This volume contains the Minutes of the Land Commission, which was in session from February 27th to June 6th, 1932.

The Land Commission was set up by the General Commission on February 25th, 1932, in consequence of the following resolution, adopted by the Conference on the 24th of the same month:

"The Conference,

"Approving the proposals of the Bureau on the action to be taken in regard to the plans and proposals which have been placed before it:

"(1) Decides to transmit to the General Commission these plans and proposals, as well as the draft Convention (with annexes) prepared by the Preparatory Commission, which may serve as a framework for the work of the Conference;

"(2) Requests the General Commission to proceed to a preliminary study of, and to co-ordinate, the said plans and proposals and the draft Convention;

"(3) Decides that, without prejudice to the rules of procedure, the General Commission shall be authorised to constitute, as and when the need arises, such commissions, sub-commissions or committees as it may consider desirable, and, in particular, the land, naval, air and national defence expenditure commissions.

"Such commissions, sub-commissions or committees will report to the General Commission on the matters which it refers to them."

The Land Commission appointed the following officers:

**President**: M. E. Buero (Uruguay);

**Vice-Presidents**: General J. Laidoner (Estonia),
M. W. M. Van Lanschot (Netherlands);

**Rapporteur**: M. M. Bourquin (Belgium);

**Secretary**: Major M. N. Mathenet, Secretary of the Military Sub-Commission of the Permanent Advisory Commission for Military, Naval and Air Questions; Member of the Disarmament Section of the League of Nations.

1 Part V of the Rules of Procedure reads as follows:

"V. Commissions.

"1. The Conference shall have the right, according to the exigencies of the business on hand and convenience of work, to set up commissions on which all delegations may be represented by a delegate, who may be assisted by advisers, experts and secretaries. Committees may also be set up consisting of delegates of a limited number of countries.

"2. Each Commission shall appoint its Chairman and its Vice-Chairman or its Vice-Chairmen and shall, at the appropriate time, appoint one or more Rapporteurs.

"3. The Commissions may themselves set up sub-commissions."
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FIRST MEETING

Held on Saturday, February 27th, 1932, at 10.30 a.m.

The Right Honourable A. HENDERSON in the Chair

1. Election of the President.

Mr. HENDERSON drew attention to the decision taken by the General Commission on February 25th setting up the Land Commission. He proposed that the Commission should proceed to elect its President, Vice-President or Vice-Presidents and one or more Rapporteurs in accordance with Article 5, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference. Under Article 13 of the Rules, the election was to be carried out by secret ballot unless the Commission decided otherwise.

He proposed that the Commission should elect its President and should then decide whether to elect immediately one or more vice-presidents and one or more rapporteurs.

M. DE AGÜERO Y BETHANCOURT (Cuba) proposed that the Commission should only elect its President, and should adjourn the election of the vice-presidents and rapporteurs until the list of members of the Commission had been prepared.

The above proposal was adopted.

On the proposal of Mr. Wilson (United States of America), M. BUERO (Uruguay) was elected President by acclamation.

Mme. LuísI (Uruguay) accepted this nomination on behalf of M. Buero, who was temporarily absent.

SECOND MEETING

Held on Wednesday, March 9th, 1932, at 3.30 p.m.

President: M. BUERO

2. Election of the Vice-Presidents and of a Rapporteur.

The Commission appointed two Vice-Presidents — namely, General LAIDONER (Estonia) and M. VAN LANSCHOT (Netherlands).

M. BOURQUIN (Belgium) was appointed Rapporteur.

3. Examination of the Agenda.

The President recalled that, in accordance with the procedure drawn up by the Bureau and approved by the General Commission, that Commission was alone competent to deal with questions of principle, which could only be referred to the special Commissions after examination by the General Commission.

A certain number of questions, however, had been considered as suitable for examination by the special Commissions, without previous discussion by the General Commission. These questions were contained in document Conf. D.103. Any question of principle which might arise during the discussions in a special Commission would be referred to the General Commission. The above document, therefore, did not in any way prejudice the right of a special Commission to refer a question to the General Commission for a decision.

The President, passing in review the questions which might be examined by the Land Commission without previous discussion by the General Commission, noted that Articles 2 and 3 of the draft Convention contained certain definitions and a method of calculating average effectives. The Commission possessed, on the other hand, the proposals of various delegations on these two articles and on the tables attached thereto. Some of these proposals were concerned with the method of arriving at the figures, others with the number of figures to be inserted in the tables. It was therefore essential, in the first place, to ascertain exactly what was represented by the figures — that was to say, what classes of effectives were covered by each set of figures. This question was quite separate from those of trained reserves, separate limitation of home and overseas forces, the numbering of officers, professional soldiers, etc.
The Commission should therefore first come to an agreement as to the meaning of the various Governments, and it would therefore be necessary to examine these interpretations and then draw from them the necessary conclusions. The concepts of the Convention held by the Governments were indicated in their replies, and an examination of these replies would be useful, in order to remove any uncertainty as to the meaning of these articles of the Convention. The replies of the Governments were, however, numerous; and they might be examined either by the Commission or by a sub-committee which would report to the Commission. It would, on the other hand, be essential to get into touch with the other special Commissions with a view to co-ordinating the work and the conclusions to be submitted to the General Commission. The Land Commission should therefore consider the method of obtaining this co-ordination.

Colonel Fabry (France) supported the proposal of the President, which he understood as follows: As there was no question of the good faith and goodwill of the members of the Commission, efforts should be made to arrive as quickly as possible at a result based upon mutual confidence and esteem. The best way to reach this result was to speak the same language. There had been a considerable loss of time at the London Conference which might have been avoided if a preliminary agreement had been reached regarding the definition of certain terms.

In submitting the draft Convention to the various Governments for examination, the Council was well aware that it was making an experiment. It was anxious to know to what extent the preliminary texts would receive a common understanding and interpretation by the various Governments—that was to say, how a final text might be prepared which might be applied in good faith in all States.

An examination of the replies of the Governments showed a very great divergence of views as to the interpretations to be given to these terms; there were also important differences on matters of principle. The best way of coming to an agreement on principles was to avoid from the beginning any ambiguity as to the meaning of the words employed. It must, of course, be understood that, if a sub-committee were appointed, it could not go into the question of the figures; it would in any case be unwise to begin any such discussion until agreement had been reached as to the exact meaning of the words; but the sub-committee might go through the replies of the Governments and ascertain what differences existed as to the interpretation of the texts. The Bureau would thus be in a position to assist in directing the discussions, it being to some extent the task of the sub-committee to prepare the ground for the meetings of the Commission after having heard, if necessary, the representative of each Government as the replies of that Government came under consideration. The formation of a sub-committee would considerably facilitate, and not delay, the work of the Commission, as it would bring to light the divergencies arising to a great extent out of the differences in the naval, air and military systems of the various States. In order to save time, it would be better that the Commission should not wait until the sub-committee had examined all the questions. It could deal with them as and when they were submitted for consideration by the sub-committee. The sub-committee should be a rather small body, and it should, of course, have the power to summon the representative of any Government concerned in order to obtain further information regarding the replies it had sent.

The President pointed out, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, that the sub-committee would not make any enquiry into the figures submitted by the Governments in their replies, and would confine itself to an examination of the interpretation placed by these Governments on the text of the Convention.

He considered that co-ordination with other technical Commissions might be effected by notifying those Commissions of results as they were obtained. It was quite likely that the various Commissions would not deal with their respective programmes in the same order. The question of setting up a co-ordinating body might stand over for the present, as any resolutions which might be adopted would be subject to a second reading, at which time account would be taken of the work of the other Commissions.

Colonel Lanskornsksis (Lithuania) pointed out that the draft Convention had been adopted as the framework and not as the basis of the work of the Conference. It was therefore possible to introduce amendments on matters of principle. The suggestions which had been made by the Governments were numerous, and both political and technical in nature. Every single paragraph of the Convention, in fact, required a preliminary decision on a point of principle, and these were the concern of the General Commission. It therefore seemed difficult for the Land Commission to begin its examination of the questions referred to it, before the questions of principle had been settled. In his opinion, the sub-committee should, so to speak, draw up a fresh programme of work for the Commission, allocating for immediate discussion all questions in which no matter of principle was involved and excluding all others.

He was also of the opinion that the Bureau, and particularly the Vice-Presidents, should form the co-ordinating body with the other technical Commissions.

General Temperley (United Kingdom) referred to the statement made in the General Commission by Lord Londonderry to the effect that the United Kingdom delegation did not favour the discussion of questions of principle in the special Commissions except on direct reference from the General Commission. He considered that most of the matters which the Commission was discussing were already before the General Commission as
questions of principle, and he was therefore opposed to the reference of such matters to a sub-committee. If it were merely a question of the meaning to be given to the words "effectives" and "days' duty", he had no objection to a discussion in the Commission, but he wished to make it clear that to enquire into the meaning of "average daily effectives" would involve matters of principle. It would, moreover, be a waste of time to discuss now the meaning of phrases which might not even appear in the final form of the Convention. He wished also to point out that a definition might be too precise, and in the present case might well fail to cover the very wide varieties of practice and procedure which existed in the armies of the world. He was in agreement with the Lithuanian delegate in considering that, if a sub-committee were set up, its terms of reference should be very restricted and very strictly defined.

General Bonomi (Italy) said that his delegation entirely concurred in General Temperley's opinion. No question of principle should be taken up until the General Commission had come to a decision.

The President explained that the sub-committee would be asked merely to perform the material work of classifying the documents and preparing the various items of the Land Commission's work. The General Commission had referred to the Land Commission a certain number of questions for examination, and the Land Commission could not refuse to do so. If any question of principle arose during the examination, it would be held over and referred by the Land Commission to the General Commission. It was quite understood that the sub-committee's work would be purely preparatory.

M. Bourquin (Belgium), Rapporteur, thought it necessary to add, in order to obviate any ambiguity, that the sub-committee would not be asked to give any definitions or to propose any texts. It would simply examine the way in which Governments had interpreted the terminology used in Articles 2, 3 and 4 and bring out the difficulties they had encountered. He proposed therefore that the Commission should decide to set up a committee of experts to enquire into the way in which the various Governments had, when compiling the information they had sent to the League, interpreted the definitions given in Articles 2, 3 and 4 of the draft Convention, and into the difficulties and doubts which had arisen in their interpretation.

General Temperley (United Kingdom) reminded the Commission that A. Benes had stated in the General Commission that, if a delegation raised objections to the discussion of any point on the ground that it involved a question of principle, the President of the Commission would be free to withdraw such a matter from discussion by the Commission. In his opinion, if a sub-committee was to be appointed, it was essential that it should be a small one. He considered that it would be a waste of time to discuss at the present stage of the proceedings terms to which the Governments gave different interpretations, so long as the fundamental question of principle had not been settled by the General Commission.

General Burhardt-Bukacki (Poland) emphasised that it was essential that the sub-committee, and later the Land Commission, should avoid dealing with questions of principle. If that were agreed, the method of work proposed by the President was, he thought, acceptable. He suggested that the Commission might itself hear the explanations of the representatives of the various delegations concerning the way in which their Governments had calculated effectives.

The President, in reply to General Temperley, said that it was definitely understood that, if a question of principle arose, it must be submitted to the General Commission. That was the very basis on which the Commission's work was organised. If during the scrutiny of the replies from the Governments it was found that one of them involved a matter of principle, it would immediately be referred to the General Commission. The sub-committee's work would be merely to clear the ground and obtain explanations.

General Temperley (United Kingdom) was satisfied with the President's explanation.

Colonel Lanskoronski (Lithuania) wondered whether the Commission could depart from the terms of reference laid down by the General Commission when fixing its programme of work. In particular, was it really desirable to ascertain how the Governments had understood the practical application of the Convention? Such a study might have only an historical interest. In his opinion, it would perhaps be wiser to instruct the sub-committee merely to study the programme closely and to single out those questions which the Commission might take up at once without touching on matters of principle. He admitted that there would not be very many, since each problem had some bearing on a question of method and the fundamental system of the Convention was not very evident for the moment.

The President thought that the Lithuanian delegate's remark related rather to the question of the Commission's agenda.
He noted that the Commission accepted the idea that certain studies should be carried out under the conditions suggested by M. Bourquin.

The Commission would have to decide to what body this work should be entrusted, whether a small committee, the Commission itself or the Bureau, which would have the assistance of the delegates concerned.

General TEMPERLEY (United Kingdom) thought that the sub-committee should be as small as possible, and suggested that the work should be done by the Bureau.

Colonel FABRY (France) expressed satisfaction at the Commission's decision to create an instrument of work which would obviate not only loss of time but controversy as well. He had some doubt as to General Temperley's proposal, since, in his view, the problems in question came essentially within the competence of experts with an intimate knowledge of military organisation. The point was to ascertain the difficulties which the States had encountered. He thought that the Bureau might have the assistance of a committee of experts, whose work it would direct, while itself retaining the responsibility. He was particularly anxious that this investigation should be carried out by experts, since that would make it possible, as the Commission desired, to avoid entering into political questions.

General BENITEZ (Spain) considered that the sub-committee, however small, should include the representatives of the delegations whose opinions differed most widely. This would obviate lengthy discussions in plenary session.

Colonel DE CARVALHO (Brazil) seconded Colonel Fabry's proposal.

The Commission decided to set up a technical committee consisting of experts belonging to the following countries: United States of America, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the committee to work under the direction of the Bureau.

The Commission further decided that its agenda would be framed by the Bureau, which would consider what questions could be discussed immediately.

THIRD MEETING

Held on Tuesday, April 26th, 1932, at 11 a.m.

President: M. BUERO

4. QUALITATIVE DISARMAMENT: METHOD OF WORK TO BE ADOPTED IN EXECUTING THE TERMS OF THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON APRIL 22nd, 1932.

The President reminded the members of the Commission of the resolution adopted on April 22nd by the General Commission, to the effect that:

"... The Conference is of opinion that the range of land, sea and air armaments should be examined by the competent special Commissions with a view to selecting those weapons whose character is the most specifically offensive or those most efficacious against national defence or most threatening to civilians."

The General Commission was asking the Land Commission for technical information with a view to determining those weapons, so far as land armaments were concerned.

