.

"(8) It is desirable that the application of penalties and precautionary measures by which individuals are deprived of their liberty should be supervised by a competent authority, preferably by a representative of the judicial authority.

"(9) With a view to the more effective prevention of recidivism, it is necessary, notwithstanding the excellent results of private initiative in the matter of assistance to discharged prisoners, that the unity and continuity of such assistance should be ensured by the State.

"It is to be hoped that measures will be adopted to deal with the position of convicted aliens expelled on their release. Such measures should be included in a special convention or as a clause in a convention on international judicial co-operation or the general situation of aliens."

Referring to the last paragraph thereof, the Fifth Committee, recognizing that the League has no organ which could at present examine this question, recommended the Assembly to instruct the Secretary-General to invite the Seventh International Conference for the Unification of Penal Law, which is to open in Cairo in January, 1938, to include in its agenda the position of aliens and stateless persons released from prison, and, further, to report to the next Assembly on the results of such a study.

The Assembly duly adopted the report of the Fifth Committee on Penal and Penitentiary Questions (Document A. 62, 1937, IV).

INTERNATIONAL RELIEF UNION.

On the proposal of the Venezuelan delegate, the Report of the International Relief Union (Document A. 15, 1937, XII), covering the year 1936, was referred by the Assembly to the Fifth Committee for examination.

During the year under review the Union had not been called upon to take any direct action in rendering assistance, but, following an appeal made on 11th December, 1936, in the Council of the League by the representative of the United Kingdom, the Executive Committee held an extraordinary session to determine whether and how far the Union could, with the co-operation of the International Red Cross Committee and the National Red Cross Societies, take steps in favour of civilian victims of the Spanish conflict. A resolution, later transmitted to the United Kingdom Government, was passed by the Executive Committee, recommending that such steps as were deemed necessary be taken in order to obtain information, to arrange for possible action, and to convene the Committee as soon as further decisions could be reached. The United Kingdom Government, however, decided, in view of subsequent information received from various quarters, not to take the action contemplated in the resolution; this decision was taken mainly on the ground that the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs stated during the meeting of the Council in December, 1936, that his Government were for the present addressing themselves solely to the League for such technical assistance as they required for dealing with problems of health and relief.

The Rapporteur on the subject of the International Relief Union (the delegate of Venezuela) stressed the fact that the Union was fully alive to its responsibilities, and that in the scientific field it had done much to stimulate the activities of Committees set up in various countries to study means of preventing public disasters. It was, of course, recognized that most calamities could not be foreseen, but the effects of others could at least be limited by appropriate measures. With this end in view the Union had, under the auspices of the French Government, organized the first International Conference for Protection against Natural Disasters. The Conference was held in Paris in September, 1937. Useful results from a scientific angle had been achieved, and co-operation between various public and private national relief organizations and the Executive Committee of the Union will in future be better assured.

The Executive Committee is still engaged in the study of the application of insurance principles to protection against disasters.

The Convention of 1932 has been acceded to by some thirty States, and efforts are being made to secure further accessions.

The Assembly duly accepted the report of the Fifth Committee (Document A. 60, 1937, XII).

ASSISTANCE TO INDIGENT FOREIGNERS.

As the replies (see Document C. 341, M. 231, 1937, IV) from Governments on the Second Draft Multilateral Convention on Assistance to Indigent Foreigners (drawn up in 1936 by the Committee of Experts) differed so much in content and character, the Council at its Ninety-eighth Session, 1937,

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

the Chinese Government, but not to such an extent as in the territories under Japanese influence. Furthermore, the penalties inflicted by the Chinese Government were extremely severe, but this was not the case in territories under Japanese influence. The Chinese delegate concluded by saying that he saw little result being achieved by the Committee in the three fields he had mentioned.

Several speakers commented on the serious situation in the parts of China under Japanese influence, which they felt was not only a real danger to the people concerned, but also to the whole world. They did not lose sight of the fact that substantial progress had been achieved by the League in its campaign against drugs, especially manufactured drugs, but it was felt that the most important aspect of the problem was in the limitation of raw materials through effective and stringent control by the administrations concerned.

In regard to the position in the Far East, the Fifth Committee concluded its discussion by adopting the following resolution:—

“Considering the serious situation existing in the Far East as revealed by the discussions held at the twenty-second session of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs and by additional information furnished to the Fifth Committee:

“Considering further that such a situation constitutes a danger not only to China, but also to the whole world:

“Endorses fully the resolution on the subject adopted by the Opium Advisory Committee at its last session, which was approved by the Council;

“Repeats its previous earnest appeals to the Japanese Government to take effective measures without delay to put an end to the clandestine manufacture and illicit traffic carried on by Japanese subjects in China, and requests the Japanese Government to inform the Opium Advisory Committee of the action which is being taken;

“And trusts that the Chinese Government will not relax its efforts in the face of an admittedly difficult situation, and that it will be able to report to the Opium Advisory Committee a progressive improvement in the situation in the regions in China to which neither Japanese nor other foreign influence extends.”

Regarding the preparatory work for the Conference to consider the possibility of limiting and controlling the cultivation of the opium poppy and the production of raw opium, the Fifth Committee agreed that the programme of the Conference should be sufficiently wide to include any problem, such as that of opium-smoking, relating to the use of the opium poppy and of raw opium. The programme should also cover the direct extraction of morphine from the dried poppy plant.

