to be drawn up, signed and ratified by the various States, unanimity must be reached once the Conference had carried out these various stages. Thus, even if profound differences of opinion were expressed in any technical commission upon some purely technical — though none the less interesting — subject, too great an importance should not be attached to the fact that only a small majority supported any particular view. The important point was whether among the members of that small majority were Powers which could be termed great air Powers, and whether an even larger number of such Powers were not to be found among the minority. Since these States had not been afforded any opportunity of reaching agreement on the question at issue, it seemed to him that the problem whether one or three criteria should be finally adopted should be the subject of negotiation between the Powers. It could be discussed either during or at the same time as the General Commission’s meetings; this must be done before that Commission could reach a satisfactory solution. The only course open to the Air Commission was to state as clearly and fully as possible the various opinions which had been expressed. He believed that it would be possible to draw up a report giving the General Commission all essentials regarding the various technical opinions expressed.

Subject, of course, to drafting, it could be stated that the Commission had unanimously considered that unladen weight should be adopted as a criterion — giving the technical definition unanimously adopted at the previous day’s meeting. The report would go on to say that a large number of delegations, whose names could be given if desired, had felt that two other criteria should be added — horse-power and the ratio between horse-power and wing area. The report would then briefly state the reasons given by the delegations in question for this view. It would go on to the definition of horse-power and wing area upon which the delegations advocating these two criteria might agree; or it might simply state that these definitions demanded extensive technical study, requiring a certain time and not yet carried out.

It would then state that another large group of countries, also mentioned by name if desired, considered that, for purposes of practical comparison, the criterion of unladen weight was alone suitable. In explanation of this, it would emphasise that such States considered that the addition of two other criteria would greatly complicate the problem and that it was not in their view possible to achieve a satisfactory definition of horse-power, or possibly even of wing area.

A report drawn up in this way would supply the General Commission with a faithful rendering of the Commission’s discussions on this point. This method would also enable it to shorten its discussions. Nothing could be gained by prolonging them, since it was impossible to reach not only a unanimous agreement, but even an agreement supported by the majority of the great air Powers.

The question of criteria settled, there remained that of figures. Complete frankness was necessary here. The situation would be perfectly clear if the Commission made the following statement to the General Commission: that certain States — namely, Italy, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Belgium and Sweden — had supplied figures. Spain had stated that it was ready to accept the figures proposed by the Swedish or Belgian delegations. The Argentine delegate had stated that his country was not in a position to give an opinion as to the figures. From the various declarations made by other delegations, it would be possible to deduce that other Powers, among them certain great air Powers, were not, for just and perfectly comprehensible reasons, in a position to give figures or to come to any decision on this point in the Air Commission, wishing to reserve their decision until the General Commission reopened the discussion of the question.

Thus, even if the Air Commission undertook the study proposed by the French delegation, it could not adopt any figures which would serve to give the General Commission a clear idea of the position of Powers whose views on the subject were of particular importance.

Given this rather special situation, would not the best solution be to communicate to the General Commission the rather general statements adopted by the Air Commission, together with the general or particular reservations regarding them, adding that certain delegations, whom he hoped would be as numerous as possible, had there and then been willing to give figures, which would be shown in the report as representing their particular views, their reasons for these figures being added if required? If the delegations concerned so wished, the reasons for which they had not considered it advisable to supply figures during the Commission’s discussion could also be given.
As Rapporteur, he could not express any opinion upon the value of the study proposed by the French delegation in its draft questionnaire. He would merely emphasise the fact that this study would not lead the Commission to supply figures giving any clear indication as to the position of the great air Powers. If, in view of other considerations for the Conference’s future work, the Commission thought it useful to undertake the proposed study, he would ask the delegates to adopt a procedure requiring the shortest time possible.

Colonel Martucci (Italy) reserved the right to lay before the Commission concrete proposals on the definitions of horse-power and wing area if the discussion of those subjects were resumed.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium) said that it was only with the greatest regret that he could abandon all hope of achieving unanimity; rather than admit such a defeat in the report to the General Commission, he would make one last effort at reconciliation.

The Belgian delegation, anxious not to shirk its responsibilities, had submitted a proposal which supplied the figures left blank in a previous proposal submitted in the same terms.

The end of the Commission’s long discussion found his delegation in precisely the same position as at the beginning; but, as it had been careful to point out, the Belgian delegation was prepared to consider any efforts towards compromise with the object of obtaining as large a consensus of opinion as possible in regard to any given point.

His delegation had, from the outset, been prepared to enter into any reasonable negotiations; he felt bound to own, however, that no new elements had come to light during the Commission’s long discussions. This was not a criticism; but, despite the efforts of certain delegations, it seemed to him that, by a strange fatality, the nearer the Commission seemed to its goal, the further this goal receded.

He was not so optimistic as to think that the solution he proposed would meet the views of all the delegations. He merely asked that it should be regarded as a starting-point by those who were willing to make a further effort. In so doing, the Commission must bear in mind the question asked by the General Commission when Sir John Simon’s resolution was unanimously adopted by the Powers attending the Conference: What were the most offensive weapons? This question was so straightforward as to admit of no misinterpretation; the Air Commission must decide which air armaments were indispensable for offensive attack by an aggressor. On one point agreement had, he hoped, already been reached. The most offensive aircraft were those most suitable for bombing purposes. There was no question as to this; bombing interfered with mobilisation operations, spread panic among civilians, demoralised troops and so on. Thus the question before the Commission was how to distinguish such machines from other aircraft.

This brought them to the question of criteria. Certain delegations of the great Powers had proposed unladen weight as an adequate criterion. He had earlier asked them to prove that in fact it was adequate. The graph supplied by the Spanish delegation showed that staff experts considered that all bombing machines exceeded 1,500 kilogrammes in unladen weight. Would the figures be taken as so as to avoid any coefficient of security; the Belgian delegation had, however, considered it indispensable to provide a margin of 300 kilogrammes. It therefore proposed a 1,500 kilogrammes limit, since experiments had proved that this figure was in most cases an adequate one for all categories other than bombers.

But could the Belgian delegation affirm that all machines weighing 1,500 kilogrammes or over were bombers? Weight gave at least an indication of a machine’s maximum capability. But, again, military aeroplanes were constructed for various ends, the construction being modified to suit that chosen. Would not a weight limit thus affect certain chaser or reconnaissance machines, indispensable for national defence? Pending proof to the contrary, his delegation was convinced that it was possible to construct the machines required for national defence within the 1,500 kilogrammes figure. Obviously, it might be argued that this regulation, suitable for Belgium, might be less so for other countries whose situation demanded heavier machines. The figures supplied by the Belgian delegation were not intended to be final; it would have no serious objection to increasing the figure by 100 kilogrammes or so. If, on the contrary, any heavy increase in unladen weight were proposed, he would have to insist on the adoption of other criteria enabling a distinction to be drawn between machines having an unladen weight above 1,500 kilogrammes, which would not all be bombing machines.

The Belgian delegation, anxious not to re-embark upon the work already carried out in the previous year by a special Committee at the express request of the League Council, thought it idle to define horse-power. It had therefore adopted the definition drawn up by certain of the leading world experts on this question. Some delegations had objected to this criterion as being of no great practical value. A criterion must above all be precise. That adopted by the special Committee was undeniably precise. In reply to the delegates
who had stated that the results yielded by the experts' formula did not correspond to the figures supplied in constructors' catalogues, he would point out that the experiments carried out on this subject in his own country and in the United States were conclusive.

The idea of horse-power, by whatever method it were determined, was vague, since it depended on a large number of factors; but the important point was to know whether there was a constant ratio between average horse-power and the maximum capabilities of a machine. Experts affirmed that such a ratio existed.

Wing area had been proposed as a criterion; but it had been argued that it was impossible to define it. The Spanish delegation had supplied two definitions. He was ready to accept either. It might be argued that, though wing area could be measured exactly, the efficiency of the surface varied. He admitted this, but did not think it affected the Belgian delegation's reasoning. The maximum capabilities of a machine must be borne in mind here, the maximum wing area. The technical difficulties were obviously serious, even considerable; but they must be surmounted, because it was unsatisfactory to depend upon a single criterion.

Another objection raised was that there was a risk of hindering the development of engine construction. But, in point of fact, the horse-power of engines was subject to very precise formulæ of measurement, laid down in the regulations for constructing racing models. The formulæ proposed by the Swedish, Italian and Soviet delegations differed from the Belgian formula. Nevertheless, he did not despair of reaching a single solution. These formulæ worked out as two parallel lines. The General Commission might, for instance, be informed that all machines shown on the right of the first line should be considered as particularly offensive, and that no machines shown on the left of the second line were offensive, and that the Air Commission could offer no opinion on the machines appearing between the two lines. Regarding these, the General Commission must take a political decision.

Two methods of procedure had recently been proposed. The United States delegate had suggested that the Air Commission should inform the General Commission of the first results of its work, reserving the question of figures until later. M. de Brouckère did not agree; the whole substance of the report could be summed up in the following simple sentence: "The stronger the aircraft, the more dangerous."

The French delegation had proposed a questionnaire, consideration of which would require some time. If certain delegations asked for time to study it and reply to it, he would accept this course, though resignedly; but he was afraid the Commission would be returning to work which had been undertaken more than once during past years.

The Disarmament Conference, the crown of all this preparatory labour, was still in session. It was to be hoped that these interminable studies were at an end. The Air Commission must not float eternally in the intermediate zone between the upper air of politics — outside its sphere — and the terra firma of technique. The last opportunity for taking a decision lay before them. He implored the delegates present not to let it pass.

The President thanked the Belgian delegate for his courageous and very timely words.

Colonel Martucci (Italy) stated that his delegation was in full agreement with M. de Brouckère's conclusions. The Italian delegation had presented a concrete proposal containing figures. It now confirmed these figures, but was ready to discuss any figures proposed by other delegations.

M. Gorge (Switzerland) said that his delegation supported the formula and figures given in the Belgian proposal. The Swiss delegation was ready to examine any other formula submitted, irrespective of whether it was based on one criterion or several.

M. Lange (Norway) again emphasised an aspect of the question which in his opinion was of primary importance. The Disarmament Conference must work to remove the grave danger to international peace constituted by the possession by certain States of armaments enabling them to bring about faits accomplis, in face of which machinery for pacific settlement would be powerless.

Subject to this reservation, the Norwegian delegation was ready to fall in with the general point of view underlying the Belgian and Swedish proposals. It was not at present prepared to discuss figures, pending its Government's instructions in this matter. Nevertheless, it could state forthwith that it would vote in favour of any effective proposal for limitation likely to do away with aircraft which could be used for bombing purposes.

M. Pedroso (Spain) stated that, though it had supplied figures, the Spanish delegation did not demand their adoption, being ready to support either the Belgian proposal, the Swedish proposal, or a combination of the two. The essential point was to attain the aim of the Conference.
M. MASSIGLI (France) reminded the Commission that the French delegation had declared in favour of supplying figures to the General Commission. The General Commission would not be in a position to reach final conclusions unless it had before it a report based on figures. The French delegation had not yet proposed figures, because it considered that, if figures were to be discussed, certain facts should be available for the Commission. The Sub-Committee had referred the questionnaire to the plenary Commission, which, not having studied it, remained faced with vague questions and a still vaguer draft reply. The object of the General Commission's question was not to find out simply which aeroplanes were offensive, but which were the most offensive. Every delegate must be aware that there existed a zone, very difficult to define, within which lay machines suitable for offensive purposes, but which could also be used for defensive ends. The French delegation considered that, in the various armies with an air arm, general regulations existed for the use of such aircraft. There could be no question as to the purpose for which a particular machine was used; in a given category of aircraft one machine must be suitable for one duty, another for another. The French delegation thought that, by a comparison of the rules in force, the Commission might obtain valuable information as to the more or less offensive character of the various types of machine. It had thought the problem easy to solve; it thought so still, granted that they kept to facts and practice. The delegations had had time to think over the problem. A rapid exchange of views might take place; in any event, it would not be without value, for, even if a common solution were not adopted, the work would at least give a concrete idea of the reasons immediately underlying the figures submitted by the different delegations. He had always been averse to stating a figure without giving the reasons for it and without stating what it represented. The French delegation felt that, far from complicating the work, a consideration of the problem from this standpoint would help to shape the solution which the General Commission would have to consider.

M. Vliegen (Netherlands) had already had occasion to say that he considered that the criterion of unladen weight alone sufficed. He feared that the discussion of other criteria would mean considerable waste of time. His delegation, in a reservation already before the Commission, had designated, as coming under the three heads given in the General Commission's resolution, all bombing aircraft and all aerial bombs. If, contrary to what was hoped, the use of aerial bombs as arms remained available for all countries, the Netherlands delegation considered, as did opinion generally, that all types of military aeroplanes other than bombers properly so called could be adapted for bombing purposes. Of such aircraft, it considered as coming within the three categories envisaged by the General Commission in its resolution those of which the unladen weight exceeded 1,500 kilogrammes (1,800 kilogrammes for seaplanes), and, if the other criteria were ultimately applied, aeroplanes the characteristics of which were expressed in figures exceeding those corresponding to the aforementioned aeroplanes designated by their unladen weight. The Netherlands delegation had not itself proposed figures, but, as an advocate of prohibiting all aerial bombardment, was ready to vote with the majority, even were this to mean an even lower level.

As regards the French questionnaire, he fully supported the opinion expressed on the previous day by the Swedish delegate, his view being in no way affected by the explanations just given by the French delegate. The Netherlands delegation agreed with the Belgian delegation's figures because it considered that these figures enabled a dividing-line to be drawn between "most offensive machines" and others; in other words, it provided an answer to what the General Commission had asked.

M. Brandenburg (Germany) observed that the German delegation had already proposed to the Air Commission that the General Commission should be informed that military aviation as a whole was offensive. Faithful to this view, it could not express any opinion upon the question of a dividing-line. For a disarmed country unprovided with defences, even the aeroplanes ranged by M. de Brouckère and some other speakers among purely defensive armaments had nevertheless an offensive character and constituted a menace both to civilians and to national defence.

Group-Captain Babington (United Kingdom) was not sure upon what basis numerical data were to be supplied to the General Commission. The French draft questionnaire was, in point of fact, intended to solve that problem, but certain delegations had stated that they were not in a position to reply to the questionnaire. Here, then, was a fundamental difficulty. The Commission must solve this question if it were to give an accurate reply to the General Commission.

The Rapporteur had referred to the work of the Naval and Land Commissions; neither of these had, however, attempted to reply to the General Commission with a unanimous report. The Air Commission had made every effort to do so; his delegation had done everything possible to this end. So lately as on the previous day, there had been some hope of achieving unanimity, but the Commission remained divided on the question of criteria and of the aggressive capacity of aircraft. The United Kingdom delegate was
in favour of the adoption of a single criterion, that of unladen weight, as being the only one capable of definition and the only one considered essential by all delegations. It would be a waste of time to attempt to agree upon the recommendation to the General Commission of other criteria which it would not be possible to apply and which only complicated the Conference's task. Thus he could not unreservedly approve the Rapporteur's conclusions; the Air Commission should, in his opinion, submit a text for paragraph II (c), on which unanimity had been reached as far as possible, proposing unladen weight as the criterion for aeroplanes and volume as that for dirigibles. The report could go on to explain the differences of opinion expressed on the question of the adoption of a single criterion or of three.

M. BOHEMAN (Sweden), Rapporteur, in reply to the United Kingdom delegate, pointed out that he had proposed to explain the position to the General Commission by setting out side by side in the report the two trends of opinion expressed on the subject of criteria. He still thought this the only possible solution, unless the discussion on figures afforded unanimous results, as seemed exceedingly unlikely. If a report on the lines proposed by the United Kingdom delegate were submitted to the General Commission, the delegations averse to the adoption of a single criterion would not be satisfied. If, on the other hand, the Rapporteur's method—the only impartial one—were adopted, the Commission would supply the General Commission with all the elements necessary for a solution of the question of criteria.

The President stated that seven States had supplied figures: Italy, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands. The French delegation had admitted the necessity for them. He asked the other delegations prepared to supply figures to communicate them to the Secretariat as soon as possible.

He felt some misgiving as regards the French questionnaire. Though some points in it were more or less connected with the questions asked by the General Commission, the majority of the problems which it raised would probably delay the Air Commission's work at a moment when the Naval and Land Commissions had practically completed their respective tasks. Possibly, the French delegation would be ready to withdraw the questionnaire, substituting for it a concrete proposal.