The President pointed out, however, that the Land Commission must be careful not to enter into questions of principle, which were outside its competence, as M. Paul-Boncour had observed in the General Commission.

He enquired what method of work the Land Commission preferred to adopt: it might examine the various proposals which had been put forward by the delegations concerning those arms to which the resolution applied; it might examine in succession each category of arms, or, lastly, it might endeavour to define the characteristics mentioned in the resolution and decide what weapons presented those characteristics. He invited the delegations to express their views as to the choice of method.

General BONOMI (Italy) was in favour of adopting the first method proposed by the President — i.e., of taking as a basis for discussion the proposals already put forward by the various delegations and examining in succession the categories of arms to which they applied: that method would make it unnecessary to revert to the work of the Preparatory Commission and would save time.
Lord HAILSHAM (United Kingdom) supported the Italian delegate's view that the Commission would be well advised to adopt the President's first suggestion. Two points, he thought, should claim the Commission's special attention: it must be sure not to omit any weapons that could be included under the head of qualitative disarmament, and it must lose no time in reaching its conclusions. The second method put before the Commission by the President would involve an unduly lengthy discussion, not necessarily followed by conclusive results. The third method — the definition of the characteristics of the various arms — was largely theoretical, and it would be difficult to focus the question within the terms of the resolution adopted on April 22nd.

The Co-ordinating Table, however, already contained any suggestions that had been submitted by the delegations, and there appeared to be only four classes that had occurred to anyone as falling within the category of qualitative armaments — namely, heavy artillery, tanks, armoured motor-cars, fortresses. If a fifth class was thought of, it could, of course, be added. The Commission might begin by discussing heavy guns, from the standpoint of mobility, long range, etc.

M. VON WEIZSÄCKER (Germany) supported the suggestions of the Italian and United Kingdom delegations. He thought the Commission should try to establish a single list, and the weapons enumerated by Lord Hailsham could be examined in succession.

M. AUBIERT (France) also supported the proposals that had been put forward, but stressed the point that the proposed list of weapons did not exhaust the subject and that other categories of arms might, if necessary, be added.

The PRESIDENT noted that the Commission was prepared to adopt the first method which he had proposed and which had been supported by the Italian, United Kingdom and German delegations. It was understood that, while the proposals already put forward by certain delegations would constitute the basis for discussion, that fact would not exclude new proposals that might be submitted by other delegations. The four classes to be examined might be, as suggested: (1) heavy artillery; (2) tanks; (3) armoured motor-cars; (4) fortresses. It would, however, be necessary, as General Bonomi had pointed out, for delegations to give details on certain points, such as the calibre of guns, etc., and any characteristic features of the material in question.

If the Commission decided to adopt that method, the President would ask the delegations to supply the necessary supplementary information as soon as possible; tables would be drawn up as a basis for the discussion, enabling the latter to be kept within the scope of the resolution of April 22nd.

The President said that he might have suggestions to submit to the Commission concerning the order in which those proposals should be studied, with a view to expediting the work as far as possible.

The Hon. Hugh WILSON (United States of America) enquired whether the intention was that gas warfare should be discussed by the Land, Naval and Air Commissions, or by one Commission only.

The PRESIDENT thought that the question came within the competence of the General Commission; he could not give an answer on the point raised.

M. DE MADARIAGA (Spain) saw no objection to the Commission drawing up its own list and including in it — if it considered this desirable — chemical weapons, even if that point had to be studied again later.

M. SATO (Japan) supported the proposals which had been put forward; he agreed also with M. de Madariaga as regards chemical weapons. He felt some doubt, however, as regards the method of discussion to be adopted by the Commission. Under the terms of the resolution, the Commission's task was to examine weapons from the standpoint of the various characteristics mentioned in the resolution; the same weapon, however, might present two or three of those characteristics. Tanks, for example, could be regarded as weapons of a specifically offensive character or as weapons most efficacious against national defence or, again, as weapons which were most threatening to civilians. It was on those three characteristics that the Commission must give an opinion and also on the degree to which those characteristics were present in each case. He proposed that each delegation should prepare tables and attribute to each of the various weapons studied so many "marks", as it were (from 1 to 10), for each characteristic.

M. POLITIS (Greece) had no wish to open a general discussion in the Commission, but would recall that the latter had been entrusted with a mission which must be carried out as quickly as possible. Under the terms of the resolution of April 22nd, the

Commission was entrusted with a work of comparison. The point was not to determine which weapons were offensive in character, but those whose character was the most specifically offensive. It must be made clear that the comparison must be made, not between the different weapons, but between the different characteristics of each weapon. He felt that a comparison of weapons, one with another, would involve unduly lengthy discussions, and that the Japanese proposal would require too complicated calculations. It must not be forgotten that the questions to be discussed were not merely technical but were in the main political, and that the Commission's task was to carry out a general examination, for which the use of coefficients seemed to him superfluous.

The President, reverting to M. de Madariaga's observation arising out of Mr. Wilson's question, insisted on the fact that the resolution of April 22nd did not set any limits on the Commission's task, and that the list submitted to it was in no way limiting.

As regards the procedure to be adopted, M. Sato had proposed a mathematical system which, as M. Politis had remarked, was open to certain objections. The point indeed was not to define the different weapons by means of a general estimate, on the basis of the three characteristics enumerated; according to the General Commission's view, it was not necessary for a weapon to present all three characteristics to be included in the list.

He thought that Lord Hailsham's argument fitted in with M. Politis's suggestions and that, if the Commission had to examine the weapons one by one and not in relation to one another, it would undoubtedly be embarking upon a somewhat lengthy enumeration.

M. Politis (Greece) replied that he had simply wished to sketch out a general plan of work. He agreed that the best method would be to study one by one the different categories of weapons, remembering that the list was not finally established and that any delegation could still submit proposals. He thought his remarks were quite compatible with the proposals of the United Kingdom delegate, since he had simply asked that the Commission, instead of comparing arms one with another, should endeavour to decide by categories to what extent each of them possessed the characteristics enumerated in the resolution.

M. Sato (Japan) said that he, too, had had in mind an estimate of the different weapons from the standpoint of the three characteristics enumerated, rather than a general estimate on the basis of the total of coefficients. As he understood it, the Commission's work was to specify the weapons which most clearly possessed one of three characteristics; to facilitate that decision he had proposed the adoption of a mathematical system. If that were considered too complicated, he was prepared to accept any other.

M. de Madariaga (Spain) agreed that the Commission would be wise to take as a starting-point for its work the proposals already submitted by delegations. At the same time, he could only support the proposal put forward by the United Kingdom delegate with certain reservations.

He noted that all the members of the Commission were in favour of taking as a basis for their work the proposals already submitted by delegations, on the understanding that they did not constitute a complete basis and did not exclude the possibility of submitting other proposals as the work advanced.

He wished to remove one apparent cause of confusion in the discussion, and pointed out that the proposals of delegations which were to be taken as a basis for the work of the Commission had each been prepared separately. That necessarily meant overlapping, which might hinder the Commission's work.

He thought it would be preferable for the Commission to take as a basis a plan in which the various proposals submitted by delegations would be co-ordinated in a list of weapons drawn up without any reference to the degree of offensiveness of each weapon. It would be for the Land Commission to determine the characteristics of each weapon within the meaning of the General Commission's resolution. A definite basis for its work would thus be available. The draft might be framed by a Committee of six or ten members selected from among the members of the Land Commission.

M. Aubert (France) said that he was very much impressed by M. de Madariaga's remarks. It was clear that, if the Commission took as its starting-point the lists of weapons submitted by the delegations, lists which had been framed on empirical lines, re-grouping would be necessary, and that re-grouping must of course be carried out on the lines of the General Commission's proposal, that was to say, with reference to the three criteria laid down in the resolution of April 22nd. For that it would be necessary to have the opinion of the delegations as to the extent to which each weapon presented one or more of the characteristics mentioned in the resolution. How could that be achieved? With the help of a small committee, or by inviting each delegation to forward its suggestions to the President, who would be asked to classify them? It seemed preferable that the Bureau of the Land Commission should be responsible for the re-grouping, so that the Commission could embark on its discussion a few days hence in the spirit of the general resolution.

The President was prepared to adopt whatever method might be recommended by members of the Commission. He expressed the view that the work would proceed more rapidly if the delegations would send him their proposals as soon as possible, in order that the Bureau might begin the work of re-grouping without delay.
M. DE MADARIAGA (Spain) supported the proposal that the re-grouping should be carried out by the Bureau of the Commission.

The President, summing up the discussion, suggested that it should be decided that delegations which had submitted lists of weapons which were to form the subject of special treatment should give fuller details as soon as possible concerning the weapons they had in mind. He expressed the hope that the delegations would send in the necessary material as soon as possible, in order that the Bureau might prepare the table without delay.

M. BOURQUIN (Belgium), Rapporteur, feared that the method of work proposed would not produce rapid results. The Land Commission was in favour of taking as a basis for its work the proposals to be found in the Co-ordinating Table, always with the possibility of supplementing them. The first weapon to be examined would be heavy artillery. The Land Commission was about to ask the delegations to define their proposals concerning that weapon. Would all those proposals fit in with one another? He feared, moreover, that the Bureau might be inundated with documents.

He thought, therefore, that it would be more practical for the President to convene the representatives of delegations which had submitted proposals concerning heavy artillery, in order that they might define their meaning in greater detail. The necessary preliminary work could be got through quickly in a single afternoon. He proposed therefore an exchange of views, instead of written replies.

The President wished, above all, to have the opinion of technical experts; it was of secondary importance whether the information was given verbally or in writing.

M. VON WEIZSÄCKER (Germany) thought that the most practical solution would be for the delegates to bring their proposals to the meeting in writing. The necessary co-ordinating could be done by means of an exchange of verbal explanations.

M. POLITIS (Greece) pointed out that it was essential to choose the most rapid method of work, so as not to suspend the meetings of the Land Commission. He was afraid that written communications might complicate the Bureau's task. It was intended to hold a meeting of the Commission on the following afternoon, and he was very anxious that it should not be adjourned.

He thought that the quickest method would be to ask the representatives of delegations which had submitted proposals to come to the meeting that very afternoon and give fuller particulars. In that way the co-ordinating document could be prepared by the Bureau the following morning and circulated to the delegations in time for the meeting of the Land Commission to be held on the following afternoon.

The President said that if the Land Commission saw no objection and decided to adopt the quickest method, he would propose that the technical experts of the delegations which had submitted proposals should be asked to attend the meeting that afternoon, in order to give the Bureau such details as it might require to enable it to draw up the co-ordinating document, so that the Commission might meet on the following afternoon.

M. SATO (Japan) enquired why the invitation was confined to the experts of delegations which had already submitted proposals. He pointed out that the Land Commission was faced with a fresh factor — the resolution of the General Commission of April 22nd — and expressed the view that all the delegations, even those not mentioned in the Co-ordinating Table, should be given an opportunity of attending the meeting in the afternoon in order to join in the discussion.

The President thought that there was a slight misunderstanding. The proposed meeting with the representatives of the delegations which had put forward the proposals enumerated in the Co-ordinating Table would be in no way exclusive in character. The other delegations could also submit proposals, should they so desire. The immediate consideration, however, was to obtain fuller details concerning the proposals enumerated in the Co-ordinating Table. Belgium, for example, had proposed special treatment for heavy long-range artillery. What was meant by heavy long-range artillery? Germany had included in her proposals heavy and field artillery above a specified calibre. The Commission must know what that calibre was.

The intention was not to exclude any other delegation that might desire to submit proposals. Any member of the Land Commission that wished might be present at the meeting.

The President insisted, however, that it was important for the Bureau to have fuller details at once as to the meaning of the proposals already submitted, in order that it might be possible for it to arrange the work within the framework of the General Commission's resolution.

The Secretariat had just given him a list of the countries which had submitted proposals, to be found in the Co-ordinating Table. They were: Afghanistan, Austria, Italy, Latvia, Switzerland, Spain, United Kingdom, Sweden, Belgium, Portugal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, China, Turkey, Germany, France, Denmark and the United States of America. He invited the delegations of those countries to send representatives.
to a meeting which would be held at four o'clock, to supply any explanations and details concerning their proposals, with a view to organising the Land Commission's work within the framework of the general resolution.

General de Nánásy-Mégay (Hungary) pointed out that other States had submitted proposals which would be found in Part II, "Material", of the Co-ordinating Table, and expressed the view that their representatives should be invited to attend the meeting.

The President assured the Hungarian delegate, as he had already assured M. Sato, that any member of the Land Commission might be present at the meeting.

M. Aubert (France), summing up, said that he understood that representatives of delegations were invited to supply information simply with a view to the preparation of a list for purposes of study, and that the forthcoming meeting would not adopt any decision on the proposals or in any way prejudice the decisions to be taken by the Land Commission in plenary session.

The President stated that M. Aubert's interpretation was quite correct.

FOURTH MEETING

Held on Wednesday, April 27th, 1932 at 4 p.m.

President: M. Buero

5. Examination of the Criteria Proposed by Various Delegations with a View to Selecting the Weapons Possessing the Characteristics Enumerated in the Resolution Adopted by the General Commission on April 22nd, 1932.

The President announced that, in conformity with the decision taken by the Land Commission at its meeting on April 26th, the Bureau had drawn up a report (document Conf. D./C.T.5) recapitulating and classifying the more detailed information given by certain delegations concerning the criteria which they proposed should be taken in determining the material that was to form the subject of special treatment.

Before drawing conclusions from the report, he wished to thank M. Mathenet, the Secretary of the Bureau, to whom it was indebted for having enabled it to get through the work so quickly.

The first point noted in the report was that a certain number of delegations proposed to establish a distinction between mobile heavy artillery and fixed heavy artillery for permanent fortification works. Certain delegations were of opinion that fixed heavy artillery did not call for any special regime, while others held that it should be made subject to less radical restrictions than were proposed for mobile artillery. The President suggested, accordingly, that the Commission should decide whether a distinction should be established between mobile heavy artillery and fixed heavy artillery. He did not think that it would be difficult to reach an agreement on that point. It would, however, be necessary to define fixed artillery. The Commission might perhaps think it expedient to ask a technical committee to establish a definition. He proposed that the Commission should decide whether a technical committee should be appointed to give the technical definition necessary to distinguish between fixed and mobile heavy artillery. To save time, however, the Commission might, without waiting for the technical committee's conclusions, examine mobile heavy artillery materials, which differed so obviously from fixed heavy artillery that the question of discriminating between them need not be discussed.

