

Geneva, September 22nd, 1927.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

**Private Manufacture and Publicity of the Manufacture
of Arms and Ammunition and Implements of War.**

REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE TO THE ASSEMBLY.

Rapporteur : His Excellency Dr. GUERRERO (Salvador).

On several occasions, the Assembly has emphasised the importance it attaches to the establishment of a convention on the supervision of the private manufacture of arms and ammunition and implements of war. In the second paragraph of the resolution adopted on September 25th, 1925, the Assembly "invites the Council to continue the preliminary work on the subject of the control of the private manufacture of arms and ammunition and implements of war, so that a draft convention may be prepared as speedily as possible and that the Council may summon an international conference to consider it, if possible, before the next Assembly".

Last year, the Third Committee considered the difficulties which the Council had encountered in carrying out the wishes expressed in such plain terms by the Assembly in 1925. Undaunted by these difficulties, the Assembly again expressed the desire that this work should be continued, so that the Conference might be summoned, if possible, before the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly. That the eighth session of the Assembly is confronted by the same situation as the preceding Assemblies is due beyond doubt to the fact that the difficulties already alluded to have unfortunately not been solved. As may be seen in the report of the Special Committee, which has been laid before the Assembly, there are fundamental differences of opinion as to the proper manner in which to consider this question.

In some quarters, it is thought preferable to adhere strictly to the terms of Article 8 of the Covenant, and to confine the projected convention to the supervision of private manufacture proper. Others would like to include State manufacture. Among the latter, in addition to the United States Government, which has expressed its views on this subject very clearly and precisely, are to be found many non-producing countries which fear to be placed in a flagrantly inferior position as regards security if the publicity precautions contemplated in the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms are not extended to cover direct purchases of arms by producing countries from national factories. As the Assembly will remember, it was this apprehension that found expression in the resolution embodied in the Final Act of the Conference of May-June, 1925, in which the Conference declared that the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and Implements of War "must be considered as an important step towards a general system of international agreements regarding arms and ammunition and implements of war, and that it is desirable that the international aspect of the manufacture of such arms, ammunition and implements of war should receive early consideration by the different Governments".

The Third Committee has been obliged to recognise that the two attitudes described above came into opposition in the Special Committee and that it proved impossible to reconcile them. The Third Committee unanimously agrees, however, that the solution of this problem is intrinsically indispensable, and that it might have an excellent effect on the general problem of disarmament. The Committee was almost unanimous in considering that this solution might perhaps be sought in a Convention which, while subjecting private manufacture to supervision, would extend to State manufacture such of the supervisory regulations as more particularly concern publicity; this would satisfy the non-producing countries, and at the same time would meet the wish of certain other countries that consideration should be given to the special conditions of State manufacture.

On this subject, the French delegation made a suggestion to the effect that the publicity of State manufacture should be secured by the strict application of Article 8 of the Covenant to particulars of military, naval and air expenditure, because, if each country's expenditure

on war material were made public, information would thus be furnished which should satisfy the requirements of non-producing countries.

It is with this end in view that the Third Committee has the honour to propose that the Assembly adopt the following resolution :

“ The Assembly,

“ Having noted the report of the Special Committee appointed by the Council to draft a convention on the supervision of the private manufacture and the publicity regarding the manufacture of arms and ammunition and of implements of war ;

“ Reaffirming the importance it attaches to the establishment of a convention which would enable non-producing and producing countries to be placed on an equal footing, as contemplated in the declaration embodied in the Final Act at the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and of Implements of War ;

“ Convinced that the establishment of a convention for the supervision of private manufacture and the publicity regarding manufacture is of the highest importance for the putting into force of the Convention on the International Trade;

“ Requests the Council to convey its views to the Special Committee, in order that the latter may agree upon a single text which will enable the Council to convene an international conference as speedily as possible. ”