M. MASSILGI (France) confessed that he did not understand the object of the President's suggestion. If the French delegation were to substitute a proposal for its questionnaire, this proposal must contain the statements which, in the delegation's view, answered the questions asked. Such statements would provide material for a discussion under the same conditions as the questionnaire; in other words, the discussion would be long or short according to the good will brought to bear upon it. He was sorry he could not agree that such a discussion would be valueless, for, if the General Commission were faced with figures unaccompanied by any explanatory statements, its difficulties would be even greater. The French delegation would therefore not withdraw its questionnaire, still hoping that the other delegations would be good enough to reply to it. In any case, as soon as his delegation felt that the time had come to supply figures it would do so, and would accompany them with concrete explanations.

The President asked whether the Commission was prepared, in principle, to accept the questionnaire proposed by the French delegation.

Group-Captain BABINGTON (United Kingdom) thought that the Commission's recent discussions were the best possible proof of the necessity of replying to the questionnaire. The French delegation was wise in refusing to withdraw it, and he considered that the question of retaining or withdrawing it did not even arise.

M. VOUGT (Sweden) was doubtful as to the value of the questionnaire, but hesitated to vote against it when its authors were so strongly in favour of retaining it. He proposed that the discussion should be adjourned until the following meeting, in order to enable delegations to consult their experts.

M. SATO (Japan) stated that his delegation was in full agreement with the French delegation. Without close examination, it was exceedingly difficult to accept more or less arbitrary figures when no explanation was given of the reasons for which such figures were proposed. If the Commission decided to vote on the subject, the Japanese delegation would vote in favour of consideration of the questionnaire.
SEVENTEENTH MEETING

Held on Tuesday, May 31st, 1932, at 10.30 a.m.

President: M. VALLOTTON.


Mr. DULLES (United States of America) stated that in the matter of figures, which M. de Brouckère's statement had brought up, the question was: Should or should not the report contain a definite statement in figures of the limits, in terms of one or more of the criteria suggested, above which aircraft should be considered as falling under the three heads mentioned by the General Commission?

The report, as it at present stood, concluded that the offensive character of aircraft (by which he understood efficacy against national defence and threat to the civilian population) was a function of its useful load and its ability to reach an objective. The position would be the same if an attempt were made to define the defensive characteristics of aircraft.

The element of size was emphasised throughout, the report, in effect, stating that a plane which could effectively carry and drop on an objective a given load of bombs was more offensive than a plane which could carry one-half this load to the same objective. It also recognised that almost all military planes — or even civil planes if adapted to military uses — could, with varying degrees of effectiveness, be employed for the dropping of bombs. Undoubtedly, the Commission would also agree that two planes, each capable of dropping 500 kilogrammes of bombs, were together more offensive than one plane capable of dropping 1,000 kilogrammes.

Hence, the mere fixing of a size-limit which would exclude the use of bombers of the size generally constructed would not be a great step forward, unless combined with a limitation by numbers. Such a step might merely do away with the heavy bombers of to-day to open the way to the lighter bombers of to-morrow in ever-increasing numbers. Until the Commission knew whether there was to be quantitative limitation of aircraft, and until it had some idea of the general principles to be applied to the limitation of land and sea weapons, it was working in the dark in trying to fix a limit for the size of machines.

To turn to the drawing of a dividing-line, above which all aeroplanes were "most specifically offensive", the task was not so easy. Geographical conditions must be borne in mind; in the United States, for instance, the largest military planes were designed for the transport of personnel and supplies and were not equipped for bombing, and it was unlikely that they would ever be used for that purpose. Further, where great distances were involved, size alone was not necessarily evidence of offensive character. It was for this reason that his delegation had advocated the insertion in the report, as one of the criteria, of the ability of aircraft to reach a given objective.

To state the matter plainly, the problem presented itself in a different light if viewed from the European angle, where short distances separated the great centres of civilian population, than if viewed from the American angle, where one of the primary considerations in the development of aviation was the great distances separating the vital points where elements of defence might be required. His delegation fully appreciated the European viewpoint, and was confident that the United States would be able to co-operate in working towards a settlement which would help to give relief from the potential menace to civilians presented by aerial bombing. Its reluctance to suggest definite figures should not be interpreted as evidence that his country took either a detached or a non-co-operative position in the matter. It was merely due to its belief that the problem did not admit of an arbitrary mathematical solution along the lines proposed.

His delegation therefore favoured the submitting to the General Commission, as soon as possible, of a report including the figures of those delegations which had submitted them, together with the considerations of any others desiring to express their views on the subject of the dividing-line envisaged.

His delegation would also suggest the addition to the report of a final paragraph running somewhat as follows:

"The Air Commission recommends that, in view of its unanimous findings as to the grave threat to civilians from aerial bombardment, the General Commission should..."
consider what effective action could be taken, as a part of any comprehensive scheme for disarmament, to do away with this threat, whether through the control of bombing from the air, the restriction on the number and size of aircraft available for aerial bombardment, or through other measures affecting aviation."

M. Simonsen (Denmark) thought that the difficulty of answering the question asked in the General Commission’s resolution arose from the fact that aircraft could in general be used for both peaceful and warlike purposes.

The Commission’s examination of the technical points at issue had clearly proved that it was not, in practice, possible to provide a form of limitation precluding the use of military aircraft for bombing, but allowing such craft to be used for other purposes. The only method of separating aircraft possessing the qualities referred to by the General Commission from other aircraft was to endeavour to draw a dividing-line through the categories of military aircraft, above which bombers preponderated and below which they were in the minority. Such a distinction was likely to be ineffective, however, in the case of small countries, and the Danish delegation therefore considered, as it had already stated, that military aviation as a whole was, by its very nature, specifically offensive and especially dangerous to civilians. The retention of any military aircraft whatsoever made it possible to give training in its use for military purposes.

Holding that military aircraft should be totally abolished, the Danish delegation would suggest that the Air Commission should simply report to the General Commission on the technical criteria governing a distinction between different kinds of aircraft.

Since the proposal for the drawing of a dividing-line had, however, received considerable support, he would like to say that limitation should be provided for by means of figures relating to unladen weight, horse-power and so on, so that an air bombardment with the machines allowed should in practice be precluded. Public opinion demanded a solution along these lines, and, if the Commission did not propose one, it would give just grounds for the mistrust of technical commissions which had been expressed. In order to attain the object in view, the limit must be fixed at a low level and the criterion must give an adequate guarantee. The Danish delegation had adopted the three-criteria proposal, but subsequent discussion gave grounds for consideration as to whether one criterion — unladen weight — might not be so advantageous as to be preferable.

The Danish delegation felt that the figures proposed by the majority of delegations were too high. For a reduction of any importance, the lowest of the levels hitherto proposed must be envisaged. Should the Commission decide that a figure was to be fixed in the report, the Danish delegation would discuss the figure on the basis of the opinion he had just expressed.

The President said that, with reference to the French questionnaire, the Bureau was fully alive to the considerations which prompted the delegations opposed to its discussion (in that it would cause delay) and those in favour of its examination (in that it was impossible to establish figures without detailed consideration of the technical problems which it raised). Since no chance of completing the work before the Commission should be let slip, and as several delegations, among them those of the United Kingdom and Japan, were in favour of studying the document, the Bureau had felt that it would be discourteous and inadvisable to leave it on one side. It therefore submitted the following proposal:

“That the Commission should:

I. Forthwith invite the Rapporteur to submit a draft general report on the work of the Air Commission up to date, this report to be discussed at a subsequent meeting;

II. (a) Retain for consideration the French draft questionnaire and resolution;

(b) Constitute a sub-committee for the examination of these documents, to submit a special report on the subject as soon as possible;

(c) Co-ordinate this general report and special report, should the latter be ready in time; if not, submit the general report, reserving the right to supplement it subsequently by a special report on the French draft questionnaire and resolution.”

M. Massigli (France) said that his delegation pressed for the study of its — he thought — very moderate questionnaire, because it felt that concrete figures must be put on paper in order that the General Commission might have before it certain technical data as to the way in which each country used its air arm. This being a much newer element than either land or sea forces, there was in many quarters some uncertainty as to its uses and capabilities.
Anxious to facilitate the Commission's work to the greatest possible extent, the French delegation had prepared a draft reply to its own questionnaire. This it would propose to submit to the suggested sub-committee, for study together with the questionnaire.

If the sub-committee's discussion were so prolonged that its report could not be included in the first report to the General Commission, the French delegation reserved the right to insert in that report a declaration with regard to its particular views.

M. LANGOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in helping to draw up the Sub-Committee's report, upon which the Commission's discussions were based, he had realised that it was far from perfect, but that he had hoped for its improvement in plenary session. Unfortunately, this had not come about. The varying points of view of the different delegations were masked by vague statements, while in some cases votes taken in the Commission had merely served to weaken the Sub-Committee's original. He had specially in mind the vote which had brought about the deletion of the first part of paragraph III (d) from the original text; further, the defensive aspect of weapons had been brought in to such an extent that the value of many of the decisions regarding offensive weapons was entirely negatived. All that the report now stated was: "The larger the machine, the more threatening" -- a conclusion which would justify the General Commission in stating that the Air Commission had achieved nothing whatever.

The Commission had before it various general declarations from which it must draw a conclusion. If this conclusion were to provide an adequate basis for the General Commission's work, it must contain figures. It was obviously unlikely that a single figure could be achieved. Nevertheless, concrete proposals should be the Commission's object, and, if the majority of the delegations present supplied figures, the General Commission would have something to go upon.

His delegation had originally proposed that all military aviation should be regarded as coming under the three heads of the General Commission's resolution. It had subsequently proposed figures -- a limit of 600 kilogrammes unladen weight, 200 horsepower, and a ratio of horse-power to wing area of 8; this was fully compatible with the original proposal, since all existing military aircraft were larger than this.

It had been argued that certain delegations were in favour of the total abolition of military aircraft because of certain clauses in the Treaties of Peace. Obviously, this did not apply to his country. The Soviet view was based upon its observations of what was being done to-day in the field of military aviation; a few examples would show this.

At the beginning of the last war, the combatant States had among them possessed 700 military machines. At the end of the war this number had risen to 10,000 -- proof in itself that aircraft operating beyond the frontiers and at vital points behind the lines were one of the most effective means of offence. Further proof of this were the immense air forces massed by the attacking side during the great offensives and counter-offensives of 1918. It was to be assumed that, upon demobilisation, this figure -- 10,000 machines -- had decreased. Nevertheless, the world air force at the present time again numbered 10,000 military aircraft, with an aggregate horse-power of 5,000,000. Added to this, developments since the war had increased the offensiveness of military machines. Of these 10,000 machines, 2,000 were capable of carrying 2,000 kilogrammes of bombs each. From these figures could be deduced the fact that the machines existing in the world to-day could, in about thirty flights, drop as many bombs as had been dropped during the whole of the last war.

Technical progress had also increased the radius of action of machines, for light scouting planes, for instance, from 150 to 400 kilometres, while heavy machines could now operate some 500 or 600 kilometres from their base. Useful load had increased proportionately, bombers being able to carry up to a four-ton load and even chasers some 500 or 600 kilogrammes. These figures proved that any part of any country in Western Europe was open to attack, and, in the case of small countries, by machines of all categories. Here was an added reason for advocating the abolition of all military machines.

A study of the development of projectiles only served to confirm the Soviet delegation in its view. A 50-kilogramme bomb was equal in effect to a shell from a 200-millimetre calibre gun, and could do immense damage to national defence or to civilians, while various kinds of incendiary and chemical bombs and of large bombs, weighing as much as 2,000 kilogrammes, had been invented during and since the war to increase the offensiveness of the air arm.

He would draw special attention to the chemical aspect of aerial warfare. The Commission had not sufficiently considered this, perhaps because a special Committee had been formed to deal with it, but he would point out that machines other than bombers could be particularly effective in this form of attack.

Obviously, machines carrying the heaviest load were the most dangerous, but the facts which he had quoted should serve to prove that the view that all aircraft came under the three heads of the General Commission's resolution was well founded.
To turn to the French questionnaire, the Bureau’s resolution for the formation of a sub-committee virtually accepted the original French proposal, which he had opposed at a previous meeting. He could not admit this, and asked that the maintenance or rejection of the questionnaire should be put to the vote.

M. BRANDENBURG (Germany) had been particularly interested to hear Mr. Dulles raise the point — with which he agreed — that two machines carrying 500 kilogrammes of bombs each were more offensive than one machine carrying 1,000 kilogrammes. This refuted the argument more than once raised that the biggest machines were the most offensive.

He was also in full agreement with the Soviet delegate that it was inadvisable to appoint a Sub-Committee to study the French questionnaire. He had already drawn attention to the insurmountable difficulties experienced by the experts at a recent Red Cross Conference at which the questionnaire’s first point only had been discussed.

Germany, deprived as she had been of military aviation for the past fourteen years, could not reply to the questionnaire without setting her experts to carry out long and difficult technical studies, involving immense delay. If the questionnaire were to be answered, it was of vital importance to his delegation whether it was to form part of the report or to be considered separately.

M. QUINTANA (Argentina) agreed with the United States delegate that the present state of the Commission’s work did not permit the establishment of figures. He was in entire agreement with Mr. Dulles’s point regarding geographical conditions and considerations of the distance to be flown.

He would here refer to a question asked by the Polish delegate at a recent meeting of the Naval Commission, with reference to aeroplanes carried on aircraft-carriers: Was an air weapon equally offensive in Europe and outside it? Had a bomber an equal degree of offensiveness against, for instance, Australia and Belgium?

The question of defence must not be left on one side, since countries which did not enjoy the security provided by a large army obviously required aeroplanes for strictly defensive purposes.

He was in favour of the French proposal and would support the resolution submitted by the Bureau. His delegation was prepared to co-operate in drawing up international rules for the protection of civilians against bombardment from the air.

General Piccio (Italy) said that the object of the French delegation’s draft questionnaire was to determine the degree of efficacy of the various types of aircraft against national defence and the degree of menace which each represented for civilians. Even if the Air Commission could agree on these points, it would be difficult to settle the technical characteristics of the armaments with which the Commission was concerned. It would nevertheless be possible to consider the question of a dividing-line between the least offensive weapons and those which were the most specifically offensive.

The Italian delegation believed that the only way in which a satisfactory reply could be given to the General Commission’s question was to fix this dividing-line. It had accordingly very carefully considered the French delegation’s questionnaire. It had come to the conclusion that the method suggested, besides being long and laborious, was not likely to assist in the practical establishment of the criteria of offensiveness with which the Air Commission was concerned.

From an examination of the points in the questionnaire, it was at once plain that they would lead to replies which it would be difficult to express in figures. How, for instance, would it be possible to define what, in modern warfare in the air, on land or on sea, would be the military objectives against which air armaments would be capable of being employed? Aviation developed so rapidly and its military possibilities were so varied and extensive that it could be affirmed without fear of error that everything in the air, on the land or on the seas might be an objective for the air force. The importance of any objective would, of course, depend on the circumstances, on the course of events, on industrial capacity, etc.; in brief, on all the factors which might assist more or less directly in the efficient conduct of military operations.

It would be even more difficult to reply to the question: What means of warfare dropped from the air were likely to have the most effective action on military objectives? Since everything depended on the relative importance of the objective and not on the absolute value of the means of warfare employed, it was not improbable that, in certain circumstances, a single projectile of a minimum unit weight might cause more damage than could be caused in other circumstances by projectiles with a higher unit weight. An incendiary bomb, for example, weighing a few kilogrammes, dropped on a military hangar could destroy an entire squadron. The same bomb dropped on a munition depot or a powder magazine might cause their destruction, and even have the most appalling consequences; whereas a dozen bombs weighing a thousand kilogrammes each dropped on a defensive system or on troops in fighting formation might have a merely trifling effect as regards its immediate value.
Take next the other point — namely, what were the most specifically offensive acts? Here, too, it would be found that definition was impossible.

Would it not, perhaps, be possible to speed up the replies to be given if the delegations, taking as basis the questions defined in the questionnaire, furnished the figures, explained in the Commission the criteria which had guided them in arriving at those figures, and so replied indirectly to the questionnaire?

The Italian delegation had desired to draw the Air Commission’s attention to the very great difficulties involved in a study of the French questionnaire. It was prepared to co-operate with the majority of the Commission, provided the decision was one which would conduce to the practical achievement of the task entrusted to it.

The delegation would, however, vote against the adoption of the French questionnaire.

M. Massigli (France) thought it was not difficult to refute any of the three arguments raised against the proposal to discuss the French questionnaire. To the first — that it would delay the Commission unnecessarily — he would reply that the Bureau’s proposal precluded delay. To the second — that it was useless because all air weapons were offensive — he would reply that, in his opinion, a full answer to the French questionnaire would be the best possible proof in support of this view. A detailed reply must be more convincing than the unqualified statement so far submitted by the delegations taking that view. To the third — General Piccio’s contention that it would merely serve to complicate the reply to the General Commission — he would reply that the technical particulars it would provide would be an invaluable basis for any subsequent political decisions.