M. Aubert (France), while agreeing that it would be useful to refer the question of a differentiation between fixed and mobile heavy artillery to a technical committee, did not wish it to be assumed, by this fact, that the principle of a differentiation between the two categories was agreed. On the one hand, the opinion expressed by Sub-Commission "A" of the Preparatory Commission made it impossible to come to a rapid decision on that question of principle, and, on the other, the experience of the last war had shown that fixed fortress and coastal defence guns could be made mobile very easily. He felt obliged accordingly to make every reservation regarding the question of principle without, however, offering any objection to its being discussed in the proposed technical committee.
M. BOURQUIN (Belgium), Rapporteur, pointed out that it was not so much a question of deciding a matter of principle as of adopting a procedure designed to facilitate the discussions. The Commission would probably achieve more satisfactory results if the technical aspect of the problem had first been discussed and defined by a technical committee. Pending the conclusions of that committee, the Commission could proceed to examine the question of mobile artillery while still leaving the matter open as regards fixed artillery.

M. AUBERT (France) expressed himself in agreement with the Rapporteur.

The President proposed, therefore, that the Commission should examine in the first place the question of mobile heavy artillery, leaving the definition of such artillery until later. He observed that certain delegations had proposed calibre limits which were not the same in the case of guns, howitzers and trench-mortars. He feared that that discrimination might lead to some confusion. If a difference was to be made between those three categories of material, it would be necessary to define each of them. Would it not be better to arrive at a single rule for guns, howitzers and trench-mortars alike? He invited the Commission to express an opinion on the subject, more particularly those delegations which had proposed that a distinction should be made.

M. VON WEIZSÄCKER (Germany) observed that all the members of the Commission were acquainted with the German proposal which made a distinction between guns, howitzers and trench-mortars. He thought that the provisions of the Treaties of Peace which had been drafted by experts might be taken as a basis for discriminating between those several weapons.

M. DE MADARIAGA (Spain) was not quite clear as to the difficulties which seemed to be troubling the Commission. The General Commission had asked the Land Commission to decide which were the weapons whose character was most specifically offensive or most efficacious against national defence, or most threatening to civilians. It was not the absolute character but the relative character of each weapon that the Land Commission had to decide. It was not necessary, therefore, for the Commission to fix any calibre; it was sufficient to say that guns of so many millimetres were more specifically offensive or more threatening to civilians than weapons of a smaller calibre. It would be for the Political Commission to draw the line of demarcation between weapons which should and weapons which should not form the subject of qualitative disarmament. Moreover, the definition based on calibre was quite artificial from the standpoint of disarmament, which was the one with which the Commission was concerned, since it had to consider what would happen to the armaments that would still remain after the abolition of certain material; such armaments would undoubtedly be more dangerous. It must not be forgotten that this question was purely relative. The Commission must draw up a list of weapons of a more or less offensive character, stating the point at which, in its opinion, the calibre of the weapons rendered them inoffensive.

The President explained that his reason for asking the German delegation whether it insisted on maintaining the subdivision of mobile material into guns, howitzers and trench-mortars was in order that the Land Commission might, if the delegation agreed, concentrate on the question of calibre for the whole category of mobile heavy armaments. Otherwise it would be necessary to define each type, which would be a heavy task.

M. VON WEIZSÄCKER (Germany) observed that there were among the members of the Commission military experts of countries other than Germany which established a distinction between guns, howitzers and trench-mortars. It might be well to ask for their opinion.

The President, adopting M. von Weizsäcker's suggestion, enquired whether the Danish delegation had any observations to offer.

M. KRAFT (Denmark) did not wish to put forward any objection.

M. VON WEIZSÄCKER (Germany) agreed that the three classes of weapons should be taken together, on condition that the lowest calibre — 77 mm. — was adopted for each type.

The President proposed that, in that case, the Commission should examine the proposals concerning mobile artillery, beginning with the proposals which had suggested the lowest calibre.

M. VAN LANSCOT (Netherlands) thought that, before beginning this examination, the members of the Commission should agree as to the meaning of the General Commission's resolution. Several of his colleagues had spoken on the previous day of three different classes of weapons coming under the terms of the resolution: weapons whose character was the most specifically offensive, weapons most efficacious against national defence and weapons most threatening to civilians. Although the General Commission had
mentioned those three characteristics, he wondered whether the weapons belonging to the first category did not almost always belong to the second also. There was no question of amending the General Commission’s resolution; that was not within the Land Commission’s competence. M. van Lanschot simply wished to interpret the resolution, by stressing the real meaning, so as to avoid all possible ambiguity. He noted that in almost every case the first and second categories were the same. He observed, moreover, that the second category had been included in Mr. Gibson’s proposal, and he seemed to remember that the expression “those most efficacious against national defence” had been inserted more with the idea of defining what was meant by “offensive” in character. It would be useful for the Commission to have the opinion of the United States representative on this point.

Mr. Wilson (United States of America) said that, while not wishing to interpret the meaning of the General Commission, it had seemed to him from the debate that there was some ambiguity and that the Land Commission was looking on the first two terms of the resolution as constituting two separate points, whereas Mr. Gibson’s intention in suggesting the insertion of the second one had been to indicate a method of defining “offensive” weapons.

The President noted Mr. Wilson’s statement, which would be of great value in applying the criteria enumerated by the resolution, when it came to defining the armaments for the purpose of the final report.

Opening the discussion on the question of calibre, he invited the German delegation to state the reasons for which it thought that weapons of a calibre of 77 mm. possessed one or more of the characteristics enumerated in the final resolution.

M. von Weizsäcker (Germany) feared that, if the report just distributed were taken as a basis for discussion, the multiplicity of the criteria proposed therein might lead to a very lengthy debate. He repeated his proposal that the basis so carefully formulated in the Treaties of Peace should be taken as a basis for the Commission’s discussions.

M. Sato (Japan) also foresaw certain difficulties if the Land Commission embarked directly on a discussion of questions of calibre, weight and range, and recommended the constitution of a technical committee to discuss the characteristics of the weapons in question.

The Commission must know first if it could take as a criterion for defining the heavy artillery covered by the resolution of April 22nd, the calibre, weight or range of the guns and whether it must deal with heavy artillery as a whole or subdivide it into three classes: guns, howitzers and trench-mortars. A technical committee was the proper body to give an opinion on both those points. When the Land Commission had that opinion before it, it could decide the characteristics of the different weapons within the meaning of the resolution of April 22nd, and could then forward its conclusions to the General Commission.

General Temperley (United Kingdom), speaking on a point of order, enquired whether the Commission was discussing the German proposal to take 77 mm. as the calibre limit or the Japanese proposal concerning the appointment of a technical committee.

The President thought that M. Sato’s proposal should be examined first and that the Commission should be consulted as to the procedure which it wished to adopt. Should the whole question be referred to the experts, or only the question of calibre?

M. Politis (Greece) supported M. Sato’s proposal; it was, he thought, essential to appoint a technical committee, which would be asked to indicate the criterion to be adopted by the Commission.

Mr. Wilson (United States of America) said that as a non-technical member of the Commission, he had no hesitation in asking for the appointment of an expert committee. He pointed out that the Land Commission was a general technical Commission. If a small committee were formed, he was afraid that certain views which would not have been expressed in that Committee might be expressed in the Plenary Commission, in which case the discussion would be reopened. He suggested, then, that the Commission should hold a meeting at which the delegations would be represented by their technical experts, though this would not prevent political representatives from attending.

For the moment, M. Bourquin was of opinion that the Commission should, as Mr. Wilson and the President had proposed, invite the delegations which had submitted concrete proposals to give figures and explain them. Such information would help to enlighten the Commission.
Colonel Lanskoronskis (Lithuania) thought that each weapon should be examined from the standpoint of the three characteristics enumerated in the general resolution, since it frequently happened that the same weapon presented more than one of those characteristics.

M. de Madariaga (Spain) was anxious to find a via media between the proposal of M. Sato and M. Politis and that of M. Bourquin as regards the examination of the technical aspect of the questions before the Commission. He suggested that the Bureau should draw up a new report giving, for example, the exact definition of the material to be examined by the Commission and a list of such material, with indications as to the calibre, power, mobility and method of transport, whether train or motor transport. The Commission could then begin its examination, starting not with weapons of the lowest calibre, but with those of the highest. It would be easier in that way to reach an agreement concerning the offensive character of the material. As the scale of calibres diminished, objections would be raised and it would be for the Commission to fix the point at which the limit of the offensive character of the weapon was deemed to have been reached.

The President pointed out that M. de Madariaga's proposal was similar to one of the three methods which he himself had submitted on the previous day for the Commission to choose from, and that it had been rejected by the United Kingdom delegation as being likely to involve lengthy discussion. He asked the Commission to come to a decision concerning M. Sato's proposal and to say whether it wished the exchange of views on the reasons for which certain delegations had proposed certain calibres to be continued at a plenary meeting or whether it wished to appoint a small technical committee to hear their explanations and draw up a report.

General Burhardt-Bukacki (Poland) recommended that the Commission should first hear the delegations' reasons, since some of them might be of a political character; the statement of technical reasons would come next and would be made before a technical committee.

M. Sato (Japan) explained that he was in favour of setting up a technical committee of military experts without stating any special number of members. All the delegations must have the right to delegate a military expert to that committee. The questions to be dealt with by the Land Commission had two aspects: military and political. They should first be studied from the military standpoint by a technical committee and then examined from a political standpoint at a plenary meeting of the Commission.

The President, noting that all the members of the Commission were in favour of hearing the reasons which had guided the delegations in adopting the various calibres given, suggested that the question of appointing a technical committee should be postponed for the moment. He invited the Chinese delegate to state the reasons which had determined the fixing of the calibre mentioned in the Chinese delegation's proposal.

General Whang (China) explained that the Chinese delegation had suggested 80 mm. as the calibre limit, as it was proposing the abolition of heavy artillery of all kinds, in view of the specifically offensive character of that weapon and of its efficacy against the national defence of the adversary.

General Bonomi (Italy) explained that, in asking for the abolition of artillery of a calibre exceeding 100 mm., the Italian delegation was considering the matter simply from a technical standpoint. It was of opinion that artillery of a calibre exceeding that figure was capable, by reason of its power or that of the projectile fired, of taking the enemy by surprise and overwhelming him, as it could destroy his defences without leaving him time to reply. The object of disarmament being to increase the possibility of defence in the event of attack, the Italian delegation felt that the prohibition of all types of heavy artillery was imperative.

From a purely practical standpoint, the Italian delegation thought that the more specifically offensive characteristics of a weapon were determined by the mobility, power and range of that weapon. It stressed the fact that mobility was a primordial factor in enabling the aggressor to concentrate his forces in order to destroy the defence works of his adversary, as was proved by the experience of the last war.

Again, the weapons which possessed in the highest degree those characteristics of mobility, power and range were also the weapons most threatening to civilians.

Lastly, it was by means of long-range guns that chemical and bacteriological warfare could chiefly be carried on.

The Italian delegation also adduced in support of its proposal a financial argument, for, in view of the fact that the cost of a weapon increased in proportion to its calibre, the abolition of artillery of a calibre above 100 mm. would result in an enormous reduction in the military budgets of States.

Lieutenant-General Omer Khan (Afghanistan) supported the Italian delegation's explanation, while reserving the right to give further details at the next meeting, if necessary.
The President observed that such additional information could be sent to the technical committee.

Colonel Züblin (Switzerland) explained that Switzerland had attempted to find a criterion which would, as far as possible, be above all discussion. It had chosen 150 mm., that being the figure adopted in the Convention on the trade in arms in establishing a distinction between heavy and light artillery. The same calibre had also been adopted as a criterion in the Convention on the manufacture of arms. Lastly, the artillery regulations of the great Powers all seemed to regard heavy artillery as starting at a calibre of about 150 mm.

M. Aubert (France) asked the President for further explanations. He understood that the President had suggested appointing a technical committee when the delegations had explained their proposals, and that there would be a full discussion at the next meeting. He did not think the time had come for the technical committee to begin its work. It was necessary first to determine, by means of a general discussion, what questions were to be referred to the committee.

Mr. Wilson (United States of America) said that, in selecting the figure of 155 mm. as the single-calibre limit, the United States had been guided by two main considerations — the character of the gun and the use to which it would be put. It had taken those guns which were most effective in breaking down defence (prepared trenches and fortresses) and had taken into account the fact that no division had guns superior to 155 mm. In approaching the problem, the Commission must aim at keeping down costs. If certain types of guns could be eliminated, heavy costs would thereby be eliminated at once, for guns, as they increased in calibre, increased in geometrical ratio in cost. He would go into the question more fully later.

General de Nánaśy-Mégay (Hungary) explained that his country had fixed 105 mm. as the calibre for guns, howitzers and mortars, because there were countries which had no fixed fortifications and which were obliged, in case of war, to erect emergency fortifications which could easily be destroyed by guns of a calibre exceeding 105 mm. Guns with a calibre exceeding that figure might also, in view of their range, constitute a menace to civilians and reach soldiers and civilians beyond the frontier. Lastly, a 105-mm. calibre was regarded in the Treaties of Peace as the limit for heavy artillery. As trench-mortars, on the other hand, had a shorter range, a higher calibre had been authorized for them — namely, 150 mm.

General Tarbuk (Austria) supported the Hungarian delegate and laid stress on the distinction clearly established in the Treaties of Peace between heavy artillery and light artillery by the provision of a 105-mm. calibre for guns, howitzers and mortars and 150 mm. for trench-mortars.

