

Geneva, September 17th, 1926.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

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

**Report of the Third Committee.**

*Submitted by H.E. M. GUERRERO (Salvador).*

The Third Committee has considered the problem of the supervision of the private manufacture of arms and ammunition and of implements of war, and has noted the close connection which exists between this problem and the other items on its agenda ; namely, that of the limitation and general reduction of armaments, that of the supervision of the international trade in arms and ammunition and in implements of war, and that of statistical information concerning this trade. The close connection between these questions is due to the fact that, on the one hand, several countries experience great difficulty in adopting the standard form recommended by the last Assembly for the communication of statistical information to the Secretariat before ratifying the Convention ; that, on the other hand, the coming into force of the Convention on the Trade in Arms is delayed because most countries cannot ratify it until the cognate problem of the private manufacture of arms has been solved ; and finally, that it might prove equally difficult to ratify a convention on the latter subject before knowing what a general convention on the limitation of armaments would be.

The problem of the supervision of the private manufacture of arms and ammunition and of implements of war is raised in precise terms in Article 8 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. It has received the constant attention of the Assembly since the foundation of the League. Document A. 47. 1926. IX, distributed to the Assembly, contains a preliminary draft Convention prepared by the Committee of Enquiry of the Committee of the Council, together with other documents, including a report submitted by M. Benes and adopted by the Council, and a Council resolution drawing the attention of the Assembly to the connection which exists between this problem and the more general question now being considered by the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference.

The Third Committee unanimously recognises that the patient and methodical enquiries which the different Committees of the Council and of various Assemblies have conducted in this matter make it possible to conclude that, from a technical point of view, the problem might be solved in the near future. There was, however, evidence of two currents of opinion in the Committee with regard to the desirability of convening, immediately, an international conference to conclude the desired Convention. Though the Committee was unanimous concerning the necessity for dealing with this question as soon as possible, the opinion was expressed that it would be desirable to avoid separating the work connected with the private manufacture of arms from the preparatory work in connection with the General Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments — a problem of which the private manufacture of arms, after all, forms but a part. Unanimity was reached on the basis of a conditional proposal to the effect that the lesser problem was capable of early solution in any case, either by its inclusion in the programme of the General Conference on Disarmament, if the latter can be convened before the Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly, or, failing this, by means of a special Conference.

Your Committee therefore proposes that you should adopt the following resolution :

“ The Assembly once again draws attention to the close connection which exists between the question of the supervision of the private manufacture of arms and ammunition and of implements of war and the international trade in these articles ;

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“ It notes that, up to the present, the Convention on the Supervision of the International Trade has been ratified by only one signatory country, and hopes that the efforts which are being made to obtain the ratification of the principal producing countries will soon be successful ;

“ It notes the work which has been carried out under the direction of the Council with regard to the supervision of private manufacture ;

“ It declares that it is in agreement with the Council as regards the connection which exists between this question and the whole problem now being examined by the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference ;

“ It lays stress upon the necessity of concluding a Convention as soon as possible, though it recognises that priority must be accorded to work in connection with the Convention on Disarmament ;

“ It therefore proposes that the Council should continue its enquiries regarding private manufacture, in order that these questions may be included in the programme of the Disarmament Conference, if this Conference can be convened before the Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly, or, if that is impossible, in order that a special Conference may be convened as soon as possible to deal with the matter.”

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