M. Brandenburg (Germany) asked whether the sub-committee was intended to carry out an independent study of the French questionnaire or a study definitely connected with the Commission’s report. If its findings were to form part and parcel of the report, this could not possibly be ready before the meeting of the General Commission if held on the date suggested.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium) had hoped that the Commission would accept the Bureau’s proposal unanimously. It seemed as if some malignant fate had determined that the acceptance of any proposal by one group of delegations must automatically bring about its opposition by another.

His delegation would vote in favour of the Bureau’s proposal, as this would enable the Commission to report many cases to the General Commission. If the Commission had agreed in time upon all the points before it, the report could be final. If not, it would be incomplete; but a report on the French questionnaire could stand over and be inserted in a later report should the General Commission judge the first of sufficient value to ask for a second.

Though some delegations had argued that the French questionnaire was useless, none, to his knowledge, proved that it was bad. He would therefore appeal to the Commission’s courtesy and goodwill for a unanimous vote in its favour.

The Commission unanimously adopted paragraph I of the Bureau’s resolution.

M. Boheman (Sweden), Rapporteur, warned the Commission that it could not expect a complete report in response to the resolution just adopted. The ending must be left open to be completed when the sub-committee had finished its work. If its report were ready in time it could be included in the general report. If not, the latter must close with any indications which the stage of the work then reached might permit, together with any statements submitted by particular delegations.

Group-Captain Babington (United Kingdom) stated that his delegation supported the second part of the Bureau’s proposal. It further considered that, if figures were to be supplied to the General Commission, an examination of the French questionnaire was indispensable.

M. Vliegen (Netherlands) said that he had at a previous meeting been opposed to the consideration of the French questionnaire. He had now changed his view, for two reasons. First, because the Bureau’s resolution provided for the drawing up of a report, whether the study of the questionnaire were completed or no. Secondly, because he had earlier understood that the French delegation was not prepared to submit a draft reply. Now that it had done so, the questionnaire was no longer of the same importance, as the discussion in sub-committee was bound to bear mainly on the reply. He would therefore vote for the adoption of the second paragraph of the Bureau’s resolution.
M. BRANDENBURG (Germany) associated himself with certain of the Netherlands delegate's remarks. He had understood from the Rapporteur's statement that the results of the study of the French questionnaire would form an integral part of the report to the General Commission. This he could not admit, in view of the delays involved. He was, however, in no way opposed to discussion of the questionnaire independently.

The Commission adopted paragraph II of the Bureau's proposal by twenty-five votes to three.

The Commission elected the following delegations to serve on the Sub-Committee: Argentine, Belgium, United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Poland, Spain and the United States of America, and also the Bureau.

M. LANGOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that, though nominated, he preferred not to serve on the Committee. He reserved the right to support the Sub-Committee's decisions, if in agreement with the views of his delegation.

General Piccio (Italy) understood that the purpose of the Sub-Committee's work was to facilitate the drawing of the dividing-line between offensive and other aircraft. He asked if the Sub-Committee were at liberty to discuss the proposals of other delegations made to this end.

The President replied that that was for the Sub-Committee to decide.

EIGHTEENTH MEETING

Held on Friday, June 3rd, 1932, at 10.30 a.m.

President: M. DE MADARIAGA.


M. BOHEMAN (Sweden), Rapporteur, described the main lines of the draft report, which was in two parts: the first part consisted of a progress report, and the second was provisional and would be modified as the work of the Sub-Committee responsible for examining the French proposal progressed.

The draft report was read, discussed and provisionally adopted page by page with various amendments.

In the course of the discussion:

M. BRANDENBURG (Germany) said that his delegation had no objection to the form or content of the report. He had already pointed out during earlier discussions that his delegation could not accept the conclusions reached at the beginning of the report as regards the offensive character of air armaments, their efficacy against national defence, and the threat they constitute to civilians. He reserved the right to insert in the report a statement giving the German delegation's views.

The President pointed out that the report proceeded to refer to the German view.

M. BOHEMAN (Sweden), Rapporteur, stated that the Bulgarian and Hungarian delegations were anxious to make a general reservation in the same sense as that already made by the German delegation. He would ask them to come to an agreement with the German delegation upon a common text.

M. LANGE (Norway) proposed the inclusion of the following declaration among the comments of the delegations after the paragraph beginning "In connection with the conclusion marked I (a), the Italian delegation . . . ; it dealt with a matter which his delegation considered fundamentally important if a useful basis for the General Commission's discussions were to be supplied:

"The Norwegian delegation, which voted for the Italian proposal, considers that, working on the same lines and in order to submit a useful reply to the first question
asked by the General Commission, the Air Commission should have in mind the hypothesis of a surprise attack, in time of peace, by a State intending thereby to create a new situation before there should be any possibility either for the League of Nations, or for States not party to this dispute, to take preventive and conciliatory action with a view to preventing a war.

"Only with this interpretation of the question asked by the General Commission can the armaments which are ‘the most specifically offensive in character’ be defined."

He added that similar considerations had been inserted in the Naval Commission’s report and would, he believed, be included in that of the Land Commission.

General Picci (Italy), Lieutenant-Colonel Herrera (Spain), M. Simonsen (Denmark), M. Contoumas (Greece) and M. Van der Donckt (Belgium) supported this declaration on behalf of their delegations.

M. Massigli (France), while understanding the reasons for the text, observed that it raised a rather important point and affected the actual interpretation of the Commission’s terms of reference. Either it must be a fundamental question, affecting their decisions which must as such be discussed, or else merely an important statement made by several delegations, in which case it was out of place in this part of the report and should figure among the reservations. In any case, it must be drafted in such a way as to conform more closely to the Covenant. Before issuing the text as the duly considered opinion of the Air Commission, some time should be devoted to its discussion.

M. Lange (Norway) would be glad of the French delegation’s assistance in improving the drafting of the proposal. He would make a reservation in respect of M. Massigli’s interpretation, as it was not completely in harmony with the idea which the Norwegian delegation had intended to convey.

M. Vallotton (Switzerland) thanked the Norwegian delegation for drawing attention to this question and supported its proposal.

A distinction must be drawn between the words “offensive” and “aggressive”, which were too often confused. In his view, “offensive” meant attacking or being used for attack; “aggressive”, used for sudden, surprise and unprovoked attack. He recalled Raspail’s definition: “Defence is a duty, aggression an act of madness”.

Captain Gregores (Argentina) said that his delegation had no objection to accepting the Norwegian proposal. Nevertheless, he would propose the addition of the words “without prejudice to the question of their defensive uses”, which had been accepted by the Norwegian delegation in the Naval Commission’s report.

Mr. Dulles (United States of America) said that his delegation was in full sympathy with the Norwegian proposal.

The President proposed that a drafting committee should be set up to amend the text submitted by the Norwegian delegation in the sense of the above remarks.

M. Massigli (France) and Group-Captain Babington (United Kingdom) accepted this proposal, reserving the right, if necessary, to make a declaration on the point.

The Drafting Committee was composed as follows: The Vice-President, the Rapporteur, the United Kingdom, Norwegian, French, Soviet, Italian, Argentine and United States delegates.

M. LangovoY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that the Soviet delegation, as well as the Italian, Norwegian and Turkish delegations, had made a reservation in regard to the maintenance of the words “without prejudice to the question of their defensive uses” in conclusion I (a). He added that, for reasons of principle, it was difficult for him wholeheartedly to support the Norwegian declaration.

He proposed the insertion of the following text in the comments of the delegations, two paragraphs after the paragraph beginning, “In connection with the conclusion numbered I (a) . . .”:

“Quite apart from the fact that aircraft have been constructed specially for military purposes or converted later for the same purposes, the Soviet delegation holds that all military aviation has a specifically offensive character.

“The Soviet delegation considers that civil aviation cannot be regarded as an arm and therefore sees no need to mention it in the report.”
General Ferraz (Portugal) said that his delegation associated itself with the United States delegation's statement regarding point I(d), and therefore asked that the introductory sentence to the statement should be altered to read: "The United States and Portuguese delegations made the following declaration."

Mr. Dulles (United States of America) asked that in the second paragraph of this declaration it should be quite specific that ship-based aircraft or aircraft taking off from bases close to land frontiers were regarded individually.

Group-Captain Babington (United Kingdom) stated that his delegation shared the views expressed in this declaration.

M. Brandenburg (Germany) concurred in the principle underlying the Soviet delegation's reservation. The idea contained in that reservation was, moreover, already embodied in the general reservation which the German delegation proposed to insert in the report.

The Commission decided to reserve the text of the Norwegian delegation.

Mr. Shedden (Australia) asked for mention to be made of Australia in the list of countries whose delegations voted for the inclusion of the special statement regarding the defensive value of air armaments regarded as the most effective against national defence. Owing to Australia's geographical situation, and in view of the radius of action of aircraft, that country's air armaments did not offer a menace to anyone, and the Australian Government therefore placed great importance on this defensive aspect.

The Australian Government would recall that the aim of the General Commission's resolution was to increase the power of the defence, and that there were some States which were in a special position to employ aircraft for defensive purposes without their being considered an aggressive threat to other States.

Colonel Riazi (Persia) asked that Persia should be added to the list of countries whose delegations considered the statement to which Mr. Shedden had just referred to be unnecessary.

Mr. Camp (South Africa) made, on behalf of South Africa, the same request as the Australian delegation.

M. Boheman (Sweden), Rapporteur, pointed out, in order to remove any ambiguity, that the Commission had agreed that unladen weight in the case of aeroplanes and volume in that of dirigibles were essential criteria and must be adopted.

The Commission decided, at the request of M. Massigli (France) and Group-Captain Babington (United Kingdom), to draft as follows the end of the paragraph regarding the opinion of the eighteen delegations on the use of unladen weight alone as a criterion for purposes of practical comparison:

"They held that the addition of the two other criteria for aeroplanes would considerably complicate the question, owing to the facility with which wing area and, more particularly, horse-power could be modified. They added that they thought it impossible to define satisfactorily or to verify in practice the value of horse-power and of wing area. They likewise considered that the adoption of these two criteria might hinder sound technical development."

M. Gafoardo (Chile) said that his delegation should be added to the list of delegations which took the opposite view.

General Picchio (Italy) proposed that the following statement should be added to the paragraph regarding the opinion of the delegations opposed to the use of unladen weight as the sole criterion:

"The above-mentioned delegations dissent from the view taken by the eighteen other delegations. They hold that horse-power or wing area, which are regarded by them as highly necessary for calculating the useful load and capacity to attain the objective, can be calculated, like unladen weight, sufficiently closely to be utilisable conjointly with unladen weight."

As unladen weight itself could not be calculated with absolute accuracy, the Italian delegation urged that the three criteria must be taken into account in determining useful load and capacity to reach the objective.

The President pointed out that the three criteria could not be dealt with identically in the Report, since one of them — viz., unladen weight — had been adopted unanimously by the Commission, whereas the other two had been upheld by only twenty delegations, and therefore could not claim the same priority. He consequently proposed that the Commission should leave the Rapporteur and the Italian delegate to settle the final form of this amendment in such a way that the Italian amendment should balance the French amendment.

M. BOHEMAN (SWEDEN), RAPPORTEUR, SAID THAT THE PARAGRAPHS DEALING WITH THE DEFINITIONS OF HORSE-POWER AND WING AREA HAD BEEN INSERTED MERELY AS A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION. THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVE DEFINITIONS HAD JUST BEEN SUBMITTED BY THE ITALIAN DELEGATION, AND THE NAMES OF ANY DELEGATIONS PREFERING THESE COULD BE INSERTED IN THE REPORT.

“Horse-Power.

“The power index of an engine given by the experts’ formula in document C.259, M.115 might be adopted as a first approximate criterion for qualitative disarmament purposes.

“This formula is \( W_f = \frac{1}{K_1} U_f P_f \)

“The Italian delegation considers, however, that it would be desirable to improve the method by adopting for the constant \( K \) different values according to the basic types of engines and to take into account in measuring the weight the material used in the fixed parts.

“It therefore proposes the constants \( K_1 \) and \( K_2 \) for liquid-cooled engines with and without reduction gear respectively; \( K_3 \) and \( K_4 \) for air-cooled engines with and without reduction gear respectively; \( K_5 \) and \( K_6 \) for Diesel engines, liquid- and air-cooled respectively.

“For surcharged engines, these values will have to be multiplied by a coefficient depending on the surcharging system and the degree of compression produced by the surcharger.

“Notes. — (1) Liquid-cooled engines are distinguished from air-cooled engines because, in measuring the weight, due allowance cannot be made for the radiators.

“(2) The values \( K_1 \), \( K_2 \), etc., and the surcharging coefficient cannot be fixed until the maximum value of the horse-power has been determined, and in fixing these values technical and statistical considerations will be taken as bases.

“It is also desirable to establish the equivalence between aluminium alloys and magnesium alloys used in the fixed parts (about 1.4), in order that a change from one of these materials to the other may not unfairly affect the measurement of the horse-power.

“(3) The Diesel engine will no longer be handicapped if it is considered separately.

“Wing Area.

“(1) The supporting surface of a wing mounted on an aeroplane is the normal projection of its perimeter on a plane passing through the chord traversing the span centrally and perpendicular to the longitudinal plane of symmetry of the aeroplane.

“(2) The wing area of an aeroplane is the sum of the supporting surfaces in its cellule.

“Notes. — I. The surface of the ailerons in the rest position is included in the wing area.

“II. In the case of wings having a safety beak, the projection of the wing itself must be taken with the safety beak in the rest position.

“III. In the total, the surfaces must be calculated in excess per square metre. Wings which are partly or wholly cut away to allow for the fuselage or nacelles, etc., are regarded as continuous.

“IV. In the case of a wing with a variable area, the area must be calculated at its maximum extension.
V. Horizontal tail units and any other supporting surfaces included in the glider are excluded provided that their total surface, calculated in the same way as that of the wings, does not exceed \( x \) per cent of the wing area of the cellule.

VI. The wing profile chord mentioned in the definition is that established by the C.I.N.A. at its sixth meeting (March 1924) and communicated to the Council of the League of Nations.

General Piccio (Italy) pointed out that the formula submitted by his delegation for horse-power was practically the same as that given in the experts' report, except that this last provided one coefficient only for all types of motor, whereas the Italian definition gave three different coefficients suitable for application to different types. The definition for wing area was, in substance, the same as that proposed by Colonel Herrera, but was more precise.

M. Massigli (France) asked that the report should state that the delegations in favour of one criterion only were in no way bound by any definitions adopted by those favouring three criteria. Even were the General Commission to adopt the three-criteria standard, such delegations would thus retain complete liberty of action.

The President agreed that this should be done. He suggested that, as the two definitions under discussion concerned only the delegations desiring three criteria, those delegations should meet unofficially to agree upon a single formula.

M. Boheman (Sweden), Rapporteur, said that the Italian delegation had, at the previous meeting, asked for the amendment of the paragraph stating the opinion of the nineteen delegations opposed to the adoption of a single criterion. In conjunction with the Italian delegate, he had drafted as follows the paragraph (three paragraphs later) referring to the same delegations:

"The delegations in question added that they considered that both the horse-power and the wing area could be computed with sufficient accuracy (though less accurately than the unladen weight) to enable them to be effectively used in the comparative measurement of the useful load of aircraft and of their capability of arriving at their objective, and that three criteria, however imperfect, would be more reliable than a single criterion."

Captain Gregores (Argentine) proposed the postponement of the adoption of this paragraph until the next meeting, in order to enable the delegations to consider it. His delegation had originally voted for three criteria, but might reconsider its opinion in view of the difficulty of arriving at agreement upon a standard horse-power measurement.

Agreed.

M. Massigli (France) pointed out that the partisans of the three-criteria standard had never given a final reply as to whether, in their view, all three criteria were of equal value or not. As the Minutes showed, this question had been brought up more than once, but had always been left in suspense. Some reference should be made to it in the report, as it was essential that the General Commission should have a clear picture of the trend of the Commission's discussions, particularly on points upon which there was no unanimity.

The President stated that the Rapporteur would note this point.

By 18 votes to 10 the Commission confirmed the wording it had previously adopted for conclusions II (c) and III (c) of its draft report, the words "and their capability of arriving at their objective" being retained. The decision was supported by Mr. Dulles (United States of America), M. Contounmas (Greece) and Captain Gregores (Argentine), and was opposed by General Piccio (Italy).

Declaration by the Delegations of Belgium, Mexico, Netherlands, Spain and Sweden regarding Numerical Criteria to determine what Aeroplanes come under the Three Categories indicated by the General Commission.