Colonel Dawnay (United Kingdom) said that, in arriving at a calibre of 155 mm., or approximately 6 inches, the United Kingdom delegation had been guided by three main considerations. In the first place, this limit definitely excluded the use of heavy shells capable of destroying heavy fortifications; it excluded guns of a definitely offensive character. Secondly — a point also noted by the delegates of Switzerland and of the United States — the limit for practically all the military nations was 155 mm., or 6 inches; to lower it would mean reorganisation at huge expense. Thirdly, the United Kingdom's own material needs made the retention of a gun of that size very necessary for carrying out her Imperial functions; in some parts of the world a lighter field-gun could not be used, owing to the nature of the terrain.

General van Tunen (Netherlands) said that, although the Netherlands delegation had not proposed the abolition of this or that weapon, it was nevertheless prepared to support any proposal for the abolition of armaments that promised to be effective. He was in favour of dealing with the question as simply as possible. He agreed with M. de Madariaga that the distinctions required under the resolution of April 22nd were primarily a question of appreciation.

The Netherlands delegation had fixed a calibre of 155 mm. as the limit between light artillery and heavy artillery, that being the criterion laid down in the Convention of 1925 concerning the trade in arms. This figure had also been adopted as the line of demarcation between the two categories of artillery in the Preparatory Commission's report. Lastly, the Netherlands delegation held that it was above that calibre that heavy artillery became most specifically offensive and most efficacious against defensive works.

M. de Madariaga (Spain) stated that his country demanded the abolition of all weapons of a specifically aggressive character. While admitting the empirical character of that...
definition, he thought that it was none the less applicable, and insisted on the point that
the offensive character of weapons lay in their range and mobility.

The President proposed that the explanations of the delegations of Sweden, France, the Soviet Union and Belgium should be heard next day. He suggested that, after hearing the representatives of those delegations, the Commission should hold a general discussion and should then appoint the technical committee, to which it could submit any technical points that might emerge in the course of the discussion.

The President's proposals were adopted.

FIFTH MEETING
Held on Thursday, April 28th, 1932, at 4 p.m.

President: M. BUERO.

6. EXAMINATION OF THE CRITERIA PROPOSED BY VARIOUS DELEGATIONS WITH A VIEW TO SELECTING THE WEAPONS POSSESSING THE CHARACTERISTICS ENUMERATED IN THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON APRIL 22ND, 1932 (continuation).

The President recalled that the Commission still had to hear the explanations of some of the delegations which had submitted proposals.

General NYGREN (Sweden) explained that the Swedish delegation had proposed 160 mm. as the calibre limit, but that it would, if necessary, agree to a figure somewhere, between 160 and 150 mm., that being approximately the calibre of coastal artillery. If the calibre of naval artillery were reduced, it would be prepared to agree also to a corresponding reduction in that of coastal artillery. For land artillery it would accept a calibre limit of 105 mm.

M. LANGOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that the Soviet delegation had proposed the abolition of heavy artillery of great power and long range, the abolition of tanks and the limitation of artillery material to the existing types.

These proposals were an integral part of a whole, and were not a reply to the three points raised in the resolution adopted by the General Commission.

In reply to these three points, the Soviet delegation was of the opinion that all artillery, cannon, howitzers and mortars of which the calibre exceeded 100 mm. should be considered as an offensive weapon and efficacious against national defence. It therefore supported the view put forward by the Italian delegation, while adding, however, that it was necessary to take into consideration not only the calibre, but other technical characteristics, such as the weight of the gun in position, the weight and range of the projectile. These data were necessary in order to ensure that the prohibitions to be instituted would not be circumvented by developments which modern technique might devise.

The Soviet delegation was, moreover, always ready to support the most radical proposals, provided that their object was a real qualitative and quantitative reduction of existing armaments.

General NYUTEN (Belgium) stated that the Belgian delegation had not thought it necessary to specify numerically the level of least efficacy for specifically offensive weapons or of least danger from the standpoint of national defence. It had decided a priori to support any proposal for the qualitative reduction of artillery material on which agreement could be reached at the Conference.

Although, in its proposals, the Belgian delegation had not put forward any data concerning calibre, it was anxious to help in elucidating the difficult problem referred to the Commission under the resolution of April 22nd. It thought that the Commission should examine land armaments from two standpoints: that of efficacy in attack and that of the danger to civilians, the first and second of the characteristics enumerated in the General Commission's resolution being one and the same.

From the standpoint of efficacy in attack, land armaments might be classed in the following order: mobile artillery, judged by the standards of present-day development and technique; tanks; gases released in waves from the ground or by means of projectiles; armed motor-cars.

From the standpoint of danger to civilians, land armaments might be classed as follows: in the first place, gases, then mobile artillery, considered more particularly from the standpoint of range. This classification would, of course, have to be justified in the report to the General Commission.
The Belgian delegate next explained that he had classed mobile artillery in the first rank of offensive weapons, as it was the most efficacious in breaking down the two principal forms of resistance in any defence — namely, active forces and permanent fortifications.

In order to decide what artillery material should form the subject of qualitative disarmament, it would be necessary to consider the specifically offensive character of each weapon, that being directly proportionate to its power, which was determined by calibre and range. The Commission would be well advised to examine each class of material from the standpoint of range, after having examined it from that of calibre, and then give an opinion as to the degree of efficacy of the material in question.

Though calibre was an important criterion in view of the destructive power it conferred on projectiles, the Belgian delegate would prefer to estimate the more specifically offensive character of a weapon according to the works that it was capable of destroying by reason of its calibre or range. He warned the Commission against fixing unduly narrow limits, and proposed that it should examine the degree of efficacy of the offensive power of artillery material against the means of resistance to attack — in other words, against permanent concrete or armoured fortifications, against emergency field fortifications and against resistance, properly so-called, of the active forces; on the basis of those data, it could indicate the calibres and range of the guns required to reduce the various obstacles.

A comprehensive study established on that basis and covering all the weapons that the Commission had been asked to examine would, he thought, answer the requirements of the General Commission's resolution.

M. Aubert (France) said that he had been struck by the discrepancy in the figures and reasons already given by the delegations, a discrepancy which was explained by the fact that each delegation was governed chiefly by its national requirements and which made it seem likely that the Commission would not be able to arrive at joint conclusions. That result he thought could be obtained only after a technical study, on the basis of the characteristics enumerated in the General Commission's resolution of April 22nd.

He proposed to make a rapid survey of those characteristics with a view to defining the questions to be referred to the technical committee, now that the explanations given had provided the Commission with data for discussion.

As regards the first point — what were the weapons whose character was most specifically offensive? — the experts had already replied in Sub-Commission A of the Preparatory Commission and their replies were in agreement with actual experience. No weapon could be said to be of a specifically offensive character. Any weapon could be used efficaciously for defence as well as for attack. While there were thus no specifically offensive weapons, some material was particularly powerful both for defensive and for offensive purposes, and that power could be determined by the extent of the destructive action and range of the material.

As regards the second criterion named in the resolution of April 22nd, M. Aubert shared the view of the United States and Netherlands representatives that it was not distinct from the first, but had the advantage of being more definite.

As regards the definition of material most efficacious against national defence, he pointed out that Sub-Commission A had defined defensive armaments as permanent or temporary-fortifications. The French delegation did not think that artillery capable of being used effectively against field fortifications should be included in the category of weapons whose character was threatening to national defence. It felt that to do so might put a premium on aggression. After a surprise attack, the invader might entrench himself in the conquered territory. The attacked State therefore must retain the means of driving out the invader. Every State must still have at its disposal the equipment it might require to reach objectives of every kind on the battlefield.

As regards the third characteristic — efficacy against civilians — M. Aubert observed that, in referring to the protection of civilians against artillery, what was obviously meant was civilians behind the battlefield, so that it was necessary first to define what was meant by the battlefield and to ask the experts to give that definition.

The French representative proposed that the following questionnaire which had been proposed by the French delegation should be sent to the technical committee:

"I"

1. What are the materials necessary for effective action against entrenchments and field works, and having the range necessary to reach the normal objectives of the modern battlefield?

2. (a) What is the weight of the projectile (or weight of explosive) necessary for effective action against the essential organisations of modern permanent fortification?

(b) What are the technical characteristics, and in particular the calibre, of the corresponding guns?

"II"

1. In modern war, what is the depth over which the troops and their various weapons engaged in the battle are distributed?

2. What are the technical characteristics of the guns capable of firing beyond that depth?"
He added that, if the question of coastal defence were dealt with by the Land Commission, it would be necessary also to consider whether coastal defence armaments should not be superior to the armament of vessels that might attack the coasts, a point which would raise the problem of interdependence between land and naval calibres.

He wished, however, to confine himself to a definition of the questions already enumerated which were to be referred to the technical committee, that was to say, to the Land Commission itself, but consisting of technical experts.

General Burhardt-Bukacki (Poland) stressed the importance of long-range artillery in view of its efficacy resulting from the range of its field of fire.

Referring more particularly to coastal artillery, he pointed out that it was essential to maintain the superiority of defence over aggression and for that reason to allow coastal batteries a calibre equal, if not superior, to that of naval artillery material. He observed that coastal artillery should include coastal guns on railways required for the defence of a long coast line.

Fortress artillery should, he thought, be at least equal in power to mobile artillery, so that the defence might still have a certain superiority over the attack. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that so-called fixed guns mounted on turrets could be dismounted and utilised as mobile pieces by placing them on gun-carriages.

As regards the various calibre limits proposed for mobile heavy artillery, ranging from 100 to 200 mm., the Polish delegate thought it would be difficult to establish a general rule, as the particular situation of the frontiers would have to be taken into account for each country, the efficacy of a weapon being determined by the obstacles which it was capable of overcoming.

In classifying weapons from the standpoint of efficacy against national defence, the first in order would be the most mobile material owing to the facility with which they could be concentrated on a specific point with the object of breaking down the adversary’s defences; then would follow the howitzers and mortars, which were more efficacious against entrenchments than long guns.

He pointed out, in conclusion, that the most radical and most logical formula would be the complete abolition of artillery of all calibres, as proposed by the Chinese delegation, provided that that formula was really applied. Since, however, some doubt was permissible on that point and it was necessary to consider the possibility of aggression, a country which was invaded must be left with arms which would be sufficiently powerful to drive out the aggressor which might have entrenched itself on its territory.

General Temperley (United Kingdom) said that the British delegation regarded artillery as of three types: light artillery, medium artillery and heavy artillery.

Heavy artillery was generally recognised as being eminently efficacious in the destruction of means of defence. Again, it seemed to be generally agreed that the calibre of medium artillery was somewhere about 155 mm. The British delegation had hoped that the Commission might choose approximately that figure as the line of demarcation between artillery material which might be authorised and material to be abolished, if it were decided to adopt qualitative disarmament.

By this means it would have been unnecessary to refer the question to a technical committee and the discussion could thereby have been shortened.

At the same time, if the Land Commission was unanimously desirous of setting up a technical committee, he would agree to the proposal to send to that committee a questionnaire on the lines of that proposed by the French delegation, which dealt with the matter adequately and would give the Commission the data it required for taking a decision. He was in full agreement with the principle of the questionnaire, which had his entire support. He wished, however, to have an opportunity of examining the text, so that he might, if necessary, suggest amendments in regard to details. He would support the suggestion to set up a technical committee, if the Land Commission were unanimous on that point.

General de Nánasy-Mégay (Hungary) observed that the calibre of the armaments which the States now disarmed had been allowed to retain should be taken as a basis in fixing the calibre of those of other States. It was on this basis that he had proposed 105 mm., which, he thought, should satisfy the requirements of other States, since any aggressor State would only have to face guns of the same calibre as its own.

M. Sato (Japan) supported the French delegation’s proposal that a questionnaire should be sent to the technical committee and approved in its entirety the text framed by that delegation. He stated that the Japanese experts were prepared to take it as a basis.

General Bonomi (Italy) said that he had not had time to examine thoroughly the French questionnaire, but thought that it would be necessary to make a few amendments. As regards the first question, he pointed out that the value of field entrenchments depended on many factors and that might equally be the case as regards permanent fortifications.

With regard to the second question, concerning the efficacy of projectiles as determined by their weight, he pointed out that a 105-mm. shell could permanently damage even strongly fortified works if it fell on a sensitive spot. Lastly, he thought it would be necessary to define the expression “various weapons” in the second part of the questionnaire.
The President asked whether the Italian delegate was in favour, in principle, of sending to the technical committee a questionnaire, the terms of which would have to be definitely settled.

General Bonomi (Italy) replied in the affirmative.

M. Aubert (France) said that, if the Italian delegate had no substantial objections to the questionnaire which he had submitted, he personally could accept all his colleague's observations.

Mr. Wilson (United States of America) thought that the questionnaire framed by the French delegation was exactly the kind of document that should be submitted to the technical committee, and said that he would be prepared to agree to its being referred to that committee, subject to a few formal modifications. He suggested that the technical committee should come to a decision on the first part of the questionnaire and submit its report at once to the Land Commission, in order that the latter might discuss it without delay.

M. Aubert (France) saw no objection to instructing the technical committee as to the order in which it should discuss the points; it remained to be seen whether the committee would be able to comply with those suggestions.

General Bonomi (Italy) proposed that a questionnaire should be framed on simpler and more comprehensive lines.

The President suggested that a small drafting committee should be appointed at once to draw up the questionnaire for the technical committee. He proposed as members of the Committee the delegates of: Belgium, Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom, United States of America and Yugoslavia. The Committee would be asked to submit its text at a plenary meeting of the Commission to be held on the following morning.

After approving the questionnaire, the Commission would refer it to the technical committee, which could begin its work at once.

The President's proposal was unanimously adopted.

SIXTH MEETING
Held on Friday, April 29th, 1932, at 10 a.m.

President: M. BUERO.

7. EXAMINATION OF THE CRITERIA PROPOSED BY VARIOUS DELEGATIONS WITH A VIEW TO SELECTING THE WEAPONS POSSESSING THE CHARACTERISTICS ENUMERATED IN THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON APRIL 22ND, 1932: ADOPTION OF A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR REFERENCE TO THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE.

The President announced that the drafting committee named at his suggestion the previous afternoon had drawn up the following text on the basis of the French proposal:

"I.
1. What is meant by fixed and mobile artillery?
2. What are the existing possibilities of rendering fixed artillery mobile, and vice-versa?