The report of the Fifth Committee (Document A. 66, 1937, XI) was adopted by the Assembly.

SIXTH COMMITTEE: POLITICAL QUESTIONS.

New Zealand Delegate: Mr. W. J. JORDAN. Substitute: Mr. C. A. KNOWLES.

MANDATES.

The Sixth Committee considered the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission during its Thirtieth and Thirty-first (Ordinary) Sessions and Thirty-second (Extraordinary) Session. The documents are numbered C. 500, M. 313, 1936, VI, Extract No. 1, C. 360, 1937, VI, and C. 370, 1937, VI. The debate in the Committee concerned itself almost exclusively with the future of the status of Palestine. It is true that aspects of administration under mandate in other countries were touched upon, and the representative of South Africa found it necessary to devote the major part of a short speech to South West Africa. Having regard to the fact that in November a representative of New Zealand will appear before the Permanent Mandates Commission, when the discussion on the report of the Administration of Western Samoa for the last financial year will take place, there seemed no need for your delegate in the Sixth Committee to make a statement, especially as fuller information on the new policy in Western Samoa has been promised and the Permanent Mandates Commission's report on its examination of the administration of the territory for the year ended 31st March, 1936, was dealt with by the New Zealand representative on the Council when this body met in Geneva in January, 1937.

As I have stated above, the future of Palestine was debated to the almost total exclusion of other matters. The debate was interesting and at times a little tense. Representatives of countries possessing Arab populations mustered in force and made speeches which must have carried a certain amount of conviction in the mind of the impartial listener. Representatives of countries of Central and Eastern Europe were equally emphatic in the interests of the Jewish peoples. I think it is a fact that the wave of anti-Semitism which has flowed from Germany to near neighbours has had an effect on the indigenous populations that is extremely embarrassing to Governments, who are finding difficulty in finding checks. In the years before the war anti-Semitism found its outlet in pogroms sometimes initiated indirectly by Governmental action, but now they emanate rather from the populace, and it is the Governments who try to check these ugly manifestations. The Jews are multiplying. The outlet afforded by migration before the war is closed except the narrow outlet afforded by Palestine, and here immigration has recently received some check. So certain countries are further confronted with a problem, the solution of which lies almost entirely in emigration. No wonder that Governments are insistent on the fulfilment of a promise to create in Palestine a national home for the Jews. As I have remarked elsewhere, we are faced with a conflict of two rights, and our sympathy goes out to the United Kingdom Government in its efforts to find a solution. It should be stated that the debate in the Sixth Committee concluded with a speech by Mr. de Valera, who spoke in strong terms, and gave it as his opinion that partition was not a solution.

The Sixth Committee was not called upon to take any action. The Palestine question was still within the competence of the Council, and particulars of such action as the Council had taken are given in my report of the Ninety-eighth Session of the Council.

The Rapporteur to the Sixth Committee, M. Jonkheer de Graeff, former Foreign Minister in the Netherlands, contented himself with bringing down a brief report which admirably sums up the tendencies of the debate, and concludes with a resolution which for convenience of reference I quote. This resolution was passed by the Assembly on the 30th September (Document A. 50).

"The Assembly—

"Having noted the activity of the mandatory powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission, and the Council concerning the application of the principles laid down in Article 22 of the Covenant and the texts of the mandates :

- "(a) Renews the expression of confidence in them voted by previous sessions of the Assembly, and pays a tribute to the results they have achieved, thanks to a close and frank co-operation which it is essential to maintain ;
- "(b) Expresses its conviction that the problem of Palestine, which is at present before the Council, will be equitably settled, account being taken to the fullest possible extent of all the legitimate interests at stake."

INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION.

At what point does a subject purely national in scope become of international importance ? In these days of improved facilities for education, quick transit, and broadcasting, the question is difficult to answer, but I think one is entitled to inquire whether all the work which has been taken in hand by the organ of Intellectual Co-operation is international in importance and scope. The organ has done, and can continue to do, excellent work ; it can pave the way for a study leading to a more sympathetic understanding of national cultures ; it can rectify mistakes such as occur in books concerning foreign peoples used for the teaching of the young ; it can do many things which have a common goal—the cause of peace. Since the early years of the League, when the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation was established in Paris by the generosity of the French Government, the organ has grown, and through its various committees and the National Committees which so many countries have set up it can claim perhaps a nearer approach to that state of universality by which alone in the opinion of some the League can be saved.

