that afflicted them in common, the man amongst them who thought he was going to get something that satisfied him completely was a good patriot, or a good nationalist; he was just a very ordinary common fool!

Therefore, the plan would satisfy no delegation at first sight. But let the members sleep over it for three or four days, and when the Commission met again, there would, he knew, be a very great change in their demeanour.

The draft stated final conditions but assumed a transition period. The transition period was one of practical accommodation, but he wanted to make it clear that he and his colleagues had not been able to complete all the enquiries that they would have liked to make. The plan had been carefully considered in general before he had left London, but, in its particular form and in its particular provisions, it might show the very hurried conditions in which the United Kingdom delegation had had to do its work, in order not to delay the work of the Conference. There might be errors in the draft. Some delegations would, perhaps, find that the risks suggested for them were too great. Let them, however, study it in a co-operative spirit, and opportunity would certainly be given by the President to enable them to propose alternatives at the proper time.

The draft laid down five characteristics of the transition period. First of all, the period was fixed; it was not indefinite; the draft suggested five years. The second characteristic was that reductions in armaments were proposed in order to prove the delegation's bona fides to the world. The present Conference was not a re-armament conference. The third characteristic was a proposal for international control, in order to ensure that the Convention, signed solemnly by all the delegations at Geneva, would be carried out and not shirked by any. The fourth characteristic was the setting up of bodies like the Permanent Disarmament Commission to study further reductions and to try and get solutions for unsolved difficulties. The fifth was the affording of opportunity for political work for the purpose of restoring confidence, so that the fears with which the Conference had had to contend would be removed before its next meeting, fixed for a few years hence.

One thing it was essential to say. There were figures in the draft. Nobody had ever tried to produce figures before. And why? Because everyone had been afraid to do so. It was therefore a bold step to produce figures; as a matter of fact, in one respect it had been a gratuitous step. But it had been necessary that somebody should produce figures before the delegations could get down to the final decisions on the problems separating them.

He was not going to apologise for his figures, although all delegations would want him to do so. But the figures suggested were not as the laws of the Medes and Persians, and if any delegates were to come and say that the figures were imperfect, he would show them that they were imperfect at places they had never discovered. But his excuse and his justification would be that when the Conference had produced its figures, either by a committee or by a commission, those figures would remain just about as imperfect as his were at the present moment. The balancing of disarmament was not a thing that could be done by a chemist's balance. There was a good deal of roughness about it.

The United Kingdom delegation had produced those figures because it had believed that they had to be produced. He was afraid that the delegations would find a good many errors and, perhaps, not a little injustice in them, but he hoped that they might be examined and the needs of the various nations as recorded in them studied.

In connection with this point, why could not those nations which might be aggrieved by the figures come together directly and negotiate them? Why call upon this grave assembly to get them out of their difficulties? He had no sympathy at all with the so-called self-respect or sense of honour which made the representative of one nation say to the representative of another, "I cannot meet you; I cannot discuss with you". Let them get on with the business. There are millions of men and women whose welfare depends upon the delegates' commonsense.

Nothing, be it appreciation of their dignity or of their traditions or of their national mind, would justify them in the eyes either of God or of man in leaving any step unattempted which would enable those among them who were most diverse to come together and report to the Conference in due time: "We are agreed". Let them look at the realities of things.

The United Kingdom draft proposal began with articles dealing with the organisation of peace, and these laid down quite clearly that no nation which had signed the agreement to be concluded by the present Conference could be indifferent to the breach of the Pact of Paris by any other nation. With that was coupled a provision relating to supervision which would give some security that whatever obligations had been undertaken were in fact actually carried out. In this connection the draft made use of the idea expressed at such a timely moment and so clearly and emphatically by Mr. Stimson, the late Secretary of State of the United States of America. No country must refrain from signing because, with justice, it could ask itself: "Will these rules ever be carried out? Will agreements concluded here really be fulfilled?" It was that scepticism which was the blight of international peace. Scepticism was the blight of individual life. It was the blight of international and national life. And all that could be done was to attempt, by provisions drafted and solemnly agreed, signed, sealed and delivered to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, to shame every nation that still hugged to its breast the blight of scepticism because it was too cowardly to take the risk of
believe in other people. That was a point which the United Kingdom delegation desired to make perfectly clear in the instrument it was submitting to the Conference.

In regard to disarmament itself, it had tried to fit into the framework of the draft disarmament convention prepared by the Preparatory Commission the solution which a thorough examination of all questions by the Conference had led it to believe would represent a just basis for negotiation, and which would result in a settlement of the problem.

Take effectives first. Mr. MacDonald had been impressed with the possibilities of simplification afforded by the French proposal for the standardisation of continental land armies. On that basis, and inspired by the principle suggested by President Hoover, the United Kingdom delegation had attempted to give a fair estimate of the numbers that should be allowed to each country. Those were the figures given in the draft. No attempt had been made to work out figures of effectives for all the countries of the world, but to grapple with the central and critical problem represented by Europe itself, and to present it, if not in a way which could be acceptable at once to everybody, at any rate in such a way that the reality of the situation was encountered straight in the face. Reality was the most awkward thing that some countries had to meet, but they were not going to meet it successfully if like ostriches they buried their heads in the sand, waiting till it had passed them rather than facing it with courage themselves.

As regards material, the draft provided for the reduction of heavy material most suited for offensive purposes, namely, tanks and heavy guns.

As regarded naval material, it had to be borne in mind that for some countries, including the United Kingdom, treaty limitations already existed, and such countries were going through a stage of disarmament in advance of the stages in disarmament which other nations with only air forces and land forces had yet to go through. These latter countries must play fair with the other countries that had anticipated agreements such as those the Conference was now considering. So far as the naval situation was concerned, there were certain treaties, which the parties to them had wanted to be general, and, if those treaties were not general, that was not the fault of the parties. The parties to those treaties were pledged to meet in further conference in 1935 and they were going to do it. They maintained their obligations under those disarmament treaties, they held all other countries to the present levels, and they provided for a conference in 1935, not only of those already pledged, but of all countries possessing naval armaments.

In regard to the air, the draft expressed the very general desire of the Conference for the prohibition of air bombardment, with a very slight exception dictated by hard practical considerations. It provided for the continued study of the possibility of realising this prohibition in the most effective manner, namely, by the total abolition of military and naval aircraft on the condition of finding satisfactory means of guarding against the misuse of civil aircraft. He would warn those who had not considered that point very carefully that this was a very serious situation. It was a very serious danger to people who frankly and honestly reduced their striking power in the air to find that, quite honestly and properly—on that he had no complaint—alongside the military arm there grew up an enormous civil aviation force which, in the twinkling of an eye, on the receipt of a telephone message, could be transformed into a fighting force. It might not be an efficient fighting force, it might not be a fighting force that Governments would choose for great adventures, but it was a very useful fighting force, especially if there were no military machines to meet it and if the development of the bomb continued to increase in a deadly direction.

He and his colleagues had made a very careful and thorough examination of this problem before coming to Geneva. They had examined it, not merely from the military point of view, but also from the commercial point of view, because civil aviation must not be retarded, and the commercial and industrial interests of the various countries in the manufacture or in the use of civil aircraft must not be penalised. It was a difficult problem. Plan after plan—inter-national control and so on—had been produced by the most expert minds. He would candidly confess that the United Kingdom Government had not yet been able to see a way out of this very serious problem. His Government had not put it on the scrap heap, however, and did not want to do so. But until a solution had been found that was really watertight and effective, it must not be expected that they would lose hope, because if hope were lost, the problem could never be solved.

He wished therefore to be perfectly clear. In principle, his Government did not defend military aviation. In principle, it would like to see military aviation abolished, but it must not leave itself open to anybody who misused civil aviation and tore to tatters agreements concluded at Geneva or anywhere else. In the meantime, whilst searching for a solution of the major problem, the United Kingdom delegation purposd immediate and progressive reduction of numbers, together with a qualitative reduction which would be a great contribution to quantitative disarmament.

The draft also reproduced the provisions which had already achieved a large measure of agreement at the Conference in regard to chemical, incendiary and bacterial warfare.

In the same way, it adopted generally the articles concerning the Permanent Disarmament Commission, which had already been under discussion and which had met with general approval.
The Convention, in general, was intended to remain in force for a period of five years, and it contained a provision that within that period a second Disarmament Conference should be convened to prepare and conclude a new Convention, and to carry on the work of limitation and reduction of armaments begun by the present assembly.

Such in very summary outline was the draft Convention proposed by the United Kingdom delegation.

As he had said, each and every country would not find satisfaction in that document. Maybe some would find a little injustice. Some, unfortunately, were very far asunder, so far asunder that it had not been possible to build bridges between them. What could be done? Were the delegations to be turned away, feeling baffled, defeated, divided? No. They must be turned away with the knowledge and conviction that if the bridges had not been built, they were being built, and, what was more important, that the workmen who were building them had got their coats off. Delegates must remember that if they rejected, if they said, "We cannot agree," that meant that they failed. There would perhaps be risks to some countries in any plan that might be proposed. But if there was no plan, if the delegates went to their various capitals at the end of this Conference as they had left them at the beginning, they would be facing not a risk, but a certainty. Risk was the alternative to certainty. If there were failure, the stream of events would drive with increasing swiftness to catastrophe. The real nature of the alternative must not be overlooked, and he would beg to impress upon the minds of all the delegates that the Conference had not merely the liberty to reject. In their rejection, they would be choosing something. They rejected or they accepted.

He knew that disarmament was not an end in itself. It was a contribution to peace. But he was interested in disarmament for the reason that the measure of disarmament was as near an expression as possible of the measure of peace and security.

Failure meant no signature, no agreement; it meant the choice of a certainty unexpressed and hidden in place of the risk expressed in documents. Failure would let loose that passion that made for war, the vagrant powers which, under the pretence of saving nations and national honour, destroyed both the body and soul of nations, and not merely nations but the whole of civilisation itself.

All those present in that great assembly were there to prevent such a tragic ending to the evolution of man. Had they not had enough of enmity and war, of attempts to settle issues by force? They could stop it, they could turn the tide of fear, which at the moment was rushing in increased volume down the high channels of history, into a tide of confidence, goodwill and peaceful effort. Let the delegates but apply themselves to the practical problems which the realities of the situation presented to them and, in a spirit of give and take, of common sense, of objective reason, approach and solve them.

The President thought the General Commission would agree that, in view of the importance of the speech of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and of the fact that the document to which he had referred was only just available, and as yet in one language only, it would be undesirable to enter at once into any discussion of the proposals which he had outlined. At the same time, the President felt sure the Commission would welcome short statements with regard to the general problem to which Mr. Mac Donald had referred.

M. Daladier (France) considered the decision proposed by the President entirely legitimate. In view of the importance of the draft just submitted to the General Commission by the United Kingdom delegation, the various delegations would naturally want time to give it the careful examination it so abundantly deserved. The Commission had just listened to a very moving speech from Mr. Mac Donald, and M. Daladier was sure that the words spoken by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, which were at once precise and eloquent, would have a profound repercussion throughout the world. He believed that they would revive the somewhat feeble spark of hope and that they would ensure the success of the Conference, which had appeared to have reached a critical stage. For these reasons, M. Daladier would make a very brief declaration in the name of the French delegation.

The French delegation had listened with the keenest interest to Mr. Mac Donald's statement of the main lines of the United Kingdom plan and to his very eloquent commentary on the principles on which the plan was constructed. The draft was of such importance that the French delegation intended to study it very closely, with the greatest care and the utmost sympathy. It desired immediately to pay a tribute to the lofty sentiments by which the plan was inspired. It had great satisfaction in finding in the plan some of the essential principles which M. Paul-Boncour had expounded in the name of France during an important discussion which the General Commission had certainly not forgotten.

He desired to make it perfectly plain that France persisted in her profound attachment to every loyal and sincere effort for the organisation of international peace and for disarmament, progressive, simultaneous and effectively controlled. The success of that effort depended to the highest degree on the clearing of the international atmosphere. In that respect the French delegation could only congratulate itself upon the conversations which Mr. Mac Donald and Sir John Simon were shortly to have in Rome, and it offered them its sincerest and most cordial wishes for their success.
Mr. GIBSON (United States of America) believed everyone would feel that the need for agreement was so imperative at the present time that it behoved the General Commission to decide, before going any further, upon the line of procedure best calculated to lead to achievement.

Everyone, he thought, realised that Mr. MacDonald’s statement marked a significant date in the history of the Conference. While detailed comments could hardly be offered with regard to a plan which had not yet been examined, Mr. MacDonald could none the less be thanked very sincerely for his effort to focus attention on the essential problems with which the Conference must deal. All alike were grateful to him for his really moving appeal to the Commission to meet its common problem in a spirit of conciliation, as well as for his picture of the broader realities of the moment. Whatever the future might bring, the appeal which had just been made could not fail to evoke a response among all Mr. MacDonald’s colleagues who were moved by the sincere desire to reach the same goal, even if they had sought to reach it by another road.

Mr. Gibson did not propose to offer any detailed comment on the plan, but there was one point which he was glad to accept—the introduction of figures. He was delighted that the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had had the indelicacy to insert them in the proposed Convention. He would make no more detailed comments, however, for there had as yet been no opportunity of examining the proposals, as none of the delegations had had advance knowledge of the contents of the plan. Mr. Gibson did not say that by way of complaint: on the contrary, he was glad that this ignorance of details enabled him unhesitatingly to bespeak thoughtful and careful consideration of the proposal as a whole, and he could do so without feeling he was committing himself on details.

He was convinced that it had been the common experience of the delegates that, when they were called upon suddenly to comment on comprehensive proposals, the general instinct, the prudent instinct, was to single out and make reservations in regard to those aspects which at first glance appeared difficult of acceptance. On the other hand, when time was afforded for more mature consideration, the difficulties and dangers were often found to be less than had been feared, and it was possible to examine the detailed problem in a more just and positive spirit.

That, he thought, was the immediate problem. What was needed most was that this proposal should be handled, not with the idea of singling out its defects, but in the hope that in its general scheme would be found possibilities of agreement. The Commission could not afford to neglect any opportunity of that sort. The proposal was too important to be dealt with precipitately.

Mr. Gibson was not prepared to participate in an immediate discussion, for the very sound reason that he wanted to know what he was discussing. Only by studying the proposal would it be possible to find in it a maximum of agreement. The President’s proposal was very wise, and Mr. Gibson was sure he spoke for many of his colleagues—he hoped for all of them—in suggesting that the President be asked to decide, in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference and such delegations as he desired to consult, when the Commission should be called together for a general discussion.

M. NADOLNY (Germany) sincerely thanked the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for having come in person to Geneva to ascertain the position of the Conference and to give it, in the light of his impression, a fresh stimulus in order that its work might conclude with a positive result. He warmly congratulated Mr. MacDonald on his resolve to submit to the Conference a draft Convention with a view to finishing its work. That was perhaps the only practical way of rescuing the Conference from the web of committees and sub-committees in which it had been caught up and to enable it at last to conclude. At the present meeting, therefore, the Conference was entering upon another phase. M. Nadolny strongly hoped that it would be the last phase, and that it would quickly lead to the desired end.

He had no need to emphasise once again the vital importance felt by Germany in a positive conclusion of the Conference. In conformity with the principles laid down anew by four great Powers on December 11th, 1932, Germany fervently desired that the Disarmament Convention should create a regime of security for all nations. She was of opinion that such a regime could be brought about first and foremost by a substantial measure of disarmament and by an equitable adjustment of armaments.

He noted with satisfaction that the draft Convention submitted by Mr. MacDonald was designed, like other proposals, to bring about a real and substantial measure of disarmament. He had no doubt that it would be possible to obtain general assent in the Conference for a Convention based on that idea, and he was convinced that a big advance in that direction would facilitate likewise the solution of the other problems to be settled in the Convention—in particular, that of the equality of rights.

He wished to make it clear that the aim which Germany had always set before herself at the present Conference was to take her place at the side of the other States as an element of peace and that she continued to observe that attitude.

With regard to the details of the draft just submitted, he would venture to reserve his opinion until he had examined it. The German delegation would study the draft in the spirit in which it had been conceived.

He wished once again to thank the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for his very noteworthy statement. He would not like to conclude his remarks without expressing the hope
that Mr. MacDonald's words would be heard throughout the world, and that they would meet
with a good reception, more particularly from those who, in no matter what place, bore part
of the responsibility for the peace of the world.

General Cavallero (Italy) said that his delegation had listened with the deepest interest
to the statement made by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. It entirely associated
itself with the expression of thanks and sympathy offered to Mr. MacDonald by the head of the
French Government and the leaders of the United States and German delegations for the
initiative he had taken and for the effort he had made to help the Disarmament Conference to
take a first substantial step towards a reasonable and final solution.

The Italian delegation desired also to state that, imbied with a feeling of confidence in
the result of that effort, it would bring its entire collaboration to the study of the United
Kingdom draft in the spirit which had inspired the statement of the Prime Minister of the
United Kingdom, and which in no way differed from the spirit that had hitherto animated
the Italian delegation, following therein its Government's instructions, in its action at the
Conference.

The President said, with reference to Mr. Gibson's suggestion, that he had already
consulted some of his colleagues, and, as they held different opinions, he would suggest, as
a compromise, that the general discussion on the draft Convention presented by the United
Kingdom delegation should open on Thursday, March 23rd, at 3:30 p.m. He had adopted a
medium course, because he thought the delegations ought to have time to meet and to study
the plan carefully. It might also be necessary for them to consult their Governments. On the
other hand, certain Foreign Secretaries had appealed to him not to keep them waiting too
long, as they desired to return to their countries to attend to their official duties. The President
hoped, if his proposal were accepted, that it might be possible, perhaps on the following
Monday, for a member of the United Kingdom delegation, Sir John Simon, to close the debate.
It was, of course, understood that the various committees would continue their work in the
meantime.

_The President's proposal was adopted._

**FORTY-SIXTH MEETING**

_Held on Thursday, March 23rd, 1933, at 10.30 a.m._

President: The Right Honourable A. Henderson.

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90. Deputation to the President from the International Conference of Associations of Ex-Servicemen and War Victims and the Interallied Federation of Ex-Servicemen.

The President informed the Commission that, on Monday, March 20th, accompanied
by M. Beneš, the Secretary-General of the League, and the Head of the Disarmament Section,
he had received an important deputation representing the International Conference of
Associations of Ex-Servicemen and War Victims and the Interallied Federation of Ex-
Servicemen. These organisations comprised 8,000,000 members belonging to the following
countries: Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France,
Germany, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Yugoslavia, as well as the Free City of Danzig and the
Territory of Memel.

The deputation had presented the two following resolutions:

_I._

"The ex-servicemen and war victims grouped in the C.I.A.M.A.C. (International
Conference of Associations of Ex-Servicemen and War Victims) and the F.I.D.A.C.
(Interallied Federation of Ex-Servicemen), assembled for the first time in a common
effort, evoking the memory of the millions of war dead and speaking in the name of
the above two organisations which comprise eight million members of the following
countries: Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France,
Germany, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Yugoslavia, as well as the Free City of Danzig and the
Territory of Memel, have adopted the following resolution:

‘Solemnly recalling the fact that peace is the primary condition for the happiness
and prosperity of peoples, and that the ex-servicemen and war victims are its best qualified
defenders; that its maintenance is only possible when based on the respect of treaties and equality of rights for all States, and by observing the following great principles: compulsory arbitration, or in any event the settlement of differences without recourse to force; security and disarmament, both moral and material:

They affirm that moral disarmament entails the suppression of everything which publicly—and particularly in schools—tends to hinder mutual understanding between the peoples.

Material disarmament should be substantial, simultaneous and progressive; it should include the suppression of private manufacture of and private traffic in arms, together with effective mutual international control.