"II.
1. What are the characteristics of artillery necessary for effective action against the essential elements of permanent fortifications: (a) weight of the projectile, (b) weight of explosive, (c) calibre, etc.?
2. What are the characteristics of artillery necessary for effective action against entrenchments, field works and other objectives of the battlefield?

"III.
1. In modern war, what is the depth over which the troops and services and their equipment engaged in the battle are distributed?
2. What are the characteristics of the artillery capable of firing beyond that depth?"

The first part of the questionnaire concerned the definitions of fixed and mobile artillery, points which the Commission had decided at a previous meeting to refer to experts; the remainder of the document embodied the proposals made by the French delegation.

The draft questionnaire was adopted.

The President said that the text as adopted would be sent to the technical committee, which was to meet under the chairmanship of General Laidoner, the first Vice-President.
8. EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY ON THE DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

The President extended to the French delegation, and through it to Madame Doumer and the French people and Government, the Commission's deep sympathy on the tragic death of the President of the French Republic. Speaking as representative of Uruguay, he associated the whole Uruguayan nation with the feelings he had just expressed.

M. Aubert (France) thanked the President. The French delegation much appreciated the Commission's expression of regret, which proved that feelings of sympathy transcended the limits of national frontiers.

The Commission rose and suspended its proceedings for a brief interval as an expression of sympathy.


The President read a letter of May 5th from the President of the Disarmament Conference inviting the President of the Land Commission to discuss with the Bureau of the Conference a letter dated May 3rd from the President of the International Association of Journalists accredited to the League of Nations. That letter drew attention to what was described as “a growing tendency toward secrecy in the debates of the Disarmament Conference” and more particularly to the fact that the meetings of the Committee of Experts of the Land Commission had been held in private; it asked that public meetings “be made the rule and not the exception” and that the question of admitting the Press to such meetings as those of the Committee of Experts “be treated as a matter of urgency”.

He pointed out that in meeting privately the Committee of Experts had acted in accordance with Article VII of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference, which provided that “sub-commissions and committees will as a rule sit in private”, and that rule, he said, applied even though all the delegations were represented on a Committee. As regards the future, however, he agreed that wide publicity would further the cause of disarmament, especially at a moment when the Conference was not progressing as rapidly as some might wish. He invited the Land Commission to authorise him to suggest to the Bureau that sub-commissions and committees on which all delegations were represented should hold public meetings unless otherwise decided by a majority vote.

The President's proposal was adopted.

10. SELECTION OF THE ARMS POSSESSING THE CHARACTERISTICS ENUMERATED IN THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON APRIL 22ND, 1932: REPLY OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS AS REGARDS ARTILLERY (documents Conf. D./C.T.8, 8(a), 8(b) and 8(c).

In the first place, the President thanked the Committee of Experts, and particularly the Chairman, for their successful achievement of a difficult task. With the text of the Committee's replies before it — and the grounds for those replies — the Commission could now examine the question referred to it under the resolution of April 22nd.

Having noticed in the various proposals a tendency to distinguish between fixed and mobile artillery, the Commission had asked the Committee of Experts to define the characteristics of both types and to state the existing possibilities of converting fixed into mobile artillery. It was no doubt the duty of the Commission to draw conclusions from the Experts' replies on that point.

Generally speaking, the text of Part I, paragraph 2, of the experts' reply might be taken as summing up the delegations' views — namely, that guns of fixed artillery could be made mobile and that this interchangeability was contingent on two factors — time and the existence of certain stocks of material. Did the Commission think that the distinction
between the two types should be maintained? If so, it must fix the conditions. Or did it feel that it would be impossible to arrive at such a distinction?

General Benítez (Spain) said that he had nothing to add or to withdraw as regards the experts' replies, which had been reached after long discussion. The Spanish delegation, moreover, had already formulated in the following terms its conclusions on the three criteria referred to the Land Commission by the General Commission:

"All weapons can be used for offensive and defensive purposes. Those most effective for the former are also most effective for the latter.

"Assuming that a certain category of weapons no longer exists, the value of those remaining increases correspondingly. The same effect is produced if no fortifications exist.

"If by most specifically offensive weapons are meant weapons which confer on the attack superiority over the material means of defence, it is permissible to regard as such and at the same time as most efficacious against national defence weapons which are not less than 150 mm. in calibre and which at the same time are equipped, even in time of peace, with means enabling them to be moved or transported, so that they can accompany the troops and co-operate in a war with a shifting battle front or in siege warfare.

"In the same category may be included tanks and armoured and armed cars.

"The weapons most threatening to civilians, who must be presumed to be outside the battle zone, are in reality gases, for whether they are used in the form of waves or fired in the form of artillery projectiles, it is impossible to control their actual range.

"Artillery with a range exceeding 30 km. should also be included in this category, since the extent of the zone in which the projectiles fall makes this weapon unsuitable for use against purely military objects."

General Temperley (United Kingdom) agreed with the Spanish representative that no further discussion would add much to their knowledge of the subject, the experts having clearly disengaged the facts with reference to fixed and mobile artillery. He thought, however, that a more serious question was raised by the suggestion that in practice there should be no differentiation between the two types. There could obviously be no question of reducing the calibre of coast-defence guns, so long as the guns of the battleships and cruisers which had to engage them were not reduced; but similarly, if no distinction were made between mobile and fixed artillery, there could be no limitation of the calibre of naval guns. Thus all possibility of restricting or abolishing heavy guns would disappear.

The conclusions to be drawn from the Technical Committee's proceedings were clear — the conversion of fixed into mobile artillery was largely a matter of time, which could be shortened if the necessary material (mountings, etc.) was available. To accept the principle that no differentiation could be established between fixed and mobile artillery would prejudice the whole question of qualitative limitation.

Mr. Wilson (United States of America) said that, as a civilian member of the Commission, he was glad to associate himself with the President in congratulating the Technical Committee on having formulated practically unanimous definitions. Any endeavour to define the various points still further would, he thought, tend to vitiate the work of the experts. He shared General Temperley's impression, and thought that the General Commission might feel that, should the obstacles to convertibility (as between fixed and mobile artillery) not appear adequate, it might be necessary to discuss additional agreements of a moral nature to be entered into between States.

M. von Weizsäcker (Germany) said that, the German delegation having made a distinction between guns inside and outside fortifications, he felt it necessary to speak on the point. The views expressed by General Temperley and Mr. Wilson were, he thought, very sound. Speaking generally, he felt it would be preferable for the Land Commission to avoid essentially technical discussions. He suggested that it should simply take note of the experts' replies and should determine, on that basis, what land weapons might be considered as capable of qualitative disarmament, so that the politicians might have before them a list of weapons and might pass on to the practical work of filling in the figures.

M. Aubert (France) observed that the Land Commission, like the Committee of Experts, were faced with certain facts which it could not overlook. General Temperley's statement was a statement of fact — namely, that a relationship could be established between the calibres of land and naval guns through the intermediary of coastal artillery. That fact did not invalidate in any way the Committee's findings in regard to the interchangeability of fixed and mobile guns. Again, the United States of America had raised the important question of control or supervision, and the only solution would be to require States to guarantee that the stocks required for purposes of conversion did not exist in the country. That point must be a subject for future discussion.
M. Bourquin (Belgium), Rapporteur, feared that the Committee would be taking an unwise step if it re-opened the discussion of the report of the Committee of Experts. As all the delegations had been represented on this Committee, such action could only lead to repetition and waste of time.

The situation was as follows: (1) the General Commission had asked the Land Commission to say what weapons were in its opinion most dangerous to national defence and to civilian populations; (2) with the object of supplying this information concerning artillery the Land Commission had submitted to a Committee of Experts a series of technical questions. The Land Commission had received the reply of this Committee and, from the technical point of view, it need only take note of it without entering on further discussion. But the report of the experts, however valuable, merely furnished raw material and it was now for the Land Commission to make use of this material and to work it up, in order to reply to the question submitted to it by the General Commission. In other words, it should endeavour, on the basis of the expert's report, to decide what weapons were the most dangerous to national defence and to civilian populations.

Colonel Züblin (Switzerland) considered that the Rapporteur's proposal was premature. The Land Commission's decision of April 27th had mentioned tanks, armoured cars and fortifications; those points must be examined as well as artillery. He would have no objection to taking artillery first, but the reply to the General Commission must eventually deal with all the points raised.

The President explained that the Bureau had discussed the possibility of a preliminary examination of the other arms, but had decided that it would be best for the Commission to proceed with the question of artillery, which had just been examined by the Committee of Experts.

General Benitez (Spain) agreed with the President and Rapporteur that it would be preferable to keep to artillery for the moment. The Commission could adopt the method of "condensation" that employed in the Spanish delegation's proposal, or it could draw up a list of weapons.

The President, summing up, observed that the Commission was in favour of M. Bourquin's proposal. Having taken note of the experts' reply, it would now prepare its own reply to the General Commission.

This procedure was adopted.

M. van Lanschot (Netherlands) remarked that the Committee of Experts' replies were intended to serve as a basis for the Land Commission's reply to the question formulated in the General Commission's resolution of April 22nd. The Land Commission should, he thought, consider not only the text of that question but also the purpose for which it had been put — namely, to achieve some measure of qualitative disarmament, and hence to contribute towards the final object of the Conference. Academic solutions and replies were of no use; delegates and experts alike must bear in mind the practical aspect of the problem.

The replies to Chapter II of the questionnaire, for example, concerning the different calibres employed according to the objective to be attacked, contained valuable material which would enable the Commission to answer the question: What guns are most specifically offensive in character and most efficacious against national defence?

It was for the Land Commission to draw the necessary conclusions from the experts' replies and that was not an easy task, for the replies, although unanimous, revealed traces of some divergence of opinion. One point, however, appeared to be settled beyond all doubt — namely, that artillery of a calibre higher than 100 mm. particularly that of about 150 mm., which is the calibre most commonly employed and up to 220 mm., was capable of effective action against most entrenchments and field works which could be organised and constructed in a short time and with limited personnel and material. But what was meant by a short time? A week? Two months? What was meant by limited personnel and material?

When the time, personnel and material at the disposal of the defence increased — so the experts stated — the degree of resistance of the position might become that of permanent fortifications with slight protection and might require the same means for its reduction — i.e., guns from 105 to 250 mm.

Artillery from 100 to 250 mm. might thus be employed against permanent fortifications with slight protection as well as against the strongest fortifications on the battlefield. Such calibres — to revert to the question asked by the General Commission — were neither exclusively offensive nor exclusively defensive. What reply, then, was the Land Commission to give to the General Commission's question concerning "the most specifically offensive weapons or those most efficacious against national defence?" The question was not to determine the absolute character of the weapons but to make a comparison: the offensive character must preponderate over the defensive character.
A weapon which would be subjected to qualitative limitation on the grounds of its specifically offensive character might in certain cases be necessary for this or that defensive operation, perhaps even for repelling an invader. Should qualitative limitation result, then, in a weakening of the defence? He did not think so. By depriving an aggressor State of specifically offensive weapons, of the weapons most efficacious against national defence, the attack was weakened, but the defence would be strengthened. It was infinitely more important to deprive the aggressor of the means of invading enemy territory than to confer on the defence additional arms wherewith to repel him. The defence — even with only temporary means at its disposal — gained proportionately as qualitative limitation weakened the aggressor.

As regards guns above 155 mm., the possibility of their being used against permanent fortifications with slight protection appeared to constitute their most characteristic feature. On the battlefield, guns having a calibre of 150 mm. were most commonly employed. The experts themselves said so. In certain cases guns of a higher calibre — as much as 250 mm. — would be required; but, if States were allowed freely to keep such guns in view of their possible use for defensive purposes, the weapons in question would be freely at the aggressor’s disposal, thereby endangering the defender’s permanent fortifications with slight protection.

The Netherlands delegation held that in establishing the line of demarcation between weapons which were, and those which were not, most specifically offensive and most efficacious against national defence, the Commission ought not to take as its starting-point special situations, but ought to consider rather the uses to which the weapons were most commonly put; for that reason the line of demarcation ought to be fixed at 155 mm. The Netherlands delegation would, of course, support any practical proposal for fixing a lower level. An exception should, however, be made in principle in the case of fixed artillery in permanent emplacements, more especially those used for coast defence, to which a special system should apply.

As regards the third point mentioned in the resolution of April 22nd, the Netherlands delegation regarded as most threatening to civilians those weapons whose range exceeded the depth of the battlefield, and which were thus able to reach the population beyond that limit. The land weapons threatening to civilians were therefore those above the calibre just mentioned, and they became more threatening in proportion as their range exceeded the depth of the battlefield and as their material effect increased.

In conclusion, the Netherlands delegation submitted the following proposal:

“"The Commission considers that the weapons whose character is the most specifically offensive or most efficacious against national defence or most threatening to civilians are, in the case of mobile artillery, guns with a calibre in excess of 155 mm. and with a projectile weighing over 50 kilogrammes.

“As regards guns forming part of the permanent installations or fortifications of fortified positions by land or sea and mounted on fixed carriages, the Commission is of opinion that they should be subject to a special regime.”

General DE NÁNÁSY-MÉGAY (Hungary) thought that the Land Commission, now that it had the Committee of Experts’ reply, should decide what guns answered to the criteria named in the General Commission’s resolution of April 22nd. The Land Commission had already admitted that it was difficult to establish a distinction, in the case of artillery, between the first two criteria. It remained then to decide, first, what guns were most efficacious against national defence and, secondly, what guns were most threatening to civilians.

The answer to the first question would be found in Part II of the experts’ reply.

Examining the defensive organisation of the different countries, the latter would be found to fall into two classes: (a) countries protected by permanent fortifications, (b) countries which, not possessing permanent fortifications, would be obliged, in case of attack, to construct improvised fortifications as rapidly as possible. The majority of countries belonged to that second category.

The Commission must decide which of the two categories should serve as a starting-point in determining the weapons which were most efficacious against national defence. The Hungarian delegation thought it was essential, in order to strengthen the security of the different countries, to choose as a starting-point the national defence of a country which possessed no permanent fortifications. Any other procedure would encourage countries
not possessing permanent fortifications to construct them, thus involving heavy material outlay. Such an outcome of the Disarmament Conference was inconceivable, seeing that the object of the Conference was to reduce the financial burdens relating to armaments.