After some thirteen years we have reached a point at which it is suggested that a conference should be convened for the purpose of framing an international convention under which those States party to it shall maintain National Committees of Intellectual Co-operation in their respective countries and make financial contributions to the Institute itself. Let us for a moment forget the future in contemplation of the present. We find that at a session held in Madrid in May, 1936, to study scientific questions there were discussed such subjects as raw materials, markets, and colonial questions, subjects of importance and well worthy of discussion, but two, at any rate, of these questions form the subject of study by technical organs of the League. Again, some attention has been paid to the placing of intellectual workers, amongst whom unemployment has been rife, but this matter has already received the careful attention of the International Labour Office. My remarks are not intended to decry the work of any particular organ of the League, but I do question whether there is not a considerable waste of effort in the overlapping which is met with again and again. Let us frankly face realities. The exchange of views concerning the teaching of youth which will make it possible for a boy or a girl to become a good internationalist and at the same time live a healthy national life is all to the good. It is even commendable that certain aspects of political questions should be studied by such an organ as that of Intellectual Co-operation, but to suggest, as has been suggested in some quarters, that the scope of the organ's work should be increased to the extent of dealing with questions which by their nature are questions of high policy is, I think, to go too far. When the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation was established the Assembly decided that its aim should be "the better organization of international activities throughout the world." This phrase perhaps offers to the Committee a wider scope of activity than some of its authors could have contemplated. Concentration of effort should be the guiding principle in the League's activities if the League is to become that reality in national as well as international life for which its well-wishers hope.

A considerable number of documents came before the Sixth Committee, and these are enumerated :—

- C. 326, M. 219, 1937, XII : Report of the Governing Body of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation.
- C. 327, M. 220, 1937, XII : Report of the Committee on the Work of its Nineteenth Plenary Session.

The report of the Rapporteur, M. Edouard Herriot, the well-known French politician and writer, however, forms an admirable introduction for any one desirous of studying the work of intellectual co-operation in detail.

In referring to the work on intellectual co-operation in somewhat critical terms, I would not have it thought that the organization is superfluous. But if, as seems possible, Governments should contribute directly towards the support of the organization and voice their views through their National Committees, one wonders what the future may bring forth. The work is of a kind which appeals perhaps more to the Latin than to the Anglo-Saxon temperament. I understand that when the Institute was founded there was here and there suspicion that the object of the foundation was mainly political—in short, that it was an attempt to bring pressure on the League through intellectual channels to face problems in a certain way. That may have been so. There does not seem to be evidence of this to-day, although it must be a source of gratification to a great nation like the French to have in the capital of their country an Institute with such wide ramifications.

The Sixth Committee was very fortunate in its Rapporteur on this question ; M. Edouard Herriot is admirably qualified to deal with the whole subject, for, apart from his intellectual gifts, which are

of a high order, he is himself President of the Institute. The résumé which appears in the *Journal* of his speeches deserves to be read. I have little space within which to describe the current work of the organization. For this I would refer you to the Committee's report, and I content myself with concluding with the resolution passed by the Assembly on the 30th September:

1. General Resolution—

“The Assembly of the League of Nations—

“Notes with keen satisfaction the development of the International Intellectual Co-operation Organization during the year 1936–37, which has found its most striking expression in the series of meetings forming the ‘Intellectual Co-operation Month’;

“Tenders its most cordial thanks to the Government of the French Republic and the Paris Exhibition Commission for their kindness in arranging for those meetings and the generosity of the material support which they afforded;

“Approves the reports submitted to it by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation on its Nineteenth Session (Document C. 327, M. 220, 1937, XII) and by the Governing Body of the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation on its Fourteenth Session (Document C. 326, M. 219, 1937, XII);

“Emphasizes the importance of the Tenth Session of the Permanent International Studies Conference and of the International Conference on Higher Education;

“Expresses its particular gratification at the success of the Second General Conference of National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation, and its satisfaction at the increase in the importance of the functions entrusted to the National Committees within the machinery of the organization, and hopes that the Governments of members of the League and of non-member States will give favourable consideration to the recommendations and resolutions of the Conference, which will be transmitted to them by the Secretary-General.”

2. Declaration on the Teaching of History—

“The Assembly—

“Referring to its resolution of 10th October, 1936, concerning the signature of the ‘Declaration on the Teaching of History’;

“And having been informed that numerous Governments have accepted the principle of the Declaration;

“Approves the addition, to that instrument, of the final clauses drawn up by the Committee to enable it to be signed by Governments and registered by the Secretariat of the League of Nations, and requests the Secretary-General to transmit it to such quarters as may be necessary in order to obtain the signatures of members of the League and non-member States.”

3. Fine Arts—

“(a) *Protection of National Artistic and Historical Treasures.*

“The Assembly—

“Agrees that a diplomatic conference shall be held in 1938 to conclude an international convention for the protection of national artistic and historical treasures.

“(b) *International Regime of Excavations.*

“The Assembly—

“Considering that our inheritance from the distant past of mankind cannot be effectively brought to light in the absence of a good international understanding;

“Referring to the recommendations which it made to Governments on 10th October, 1932;

“Being convinced that, although the regime of excavations is essentially the concern of the country in whose territory such excavations are undertaken, and must therefore be primarily governed by its domestic legislation, it is highly important that this principle should be reconciled with the demands of a largely conceived and freely accepted international co-operation;

“Being of opinion that the rules drawn up for that purpose by the International Excavations Conference convened at Cairo by the International Museums Office with the generous support of the Egyptian Government are admirably designed to attain that end;

“Requests the Secretary-General to transmit the text of the conclusions of the Cairo Conference to the Governments of members of the League and non-member States for their guidance in legislating on the subject of antiquities and excavations.”