They insist firmly that the President and members of the General Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments interpret in their decisions the wishes thus expressed, and that, instead of seeking to 'humanise' warfare, they institute an effective organisation for the prevention and, if need be, repression of any aggression.

II.

The ex-servicemen and war victims of the United States and Italy, solemnly recalling that peace is the primary condition for the happiness and prosperity of peoples and that ex-servicemen and war victims are its best qualified defenders, firmly insist that the President and members of the Disarmament Conference interpret and realise, in their future decisions, the wishes expressed in all circumstances by ex-servicemen and war victims in favour of moral and material disarmament.

During his reception of this deputation, which spoke with authority as the representatives of eight million men who had fought in the last war, the President had given them a pledge that he would lay their views before the Conference at the earliest opportunity. That pledge he had redeemed by reading to the Commission the resolutions which they had presented.

He would ask the members of the Commission to remember that the members of the deputation had voiced the views of people who had fought on both sides in the last war and who constituted the vast majority of those who had survived their terrible experience in the trenches and on the battlefields. He wished that every member of the Commission could have seen the passionate earnestness and deep enthusiasm with which the deputation had laid before himself and those accompanying him its constructive programme of disarmament and peace. The Commission as a whole would, he thought, have felt, had it been present, that with such hopes and with such support behind it, the Conference could not fail. The sight of that great deputation would have banished from the delegates' minds the defeatist rumours about winding up the Conference, about indefinite adjournment, and the other or dangerous nonsense which had been far too prevalent in recent days. He believed that every delegation would feel strengthened, by the resolutions he had read, in their determination to bring the Conference's work to an early and triumphant conclusion.


The President thought that an explanation was necessary as to why the Commission had been summoned to meet at 10.30 a.m. instead of at 3.30 p.m. as had been previously arranged.

In view of the importance of the draft Convention presented by the United Kingdom delegation and the need for giving adequate time to all delegations to study it, the officers of the Bureau had met on Tuesday, March 21st, to consider the Commission's programme of future work. They had had to take into consideration the fact that the Easter recess would have to begin soon. Two alternative plans had been suggested, between the merits of which the officers had had to judge. The first plan was to begin the Easter recess at an early date and thus enable the Conference to resume its work immediately after Easter was over. It was believed that this would give the Commission a longer time between Easter and Whitsuntide to undertake the detailed consideration of the United Kingdom draft and to carry its work to a definite result. The second alternative was to continue the meetings of the General Commission until nearer Easter and then either to have only a short recess or seriously to shorten the time available between Easter and Whitsuntide.

As between these two alternatives, the officers had come to no decision except that they should invite the General Commission to meet this morning in order that the Commission itself should decide when it should adjourn and what should be the period of the recess.

If no delegation had any comments to make upon the alternative proposals, the President would take it that they were all prepared to continue the work.
M. Titulesco (Roumania) thought that the President's interpretation of the Commission's silence was the right one.

The President was sure that M. Titulesco felt quite confident that he had correctly interpreted the mind of the General Commission. In that case, unless there was any objection, he would suggest that the Commission begin the discussion on the United Kingdom draft Convention on the following day, Friday, March 24th, at 3.30 p.m.

The President's suggestion was adopted.

FORTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held on Friday, March 24th, 1933, at 3.30 p.m.

President: The Right Honourable A. Henderson.

92. Draft Convention submitted by the United Kingdom Delegation: General Discussion.

The President informed the Commission that at the close of the general discussion on the draft Convention submitted by the United Kingdom delegation, he intended to propose, after the decision taken at the previous meeting, that the Commission should proceed immediately to deal with the draft Convention chapter by chapter and article by article. It was, he thought, absolutely essential to convince the public that the Conference was going to make a most serious effort to bring its work to an end by having a Convention properly drafted by a legal committee and opened for signature.

M. Titulesco (Roumania) said that the States of the Petite Entente, in whose name he had the honour to make the present declaration, had made a preliminary study of the proposals submitted by the United Kingdom Government, from both the political and the technical angles.

The outcome of this first preliminary study by the experts of the three countries was such that the three States were prepared to accept the proposals as a basis of discussion, with a view to achieving the final text of the first Convention for the limitation and reduction of armaments. The Petite Entente hoped that the present discussion would be frank, sincere, complete and efficacious. Even at the present stage they saw in the United Kingdom proposals a number of principles, or even concrete provisions, which they could accept. There were others which they would have to consider more closely, as they would have amendments to submit in connection therewith. Finally, there were in the draft certain omissions which, in the view of the three countries, it was essential to make good. They would put forward their suggestions as and when the various chapters in question came up for discussion. They considered that the various theses which had been discussed at the Conference should be reconciled in a reasonable manner, that the different attitudes taken up should be equitably adjusted and that a proper balance should be struck between sacrifices and advantages, in order that an equitable combination, acceptable to all, might be finally worked out with the co-operation of all the members of the Conference.

A disarmament Convention which failed to bring about an equitable combination of the three factors which were essential, in the present circumstances, to the Conference's success—the degree of disarmament, the degree of security, and the degree to which the principle of equality was to be applied—would not be in accord with the existing political possibilities, and would therefore be unworkable. The proposals made by the United Kingdom Government undoubtedly offered certain elements for achieving such a combination. It was for that reason that the States of the Petite Entente viewed them with favour and sympathy and were prepared to discuss them in the spirit of objectivity, equity and loyalty by which the present declaration was inspired.

It was in that sense that M. Titulesco favoured a detailed discussion of the United Kingdom proposals, and it was in the same sense that the three delegations would take part in it, with the firm intention of making their contribution to it, and in the hope that in that task they would meet with co-operation on the part of all the other delegations to the Disarmament Conference.

M. Motta (Switzerland) said that when the Conference had opened in the previous year he had held the office of President of the Swiss Confederation, and, as a mark of special friendship, the Conference had desired that the delegate holding that office should at the same time be Honorary President of the Conference. In that capacity, and also, needless to say, as leader of the Swiss delegation, he asked permission to submit a few brief observations.

When, on the previous Thursday, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had come and laid before the Commission the plan now termed the United Kingdom plan, and had accompanied it with a very moving speech, all the delegates had, he imagined, felt that, before Mr. MacDonald’s intervention, the Conference was drifting. Pessimism had taken possession of their minds. Divergencies, although concealed by the habitual courtesy of formulae, were becoming more and more manifest. The Conference had been discussing questions of procedure and it had been felt that, beneath these questions of procedure, there were certain major realities that moved and met in conflict. In the voting that had taken place the Conference had been divided into majorities and minorities, and there had been a feeling that, while these votes might indicate a tendency, they nevertheless remained inoperative and were powerless to bring about the necessary measure of agreement among the members of the Conference.

It was at that critical moment that the United Kingdom Government had brought forward its plan, the plan which the Commission was now discussing.

It would, he thought, be useless to consider to-day whether an adjournment, voted at the previous meeting, might perhaps have led to certain contacts, certain agreements which would be useful in the future. That question had been settled finally on the previous day, and it was no longer desirable, in M. Motta’s view, to revert to it. He would, however, like to say that the tabling of the United Kingdom plan had been, not merely a useful act, but also a salutary act, for which the Commission should show its gratitude and confidence.

M. Titulesco had just stated that the States of the Petite Entente accepted the plan as a basis of discussion. M. Motta felt the deepest satisfaction at that statement. But for M. Titulesco’s having already formulated this idea—he might almost say this suggestion—that the plan should be taken as the basis of the Commission’s future work, M. Motta would himself have made a proposal on those lines. There was, however, no need for him to do so, in view of M. Titulesco’s speech.

The United Kingdom plan presented certain advantages on which M. Motta would venture to lay stress without, however, going into questions of substance, but confining himself to questions of method, of procedure. In this case, however, questions of procedure were important—indeed, very important—because good results could only be secured by good methods.

Contrary to the opinion of those who had followed the Conference’s discussions from outside, M. Motta considered that considerable work had been accomplished in the technical commissions and in the political commissions as well. The United Kingdom draft itself would have been impossible but for this lengthy preparation, which had allowed various factors to germinate and reach a certain degree of maturity. The Conference’s chief effort, however, had been one of analysis. It had attacked the various problems separately. One of the advantages of the United Kingdom plan was that it sought, not for a piecemeal solution, but for a general solution.

The plan represented also a compromise—in M. Motta’s view a fair compromise—between a number of conflicting tendencies which it had never yet been possible to merge completely in one another. The plan was far from satisfying all desires. That was quite manifest, and the United Kingdom delegation was, no doubt, the first to realise that. Mr. MacDonald, in his speech, had stated it explicitly.

The plan sought to limit the Conference’s efforts to what appeared practicable in the present circumstances. Had it gone beyond what was possible, or had it remained within the realm of possibilities? Only the subsequent discussion could shed full light on these queries.

The plan was capable of numerous improvements, some of which, he thought, were essential. He would not mention them now because these necessary improvements could be studied to better purpose during the detailed discussion. The plan contained certain concrete proposals as to effective and material, in regard to which the possibility of negotiations and agreements were not excluded. To put it briefly, the plan might be described as a meeting-place where all those actuated by good intentions could confer, and, subject to the improvements and changes it would necessarily undergo, was, he thought, of such a nature as to prevent the Conference ending in failure. There was no delegate, there was no Government in the world, there was, in particular, no Government in Europe which could contemplate without a secret shudder the deplorable failure of so much effort and hope. Great and small alike, all the members of the Conference formed the links of a chain that united them to one another. They had lived through one of the greatest and most tragic eras in history. Dark clouds were again appearing upon the horizon. The time seemed to have come for decisions which would perhaps determine the path of destiny. The great Powers had responsibilities and, consequently, special rights and duties. It was for them to set the great example. The other countries asked that their rights should be respected, but, in the nature of things, they were the most loyal and determined defenders of the new international order. They would always associate themselves, in the plenitude of their sovereignty, with any proposals devised to strengthen the ideas of justice, right and peace throughout the world.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands) said that the present discussion represented the first result of the impetus given to the Conference by the head of the United Kingdom Government when he had presented a new general plan. It was not the first time in the history of the Conference that such an event had occurred. The Conference had received an impetus on other occasions. There had been other ceremonial meetings for the solemn reception by the Conference of a new general plan. Perhaps it might even be wise to adopt a special etiquette for this ceremony, and embody it in the rules of procedure. The result, however, of all this was that the
Conference's method of work was not as systematic as it had been intended to make it in February last year. The monumental programme of work of the General Rapporteur, M. Benes, appeared to have been completely forgotten. The Conference advanced by a series of fits and starts. The ship seemed sometimes to be left to the direction of the winds and waves, which were as unstable and variable in the political as in the meteorological sphere. The delegates might be excused for sharing the feelings of Columbus's crews in his quest for America. "Where is all that going to lead us? How shall we ever get there?" Luckily, like the crews he had mentioned, the Conference had an admiral, who, like Columbus, possessed an unshakable faith in a new world of countless riches awaiting the Conference at the end of its work.

The Netherlands delegation was of opinion that, if he might keep to his metaphor, the wind from London was the most favourable the Conference could hope for. The general plan submitted by the United Kingdom delegation marked an appreciable advance. It was devised in the form of a draft Convention, a form which gave the proposals put forward a concrete, real and tangible character. Proposals in this form did, of course, offer a better target for criticism, but it was an act of courage which deserved the Conference's appreciation. It should, however, be added that, to achieve a Convention, it was absolutely indispensable for the Conference to have a draft Convention before it. That was certainly the feeling of the General Commission, as it had shown by adopting on February 25th, 1932, a resolution deciding to pursue the work within the framework of the Preparatory Commission's draft Convention. The United Kingdom draft, which approximated to the former draft in many respects, was therefore, so far as its form was concerned, in accordance with what the Conference might desire.

But it was not the form only of the draft that the Netherlands delegation welcomed very sympathetically. On the contrary, it could say that it accepted the principles of the United Kingdom plan. In its main lines the plan was assured of the Netherlands delegation's acceptance. It was impossible that so precise a plan should, in all its details, arouse the enthusiasm of all delegates. The head of the United Kingdom Government had explained that he himself expected that the plan would satisfy nobody. The author of the plan would therefore certainly not be surprised when he read that the Netherlands delegation also would be glad to see certain modifications or additions inserted in the plan and reserved its right to support amendments or submit them itself. The changes which it desired, however, from the Netherlands' point of view, did not affect the main lines of the scheme, and should not, he thought, meet with objections. The Netherlands delegation was accordingly prepared to take part in the study of the United Kingdom plan in a spirit of co-operation, with a keen desire for its success and with a firm resolve to contribute, to the best of its powers, to a positive outcome for the Conference. The leader of the Netherlands delegation, M. Beelaerts van Blokland, had two days ago expressed the same sentiments during the discussion of his budget in the Netherlands First Chamber.

In this spirit M. Rutgers wished to offer the first delegate of the United Kingdom the Netherlands delegation's sincere gratitude for his initiative and for the very eloquent and moving speech in which he had reminded the Conference of its heavy responsibilities towards God and man. The Netherlands delegation hoped that Mr. MacDonald would continue his efforts for the success of the Conference. As all the members knew, that success did not depend exclusively, nor even primarily, on the efforts of the Conference itself, on the way in which the delegates performed their mission at Geneva. It depended first and foremost on the decisions of the Governments of Europe and of the other continents. Nevertheless, for the Conference to reach a conclusion it was certainly necessary that it should continue to sit. Account must be taken of the fact that its decisions, which depended on the decisions to be taken in the capitals of the entire world, would not perhaps be taken as rapidly as the delegates at the Conference might desire. Progress might perhaps be held up by the fact that one Government or another was still unable to make up its mind on some particular point. The greater the importance attached by delegates to their decisions, the easier it would be for them to realise that no Government could take a decision lightly. There were certain delegations and Governments who, before they could pronounce on certain questions, felt it necessary to consult the delegations of Governments of other countries with which they were united by their general views, by geographical situation, by similar interests or responsibilities. Upon the outcome of these deliberations their attitude at the present Conference might depend. No one would challenge the legitimacy or utility of such consultations. The agreement of December 11th, 1932, proved the immense importance of such consultations which might have for the Conference. It followed that the delegates must resign themselves to the delay which these deliberations might cause in their work. However, to prevent the danger of such delays being protracted indefinitely, a danger that might be illustrated from the history of the Preparatory Commission, it was absolutely essential that the Conference should continue to sit, and, by so doing, impose on all Governments the necessity of making up their minds with the utmost possible speed.

If the President would permit him, he would like to add a word on the way in which the Conference should continue its work. If it took as a basis for its subsequent discussion the United Kingdom delegation's draft, as the President had recommended and as the previous speakers also had recommended, it would not be departing too widely from the decision taken by the General Commission on February 25th, 1932, under which the Preparatory Commission's draft had been adopted as the basis of discussion. The United Kingdom draft, while making allowance for the proposals put forward by a large number of delegations, kept close to the Preparatory Commission's draft in many respects, more particularly as regarded its structure.
The Netherlands delegation hoped that, apart from exceptional cases, any proposals still to be submitted by the various delegations would follow the United Kingdom scheme on this point and that they would take the form of articles of a future Convention.

In conclusion, M. Rutgers desired to point out that, although the statements he had just made were sometimes ironical rather than tragic in form—and each delegate spoke in his own way—that did not mean that the Netherlands delegation failed to appreciate the extreme gravity of the present circumstances or was not deeply aware of the heavy responsibilities which those circumstances entailed. The Netherlands delegation asked for nothing better than, in agreement with all the other delegations, to discharge those responsibilities and to be able, in a future which it hoped was not too distant, to affix its signature at the foot of a Convention containing substantial and extensive measures for disarmament.

General Tanczos (Hungary) said that the Hungarian Government and public opinion in his country had welcomed the generous initiative taken by the United Kingdom Prime Minister, with the full measure of sympathy it deserved. The rulers of Hungary had repeatedly stated that their country was deeply attached to the cause of order, peace and international brotherhood. For those reasons, in Hungary perhaps to a greater degree than anywhere else, increasing anxiety was felt at the difficulties confronting the problem of disarmament and likewise at the alarming symptoms of a general tension, which was becoming more marked daily and was fraught with danger for the peace of the world. In the Hungarian delegation's opinion, and he was convinced that that was the opinion of the three other countries whose armaments had been determined by the Peace Treaties, Mr. MacDonald's proposals represented the mot juste for which the present critical time had called. The spirit of justice and understanding displayed in the eloquent words he had pronounced gave grounds for hoping that the draft Convention before the Commission would provide a new point of departure for the Conference's work. The Hungarian delegation appreciated the draft as a courageous step in the direction of a substantial reduction of armaments, affording reason to hope that, during the discussion of the details, a satisfactory solution of the disarmament problem would be found, one which would realise the practical application of the principle of equality of status in the matter of armaments and would be acceptable to all. Only such a solution would be in tune with the principles contained both in the League Covenant and in the five Powers' declaration of December 11th, 1932, and likewise in the magnanimous suggestions put forward by the United Kingdom Prime Minister in the speech he had delivered a few days ago.

In the foregoing observations General Tanczos had attempted to impress upon the Commission the spirit of goodwill, conciliation and international brotherhood in which the Hungarian delegation intended to take part in the discussion of the plan before the Commission.

Cemal Hüsnü Bey (Turkey) wished, in the first place, to thank Mr. MacDonald for having come in person to the Conference to inspire it with fresh activity by submitting a definite disarmament plan at a moment when the work appeared to be encountering difficulties which would describe as serious and others even considered to be insurmountable.

He could not give a general analysis of the Turkish view of the United Kingdom plan without going into considerations inspired by the various sections and chapters of that work, if he was to avoid duplication in dealing with general and detailed questions. He would merely make a brief statement of the Turkish view, while reserving the right to return to questions of detail when the plan came to be discussed article by article.

The Government of the Turkish Republic had studied the United Kingdom proposal somewhat hastily and had instructed him to present to the Commission the following observations which must be considered as being general in character.

The United Kingdom proposal was based partly on the American disarmament plan, partly on proposals made by the Italian and French delegations and partly on the discussions and suggestions which had been heard in the General Commission.

But, on the other hand, certain bases of calculation were entirely obscure to the Turkish delegation. For that reason, and until the Commission was in possession of explanations which the United Kingdom delegation would no doubt supply, Cemal Hüsnü Bey must describe them as empirical. At the same time, he noted that, on some points, the United Kingdom plan entirely disregarded some principles unanimously adopted by the Commission, and even ran counter to them.

Nevertheless, by submitting a more or less complete work, the United Kingdom delegation had made an effort inspired by noble ideas, for which he had nothing but praise. He could, therefore, only approve once more the decision taken by the Commission to begin the discussion of the plan immediately, without deciding on an adjournment which might have been a disintegrating factor for this assembly, on which the public placed such high expectations.

The conversations which had taken place between the great Powers, with whom Turkey entertained the most friendly relations, had only been announced to the Conference by the Press. Without underestimating the usefulness of contact between the main parties, Cemal Hüsnü Bey thought, and the Commission would no doubt agree with him, that, in a question of such importance for all, no valid decision could be taken without full agreement being reached between all the States Members of the Disarmament Conference.
He had no doubt that these chancery discussions were intended to remain within the framework of and to promote agreement in the Commission; there could be no question that a small number of Powers, whatever their importance, should be able to come to this Commission with ready-made decisions or even with suggestions which implied moral pressure.

Cemal Hüsnü Bey passed on to a rapid survey of the various chapters of the plan.