M. Van der Donckt (Belgium) submitted the following declaration:

"The delegations of Belgium, Mexico, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden, having examined a large number of aeroplanes at present in use in various countries with a view to finding numerical criteria to determine what aeroplanes come under the three categories indicated by the General Commission — namely, the most specifically offensive, the most efficacious against national defence, the most threatening to civilians — have come to the following conclusions:

1. There is a limit, based on technical data, above which almost all aeroplanes possess the three characteristics mentioned above;
"2. There is a limit below which no aeroplane can be deemed to possess these three characteristics;

"3. For aeroplanes the characteristics of which lie between the two limits, it is impossible to lay down a simple rule enabling those possessing the three above-mentioned characteristics to be distinguished with certainty.

"The limit under (1) might be fixed at an unladen weight of 1,500-1,600 kilogrammes (with the addition of 300-400 kilogrammes for seaplanes).

"The limit under (2) might be fixed, in general, at an unladen weight of 600 kilogrammes, a horse-power of 200 and a wing area of 25 square metres, on the understanding that any aeroplane exceeding any one of these three limits would come under category (3) above."

M. Valлотton (Switzerland) stated that the Swiss delegation supported the Belgian proposal. The geographical position and the size of Switzerland rendered it especially vulnerable to air attack, as were all small countries; in its case, terms such as "the theatre of operations" or "rear" were purely relative. The same applied to the term "air front", Switzerland's area being so small that it was a simple matter to flank its so-called air front and attack the very heart of the territory.

From the point of view of defence, too, Switzerland might be faced with war on several fronts at once. Thus all the advantages would invariably be with her attacker, who could concentrate considerable forces at any time and place desired, but assured not only of numerical superiority but of the undeniable advantages of surprise; whereas the Swiss defence forces must necessarily be spread throughout the country in order to protect vital centres.

Another point: in the case of small States like Switzerland, most military objectives could easily be confused with civilian objectives; arsenals, barracks, depots and so on were necessarily situated in towns or their suburbs. How could a foreign bomber distinguish them from civilian buildings? Though these might be kept apart in large territories, it was impossible to do so in a small country like Switzerland.

The danger resulting from the proximity of such objectives was increased by the inevitable inaccuracy of bomb-dropping from the air, a fact which had been emphasised, and rightly, in the revised draft of the French resolution presented to the Sub-Committee. An illustration of this point was provided by the Geneva barracks. Surrounded as they were by civilian dwellings, what pilot could be certain that his bomb would fall on the military and not on the civilian objective?

The French document pointed out that attacks on the civil population were contrary to international undertakings, but all States had not signed these undertakings; moreover, persons fully qualified to do so had assured him that certain military instructions expressly laid down that terror could be spread among civil populations by means of air bombardment. This, called the "strategy of terrorisation", was nothing short of pure barbarism.

The Swiss experts were studying the Belgian figures, but he could, he thought, confirm M. Gorge's earlier statements, and say that his delegation supported the figures given in the Belgian proposal. Its only hesitation was on the score of that given under (1) (1,500 to 1,600 kilogrammes) which it felt should, in the interests of small countries, be lowered to 1,200 kilogrammes, especially in view of the fact that unladen weight alone was limited, horse-power remaining unrestricted. Given a machine of 1,500 kilogrammes unladen weight but with a 500 horse-power engine, it was possible to construct an aeroplane coming under the three heads of the General Commission's resolution. Anxious to obtain agreement here, his delegation would submit its final decision later.

Two points had arisen from the Commission's long discussions; possibly they might be pointed out to the General Commission in the general report or in the resolution proposed by the French delegation. Whatever the differences of technical opinion expressed, some of them, based on reasons which, though comprehensible, were possibly not always scientific, it could be stated that all delegations, and all the experts, were agreed that the most dangerous aeroplanes were bombing aircraft. The technical definition of such aircraft, as distinct from reconnaissance and other machines, had raised enormous difficulties, comprehensible to experts but ill understood by the man in the street.

His second point, upon which he thought the Commission would also agree, was, therefore: any measures covering bombing aircraft only must be inadequate, ineffectual and illusory. On the other hand, the total abolition of bombing and the abolition of chemical and bacteriological warfare, supplemented by measures taken against bombing aircraft, would mean the achievement of their double object. It would, first, place obstacles in the way of acts of aggression likely to lead to war and, more important still, it would protect the women, old persons and children who might be the innocent victims of dastardly bombing.
M. Vogt (Sweden) stated that any part played by his delegation in attempting to provide as precise a technical reply as possible to the questions submitted by the General Commission did not prejudice its views as to the total abolition of military aviation accompanied by the internationalisation or strict control of civil aviation.

Colonel Serrano (Bolivia) agreed with the Swiss delegate so far as the position of small countries was concerned, but would make a reservation regarding the figures submitted in the Belgian proposal, this because Bolivia was affected not only by geographical conditions, but by its altitude. All the most populated parts of the country were situated at over 12,000 feet, and any figures fixed should take into account the fact that, in some countries, aircraft must take off from such altitudes.

M. Fisch (Germany) was glad to see the disadvantageous position of small countries brought to light, and was also in a position to support the Swiss delegate. Germany was in rather the same position as Switzerland. Present technical conditions meant that all parts of the country were exposed to air attack at the shortest notice and that its 65 million inhabitants constantly lived under the nightmare of such an attack. The position was particularly disquieting in view of the complete lack of any means of aircraft or anti-aircraft defence.

For the reasons already given, he could not agree with the figures submitted in the Belgian proposal, but would point out that the arguments raised in its support by the Swiss delegate were, in fact, one of the reasons why Germany regarded all military aviation as corresponding to the three criteria of the General Commission.

M. Langovoj (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), though he could not accept the figures in the Belgian proposal, thought that the very fact that the declaration contained these concrete data constituted an immense advance on previous proposals. His delegation considered that the limit fixed for (2) in the Belgian proposal was still too high. It would allow a machine to carry out a flight of over 100 kilometres, meaning that it could operate some 50 or 60 kilometres inside enemy territory. It could also carry over 50 kilogrammes of bombs or other means of warfare. The fact that such means covered chemical and incendiary bombs was an added argument in support of the Soviet view that the Belgian figures were unacceptable.

M. Szentkeresztesy (Hungary), while supporting the statements made by the Swiss delegate, pointed out that his delegation could not endorse the Belgian proposal, since, apart from the question of the vulnerability of small nations, it ignored the relative strength of air forces — an important point for his country. Hungary, deprived of all air armaments and particularly open to air attack, felt that all military aviation should be abolished.

General Ferraz (Portugal) and Colonel Martola (Finland) endorsed the Swiss delegate’s statement and supported the Belgian proposal.

The Commission unanimously agreed to insert the text under discussion as a declaration ex parte.

TWENTIETH MEETING

_Held on Tuesday, June 7th, 1932, at 10.30 a.m._

President: M. Valлотон.


M. Boheman (Sweden), Rapporteur, set forth the main outlines of the text. He pointed out that the reservations given in the annex could be divided into three groups. The first, comprising the German reservation, represented the view of the countries without air armaments or aerial defence; the second included the Italian reservation, and presented the view that the text had the effect of enabling countries to retain heavy aircraft; the third comprised the reservations of countries which disputed various figures.
General Piccio (Italy) observed that the Sub-Committee had specified that its replies constituted, not a proposal as to the figures which the Commission should submit to the General Commission or an attempt to discuss these, but a collection of technical data. Nevertheless, he could not help wondering whether these technical particulars would really supply the Air Commission with useful information and guide it in its work.

The report stated that the useful load of the heaviest aircraft existing at the present time was about 27,000 kilogrammes for civil aircraft, and 15,000 for military aircraft. This was true of the "Do X" and the "Caproni", but these were two trial machines, and, if the tonnage corresponding to the useful load of 27,000 and 15,000 kilogrammes respectively represented the approximate limit of present machines, these figures might well be doubled in the near future.

What the report did not say, however, was that these useful loads of 27,000 and 15,000 kilogrammes, corresponding to total weights of 50,000 and 30,000 kilogrammes, were those of aircraft not in service with mobilisable units of existing military air forces, whereas information as to the tonnage of machines actually in service in such units for the accomplishment of the work envisaged in the report would undoubtedly have been more useful.

The report added that aircraft needed for communications with and between overseas territories by Powers possessing colonies in different parts of the world should have a radius of action of at least 2,000 kilometres, and a crew of not less than five, which amounted to stating that a machine of unladen weight of from 5 to 6 tons and of about 2,000 horsepower would be necessary.

The report stated that, for scouting operations, the minimum radius of action should be 1,200 kilometres over land and 2,500 kilometres over sea, which amounted to the adoption of an unladen weight of between 4,000 and 7,000 kilogrammes and of about 1,500 horse-power, whereas the military machines actually used for such work were of unladen weight of from 1,500 to 2,000 kilogrammes only.

It was also stated that bombs of from 100 to 500 kilogrammes were indispensable for the destruction of munition depots. The regulations actually in force, however, stated that, unless the depot contained only heavy artillery projectiles with particularly resistant cases, a bomb of under 50 kilogrammes was adequate and effective.

It also stated that, to be capable of producing serious results against fortifications, aeroplanes must carry a useful load of from 5,000 to 6,000 kilogrammes, and, to produce appreciable results against obstacles placed in the way of invading troops, a useful load of from 3,000 to 5,000 kilogrammes. He thought he was right in saying that aircraft of this size were not at present in service in any of the mobilisable units of existing military air forces.

Surely the Commission must realise, as did his delegation — which for the above reasons had taken no part in the discussion or drafting of the report — that these exaggerated figures were not calculated to enlighten the General Commission, but that, on the contrary, they would confuse it and give it a false idea of the tonnage of machines in service in existing military air forces.

The sole conclusion to be drawn from these figures was that existing aircraft were inadequate to carry out the duties expected of them. Thus, these figures could but mislead the Air Commission, and the General Commission too, as to the tonnage limit to be fixed if the Disarmament Conference were to reduce to a minimum the consequences of air raids against towns, industries and civil populations, and if it really intended to accomplish the task which humanity expected of it.

He would therefore submit the following reservation:

"The Italian delegation took no part in the discussion and drafting of the report in reply to the questionnaire.

"It considers that the statements and figures given in this report do not correspond to the present situation of mobilisable military aviation and that, by leading the General Commission astray, they render more difficult the decisions which it will be called upon to take."

M. Vliegen (Netherlands) considered that the examination of the French delegation's questionnaire in the Sub-Committee had afforded precisely the results which he had expected when he had expressed doubts as to the value of discussing it.

The document before the Commission could be regarded as a scientific course in military aviation. It gave particulars as to the conditions to be fulfilled by an aircraft to be suitable for bombing air and naval bases, to take action against lines of communication, munition factories and military establishments, to produce appreciable results against obstacles placed in the way of invading troops, and in battle. It thus arrived at figures such as those given in the document, which dealt with aircraft capable of carrying a useful load of from 3,000 to 6,500 kilogrammes and with a radius of action of from 1,200 to 2,500 kilometres. The report, however, reached no conclusions.

What conclusion could the Commission draw from this document? Were the armaments in question to be maintained? Was it to prohibit machines which did not yet exist? It must be remembered that the Air Commission was called upon to reply to precise questions asked by the General Commission. Had it any right to act as if it ignored the reasons for which these questions were asked?
The General Commission would be required to submit certain proposals to the Disarmament Conference, such as the prohibition of most specifically offensive weapons; but it had not asked the technical commissions to inform it which weapons were exclusively offensive.

It was common knowledge that any offensive weapon could be used for defensive ends. Again, it was impossible to say in advance who was the aggressor and who the defender. The pretext for almost every act of aggression in history was that the country concerned had been, or was just about to be, attacked. A nation invariably used the argument that it was being attacked in order to incite its people to war. It was thus obviously essential that, if a stop were to be put to aggression, if it were to be rendered difficult and dangerous, that means of defence should also be weakened. A means must be found whereby the opportunities for aggression would be reduced, and, in the case of qualitative disarmament, such means must be sought in the prohibition of those weapons likely to give the aggressor—who must always be reckoned as being better prepared than the defender—the greatest advantages.

As regards aviation, there was no denying that an aggressor could acquire such advantages through possessing machines of wider radius of action and larger useful load. On the other hand, the defender with machines of equal capacity would always have a certain advantage over the aggressor, as he could remain nearer his bases.

The Netherlands delegation was in favour of the prohibition of aerial bombardment, if only because the small countries would always be the most exposed to it. In countries like Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Portugal or Denmark, heavy enemy aircraft could, flying over their territory, cause terrible destruction in the space of a few hours. The prohibition of bombing was the only effective means of combating this danger, for, even with aircraft of small useful load and restricted radius of action, the countries in question were exceedingly exposed if attacked by machines in any number. As the Swiss delegate had said at the previous meeting, an end must be made of the bombing aeroplane, which constituted a menace to civilization.

Why had the great Powers come to Geneva if they were not prepared to proceed along these lines? They had nothing to lose if the proposed prohibition became the subject of a universal convention. On the contrary, they had everything to gain in the matter of finance, security, and—last, but not least—from the moral and humanitarian point of view. They should not attempt the impossible, and for that reason the Netherlands delegation associated itself with the declaration introduced by the Belgian delegation.

M. Langovoy (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had more than once explained the reasons for which the German delegation had never taken any part in votes. As regards the Sub-Committee's report, he was in full agreement with the Italian delegation. It was to be hoped that the General Commission would determine the relation between air armaments and chemical and bacteriological means of warfare. The dividing-line advocated in the declaration made by the small States would then acquire far greater significance than had been attributed to it by the Soviet delegate.

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M. Langovoy (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that his delegation could accept neither the theoretical and technical considerations nor the figures given in the Sub-Committee's report. He endorsed the Italian delegation's declaration on this subject and asked for a vote to be taken on the insertion of the Sub-Committee's report in the Air Commission's report to the General Commission.

In reply to the Netherlands delegate, he was well aware of the existence of the Protocol signed at Geneva in 1925 on chemical warfare. On the other hand, he had, however, just learnt from the Press that the Swiss Government intended to purchase large quantities of gas masks and other means of protection. Here was sound proof that the danger of chemical warfare was not eliminated. Low-tonnage machines should, therefore, come within the three categories referred to by the General Commission, as they were capable of carrying means of chemical warfare and incendiary bombs.

M. Fisch (Germany) said that his delegation had more than once explained the position of Germany and the other disarmed countries. The Commission must therefore realise the reasons for which the German delegation had never taken any part in votes.

As regarded the Sub-Committee's report, he was in full agreement with the Italian delegation. It was impossible to solve problems of such importance in so short a time.
The Commission's brief discussions could only supply the General Commission with the flimsiest basis for discussion. The German delegation, therefore, maintained the reservations already submitted, and could not vote for the insertion of the Sub-Committee's report in the general report.

M. GORGE (Switzerland) stated that his delegation was in full sympathy with the spirit of the Belgian declaration. In the matter of the limit mentioned therein, the Swiss delegation would have preferred a lower figure—for instance, 1,200 kilogrammes. This point—extremely important for Switzerland—might be indicated in a footnote to the Belgian declaration.

M. MASSIGLI (France) regretted that General Piccio, who had been present at the Sub-Committee's meetings, had not submitted technical observations, and had reserved any remarks likely to throw suspicion on the technical value of the document in question until the plenary meeting of the Commission.

As regards the part played by aircraft against fortifications, he feared that General Piccio had not read the whole of the relevant passage in the report. He would ask him to refer to it. The Italian delegation had criticised the insertion of a figure indicating the large tonnage of existing machines, arguing that the machines in question were as yet merely being tested. Actually, these figures were of great interest, being indicative of the present tendencies of aviation, and at all events proved that, where air forces comprised such machines, they were considered more suitable for certain purposes than the existing machines. The report further indicated that, for certain purposes, a crew of five was the maximum. It did not say that five men were in every case necessary. Lastly, the question of what conditions were most favourable to the blowing up of munition depots was a matter for technicians.

The Netherlands delegate had said that it was impossible to know in advance who was the aggressor. He noted this statement, indicative of a particular state of mind, which threw singular light on certain discussions. He was fully aware that this state of mind was indeed disquieting as far as the future work of the Conference was concerned.

In conclusion, he would like to make it clear that the figures contained in the Sub-Committee's report were purely indicative. Perhaps it would be better to say this at the beginning of the report. In the actual text, the note on this point only appeared at the beginning of Chapter III.

Similarly, the French delegation thought it would be well to state that certain of the technical indications given in the report in no way bound certain delegations as to the figures which they were prepared to accept.

Mr. DULLES (United States of America) said that his delegation was in favour of inserting the Sub-Committee's report in the Commission's report. It was a good thing to supply the General Commission with concrete data. He was sure that a few moment's conversation would suffice to convince General Piccio that the figures given in the Sub-Committee's document could be justified and explained. The word "justified" did not necessarily mean that the delegations which favoured the Sub-Committee's report demanded the maintenance of the machines referred to in the report. They merely stated that such machines existed. Those who had criticised the report had quoted only the highest figures, ignoring many details of equal importance, such as the following paragraphs: II, 2, third paragraph; III, B, third paragraph; IV, first paragraph. The report must be considered as a whole; as such it would be most useful to the General Commission.