4. Ethnographical and Historical Collection on the Origins of American Civilization—

“The Assembly—

“Referring to the resolution of 10th October, 1936, in which it requested the International Organization for Intellectual Co-operation to consider as soon as possible the scheme for this collection and the conditions in which it should be carried out;

“Is of opinion that those conditions, as defined by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation at its last session, afford all necessary guarantees;

“Approves the Committee's scheme, and sincerely thanks those Governments which, by their contributions, are making it possible to put the scheme into effect.”

5. Exact Sciences—

“The Assembly takes note with satisfaction of the agreement reached between the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the International Council of Scientific Unions for close collaboration between them in the future in the field of scientific research.”

6. Intellectual Rights—

“ The Assembly—

“ Convinced that the conclusion of a universal agreement for the protection of intellectual creations is bound to have the happiest influence upon international intellectual relations ;

“ Taking note of the official transmission to the American Governments, by the Pan-American Union, of the two draft World Conventions framed for that purpose respectively by the Montevideo Special Commission and the Joint Committee of Experts of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation and the Rome International Institute for the Unification of Private Law ;

“ And having been informed of the Belgian Administration’s intention of sending to all Governments a memorandum drawn up in collaboration with the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation and containing all the material available ;

“ Trusts that circumstances will enable the Belgian Government to convene at the earliest possible date the two conferences contemplated for the revision of the Berne Convention and the framing of a universal charter of authors’ rights ;

“ Invites the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation and the Rome International Institute for the Unification of Private Law to arrange for a further meeting of the Committee of Experts to consider such additional observations as may be received from Governments with regard to the draft conventions, and to formulate definite proposals regarding the World Conference on the basis of those observations ;

“ And desires already at the present stage to express its opinion that account should be taken in these proposals of the need for increasing the reciprocal influence of civilizations, more especially by appropriate measures governing translation rights.”

7. Draft International Act concerning Intellectual Co-operation—

“ The Assembly—

“ Having considered the joint report submitted to it by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the Governing Body of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation on the subject of a draft International Act concerning intellectual co-operation ;

“ Being informed of the opinion of the Council of the League of Nations, dated 15th September, 1937, recognizing the importance of these proposals and recommending them to the Assembly’s attention ;

“ Noting that those proposals have received support from many quarters in the course of the discussion :

“ Instructs the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to communicate the text of the draft Act to all members of the League and non-member States for their observations. The replies will be considered by the Executive Committee of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, which, having made such inquiries and revisions as may be necessary, will report to the Council of the League, and the latter will, if it thinks fit, summon a conference to conclude the Act.”

MODERN MEANS OF SPREADING INFORMATION UTILIZED IN THE CAUSE OF PEACE.

The Seventeenth Assembly passed a resolution under which the Secretary-General was required to report (for the consideration of the Eighteenth Assembly) on the technical means of spreading information at the disposal of the competent sections of the Secretariat. The result of the Secretary-General’s action is a useful and informative report to the Assembly (Document A. 18, 1937) which was brought before the Sixth Committee at the meeting held on the 15th September, when the Chairman proposed that a sub-committee should be appointed to deal with the question, comprising the representatives of the Argentine, Australia, Austria, the United Kingdom, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, and Switzerland. The proposal having been accepted, the Committee proceeded to a general discussion, which was opened by the representative of Denmark, who was followed by M. Bonnet, the Director of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, and Lord Cranborne, representative of the United Kingdom.

The questions at issue have been divided into two groups :—

(a) Broadcasting and the Cinema ; and

(b) Intellectual co-operation,

and they might conveniently be referred to as the technical and intellectual aspects, but, of course, they rest on a common foundation.

It was primarily with broadcasting and the cinema that the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation had concerned itself so far, having reserved other aspects for later consideration. As to the other aspects, the Danish Foreign Minister, who has always taken a close personal interest in the work of intellectual co-operation, had made some rather striking suggestions at a meeting held in Paris in July last. They had reference to the preparation of a book or a series of books by authors and scientists in different countries dealing with problems which occasioned obstacles to international understanding ; to the preparation of a work showing the part played during the historic epoch by universal ideas and co-operation ; to the preparation of a world history text-book drawn up in a spirit of impartiality ; to the holding of an annual conference, during which problems of international life could be discussed ; and, finally, to the organization of international summer camps.

For an account of the action taken by the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation I refer you to its report (Document C. 327, M. 220, pages 93-99).

The sub-committee appointed by the Sixth Committee had meetings after the 15th September, and on the 24th of that month its report, or rather reports, came before the main Committee. One report (Document A. 68, 1937, XII) is entitled "Modern Means of Spreading Information utilized in the Cause of Peace," and the other (Document A. 71, 1937) "Means of Spreading Information at the Secretariat's Disposal." The first deals solely with broadcasting and the cinematograph. On it I would offer two observations only. The first concerns the Convention on the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace, signed last year on behalf of New Zealand, but not yet ratified. Personally, I think it would be of advantage for the Dominion to ratify. The second observation concerns the recommendation accepted by the Sixth Committee that the further questions to be studied by the Intellectual Co-operation organization should be the subject of consultation between the organization and an *ad hoc* Committee of Experts, which would be responsible for co-ordinating the proposed programme.