**Security.** — It should be noted that, in the articles dealing with the case of the non-application of a universal pact concluded between States possessing exactly the same rights, inequality had been established as regards the vote to be taken in the conference, which would be composed of all the contracting States. Nevertheless, the Turkish delegation was prepared to accept the procedure which the Conference thought advisable. Under any procedure, however, if the substance of the decision taken thereon such as to impose any action on Turkey, that decision could not be valid for his country unless, in accordance with the provisions of the Turkish Constitution, the Turkish delegates to the Conference had given their consent.

**Effectives.** — In the Hoover plan, one of the essential proposals accepted by the Commission was the division of effectives into two categories—reducible and irreducible. It had also been agreed that the irreducible component would vary according to the conditions applicable to each State, its population and the area of its territory, together with the length of its frontiers and coasts.

In Europe, in most armies with a similar formation the length of service was at present fixed at eighteen months; the limit of eight months would have to be reached in two stages and, for the first five years, a length of service of twelve months would have to be fixed, below which no State should be authorised to go (with the exception of Switzerland), in order to achieve the standardisation of armies and to make the reserve cadres proportional to the effectives assigned to each country.

It was obvious that there was no objection to the reduction of this period, provided, however, that such reduction could not cause an increase in the reserves and that this rule applied to all European States.

The General Commission, while taking into consideration the movements of the free overseas troops in Europe and the Mediterranean, in case of war between the contracting States, had considered the question of adopting restrictive provisions in regard to them. It was necessary to consider this problem, to reach a result and to embody it in the Disarmament Convention. On the other hand, it would be seen, in Article 15 of the proposal, that colonial troops were exempt from standardisation and were excluded from the provisions of the articles relating thereto. The General Commission had begun a discussion on this subject and had not yet reached a solution. For that reason Cemal Hüsnü Bey would, for the moment, refrain from expressing an opinion. But if it were considered that the standardisation of these troops could not be achieved, was it not necessary, since the object of disarmament was to prevent war and to restore that confidence which was closely related to economic crises, to endeavour to organise and arm the colonial troops in the same manner as the gendarmerie and to deprive them of their warlike armaments? This consideration was inspired by the legitimate anxiety that such troops, whose sole mission was to maintain order in the territories to which they were assigned, should not be considered as an element of suspicion in future.

Cemal Hüsnü Bey could not conclude his observations on effectives without stating that there was one point which the Turkish delegation had been unable to understand and of which it could not grasp the scope. Turkey, which, in view of its continental territory and its Mediterranean coast-line, was a European country in the same way as Soviet Russia and, as such, belonged to the European Commission, was not mentioned among the States to which the United Kingdom plan granted special effectives. She wondered if this peculiarity was due to the confidence which her loyal pacific policy had universally inspired, or if the reason was to be sought in the parallel which had been drawn between the Bosphorus and the English Channel.

**Material.** — In the sphere of material, the Turkish delegation had constantly shown its sympathy for qualitative limitation. It had always noted that this system was one of those which, apart from its practical advantage, ensured equality of treatment. In all that the Conference had to do, he wondered if there were any sounder foundations than those of common sense and equal treatment.

With regard to this section of the plan, his observations would relate to three questions, one of which was of essential importance. The fundamental point referred to an initiative formerly taken by the United Kingdom delegation to classify arms on a more or less definite plan; the Turkish delegation had approved this initiative on account of the practical use of such a classification.

It would, however, be observed that an essentially offensive weapon such as the tank was retained in the United Kingdom plan up to a weight of sixteen tons. The Turkish delegation thought this aggressive arm should be entirely abolished, since its maintenance was in direct contradiction to the principle admitted in the Commission itself. With regard to the other questions, the plan regarded a gun of 114.5 mm. as equivalent to a gun of 105 mm. only in the case of countries whose standard gun was of the former calibre. This formula should
be made general by extending it to countries wishing to adopt the same type of gun. Moreover, in the definition relating to guns of 155 mm. forming part of existing material, since any guns ordered or begun must naturally be included, it was essential to require evidence that the order had been given before the plan was submitted to the Disarmament Conference.

**Naval Armaments.** — In the presence of the Powers which had signed the Treaties of Washington and London, it was certainly not for Turkey to take an attitude on the question of naval armaments, particularly as Turkey was not included in the States whose existing naval armaments were subject to any reduction in the plan. But the Turkish delegation was obliged to take into account the existing correlation and interdependence between the armaments of all categories and to state that even the countries which did not possess navies were desirous that there should be a corresponding reduction between their land and air armaments and the naval armaments of the States which were heavily armed in this respect. This should, therefore, not be overlooked in the future.

**Air Armaments.** — The Turkish delegation was glad to note the abolition of bombing from the air. But it did not quite understand the meaning of the expression “ outlying regions”. As this could not refer to the territories of the contracting States, however far they might be from Europe, the exception must relate to repressive police measures to be carried out in territories placed under the authority of those States. But how could it be admitted that a weapon which had been prohibited between adversaries might be tolerated as a weapon of repression against countrymen, nationals or persons under the protection of the States?

In the part relating to air armaments, there was one point which had caused the Turkish delegation some surprise. It was the number of aeroplanes allotted to Turkey, which was much lower than half the number fixed for European States which might be compared with that country. Cemal Hüsnü Bey thought the reason might be found in the fact that, apart from requirements of training, Turkey abstained from all warlike manifestations. This was no doubt the result of a false calculation based on the moderation of his country’s policy in this sphere. He was convinced that the authors of the plan had not intended to deprive Turkey of an absolutely legitimate right, and the Turkish delegation would claim this right both from the members of the Conference and from the authors of the plan themselves.

**Supervision.** — While the Turkish delegation agreed as to the appointment of the Commission proposed in the plan, it could not agree that the Commission should have power to make enquiries and investigations unless an application were made by the State subject to the supervision. It had always stated in the Commission that the Governments would never fail to be informed of the actions of others and that the most effective sanctions to be given to the treaties and conventions consisted of faith in the establishment of an atmosphere of confidence and in the creation and maintenance of such an atmosphere. In short, that was a mere quibble. The Turkish delegation did not mean that nothing should be attempted or accomplished in this sphere. Cemal Hüsnü Bey might make the following suggestion for the information and consideration of the Commission: since conventions concluded and ratified by the States constituted laws to which the Governments must unreservedly submit, it might be possible to give the Supervisory Commission in question the power to apply direct to the legislative assemblies, in order to draw their attention to violations committed and thus to cause them to intervene with the executive bodies.

In conclusion, he would like to refer to an important aspect of the plan—namely, the principle contained in its final article. Equality, equality of treatment constituted an essential condition and the primary guarantee of harmony between the States. The Turkish delegation was convinced that it was unnecessary to speak in defence of this evidence before civilised humanity, which for centuries had struggled for the realisation of this ideal.

Cemal Hüsnü Bey noted another point which was as important as this principle, not only for Turkey, but for all other countries. While the military, air and naval clauses inserted in certain treaties were being replaced, for reasons which he would not criticise or analyse here, by the general provisions of the Disarmament Convention, it was to be observed that similar clauses found in the Treaty of Lausanne had not been mentioned. The Treaty of Lausanne contained military provisions relating to the Straits and certain parts of the European continental territory of Turkey, and those provisions must naturally undergo the same fate. In order to avoid any misunderstanding on the subject, he hastened to state that his remarks did not in any way refer to freedom of passage, to the significance of Turkish neutrality in the Straits and to the application of the Treaty of Lausanne regarding the opening of the Straits. On the contrary, these principles were in absolute agreement with the Turkish point of view. Consequently, the opening of the Straits, which involved Turkey in obligations assumed at Lausanne towards Europe and the entire world—and which therefore placed that country in a special position—was, in all cases where Turkey herself was not involved, a fundamental policy to which she was more strongly attached than ever. That which Cemal Hüsnü Bey requested should be suppressed was precisely intended to ensure that freedom of the Straits and Turkey’s obligation to keep them open. Articles 3 to 9 of the Straits Convention, annexed to the Treaty of Lausanne, constituted a hindrance to that liberty and to the exercise of the obligation assumed by Turkey; those articles had now fallen into disuse, not only in anticipation of an effective disarmament Convention, but because they had lost all real and practical
and he begged leave once more to suggest, as means of increasing international security, the further in this direction than was done in the United Kingdom plan. He had then suggested, for increased security which a considerable number of States felt, it was indispensable to go country had no special feeling in the matter. But, as he had ventured to say some weeks thin. That criticism was not based on any anxiety from the national point of view. His own These two gaps ought to be filled.

In his view was the only means of cutting short the competition in armaments. In the second to profit by the opening afforded. He confessed that he found two big gaps in the plan. In the first place, he regretted not to find any provision in the plan for the supervision of the manufacture and trade in arms, which was an indispensable element of any disarmament Convention. It was also, maybe, a delicate attention on the part of the United Kingdom delegation, that slowly-too slowly for many people—the Conference was arriving at a general conspectus of the great problems of disarmament. The French proposal some weeks ago had represented a first stage in this direction, because it had in view simultaneously the two main aspects of these problems—namely, the reduction of armaments and security, the one being a function of the other. The United Kingdom plan to-day represented a second stage and, he thought, a distinct step forward.

The French proposal, in accordance with the character with which it was intended to invest it, contained few details in regard to the proportions of the reductions contemplated, and this made it somewhat difficult to give an answer to the questions which it raised in the matter of security. The United Kingdom plan at any rate contained details: it even contained figures from which it was easy to perceive the attitude which inspired it.

In particular, the United Kingdom plan proposed a general reduction, at any rate in the case of land and air armaments. As regards the sea, it confined itself—and that was intelligible enough in the circumstances—to proposing a consolidation, still within the general scheme, on the basis of the Naval Convention of London, for the States signatories of that Convention, with the maintenance of the naval status quo for the other States. He hoped that this effort, at any rate, would be successful. In the matter of naval armaments, the United Kingdom plan therefore went considerably less far than the Hoover plan, which had been warmly welcomed by the Conference itself. But in other respects it came near to the Hoover plan, at any rate in respect of its general attitude in regard to land and air forces—that is to say, by its attitude in regard to reduction.

That attitude, M. Lange need hardly say, was the attitude of the Norwegian delegation. His delegation felt that reduction of armaments was not only indispensable for the peace of the world, but was also necessary for the solution of the economic crisis. He himself also felt that, technically and politically, reduction offered the easiest solution of the problem of equality of rights. It might afford a solution of the still unsolved problem of re-armament, which would inevitably arise if they were to proceed along the line of consolidation; and it would avoid all the dangers of the process of equalisation in an upward direction. The Norwegian delegation would definitely prefer equalisation in a downward direction.

In principle and taking the scheme as a whole, the Norwegian delegation therefore supported the United Kingdom plan, and would be prepared, as occasion arose, to support its being taken as a basis of discussion in the General Commission, as proposed by certain previous speakers. M. Lange reserved the right, when the plan was discussed chapter by chapter, to submit certain observations of detail—not (he was anxious to explain) in any negative sense: quite the contrary. For example, he thought he could say at once that the figure 50,000 represented very much more than the number of effectives which Norway wished to have inserted for herself in the table. The United Kingdom delegation would appear to have had in mind the maxim of Roman law de minimis non curat prae tor when, with an elegant stroke of the pen, it proposed the same figure for a whole group of small States.

It was also, maybe, a delicate attention on the part of the United Kingdom delegation that it had not seen fit to submit to the Conference a complete plan. Had it wished to reserve for others the pleasure of being able to make additional proposals? In any case, M. Lange proposed to profit by the opening afforded. He confessed that he found two big gaps in the plan. In the first place, he regretted to find no mention in it of the limitation of expenditure, which in his view was the only means of cutting short the competition in armaments. In the second place, he regretted not to find any provision in the plan for the supervision of the manufacture and trade in arms, which was an indispensable element of any disarmament Convention. These two gaps ought to be filled.

He also found the first chapter on security—if he might be excused the expression—rather thin. That criticism was not based on any anxiety from the national point of view. His own country had no special feeling in the matter. But, as he had ventured to say some weeks earlier when the French proposal was under discussion, he thought that, in view of the need for increased security which a considerable number of States felt, it was indispensable to go further in this direction than was done in the United Kingdom plan. He had then suggested, and he begged leave once more to suggest, as means of increasing international security, the
Convention on financial assistance, that on the means of preventing war, regulations defining aggression, the creation of an air police force, and lastly—a point of the first importance in his view—an undertaking on the part of the States to make preparation in time of peace for the inauguration of sanctions in order that everything might be ready for such time as the Governments might think fit to apply the sanctions. It had just been seen, in another connection, that there was here a grave lacuna in the organisation of peace and security.

Having said this, M. Lange admitted the value and importance of systematic consultation and decision—especially the latter—as adumbrated in Articles 2 to 5 of the United Kingdom plan; but, as he had said, the system required to be completed.

The Norwegian delegation had frequently had occasion, in the course of the discussions, to point out that it considered as a primary object of the first Disarmament Convention, which the Conference was to draw up, the elimination, as far as possible, from the armed system of all means which might assist a precipitate attack. To eliminate such means was one way of preventing war, since it would give the organs which were concerned with the maintenance of peace time to intervene and the opportunity to assert their authority. He therefore welcomed with great satisfaction the proposals in the United Kingdom plan for the prohibition of heavy field artillery and chemical war. He would have liked also to see a total prohibition of tanks and not merely limitation of their tonnage.

He had hoped that the United Kingdom delegation would have proposed the total abolition of military aviation. As the Commission was aware, the Norwegian delegation had raised this question, and the Air Committee was at that moment considering the possibility of the prohibition of military aviation. M. Lange confessed that he was not a little alarmed by the high figures given in the air force table, and he must also confess he was very sorry to see the high demanded in connection with the prohibition of bombing from the air.

Might he make one very frank observation on this matter? To some it might seem the naive reaction of a simpleton; but there were moments when it was a duty to forego diplomatic formulae and to speak without ambiguity. Article 34 of the plan, as the Turkish delegate had pointed out, reserved the right to resort to bombing from the air “for police purposes in certain outlying regions.” How, he would ask in the first place, were the “outlying regions” on the surface of a globe to be defined? It was a maxim of geometry that the surface of a globe had no centre and consequently it could have no “outlying” points. The history of recent years, and, indeed, the history of recent months, showed that there were no regions on the globe which were sheltered from the possibilities of conflict. But how ensure that bombing aeroplanes intended for police purposes would not be utilised for war? The temptation was there, and he felt himself that there was no passage in the Lord’s Prayer which was so full of profound wisdom as that which said: “Lead us not into temptation.” Poor humanity had but little strength to resist temptation. Moreover, aviation was the most mobile of all arms. Even an “outlying” region might be some days, or even some hours only, distant from the scene of a conflict in which one or other of the parties was concerned. A State possessing a corps of police airmen would have a nucleus of trained personnel which might be rapidly developed and used for purposes of precipitate attack, which might create “faits accomplis.”

M. Lange had already had occasion, during the discussion on the resolution of July 23rd, 1932, to say that, in order to do away with this danger of air war, it was necessary to go to the root of the matter. It was no use to stop at half-measures, or even at 95 per cent measures: the evil must be rooted out completely in all its ramifications and in all its forms. As to the evil and the dangers that involved, he would confine himself to recalling the truly moving speech delivered in November last by Mr. Stanley Baldwin, the second Head of the United Kingdom Government. On the strength of the arguments of that eminent British statesman, he appealed to the United Kingdom delegation and ventured very respectfully to ask it a question: “Was it not necessary to preserve some sense of proportion? If the advantage of an air police in dealing with an Indian tribe or the mountaineers of Mesopotamia was balanced against the risks to an affrighted world confronted with danger from the air, could they hesitate?” He, for his part, hoped and believed that the United Kingdom delegation would preserve that sense of proportion which had been in all times the distinctive political gift of the British race.

In conclusion, M. Lange cherished ardent hopes of the possibility of reaching an agreement at that Conference on the basis of the United Kingdom plan, supplemented and amended in the directions he had indicated, and completed by other political provisions on which he was not in a position to speak further. More than all, he hoped for agreement in this connection between the great Powers, and he could only emphasise the observation which President Motta had addressed to them the other day: “Do you agree and we will follow you.”

The essential thing was to contrive quickly—the quicker the better—to put on foot the draft of a Convention. When all was said and done, the idea of transferring the armament system from conditions of anarchy and national sovereignty to conditions of law and contractual agreements would in itself constitute a revolutionary achievement. Even a Convention for the purposes of consolidation—which amounted to a Convention calling merely a halt—would be better than nothing.

M. Lange did not ask for the impossible. Provided there was a Convention, he would resign himself to its imperfections. But it must not be forgotten that the generous declarations, pregnant with promises, by which the discussions of the Conference had been so frequently punctuated, had given rise to far-reaching hopes. “Verba manent quia scripta.”

The Conference could not believe—he hoped that no one would dare to do so—the hopes which had been created in the course of its debates.
M. Schou (Denmark) said that the Danish delegation was glad to associate itself with the other delegations which had already expressed their lively satisfaction at the action taken by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom with a view to speeding up the work of the Conference. It had no hesitation in stating that, in its opinion, the new United Kingdom proposal contained a series of stipulations which would, if they were accepted and signed, constitute very considerable progress in the direction of the solution of the problem before the Conference.

As the Honorary President of the Conference had said, the United Kingdom delegation had, when drafting its proposal, made every effort, not only of the splendid conceptions which were gaining more and more dominion over the minds of the members of the Conference, but also of the results of the technical work of the committees. Nor had it failed to incorporate in its programme some of the happiest suggestions made by other delegations. Such a wide selection was, no doubt, highly to be recommended, and, in according to the plan, the Danish delegation certainly did not wish to exclude the extremely valuable elements contained in other proposals submitted to the Conference.

It would be premature to deal at the present stage with the details of the plan under discussion. He would, therefore, merely mention certain points which, in his opinion, should receive the particular attention of the Conference at its future discussions. There was no doubt that the Conference should not overload its programme and attempt to achieve everything at once. He was in agreement with the English proverb: “If good is well, leave better alone”. He desired, however, to mention certain points in the proposals, with regard to which the Danish delegation wished to make some alterations which, moreover, would not affect the general structure of the plan. It seemed that the wording of the first chapter should be more definite. It would be well to introduce into it two ideas which had, on several occasions, commanded a large measure of approval both in the Conference and in the Assembly of the League of Nations. The first of those ideas was that of a formal obligation on the part of the States not to resort to force. The second consisted in a declaration to the effect that the Powers would refuse to recognize any fait accompli and any position achieved as the result of the violation of an international undertaking, and, in particular, of the undertaking not to resort to force.

With regard to the following chapters of the proposal, the Danish delegation merely wished to say that the figure of the effective for the small States did not constitute a real limitation for those States, as their population would, in any case, make it impossible for them even to approach the average of 50,000 men. That limitation did not, therefore, contain any indication with regard to the effective for those States.

The Danish delegation also noted with keen satisfaction that the proposal submitted to the Conference contained precise and detailed stipulations with regard to the Supervisory Commission to be set up, and with regard to its work. It attached the very greatest importance both to the constitution of that Commission and to its powers. Without effective and well-organised supervision, any Convention for the limitation and reduction of armaments would run the risk, not only of remaining a dead letter, but also of giving rise to suspicion and regrettable incidents. It must be confessed, however, that it was extremely doubtful whether rigorous supervision could be established without budgetary limitation and the regulation of the manufacture of arms.

M. Schou concluded those few preliminary remarks by expressing the hope that the United Kingdom proposal would help the Conference over the decisive phase of its work.
would no doubt desire to put forward. In particular, it would be essential to know the opinion of the United Kingdom delegate in view of the extremely important proposals made by Mr. MacDonald a few days ago.

