5. ISLANDS UNDER JAPANESE MANDATE.

Annual Report for 1930.

At its twenty-first session, the Commission noted with regret that in ten years the native population of the island of Yap had decreased by about one-quarter. While appreciating the mandatory Power's efforts to ascertain the causes of this decrease, the Commission felt that it would be advisable to study the question not merely from the medical, but also from the social standpoint.

On January 25th, 1932, the Council decided to communicate these observations to the Government of the mandatory Power with a request that it be good enough to take the action desired by the Commission.

III. SPECIAL QUESTIONS.

1. PROPOSAL BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WITH A VIEW TO THE EMANCIPATION OF IRAQ.

(a) Opinion of the Permanent Mandates Commission.

At the close of the Council's discussion on the conclusions formulated by the Permanent Mandates Commission regarding the general conditions to be fulfilled before the mandates regime could be brought to an end, the British representative expressed the hope that that Commission would study without delay the question whether Iraq could be emancipated from the mandates system.

On September 4th, 1931, the Council adopted a resolution in which it requested the Mandates Commission "to submit its opinion on the proposal of the British Government for the emancipation of Iraq after consideration of the same in the light of the resolution of the Council of September 4th, 1931, with regard to the general conditions to be fulfilled before a mandate can be brought to an end ".

The Mandates Commission proceeded to an examination of this question at its twenty-first session. It formulated its opinion in the special report which was submitted to the Council on December 30th, 1931. The Commission considered that its task was to express an opinion as to whether the time contemplated in Article 22 of the Covenant had arrived in the case of Iraq, the mandatory regime for which had from its inception possessed certain special features, and to define the guarantees which Iraq should be asked to give to the League of Nations.

The Commission recalled the fact that, in its opinion, in order to decide whether a people which had hitherto been under the mandatory regime had become fit to stand alone, it was necessary not only to ascertain whether the country in question had at present the essential political institutions and administrative machinery of a modern State, but also whether it gave evidence of such social conditions and civic spirit as would ensure the regular working of those institutions and the effective exercise of the civil and political rights established by law.

The Commission had, however, had no opportunity of observing at first hand the moral condition and internal policy of Iraq, the degree of efficiency reached by its administrative organisation, or the spirit in which its laws were applied and in which its institutions functioned.

In these circumstances, apart from petitions, it had obtained its information solely from the annual reports of the mandatory Power and the statements of its accredited representative. The views of the British Government as to the political maturity of Iraq were, to quote the Commission, the views of a guide who, since the beginning of the mandatory regime, had been constantly directing and observing the rapid progress achieved by that country. The full significance of these views was recognised when they were considered in conjunction with the declaration made by the accredited representative of the British Government at the twentieth session of the Mandates Commission to the effect that "His Majesty's Government fully realises its responsibility in recommending that Iraq should be admitted to the League . . . Should Iraq prove herself unworthy of the confidence which has been placed in her, the moral responsibility must rest with His Majesty's Government . . . ".

Had it not been for the declaration, the Commission would, for its part, have been unable to contemplate the termination of a regime which appeared some years ago to be necessary in the interest of all sections of the population.

Endorsing the view set out in the British Government's special report for the period 1920-31, the Commission held that the attainment of an ideal standard of administrative efficiency and stability was not a necessary condition for the termination of the mandatory regime in Iraq and that there could not be any question of expecting a country whose emancipation was proposed to be able to challenge comparison with the most highly developed and civilised nations of the modern world.

Subject to these reservations, the Commission had endeavoured to determine in the first place, with the help of its usual sources of information and to the extent compatible with the nature of its functions and procedure, whether the de facto conditions laid down in the Council resolution of September 4th, 1931, really existed in Iraq.

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1 See page 43.
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The Commission gave its opinion, with accompanying comments, as to the extent to which Iraq fulfilled these several conditions. In its opinion, the information collected justified the assumption that Iraq now possessed a settled government and an administration capable of maintaining the regular operation of essential Government services, that it was able to maintain the public peace throughout the whole territory, that it had at its disposal adequate financial resources to provide regularly for normal Government requirements, and that it possessed laws and a judicial organisation likely to afford equal and regular justice to all.

The Commission held that the present military situation in Iraq was not such that the country could be regarded as capable of maintaining its territorial integrity and political independence against a foreign aggressor by means of its own national forces. On the other hand the Commission noted that, if Iraq were admitted to the League of Nations, it would enjoy the guarantees of security which all the States Members of the League derived from the Covenant. Moreover, in the same eventuality, the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance of June 30th, 1930 — Article 4 of this Treaty ensuring that the contracting parties would furnish mutual and immediate aid in case of war — would automatically come into force. The Commission felt that in these circumstances, and if the termination of the mandate was accompanied by the admission of Iraq to the League, the country fulfilled the condition concerning the defence of the territory, interpreted in the sense attached to it by the Commission in the course of its previous discussions.

Going on to the question of the guarantees to which Iraq should be asked to subscribe before being released from the mandatory regime, the Commission recommended that the effective protection of racial, linguistic and religious minorities should be ensured by means of a series of provisions inserted in a declaration to be made by the Iraqi Government before the Council of the League of Nations and by the acceptance of the procedure laid down by the Council in regard to petitions concerning minorities.