The scope of the second of the sub-committee's reports is sufficiently indicated by its title, but I would remark here that the invitation of the President of the New York World's Fair, 1939, to the Secretary-General of the League to take part in the Exhibition, is, at any rate, an indication, if no more, of the interest which the League's work excites in the United States of America. Of course, any exhibition by the League must be worthy of the League, and careful planning is necessary. A credit for work of preparation is to be put at the disposal of the Secretariat.

Both reports came before the Assembly on the 2nd October and were accepted by that body, which passed the following resolution :—

"The Assembly—

"Approves the report of the Sixth Committee and the proposals contained therein.

"It decides, on the proposal of the Fourth Committee, to insert in the budget for the coming year a supplementary credit of 12,000 Swiss francs."

See also Document A. VI/s/c. 1/1.

SPAIN.

The Prime Minister of Spain, Senor Negrin, brought directly and forcefully before the Assembly his Government's charge that certain foreign Governments had aided in fomenting rebellion in Spain, and that, violating alike international law and their own pledges of non-intervention, they had given military, naval, and aerial assistance to the rebels. He pointed to the failure of non-intervention; he referred to boasts by leaders of foreign Governments of their activities in Spain; he contrasted these with the obligations and the rights established by the Covenant of the League of Nations; for his Government he requested—(1) That the foreign aggression of which Spain has been the victim be recognized; (2) that, in consequence of this recognition, the League of Nations examine the means of putting an end to this aggression; (3) that the Spanish Government once more have the right to acquire freely all the war material it may consider necessary; (4) that the non-Spanish combatants be withdrawn from Spanish territory; (5) that the measures of security to be adopted in the Mediterranean be extended to Spain, and Spain be assured her legitimate participation in them.

In the Sixth Committee, as might be expected, widely different opinions were voiced; and the differences, again as might be expected, arose not from different views as to the facts, but rather from the different philosophies held or from the tenacity or otherwise in adhering to a line of policy by the various Governments represented at Geneva. In a world in which ideological conflicts are real, in which the ways of orderly peace and co-operation are openly challenged, any representative Assembly such as the League or its Sixth Committee will inevitably face the clash of diametrically opposite views. Having regard to this elementary fact, the substantial unanimity arrived at as to the League's appropriate immediate attitude to the conflict in Spain is noteworthy.

This "immediate" attitude—the adjective is stressed, for nothing but a short-run policy was sketched in the resolution presently to be quoted—was defined in a unanimous report by the Sixth Committee's drafting sub-committee. The drafting sub-committee consisted of representatives of the United Kingdom, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Spain, Argentina, Mexico, Norway, Poland, and Yugoslavia, under the chairmanship of M. Santos (Colombia). After a two days' discussion in the main Committee, in which there seemed little semblance of agreement, the sub-committee entered upon its difficult task of finding a generally acceptable formula. The representative of Spain (Senor del Vayo) had supplemented his Prime Minister's Assembly speech with detailed and documentary evidence of Fascist intervention in Spain; he condemned the so-called policy of non-intervention not less for its ineffectiveness than for the fact that in principle an embargo against supplies to the lawful Government of his country was a violation of international law; he contrasted the terrorism of the intervening powers with the seeming infirmity of purpose of others who might be expected to stand loyally by democratic principles and their Covenant obligations; and he again urged the right of the Spanish Government to obtain from the League the five measures as requested by her Prime Minister and mentioned above. Following this moving appeal, the representatives of France and the United Kingdom spoke in defence of the policy of non-intervention, though with undisguised misgivings as to its observance. Mexico's representative, in contrast, proclaimed without ambiguity that Spain was the victim of a war of aggression, that the provisions of the Covenant were applicable, and that the five-point request of the Spanish Government was entirely justified. The representative of Norway agreed that the League could not remain aloof from the Spanish question; he favoured the suggestion already made by the New Zealand representative that the League might secure a cessation of hostilities, making possible a genuine and peaceful expression of the Spanish people's will. The representative of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, having spoken on this issue in the Assembly (21st September, 1937), restated his country's general support of the Spanish Government's appeal, urging that a firmer stand by Governments loyal to the League would have ended the war and

preserved the independence of the Spanish people. The representatives of Austria, Poland, and Hungary commended the prudence of the Governments of the United Kingdom and France; and altogether the discussion, thus confined as it was to nine speakers, displayed fundamental differences in approach and sympathy such as to make agreement on anything beyond the most innocuous platitudes seem well-nigh impossible.