The President said that, in reply to Count Raczynski's questions, he could only say that no steps had been taken to prevent the committees from continuing their work. The Chairmen had probably felt that a new situation had been created by the presentation of the United Kingdom draft Convention, and that it would be better to wait until after the general discussion on that Convention as a whole before proceeding further with the work in hand. If that were the view of the Chairmen of the Committees, he thought it was a very common-sense view. When the general discussion was concluded, it would be necessary to take into consideration, not only the procedure of the separate committees, but also the procedure of the General Commission. That was the only answer he could give at the moment.

The continuation of the discussion was adjourned to the next meeting.

FORTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held on Saturday, March 25th, 1933, at 10.30 a.m.

President: The Right Honourable A. Henderson.

93. Draft Convention submitted by the United Kingdom Delegation: General Discussion (continuation).

Mr. Riddell (Canada) said that the Canadian Government welcomed the United Kingdom draft Convention as placing before the Conference a comprehensive and connected basis upon which it could take definite decisions, thus enabling it to achieve rapidly a first step in a world plan of disarmament. Since the resumption of work following upon the Christmas recess, it had been evident to many of the delegates that the Conference should discuss simultaneously the debits and credits of the disarmament ledger, so that all its members might know what they would be called upon to give and what they might expect to receive. On two occasions during the past few weeks, the Canadian delegation had taken pains to show the necessity of proceeding along these lines. It had already urged those who were pressing for security to state what reduction they were prepared to make, provided they obtained the security they had in mind; and, similarly, it had urged those who desired a substantial reduction in armaments to state the price in terms of security that they were prepared to pay. The United Kingdom draft Convention embodied that idea in concrete form, placing in juxtaposition, as it did, the security that would be given and the reductions in armaments that would be required. It was possible, as had been explained by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in presenting the draft, and also by certain speakers on the previous day, that it might be desirable to make minor adjustments in order to secure a better balance between security and the reduction of armaments. Slight modifications might also be necessary to establish a more equitable basis for the contributions and sacrifices to be made by the individual States in each of those fields. That, however, should not be allowed to become the occasion for unnecessary delay.

The Conference was more than a Disarmament Conference. It had come to be the barometer of international relations, which the whole world was anxiously consulting day after day. If it were possible to achieve immediate and tangible agreement on the main lines of the United Kingdom proposals, much would be done to restore confidence in the prospect of peace, and the way would be prepared for the convocation of the World Monetary and Economic Conference.

Where the provisions of the United Kingdom draft Convention referred to Europe alone, the Canadian delegation could only express the hope that they would commend themselves to the Governments concerned; where the application of the provisions was universal, the Canadian delegation was authorised to state that, should the Convention come into effect, the Canadian Government was ready to do its part in translating them into practice at once.

M. Raphael (Greece) said that, without, for the moment, entering upon considerations other than those animated by its desire loyally to collaborate in the work of the Conference, the Greek Government cordially acceded, in principle, to the United Kingdom draft Convention. Its support was based on a preliminary study of the draft, as the departments at Athens had been unable more thoroughly to examine it, owing to the very limited time at their disposal. The Greek delegation therefore desired to reserve its right to submit, during the debates which would follow the general discussion, such amendments as its Government might desire to those clauses of the draft which more particularly concerned Greece. As an indication, M. Raphael would mention the stipulation limiting the maximum number of aeroplanes to which his country would be entitled under the draft Convention to seventy-five. In view of the "special conditions" peculiar to Greece—the length of the coast-line and the geographical situation in general—the minimum air armaments allocated to her under the United Kingdom plan were considered by the Greek Government as absolutely inadequate from the point of view of national security.

M. Pfĺügl (Austria) said that the Austrian delegation sympathetically welcomed the noteworthy effort to achieve the aims of the Conference which was constituted by the draft handed in by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. It noted that this draft contained important factors likely to facilitate the Conference's work, and it desired that general agreement should be reached on all its parts. In this connection, it reserved any observations it might have to make until the General Commission embarked on the discussion of the draft, article by article.

As regards the principles by which the Austrian delegation would be guided in studying the draft, they were the same as those it had always enunciated during the Conference, which had inspired all its interventions, and for the realisation of which it hoped. In the difficult times through which it had just passed, the Conference had indeed come nearer, step by step, to an agreement on a general and efficacious reduction of armaments and to the recognition of the equality of rights. On these factors the Austrian delegation based the hope, which it shared with the delegations of the countries in a situation similar to its own, that, in the fairly near future, the Conference would bring about such a substantial and general reduction, as well as the equality of the signatories to the Convention.

M. Schmidt (Estonia) pointed out that when, on March 16th, the head of the United Kingdom delegation had commented on the draft Convention he was about to submit to the Conference, he had done so in the hope that the ideas he was expressing would be such as to accelerate the work of the Conference and to facilitate its conclusion. The head of the United Kingdom delegation had added that the document submitted by him should be considered not so much a proposal by the United Kingdom Government as a service to the Conference and to disarmament, and had asked that it should be studied in a spirit of co-operation, it being understood, of course, that the President of the Conference would give all the delegations who desired it an opportunity of making alternative proposals at a suitable moment.

The Estonian delegation welcomed the important step taken by the United Kingdom delegation. It had immediately set to work to study the document submitted to the Conference, and, as soon as that document had reached the competent Estonian authorities, they had subjected it to a detailed technical examination. In view of the short time at their disposal, they had as yet been unable to take up a definitive attitude with regard to all the practical questions raised by the draft, and M. Schmidt could therefore not enter immediately into all the details of the document. He was in a position, however, immediately to define his Government's general attitude towards the United Kingdom draft, while reserving the right to submit more precise and detailed observations on special points at a subsequent date.

The United Kingdom draft Convention was, as the Commission was aware, divided into five parts.

The first part dealt with security. The importance of this problem was so clear that there was no need for him to stress it. Article 2 of the United Kingdom draft contained the formal declaration that "any war undertaken in breach of that Pact (the Pact of Paris) is a matter of interest to all the High Contracting Parties and shall be regarded as a breach of the obligations assumed towards each one of them". That was a very useful statement which deserved special emphasis. The draft Convention then provided for the immediate convocation, in the event of a breach, or threat of a breach, of the Pact of Paris, of an international conference, and laid down the manner in which that conference would be called upon to act. Articles 3, 4 and 5 dealt with that question.

Everyone would agree that this was a very complex problem and was so important that it must be studied most carefully. On this particular point M. Schmidt had as yet no definite instructions from his Government, but would immediately make certain preliminary observations.

While he was fully aware of the complexity of the problem, he wondered, in the first place, whether it would not be possible to word the articles in question more clearly, and even to supplement them at certain points. Several concrete examples, to which M. Schmidt desired to call attention, had already been mentioned in this connection during the discussion on the previous day.
Secondly, it was important that there should be no misunderstanding owing to the fact that two different procedures might subsequently be applied in the event of a dispute—namely, the procedure of the League Covenant, which was always open to the Members of the League of Nations, and the procedure to be laid down in the proposed Convention. It was true that Article 90 of the United Kingdom draft Convention expressly stipulated that “The present Convention is not to be interpreted as restricting the provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations in particular, those which fix the powers of the Council and the Assembly”. That article was clear and definite, and the starting-point, therefore, could be considered as clear. He ventured to hope that all misunderstanding would also be avoided in practice.

The Estonian delegation would not for the moment submit any concrete suggestions as to the first part of the Convention; but if, after the general discussion, the United Kingdom delegation itself, or any other delegation, took steps to supplement the present draft by provisions which, while taking existing realities into account, had some chance of being accepted by the Conference, it would certainly consider them in the most friendly spirit.

The second part of the United Kingdom draft dealt with disarmament. Its great importance was due to the fact that it contained exact figures. The Conference had before it definite proposals as to the total number of effectives of the different countries. In the United Kingdom proposals would be found figures for material, aviation and naval forces. In submitting these definite figures, the United Kingdom delegation had furnished the Conference with a concrete and useful basis, for which it must be grateful. M. Schmidt would have occasion to refer to these figures in more detail when the competent Estonian authorities had completed their technical examination.

As to chemical, incendiary and bacterial warfare, the Estonian Government was definitely in favour of prohibiting the use of these terrible weapons. It realised that there were technical difficulties in this sphere, but it would welcome with satisfaction any proposal that would invest this prohibition with the utmost possible practical efficacy.

In connection with Part V, the Estonian delegation attached special importance to the setting up of a Permanent Disarmament Commission, and, in particular, to the establishment of a system of international supervision. This was one of the elements of the plan which could only increase the practical value of the Convention, and the Estonian delegation hoped this supervision would be as efficacious as possible and would be universally accepted.

M. Schmidt would not for the moment dwell on the other provisions contained in the last part of the draft Convention, which seemed, as a whole, acceptable to the Estonian delegation.

The United Kingdom draft was a first stage, even in the opinion of the United Kingdom delegation. Article 95 of the draft expressly provided for the conclusion of a new Convention to replace the first. As a first stage towards disarmament, the present draft—as, moreover, the United Kingdom delegation had itself foreseen—would probably not be entirely satisfactory to any delegation, but a consideration of the existing realities would show that the United Kingdom draft, if supplemented, as far as possible, on certain points and universally accepted, would constitute an appreciable advance. The very existence of an international convention on national armaments would in itself represent an advance on the present situation, and on this point M. Schmidt shared the opinions expressed by the Norwegian delegate.

The Estonian delegation therefore contemplated the United Kingdom draft with sincere sympathy. It declared its readiness to take part in the detailed discussion that might follow, frankly, loyally and with a sincere desire to achieve results.

M. HOLSTI (Finland) said he would like to thank and congratulate the United Kingdom for its draft Convention. His Government had studied that draft with very great interest and had appreciated the utility of most of the suggestions contained therein. There were, however, a few points in regard to the stipulations on security on which it would like to see amendments made. It would also like to see included some provisions concerning budgetary limitation. With regard to the number of aeroplanes, M. Holsti adopted the same point of view as his Greek colleague. His Government would like the number of aeroplanes allotted to Finland to be considerably increased.

M. DI SORAGNA (Italy) recalled that, after Mr. MacDonald’s speech in the General Commission on Thursday, March 16th, the Italian delegation had been one of the first to assume the distinguished speaker of its desire to study the United Kingdom plan in a spirit not only of goodwill but, what was still more, in a spirit of confidence. At the time, the Italian delegation had not been familiar, so to speak, with the whole plan and its details. It had had rather an indication of what was covered than actual data. Further, the fact that, in the past, so many plans had already been presented tended to diminish, if not the Italian delegation’s gratitude to the author, at any rate its hope that the new plan would embody that perhaps indefinable combination of qualities which was neither completely logical nor perfect, but contained in itself a much more valuable gift: the possibility of living and of generating something active and vital.
Since then, the Italian delegation’s careful, though still somewhat brief, study of the United Kingdom plan had at least sufficed to show it that the spirit of reality and life with which the fine speech of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom was inspired was strikingly reflected in the plan as a whole, and that the structure and bearing of that document really answered to something new and living. For by taking up, simplifying and rearranging many of the valuable elements that had come to light during the Conference, he had infused them with a spirit of reality and had conferred on them a capacity for realisation with which they had hitherto not been fully invested.

It had seemed to the Italian delegation, in fact, that the chief merit of the United Kingdom plan was that it took up, collected and presented with obvious success a series of results in which, setting aside the details, could plainly be recognised the points and conclusions that had seemed to be acquiring the increasingly general approval of the delegates to the Conference during the complicated and wordy discussions. It seemed to M. di Soragna, if he might so put it, that the United Kingdom plan constituted a “shock” arm, simply but cleverly fashioned to pierce, at the point of least resistance, the barrier that was still raised between the Conference’s sincere desire to achieve positive results and the practical and speedy realisation of that desire.

M. di Soragna believed that, in so saying, he was fairly accurately interpreting the sense attached by the head of the United Kingdom delegation to this remarkable result of his experience and his knowledge of the position that the Conference had reached a week previously.

In that belief, the Italian delegation had refrained from making a fractional and critical investigation, which would have appeared to it both false and sterile, but had, as it were, taken the same line as the plan, as interpreter and collaborator rather than as spectator, examiner and judge.

The application of this method had led the Italian delegation to observe that, roughly speaking, each section of the United Kingdom plan constituted, for the matter with which it dealt, an acceptable, solid and practicable basis upon which the different sections of the future Disarmament Convention could be constructed, if that were really the Conference’s desire.

Many of the speakers had raised a number of objections and criticisms. The United Kingdom plan had been criticised for what it did not contain, and prudent reservations had been made on some of its contents.

The Italian delegation would not add its voice to the voices of those speakers, for it realised that the basis of unity for a large number must be much smaller than the basis one could choose, to suit oneself, as a foundation for all one’s aspirations, needs, theories and possibly dreams. The Italian delegation felt that it was necessary to accept what could be done, what everyone could do immediately, and believe in progress in the future, for if faith were limited to what could be achieved in the present, M. di Soragna did not know whether it would be worth while building at all.

As to reservations, the delegations had always been very rich in that commodity at the present Conference, and Mr. MacDonald, as he had clearly shown, would not be surprised at that. On the contrary, M. di Soragna believed the United Kingdom delegation fearlessly awaited the collaboration of the delegations, with regard to certain details and figures, with a view to bringing much closer together the needs of each and the realities which were the same for all. The Italian delegation firmly intended to collaborate as little as possible, and if it rested in its power not at all, on that side of the common task on which, generally speaking, all could do immediately, and believe in progress in the future, for if faith were limited to what could be achieved in the present, M. di Soragna did not know whether it would be worth while building at all.

As to reservations, the delegations had always been very rich in that commodity at the present Conference, and Mr. MacDonald, as he had clearly shown, would not be surprised at that. On the contrary, M. di Soragna believed the United Kingdom delegation fearlessly awaited the collaboration of the delegations, with regard to certain details and figures, with a view to bringing much closer together the needs of each and the realities which were the same for all. The Italian delegation firmly intended to collaborate as little as possible, and if it rested in its power not at all, on that side of the common task on which, generally speaking, the workers were never unemployed. To speak more plainly, if it sometimes so collaborated it would always do so in the direction indicated in the plan: in the sincere and disinterested search for a common practical ground acceptable to all.

It was the Italian Government’s sincere desire—and M. di Soragna was glad to be able to say so openly—to accept the United Kingdom plan as a whole. He added that any requests for the modification of details which the Italian delegation might submit would depend almost entirely upon the modifications for which others might ask, and which might necessitate a revision of their respective positions.

The Italian delegation felt more strongly than ever one truth which Mr. MacDonald had expressed in unforgettable terms in presenting the plan: disarmament was not an end in itself, but a contribution to peace. The aim of disarmament was not still to be prepared for war, but to inaugurate an era of appeasement in which the evil days of the past could be forgotten. The Italian delegation preferred certain risks that might be involved in conscious action to the certainty that would appear to be perfect, but that could only exist in abstract ideas, thereby leaving the nations to dread much greater and more probable risks.

Above all, it felt that the Conference must desire, and must find a way, to finish, and to finish successfully. But the Italian delegation would certainly not regard the continuation of the Conference as a success, if it were to produce nothing or to engage in purely critical discussions, even though the whole machinery appeared to be working. Such phenomena would disclose not the life but the degeneration of the organisms, and would hide under a dull routine the real dangers. The Italian delegation called success what alone could be called success—namely, constructive work, followed by a convention for the reduction of armaments, to which, through the goodwill of the delegations or Governments, the States could freely consent, making a negative or positive sacrifice of all, in their ideological or practical equipment, that could not be assimilated by the community. That was the most valuable guarantee for the maintenance of peace that could be given to tired nations which sought to be assured of this supreme good.
The United Kingdom plan seemed capable of providing that guarantee both satisfactorily and effectively, for it was in the direction of security in disarmament and the parity of rights. M. di Soragna hoped all who had the power and the responsibility would really desire to provide that guarantee and would make it possible for others to show the same goodwill.

M. MIKOFF (Bulgaria) said that the Bulgarian delegation’s support was assured in advance for any step that might lead the work of the Disarmament Conference to a successful conclusion.

The plan submitted by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom to the General Commission, following upon his moving speech on the previous Thursday, was undoubtedly a positive contribution of capital importance to the Conference’s success by way of the real and substantial disarmament for which it provided and the application of the principle of equality of rights to which it opened the way. Those were two conditions which many delegations, among them those of the disarmed countries, had always regarded and still regarded as essential to the Conference’s success.

The Bulgarian delegation paid a tribute to the spirit in which the United Kingdom plan had been drawn up and desired warmly to thank Mr. MacDonald for a step which, in the critical circumstances that had led up to it, assumed the proportion and character of a supreme effort to save the Conference in distress. The gloomy picture painted by Mr. MacDonald of what would happen if the Conference failed was in the minds of all the delegations. Failure would let loose passions and blind forces which, under the pretext of saving the nations, would destroy them, and with them, the whole of civilisation. Humanity must and could be spared the evil whose tragic spectre had thus been evoked.

Speaking on behalf of a country deeply and absolutely devoted to peace, M. Mikoff was firmly convinced that the General Commission would not lose the opportunity, possibly the last opportunity, offered by the United Kingdom plan of leading the Conference towards practical results, and he hoped that, with renewed energy and active faith, it would succeed in erecting that structure based on justice and equity for which the MacDonald plan laid a solid foundation.

M. RUIZ GUINAZU (Argentina) said that the Argentine delegation was glad to accede to the plan submitted by the United Kingdom. It regarded that plan as a valuable means, conceived in a very wide spirit, for strengthening peace. It was in that spirit, at least, that the Argentine delegation felt called upon to support it.

That delegation considered, in consequence, that the plan was a noteworthy effort to organise a lasting peace by means of progressive disarmament. Further, the plan would make international relations more stable and would to some extent facilitate the solution of the financial difficulties of the countries that were weighed down by national defence expenditure.

The first part of the plan, which concerned “security”, would not appear to apply to the States of Latin America. For its part, the Argentine Government, desirous of contributing to the general acceptance of the Pact of Paris and of its efficacious application, although it was not a signatory thereof, had concluded a similar agreement, animated by the same principles, with certain South-American Republics, account being taken both of conditions and arrangements involved in their geographical and economic situation and of the guarantees necessary to their political institutions.

The Argentine delegation accepted as a basis for discussion the general lines of the second part of the United Kingdom draft, which related to effectives and material. As far as air armaments were concerned, starting from the exception embodied in Article 34 of the draft, the Argentine delegation agreed to the abolition of bombing from the air, while acceding to the reservation for which provision was made therein. That reservation was justified by the necessity for defending a very long coast with no military bases. In this sense, the Argentine delegation adopted the reservation and conditions mentioned by Lord Londonderry in his speech in the Air Committee and by the representatives of the United States of America and India, who had described the profound differences in the position of aviation in the extra-European continents.

In conclusion, in accordance with the statements made on several occasions, the Argentine delegation accepted, generally speaking, Parts III, IV and V of the draft Convention.

M. FELDMANS (Latvia) said that, as the new Latvian Cabinet had only been formed two days previously, the Latvian Government had not yet had time to study in all its details the draft Convention submitted by the head of the United Kingdom Government.

He was nevertheless authorised to express his Government’s deep gratitude to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for having thus, at a critical moment of the Conference, presented a definite detailed text embodying most of the ideas which had slowly emerged from its long and laborious discussions.

The Latvian delegation approved this draft as a whole and regarded it as the best basis for discussion at the present stage of the Conference’s work. Indeed, experience had abundantly proved that, in order to reach concrete and decisive results, it was no use endeavouring to solve separately various questions the solution of which depended on a series of other problems, the fate of which depended in turn on the fate of the aforesaid questions. This interdependence of problems separately insoluble, this vicious circle with which the Conference had been faced since it resumed its work, had been the main cause of the disparity which had been gradually invading the minds of even those who were most enthusiastic for the cause of disarmament.