On the other hand, by taking as a starting-point the defence of a country which possessed no permanent fortifications, the Commission would be serving the interests of every country, and that solution, the Hungarian representative thought, might be adopted unanimously.

Finally, the Hungarian delegation proposed that the Commission should consider as particularly efficacious against national defence all guns capable of being successfully used against improvised fortifications, that was to say all guns of a calibre exceeding about 100 mm.

The answer to the second question — the threat to civilians — must be deduced from paragraph 2 of Chapter III of the experts’ reply.

Although it had not been possible to obtain, as regards paragraph 1 of Chapter III, that unanimity which was desirable, the Hungarian representative thought that the Commission might come to some agreement when discussing the question of assessment.

Before it would be possible to decide what guns were most threatening to civilians, the Commission must first define the zones of the theatre of operations which were inhabited by civilians.

The presence of civilians on the scene of operations was tolerated to an extent which depended — all the delegations were agreed on that point — on two factors: the presence of the adversary and the dangers resulting therefrom and the extent to which civilians might impede the military operations of the army of their own country.

What had to be determined was the extreme line beyond which were to be found only at considerable intervals important military objectives which would justify artillery bombardment, the line behind which civilians were tolerated as not impeding military operations. That line, it seemed, could not be any other than the line indicated by the Committee of Experts as the extreme limit of the zone over which the troops and the various services taking part in the operations were distributed.

While not unanimous as regards the depth of the zone, the experts had considered that it should be not less than 15 kilometres. The solution thus seemed to be for the Commission to decide on that limit — the lowest on which the experts had agreed. By so doing, the Commission would give satisfaction to countries whose territory was small and which, owing to that fact, could not evacuate their civilian population to an adequate distance.

The Hungarian delegation proposed, in conclusion, that the Commission should regard as weapons particularly threatening to civilians all guns with a range exceeding 15 kilometres and a calibre exceeding about 100 mm., as suggested in paragraph 2 of Chapter III of the experts’ reply.

General Bonomi (Italy) recalled that the Italian delegation had already indicated at the meeting on April 27th the heavy artillery material which, in its opinion, answered to the three criteria mentioned in the General Commission’s resolution of April 22nd — namely, all heavy artillery (guns, howitzers and mortars), whatever the weight, of which the calibre exceeded 100 mm. According to the particular calibre and range of each type of artillery, one or other of the criteria would apply.

The Italian delegation maintained the views which it had already expressed, and desired to state at once that it could not agree to any resolution which failed to take account of them.

Colonel Crerar (Canada) said that he had followed very closely the proceedings both of the Land Commission and of the Committee of Experts, and that he had been struck by the considerable time that had been required to reach approximate agreement on one only of the points referred to the Commission. He thought that an attempt should be made to hasten matters, and suggested that, in order to submit a clear reply to the General Commission’s questions at the earliest possible date, the delegations should try to put on one side their own particular preferences so that it might be possible to arrive at a compromise acceptable to the majority of the Commission.

Having examined the Committee of Experts’ reply, the Canadian delegation proposed as a basis for discussion the following formula, on which it thought that agreement was possible: Guns of a calibre exceeding 150 mm. and a range exceeding 20 kilometres should be regarded as answering to the criteria named in the General Commission’s resolution.

M. Lounatcharski (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that the Soviet delegation supported the proposals put forward by the Hungarian and Italian delegations as being in accordance with its own views.
Colonel Züblin (Switzerland) said that the Swiss delegation supported the Netherlands proposal.

He directed the Commission's attention to two points which did not appear to have been considered.

1. If, in reply to the General Commission, the Land Commission simply reproduced the text of paragraph 2 of Part II of the experts' reply, it was difficult to see what conclusion the General Commission would be able to draw therefrom. That paragraph said that the artillery capable of effective action against most entrenchments which could be organised and constructed in a short time with limited personnel and material was of a calibre between 100 and 220 mm. The experts' reply, he thought, reflected the various conditions that might be encountered, but none the less, it would be difficult for the General Commission to draw any practical conclusion.

The Swiss delegation felt, therefore, that the Land Commission should, in order to accomplish useful work, adopt the Netherlands proposal, which represented a moderate solution.

2. The adoption of a calibre of 220 mm. as the limit above which artillery should be regarded as heavy artillery would result in a general increase in the calibre of field artillery. Indeed, if it were permissible to employ guns of a calibre of 220 mm. against improvised fortifications, it would be to the advantage of the countries not at present possessing such artillery to obtain it. That result would certainly not be in conformity with the aim of the Conference or with the intentions of all those statesmen who had declared that their Governments were prepared to abolish heavy artillery to some extent, and who understood the term "heavy artillery" in its usual sense, that adopted, in particular in military regulations — namely, artillery of a calibre of 150 or 155 mm. and over. The League of Nations Armaments Year-Book, published in March 1932, stated that in certain armed forces divisional artillery included light and heavy artillery, and that the latter consisted of guns of a calibre of 155 mm.

Colonel Züblin felt that the Commission should not help to create a new idea of heavy artillery, inconsistent with the aim in view and with the statements made in the General Commission. The Swiss delegation therefore supported the moderate solution proposed by the Netherlands delegation.

Major-General Tcheng Kai (China) said that, in the Chinese delegation's opinion, the Commission should rapidly reach a unanimous decision and should adopt as a limit the smallest calibre, the least destructive power and the shortest range, in order to give satisfaction to those who desired the limitation and reduction of armaments.

The Chinese delegation considered that the Commission could not achieve practical results by endeavouring to find precise replies to the various points mentioned in the questionnaire. The Chinese delegation had already proposed the abolition of all mobile artillery, the calibre of which exceeded 80 mm., and it felt that the Commission should adopt this limit in its reply to the General Commission's resolution.

M. von Weizsäcker (Germany) noted that the result of the experts' work corresponded with the proposals made by the German delegation at the beginning of the Conference. Indeed, the experts stated in Part II, paragraph 2, of their reply, that:

"As a rule, artillery of a calibre up to about 100 mm. can only be effectively used against the least strongly protected personnel and objectives of the battlefield."

It had been pointed out on several occasions that, whatever calibre was contemplated, the offensive character of a gun was only relative. That was true, but it was none the less necessary to fix a figure in the reply to the General Commission. The German delegation proposed the figure contained in the Treaty of Versailles — namely, a calibre of 77 mm. All mobile artillery of a higher calibre should be considered as answering to the three criteria of the resolution of April 22nd.

In order to exclude the possibility of the use of certain fixed artillery by field armies, it was proposed that the States should give undertakings on this matter. The German delegation fully approved this suggestion.

On the other hand, it had been pointed out that fixed guns for coast defence must be of a calibre at least equal to that of the armaments of the naval forces. The principle at the basis of this observation held good for armed land forces as well as for naval forces: the defender must be at least as well armed as the assailant.

Colonel Riazi (Persia) observed that it would be premature for a country which only possessed sufficient forces for the maintenance of order and internal security to express an opinion concerning the aggressive weapons which should be either suppressed or internationalised. He stated that the Persian delegation was nevertheless disposed to accept the most radical solution which the majority of the Commission would accept, provided that the interests of countries which did not produce arms, ammunition and war material and which loyally observed such undertakings, were fully safeguarded.
APTULAHAT Bey (Turkey) pointed out that the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs had stated on several occasions that Turkey would willingly accept any system and any proposal for as great a reduction of armaments as possible. Maintaining that line of action, the Turkish delegation had stated, during its last observations in the Land Commission, that it considered heavy artillery of all kinds as a specifically offensive weapon. It now supported the Hungarian delegation’s proposal for a substantial reduction as regards heavy artillery.

EIGHTH MEETING

Held on Wednesday, May 11th, 1932, at 10 a.m.

President: M. BUERO.

11. SELECTION OF THE ARMS POSSESSING THE CHARACTERISTICS ENUMERATED IN THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON APRIL 22ND, 1932: REPLY OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS AS REGARDS ARTILLERY (continuation) (documents Conf. D./C.T.8, 8(a), 8(b), 8(c)).

M. SATO (Japan) said that while the Japanese delegation approved the fundamental principle of qualitative limitation, it could not agree with all the opinions expressed on the previous day concerning the types of artillery that answered to the three criteria proposed by the General Commission.

The discussions in the General Commission had exposed the profound error of confounding aggression with offensive action based on strategic reasons. A country engaged in a war of defence might be obliged for strategic reasons to assume the offensive, and it was inevitable that during military operations of this kind entrenchments and provisional organisations established by the adversary would be attacked. Again, it was necessary to contemplate the necessity of attacking the enemy’s permanent fortifications. The majority of the speeches of the previous day had revealed a tendency in favour of the extreme limitation of the assailant’s artillery power, without taking into account the strength of entrenchments and temporary works or of permanent fortifications. Admitting that the army of the country attacked might then require to assume the offensive, for strategic reasons, it would then be necessary to limit the power of resistance of the fortified works of the aggressor, otherwise the latter would be favoured to the detriment of the country attacked — which was both illogical and unfair.

The Committee of Experts’ reply showed clearly that the power of resistance of temporary entrenchments and permanent fortifications differed according to circumstances. That state of affairs had been ignored in some of the declarations made on the previous day, and political considerations had been used as an argument in support of a proposal for drastic and uniform limitation of heavy artillery. The Japanese delegation could not endorse that view.

Present-day technique might confer a high degree of strength on temporary entrenchments and organisations, even during an offensive. If, as some members of the Commission recommended, only guns having a calibre of 100 mm. or less were used against such works, the result would simply be a waste of human life. It was generally recognised that even against earthworks 150 mm. guns were required. To limit artillery to the calibres suggested would be to deny the possibility of any counter offensive and would, indirectly, deprive States of the possibility of defending themselves.

For the purposes of the report to be submitted to the General Commission, the Land Commission must not be carried away by purely theoretical considerations but must arrive at rational conclusions based on the actual situation as regards modern strategy and present-day military technique.

As regards the artillery necessary for effective action against field entrenchments of great strength, the Japanese delegation supported the reply unanimously adopted by the Committee of Experts. It could not endorse the view that that category of artillery should be included among specifically offensive weapons and weapons particularly efficacious against national defence.

M. AUBERT (France) feared that the Rapporteur’s wise recommendations not to enter into a technical discussion of the experts’ reply had been taken too literally: if
personal empiricism was to take the place of scientific findings, the Commission could not hope to progress towards an agreement as to principles and figures.

Although not all the delegates' replies had been supported by reasons, certain of them had put forward arguments for including weapons having the smallest calibres among offensive weapons, which ignored the terms of the questions referred to the Commission. The Commission had not been asked to say whether artillery of this or that calibre, considered in itself, was offensive in character — on that basis a machine-gun might be offensive — but to decide, in the whole scale of artillery calibres, which were most offensive and why.

Again, other arguments in favour of the same thesis had been derived from certain clauses of the Treaties of Peace as if the problem before the authors of the Treaties was the same as the problem now before the Commission — namely, the determination of the weapons most dangerous to national defence and to civilians. The Treaties also prohibited, in certain regions, arms — such as fortifications — which were obviously defensive. It was true, as certain delegates had brought out on the previous day, that the abolition of calibres of artillery capable of destroying permanent fortifications should involve the abolition of such fortifications, since otherwise it would enhance their value and competition in armaments would tend in that direction. That point would have to be discussed when the Commission came to consider whether, as some delegations maintained, permanent fortifications might be offensive in character.

The arguments in favour of the adoption of a medium calibre — 150 to 155 mm. — were of a different order; they were based on the fact that that was the calibre found in many armies, for some of which it was the maximum. Were they to be obliged (the argument ran), on the pretext of a reduction of armaments, to construct weapons of a higher calibre, if these were not prohibited? Was it not better to compromise on that medium calibre, which in certain nomenclatures marked the limit between light and heavy artillery? Supposing that, that limit having been accepted, no one type of artillery could qualitatively outclass another, difficulties would immediately occur; it was sufficient for the moment to mention only one of them: whereas land calibres were to be limited, were coast calibres to be allowed to follow those of the battleships they were intended to engage, when the experts declared that fixed artillery could rapidly be rendered mobile and could thus be transported from the sea to the land frontiers?

The Commission should adhere to the method it had adopted in drawing up the questionnaire for the Committee of Experts, for that questionnaire and the replies to it bore a direct relation to the questions referred to the Land Commission by the General Commission.

The former had been asked, for example, to decide what weapons were most efficacious against national defence, and, in order to be in a position to reply to that question, it had asked the experts what weapons were most efficacious against permanent fortifications; the experts had given a definite reply, mentioning certain calibres. The delegations therefore should ascertain whether they were agreed that the arms most efficacious against national defence included the most powerful artillery weapons capable of being used most efficaciously against permanent fortifications. If the answer was in the affirmative, it would be sufficient, in order to determine the types of artillery concerned, to take the experts' reply to paragraph 1 of Chapter II.

The Commission could then consider which artillery was effective against field works, decide whether such artillery was threatening to national defence, and, if so, define its relevant technical characteristics.

A third question might be examined — namely, whether the Commission considered that the weapons most threatening to civilians were those designed to fire beyond the limits of the battlefield — i.e., of the zone in which military objectives predominated. There again the Experts had supplied the material for a definite reply as to ranges.

Such was the method of work already adopted, and that method alone was calculated to enable the Land Commission to lay before the General Commission replies supported by sufficient reasons to enable it itself to take its decisions.

General Benítez (Spain) explained that, as the Commission had been asked to reply to a definite question and was obliged to accept the three criteria named by the General Commission, the Spanish proposal submitted at the previous meeting began with a kind of reservation, while the third paragraph of that proposal enunciated a condition.

The Spanish delegation would have no objection to accepting a 150 mm. calibre: The reason underlying the Spanish proposal was that aggression would take the form of a rapidly executed attack. If the French proposal for ensuring collective military assistance to a State victim of aggression was not adopted, the only solution would be to make the defence stronger than the attack — at all events so far as material means were concerned. Subject to the conditions stipulated in the Spanish proposal, States could retain their fortress artillery. True, the Committee of Experts had declared that fixed and mobile artillery were interchangeable, but only subject to certain very important conditions, such as the existence of the necessary mountings. The question of mountings was a difficult
one: their construction involved a big outlay, and any nation preparing such a transformation of fixed artillery into mobile artillery — supposing that the Spanish proposal were accepted — would have violated the Disarmament Convention.