Nevertheless, the representative Drafting Committee in due course produced an agreed text of a resolution which is worth citing here in full:—

“ The Assembly—

“(1) Associates itself with the Council in recalling that it is the duty of every State to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of other States— a duty which, for members of the League of Nations, has been recognized by the Covenant :

“(2) Affirms that every State is under an obligation to refrain from intervening in the internal affairs of another State ;

“(3) Recalls the special undertakings entered into by the European Governments, and the London Non-Intervention Committee, which, in the intention of the countries to whose initiative it owes its origin, was set up for the purpose of restricting the Spanish conflict and thereby safeguarding peace in the rest of the world ;

“(4) Regrets that not merely has the London Non-Intervention Committee failed, despite the efforts of the majority of its members, of which the Assembly expresses its appreciation, to secure the withdrawal of non-Spanish combatants taking part in the struggle in Spain, but that it must to-day be recognized that there are veritable foreign army corps on Spanish soil, which represents foreign intervention in Spanish affairs ;

“(5) Observes that the Council in its resolution of 29th May last justly described this withdrawal as ‘ the most effective remedy for a situation the great gravity of which, from the standpoint of the general peace, it feels bound to emphasize, and the most certain means of ensuring the full application of the policy of non-intervention ’ ;

“(6) Sincerely trusts that the diplomatic action recently initiated by certain powers will be successful in securing the immediate and complete withdrawal of the non-Spanish combatants taking part in the struggle in Spain ;

“(7) Appeals to the Governments, which must all be animated by the desire to see peace maintained in Europe, to undertake a new and earnest effort in this direction : And notes that, if such a result cannot be obtained in the near future, the members of the League which are parties to the non-intervention agreement will consider ending the policy of non-intervention ;

“(8) Requests the Council, in view of the provisions of Article 11 of the Covenant of the League, to follow attentively the development of the situation in Spain and to seize any opportunity that may arise for seeking a basis for a pacific solution of the conflict.”

When this draft was reported to the Sixth Committee it met with a generally cordial reception. Sharply conflicting views were for the time reconciled in the united emphasis on the urgency of securing immediate and complete withdrawal from Spain of foreign combatants, and on the crucial bearing of this on the issue of continuing or ending the policy of “ non-intervention ”.

The Irish Free State representative took exception to the latter part of paragraph 7 in the proposed resolution ; his Government, he said, would abide by the policy of non-intervention even if the attempt to obtain withdrawal of foreign combatants did not succeed. Dissent from details was voiced also by the representatives of Hungary, Austria, and Portugal, while the representatives of Bulgaria and South Africa said they would not vote in the absence of instructions from their respective Governments.

The draft resolution was put to a vote. The Irish Free State, South Africa, Portugal, Bulgaria, and Austria abstained from voting. With these abstentions the draft was accepted by the Committee, *nem. con.*

Discussion and voting on the resolution in the Assembly did not differ materially from those in the Sixth Committee. Amendments were moved that would have changed the tenor of the resolution, by referring to the participation of foreign army corps “ on both sides ” in Spain (paragraph 4), and by saying (in paragraph 7) that “ certain members ” of the League “ might consider ” ending the policy of non-intervention rather than that “ the members . . . will consider.” These amendments were rejected, New Zealand, of course, voting with the majority for the resolution as it stood. For inserting the words “ on both sides ” the Ayes were three, the Nocs were thirty-two, and thirteen States abstained from voting. On a final vote for or against the resolution in its entirety there were fourteen abstentions, thirty-two States in favour, and two (Albania and Portugal) against. The rule of unanimity being applicable, the resolution technically failed of acceptance by the Assembly—in the words of the *League Journal* (3rd October, 1937), “ the Resolution was not carried unanimously.” But substantially the resolution as carried thus far through League machinery in September–October, 1937, recorded the best compromise statement on the Spanish tragedy that was then possible, with its emphasis on certain States’ armed intervention as the paramount element in that tragedy.

REFUGEES.

The problem of refugees, like the problem of opium, has always occupied the closest attention of the Assembly, but, unlike the problem of opium, its superintendence or solution does not devolve upon the League in virtue of any international convention. The outstanding figure in the League’s refugee work was Dr. Nansen, the famous explorer, who, from the close of the war to his death, devoted his energies to the alleviation of the lot of thousands of peoples who owing to the exigencies of the war had sought refuge in foreign countries. However, it is not for me to deal with the past, but rather to say a few words about the present and about a future which is full of uncertainties. In

1931 the Assembly believed that in a period of some eight years the problem in its League aspects could be liquidated, and the Budget of the Nansen International Office for Refugees, established under the authority of the League, has every year since been prepared on the assumption that finality would be reached in 1938. Consequently, this year, in addition to the annual report of the governing body of the Office (Document A. 21, 1937, XII), the Sixth Committee had before it a report on the liquidation of the Office (Document A. 11, 1937, XII), together with the replies of certain Governments (Document A. 24, 1937, XII) to a circular letter covering the despatch of Document A. 11, 1937, XII. There was also another document, the report on German refugees (Document A. 17, 1937, XII), which deals with the situation that has arisen since 1931, in which year the Assembly foresaw the possibility of naming a date for the termination of the refugee work. The problems raised by the Armenian and Russian refugees and by refugees of other nationalities, including persons of German nationality who fled from the Saar when, as a result of the plebiscite, that territory was handed back to Germany, have been known for years, and they are more or less understood. But to these problems have in recent years been added others consequent on the flight from Germany of citizens of that country who are not in harmony with the present regime, and more particularly of the Jews. The discussion was opened at the third meeting of the Sixth Committee, held on the 18th September. At the outset the Chairman proposed that in accordance with the usual procedure the various papers should be referred to a sub-committee, which would in due course report to the full committee. The value to a sub-committee of a general discussion in full Committee was, however, not lost sight of, and the Chairman invited members to speak. The discussion was opened by the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In addition to the political events on which I have touched, the Norwegian delegate referred to the depression which set in about the time the Assembly took its decision to wind up the Nansen Office, and he claimed that the problem could not be solved by 1938, and that the League must continue to assist, at any rate, to the extent of bringing to an effective conclusion the work at present in hand. He added that he had proposals to make in this connection and would place them before the sub-committee. The Norwegian delegate received a considerable measure of support from the representatives of other countries, including Great Britain, France, Sweden, and Denmark. In accordance with the instructions which had been received from Wellington, your delegate on the Sixth Committee stated :—