The United Kingdom draft had liberated the Conference from this labour of Sisyphus and had enabled it to envisage the whole problem at a glance, and to realise the true possibilities
of the moment. In complying with the invitation of the chief United Kingdom delegate, the
delégations would be able, in so far as they deemed it necessary, to help in improving the text.

The Latvian delegation, for instance, reserved the right, during the discussion of the draft,
article by article, to submit amendments and, if necessary, to support any amendments
submitted by other déléguations which appeared to it to be in keeping with Latvia's interests.

M. Westman (Sweden) desired, like the previous speakers, to express his délégation's
gratitude to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for having placed on the table of the
Conference, not only a plan of disarmament—a large number of such plans had already
been put forward—but something far better, the definite text of a Convention.

The Swedish délégation considered that the text was neither complete nor satisfactory
every respect. Its authors had disregarded a considerable number of proposals submitted
or supported by the various délégations. In many cases, the methods followed tended to
circumvent difficulties rather than to solve them. In places, the draft simply referred too
thorny questions to the Permanent Disarmament Commission, which thus, even before its
creation, was used as a safety-valve to relieve existing political pressure.

It was comprehensible that a text prepared on such bases and under such conditions
should—as the author himself had foreseen—be open to criticism, and indeed authoritative
voices had, in the present discussion, expressed doubts and scruples.

In point of fact, what was the United Kingdom draft? M. Westman did not in any way
underestimate the originality of the plan, which certainly bore the marks of its authorship. One
of its most characteristic and daring features was that it contained figures: an effort had been
made to fill in “the framework of the future Convention”, a phrase so often employed in the
now far-off days of the Preparatory Commission.

He wished to draw the attention of those who might be inclined to criticise the
draft too severely to the fact that the latter was—if he were not mistaken—above all, an
attempt to synthesise the results already obtained by the Conference, and to sum up its often
indefinite decisions and halting discussions. It was possible that the United Kingdom délégation
had been mistaken and had underestimated the degree of agreement achieved or achievable.
He sincerely hoped that this was so. In any case, it would not be right to assert that, after
the fourteen months which had elapsed, the labourer had begun too soon to make preparations
to gather the fruit of his toil.

Subject to these few remarks, he wished to indicate briefly his Government's attitude
towards the United Kingdom draft.

The Swedish délégation was prepared, subject of course to the necessary examination of
the details of the text, to accede to a Disarmament Convention established on the basis of that
draft. It was prepared to do so primarily because the United Kingdom draft fulfilled, to a large
extent, the first condition for a Disarmament Convention—namely, the comparative forces
of defence must be increased by the reduction of the aggressive forces; in other words, there
must be a perequation of armed forces.

That having been said, M. Westman felt bound to state that the Swedish délégation was
not resigned to the present situation and still hoped that it would be possible to reach the
necessary agreement with a view to improving the United Kingdom text. It would regret in
particular if it were found impossible to incorporate therein the whole of the decisions reached
by the Conference on July 23rd, 1932.

In any case, the Swedish délégation would insist on two desiderata to which it attached
great importance and which were both concerned with those provisions of the draft which
were intended for immediate application. The first was the adoption of budgetary limitation;
and the second was the limitation of artillery on a quantitative as well as a qualitative basis.

He would add, in addition, that if it were not possible to reach agreement on immediate
steps to be taken in connection with the trade in and manufacture of arms, it was important that
this should at least be one of the first problems to be dealt with by the Permanent Disarmament
Commission.

He also drew attention to certain transitional clauses concerning air forces (Articles 40
and 41 of the draft) which seemed likely to deprive for a considerable time the suggested
limitations for aircraft of a great part of their real value.

With regard to naval armaments, M. Westman would merely say that he thought it
desirable to cease dealing with naval questions separately under special agreements. These
questions should be included within the framework of the general Disarmament Convention.

He would not touch on the great number of problems already dealt with by other speakers.
His Government's attitude with regard to these problems was sufficiently known.

Finally, he wished to say that a convention prepared on the basis of the United Kingdom
draft might certainly mark an important step in the direction of disarmament. He therefore
expressed the hope that this draft would meet with a better fate than that of all the other plans
which had been received by the Conference with much sympathy, but which had subsequently
been scattered and lost in the vast jungle of committees.

He also urged that, in a noble effort to perfect the United Kingdom draft, those means
which it seemed to contain for reaching an immediate, positive and viable result should not
be frittered away.

The conclusion of the discussion was adjourned to the next meeting.
FORTY-NINTH MEETING

Held on Monday, March 27th, 1933, at 10.30 a.m.

President: The Right Honourable A. HENDERSON.

94. Draft Convention submitted by the United Kingdom Delegation 1: General Discussion (continuation).

M. de Madariaga (Spain) said that the Spanish delegation desired to associate itself with all those who had come to the platform to pay a tribute to the United Kingdom delegation and, in particular, to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for the great service they had rendered to the cause of disarmament and, in particular, to the Conference, by submitting the plan now under discussion.

The number of disarmament plans which had already been discussed by the Conference had provided fodder for untimely wits. The cynicism or desire that the Conference should not succeed which inspired these critics must have blinded them to the fact that the number of plans of disarmament which had been submitted and discussed since February 1932 were but evidence of the difficulty of the Conference's task and of its sincere, persevering and determined efforts to cope with that task.

If there had been one plan, however, regarding which untimely wits would have been wise to have held their peace, it was certainly the United Kingdom plan, because that plan was the first, as had already been observed by previous speakers, to contain, not merely specific articles—which was not a new fact, because similar articles already existed in the draft Convention which had been the basis of the Conference's initial work—but, above all, figures. On this point he entirely agreed with those who thought that the United Kingdom Government had rendered an eminent service to the Conference, because it was this last step, the passage from general ideas to the definition of their application in practice, which called for courage and single-mindedness.

Having said that, however, M. de Madariaga desired to define the manner in which, in his opinion, the United Kingdom plan had really rendered great service to the Conference. There might, he thought, be some danger of the idea growing up and developing that the Disarmament Conference, before the submission of the United Kingdom plan, was dangerously near to failure. On the contrary, he had been almost astonished at the progress which the Conference had made. It was only when people were far from Geneva and looked at the problems from the amused and sceptical standpoint of an intelligentsia that desired the Conference to fail, or of more or less moralist or amoralist observers who would be disappointed if mankind failed to bear out their pessimistic conjectures, that it was possible not to appreciate the progress which the Conference had made.

The Conference had not met to establish a text which, after signature, might be ratified more or less—probably less than more—and which was never likely to come into force. The first and essential duty of the Conference was to instil a new truth into the minds of men, a new conviction, strongly resisted by all whose thoughts were deeply impregnated with the concept of national sovereignty—namely, that the most precious and intimate concern of all nationalisms—national defence, national security—could ever be entrusted to an international authority, a suggestion which, in the eyes of most citizens, was tantamount to handing over the most precious national interests to a community of foreigners. When it was a question of implanting this really revolutionary idea in the minds, not of those who came to Geneva, but of people who remained at home, could it really be argued that twelve, that fourteen months was a long period?

M. de Madariaga did not propose to enter into a discussion of all the Conference's achievements. He would merely give two very striking examples. The first was that, when the Conference began in February 1932, one of a very small group of delegations—the Spanish delegation, in fact—had dared to submit a few concrete proposals for possible adoption by the Conference, in particular, a proposal for the total and absolute abolition of military and naval aviation combined with the internationalisation of civil aviation in so far as that might be necessary. What was the reception accorded to this proposal? It was almost entirely ignored. It was regarded almost everywhere as a Utopian idea which only a young and inexperienced Republic could possibly have dared to submit to the highest international instance. What was the situation twelve months later? A great Power which possessed one of the largest and most efficient air forces in the world, the United Kingdom, proposed that the possibility of abolishing military and naval aviation should be studied: it even submitted specific proposals on the subject. Another great Power, which possessed the strongest and most efficient military and

accomplished in time, and, on the other, the conviction that, for psychological reasons, there
was this. The Conference had started, with very considerable chances of success, along a
long and difficult path. At the same time, it was being goaded on to hasty action by difficulties
that the Disarmament Conference had itself brought about before the United Kingdom plan came into being? Could the plan be explained apart from the progress realised by the very Conference which the plan had been intended to save?

It was, therefore, quite clear—or so at least it seemed to the Spanish Government and people—that the Disarmament Conference, far from approaching failure, was approaching success. The way was rough, long and uphill. The goal was still fairly distant, but there could be no doubt that the path the Conference was following was leading to success and not to failure.

On the other hand, was the United Kingdom plan useless? Certainly not, because there really had been serious and well-grounded reasons for doubt and a certain measure of anxiety regarding the possible evolution of the Conference. Although, objectively speaking, as he had endeavoured to prove, the Conference had made great progress, there had been subjective—purely subjective—factors which had been rendering its success problematical. There had been impatience as to the way in which it was developing—quite legitimate impatience on the part of those who felt it. There had been a whole series of problems outside the Conference which had so clouded it as to increase the difficulty of its task, and there had all the time been a complex interplay of national policies regarding which he proposed to say more later, and which was making the work of the Conference particularly delicate at the time when the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and his distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs had felt it necessary to come to Geneva in order to clarify the atmosphere. The great service which the plan had rendered to the Conference was of a psychological character.

It was true that, just at the moment when the Conference was about to reap the benefit of this psychological improvement, another international phenomenon, another fact of first importance had occurred to complicate the effects of this improvement. M. de Madariaga referred to the pact which, suggested at Rome, had been further discussed in Paris and was now being debated within the chancelleries of the four great Powers. He could not praise this pact until he knew what it was. According to Press information, its object was alleged to be to create an instrument which would make European territorial adjustment possible. If that were indeed its intention, M. de Madariaga would merely offer three comments. The first was that all were convinced that an effort of this kind should and could only be made in an atmosphere of absolutely guaranteed peace. The second was that, if and when the atmosphere of peace were guaranteed, it would be highly desirable that everyone should know that this effort would be made. Here, then, were two self-balancing factors: the first was to ensure the peace which would permit of this action, and the second was to state that this action would be taken when an atmosphere of peace had been assured. He thought that, by the wise and prudent use which the countries who had assumed this burden were certainly capable of making of these two factors, the thorny question would doubtless be solved.

There was yet another point which merited consideration. In the matter of policy, it was wise to rely on experience. If the question was that of correcting the defects which had been observed in a treaty—which Spain with very few other countries in Europe could regard in a purely philosophical spirit—it would be wise perhaps to refrain, when seeking a remedy, from following those very methods which had caused the alleged evil. Unless he were mistaken, the treaties it was proposed to amend were precisely those which had been elaborated by a small committee of four Powers, surrounded by a large committee or conference of Powers who were not required to collaborate fully in the work of the small committee. That was an observation which, from an entirely disinterested point of view—disinterested within the limits which he proposed to define presently under the heading of security—the Spanish Government desired to draw attention to, for the reason that he proposed to address later. It was, he thought, quite true that the Conference ideas which the Spanish delegation was bound to approve since it had been one of the first to advance them, but the boldness of which it was bound to recognise, as well as the most delicate sacrificed habits of thought represented thereby on the part of the political and technical departments which had dared to submit those ideas, it must be recognised that the Conference, by its collective action and moral impetus, to which he would refer later, had induced responsible international opinion to take a huge step forward, without which the discussions of texts would have been quite useless hair-splitting.

M. de Madariaga would give another example. As he had just said, the United Kingdom plan now under discussion had rendered great service to the Conference by stimulating its activities. But was not the converse equally true? Would the plan have been possible without the tremendous progress of thought which the Disarmament Conference had itself brought about about before the United Kingdom plan came into being? Could the plan be explained apart from the progress realised by the very Conference which the plan had been intended to save?

After this digression, M. de Madariaga would revert to the United Kingdom Government's plan in order to point out how very ingenious that plan was. The problem was this. The Conference had started, with very considerable chances of success, along a long and difficult path. At the same time, it was being goaded on to hasty action by difficulties of a psychological nature. There existed, therefore, a certain contradiction: there was the conviction on the one hand that the Conference's task was a long one which could only be accomplished in time, and, on the other, the conviction that, for psychological reasons, there
was urgent, though not desperate, need to progress quickly. To that the United Kingdom plan replied: "Let us prepare a Convention with fair speed. Here is the draft text. Let us then leave in our place a duly constituted body, the Permanent Disarmament Commission, which will undertake within a short space of time (the plan says five years) to develop these ideas which call for time and reflection."

There might perhaps have been another possibility, which would have been to reduce the first and urgent task to a mere immediate political truce to be supervised by the Council. During this truce, the Disarmament Conference would be granted a further time-limit—twelve months, for instance—to elaborate a Convention of possibly more perfect workmanship. Although the Spanish Government and he personally would have preferred such a solution, he recognised that the solution proposed by His Majesty’s Government in the United Kingdom possessed several encouraging elements of success—perhaps the best possible elements of success. The Spanish Government was therefore prepared to co-operate fully and loyally. It regarded the United Kingdom text as an excellent basic text for the continuation of the Conference’s work. If, subsequently, he ventured to submit a few observations regarding this plan, they would not be observations which, if they were not taken into consideration, would prevent the co-operation of the Spanish delegation. On the contrary, they were suggestions which that delegation submitted very respectfully to the Conference and to the United Kingdom Government, in case it might be thought desirable to incorporate them in the plan.

The first chapter concerned security, and, in particular, what was called the outer circle of security. The Spanish delegation agreed with this chapter as a whole, although it would wish to examine closely certain details. It noted, however, that, in substance, the problem of security was a problem of the organisation of peace, and it desired to state its opinion (for it believed the moment had come to do so) that the organisation of peace could only be achieved by the most full, frank, unreserved and universal strengthening of the League. The Spanish delegation believed that it was dangerous to employ too readily the term "within the framework of the League", a term which should be banned as dangerous, because it might afford too much latitude, and that the expression to be used was a much more peremptory one, namely, "in the spirit of the League". Everything was possible "in the spirit" of the League; but the Spanish delegation reserved the right to look very closely at whatever was done "within the framework" of the League.

There could be no peace, therefore, without the League of Nations. It should be thoroughly understood, however, that there could be no League of Nations without two essential conditions—equality of the States Members and publicity for all that was done there. "League of Nations" meant "the opinion of the world directed towards international co-operation", which was an impossibility without equality and publicity. He would go even further. There could be no League of Nations if there existed or developed—within its framework—groups of political interests.

He admitted that these groups were an historic necessity, as it had not yet been possible to depolarise, to dis-electrify the domestic atmosphere of the League. But it should be understood that they were a necessary evil. Grouping of principles? Yes. Nations which, united by the same principles, endeavoured to consult one another in order to diagnose the tendencies of the moment and to assert those principles? Yes. That was not an attitude which would conjure up rival coalitions. The grouping of interests did, however, seem, in the view of the Spanish delegation, to be dangerous. Perhaps, at the present time, it was necessary and even indispensable; but the Spanish delegation wished to assert that, admitting the evil was necessary and even unavoidable, it also believed that the grouping of interests must be eliminated if the League were ever to develop along natural and healthy lines.

Again, there could be no League of Nations if its machinery were used for a policy of balance of power, bargainings, zones of influence and prestige, which would be a reversion to the pre-1914 policy which led precisely to the events of 1914. There must be no policy of bargainings. There must be no policy of what was formerly called in English "the balance of power", because that always led to the "unbalancing of power", with the inevitable, known consequences of strife and bloodshed.

There could be no League of Nations if the principle were disregarded that everything interested everybody, that there were no problems which interested some only, and that nations particularly interested should always take part in the discussions but should always be under the eye of particularly disinterested nations, for disinterestedness was yet another form of interest, the higher moral interest of peace which deserved as much respect as national interests, if not more.

These were some of the declarations which the Spanish Government had felt it necessary to make at the present time, subject to what M. de Madariaga might add when he had completed a detailed study of the United Kingdom plan. He wished further to point out—it being understood that the chapters to which he did not refer were chapters concerning which the Spanish delegation had no special observations to offer—that he had determined reservations to make regarding the chapter on naval armaments.

M. de Madariaga had already explained, a few days previously, that the present difference between the naval strength of the great Power least heavily armed at sea and the naval strength of the most heavily armed of the small Powers was so great that the Spanish delegation thought
it indispensable, before any general effort were made in the direction of a reduction of naval armaments, that a far greater effort should be made by the behemoths before there could be any question of disarming the fry.

He now came to the chapter on aviation. The delegation of His Britannic Majesty would permit him to say very respectfully, not only as delegate of Spain, but also as President of the Air Commission—a position with which the Conference had been good enough to honour him—that in this matter he felt that the United Kingdom draft was far too modest. The Conference had gone much further than the draft gave reason to believe. It was an understood and acquired fact that the abolition of aerial bombardment, which was, in short, all that the United Kingdom draft proposed, was only a measure for humanising warfare. He must repeat again that all efforts to humanise war were perfectly useless, because, if war broke out, it would be “non-humanisable.” War was a natural phenomenon, and it was not a defensible phenomenon for all that. Plague was also a natural phenomenon. War, like gravity, was governed by laws. One of the laws of war, which no international legislation could ever abolish, was that, once war had been declared, none of the parties would forgo the use of any sort of arm it might require to achieve victory. Cruel and anti-human arms had often been denounced in warfare. They had been renounced, however, as a result partly of humanitarian feeling, and partly because they had proved useless for the purpose of winning the war. Whenever any arm was indispensable for winning a war, no nation could ever forgo it use. Consequently, to state that air bombardment would be abolished could not possibly satisfy the Spanish delegation, which must insist on something more.

It had also been definitely agreed that the only effective measure of avoiding the use of aviation in warfare was the total abolition of military and naval aviation. That, from a technical point of view, implied very far-reaching consequences which, for a long time and to a very great extent, would weaken, though not entirely eliminate, the possibility of the misuse of civil aviation for this purpose.

It was true that the Air Committee had not yet reached complete agreement on the details of the measures to be adopted in regard to civil aviation. But the progress made by that Committee was sufficient to give grounds for the hope—he would express his conclusion in the most modest form—that the measures which might be embodied in the Convention, even in a first Convention, should go much further and be much more effective than was suggested in the United Kingdom plan.

M. de Madariaga stressed this point, because he thought this was perhaps the most important question on the agenda of the Conference. The fear of aerial warfare was the gravest of the fears which afflicted humanity, and it was justified. Aerial warfare would destroy, not only many human lives, but also the irreplaceable riches accumulated by civilisation in magnificent cities. It would brand civilisation with such barbarity and savagery that the present generation could never wash itself clean from this stain in the eyes of posterity. He therefore thought it was the duty of the Conference and of all its members to accomplish the maximum possible in the question of aerial disarmament, and not to be hindered by arguments which, while generally inspired by the best intentions, showed a complete ignorance of facts: he thought it was the duty of the Conference not to be influenced by the argument that the measures to be taken in regard to civil aviation would prevent its development. On this subject, there was a sentence in Annex II of the plan which he thought—if the United Kingdom delegation would excuse the remark—entirely erroneous. The measures contemplated to prevent aerial warfare, far from preventing the development of civil aviation—as had been demonstrated a score of times by M. de Brouckère with his eloquence and irrefutable technical knowledge—would have the most beneficial effect on the development of civil aviation, which was still in a pitiable state as a result of the influence of military aviation and aerial nationalism. On behalf of the Spanish delegation and with the permission of the United Kingdom delegation, he reserved the right to propose a definite amendment on this subject.