General Piccio (Italy), in reply to M. Massigli, pointed out that, in view of the gulf which separated the French from the Italian point of view, he had considered agreement impossible. For this reason he had refrained from speaking in the Sub-Committee, merely stating his position in plenary session.

As regarded the action of aircraft against permanent fortifications, there seemed to be a contradiction between the first and the following paragraphs of III A. Moreover, as regarded crews, it was stated that certain aircraft must be capable of carrying a crew of at least five persons.

He would emphasise once again that none of the mobilisable units in any existing air arm possessed the machines referred to in the report.

M. LANGOVY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), in reply to certain delegations, stated that he had from the first questioned the adoption of the Sub-Committee's report. If upon a vote the Commission were to decide that this document should not be inserted in its report to the General Commission, it would nevertheless figure therein as the expression of the opinion of certain delegations. If adopted, it would represent the opinion of the Commission as a whole.

Colonel DE BAURAIN (Poland) pointed out that his delegation had from the outset held that the limitation of bombing aircraft must, provided it were effective, be in the interests of all nations. Poland neither constructed nor purchased military aircraft of tonnage higher than that which the majority of delegations had indicated as the limit for specifically offensive aircraft.
He would point out that the designation of all military aviation as an offensive weapon, for the purpose of providing an ultimate guarantee against bombing aircraft, lost much of its value if the dangers which the civil aviation of certain countries might present to other countries were borne in mind.

Lastly, he drew attention to the fact that the problem of protecting civilians against aerial bombardment had been dealt with by a special committee composed of eminent jurists, which formulated important opinions to which reference had been made during the discussion. It would thus be astonishing if the technical experts of whom the Commission was composed were incapable of reaching definite and conclusive results through their examination of the problem, to which the Sub-Committee's work made a first and important contribution. He would therefore propose that the Sub-Committee's report be included in the Air Commission's report, the various delegations submitting any observations they might think fit.

M. Vliegen (Netherlands) considered that the Sub-Committee's report—purely documentary, since it contained neither conclusions nor proposals—should be included as it stood in the Air Commission's report to the General Commission; otherwise, the latter would have a very incomplete idea of the work done by the Air Commission.

Group-Captain Babington (United Kingdom) felt that, if the report to the General Commission was to contain figures, it was indispensable that such figures should be borne out by a technical study. His delegation would therefore vote for the insertion of the Sub-Committee's report in the Commission's report.

M. Massigli (France) desired that the discussion should end and a vote be taken.

A vote was taken by roll-call on the proposal to insert the Sub-Committee's report in the Commission's report. The result of the vote was as follows:

For: United States of America, Argentine, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Finland, France, India, Japan, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Siam, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Yugoslavia.

Against: Afghanistan, Austria, Bolivia, Bulgaria, China, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Mexico, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Abstained: Denmark, Greece, Persia, Switzerland.

The Commission decided, by 23 votes to 11, four delegations abstaining, to insert the report.

M. Lange (Norway) stated that his delegation, though it had voted for inserting the report, had very definite reservations to make on the figures contained therein, and the conclusions which might be drawn from these during the General Commission's discussions.

M. Langovoy (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that he would take no part in the detailed consideration of the report, but would make a general declaration at the end of the discussion.

Colonel Riazi (Persia) had abstained from voting, but asked that the following declaration might appear in the Minutes:

"Since the Persian delegation has, since the outset of the Commission's work, made it clear that it is in favour of the abolition of military aviation provided civil aviation be regulated by international statute, it is impossible for it to express an opinion on the aggressive character of military aviation alone, since the General Commission has as yet taken no decision regarding civil aviation. For this reason, the Persian delegation has always abstained from voting."

M. Schmidt (Estonia) stated that his delegation had voted for the inclusion of the report in order that the General Commission might gain a more precise idea of the Air Commission's work. This vote did not, however, mean that it approved the figures given in the report, and the Estonian delegation reserved the right to express its views on this point before the General Commission. It approved the suggestion made by the French delegation—that the idea contained in the footnote at the beginning of III should appear at the head of the report.

M. Fischer (Germany) repeated that his delegation could not accept the Sub-Committee's report.

The President invited the Commission to begin the detailed consideration of the Sub-Committee's report on the Draft Resolution submitted by the French delegation.
General Piccio (Italy) stated that he would not take part in the detailed discussion of the report, as his point of view was very different from that set forth in the report. He confirmed the reservation at the close of the statement which he had made at the beginning of the meeting and which was supplemented by the Italian reply in document Conf. D./C.A.13.

M. Contoumas (Greece) thought there was a discrepancy between the first paragraph of the Sub-Committee's report and paragraph I (c) of the Commission's draft report to the General Commission. It was the doubt he felt in regard to these two paragraphs which had caused him to abstain from voting.

The President replied that the Rapporteur would note the point.

M. Massigli (France), in pursuance of his previous suggestion, proposed the amendment of the third paragraph to read as follows:

"The Air Commission accordingly submits the following considerations and conclusions, which seem to it to meet the intentions of the General Commission. It would, however, emphasise that the figures given in the present document are purely illustrative and not final, and in no way bind the delegations in the matter of any proposals for qualitative limitation which they may submit elsewhere."

M. Sato (Japan) pointed out that the footnote to the title of III had been placed there with good reason, since all the figures given in that chapter were merely illustrative. If the contents of this note were given at the head of the report, it would cover certain figures — for instance, those in Chapter II, which were statements of fact to which the text proposed by M. Massigli would not apply. The drafting of this paragraph should therefore be slightly amended.

M. Massigli (France) pointed out that the second paragraph of Chapter I, did not accurately express the idea intended. He proposed the following wording:

"In particular, the effects of using air armaments cannot be the same in countries with a small area which have their vulnerable points near the frontier or which, having only land frontiers, are not separated from other countries by a wide expanse of water."

Adopted.

The footnote to the heading of III was deleted.

The Commission adopted the Sub-Committee's report as a whole, with the above-mentioned amendments and with various drafting amendments.

M. Massigli (France) read the following declaration:

"The French delegation considers that the statements of fact contained in the second part of the Commission's report show how impossible it is, from the technical point of view, to draw a clear dividing-line between defensive aircraft and those more specifically offensive in character. Even if it is possible to fix a limit above which aircraft cannot be considered purely defensive, there is, on the other hand, a whole zone covering both specifically offensive machines, threatening to the civil population, and machines indispensable for national defence.

"The French delegation would state that these were the considerations which led it to submit its proposals of February 5th last, and to fix, for the capacity of aircraft, two series of limits which it has reserved the right to define later: the first, the higher, above which no machine may be retained in a national air force; the second, the lower, below which the use of military aircraft shall be subject only to those restrictions arising out of the quantitative limitation provided for in the convention to be drawn up, and as already laid down in the Preparatory Commission’s draft.

"All the aircraft included between these two limits, whether their predominant character be offensive or defensive, may only be retained by national air forces, subject to a preliminary undertaking to place such machines at the disposal of the League of Nations in the event of the application of Article 16 of the Covenant."

M. LangovoY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that, since the moment had come to draw conclusions from the Air Commission’s work carried out in response to the three questions asked by the General Commission, the Soviet delegation desired to make the following declaration:

"1. The Air Commission has not found it possible to recognise the soundness of the statements of certain delegations — among them the Soviet — that all military aviation comes under the head of the General Commission’s questionnaire. Nevertheless, the Air Commission has not indicated the limits above which military aeroplanes acquire the properties which bring them into the category of armaments envisaged in the General Commission’s questionnaire."
"2. The drafting of certain articles, as well as certain statements in the report, which, moreover, exactly correspond to the declarations made by the different delegations, show that the majority of the Commission considers that air armaments are only offensive and threatening to national defence and the civil population when used for purposes of aggression or attack on specified localities. The Soviet delegation is firmly opposed to this point of view, considering that it is the technical characteristics of aircraft which determine the offensive properties of military aviation, and that the very existence of military aircraft, as well as of aerial bombs and other means of warfare intended to be dropped or launched from the air, are a danger to national defence and constitute a threat to the civil population.

"3. For the above reasons, the Soviet delegation is unable to support the view that the offensive character of military aviation can only be determined after a review of the possibilities of its employment for defensive purposes. The Soviet delegation feels that it is the Air Commission's duty to determine the aggressive characteristics of air armaments and not to defend such armaments by mere reference to the various possibilities of their defensive uses.

"4. The references to be found in the report as to the necessity for taking into account the geographical situation and special circumstances of each country, as well as atmospheric conditions and other factors, seem to the Soviet delegation to be an attempt to divert the questions asked by the General Commission into a discussion very far removed from the concrete task assigned to the Air Commission.

"5. Without raising any objection to the point of view of the majority of the Commission that aeroplanes become more aggressive and dangerous to national defence and the civil population with any increase in their useful load (provided they be considered singly), the Soviet delegation, basing its view on a technical study of the properties of military aircraft, once more declares that all military aircraft clearly come within the three categories referred to by the General Commission. The Soviet delegation is thus the less able to support the view that only large bombing aircraft should be considered offensive, even if the figures contained in the report are only given for purposes of indication. It feels that such a classification is far removed from reality, and can but prejudice qualitative disarmament.

"In view of the foregoing, the Soviet delegation desires to state that the Air Commission, in confining itself to general statements, has failed to reply to the three questions asked by the General Commission. The Soviet delegation is therefore obliged to continue, in the General Commission, to defend its view as expressed in the present declaration as well as in earlier discussions."


M. BOHEMAN (Sweden), Rapporteur, recalled that the Italian delegation had proposed at the previous meeting a definition for horse-power and wing area.

In consequence, and in view of the few observations on the subject which he had received from the other delegations, he submitted the following text to be inserted in the report in place of the two paragraphs following the statement of the opinion of the nineteen delegations on unladen weight:

"As regards the definitions of horse-power and wing area, the Commission's discussions have shown that sufficient light has not yet been thrown on the technical aspect of these questions to enable a number of the delegations in favour of the three criteria to express an opinion on the definitions to be established for the two criteria mentioned above.

"As regards horse-power, certain of those delegations referred to the conclusions of the report of the Committee of Experts to fix rules for the adoption of a standard horse-power measurement for aeroplanes and dirigible engines (document C.259. M.115.1931), while the Italian delegation submitted a slightly different definition, which is annexed (Annex II) to the present report.

"As regards wing area, proposed definitions have been furnished by the Spanish and Italian delegations and figure as Annexes III and IV to the present report."

Adopted.

The following text proposed by the Rapporteur for the paragraph previously reserved relating to the statement of the nineteen delegations on unladen weight was adopted:

"The delegations in question added that they considered that both the horse-power and the wing area could be computed with sufficient accuracy (though less accurately than the unladen weight) to enable them to be effectively used in the comparative measurement of the useful load of aircraft and that three criteria, however imperfect, would be more reliable than a single criterion."
TWENTY-FIRST MEETING

Held on Wednesday, June 8th, 1932, at 4 p.m.

President: M. VALLOTTON.


The Commission proceeded to adopt at second reading its report to the General Commission.

In the course of the discussion:

Mr. Dulles (United States of America) stated that, while recognising that bombs of small dimensions could contain millions of microbes, he still thought that gas or bacteria projectiles could not be highly efficient in small quantities. He would not press his view, however, if the Commission thought otherwise, as the point was not of sufficient importance to call for a reservation.

On the proposal of M. Contoumas (Greece), and to avoid confusion, the word "characteristics" was substituted for "criteria" in every reference to the General Commission's resolution of April 22nd.

With reference to the question of the relative value of the three criteria, he asked that the report should make it clear that the Commission had taken no decision as to the relative value of the three criteria.

M. Boheman (Sweden), Rapporteur, explained that the intention had been to take into account the observation of the French delegation that the delegations in favour of three criteria were not agreed as to whether or no these should be regarded as of equal value.

M. Massigli (France) proposed that a fresh paragraph should be added to the report explaining that the question of the relative value of the criteria could not be settled.

M. Lanskoronskis (Lithuania) had been absent when the vote was taken on the inclusion in the Commission's report of the Sub-Committee's report on the draft resolution submitted by the French delegation, but asked that his delegation might be recorded among those voting against.

M. Langovoy (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that at the beginning of Part IV due account should be taken of the point of view of the delegations which, like his own, considered that all aircraft could carry out bombardment and therefore came under the three heads of the General Commission's resolution.

Captain Gregores (Argentina) reminded the Commission of his delegation's reservation that all such machines were necessary for purposes of national defence.

The report was adopted at final reading, with the changes indicated and subject to drafting amendments.
TWENTY-SECOND MEETING

Held on Tuesday, June 14th, 1932, at 10.30 a.m.

President: M. DE MADARIAGA.

28. TECHNICAL STUDY OF THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF CIVIL AVIATION.

The President, after recalling the discussion which had already taken place on this question, reviewed briefly the documentation which had been distributed on the basis of the resolution adopted by the Air Commission on March 17th, 1932. He then explained the lines along which he thought the discussion should be conducted.

He had, in his capacity of delegate of Spain, prepared the following draft basis of discussion:

"1. The internationalisation of civil aviation — whatever its intrinsic advantages — is not entitled to figure in the programme of a Disarmament Conference save in so far as civil aviation is or may become a factor which must be taken into account either under the head of armaments or under that of security.

2. Under the head of armaments, civil aviation presents a certain importance as a subsidiary or auxiliary element for countries possessing military aviation, and as the only element capable of being used for military purposes for those which do not possess any military aviation.

The Commission might endeavour to assess the value of these elements.

3. Under the head of security, civil aviation is virtually of no importance as long as military aviation exists in its present form. The position would be quite different if military aviation:

   (a) Should disappear entirely;

   (b) Should be strictly limited, more particularly by the abolition of aircraft above certain limits.

The Commission might endeavour to assess the importance of civil aviation as an element threatening to security in these two hypotheses.

4. This study would probably tend to prove that the very existence of highly developed civil aviation constitutes an obstacle which would be sufficient to render impossible the abolition of military aviation or even that of machines above a certain limit, which abolition, in the opinion of certain delegations, is indispensable for the maintenance of peace.

5. In the hypothesis of such abolition being indispensable, it is necessary to consider the measures to be taken in regard to civil aviation, not only from the strictly technical standpoint of the advantages of an international organisation of aviation — which are considerable in themselves but lie outside the scope of the present subject — but also from the standpoint of international security.

The Commission must then study a general groundwork for the internationalisation of civil aviation which, while safeguarding the intrinsic interests of civil aviation, would eliminate the obstacle which the existence of civil aviation not organised on international lines constitutes as regards disarmament.

The Spanish delegation reserves the right, if necessary, to submit concrete proposals in the matter."

All delegations would, he hoped, agree with him as to the purport of paragraph 1. The only reason for which the Disarmament Conference should deal with the internationalisation of civil aviation was that this could play an important part, either directly or indirectly, in the matter of armaments or security. Indeed, this conception underlay the resolution adopted by the General Commission on March 16th, 1932.

The affirmation in paragraph 2 was hard to gainsay. The importance of civil aviation could vary from nil to infinity, and the Air Commission might with advantage consider the various factors mentioned in this paragraph.

The third paragraph required closer attention, since it brought in a psychological factor. The object of the Disarmament Conference must rather be to maintain peace than to seek to prevent war. For this purpose, the psychological condition of the nations must be noted, and it would be well to consider the importance of civil aviation from the point of view of its menace to security, supposing military aviation were totally abolished or strictly limited.

1 See Minutes of the second to fifth meetings of the Air Commission.
2 See Minutes of the fifth meeting.
3 See Minutes of the seventh meeting of the General Commission.
Civil aircraft were at present so inferior in numbers to military aircraft that it could scarcely be stated that, at the present time, they constituted an element of insecurity. If, however, the Disarmament Conference succeeded in preparing the way for total or even partial abolition of the most dangerous military aircraft, the existence of a strong civil aviation might automatically constitute such a psychological obstacle to the security of nations that, in the last resort, it would be impossible for the Conference to decide upon the abolition or limitation of military aviation. Internationalisation of civil aviation would be the sole solution of this serious problem.

As regards the fourth paragraph, technicians could not deny that the destructive powers of present-day military aviation, especially when exercised over crowded urban districts, was infinitely greater than the defensive possibilities of such districts. In the absence of very strict measures against civil aviation, it was impossible totally to abolish military aviation.

Lastly, as regarded paragraph 5, it was only necessary to refer to document Conf. D./C.A.9, prepared by M. de Brouckère. From the purely technical point of view, organisation on international lines was essential. Civil aviation, already in itself virtually international, should become so legally. The Commission must study the means of internationalising civil aviation with a view to security as much as to disarmament.