“The New Zealand Government would deplore any diminution in the efforts made by, or under the supervision of, the League of Nations for the assistance of refugees, whether these were the responsibility of the Nansen International Office or of the High Commissioner for refugees coming from Germany. They would be happy to collaborate with other members of the League in devising the best means possible for continuing this work, and in default of any better solution would be quite prepared to support an extension of the period of activity of the existing organizations, so long as they could continue to perform a useful function.

“Accordingly, New Zealand supported the proposal advanced by the representative of Norway, and, in regard to procedure, endorsed the suggestions made by the United Kingdom.

“He also wished to identify New Zealand with the statements made in connection with the Budget in Document A. VI, 4. The work done was clearly worth while, and the care and competence with which it was administered were most impressive. It appeared that a supplementary credit of 104,000 francs had been asked for. This was a matter which would apparently have to be decided by the Supervisory Commission and the Assembly, but so far as the present Committee was concerned he hoped, in view of the universal good will felt towards the work, that this sum would be agreed to.”

The representative of France, whilst conscious that the Assembly of 1931 was desirous of bringing the work to an end at a given time, pointed out that the Seventeenth Assembly had adopted a more cautious tone, since in its resolution there occurred the following :—

“Considers, further, that the Assembly should, at the latest at its ordinary session in 1938, determine the general principles which, after that year, should govern the attitude of the League towards the refugee problem as a whole.”

He added that there were still 600,000 refugees in the world and that the League could not ignore them. Whilst he considered that the Nansen Office should be liquidated, it would be necessary to replace that Office by another organization. It is a pleasure to be able to record such a considerable measure of sympathy, but this brief account of the proceedings in the Sixth Committee would not be complete without an allusion to the attitude of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, whose representative stood by the decision to wind up the work by 1938, and to the warning uttered by the Indian delegate to the effect that the Sixth Committee should be careful not to take any action which would perpetuate the problem beyond its necessary duration.

At the meeting held on the 24th September the Sixth Committee considered a communication from the Chairman of the sub-committee regarding the request of the Nansen International Office for Refugees for a grant of a supplementary credit of 104,000 francs. It appeared that after careful consideration the sub-committee had decided, with one dissentient voice (that of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), to recommend the Sixth Committee to ask for the credit, and, in addition, to request a credit of 5,000 francs as representation allowance for 1938 of the President of the governing body of the Office. On the second credit there was no discussion. On the first credit, however, the discussion was prolonged, but it is not necessary to say more than that the recommendation of the sub-committee was accepted by the full Committee, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics finding himself in a minority of one.

On the 1st October the Sixth Committee met for the purpose of considering a draft report prepared for submission to the Assembly by M. Motta, the first delegate of Switzerland, who had presided over the deliberations of the sub-committee referred to above. The first section of the report treats of finance, a matter which has already been dealt with here. The second concerns the current work of the Nansen Office and that of the High Commissioner who cares for refugees coming from Germany. On these two subjects M. Motta contented himself with proposing two comprehensive draft resolutions for submission to the Assembly. As these draft resolutions did not involve anything of a controversial nature, they were readily disposed of towards the end of the debate. On the third part of the report, however—that dealing with the winding-up of the Nansen Office and the future of refugee work—there was a debate, protracted doubtless because of the attitude of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In the course of the debate many moving appeals were made, especially by the representatives of the United Kingdom and Norway, but the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics's delegate stated categorically that it would be impossible for him to assent to the two resolutions in four parts, since the instructions received by him from his Government were to the effect that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would accept no proposition which involved action by the League in the matter of Russian refugees beyond the 31st December, 1938. No other member of the Committee, however, was prepared to discriminate in the matter of nationality, and, indeed, the greater number of the refugees under the care of the Nansen Office is of Russian origin. Attempts were made to get over the difficulty, particularly by the representative of France, who suggested postponement of decision, his plan involving a request to the Nansen Office to formulate a scheme of future work, such scheme to be forwarded in January next to Governments for their observations. But the overwhelming majority of members who subsequently spoke preferred a definite decision, since it was only fair to the Nansen Office, and also to the refugees themselves, to be made aware of their future position. A draft resolution by the Latvian delegate couched in similar terms to the Committee's draft resolution was also discussed, but the two resolutions did not differ materially—the substance was the same, but the form somewhat different.

The Latvian draft resolution needs no further reference, except to say that when put to the vote it was lost. M. Motta's draft resolution was subsequently voted, and it was accepted almost unanimously, one delegation only voting against it, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the Latvian delegation abstaining. After the vote had been taken, M. Grumbach, the representative of France, brought forward a motion, the object of which was to instruct the Nansen Office to prepare a scheme of future work for submission to Governments. It was pointed out to him, however, that the Committee had already taken a decision on the whole of M. Motta's report. If the third section of the report was lost in the Assembly—and the vote of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would certainly cause this if that delegation had not in the meantime changed its mind—it was available to M. Grumbach to move his own motion.