M. de Madariaga desired to make two remarks concerning supervision. In the first place, the Spanish delegation thought that supervision ought to be automatic and periodical instead of solicited and sporadic. It should be understood that supervision was a matter of course, and that it should take place every month, every quarter, or every year, but in any case automatically and regularly. Why? Firstly, because such a procedure would obviously be surer. Secondly, because prevention was better than cure. Steps should be taken in advance to avoid the evil rather than that it should be necessary to achieve an agreement in the face of an evil already experienced. In the third place—and he thought this was by far the most important argument—because it was the duty of the Conference to increase and not to decrease confidence, to develop and not to restrict co-operation. Consequently, supervision, which it was agreed in advance should be constant and periodical, could not but increase confidence, while supervision imposed because of an existing suspicion could not but increase dissension and distrust. All measures adopted in this connection should be inspired by this general law. If it were a question of choosing between international automatic supervision and sporadic supervision applied a posteriori, he declared—and in this he was also voicing the opinion of his Government—that he was in favour of the former type, that was to say, the automatic type, which was infinitely superior from the point of view of confidence. Even if this form of supervision were inferior from the technical point of view—although in fact it was not—it must be chosen because it was superior from the moral point of view.

In the second place, the Spanish Government considered that supervision could not be effective unless it was exercised in full and close co-operation with workers’ associations. Experience had proved that the co-operation of the workers’ trade unions and, in general, of
unavoidable. The present generation found itself in a world which had existed before it and from the tribune of force, had merely to remove themselves from the horizon of the earth. But those who reproached it with slowness, while speaking persist because the League, of which the essence was the reign of reason, still contained an excess human activity. Whenever people had anything to discuss there must be committees, majorities and minorities, whether the object was to do good or evil, to direct international policy or a town council, or a provincial hospital. That was not parliamentarianism and M. de Madariaga thought it was entirely off the mark to attempt to draw a comparison between the League and the parliamentary system, the object being perhaps to associate it with the anti-parliamentary tendency which had arisen in various places, and which, in his view, was an obviously temporary phenomenon.

The League was founded on reason. There were two ways of carrying on the affairs of mankind—by reason or by force. As the League had been founded in order to direct the affairs of mankind by reason, it must evidently use the dialectic method—i.e., the method of discussion; the similarity to the parliamentary system did not go further than that. The difficulties encountered hitherto by the League were due, not to the employment of the system of reason, but to the remains of the system of force, and these difficulties had been able to persist because the League, of which the essence was the reign of reason, still contained an excess of the system of force like a sort of virus inherited from previous generations. It was for this reason that the League was slow. But those who reproached it with slowness, while speaking from the tribune of force, had merely to remove themselves from the horizon of the earth and, from the planet to which they had exiled themselves, when they would see the League was surrounded by a tissue of egoistic national policies, and that was unavoidable. The present generation found itself in a world which had existed before it and
where there were national policies and national ambitions which had been maintained at any rate since the sixteenth century and which were very difficult to eliminate from the heart of nations. Owing to the tissue of national ambitions surrounding it, the present generation could only advance in its work of peace with as great difficulty as had been experienced by the soldiers in the war in their advance through barbed wire. But, because there existed nationalistic opinions which were not yet sufficiently educated from the international point of view, was that a reason for accusing the League of not advancing quickly enough, precisely because of such deep-rooted national opinions? He was speaking for his own country alone. All countries without exception, in the League and outside it, had an ancient history from which it was difficult to cut themselves loose and in which there were many glorious pages side by side with dire distress, and great ambitions side by side with great single-mindedness. Could it be expected that these countries would in five minutes become international saints? No! But since they were still national sinners, none of them should come and tell the Conference that it was working slowly. It was merely a human institution; it was working as rapidly as it could and doing its best.

M. DOVGALEVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, supposing a delegate who was broken in to the habits of the Disarmament Conference, were to find himself after a more or less protracted absence transported into the middle of a meeting devoted to the solemn declaration of principles and expressions of sympathy and fine feelings, he would be able to say at once without fear of mistake that he was attending the celebration of the birth of a new plan intended to extricate the Conference from a deadlock once again and presented, to this end, as a substitute for previous efforts of the same kind. The more solemn and the more warmly expressed the declarations made, the more such a delegate would be able to appreciate the gravity of the deadlock in which the Conference found itself.

M. Dovgalevsky must admit that most of the speeches heard at the present and at the last two meetings appeared to him to conform very closely to that tradition. For himself he would proceed without further preface to the preliminary remarks which he desired to offer on the United Kingdom delegation's draft. In doing so, he might perhaps be contravening what had become almost a usage in such circumstances, but he felt certain that the policy of peace which was pursued by his Government and which had been frequently explained to the Conference through its proposals was already sufficiently familiar to the General Commission.

As the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had very properly observed when submitting his plan, one conspicuous feature of the plan was that it contained concrete figures. Indeed, Mr. MacDonald had attempted, not without some pride, which was, of course, perfectly comprehensible, to claim priority for the merit due on this score to the plan. M. Dovgalevsky, however, would venture very respectfully to challenge that claim. He would point out that, long before the United Kingdom Government had done so, the Soviet delegation had proposed certain very precise disarmament figures, and that not only once but twice. In 1928, the Soviet Government's draft had contained figures, or to be exact a single figure, which was to be applied with absolute equality and uniformity to the armaments of all countries. That figure was nil, effective nil, guns nil, tanks nil, military planes nil, and so on. No one would challenge the statement that nought was certainly a mathematical figure and, indeed, that it was definitely the ideal figure as regarded disarmament. The Conference, however, had apparently preferred the view that the ideal could only retain its purity if it were not compromised by application in real life. It had also seemingly considered that the desire of the Governments to disarm must be taken with a pinch of salt. It had therefore rejected the figure suggested by the Soviet delegation. Afterwards, during the same year, 1928, the Soviet delegation had brought forward its second proposal, which was for the substantial reduction of armaments by a proportional and progressive lowering of the level of existing armaments, a reduction expressed in percentages for each of the different States. The absolute figures resulting from this method, if applied, could be easily worked out by the simplest arithmetical rules.

However that might be, the point with which the Soviet delegation was at present concerned was figures and it noted that fact with satisfaction, although it of course reserved its right to offer in due course such remarks as it might consider necessary with regard to those figures. Two serious deficiencies, however, should be mentioned at once: (1) although there were over fifty countries represented at the Conference, the figures for effectives in the United Kingdom plan covered only the European countries and not even all of them; (2) the plan contained no indication of the criterion adopted by its framers in establishing their figures. To these two remarks, the Soviet delegation wished to add at once that it had always been willing, and was still and would in future be willing, to accept for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics an appreciably lower figure for effectives than that suggested in the United Kingdom plan, provided of course that a proportional reduction was applied to all the other countries without exception in and out of Europe. His delegation was also ready to accept upon the same condition any more radical suggestions for qualitative reduction than those suggested in the United Kingdom draft. However, before the Soviet delegation could usefully proceed to
examine the figure proposed in the United Kingdom plan for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics it was essential that the United Kingdom delegation should state the criterion adopted for working out the table of figures, and likewise that, upon the basis of that criterion, concrete figures should be worked out for the countries not at present included in the table. To put the case more specifically, a point to which the Soviet delegation was bound to pay special attention was the question of the effects which, in such circumstances, would be left to its neighbours in Asia—that was to say, Japan—account being had also to the adjacent districts liable to be armed by that Power.

To these questions he would like to add a remark inspired by the passage in M. Lange's speech, in which the Norwegian delegate had shown that the 50,000 effective allocated to Norway in the plan was higher than the number at present possessed by Norway. In view of that observation, it was natural to ask whether the same feature—namely, an increase in the existing effects—would not take place in the case of the western neighbours of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which appeared in the table of effective under the heading "Each Other Continental European State".

To conclude the foregoing general observations regarding effects, the Soviet delegation declared that, in principle, it would not oppose the reduction of the maximum period of service, on condition of course that reduction covered all countries without exception, the home country as well as the colonies.

While on the subject of effects, he desired to associate himself with the troublesome questions which his friend Cemal Hüsni Bey had very properly raised the other day concerning the place which, according to the intentions of those responsible for the United Kingdom draft, Turkey was to occupy in regard to the figure of effects. He likewise took the opportunity to say, on behalf of the Soviet delegation, that the Turkish delegate's proposal concerning the annex to the Treaty of Lausanne was, in the Soviet delegation's view, entirely justified and entirely in accordance with the interests of peace and general security.

Passing next to the chapter concerning air armaments, he could only repeat what he had just said with regard to effects. In particular, before it could pronounce, with a full knowledge of the circumstances, on the number of aeroplanes suggested in the United Kingdom draft, the Soviet delegation would have to know the factors taken by the authors of the draft as a basis for their calculations. The table of aeroplanes would also have to be amplified so as to cover all countries taking part in the Conference. The Soviet delegation was more particularly concerned with the air forces of certain of its neighbours, among them, first and foremost, those of Japan, account being had to the fact that the latter country had recently made it possible for itself to form a supplementary air fleet outside its own frontiers.

The Soviet delegation could only approve the prohibition of bombing from the air. The United Kingdom plan proposed an exception to that rule for police purposes in certain outlying regions. That exception had come in for entirely legitimate criticism—as witty as it was destructive—on the part of certain previous speakers. If, in making that criticism, the delegates in question had meant that they desired to rule out this exception with the object of prohibiting all bombing from the air, in whatever region and for whatever purpose, M. Dovgalevsky entirely agreed with them. Furthermore, he would venture to suggest that, in order to prevent any breach of this prohibition, Article 34 would have to be amended in such a way as to bring about the complete abolition of bombing aircraft. He would remind the Commission that his delegation had repeatedly pronounced in favour of that measure.

With regard to naval armaments, the Soviet delegation wished to observe in the first place that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was not a party either to the Washington Agreement or to the London Agreement, and therefore it could not be asked to accept purely and simply the provisions of those agreements. As to the actual principles proposed in the United Kingdom plan for the reduction of naval armaments, he would draw the General Commission's attention to the dual character by which they were marked. For the States not parties to the Washington and London treaties, the plan suggested the stabilisation over a specific period of their naval armaments at the existing levels, whereas the countries which had signed those treaties were to be allowed, during the same period, to carry out their building programmes and so increase their naval armaments. The Soviet delegation would be glad of information as to the reasons which the United Kingdom delegation thought fit to adduce in support of this discrimination between two classes of States—namely, those which were invited to stabilise their naval armaments and those which were to be allowed to increase them.

Such were the general observations which he had thought it necessary to present to the General Commission following a first examination of the United Kingdom delegation's draft. The Soviet delegation would not fail to pursue its study of the draft energetically, and, during the more detailed discussion of the various parts of the draft, would submit to the Commission its comments and amendments dealing both with the points he had just mentioned and with other questions raised in the draft on which he had thought it unnecessary to dwell at the present stage. Among these latter questions, he would single out for special mention those that arose in connection with the first part of the draft (security) and the suggestions for supervision contained in the same draft.
The Aga Khan (India) supported whole-heartedly the appeal from the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom to all parties to the Conference to make what contribution they could towards the promotion of the spirit of peace and the will to pursue peace. At one of the plenary meetings over a year ago, he had ventured to use the following words: 1

"I am speaking here for many millions of my fellow-countrymen, who place the love of peace and the repudiation of violence among the first of the human virtues; with them, the ideal of peace is no mere economic expedient, it is an element deep-rooted in their very nature. That is the spirit which it is my task to reflect in making what contribution I can to the proceedings of this Conference."

In the same spirit, he appealed to his fellow-delegates and to the Governments they represented to make the supreme effort called for at the present moment to resolve differences between them and to face the crisis in the deliberations of the Conference with a firm resolution to avert the great risk—indeed, the certainty—of disaster to international relations and to world peace which would be involved in the Conference's failure or even in its adjournment without conclusive results achieved in the twin spheres of security and disarmament.

In making these remarks, he was thinking in particular of the continent of Europe. Today, in India, and probably in other parts of Asia, all sections of society were convinced that, in science and invention, Western culture had reached a far higher standard than Asiatic, but the peoples of Asia did not admit any superiority of the West in the realms of spirit and morals. Nevertheless, the Indians and their friends in Asia were grateful for the practical lessons they had learned from Europe. They wished to absorb the methods of applied science, with all the benefits they offered to mankind in the mass and in the individual. But they had seen, too, how science and civilisation could be shaped to the purposes of warfare and destruction of culture. Could they not fairly appeal to Europe to show a still better way, the way to harmonious co-operation and international unity in the new command of natural forces for the benefit rather than the destruction of fellow-men? Europe must face her responsibility—whether she would go down before history as the one who had taught Asia how to improve the material conditions of men, or how to destroy them.

In the present Conference, and outside it, the theory of insuring against war by armed preparation had been given too prominent a place. To think, to speak, or to act as though war was not only a possibility, but an imminent probability, was the surest way of bringing about that indescribable disaster. Let men talk of peace, let them think in terms of peace, and they would achieve, not only the success of the Conference, but peace as well, that peace which was not merely the absence of war, but a positive effort of co-operation amongst the nations of the world towards a Society of Nations.

With regard to the procedure for attaining the successful issue of the Conference, he fully agreed with Mr. MacDonald that the time had come to face the facts, however unpalatable, and to pass, for the time being, from the study of details in compartments to the consideration of a complete plan of disarmament. He particularly welcomed the plan put forward by Mr. MacDonald because it brought the Conference face to face with concrete proposals based on specific facts and figures, to which delegations must give a definite answer. Further, it had the great merit of bringing together the different issues involved, and seeking an answer to each in relation to the rest. While it was true that the Conference was thus confronted with numerous proposals, not all of which were likely to be acceptable to anyone, the project nevertheless assumed a certain rough balance which made it possible to view it as a whole and which should facilitate a decision on each part thereof. On some such basis as the document before the Commission he hoped and believed that common agreement would be possible, if all the nations were determined to approach the problem in a mood of conciliation and compromise. The draft convention represented no more than a first draft of the instrument the signature of which the representatives of all States would be the happy conclusion of the Conference's work. There might be adjustments which could and must be made in the draft if the legitimate needs of various countries were to be met, in accordance with Article 8 of the Covenant. There were, without doubt, points of detail which would require careful consideration and concerning which he, and no doubt others, would wish to speak in due course. But in its general outline, the draft convention was a document which, on behalf of India, he welcomed most warmly as a means of enabling the delegations to co-ordinate their efforts and to reach an early conclusion of their work.

Colonel Riazi (Persia) observed that, since the Disarmament Conference had first embarked upon its very important enquiries, it had discussed a series of plans. All of them were of interest, but some of them, owing to their dimensions, were not attuned to the present situation of international security and others, though more rationally conceived, were unable to give general satisfaction.

1 See records of the plenary meetings of the Conference, Volume I, page 159.
The merit of the MacDonald plan was that it contemplated the question from a practical angle by blending the various tendencies and leaving a sufficient margin for the adjustment of the plan to legitimate national needs. The Persian delegation, which had accepted the most radical proposals, from the Litvinov scheme to the plan propounded by President Hoover, would be glad if the United Kingdom plan could be accepted by all delegations as a basis of discussion. That would enable Europe and the other continents to achieve the regime of concord and stability at which they aimed.

The views and desires of the Persian Government with regard to general and world disarmament had, he thought, been sufficiently fully expounded during its statement of acceptance of the Hoover plan to make it unnecessary to repeat them. The Persian delegation would announce them when the Commission embarked upon the discussion of details.

M. DE VASCONCELLOS (Portugal) said that, on behalf of its Government, the Portuguese delegation gave its warmest acceptance of the message from Geneva addressed to the Conference, in very striking, grave and eloquent words by the Prime Minister of a country that had been Portugal's friend for many centuries. Impressed by the manifold difficulties impeding the Conference's progress and threatening to strike it, if not with paralysis, at least with paresis, Mr. MacDonald had done the Conference the eminent service of coming to the platform from which the delegates addressed the peoples of the world and uttering a warning and an appeal that could alone prevent the headlong rush to a disaster which he feared was inevitable if the Conference were to fail. To ensure the progress and prepare for the success of the Conference, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had chosen the method which appeared to him the most practical. He had brought the Conference a draft convention containing articles and modelled, in its general lines, on the Preparatory Commission's draft.

M. de Vasconcellos was happy to say that the Portuguese delegation supported the proposal for the adoption of the United Kingdom draft Convention as a basis of discussion. The draft took account of the entirely legitimate suggestion for establishing a transition period during which the necessary practical adjustments would be carried out and it laid down particularly successfully the characteristics of this transition period.

The organisation of effective international supervision and the clauses devised to prevent the Conference becoming a re-armament conference—which provisions were included among these characteristics—provided fresh guarantees of security which supplemented the provisions of Part I and strengthened them substantially.

Like several previous speakers, he noticed that the draft contained no rules concerning budgetary limitation. The Portuguese delegation considered some such rules as fundamental to the establishment of really effective supervision.

While thanking M. de Madariaga for the very pertinent remarks he had made concerning the Commission over which M. de Vasconcellos had the honour to preside and the kindly way in which he had referred to its President, he associated himself with the Spanish delegate's comments regarding the absolute necessity for budgetary limitation, which would give the peoples a sure guarantee that the competition in multiple armaments would not be converted into a competition in expensive armaments. That was a deficiency which would certainly be made good during the discussion.

The Portuguese delegation reserved its right to submit during the discussion of the articles certain remarks on the chapter concerning security and the figures suggested for its country in the articles relating to effectives and aeroplanes, as also on other details in the draft. In order to be able to do so with a full knowledge of all the circumstances involved, M. de Vasconcellos hoped that the discussion of the articles would be postponed until the resumption of the work after Easter. He did not think that the Commission had decided in favour of the immediate discussion of the articles. It had voted last week for the continuation of its work, but it had not decided when the Easter holidays should begin, and M. de Vasconcellos thought that, in the case of the Commission, they should begin as soon as the general discussion of the United Kingdom draft had been concluded. Delegations belonging to countries three or four days' away from Geneva would need at least a three weeks' suspension in order to get into touch with their Governments and come back with all the information necessary for the better progress of the work. In the interests therefore of the Conference's success, M. de Vasconcellos would request the President to consult the Conference upon the expediency of such a suspension.

The President said that M. de Vasconcellos had raised an issue which would probably come up later in the day. At the moment, the President could only speak for himself and must say that he was entirely opposed to the idea the Portuguese delegate had put forward. He had understood, when the Commission decided last week to continue its work, that it intended to go on for not for three days, but probably until the Saturday before Good Friday. That was certainly what the President himself had had in mind. However, the matter would be brought before the Commission later, as certain delegations were proposing to submit a resolution.

The continuation of the discussion was adjourned to the next meeting.
M. Wellington Koo (China) said he would not consider himself to be true to the sentiment of his delegation and to his own sentiment if he did not join his colleagues in paying a tribute to the United Kingdom delegation for the draft Convention which the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, as its chief and in its name, had presented to the Conference in an exceedingly eloquent, moving and vigorous speech. Complying with the President's wishes, he would be as brief as possible and would, in fact, try to make his statement briefer than he had originally intended.

The Chinese delegation welcomed the United Kingdom plan as a whole, because it represented a bold and decisive step towards the attainment of that goal which was the object of the Conference and which was impatiently awaited by all the peace-loving peoples of the world. In its concreteness as well as in its comprehensiveness, it constituted an invaluable contribution to the work of the Conference. The Chinese delegation had examined it in the spirit in which it had been presented, and was ready to accept it as a basis of discussion, with such amendments as it hoped to present in due course.