Colonel MARTOLA (Finland) felt that the Land Commission had reached a stage in its discussions at which it would be well for every delegation to state its views, so as to reach an equitable solution of the problem referred to it by the General Commission. The Finnish delegation would therefore give its views on the artillery most efficacious against national defence and most threatening to civilians.

The reason, he thought, that the principle of qualitative disarmament had been so unanimously adopted by the General Commission was that disarmament of that kind seemed to be one of the measures most likely to increase the security of nations. The Finnish delegation, however, considered that qualitative disarmament alone was not sufficient, any more than quantitative reduction alone would be. What was necessary, and indeed indispensable, was political and legal guarantees. The fate of qualitative disarmament must thus depend in the last resort on the solutions arrived at for political and legal problems in the General Commission.

The soundest method of work, however, was to proceed by stages, and it was essential to determine for each successive item of the Conference's agenda the best possible solution — always in the direction of disarmament and security — leaving open the possibility of modifying each solution to fit in with the sum total of the results achieved.

The Finnish delegation would be the last to hinder the idea of qualitative disarmament at the present stage, and recommended that the Land Commission should express its technical opinion on the degree of offensiveness of land artillery in such a form that the General Commission might take a decision as regards the prohibition, as far as possible, of the use of heavy artillery.

As regards mobile heavy artillery, calibres above 150-155 mm. should be considered as most efficacious against national defence and most threatening to civilians. Finland, however, would be prepared, like its Eastern neighbour, to support a lower limit, if unanimity could be achieved on that point. A 150 mm. calibre limit had been chosen as representing a medium solution most likely to meet with approval, since it would reduce the force of possible attacks and would not interfere with purely defensive armaments. The opinion had been expressed in the Committee of Experts that a defender State which did not possess weapons of more than 150 mm. in calibre might not be able to repel an invader, and it would be prudent therefore not to deprive a country of legitimate means of defence.

Without anticipating the General Commission’s decisions as to whether heavy material should be entirely abolished or placed at the disposal of an international authority, it might be said that a small nation which was not able to build super-strong fortifications would prefer to feel that its organs of defence could not be bombarded with guns having a calibre of more than 150 mm. Countries which were able to maintain more powerful defensive artillery could still employ it as fixed artillery in forts.

For mobile artillery, then, a calibre of 150 mm. might be adopted as the maximum required by States for their mobile defensive land forces.

The Land Commission, in its reply, would no doubt wish to direct the General Commission’s attention to the importance of distinguishing between fixed and mobile artillery. Fixed artillery, and more particularly coast defence artillery, obviously depended on the artillery of battleships, and its qualitative reduction must be conditioned by the qualitative reduction of the latter. The General Commission must be warned as to the possible abuse of fixed artillery; that would lead to the question of control and to other political and legal questions.

Lieutenant-General GALET (Belgium) recalled that the Belgian delegation had submitted the following proposal:

“(1) howitzers and mortars of a calibre exceeding 220 mm.;
(2) guns of a calibre exceeding 155 mm.;
Publicity and control of coast artillery having the characteristics mentioned under (1) and (2) above seem indispensable.”

Nevertheless, though Belgium was a small country, in a very special geographical and political position, the Belgian delegation had decided in the Committee of Experts to set aside its own proposal in the interests of unanimity.

In the problem under consideration — the limitation of artillery — qualitative limitation was essential, firstly to protect the defence, and secondly to protect civilians without unduly interfering with that defence.

As regards the first point, two cases might arise: (1) There might be no element of surprise and the defence might then be able to bring its army to the front and to take other
necessary measures; or (2) the defence might be surprised and have to repel the invader — that had occurred in the last war. With increasing mobility, the use of that second method would also tend to increase. A State could never be persuaded to abandon its anxiety as to its defence, and care must be taken not to deprive it of the necessary means to ensure that defence.

As regards calibres, the Committee of Experts had made a distinction between those for use against field positions and permanent fortifications, respectively; there was, however, a certain continuity in the scale, and with those data the Commission should be able to arrive at conclusions. In the interests of the defence everything should be done to protect permanent fortifications, and the Belgian delegation proposed the abolition of all calibres capable of being used efficaciously against them. Field fortifications, however, which involved the element of mobility, could still be attacked, even though the 220 mm. calibre stipulated by the Experts for use against permanent fortifications was prohibited.

As regards the second point — the protection of civilians — two zones had been envisaged, the first of which (some 20 km. on either side of the lines) was essentially military in character while in the second zone, beyond it, there were only certain objectives of military importance. The Belgian delegation proposed the abolition of all howitzers and mortars of a calibre exceeding 220 mm. and all guns of a calibre exceeding 155 mm., as being specifically offensive or threatening to civilians; civilians would thereby be given the greatest possible measure of protection consistent with full freedom of action for the defence.

Derogations would be necessary in respect of coast artillery, and, to avoid abuse, publicity and control of coast artillery of the calibres specified would be indispensable, as had been noted in the Belgian delegation's proposal. No calibre under 155 mm. would be controlled, but measures would be taken to ensure that guns above that calibre could not be rendered mobile.

The Commission must aim at a moderate solution — that aspect of the question had also been stressed by the Canadian representative. It must devise a solution likely to meet with general acceptance.

M. PÜRSCHEL (Denmark) said that the Danish delegation regarded the Committee of Experts' reply to the questionnaire as a very good starting-point for deciding what artillery weapons were most specifically offensive, most efficacious against national defence and most threatening to civilians. In its view, the idea underlying the General Commission's resolution of April 22nd was to discover a way of strengthening the defence by eliminating certain categories of offensive weapons.

The Danish Government — as was clear from the delegation's memorandum of April 13th — regarded mobile artillery having a large calibre and long-range artillery as specifically offensive weapons and considered that it was essential to abolish arms of that category until the lowest possible level of armaments had been reached.

It might still be necessary to discuss what was the most suitable level, but the Danish delegation thought that any conventions to be concluded should maintain the distinction between heavy and light artillery stipulated in the Treaties of Peace.

The level thus fixed was the one to aim at, so as to effect a real reduction of the weapons possessing the specific characteristics under consideration. The Danish delegation accordingly supported the proposal submitted by several other delegations that the maximum calibre for mobile artillery should be fixed at about 100 mm.

General TEMPERLEY (United Kingdom) noted that, despite the long discussion in the Technical Committee, the Land Commission was no nearer agreement than when the Bureau had issued its report (document Conf. D./C.T.5) on April 27th. Many delegations were now merely repeating their views. The United Kingdom delegation adhered to the views which it had already put forward; it believed that it was possible to restrict heavy mobile artillery to a calibre of 155 mm. It had chosen that figure for practical reasons — already stated — and did not regard such guns as specifically offensive. Recognising, however, that there was a difference of opinion on that point and that it might be impossible to draw an exact line above which mobile artillery should be restricted, it had put forward another proposal representing an attempt to frame a unanimous reply to the General Commission which should take into account the differences of opinion in the Land Commission; it had tried to indicate the main characteristics of heavy artillery and to bring the views of the delegations down to one text.

The text of the British proposal read as follows:

"Basing its opinions upon the conclusions embodied in the replies of the Technical Sub-Committee to the questionnaire submitted to it (document Conf. D./C.T.7) the
Land Commission offers the following recommendations for consideration by the General Commission:

“(a) All artillery can be used for offensive and for defensive purposes, but, whereas the lighter natures have a restricted offensive capacity, the offensive element becomes greater as the power of the artillery increases.

“(b) Leaving aside the question of artillery constituting the fixed armament of permanent fortifications, which raises certain issues more appropriate for separate discussion, the Land Commission is of the opinion that those types of mobile artillery which are capable of destroying permanent fortifications of average, or of more than average, strength—that is to say, pieces of calibres from 250 mm. upwards, firing projectiles weighing from 200 kilogrammes upwards, should be regarded as the most specifically offensive and the most efficacious against the national defence.

“(c) In a second and a lower category of offensive power should be included those weapons which are capable of effective action against lightly protected permanent fortifications or against non-permanent field-works and entrenchments—that is to say, pieces of calibres between 155 mm. and 250 mm., firing projectiles weighing between 50 kilogrammes and 200 kilogrammes.

“(d) Artillery of natures lighter than those referred to in paragraph (c) above are the least specifically offensive in character.

“(e) As regards the third element in the resolution of the General Commission, the replies submitted by the Technical Committee to questions (1) and (2) of Chapter III of the questionnaire lead to the conclusion that artillery material of over 200 mm. calibre, having an effective range of more than 25 km., is the most menacing to the civil population.

“Pieces of over 155 mm. calibre, having an effective range of more than 20 km., may also be a menace to the civil population, but in a less degree. It should be noted that these calculations apply only to normally constructed guns at present existing.”

That proposal, which it was hoped would meet with the approval of the majority of the Commission, might not perhaps go far enough for delegations that had insisted on a 100-105 mm. calibre; their preoccupation with the Peace Treaties was very comprehensible, but the Commission had to consider its terms of reference and to decide what artillery was specifically offensive.

No one had spoken yet in support of the new proposal—unless M. Aubert’s words might be interpreted as meaning that the French delegation was not entirely opposed. It had only been put forward in a spirit of conciliation, and if it were not acceptable the United Kingdom delegation would withdraw it and go back to its original proposal. If agreement could not be reached, the Rapporteur might perhaps be asked to frame a report reflecting the three main currents of opinion; some delegations were in favour of a 220-250 mm. calibre limit, others supported a medium view, while a third group advocated with great determination a calibre of about 100 mm. A report on those lines would be the best answer to the General Commission and would represent the views expressed in the Land Commission.

General Nygren (Sweden) said that the Swedish delegation fully endorsed the Netherlands delegation’s proposal, which was in conformity with the suggestions contained in the Swedish memorandum. It was of opinion therefore that mobile artillery of a calibre above 155 mm. should be included in the category of weapons “whose character is the most specifically offensive”, but did not think it necessary to repeat the reasons for that opinion.

On the other hand, fixed artillery, even of a calibre exceeding 155 mm., should not, in its view, be regarded as offensive in character, if in time of peace no stock of mobile mountings existed on which such pieces could be placed. It was, nevertheless, necessary to bear in mind the importance of the existence in time of peace of mobile mountings constructed with a view to the rapid conversion of fixed heavy artillery into mobile artillery.

M. von Weizsäcker (Germany) stated that the German delegation was prepared to give the new British proposal some measure of support. It noted that several delegations had drawn nearer to the figures proposed by the German delegation and wondered whether other delegations might not consider doing the same. Those figures, as he had explained on the previous day, defined the artillery material answering to the three criteria laid down in the General Commission’s resolution and they were the figures, moreover, found in the Treaty of Versailles.

The German delegation was prepared to stress that last consideration repeatedly, for, as it understood the Note of June 16th, 1919, the military provisions of the Treaty of
Versailles were intended to preclude all possibility of recourse to a policy of aggression. The limits stipulated at that time should thus form a satisfactory basis for the Commission’s present task.

Again, the French representative had observed that the Treaties of Peace prohibited certain armaments necessary for national defence. The German delegation would venture to note that point.

M. Aubert (France) asked the Commission to decide the question of procedure which he had raised at the beginning of the meeting.

The Land Commission, in putting certain preliminary questions to the Committee of Experts, had followed a synthetic method, but the present discussions, in the form of a series of monologues, seemed to show that the Commission now intended to adopt the analytic method. It was very important, however, that it should return to its original synthetic method, as this would facilitate the Rapporteur’s work.

For this purpose, the French delegation proposed that each of the three points mentioned in the General Commission’s resolution should be discussed successively; it realised the importance of the United Kingdom proposal, which was a step in the direction M. Aubert had just indicated. Considered in this manner and taken as a basis for the Commission’s discussions, the United Kingdom proposal was acceptable to the French delegation.

In reply to the German delegate’s last observation, M. Aubert stated that he had confined himself to saying that the question which arose during the preparation of the Peace Treaties was not in any sense the same as that which had arisen during the present discussions. The intention in the Peace Treaties had been to prohibit armaments, some of which might be considered, in the present discussion and in the light of the General Commission’s three criteria, as defensive. This matter could, however, be discussed at the appropriate time; it was not within the competence of a purely technical commission.

In reply to an enquiry by the President, M. Aubert confirmed that the French delegation suggested that the United Kingdom proposal should be accepted as a basis for discussion, so far as it followed the order of the questions asked by the General Commission. It would seem preferable for the delegations not to deal with all the questions at the same time.

The President asked the Commission first to hear the speakers on his list in order to conclude the general discussion, and then to examine each of the points of the resolution of April 22nd, as the French delegation had suggested.

Colonel Tomberg (Estonia) said that the Estonian delegation shared the Finnish delegation’s point of view and supported its declaration.

General Kaleys (Latvia) stated that the Latvian delegation also supported the Finnish delegation’s point of view. He thought, however, that in the opinions of the various delegations there were so many points in common that a final agreement would not be very difficult.

General Tarbuk (Austria) thought that artillery material covered by the General Commission’s three criteria included all heavy artillery, whether fixed or mobile. The Austrian delegation thought heavy artillery included all pieces (guns, howitzers and mortars) of a calibre exceeding 105 mm. It therefore accepted the Italian and Hungarian proposals. General Tarbuk observed, nevertheless, that while it would not consider itself bound by the definition of heavy artillery to which it had just referred, the Austrian delegation could accept, from the technical point of view, a somewhat higher limit.

The Austrian delegation further considered that all tanks, armoured cars, and armoured trains, and all means of chemical and bacteriological warfare should be placed in the category of weapons “ whose character is the most specifically offensive or those most efficacious against national defence or most threatening to civilians “.

General Kossitch (Yugoslavia) thought that heavy artillery had been adequately considered from the technical aspect, and that the Commission had the necessary information to reach a conclusion. To prolong the discussion would be to invite proposals similar to those already made and would be a waste of time.