If the Air Commission were prepared to adopt as a basis for discussion the ideas set out in the document which he, as delegate of Spain, had just submitted, the Spanish delegation would submit a second memorandum defining the general principles of internationalisation. Only then could the Air Commission lay before the General Commission a definite scheme which would enable the Conference to make an appreciable advance in the direction of abolishing military aviation.

The discussion was adjourned until the next meeting.

TWENTY-THIRD MEETING

Held on Wednesday, June 15th, 1932, at 10.30 a.m.

President: M. DE MADARIAGA.

29. TECHNICAL STUDY OF THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF CIVIL AVIATION (continuation).

The President, in accordance with his proposal made at the close of the previous meeting, submitted, in his capacity of delegate of Spain, the following memorandum embodying the general principles proposed with a view to permitting the total or partial abolition of military aviation:

"I. — Intrinsic Interests of Aviation.

"1. The development of aviation is still at an experimental stage necessitating the financial support of Governments, which it receives at present chiefly for military reasons (orders placed with works, subsidies to air lines, etc.). It will be necessary to provide for financial support equal to the sum of the present national subsidies — apart from the question of the saving that might result from the international organisation of such subsidies — in order not to hamper the development of civil aviation in the future.

"2. This first principle having been admitted, the international organisation of aviation cannot but have a beneficial effect on its development. The co-ordination of national efforts would make it possible gradually to eliminate the financial and technical obstacles which at present stand in the way of such development. In particular, co-operation in regard to researches would make it possible to achieve results rapidly with a minimum of expenditure.

"3. A detailed study of the distribution of the financial efforts required and a technical study of the lines to be established — on which such distribution depends — must be left to a later stage. In all probability, the international financial organisation would be on the model of the Universal Postal Union. Nothing need be settled yet as regards the organ or organs of management (international aviation directorate, company or companies constituted on a "régie" system, etc.).

"II. — Interests of Peace.

"1. The principle of intervention by an international institution (referred to hereinafter by the initials I.I.A.) at every stage of aviation activity must be applied as generally and as comprehensively as possible.

1 "Objective Study on the Internationalisation of Civil Aviation and on any Other Measures calculated to prevent the Signatory States from utilising Civil Aviation for Military Purposes."

(a) Nationality:
All air material without exception shall become international and shall bear the mark I.I.A. Aircraft shall have a port of register but no nationality. Aircraft shall be allocated to the various ports of register by the I.I.A.

(b) Construction:
Schemes and estimates for construction shall be approved by the I.I.A. The quantities and types of machines shall also be decided by the I.I.A. Factories for construction shall be placed under the control of the I.I.A. The repair of machines shall be under the control of the I.I.A.

(c) Movements and statistics:
The services of the I.I.A. shall keep up to date the statistics of the movements of aircraft all over the world, so that they may know at any moment the situation with regard to machines in use or on the ground.

3. Personnel.

(a) Duties of aviation personnel:
Pilots, observers, navigators, navigating mechanics and wireless operators (i.e., the navigating personnel) shall be regarded strictly as international personnel. They shall take the oath before the international authorities, undertaking in particular never to use their machines for military purposes, save in the cases specifically laid down by the League of Nations.

They shall be explicitly exempted from all military obligations, even in time of war, by the States of which they may be nationals.

(b) The military training of navigating aviation personnel shall be prohibited. Aviation schools shall be placed under the control of the I.I.A.

(c) The navigating personnel and the personnel of aerodromes shall be so distributed by the I.I.A. that not more than one-quarter of such personnel shall at any moment or in any country be of the nationality of the country in question.

(d) The services of the I.I.A. shall keep up to date the statistics of the movements of the navigating personnel all over the world, so that they may know at any moment the situation with regard to the said personnel.

The Commission was, of course, free to discuss the question in any way it thought fit, but he would suggest that delegations which had submitted definite schemes should explain the reasons underlying their proposals.

M. VOUGT (Sweden) ventured to recall the following memorandum submitted earlier in the discussion on this question:

"In conformity with the speech made to the Conference by its first delegate, the Swedish delegation, in its memorandum of February 19th, summarised as follows its proposals relating to air forces:

1. Total prohibition of military aviation, and manufacture, preparation and training in connection therewith;
2. Internationalisation or strict international control of civil aviation."

On March 17th, the Air Commission recommended the delegations to transmit to the Bureau of the Commission concrete proposals and explanatory statements relating to the internationalisation of civil aviation and any other measure calculated to prevent the signatory States from utilising this aviation for military purposes. In accordance with this resolution, the Swedish delegation ventures to submit to the Commission the following suggestions which might be taken into consideration in the course of its work:

"The essential problem appears to be that of subjecting aviation to effective control without at the same time hampering the free evolution of air transport towards its economic ends. The global limitation of civil and military aviation has already been discussed by the Committee of Experts on Civil Aviation of Sub-Commission B, which unanimously agreed that global limitation could not be effectively applied without hampering the development of civil aviation and therefore without involving undesirable economic consequences. Such a method would merely bind national aviation more closely to the State, whereas civil aviation by its very nature tends to assume more and more international forms.

What is required is to find a method of controlling civil aviation by a study of its characteristic tendencies. Military aviation has hitherto developed purely on national lines, whereas civil aviation is more and more assuming international forms. It is this consideration which more than anything else has given rise to the idea of the 'internationalisation' of civil aviation."
"The Committee of Experts of Sub-Commission B emphasised the desirability of establishing a line of demarcation between civil and military aviation; in this way, civil machines will become capable of a maximum economic return and will become less and less useful for military purposes, and the activities of civil aviation can be developed in full freedom without being subordinated in any way to the military requirements of the different countries. The work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit has clearly demonstrated that it is by tightening the bonds between the aviation of the different countries that air transport may be given a new impetus. The work accomplished with a view to the creation of a postal service system is of particular interest in this connection.

"The internationalisation of civil aviation might involve either the amalgamation of undertakings for commercial aviation or the establishment of a closer collaboration between such undertakings, which would still retain a certain economic independence. But no internationalisation of civil aviation, whether radical or the reverse, could give rise to measures of strict supervision. The point at issue here, however, is the control of civil activity, not of military institutions for which very strict supervision might involve a risk of the discovery of legitimate military secrets. Nevertheless, it seems desirable to make this control as flexible as possible by carrying it out in such a way as to be exercised, not so much over the Governments of the various States, as within an international organisation for civil aviation to which the national commercial air services would be affiliated.

"The following measures might be considered to constitute the minimum of internationalisation capable of promoting effective control:

"In the convention to be concluded by the Governments with a view to preventing the use of civil aviation for military purposes, provision would be made for the creation of an international organisation to which the air-transport undertakings of all States would be affiliated. This affiliation of undertakings would be a condition required by the Governments before granting concessions or subsidies. By means of this international organisation, and subject to the controlling authority to be set up by the Disarmament Convention, as methodical and permanent a supervision of civil aviation as possible would be exercised. It would notify the above-mentioned authority in the event of the discovery of a breach of State obligations in regard to civil aviation.

"The national undertakings would entrust to this international organisation the administration of the airports and ground organisation of the whole system of civil aviation. This organisation would have to arrange for an interchange of employees of different nationalities, particularly between the more important airports.

"The supervision of aircraft and of their utilisation would also be exercised by the pilots and other navigating staff, who would, for purposes of supervision, be placed entirely under the authority of the said international organisation. This organisation would arrange, wherever possible, for an inter-State exchange of pilots and other employees, including the clerical staff. The pilots would thus be distributed over the whole system in such a way as to place supervision at all times in the hands of an international organisation. Possibly an international status might be established for the professional corps of pilots.

"The costs of carrying out this system would be met by contributions from the contracting States. These contributions might be fixed at a certain percentage of the grants which the States allow each year to aviation undertakings or, where no such grants are made, they might be calculated according to a scale to be drawn up for the purpose.

"Obviously, control of the kind contemplated above would become more and more practicable as civil aviation, obeying the law of its being, assumes more and more international forms.

"Further, the proposed international organisation, when it has come into being, would certainly — apart from its supervisory functions — demonstrate its usefulness by promoting the rationalisation of the international air-transport service, which, generally speaking, does not at present appear to be organised so as to provide maximum efficiency either from the economic standpoint or in regard to transport facilities."
He added that the Swedish proposal was mainly designed to facilitate the discussion of the problem raised by the General Commission.

What did internationalisation mean? The Commission was faced with the difficulty that no branch of human activity was quite comparable to civil aviation, for which there was no precedent.

Means must therefore be sought by which civil aviation could be so regulated as to prevent its use for military purposes. He was aware that the radical measures necessary for the control which it was desired to establish might raise objections. Obviously, however, such control was essential, for the goodwill of the nations was not enough. Their reciprocal fear and suspicion led to the massing of armaments, and there was no denying that one of the main causes of this fear was the menace of air armaments to civil populations.

Hence the idea of internationalisation. The best method of organising this internationalisation was a question to be discussed. One means suggested was the French proposal for a fusion of already existing organisations. The Swedish delegation was not yet in a position to form a definite opinion on that point. Even if it were possible to realise in such a radical way the idea of internationalisation, the creation of an international right of ownership in respect of commercial aviation did not provide the necessary guarantee against the confiscation and utilisation by a Government of the aeroplanes on its territory, at the moment when it intended to break its contractual obligations. It seemed necessary, therefore, to consider in detail the question of control, and it was in connection with this matter that the Swedish delegation had desired to raise, in particular, the question of the rôle played by living material — that was to say, personnel — which was much greater than that of inanimate material. The Swedish delegation had noted with great satisfaction the predominant place given by the Spanish delegation in its second memorandum also to the control exercised by the pilots and staff in civil aviation, and he drew attention also to the fact that Lord Cecil had just expressed in a Geneva newspaper his acceptance of the idea to create an international organisation with pilots enjoying an international status.

The Swedish delegation was only anxious to interest those engaged in aviation in the cause of peace and, to this end, was fully prepared to join in the discussion of the problem, from the standpoint either of total or partial abolition of military aviation.

M. Fierlinger (Czechoslovakia) pointed out that the three proposals — those submitted by the Swedish, French and Spanish delegations — before the Commission, all of them dealing with the main aspects of the problem, had several salient points in common. He was not for the moment prepared to cast his vote in favour of any one of them; all three seemed to him equally valuable.

Undoubtedly, all the delegations present realised the interdependence of military and civil aviation. Even some of those who were not as yet in favour of control of the latter had acknowledged that civil aircraft requisitioned by military forces must be controlled. The two problems of restricting military and civil aviation should, however, be treated separately, since the limitation of one should not affect that of the other. The internationalisation of civil aviation should be studied, and even achieved, before any final decision was taken as to the qualitative and quantitative limitation to be applied to the military air forces of the world. The Commission must in principle aim at creating an international organisation with a common policy, as regards civil aviation for all countries, though, in view of the very different interests in the different continents, it might be better to provide a separate organisation for each.

How would such an organisation function? He agreed with the statement in paragraph 3 of the Spanish memorandum to the effect that the financial and economic aspects of the question, although of cardinal importance, should be dealt with last. Various combinations were possible: a cartel, a pool, or the amalgamation of the various national companies into one great union. In any case, the first question to be discussed was that of material. How was civil aircraft to be registered? What categories of aircraft would be covered by the international regulations envisaged? How would the manufacture of material be supervised? On the important question of personnel, how would international certificates for pilots and administrative officers be issued?

M. Fierlinger considered that amalgamation must, to be satisfactory, involve the internationalisation of capital. This would mean an extensive study of the policy of the various Governments and the fixing of rules for the allocation of subsidies. All these salient points were touched upon in the three proposals before the Commission, which, should he thought, form the subject of a general discussion before any attempt was made to co-ordinate them to form a basis for subsequent studies.

Sir Thomas Wilford (New Zealand) thought that, from the European point of view, the internationalisation of civil aviation might or might not be workable, but that, from the world point of view, it was ridiculous. He had waited since February in the hopes of voting for abolition in some form, and hoped that he would not have to wait much longer.

M. Brandenburg (Germany) deplored the uncertainty of the Commission's position, due to the fact that it did not know what action the Disarmament Conference would take concerning military aviation.

The accomplishment of the Commission's task would be easier if it were certain that the Disarmament Conference would abolish all military aviation and bombing from the air in general. It would then be comparatively easy to remove all possibility of civil aviation being used for military purposes. Germany was, as the Commission knew, in favour of this solution and had submitted proposals to this effect.

The question became more complex when all discussion thereof must be based on several different hypotheses regarding the degree and methods of disarmament. The approbation of economic circles could scarcely be expected were the Commission to decide to hamper the liberty and possibilities of development of a young branch of the transport industry without succeeding, in exchange, in ridding the world of the nightmare of military aviation. It was still more important to bear this in mind in that the nations, as yet abounding in military air squadrons, had ample possibilities for preventing entirely the use of a country's civil aviation for military purposes.

He would draw the Commission's attention to the measures taken by the Conference of Ambassadors in 1926 with a view to preventing the use of German civil aviation for military ends. These measures had rendered such use of civil aviation impossible and had entirely limited it to its civil and peaceful functions. The measures in question were:

(1) The prohibition of all aircraft, armoured, armed, protected or equipped for military use;

(2) The keeping of registration lists to be placed at the disposal of the League of Nations and recording all air material and all pilots, including those with licences covering the flying of small sporting machines only;

(3) The publication of all information given in these lists;

(4) The prohibition of all public subsidies to sporting aviation, whether granted by the Reich, the States or the communes;

(5) The prohibition of pilotless aeroplanes;

(6) Limitation of the participation in a private capacity of members of the Reichswehr and Navy in sporting aviation to a very small number of persons — thirty-six at the maximum — and only at their own expense;

(7) The laying down of restrictions regarding air traffic and the construction of airports in the neutralised zone;

(8) The prohibition of the maintenance of police aircraft.

If such provisions were generally adopted, the restriction of air traffic in neutral zones could quite easily be entirely abandoned, and if, over and above this, bombing from the air were prohibited, everything humanly possible would have been done to render civil aviation harmless, whatever the Conference's decision on the subject of military aircraft. He therefore proposed that the Commission should first discuss this system, as being easy to adapt to any subsequent decisions of the General Commission.

By this means tangible results would be obtained more rapidly than by a discussion of the internationalisation of civil aviation based on the hypothesis of the total abolition of military aviation; this method would be more profitable even than the discussion of a world trust with sovereign rights, the working of which would fundamentally affect the principle of international law under which each State had sovereign rights over the air above its own territory.

During the development of a means of transport which was still young, the free interplay of forces, free competition and the individualistic spirit of the pioneer were indispensable. The discussions by the Committee of Experts of the Organisation for Communications and Transit, reproduced in document Conf. D./C.A.15, brought out the tremendous obstacles with which the Commission would be faced were it to envisage the organisation of such a world trust.

Thus the Commission would be wiser for the moment to abandon proposals for internationalisation, and to confine itself to a study of the measures likely to render civil aviation harmless — measures already practised in a certain number of countries.
The President pointed out that, so far as the effect of civil aviation on security was concerned, the Swedish and Czechoslovak delegates' observations were in harmony with paragraph 3 of the first Spanish memorandum submitted at the last meeting. The German delegation, on the contrary, held a directly opposite view. Some agreement on this point must, if possible, be reached, or, failing this, the Commission must at least express its view on the importance of civil aviation from the point of view of security: (1) in the case of countries deprived of military aviation, and (2) in that of countries possessing military air forces. It must go on to decide on its importance: (a) should military aviation disappear entirely, (b) should it merely be limited or (c) should the status quo be maintained.

The German delegate had argued that all difficulties could be overcome if the proposals made by the Conference of Ambassadors in 1926 were accepted. Some delegations would, he knew, not be prepared to do this, and a study of the technical aspects of the question would prove that M. Brandenburg's theory was not tenable.

He suggested that an ordered discussion could best be achieved by the adoption of a definite programme of work, carried out, perhaps, on the basis of the first Spanish memorandum, the various paragraphs of which covered all the proposals submitted.

M. Langovoy (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that civil aviation, capable of transformation into military aviation, the abolition of which was advocated by his delegation, was obviously worth consideration.

He agreed with the German delegate that the regulations laid down by the Conference of Ambassadors in 1926, which were substantially the same as the proposals submitted by the Soviet delegation, would provide adequate safeguards.

The Soviet delegation considered that it was above all essential to prevent any possibility of transforming civil into military aircraft. It considered this more important than internationalisation, for, though not actively opposed to such a measure, it considered its organisation rather outside the Commission's sphere.

He disagreed with M. Fierlinger's view that the question of civil aviation should be studied prior to that of the abolition of military aviation.