The Chinese delegation noted with satisfaction that the question of security, which in its opinion was inseparable from that of disarmament, was given a prominent place in the draft Convention. In making that observation, however, M. Wellington Koo could not refrain from expressing the wish that the chapter on security had contained fuller and more explicit provisions. The Chinese delegation was not clear, for example, as to the bearing and effect of these provisions upon the Covenant of the League. Were they intended to supplement and strengthen the fundamental instrument of the League of Nations, or were they intended to modify it in another sense? As all were aware, the Covenant provided a number of principles for the maintenance of peace, a machinery, a procedure and a series of sanctions against the Covenant-breaker. What was needed in the interest of enhanced security and therefore of a better prospect of permanent peace, was to reinforce the Covenant, so as to ensure a speedier and a more effective method of applying the system of collective responsibility for the prevention of aggression and the maintenance of peace.

While M. Wellington Koo was convinced that the Covenant of the League and the Pact of Paris—the Pact which was made at once the basis and pivot of the plan of security in the draft Convention—could make a strong foundation for a disarmament system if they were used boldly and firmly to prevent aggression in every case in which aggression occurred or might occur, he would be lacking in candidness if he not say at once that China had not found them to be sufficient safeguards for peace. On account of her scrupulous respect for these instruments and her faith in their efficacy, she had undergone for the past eighteen months, and was still undergoing at the present moment in increasing severity, an aggression which was morally and juridically recognised as such by the whole world. The Chinese delegation, therefore, attached the greatest importance to the question of security in connection with any proposal for the limitation or reduction of armaments. It would like to see the existing safeguards of peace reinforced and not in any way impaired, however indirectly or unwittingly.

The Chinese delegation was not entirely free from doubt as to the intent and purpose, for example, of Article 3 of the draft Convention, which provided that, in the event of a breach or threat of breach of the Pact of Paris, a conference for the purpose of dealing with such an event could only take place at the request of any five of the signatory Powers, among whom there must be one of the six Powers specifically named in another article of the same chapter. There, in its view, was evidently a differentiation between States which, in clear contrast, did not exist in the Covenant, at least in so far as the right of appeal for redress against aggression or a threat of aggression was concerned. Some of the delegations might not fully subscribe to the consecrated principle of equality of States, but M. Wellington Koo respectfully submitted that the question of security and protection from aggression must be a matter of equal concern.

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to all States. Whatever their size, rights or responsibilities, they must be accorded an equal right to redress in any system of mutual protection against aggression and joint responsibility for the maintenance of peace.

It was possible that, apart from this point, the reason why the provisions of the chapter on security in the United Kingdom draft Convention were made less definite than those of the Covenant and why no relation between the two instruments was clearly indicated was that the Pact of Paris comprised a wider circle of States than the League of Nations. But was it not a fact, even though the draft Convention was intended to deal with only what was called a transitional period, that it was absolutely essential, in laying a real foundation for peace upon which it might be hoped to build a permanent system of law and order among nations, to make provision, by way of supplementing the Covenant, for the effective prevention of international aggression, and, if necessary, for its prompt repression? The Chinese delegation would therefore be grateful if the United Kingdom delegation would be good enough, when a suitable occasion presented itself, to throw more light on the meaning and purpose of the provisions in the chapter on security, particularly as regarded the points M. Wellington Koo had just mentioned.

It was not his intention at a general discussion to go into details, but perhaps he might be allowed briefly to touch upon one or two points in the other parts of the draft Convention to which his delegation attached special importance.

It was generally recognised that tanks of all categories were offensive weapons. Their total abolition had been advocated by very many delegations and was called for in the Hoover plan. If, for the moment, it was not practicable to abolish such weapons, the Chinese delegation would earnestly appeal to the Conference to minimise their offensive characteristics by reducing their maximum weight more drastically than to 16 tons, as specified in Article 21 of the draft Convention.

With regard to bombing from the air, M. Wellington Koo expressed, on behalf of his Government, its gratitude to the United Kingdom delegation for stipulating for its complete abolition at the outset of the chapter on air armaments. On more than one occasion the Chinese delegation had stated in the Commission—and he was sure no one would object if he repeated it again—that air bombing had come to have a terrible meaning to the Chinese people. As a result of their recent experiences, which unfortunately still continued, they were convinced, like the Air Commission in its findings, that air bombardment was a form of warfare which was specifically offensive, extremely efficacious against national defence and most threatening to the civil population. It thus combined all the three worst characteristics emphasised in the resolution which was passed by the Commission on April 22nd, 1932.

The article which stipulated for the abolition of air bombing unfortunately carried with it a proviso that exception was to be made for police purposes in certain outlying regions. M. Wellington Koo very much feared, as did his eminent colleague from Norway, that such an exception was liable to invite misunderstanding, misinterpretation and therefore abuse. As the total abolition of air bombing was demanded by world public opinion in the name of humanity, there should not be two categories or grades of humanity, with two standards of measurement, especially as the human beings against whom the exception was intended to apply were certain to be ill-equipped for protection against that cruel weapon of offence. Moreover, in the resolution recording the conclusion of the first phase of the Conference, which was adopted by the Commission on July 23rd, 1932, the abolition of air bombing then decreed was not accompanied by any exception. The exception now proposed, in respect of police measures in certain outlying regions, gave the Chinese delegation special cause for concern. Apart from the fact that its country was situated far from Europe and an aggressive country might argue that it was an outlying region, the phrase "police measures" had become an ominous expression to the Chinese people ever since the Council meeting on December 10th, 1931. The Chinese delegate hastened to add that it was his confident belief that nothing was farther from the thoughts of the eminent authors and sponsors of the draft Convention than that to which he had alluded, but its danger lay in its susceptibility to misinterpretation by the more designig. The Chinese delegation therefore held to the view that the abolition of bombing from the air should be without exception.

Speaking generally, however, the Chinese delegation was in substantial agreement with the United Kingdom plan as regarded the proposals for the qualitative reduction of armaments. It welcomed the proposals, though it was its fervent desire to see them go further in the same direction, even at the initial stage of disarmament.

As to those proposals which related to the limitation of naval and air forces, no one, M. Wellington Koo believed, would dispute that the main purpose of disarmament was to promote peace by increasing a sense of security through a more balanced system of reduction and readjustment of armaments, not to penalise the militarily weak nations whose defensive weapons were below the minimum requirement for internal order and external safety. Nor was it intended to increase the feelings of insecurity of the weak States or to perpetuate a system of inequality. Militarily strong States, having attained the plenitude of their land, naval...

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and air power, could agree on successive reductions calculated on the basis of their present armament, and yet still be strong enough to withstand the vicissitudes of international life. They would retain their superiority and still have a much greater fighting potential with which to defend their frontiers. There were also other countries which could congratulate themselves on their specially favourable geographical situation, or, what was of greater importance, on having uniformly trustworthy and friendly neighbours who would observe solemn international obligations, co-operate in ensuring peace, and even afford assistance against a possible aggressor. For such States, a simple scheme of reduction of armaments, no matter how arbitrary its nature, could also be faced with equanimity. Unfortunately, China was not in such a privileged and happy position. M. Wellington Koo submitted that it would not be conducive to the real interests of peace to ask her country, in the unfavourable circumstances to which he had referred, to reduce, limit or stabilise her armaments on the basis of their existing level and thereby further compromise her security.

Indeed, China had never had an army, a navy or an air force fully answering to the requirements of her special circumstances. Her national defence had been and was much below the minimum level. Her traditional love of peace had inclined her to disregard the need for armaments. Her faith in the validity of the peace instruments and the efficacy of the peace machinery had accentuated her unwillingness to arm. But her present experience was a lesson to her. She was faced with the pressing need for a coast defence navy and an air force commensurate with the extent of her territory, the length of her coast-line and land frontiers, and her inadequate transport and communication facilities. She had yet to forge the necessary instruments for effectively ensuring that security and independence to which she, no less than the militarily strong Powers, was entitled. Indeed, it had even been said that her inadequate system of national defence had in a way induced and encouraged aggression, and had added to the League's difficulty in the past eighteen months and to its anxiety at the present time.

Consequently, the Chinese Government would be failing in its duty if it were, without considering the geographical position of China or the present exigencies of her situation or the relative military strength of her neighbours, to submit its armed forces to an arbitrary scheme of limitation or stabilisation at a ratio so wholly disproportionate as to endanger her national existence. To limit China's aeroplanes to the low figure indicated in the table mentioned in Article 40 of the draft Convention, or to stabilise her naval forces in the manner provided for in Article 29 thereof, would lay the Chinese Government open to that charge and would perhaps even raise a doubt in the minds of the other delegations as to her determination to contribute her share in the common endeavour to uphold the new peace system of the world. That most States in the table on aeroplanes were assigned 500, 200, or 150 planes while China, whose territory and frontiers were ten, twenty or fifty times larger than some of the more favoured countries, was allotted only 100 planes constituted a discrepancy out of all proportion, not only when weighed on the 'chemist's balance' mentioned by Mr. MacDonald, but even when weighed by rough and ready scales. M. Wellington Koo mentioned that point not with any idea of kicking; for, apart from the fact that he did not relish kicking as a recreation, he fully realised the hard work involved in producing any figures at all. He wished only to emphasise the inadequacy of the aeroplane figure for China when measured by any known or accepted standard.

It would be recalled that, when the question of criteria for disarmament was discussed, the Chinese delegation had the honour, on behalf of its Government, to state in the Commission that the scale of land, sea and air armaments should be determined by the size of a territory, the population, the length and nature of land frontiers and coast-lines, facility of communication and degree of security. These criteria were derived from Article 8 of the Covenant, which stipulated that plans for armament reduction should correspond to the geographical situation and special circumstances of each State. In view of the course of events in the Far East since the Conference first met, the Chinese delegation was sure the Commission could readily understand why the Chinese Government felt it could not deviate from its original proposals.

Such were the views of the Chinese delegation on the draft Convention in general. It might be thought that there was in them somewhat of a note of that scepticism against which the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had spoken in the past week with no mincing of words. But might M. Wellington Koo respectfully point out, in stressing the necessity for adequate security against external danger, that what was merely a future possibility for many of the countries represented was a terrible, living reality to China to-day? Indeed, in presenting its views frankly, the Chinese delegation had only sought to be guided by the sound and eminently practical advice which Mr. MacDonald had given in another part of his eloquent speech, when he said that reality was the most awkward thing that some of the delegations met with, but that they would not meet it successfully by behaving like ostriches, burying their heads in the sand until it had passed them, rather than facing it with courage. It was with

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1 See Minutes of the General Commission, Volume I, page 85.
the idea of bravely facing the reality, of taking it fully into account, that M. Wellington Koo had spoken frankly on behalf of his country.

Subject to the above considerations, he would, in conclusion, assure the President and delegations that, loyal to her traditional policy of peace and hearty co-operation with all countries for the advancement of peace in the world, China would be prepared to limit her armed forces, whether land, sea or air, to the lowest figure consistent with the maintenance of her internal order and the safety of her national independence.

M. Massigli (France) reminded the Commission that, on March 16th last, with a force and energy which would be vividly remembered, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had commented on the draft submitted by the United Kingdom delegation. The French Prime Minister had immediately paid a tribute to the nobility of sentiment which had inspired this effort. He had said at the same time that the French Government would study the whole draft submitted to the Conference with all the attention and care that so noteworthy a document merited. This study had not yet been completed; that fact would, he thought, surprise nobody in the Commission. But the Commission would excuse him if, in these circumstances, and in the absence of M. Paul-Boncour, who deeply regretted that urgent duties elsewhere prevented him from being present, he merely submitted a few general observations. M. Massigli might say forthwith that those observations would, to a large extent, coincide with the comments of other speakers. He would beg these speakers to pardon him if, owing to pressure of time, he omitted to refer to them by name in his own speech.

The United Kingdom draft was, if he were not mistaken, of a twofold character. It was an effort to co-ordinate the conclusions which, its authors thought, were to be drawn from the work of the Conference. On the other hand, it was a bold, a very bold and therefore admirable attempt to break through into the sacred and mysterious domain of figures whither scarcely anyone had, up to the present, dared to venture. For his part, he would not be bold enough to follow the example given and enter into the domain of figures. Moreover, he did not think that most of the speakers who had preceded him encouraged him to do so. He would accordingly only deal with the other aspect of the United Kingdom draft, in so far as it was an attempt, and a very noteworthy attempt, at synthesis.

Synthesis by definition meant an effort to build up separate elements into a connected whole, an effort which, if absolutely successful, produced such a result that it became impossible to detect the various elements of the new structure otherwise than by minute analysis. He did not really believe that the United Kingdom delegation had intended to produce so perfect a synthesis as that. It might have thought that, in order to please the Conference, it was necessary for each delegation to recognise in the document some contribution of its own. M. Massigli thought, however, that there was another, and, in his opinion, decisive, reason. During the last fourteen months, and particularly during the last few months and weeks, various resolutions had been adopted, and decisions taken which no one had the right to disregard and which any scheme, to be successful, must now incorporate. The French delegation therefore had been glad to recognise in the United Kingdom draft a large number of those principles which had inspired, and had indeed formed the basis of, the French plan, which had on several occasions been endorsed by the vote of the General Commission, and could not now be ignored. He would venture to enumerate those principles, or at least the more important of them, which he found re-embodied in the United Kingdom draft.

First, this plan affirmed the great principle that there was a connection to be established in a Disarmament Convention between reductions of armaments and the guarantees of security offered to the signatories. That was the idea contained in Chapter I of the United Kingdom draft. M. Massigli did not propose to discuss the contents of that chapter. He would not endeavour to determine either the value or the scope of the effective guarantees set out therein. Nevertheless, he noted that the authors of the draft acceded to this essential principle.

The second principle which he found endorsed in the United Kingdom draft was the principle, adopted by the General Commission, that all the armies of continental Europe should be on a uniform basis with short-term service and limited effectives.

The third principle was that the draft took into account, for the limitation of effectives and the duration of service, all persons of at least 18 years of age who were receiving pre-military or quasi-military training outside the army and particularly in the police forces.

Similarly, the United Kingdom draft affirmed that professional or long-term service effectives, including the effectives of police forces having a military character, should be limited on a common basis.

He noted, moreover, that special provision was made for overseas forces.

Finally, as regarded aviation and without discussing whether the application had been pushed as far as it might have been, he noted that a connection was established between the total abolition of military aviation and the creation of some—as yet unspecified—effective system of supervision for civilian aviation.

Those were a few points on which—M. Massigli was glad to observe—agreement existed between the United Kingdom draft Convention and the plan submitted by the French delegation.
On other points, which the French delegation regarded as essential, the United Kingdom draft was rather more reticent. Nevertheless, he had been pleased to note, in Article 6 of Chapter I, a tentative, perhaps too tentative, invitation to conclude, on a regional or continental basis, agreements for mutual assistance or agreements intended to define the manner in which aggression might be determined.

Obviously, there were many other places in which he could point to omissions or could request additions. For the present, he only referred to the said point because it was an essential one. He had already stated that, when the time came to decide on figures, this capital point would have to be defined beyond all ambiguity. There was, as had so often been pointed out, a close connection between the extent of the reductions in armaments and the extent of the guarantees of security offered to the signatories.

Such being the first of those which a rapid survey of the United Kingdom draft had suggested to the French delegation, he desired to inform the Commission of the essential principles by which the French Government would be guided during the next few weeks, in examining this draft in detail.

First, there was the very important point rightly raised by Mr. MacDonald that the moment for dealing with various subjects in watertight compartments was past. The draft should be examined as a whole. The guarantees it afforded, the sacrifices it involved and the concessions it demanded should be looked at as a whole. This must be done, moreover, within the framework of the draft, for there must be interdependence of sacrifice. This must be done, also, for all the signatories, because, in that domain, there must be no privileged situations. That was the first point.

Secondly, it was absolutely necessary to take into account the actual situation and special needs of each country. The only effect of adjustment must not be to alter the incidence of inequalities. Care should be taken to ensure that, on the pretext of righting certain inequalities, other inequalities were not created in the opposite sense.

Because no sphere was excluded from the Convention, M. Massigli would say outright that there was one subject in respect of which the draft had perhaps stopped half-way. In the matter of naval limitation some place should, he thought, be accorded to qualitative limitation, which was all the more necessary because, in the domain of land material, the draft went further. In this connection, moreover, resolutions had been adopted, if not by the General Commission, at least by the Naval Commission, so that it might be well to see whether these resolutions could be taken into account in one way or another.

Not less important was the question how and at what rate the future Convention would recommend that reductions of armaments should be effected. In this connection arose the idea, the essential idea, of stages, regarding which the General Commission had already, if he were not mistaken, voted twelve months previously. In particular, the contemplated reductions of material and the unification of the types of army must be synchronised.

Another indispensable point was that the Convention should not appear to be a leap in the dark. By that he meant that countries should know what the situation would be on the expiration of the Convention and whether, at that moment, they would be free to revert to a competition in armaments. That was a very important question, the reply to which would be of great value in determining the attitude to be adopted with regard to the destruction of material.

Another point which seemed to him to be no less important was this. It would be difficult to understand why a draft established at the present time should, on any particular point, lag behind the resolution of July 23rd last or resolutions adopted subsequently. The Commission should, therefore, endeavour to ascertain whether these resolutions had been taken fully into account, it being quite possible that, owing to the haste with which the draft had been prepared, some point might have been overlooked. It was essential that previous resolutions should be taken into account, and, in particular, the various points concerning supervision, the importance of which had been mentioned. The French delegation had been happy to note, in Article 75, a first step in the direction of special agreements for periodic investigations. But that was not enough. The French delegation intended to make sure whether, on any given point, the putting into action of the machinery of supervision and of investigation on the spot in case of complaint had been rendered more difficult.

Following the same line of thought, M. Massigli observed that the question of violations of the Convention had previously been touched upon from a rather special standpoint—namely, violations of the prohibition of chemical warfare. He did not know whether this point had been maintained; he rather thought it had not. This question had been adjourned until the Commission came to study the whole body of questions connected with the violation of the Convention. That was a chapter which seemed to have remained a blank.

Finally, and precisely because the French delegation based its attitude on the resolution of July 23rd, 1932, he thought that a provision should be made, taking into account all the special situations, for a limitation of expenditure on national defence. That was a point which seemed to have been ignored upon and of which he could find no mention in the draft.

In this connection, M. Massigli agreed with M. de Madariaga’s reference to the importance of the question of the manufacture of arms. He felt bound to add a few words on this subject. M. de Madariaga, at the morning meeting, had taken up his stand on the Covenant, and Article 15 of the Covenant in particular. From another and more material point of view, it would have to be acknowledged that the Conference would, to a large extent, have laboured in vain if, though limiting and reducing armaments, it permitted any possibility of creating a war potential. While it was difficult to admit that full freedom should be allowed in the matter of
developing the manufacture of arms, it was still more difficult to admit that countries should be left free to re-create their war potential in cases where that potential ought to have disappeared. Here, M. Massigli touched on a point which was of capital importance in the opinion of his Government—the question of re-armament.

In studying the draft Convention, the French delegation would consider with the greatest care whether, in providing for the gradual reduction of armaments by stages, re-armament was still excluded. It believed that only through the reduction of armaments by stages and by excluding all re-armament could true equality of status gradually be achieved in a system of security guaranteed for all States.

The result of the first Convention on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments should not be to legalise re-armament or prepare the way for such action.

These were the essential principles which the French Government would bear in mind when studying the United Kingdom draft. Very rightly the United Kingdom delegation had, in preparing this document, been guided by the general lines of the draft Convention drawn up by the Preparatory Commission. The draft would thus greatly facilitate the work of the Conference, because it would provide, so to speak, a background for the co-ordination of the various amendments, modifications, additions or omissions which delegations might intend to propose.