The Yugoslav delegation therefore supported the United Kingdom proposal, as interpreted by the French delegation. In its view, a decision should be taken as quickly as possible with regard to heavy artillery, in order that the Commission might discuss the other questions before it.

General Vateff (Bulgaria) proposed that the question of artillery material should be considered in the light of each of the General Commission’s three criteria.

It appeared that the main characteristic of artillery which could be considered as most offensive was mobility. Field artillery, which had the greatest mobility and could
follow the infantry everywhere, should therefore be considered as answering to the first criterion. The efficacy of this artillery against fortified works on the battlefield was limited, however, which meant that it was not very efficacious against national defence and consequently did not answer to the second criterion.

These two criteria should therefore be considered together, and the Bulgarian delegation thought that artillery material answering to these two criteria was that referred to in Chapter II, Section 1, last paragraph, and Section 2, paragraph 3, of the note by the Committee of Experts — namely, artillery material of a calibre exceeding 105 mm.

As to the third criterion, the threat to civilians, the Commission’s reply could be deduced from Chapter III of the note by the Committee of Experts — namely, weapons particularly threatening to civilians were those with a range exceeding the depth of the active zone of the battlefield — namely, those of a range greater than 15 km. and with a calibre exceeding 105 mm.

Colonel Steffens (Norway) said the Norwegian delegation was of the Netherlands delegation’s opinion — namely, that artillery of which the calibre exceeded 155 mm. was specifically offensive.

Lieutenant-General Omar Khan (Afghanistan) said that the Afghan delegation, in view of the Committee of Experts’ replies concerning the efficacy of artillery with a calibre exceeding 100 mm. against fortifications and national defence and the menace of such artillery to civilians, fully endorsed the Hungarian delegation’s declaration and confirmed its original proposal concerning the limitation of such artillery.

General Burhardt-Bukacki (Poland) observed that while the Committee of Experts had supplied purely technical information, the Land Commission should also bear in mind the practical aspect of the problem. It must not lose sight of the final object of the questions referred to it by the General Commission. That object was clearly set out in the resolution of April 22nd: weapons which exceeded the limits indicated by the Land Commission would be examined by the General Commission with a view to prohibition or internationalisation under a general convention.

The Polish delegation thought that, from the standpoint of national defence, those two measures — that was to say, abolition or internationalisation — or placing at the League’s disposal — had not at all the same value as guarantees for security.

Internationalisation, or placing at the League’s disposal, represented a very important guarantee. It assured a country that was attacked the benefit of the most powerful weapons not specifically prohibited, and in a measure far exceeding the quantities that the country itself could possess.

On the other hand, mere abolition or prohibition, not only did not offer equal guarantees and upset to some extent the present value of the different countries’ armaments, but it might involve very serious surprises for a country that was attacked. It was probable that its adversary, not having hesitated to violate the most solemn undertakings not to resort to war, would appear on the battlefield with prohibited weapons, particularly if the industry of the said adversary was sufficiently developed. In other words, abolition or prohibition was, in certain cases, liable to ensure the aggressor a privileged situation in advance.

Any qualitative differentiation between the weapons considered most offensive and those considered less offensive (or, more precisely, between more or less powerful weapons — since all weapons could be used both for attack and for defence) would be of purely relative value, and the choice of the limit would depend to a large extent on the practical object in view. In this connection, the Polish delegation could state at once that it was prepared to support the Belgian delegation’s proposal, subject to the fundamental reservation that all artillery exceeding the calibre or range indicated therein should be internationalised under a general convention.

The Polish delegation, as he had already said, was avowedly opposed to the principle of abolition or simple prohibition, but was prepared to support it if the Conference took a decision on those lines. It thought, however, that the level of arms left at the disposal of countries might be made much lower if the Conference decided to adopt the principle of internationalisation.

The Polish delegate regretted having been obliged to add to the series of monologues to which the French delegate had referred, but thought that it was desirable to define his delegation’s views.

In order to facilitate the proceedings, the Polish delegation was prepared to accept the United Kingdom proposal as a basis for discussion, subject to the modifications indicated by various other delegations.

M. Sato (Japan) recalled that he had already stated the Japanese delegation’s views at the beginning of the meeting. He thanked the British delegation for its efforts towards
conciliation, as embodied in its recent proposal. The Japanese delegation was prepared to accept that proposal as a basis for discussion, subject to certain minor amendments.

General FERRAZ (Portugal) stated that the Portuguese delegation would support the British proposal as interpreted by the French delegation, on the understanding that the Committee of Experts' replies would be taken as a basis for the later work of the Commission.

General TEMPERLEY (United Kingdom) wished to define the attitude of the United Kingdom delegation. It shared the views of the Netherlands delegation and of Sweden and would have been prepared to support the Canadian delegation's proposal. Bearing in mind, however, what still remained to be done, it hoped that the proposal it had just submitted might facilitate the Commission's work. That proposal, as the United States delegation had noted, represented a compromise and in the British delegation's view could only be regarded as a makeshift.

General ELIAS (Czechoslovakia) said that, despite the preoccupations to which it had referred during the discussion in the Committee of Experts, of paragraph 1 of Chapter III, the Czechoslovak delegation was prepared to support the United Kingdom proposal as interpreted by the French delegation. That proposal, moreover, did not differ very materially from the one submitted by the Belgian delegation.

Generally speaking, the Czechoslovak delegation was prepared to accept the calibre-limits or range-limits mentioned in those two proposals, subject to the reservation that guarantees should be provided to ensure the execution of any undertakings concluded.

The President declared the general discussion closed, and invited the Commission to choose between two solutions. The simplest solution would be to frame an objective report reflecting the three currents of opinion revealed in the Commission: one group of delegations was prepared to take as the limit above which artillery would be regarded as specifically offensive a calibre of 100-105 mm., a second group had proposed a calibre-limit of 150-155 mm., while a third group thought that it should be fixed at not less than 220 mm. This solution would be the simplest, as the Rapporteur could, without much difficulty, draw conclusions from the declarations made by the delegations.

The second solution would be to find some common ground in a formula which would reconcile the various points of view to some extent, though still taking into account the different shades of opinion expressed.

The Commission had paid a tribute to the spirit of conciliation exhibited by the United Kingdom delegation in submitting its proposal. That proposal, as well as the Belgian proposal, should give the Commission an adequate basis for establishing an agreed formula.

Delegations which had spoken from a purely technical standpoint could rest assured that a copy of the Committee of Experts' reply would be annexed to the report which the Land Commission was to submit to the General Commission.

If the Land Commission pronounced in favour of the second solution — that was to say, if it agreed to examine the possibilities of a joint reply — it might set about that task at the next meeting, on the basis of the British and Belgian proposals. Any other proposals communicated to the Bureau in the meantime would of course be examined also.

The President hoped that, thanks to the prevailing goodwill and spirit of conciliation, the members of the Land Commission might be able to submit to the General Commission a reply which would serve to facilitate its decision.

NINTH MEETING

Held on Tuesday, May 17th, 1932, at 4 p.m.

President: M. BUERO.

12. EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY WITH JAPAN.

The President extended to the members of the Japanese delegation the Commission's deep sympathy on the occasion of the fresh misfortune which had stricken Japan in the death of the Head of the Government, who had just succumbed to a cowardly attack.

M. SATO (Japan) thanked the president.
13. **SELECTION OF THE ARMS POSSESSING THE CHARACTERISTICS ENUMERATED IN THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON APRIL 22ND, 1932.**

**CONSIDERATION OF THE TERMS OF THE REPLY TO BE SENT TO THE GENERAL COMMISSION AS REGARDS ARTILLERY.**

The President recalled that the question on the agenda was the reply to the General Commission with reference to artillery material. Five proposals relating to that reply had already been distributed — namely, the Spanish 1, Hungarian 1, United Kingdom 2, Belgian 2 and Netherlands 1 proposals. The Commission also had to consider other proposals — for example, those from the German, Italian and Japanese delegations, in the form of amendments to certain paragraphs of the United Kingdom proposal. In addition, the French delegation had submitted, within the framework of the United Kingdom text, a concrete proposal of which the text was the following:

"Basing its opinions upon the conclusions embodied in the replies of the Committee of Experts to the questionnaire submitted to it (document Conf.D./C.T.7), the Land Commission offers the following recommendations for consideration by the General Commission:

(a) All artillery can be used for offensive and for defensive purposes.

(b) Subject to such solutions as may hereafter be found by the General Commission, for the questions raised by the fact that the fixed artillery of permanent fortifications and mobile artillery can be rendered interchangeable, the Land Commission is of opinion that the types of artillery most threatening to national defence comprise those which are capable of destroying permanent fortifications of considerable strength — namely:

1. In the case of permanent fortifications of great strength, artillery of a calibre exceeding 320 mm. firing projectiles exceeding 500 kilogrammes in weight.

2. In the case of permanent fortifications of medium strength, artillery of a calibre between 250 and 320 mm. firing projectiles exceeding 200 kilogrammes in weight.

(c) In a second category of lower power should be included artillery capable of effective action against lightly-protected permanent fortifications or against works on the battlefield, if it has been possible with the time, material and personnel available to give such works a like degree of strength. This artillery includes calibres between 220 and 250 mm.

(d) As regards artillery capable of effective action against improvised field works and entrenchments, this includes generally pieces of calibres varying from 100 to 220 mm. inclusive, firing projectiles of from 50 to 200 kilogrammes in weight.

(e) Certain delegations regard such artillery as threatening to national defence while others consider it necessary for national defence.

(e) As regards the third element of the resolution of the General Commission, the replies of the Committee of Experts to questions 1 and 2 of Chapter III of the questionnaire lead to the conclusion that, in the view of certain delegations, artillery material of over 200 mm. calibre having an effective range of more than 25 kilometres is the most menacing to the civil population. Other delegations attribute this character even to artillery of a calibre over 100 mm. or with an effective range of over 15 kilometres.

Other delegations, on the other hand, think it necessary to include in the zone of the battlefield tactical reserves capable of joining in the battle in a few hours with the aid of motor transport, and which may be 50 kilometres away from the front; these delegations consider that artillery designed to fire beyond the corresponding range is more dangerous to the civil population than to military objectives, and is consequently the most menacing to the civil population."

The first question which the Commission would have to decide was which document it would choose as a basis for discussion. The President supposed that the Commission would wish to take for this purpose the United Kingdom draft, which, though not the first in date, had been regarded by a number of delegates as a possible basis, and to which the delegations had been invited to propose amendments. Such a decision, however, could not, in his view, be taken before the authors of the four other original proposals had stated that they had no objection to that procedure. The fact that the United Kingdom draft had been submitted in the form of a reply to the General Commission was a further argument in favour of his

1 See Minutes of the seventh meeting.
2 See Minutes of the eighth meeting.
suggestion, and he would recall that those delegations which were not satisfied with the tenor of the document could always propose amendments.

General Benítez (Spain) accepted the President’s proposal on behalf of the Spanish delegation.

General de Nánasy-Mégay (Hungary) also accepted it.

M. van Tunen (Netherlands) said that, although the United Kingdom draft differed in form from that submitted by the Netherlands delegation, he had no objection to the President’s suggestion, but that he would wish in due course to submit the proposals embodied in the Netherlands text.

Lieutenant-General Galet (Belgium) accepted the President’s suggestion.

**Preamble.**

The President read the preamble to the United Kingdom proposal, as follows:

“Basing its opinions upon the conclusions embodied in the replies of the Technical Sub-Committee to the questionnaire submitted to it (document Conf.D./C.T.7), the Land Commission offers the following recommendations for consideration by the General Commission.”

The Secretariat had not been informed of any amendments to that text.

Colonel Leitão de Carvalho (Brazil) stated that the Brazilian delegation, which had followed with interest the discussion on the reply to the General Commission’s questions and had only abstained from submitting concrete proposals in order to facilitate agreement, had never lost sight of the object of the resolution of April 22nd. It had always aimed at identifying, for the purposes of the reply to the General Commission, the armaments particularly calculated to strengthen aggressive action, with a view to subjecting those armaments to a qualitative limitation whereby their power would be kept below that of defensive armaments.

The Brazilian delegation would have preferred a reply which, like that of the Belgian delegation, left no doubt as to the characteristics of the artillery material of which abolition would render easier the defence in case of aggression; a reply on those lines would, it thought, greatly facilitate the work of the General Commission.

Account could not be taken, however, in a text as concise as that of the Belgian delegation of all the tendencies expressed in the course of the debate. The Brazilian delegation accordingly supported the British proposal. The calibres for artillery pieces which the Committee of Experts regarded as capable of destroying the essential parts of permanent fortifications and acting effectively against field entrenchments varied between minimum and maximum limits of 100 mm. and 320 mm. and above. Referring to the Committee of Experts’ reply on this point,¹ the Brazilian representative expressed the view that artillery of about 150 mm. — which was the calibre most commonly employed — and upwards was sufficient to destroy entrenchments improvised by the defence in a short time, and that artillery from above 150 mm. to 220 mm. was a weapon extremely favourable to the aggressor. He thought therefore that the limit referred to should be taken as a basis for qualitative reduction.

He thought also that the minimum figures named in the Committee of Experts’ reply might furnish a reply to the question concerning the weapons most threatening to civilians. In his view, a depth of 15 kilometres constituted a minimum limit and should be taken as a basis for qualitative reduction.

Having regard to those various considerations, it would be possible to frame a simple and clear reply to the General Commission, taking as a basis the Committee of Experts’ figures. He realised, however, that considerations of a different nature might influence the Commission’s decisions, and stated that, in the interests of conciliation, the Brazilian delegation was prepared to support the United Kingdom proposal. It was ready, indeed, to accept any solution that might meet with unanimity or at all events obtain a majority vote in the Commission.

The President said that the Commission would note Colonel Leitão de Carvalho’s declaration, which related to the British draft as a whole.

The preamble was adopted.

**Paragraph (a).**

The President read paragraph (a) of the United Kingdom proposal, as follows:

“(a) All artillery can be used for offensive and for defensive purposes, but, whereas the lighter natures have a restricted offensive capacity, the offensive element becomes greater as the power of the artillery increases.”

The French delegation had submitted an amendment to that paragraph, to delete the phrase beginning “but whereas. . .”