Sir Thomas Wilford (New Zealand) asked to hear the arguments submitted by those delegations who considered internationalisation practicable.

M. Mouchard (France) would not go into the arguments in support of his delegation's proposal, since these were fully set out in the memorandum submitted on April 14th, 1932 (document Conf. D.115), and in subsequent documents. He pointed out that his delegation did not envisage the internationalisation of civil aviation as a whole, but only of air transport as opposed to private aircraft. In this connection, a few definitions might be useful.

As regarded the point raised by M. Fierlinger and M. Langovoy, who disagreed on the question whether civil aviation should be discussed before or after military aviation, this matter was not for the Commission to decide, since the General Commission's resolution required it to undertake a study in connection with future decisions "to be taken concerning the abolition or reduction and limitation of military aviation."

Turning to the question of the programme of work, he would point out that the Bureau, which had already given effect to the first three paragraphs of the resolution adopted by the Air Commission at its fifth meeting, had yet to deal with the fourth. In the matter of the programme itself, the French delegation accepted the first memorandum, submitted by the Spanish delegation as a basis for discussion.

M. Fierlinger (Czechoslovakia) thought that M. Langovoy had misunderstood his views on the interdependence of civil and military aviation. These, though closely connected, should be dealt with separately; in order to make his meaning clearer, M. Fierlinger recalled an earlier mention by the French delegation of two limits, the first covering a qualitative limitation of military aviation independent of any decision regarding civil aviation, the second, a lower limit conditioned by any decision that might be reached in that respect.

Colonel Riazi (Persia) pointed out that the Air Commission had almost unanimously recognised that military aviation, while valuable for purposes of defence, constituted a formidable aggressive weapon. The technicians had also recognised that certain civil aircraft could be transformed into bombers at very short notice. If the study of the internationalisation of civil aviation could have followed as the conclusion of the abolition of military aviation, many delegations would undoubtedly have voted in favour of some restriction of civil air navigation. If it had been decided to abolish military aviation, his delegation would advocate such internationalisation; since, however, the former question had been adjourned, it was more difficult to take a decision on the second.
His delegation considered that, if the Conference were to confine itself to quantitative and qualitative limitation of military aviation only, it could logically content itself with a mere study of the means of subjecting civil aviation to close supervision in order to prevent its use for military ends.

The President felt that M. Mouchard was right in thinking that the terms of the General Commission's resolution gave priority to discussion of the internationalisation of civil aviation.

With reference to the interdependence of the two problems of the abolition of military aviation and the internationalisation of civil aviation, he would point out that the very fact that some delegations considered that the former could not be settled before the latter, while others were of the contrary opinion, proved that there was only one problem, and that aviation must be regarded as a single unit, suitable either for civil or for military purposes. He asked the Commission to avoid dogmatic discussions on priority and to aim at presenting constructive arguments.

Would the Commission accept the first Spanish proposal as a basis of discussion, or would it prefer some other draft?

The Commission unanimously adopted the first Spanish proposal as its basis of discussion.

M. Brandenburg (Germany) pointed out that the Commission's terms of reference, laid down in the General Commission's resolution, empowered it to discuss not only internationalisation but "any other measure calculated to prevent signatory Powers from using this aviation for military purposes". He would therefore submit, as a formal proposal, the suggestions he had made earlier in the meeting.

30. APPOINTMENT OF A RAPPORTEUR DURING THE ABSENCE OF M. BOHEMAN.

On the proposal of the President, the Commission approved the appointment of M. Lange (Norway) as Rapporteur during the absence of M. Boheman.

TWENTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held on Friday, June 17th, 1932, at 10.30 a.m.

President: M. DE MADARIAGA.

31. TECHNICAL STUDY ON THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF CIVIL AVIATION (continuation): EXAMINATION OF THE BASIS OF DISCUSSION SUBMITTED BY THE SPANISH DELEGATION.

M. D'Avila Lima (Portugal) said that his delegation always favoured, in principle, any concrete and progressive plan to achieve world peace. Though there had been no question, in the early stages of the Conference, of more than a reduction or limitation of armaments, certain prohibitive and absolute solutions had been suggested — among them, for instance, the French, Swedish and Spanish proposals, together with the document (Conf. D./C.A.9) drawn up by M. de Brouckère. The Portuguese delegation, in its turn, had some observations to make.

Obviously, radical changes must be made in the legal sphere. He would point out that Grotius' conclusions on the *mare liberum* were not yet valid where the air was concerned; in other words, it could be stated with truth that the international regulation of the upper air took the form of the *aer clausus*. The laws at present in force were drawn up on this basis. For instance, the International Commission for Air Navigation, to which some thirty countries belonged, had recently approved the dictum that air space belonged exclusively to the countries above whose territory it was situated. The Ibero-American Convention on Air Navigation, which originated under Spanish auspices, had given a like decision. The Portuguese delegation, in its turn, had some observations to make.

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1 See Minutes of the twenty-second meeting.
The Portuguese delegation thought that the solution proposed in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Spanish document seemed, at first sight, fairly rational. The later paragraphs, especially that dealing with the intrinsic interests of civil aviation, presented more delicate problems. His delegation considered that, in the technical study on the internationalisation of civil aviation submitted by the Spanish delegation, the idea of an organisation similar to that of the Universal Postal Union was too modest. On the other hand, the programme for the proposed new international air organisation seemed too ambitious.

Lastly, Portugal, whose geographical situation and the extent of whose colonial possessions placed her in a special position, could give a thoroughly impartial opinion on the matter. Thanks to the distribution and extent of these possessions, she could offer a valuable contribution, in the form of air bases, for the purposes of international co-operation on an equitable basis, to which she was ready to contribute in the interests of the whole world. The Portuguese delegation reserved the right to offer further observations later, should it think fit.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium) had only one word to say on the first part of paragraph 2 of the Spanish proposal. In approving its terms, the Commission would merely reiterate an old truth in new words. He would prefer, in the final draft, to give even stronger expression to the considerable importance which civil aviation undoubtedly possessed from the military point of view.

As regards the second part of the paragraph, he was afraid that, if the Commission adopted a procedure to which it had more than once resorted, it would merely become involved in a long preliminary study and, after interminable discussions, would only reach vague conclusions as to the exact degree of danger which civil aviation might present from the military point of view. This was not, he thought, the method envisaged by the Spanish delegation. He considered that the Commission need only prove that the danger presented by civil aviation from the military point of view was both serious and certain; an interpretation of that danger in figures was perhaps less important. The danger was inherent in the very nature of things, for it was difficult to conceive of civil aircraft which could not, sometimes with slight modifications only, be used for military purposes; it was, above all, due to the systematic fashion in which countries constantly contrived to construct civil aircraft efficacious for war purposes.

Civil aviation had developed under the aegis of war. Before 1914, it was almost unknown, and its sudden and formidable development after 1918 was due to the experience of the war years and especially to the determined desire of all States to develop it. This desire took the form of subsidies to the original war aircraft workshops, suddenly deprived of their clientele. It was possible that the States which acted thus generously were not always prompted by entirely disinterested motives, and that the military advantages presented by this development of civil aviation might not have been entirely absent from their minds.

An examination of the financial and technical organisation and the legal status of civil aviation served to show that it was entirely dominated by national military interests. The international status of civil aviation was based on certain conventions, the earliest and most important being that signed at Paris on October 13th, 1919, a few months after the conclusion of the Versailles Treaty, and drafted by the Aeronautical Commission of the Peace Conference. Thus the Convention was drawn up under the influence of war in a Commission which was still entirely dominated by war ideas. In these circumstances, was it surprising that, breaking roughly with an established legal tradition, national preoccupations should carry the day, to the detriment of the international point of view?

Civil aviation had begun to develop after the war, but long before the war jurists had turned their minds to its regulation by law. Many conferences had been held to deal with the question, and two opposing schools of thought had arisen. The first, prompted apparently both by the jurists' studies and by pure common sense, viewed air space as international, the theory being that a new law, overruling all national law, should operate in this sphere.

The second school of thought had gained ground as the menace of war approached. The air space above each country became, for some, the property of that country; for others, a sphere over which the country had sovereign rights. Some were anxious to give aeroplanes a nationality, like ships; others wished to abolish or at least reduce to the barest possible minimum the new international law regulating aviation. A comparison of the draft Convention drawn up at Paris in 1919 and the Convention of October 13th, 1919, would show to what extent the war had hindered the development of the first thesis and favoured the realisation of the second. Possibly it was this circumstance which had given rise to the clear and undoubted danger of the use of civil aviation in time of war.

The Paris Convention of 1919, and those which followed it, admitted the principle of the sovereignty of the State, that of the nationality of the aeroplane and that of the reduction to a minimum of international regulation.
In theory, the principle of sovereignty had to some extent been waived. The principle of “innocent passage” had been admitted for foreign aircraft. Authorisation for this was, however, only granted in exceptional cases and was subject to so many restrictions that this right of flight above the territory of another country was purely nominal — the right for a tourist aeroplane occasionally to cross a territory on condition that it did not fly over particular zones and conformed to certain restrictions. These facts proved to what extent the danger of the use of civil aviation for war purposes had been enhanced.

As regards the question of nationality, an aeroplane was not comparable to a motor-car but to a ship, and, in order to render it difficult to acquire nationality, far more formalities were required than in the case of ships. The regulations still in force in the majority of countries, and an as yet unrevised article of the 1919 Convention, demanded that an aeroplane should, before it could acquire nationality, belong entirely to persons of the same nationality; if it belonged to a company, two-thirds of the directors must possess the same nationality as the aircraft. This provision, introduced into the Paris Convention from military motives, had since then met with considerable opposition. There had been a desire to mitigate it, and when all the ratifications to the amendment actually proposed had been received it would be modified in the sense of the Pan-American Convention, which stated that “the registration of aircraft shall be carried out in conformity with the special laws and provisions of each contracting State”.

This would mean, however, that the various national legislations, with their conflicting provisions, would regulate the laws applying to aircraft. An aeroplane which, in the great majority of cases, crossed several territories in a single flight would find itself subject to various forms of sovereign rule, and could only cross the various territories if all the countries had authorised it to do so. At present, a machine whose very flight constituted an international action, and for which international regulation was indispensable, found itself hampered by the existing legal situation. Various associations had made successive efforts to remedy this admittedly impossible situation. Their multiplicity proved the futility — at any rate partial — of the efforts made by each of these societies. There was an element in the regulations governing aviation which checked the tendency of such societies towards increased internationalisation, limiting their activity and preventing them from obtaining the results desired.

For instance, the International Commission for Air Navigation, which should have the right to draw up international regulations for aviation, had merely the right to select the calls and marks to be placed on aircraft, to regulate the issue of certificates of airworthiness, to decide on the standard log-book to be carried, to regulate lights and signals, to fix regulations for air traffic, and to indicate the minimum conditions required for obtaining pilots and navigators’ certificates and licences. It could produce international maps, fix aerial ground marks and, lastly, centralise and distribute meteorological information. Everything which was likely to guarantee peace, to prevent the abuse of civil aviation or the easy or voluntary construction of civil aircraft with military characteristics and the training of military aviators under pretext of developing civil aviation — all of which might contribute to rendering civil aviation a really peaceful organisation — was omitted from international legislation, a circumstance which singularly enhanced the danger with which the Air Commission was called upon to contend.

Thus, civil aviation had, both technically and commercially, developed along military lines. Though it might depend upon commercial receipts — considerable in the case of certain lines — it depended in the main for its development upon subsidies. This practice had resulted in the formation of a clientele consisting of the organs granting the subsidies — namely, the Governments — who considered that, in exchange for their money, they should be in a position to derive all possible military profit from civil aviation.

In many countries the subsidies were granted on condition that aeroplanes had certain military characteristics and that the civil aviation personnel undertook certain military duties. The Commission which had met at Brussels during the preparatory work for the present Conference had asked, as long ago as 1927, that such practices should be abolished in order to lessen the danger of the use of civil aviation for war purposes.

Were civil aviation purely commercial and nothing more, things would be different. It required safe, convenient and economical working machines. This meant that the lighting equipment, upon which aeroplanes were more and more dependent and which they could no longer do without, must be developed and rendered uniform. Military aircraft, on the other hand, in order to advance into the enemy country, must have its own methods of flight and be independent of the lighting equipment. In view of the considerable number of practically useless lines created and the clearly inadequate development of lighting equipment, it was impossible not to feel that the fact that this lighting equipment was useless from the military point of view — in spite of its value for civil purposes — had brought about the present situation.

The same preoccupations governed the organisation of the lines. These lines, international in their very essence, since they crossed the territories of several countries, were, almost without exception, operated by national companies. Their aeroplanes flew over national territory in virtue of sovereign rights and could not fly over neighbouring territory without obtaining concessions in exchange for other concessions, in accordance with the terms of a complicated network of agreements subject to all sorts of conditions. Almost all these conventions betrayed purely military preoccupations; flight was authorised but on conditions permitting the creation of interlinked systems between militarily allied nations,
commercial interests taking second place. This must continue until this host of agreements
was replaced by certain common regulations bringing about close co-operation between the
national companies acting as if they were the various branches of a single organisation — in
other words, until the establishment of great international companies.

Remedies had been sought; by means of pools the receipts from the passenger and goods
traffic had been paid into a common fund, but until subsidies, too, were pooled this remedy
would be inadequate. Further co-operation must be achieved by pooling, not only the
quite inadequate receipts from passenger and goods traffic, but also the sole important
contributions — those received from the States.

Mention was often made of the marvellous development of civil aviation. True, the
number of lines was increasing; but had the real value of civil aviation, notably in a restricted
area like that of Europe, increased to the same extent? Was it certain that the methods
adopted had provided a practical means of communication? Were there many business
men who travelled by air to gain time? No, because night flying was not practised, and
because, except for great distances, the railway was the more rapid means of transport.
If civil aviation were to be really serviceable, the lines must be operated throughout the
year and by night as well as by day. An effort must be made to provide a few well-equipped
lines rather than the multitude of lines and the surplus aircraft at present existing. The
use of aviation for commercial and postal services must be developed by means of night
flying, by improvements in the lighting equipment, and by the creation of the necessary
connections to admit of rapid transport.

A precise and detailed Swedish scheme proved that, thanks to the judicious
organisation of the air-mail service, a letter posted in the evening could be received by the
first delivery on the following morning in any large town in Western Europe. The service
would practically pay its way and the subsidies could, from the first year on, be considerably
reduced. All that was required was co-operation. The experiment had not been made
because the companies could only obtain subsidies on condition that they preserved their
national character, and because subsidies were subject to considerations of war needs.

It was legitimate to conclude that civil aviation presented to-day a great danger and
also that — though this was perhaps outside the field covered by paragraph 2 under discus-
sion — it would not be difficult to remove this danger were internationalisation to be
attempted once more in the legal, technical and commercial field.

The arguments used by the latter had failed to convince M. de Brouckère. Obviously,
there were certain drawbacks in internationalisation. Certain commercial interests would
not be furthered, nor would certain military interests predominant at the present time.
The international firm of Mercury, Mars and Co. was a powerful establishment against which
it was difficult to compete. Over and above this, there was the fear of novelty.

M. de Brouckère understood that certain delegates had declared in the Air Commission
that they did not wish the question of civil aviation to be even studied. This attitude had
convinced him; a case must be very strong before a Commission could refuse to examine it,
and before it applied to it the old and hackneyed formula only too often applied to new
truths: "The question does not arise." His reply was: "When the interests of peace are
at stake, the question does arise, and must stand".

M. Vliegen (Netherlands) agreed with the opinion expressed by the Soviet delegate,
at the previous meeting, as to the sense of the question asked in paragraph 2 of
the Spanish proposal. It was quite possible to take a decision in the matter of military
aviation without being influenced by the question of civil aviation. The Air Commission's
discussion had proved this. What was impossible, so to speak, was the contrary. The
attitude of certain delegations, which seemed in no hurry to submit precise suggestions
regarding the reduction of air armaments, was such as to hamper very considerably the
present discussions.

The Netherlands, with a relatively developed civil aviation, would find it very
difficult to make a move towards rendering the various civil aviation interdependent
without proof that this would be valuable; his delegation, though ready to make all
concessions, must be certain that any sacrifices made would really and effectively serve
the cause of disarmament.

The prohibition of air bombardment was the keystone of air disarmament. If air
bombardment were not abolished, it was useless to sacrifice the independence of civil
aviation. If it were true that, given the abolition of military aviation, civil aviation
might acquire a disquieting value from the military point of view, it was, on the other hand,
certain that, by comparison and above all in opposition to military aviation, the fighting
value of civil aviation fell to practically nil. Consequently, if the prohibition of bombing
aircraft at least were achieved, the Netherlands delegation was ready to adopt any measures
likely to prevent civil aviation from replacing these "avions maudits". It was even ready to accept internationalisation, organised in such a way as not to hamper the technical and commercial development of civil aviation.