The United Kingdom draft—Mr. MacDonald himself, he believed, had said so—was not a plan; it was rather a method of work which might prove to be extremely fruitful, and M. Massigli could see no reason why this draft should not serve as a basis for the Conference’s subsequent discussions. But for that very reason, and because the draft appeared as a method of work open to all corrections and additions, he regretted rather that the mere fact of its submission had in some cases been interpreted as meaning that the work in the technical committees had henceforth lost a great deal of its value. His own opinion was quite the contrary. He thought that that work was still indispensable—first, because there was nothing at the present time to prevent additions to the proposals contained in the draft; and, secondly, in order to determine the attitude which should be adopted towards the various technical aspects of the United Kingdom draft. He would explain what he meant.

In the matter of effectives, very felicitously, and taking into account the decisions already reached by the Committee on Effectives, the United Kingdom draft incorporated the essential provisions adopted by the General Commission as regarded the various elements to be included in the limitations. But in so doing, it had remained on the theoretical plane. Then, a priori, so to speak, the United Kingdom draft indicated the total figures to which its theoretical principles must lead in the case of certain armies. It did not, and probably could not, say what, in these figures, was the proportion of the various elements which it proposed to take into account. The importance of this question was quite evident. When Governments had to estimate the effort of reduction demanded of them, they would need to know how it would balance out and be divided among the different countries in question. In other words, they would wish to know which, among the various categories of national forces, were those to which the limitations would apply. They would require, in order to measure the effort demanded of them, to know what relationship there would be between the present situation and the situation which would arise when the Convention was applied. Consequently, he thought that the work already undertaken by the Committee on Effectives should be continued with a view to determining the existing situation and the scope of the limitations of effectives in the various countries.

Similarly, the Air Committee had been given very definite terms of reference. He felt, as M. de Madariaga had said in the morning, that, in certain respects, the United Kingdom draft lagged appreciably behind those terms of reference. In order, therefore, to allow the Governments represented at the present Conference to decide whether it was really impossible to go further than the United Kingdom draft, it was indispensable that all the technical studies now proceeding should be continued to their logical conclusion, and that the results which might be achieved in every sphere could be clearly ascertained. From the point of view of expenditure, in particular, the Technical Committee had produced results, and it was important that these results should be referred to the competent Commission in order that they might be finally endorsed.

The great merit of the United Kingdom draft, in stating the problem in definite terms, was to make it possible for the Conference to co-ordinate its discussions and work on systematic lines so as to achieve a result in the near future. The United Kingdom Government had never intended to submit texts which the members of the Conference were not entitled to alter or supplement. He thought therefore that the various delegations might work on this basis, knowing that there were, in the various plans submitted to the Conference, other texts which might be utilised to supplement the proposals submitted.

It might be said that the discussion was now commencing, unfettered, on the basis of this draft. M. Massigli need not say that the French delegation, for its part, was prepared to pursue this discussion in all sincerity and with that entirely open mind which it believed the work of the Conference required.

M. Bourquin (Belgium) said the Belgian delegation associated itself with the sympathetic expressions used in respect of the initiative taken by the United Kingdom. A draft Convention which constituted a compromise was now before the Conference. The plan had been conceived in this spirit, and it was in this spirit that it should be considered. Naturally, no one would find in the plan the complete fulfilment of his desires and aspirations, since a compromise, by its very
nature, entailed sacrifices. On the other hand, the proposal had not been submitted as some-
thing sacrosanct and absolutely final. Mr. MacDonald, in submitting it to the General
Commission, had taken care to state that it was elastic enough to lend itself to certain readjust-
ments, corrections and additions. But it would appear, for the moment, superfluous to go into
these special points. This would be done later, when the text came to be discussed in detail. The
question for the moment seemed to be simpler and more essential. The plan was to
be considered as a whole—i.e., in its main lines and in its spirit—and the Commission should
state whether it accepted the plan as a basis for the completion of its work.

The Belgian delegation trusted that the Conference would reply in the affirmative to this
question, because it considered that the United Kingdom plan enabled the Conference to hope
for a reasonable arrangement, and because the time had certainly come to choose between the
conclusion of such an agreement or failure.

The Conference should be under no illusion; time was not on its side. After fourteen
months of preliminary discussion and of extremely useful preparatory work the time had come
to reach a conclusion. How could this be done without a compromise? Hitherto, each country
had expressed its preferences and had explained and defended its views and ideas; this was all
very well and was no doubt necessary, but it was evident that, by maintaining isolated
positions, the countries would not attain their object. The necessary meeting-ground could
very well and was no doubt necessary, but it was evident that, by maintaining isolated
positions, the countries would not attain their object. The necessary meeting-ground could
only be found in mutual concessions; consequently, the only alternatives were—compromise
or failure.

M. Bourquin, like all the delegates, was aware that a compromise was always difficult to
reach, particularly in a question involving the fundamental interests of the States and in
matters where the most sensitive network of national policy was constantly being affected.
But, if the consequences of failure were borne in mind, it would be easier to adopt the course
of settlement and compromise, because failure would not only mean that the Conference recognised
the impossibility, at the present moment, of solving the particular problem before it, but would have
the more serious effect of prolonging the economic and political crisis from which the world
was suffering, and of giving full play to all the existing elements of disturbance and violence;
it would mean the starting of an adventure, and would involve the possibility of disaster.
It was sufficient to face this prospect in order to feel the imperious necessity of bringing the
work of the Conference to a positive conclusion without delay.

In the view of the Belgian delegation, these were the elementary considerations which
should dictate its ideas, arguments and attitude. It was in the light of these considerations that
the Belgian delegation had studied the United Kingdom plan, and proposed that the Conference
should adopt it as the basis of its work.

M. Nadolny (German) said that when the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, in
submitting the draft Convention to the General Commission a week ago, addressed
his moving appeal to the good will of the Conference, the delegations could not grasp immedi-
ately the great importance that the initiative taken by the United Kingdom delegation
represented for the Conference. Now that they had been able calmly to study this plan and the
scope of Mr. MacDonald's words, he thought that they had all reached the conclusion—as had
been shown by the remarks of a number of delegates—that the aforesaid initiative did indeed
open a new and a decisive phase of the Conference. Why? Because, at the very moment
when—M. Nadolny would endeavour to express himself so as not to contradict the previous
speakers as to the value of the work of the Conference—at the very moment when all delegations
felt it to be necessary, the United Kingdom proposal embodied the complete draft of a Conven-
tion which, on the basis of the negotiations of the last fourteen months, contained definite
solutions, including figures. That obliged the delegations to take a definite decision on the
entire problem of disarmament and, consequently, on the fate of the Conference.

As the representative of a country which earnestly desired that the Conference should
reach a satisfactory result, and which was co-operating to the best of its ability, M. Nadolny
would like, before expressing an opinion on the draft and on the important remarks made by
the United Kingdom Prime Minister, again to thank the United Kingdom delegation for having
taken the initiative with such vigour and with such a profound feeling of responsibility in
order to find a solution of the problems which the Conference had hitherto found insoluble.

Mr. MacDonald's remarks had been animated by the firm conviction that the Conference
must absolutely be brought to a favourable conclusion if it were desired to safeguard the peace
of the world and to save humanity from its present distress. In this connection, it would be
remembered that Mr. MacDonald had quoted the opinion that Germany must receive justice
and liberty; otherwise Europe would be threatened with destruction. This quotation showed
that Mr. MacDonald had reflected deeply on the problems of disarmament and security from
the point of view of the disastrous effects entailed by the discriminations and differences of the
peace treaties. M. Nadolny thought the entire world was now convinced that the general feeling
of insecurity was the result, in particular, of the position created by the severity and injustice
of the peace treaties, and that the permanent inequality between a very high level of armaments
on the one hand and complete disarmament on the other hand was a very serious element in
this position. He would be very glad if other responsible statesmen would also consider these
ideas and, by recognising the impossibility of reconstructing and consolidating Europe without granting justice and liberty to Germany and the other States in the same position, would direct their policy more and more in this direction.

On the other hand, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had stated that Germany would be placing herself in a false position if she wished merely to receive, and that contributions should be made on both sides. Undoubtedly, he who wished to receive must also give. Germany did not deny this. This was a principle which not only governed private life but also the relations between States. In this M. Nadolny entirely agreed with Mr. MacDonald. But had not Germany already made her contribution in the sphere of disarmament? Had it been forgotten that Germany had already carried out her disarmament more than ten years ago, and that this disarmament was expressly defined as constituting the first step towards general disarmament? It was now for the other States which had imposed these obligations on Germany and had accepted their execution to give the return which they had definitely promised. It was precisely, therefore, from the standpoint adopted by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom that Germany could and must demand that the other States should finally make their contribution by proceeding with their own disarmament.

But, Germany had not only disarmed; she had done much more, she had co-operated with all her might in the international work of the organisation of peace. M. Nadolny did not need to enumerate once more the various agreements which had been so often mentioned during this Conference. He would merely recall the Rhineland Pact and the Pact of Paris. The same sincere desire to work for peace and to contribute to the best of her ability to the realisation of an agreement had also inspired Germany during this Conference. Thus, she had readily taken that further step in the same direction which, according to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, must constitute the counterpart of the recognition of equal rights expressed in the declaration of December 11th of last year. Germany had solemnly declared her willingness not to resort to force as a means of national policy. Lastly, she was also prepared to accept the proposal contained in the first part of the United Kingdom draft relating to the development of the Pact of Paris and she hoped that this proposal would soon become a reality.

But everything that had been done by Germany, in this sphere or with her active co-operation, with a view to increasing confidence and security for all nations, must not be considered as the fulfilment of an obligation which had to be accomplished in order to bring about conditions on which the disarmament of others still depended. The condition of that disarmament had been realised long ago by the disarmament of Germany.

Naturally, the demand constantly put forward by Germany—during all these years and at this Conference—that general disarmament should be achieved was not only due to the fact that she had already made her contribution by her own disarmament and that general disarmament had been promised to her in the Treaty of Versailles and in Article 8 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. Like the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Germany demanded disarmament in the interest of peace. He ventured to quote the words spoken by the German Chancellor in the Reichstag a few days ago:

"The German people wishes to live in peace with the world. But it is just for this reason that the Government of the Reich will endeavour in every way to put a definite end to the division of the nations into two categories. This open wound inspires distrust on the one hand and hatred on the other, and thus leads to a general lack of security. The National Government, with a view to reaching a sincere agreement, is prepared to hold out its hand to any nation which desires once for all to put an end to such a sad past. The misery of the world can only be overcome when stable political conditions have been created and confidence between the nations has been restored."

It would be impossible to find any other words which would give better proof of the aim pursued by Germany at this Conference. Indeed, the general sentiment of insecurity created by the unilateral disarmament of Germany and of the other disarmed States and by the constant delay in the disarmament of the other States could only be dissipated if this Conference finally decided to make disarmament general and to bring about an equitable perequation of armaments. It was impossible to continue to ask for more and more new contractual guarantees for the establishment of equal security for all nations; in the same way, an end must be put to an idea that other States would be entitled to ask for greater national security than Germany and that the latter should not only resign herself to the insecurity created by unilateral disarmament but should give fresh guarantees of security, in spite of the fact that she was a disarmed State surrounded by a world armed to the teeth. What this Conference had to decide was a general large-scale reduction of armaments and a perequation of armaments on the basis of the present position of contractual security. He repeated that Germany was prepared to accept the development of the Pact of Paris as proposed in the United Kingdom draft. If, in an era of confidence and international co-operation inaugurated by the perequation of armaments, other means and methods could still be found to render the organisation of peace more complete and effective, Germany would show no lack of goodwill.

But the task of this Conference was to bring about general disarmament and equality of rights for all States represented. It was from the point of view of the accomplishment of these two fundamental conditions that the German delegation had examined the United Kingdom plan.
As regards the reduction of armaments, it gladly recognised that the United Kingdom proposal provided for definite reductions, and the initiative taken on this point gave him the greatest satisfaction. He wondered, however, whether, in this respect, the draft went far enough and whether it provided the guarantees necessary for an effective realisation of these reductions. He hoped that, in the coming negotiations, it would be possible to take more far-reaching measures of reduction in all spheres. He was thinking, in particular, of the problem of air armaments, which had already been the subject of thorough preparatory work during the Conference. It should also be considered in what manner guarantees might be created in order to give an assurance that the object of these measures of disarmament would be actually attained.

As regards equality of rights, M. Nadolny did not need to repeat that, under the agreement of December 11th, 1932, this principle must be regarded as accepted. Germany must therefore take her place in the system of general disarmament as a party benefiting from equal rights, while the relation between her own armaments and those of the other States must be regulated in accordance with her right to national security, account being taken of her geographical position and special conditions in the same manner as in other States. The provisions of the draft and the words spoken by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had given M. Nadolny the impression that the justice of this demand was not contested. It was true that equal rights would only be completely realised after a transition period. Well, the German delegation was prepared to accept such a period. Nevertheless, in order to take account of his country's need for security and of its national dignity, certain changes appeared to be indispensable in the provisions of the draft on this subject. For instance, this first Disarmament Convention must put an end to all qualitative discriminations. The same categories of arms must be forbidden for all States and the same categories must be authorised for all. No doubt, the best way to disarm and to bring about equality of rights would be to prohibit now, in all countries, those arms which were prohibited in the peace treaties and to provide for their immediate destruction. Should, however, the Conference decide to make a different distinction between prohibited and permitted arms than that contained in the peace treaties, the practical consequences should be drawn automatically for the disarmed States on the basis of the principle of equal rights.

The quantitative regulation of the armaments of the disarmed States, like the regulation applicable to the other States, must take account of the principle of relativity—that was to say, the just relation of the armaments of one country to the armaments of its neighbours. The level on which this relativity must be based would naturally depend on the decisions of the Conference. The German delegation hoped that, in this case also, the Conference would take the peace treaties as its point of departure. In any case, it would be compatible neither with the principle of equality of rights nor with that of equal security for the whole world if the principle of relativity were left out of consideration.

Lastly, the German delegation thought it was in agreement with a great number of other delegations in considering that no State should be subjected to a military system which did not correspond to the special conditions and necessities of the country. M. Nadolny hoped that with a little goodwill the principles which he had just developed might be realised without great difficulty in the Convention. Once the principles of equality of rights and equality of security were accepted as a basis of the settlement, it was merely a matter of drawing conclusions from them. The question as to how the transitional character would nevertheless be expressed could be reserved for the detailed negotiations. In any case, he wished to state that the German delegation regarded the United Kingdom plan as a useful and adequate basis for the Convention, and that it was prepared to discuss it.

He would like to say a few words as to the method to be employed in this discussion. In his opinion, the method should only be determined by practical considerations—namely, what was the best way to reach a rapid agreement? It was, indeed, quite clear that a Convention would only be possible when it was acceptable to all—that was to say, when all had agreed at any rate on the main provisions. The question whether it would be useful, under these circumstances, for any particular States to come together in order to prepare the general agreement was one in which prestige or other motives foreign to the objects of the Conference should certainly not play any part, but it should be settled solely with a view to finding the best method in order to reach the final agreement as rapidly as possible. As far as the German delegation was concerned, it was prepared to accept any procedure offering practical possibilities of an agreement; in order to facilitate the work, it would as far as possible restrict its proposals to questions which appeared to be of capital importance, and it would avoid anything calculated unnecessarily to delay the work. The world was waiting impatiently for the result of this work; any delay would be unpardonable.

In conclusion, M. Nadolny again expressed his satisfaction that, thanks to the United Kingdom initiative, the Conference had now left the stage of preliminary enquiries, technical investigations and, to speak frankly, the evasion of decisions, and had entered the phase of practical decisions. With reference to the declarations made by the representatives of the three other States which were disarmed under the peace treaties, he hoped with them that these decisions would finally give satisfaction to the legitimate requirements of such countries.

The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had rightly said that it needed courage to have the confidence required for taking the necessary political decisions. M. Nadolny hoped that all
who were responsible for the fate of the Conference would now find this courage, the courage
necessary for finally settling the problem of disarmament and thus entering the path of peace,
of a just and durable peace between free nations.

Viscount Mushakoji (Japan) thought that there was no doubt that it was the common
desire of all delegations that the Conference should come to a successful close at an early date.
The Japanese delegation therefore considered it very opportune that the United Kingdom
delegation, to which it expressed its gratitude, had presented to the Conference a draft
Convention, which would certainly be very useful in the progress of the Conference’s
deliberations. The Japanese delegation fully understood the importance and timeliness of
such a démarche on the part of the United Kingdom delegation which would facilitate the work
in hand and accelerate it towards a satisfactory conclusion. It sincerely appreciated the motive
that had prompted the United Kingdom delegation in making the proposal.

The draft was at present being submitted to the most careful and detailed consideration
by the Japanese delegation and Government. He would therefore lay before the Conference
the Japanese delegation’s views on a later occasion when it had formed its opinion on
this important proposal. He desired, however, to assure his colleagues at the Conference that,
while reserving its position in regard to details of the draft, the Japanese delegation was prepared

to offer its sincere collaboration for the purpose of attaining the great end in view, taking the
United Kingdom proposal as the basis of discussion.

M. Saaavedra (Chile) said that the Chilian delegation had taken note with great pleasure
of the draft Convention submitted by the United Kingdom delegation. The draft had arrived
at a critical moment in the Conference’s discussions, and the welcome given to it was the best
proof that all had received it with great satisfaction.

Unfortunately, the work of a year and several months showed that the different plans that
had hitherto been submitted had, generally speaking, met with the same warm welcome during
the first discussion, but had partly broken down in the committees and sub-committees.

M. Saaavedra earnestly hoped that this plan, which testified to a great effort and a sincere
desire to rid the world of the nightmare of war, would not meet with the same fate, but that
the Conference would be able to reach the goal all its members so greatly desired and from which
they appeared to be getting farther away instead of nearer to it.

In the United Kingdom plan, which the Chilian delegation at once accepted as a basis for
discussion, there were perhaps certain gaps which, as several speakers had pointed out, would
have to be filled in.

Above all, M. Saavedra would venture to observe that the plan had apparently nothing
to say about one point that had received special attention in the Conference—namely, regional
understandings. The Chilian Government, as he had pointed out ever since the first preparatory
meeting, believed such understandings to be one of the means by which tangible results could
most easily be achieved.

Nevertheless, as the problem of disarmament mainly affected Europe, the Chilian dele-
gation would confine itself to expressing once again the hope that, by paying more attention
to the stipulations of Article 8 of the Covenant—that was to say, to the geographical situation
and special circumstances of each State—the ultimate Convention would be made more
flexible than the United Kingdom plan and would enable certain non-European States to seek
solutions within the framework of regional understandings.

One important point, to which several delegations had already called attention and which,
in M. Saaavedra’s opinion, should be settled in a Convention, was the definition of the aggressor.
He would, even go so far as to stipulate that there was no difference between de facto and de
jure war. In this connection, he might point out that the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of
Chile, M. Matte Gormaz, had made the following declaration in December last:

"We cannot make any difference between a de facto and a de jure war. The absence
of a formal declaration of hostilities does not alter the brutality of the acts committed."

He had added:

"If Pan-Americanism has a practical significance, I believe we must do everything to
avoid the fiction of peace when in reality there is war."

It seemed to M. Saaavedra that the Conference would take a big step towards strengthening
confidence if these points were clearly fixed in a subsequent Convention.

Without for the moment entering into details of the different parts of the plan under
discussion, the Chilian delegation desired to say that it noted with pleasure the limitation of the
maximum calibre of artillery to 105 millimetres, a proposal which would bring the
Conference a good deal nearer its goal. The Chilian delegation would also have welcomed the
abolition of tanks, seeing that they were essentially elements for attack.

It acceded enthusiastically to the complete abolition of bombing from the air and to the
prohibition of chemical, incendiary and bacterial warfare.