Between the rising of the Sixth Committee and the meeting of the Assembly on the 5th October, at which the report was to be taken, M. Grumbach had been in communication with members of other delegations, and as a consequence the report was accompanied by a draft resolution in the names of the delegations of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, and The Netherlands to replace Articles 2, 3, and 4 of the Committee's third resolution. The effective part of the amendment was to be found in the following words:—

“Request the Council to draw up or cause to be drawn up before the next Assembly a plan for international assistance to refugees.”

As I have before observed, it was known that the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would vote against the third resolution. It was believed, however, that he would abstain when the amendment was put to the vote, and many delegates thought that the cause of the refugees would be served by gaining time. The amendment was supported by several speakers, but Lord Cranborne (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the United Kingdom, preferred an immediate decision, since it would not be fair to the refugees themselves to keep them in suspense. He added that he would not hamper the movers of the motion, who believed that their action would serve a good cause. Bearing in mind your instructions, and knowing that the Committee's draft resolution would be defeated if put to the vote (unanimity being required), I decided to vote for the amendment. Forty-seven States voted, twenty-two abstained, including the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and twenty-five voted for the amendment, which was thus carried. Parts 2, 3, and 4 of the Committee's third resolution were not put to the vote, as these were replaced by the amendment (Document A. 77, 1937). The resolutions, numbered 1 and 2 in the Committee's report (Document A. 75 (1), 1937, XII), were passed by the Assembly.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS COVENANT.

In accord with your telegram of the 9th September, 1937, received on the eve of my leaving for the League Assembly, and with the sixteenth of your twenty-one points (letter to Secretary-General of the 16th July, 1936) giving your Government's views on the Covenant, I took advantage of every opportunity to press for the formal separation of the Covenant from the treaties of peace.

The Committee of Twenty-eight, which was set up by Assembly resolution of the 10th October, 1936, and of which New Zealand is a member, resumed its sittings on the 10th September, three days before the opening of the Eighteenth Assembly, and it held four further meetings during the period of this Assembly. The Committee's mandate is “to study all the proposals which have been, or may be, made by Governments regarding the application of the principles of the Covenant and the problems connected therewith.” The field is wide. Not all Governments submitted proposals with the fullness or, one can fairly say, with the helpful conscientiousness that marked the New Zealand reply to the request for an expression of views; but twenty-seven statements were received from Governments, with, of course, a great variety of comment and suggestions, in time to be embodied in special supplement No. 154 (1936) to the League's official *Journal*.

So diverse and conflicting, indeed, were the views tendered, and so pressing were other problems before the League at this time, that it seemed futile to expect any agreement on matters of substance in changing the Covenant. Reference to the published reports (August-September, 1937, Documents C.S.P. 11, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21) will indicate the range and complexity of the issues involved. Their perusal will, I am sure, suggest that, with all its defects, the Covenant substantially as it stands will have to serve nations yet awhile—and it cannot be too often stressed that its inadequacies in ensuring peace and collective security are due not to any inherent defects in the document itself, but to the attitude of existing Governments.

Having regard to the limitations within which we were thus working, the wisdom of proceeding with such matters as could command general agreement—and the separating of the Covenant from the peace treaties was one, and perhaps the only one, satisfying this test—seemed clear. I was accordingly glad to have your authority to proceed.

At the meeting of the Committee of Twenty-eight on 10th September, following some discussion that confirmed the general absence of agreement, I asked that the separation of the Covenant from the treaties be put in hand forthwith. Since consultation with non-member States regarding the provisions of the Covenant, with the allied question of universality, was under controversial discussion at the time, it seemed pertinent to comment that the suggested separation “would be a useful step towards consultation with non-members, at whatever date such consultation be taken.” My proposal was that a small drafting Committee frame a resolution for consideration by the Assembly separating the Covenant from the peace treaties, leaving open the question whether the formal amending of the Covenant to remove all verbal references to those treaties should be put in hand now or at a later date.

The main Committee accepted this proposal, and a drafting body that came to be known as the “Committee of Ten Jurists” was set up accordingly, New Zealand being represented thereon. This Committee took the view that the precise textual amendments which required to be made to the Covenant, with ratification by States as provided by Article 26 of the Covenant, should be drafted. Its work was prolonged accordingly, and it did not report until the Assembly was nearing its adjournment. The report, with draft amendments to the Covenant and a draft resolution by the Assembly, is Document C.S.P. 24.

The Committee of Twenty-eight, meeting on the 29th September, decided that the report and relevant papers should be communicated to Governments.

Reference to other business that came before the Committee of Twenty-eight is made in my main report on the Eighteenth Assembly, bearing particularly on the proposals made by the representatives of Argentine and Chile.

The Committee itself adjourned until a later date to be determined by the Chairman.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. J. JORDAN,

High Commissioner.

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

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (456 copies), £35.

By Authority: E. V. PAUL, Government Printer, Wellington.—1938.

Price 9d.]