Nevertheless, he felt certain that, in the matter of security, the same results could be attained by another means. The Netherlands delegation would willingly take part in the examination of any new suggestion, but would for the moment merely draw attention to Article 28 of the draft Convention.

If, on the other hand, military aviation were maintained, the abolition of the nationality of civil aviation, as conceived in the French and Spanish proposals, could only result in an increase of military influence over aviation in general; this was not the object of the Disarmament Conference.

To conclude, he would ask the Powers possessing air forces if their feeling of security was, in present conditions, such that they desired no change. He did not believe that this was the case, and hoped that they would co-operate to bring about effective disarmament.

M. BRANDENBURG (Germany) thought that, if the Commission intended to establish the basis of an international trust for civil aviation affecting the most elementary principles of international law, it would be well to act with all due caution. The possible military value of civil aviation must be discussed with an open mind, and a clear distinction must be drawn between the countries already possessing military aviation and militarily trained crews, and those which had none. The German delegation had drawn up a questionnaire for this purpose (document Conf. D./C.A.38) concerning paragraph 2 of the draft basis of discussion submitted by the Spanish delegation. He would ask the Commission to take due note of this document, the terms of which were as follows:

"The Air Commission is requested, before pursuing its study of the above-mentioned basis of discussion, to elucidate the following questions relating to the military value of civil aircraft.

I.
1. What civil aircraft possess any military value from the offensive point of view:
   (a) When a country possesses a military air force and crews trained in military aviation;
   (b) When a country has no military air force or crews with military training?

2. What are the limits of capacity of these aircraft according to the criteria laid down in the report submitted by the Air Commission to the General Commission (document Conf. D.123 of June 8th, 1932)?

II.
1. What civil aircraft possess any military value for national defence:
   (a) When a country possesses a military air force and crews trained in military aviation;
   (b) When a country has no military air force or crews with military training?

2. What are the limits of capacity of these aircraft according to the criteria laid down in the report submitted by the Air Commission to the General Commission (document Conf. D.123 of June 8th, 1932)?

III.
1. What civil aircraft possess any value as auxiliary military instruments:
   (a) When a country possesses a military air force and crews trained in military aviation;
   (b) When a country has no military air force or crews with military training?

2. What are the limits of capacity of these aircraft according to the criteria laid down in the report submitted by the Air Commission to the General Commission (document Conf. D.123 of June 8th, 1932)?

IV.
What is the value of civil aircraft used for military purposes against specifically military aircraft:
   (a) When manned by a crew trained for the military purposes for which the civil aircraft is employed on military lines;
   (b) When manned by a crew which has no training in military aviation?
"V.

"What is the military value of the navigating personnel of civil aviation (commercial air pilots, touring air pilots, observers or navigators, wireless telegraphists and air mechanics):

"(a) When trained in a military air force;

"(b) When not trained in a military air force, but possessing a general military training;

"(c) When without any military training?"

Group-Captain Babington (United Kingdom) pointed out that, though one of the objects of internationalisation was to free civil aviation from existing restrictions, its essential end was to demilitarise such aviation. There was a certain contradiction and fresh element of complication here, as the elimination of one group of restrictions would merely give birth to another. In order to avoid this difficulty, the Commission should not lose sight of the military aspect of the question, with which it was alone concerned. The United Kingdom delegation, although it had not submitted any proposal regarding the internationalisation of civil aviation, was none the less ready to take part in the discussion of the problem and to make practical suggestions thereon.

The various documents before the Commission proved that internationalisation was a most complex question with multiple ramifications. The majority of these proposals were, however, general in character and no precise or complete scheme had up to the present been submitted. It would hardly be possible for the delegations to give an opinion on such a complex question as that of the internationalisation of civil aviation without some knowledge of the exact significance of the term. The United Kingdom delegation further felt that it was profitless to continue the general discussion without receiving fuller details.

Certain proposals had already received almost unanimous approval. This constituted the first step in the direction of internationalisation. The provisions of Article 28 of the draft Convention must, however, be borne in mind.

An immense number of points remained to be settled before the general idea of internationalisation could be discussed with any profit. The United Kingdom delegation therefore suggested that the Commission should begin by reaching some agreement on the detailed aspects of the problem in order that, fortified with a knowledge of these, it might later undertake a general study.

The President replied that it was to his mind an advantage for the Commission to consider, in the first place, the general aspect of the problem. A concrete scheme of internationalisation could not as yet be envisaged, as the Commission was discussing a question which was still problematical — namely, to what extent civil aviation was subsidiary to the State’s armaments and an element of insecurity. When the Commission had formed an idea on this point, it could estimate whether internationalisation was likely to remedy the evils and what type of internationalisation would be best fitted to do so. If the General Commission adopted the Air Commission’s suggestion, then only would the latter Commission be able to submit a more precise scheme. It would be unwise at the present stage to undertake a concrete study; the general outlines of the question must first be considered.

M. de Jouvenel (France) approved the method suggested by the President. The Commission must avoid losing its way in a mass of detail. Further, it could not ignore the important preliminary work carried out under the auspices of the League.

The French delegation accepted the view expressed by the Netherlands delegate that the internationalisation of civil aviation must be a condition of disarmament. The question should be considered from this point of view and not from that of the technical and commercial improvement of civil aviation, which, in spite of its undoubted interest, was not within the competence of the Air Commission.
TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING  
Held on Wednesday, June 22nd, 1932, at 10.30 a.m.

President: M. DE MADARIAGA.

32. TECHNICAL STUDY ON THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF CIVIL AVIATION (continuation):  
EXAMINATION OF THE BASIS OF DISCUSSION SUBMITTED BY THE SPANISH DELEGATION (continuation).

Mr. Riddell (Canada) pointed out that the proposals before the Commission, although not very clear, seemed to imply two distinct undertakings: the first, the organisation of civil aviation under one great official international enterprise in time of peace; the second, the placing of the resources, in men and material, of this organisation at the disposal of the League of Nations in case of war.

The first undertaking would be much more far-reaching than anything that had yet been achieved in the field of transportation. No such monopoly had, at least in modern times, even been contemplated, much less attained. The magnitude of the undertaking and the multitude of interests involved, as well as the great variety of needs which civil aviation was serving in various parts of the world made it evident that the first proposal was a very bold and ambitious one — much more so, at any rate, than that set out in paragraph 4 of Article 28 of the draft Convention.

Mr. Riddell pointed out that great enterprises in commercial or industrial organisation had usually been built up gradually, slowly extending their activities from country to country and continent to continent. In the present case, however, a study of the various proposals would serve to show that, though other continents were mentioned, the whole plan had been conceived to meet a European political situation and to handle various European air-transport problems. In a continent such as Europe, with highly organised road and rail communications, civil aviation had an economic future only in long-distance high-speed transportation, which of necessity involved flights over two or more countries in the majority of organised air routes. If wasteful competition were to be avoided, the possibility of instituting some form of international co-operation or amalgamation of organisations, as contemplated in paragraph 4 of Article 28, might be carefully considered.

Nevertheless, if it were desired to apply such proposals to continents such as North America, they lost whatever virtue they might possess. Civil air activities in Canada, for instance, were almost entirely national, intimately connected with the settlement and development of a new country of great extent; they included such matters as crop dusting, protection of forests, survey by aerial photography, freight transportation in default of rail, road or water transport, police work and national air-mail routes. International transport was of very secondary importance, there being only four international air connections at present in operation.

To turn to the second part of the proposals before the Commission, the Canadian delegation considered that the placing at the disposal of the League in times of emergency of personnel and equipment controlled by an official international air enterprise would constitute the setting up of a super-State. The Disarmament Conference was not convened to achieve this end, but the Canadian delegation felt that the Commission would be working towards it were it to approve the principles involved in the proposals for the internationalisation of civil aviation.

Lastly, as regarded security — the only reason for discussing civil aviation at a Disarmament Conference — the Canadian delegation was not convinced that internationalisation would provide much greater security than that furnished by the draft Convention as it stood. An agreement between the contracting parties not to requisition in their territories civil aviation material belonging to the proposed “International Air Transport Union” would not seem to offer much greater guarantees than a simple agreement not to use national civil aviation material for war purposes.

M. DE JOUVENEL (France) said that the natural respect of a newcomer for the competence of the members of the Air Commission tempted M. Laurent-Eynac and himself to continue merely to listen, as they had done at the previous meeting, and to vote in support of M. de Brouckère’s view and the Spanish delegation’s proposals.

Nevertheless, the technical objections raised by the United Kingdom delegate, together with the multiplicity of preliminary questions submitted by the German delegation, the problem so frankly expressed by the Netherlands delegate and the Portuguese delegate’s speech led the French delegation to consider that all were fundamentally concerned with one and the same problem, to which a clear reply must be given without delay. This problem might be expressed somewhat as follows: Was the internationalisation of civil
aviation really indispensable for the reduction of military armaments and to what extent was it involved by such reduction? Such was the very precise question to which a reply was, he felt, essential.

His delegation was not surprised that, at the outset, some doubts should be felt on this score. The Canadian delegate had depicted a situation which could readily be understood. He had expressed the question with frankness and sincerity: undoubtedly, part of the world could quite reasonably ignore the problem now before the Commission. Conditions in the two Americas differed from those in Europe; they were not condemned to the over-armament which was Europe's inheritance from centuries of war. There were not in America, as in Europe, nations living cheek by jowl, forced, to a certain extent, to mistrust one another or at least to take precautions against one another. Thus the American countries need only consider this problem in the measure — happily a large one — in which they were concerned with the reduction of armaments in Europe and the well-being of the old world.

M. de Jouvenel understood very well the doubts which were felt as to the necessity of such internationalisation. The idea was rather new in Europe itself. The French, who had taken the initiative in the matter, had met with opposition in their own country. Propaganda carried out for four years by ex-service men, workers' syndicates and university students, grouped in the Comité d'action pour la Société des Nations, had been necessary in order to convert first the parties of the left, then the others, to this idea. He had always been impressed by the fact that each time the origin and future of this scheme had been explained audiences had been converted to it. He hoped that this would be the case to-day, if the delegations would allow him briefly to review the road followed by those who were in favour of the idea of the internationalisation of civil aviation, at least so far as transport was concerned.

One fact was striking, namely, that, of recent years, the race for armaments had been resumed with overwhelming intensity. And for which armaments? Not for naval armaments in Europe, since the Washington Convention had greatly reduced the size of the big warships in the European fleets. Not for land armaments, since certain nations, among them France, had much reduced the period of military service. The real burden which was unceasingly swelling the various national budgets was the race for air armaments. This was natural, being the price paid for technical progress.

The Commission would perhaps remember the small aeroplanes of 1913, of tonnage from 600 to 800 kilogrammes. Such machines then cost from about 100,000 to 150,000 French francs at the present rate. Nowadays, 4-ton machines were an everyday affair. The French budget figures showed that the cost of such aeroplanes was something in excess of 1,500,000 francs — from twelve to fifteen times more than in 1913, which explained why the small air budgets of those days had increased tenfold. Nor were matters at a standstill. Certain countries already had 15-ton machines, either in service or on order, and, if he had calculated rightly, such aeroplanes should cost 10 million French francs. Thus, the ratio of the cost of the 1913 aeroplane to that of the 15-ton machine was that of 1 to 100. Further, a 27-ton aeroplane had flown the European sky; it had been spoken of as a monster, but every custom began by being considered monstrous, and became current nevertheless. Obviously, when one great country possessed an aeroplane of this type, other Powers would wish to follow suit. What would this involve? A race in armaments budgets which could but lead the States to ruin, and the French delegation considered that if the Conference did not reduce air armaments, and put an end to this race, it would have failed to fulfil its object and have avoided the real question at issue.

The budgetary aspect was not the only important one; even general ruin was the least of the catastrophes threatening the States. These huge machines, with their high tonnage, their transport capacity and radius of action, were not intended to fly along the fighting-line, but to cross beyond it. Their very power to a certain extent condemned them to fly not over armies but over civil populations; their field of action was the open township and the capital.

The delegations of all countries had agreed that chemical, bacteriological and incendiary warfare must be abolished. That being so, the means for carrying out such warfare must also be abolished, for it was open to question whether the Conference, by merely issuing prohibitive regulations, would have done anything really concrete. It must not be forgotten that most countries had been represented at The Hague. Nevertheless, certain events had taken place in the world since then. Could any nation, could any individual forget what had happened, during the world war, to the papers signed at The Hague?

The Conference must look to the future, and military chiefs must not be left in control of arms which might tempt them to successes to-morrow far surpassing those of yesterday. When these military chiefs assumed the responsibility for the fate of the nations, was the Conference sure, were it to give them on the one hand, a list of prohibitions, and on the other the armaments enabling them to throw over every such regulation, that they
would choose the former? They could not do so; in all honesty, they would have the right not to do so, to say that there had been a real desire at Geneva to prohibit chemical, bacteriological, incendiary and air warfare, air bombardment and the massacre of civil populations, the instruments thereof would have been abolished in fact and not only on paper.

For this reason M. de Jouvenel considered it essential that air bombardment, other than of actual battlefields, air bases and long-distance gun emplacements, which were adjuncts of the battlefield, should be abolished. For this purpose, a maximum tonnage for military aircraft must be fixed; this the Conference could and should do.

Was it possible, however, to limit the tonnage of civil aircraft? Was it possible to say that science must come to a stop, that there should be no further progress in human relations? This was impossible, and led to the inevitable conclusion that all that could be abolished must be abolished, while all that could not be abolished must be internationalised.

It was clear that civil aircraft—he would not repeat all that M. de Brouckère had so ably said, nor dwell upon the unanimous conclusions of the special commissions—by the very fact that their tonnage was perpetually on the increase, were destined to be used as bombing aircraft in time of war. If they were not internationalised, the nations lacking heavy transport machines or great air industries—above all, the small nations—would be at the mercy of those possessing a large force of transport aircraft and a large industrial equipment.

A point arose in this connection with which he would deal very frankly, in order to dispel a suspicion which the Conference seemed to harbour. Each time the German delegation rose to speak, someone said: “This is against France”. Each time the French delegation spoke, someone said: “Against Germany”. This must be brought to an end; otherwise an atmosphere precluding all reconciliation would be created. Only that morning he had, to his regret, read the summary of an article appearing in a newspaper of a friendly country—Brazil—and in a paper which should be particularly well informed, voicing the suspicion that France was seeking superiority over all other nations. Had the figures not been taken into consideration? He would appeal to the experts on the Commission; the figures for civil aviation in France and Germany were the same, each country possessing about 1,100 civil aircraft. As far as he knew, the subsidies granted by the French State to civil aviation at present exceeded the sum of those granted by the Reich, the States and the towns in Germany to civil aviation.

Supposing—he was ignorant of the actual facts—that industry in Germany was at present superior to that in France. French subsidies were, on the other hand, greater than those granted in Germany. Such superiority, however, was very short-lived, and no one could tell whether to-morrow the situation would not change; during the war it had done so constantly. What was certain was that the effects of the two countries were the same—that the French subsidy was greater, that France had a chance to progress, that the country was obviously not out to seek superiority, but rather to renounce it. The other civil aviation of Europe were all smaller in numbers; the subsidies they were granted were also lower than those granted by the two countries he had mentioned, with the possible exception of Russia, regarding which no precise information was available, as she did not willingly share her secrets with other countries. The French Government would joyfully renounce this superiority, for it was essential to do so if the armaments of Europe were to be reduced.

He hoped that he had succeeded in giving a clear sketch of the lines along which the French view had developed. He thought that opinions must harmonise at this point, for the reasoning followed was only logical.

In these conditions it should not be difficult for the delegations to come to an agreement. The main problem was the following: if the States wished—as was undoubtedly the case—to reduce their armaments, the tonnage of military aircraft must be limited; if they wished to limit the tonnage of military aircraft they must, since it was not possible to do likewise with civil aircraft, internationalise at least civil air transport. Consequently, to refuse to internationalise civil aviation in this form would make it impossible to reduce armaments and to limit to a maximum the tonnage of military aeroplanes.

In order to make the matter quite clear, and to set out the problem before the Commission in a form which would leave no room for doubt, the French delegation submitted the following proposals (document Conf. D./C.A.40), in the hope that the Air Commission would adopt them and forward them to the General Commission:

1. Absolute prohibition of aerial chemical, bacteriological and incendiary warfare.

2. Prohibition of aerial bombardment apart from the field of battle or air bases and long-range artillery emplacements.

3. Fixing of a maximum tonnage per unit (unladen weight) for military aeroplanes. Limitation in the number of military aeroplanes in excess of this tonnage which are essential for strictly defensive purposes and placing of these machines at the disposal of the League of Nations.