As regards the safeguarding of the interests of foreigners in judicial matters, the Commission considered the eventuality of substituting for the capitulations an undertaking to be entered into by Iraq before the Council. It recommended that, should this suggestion not be approved, or should there be a simple reversion to the system of the capitulations, Iraq should make a declaration to the Council, guaranteeing the interests, in civil and criminal judicial matters, of nationals of States Members of the League of Nations which did not enjoy the benefit of rights under the capitulations in the Ottoman Empire or had renounced those rights under treaties.

The Commission considered that the undertaking which Iraq would enter into before the Council either to replace the regime of capitulations or, in the case of reversion to the latter, to ensure the protection of nationals of States not enjoying the benefit of that regime, should be based on the provisions of the Anglo-Iraqi Judicial Agreement of March 4th, 1931, which had received the approval of the Council and of the Powers concerned, and should be accepted by those Powers. However, the majority of the Commission, was of opinion that in that case the foreign judges forming part of the judiciary of Iraq should not be exclusively of British nationality but should be chosen from among the nationals of different countries.

In accordance with the general conditions for the termination of the mandate, annexed to the Council resolution of September 4th, 1931, the Commission recommended that Iraq should subscribe to guarantees such as to ensure freedom of conscience and public worship, and the free exercise of the religious, educational and medical activities of missions, respect for the rights of every kind legally acquired under the mandatory regime, and the maintenance in force of international conventions, both general and special.

It noted specifically that the declaration to be made by Iraq before the Council with regard to the financial obligations assumed in regular form by the mandatory Power should provide every guarantee for the application of the principles relating to the question laid down in the Council's resolution of September 15th, 1925. Under the terms of that resolution, the cessation or transfer of a mandate could not take place unless the Council had been assured in advance that the financial obligations in question would be carried out and that all rights regularly acquired under the administration of that Power would be respected. When this change has been effected, the Council would continue to use all its influence to ensure the fulfilment of these obligations.

As regards the safeguarding of the principle of economic equality, the Commission noted that, under the terms of the Council resolution of September 4th, 1931, Iraq should be asked formally to consent to secure to all States Members of the League of Nations the most-favoured-nation treatment as a transitory measure and for a period to be decided in agreement with the Council on condition of reciprocity.

The Commission did not confine itself to defining the undertakings to which the emancipation of Iraq should in its opinion be made subject. It recommended further, being of opinion that such a guarantee was required, that — apart from the protection of minorities, for which it proposed the ordinary procedure governing this question — Iraq should be requested to agree that any difference of opinion arising between Iraq and any Member of the League of Nations relating to the interpretation or execution of the undertakings in question should, at the request of such Member, be submitted to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

Finally, in conformity with the Council resolution of September 4th, 1931, the Commission examined the undertakings entered into by Iraq with the United Kingdom, from the point of view of their compatibility with the status of an independent State. Although certain of the provisions of the Treaty of Alliance of June 30th, 1930, appeared to the Commission to be somewhat unusual in treaties of this kind, it was of opinion that the obligations entered into by Iraq towards the United Kingdom did not explicitly infringe the independence of the new State.
(b) Decisions taken by the Council at its Meetings held on January 28th and May 19th, 1932.

The Council examined the report of the Permanent Mandates Commission at its meeting on January 28th, 1932. In commenting on this report the representative of Yugoslavia, in his capacity as Rapporteur, noted that the Commission's opinion was the result of careful examination of a specific case carried out in the light of the Council resolution of September 4th, 1931, and based on the sources of information available to it; and as such it was accompanied by various reservations and comments.

He recommended the Council to decide that the Commission's conclusions justified the assumption that Iraq satisfied the de facto conditions for the termination of the mandate, provided that she was admitted into the League of Nations. This reservation — which the Mandates Commission held to be necessary in view of the benefits accruing to and the duties devolving upon all Members of the League — was, he added, also justified legally by the Council decision of December 16th, 1925. On that occasion the Council made the execution of its decision defining the frontier between Turkey and Iraq conditional on the prolongation for twenty-five years of the mandatory regime in Iraq, subject to the reservation that Iraq might, before the termination of that period, be admitted into the League in conformity with Article I of the Covenant.

As regards the guarantees to be furnished by Iraq, the Rapporteur suggested that the Council should adopt the opinion of the Mandates Commission.

Lastly, the Rapporteur noted that for various reasons it was difficult for the Council to adopt entirely the suggestion of the Permanent Mandates Commission with regard to the clause of guarantee. He accordingly proposed that only Members of the League represented on the Council should be allowed to lay before the Permanent Court of International Justice any differences of opinion that might arise concerning the interpretation or execution of Iraq's pledges.

After a discussion in which the representatives of Italy, the United Kingdom, Norway, Germany and France, the Rapporteur, and the Chairman of the Permanent Mandates Commission took part, the Council, on January 28th, 1932, adopted the following resolution:

"The Council,

Having to consider the special case of the termination of the mandate for Iraq:

1. Notes the opinion formulated, at its request, by the Permanent Mandates Commission on the proposal of the British Government;

2. Considers that the information available is sufficient to show that Iraq satisfies, generally speaking, the de facto conditions enumerated in the annex to the Council resolution of September 4th, 1931;

3. Declares itself prepared, in principle, to pronounce the termination of the mandatory regime in Iraq, when that State shall have entered into undertakings before the Council in conformity with the suggestions contained in the report of the Permanent Mandates Commission, it being understood that the right to apply to the Permanent Court of International Justice may only be exercised by Members of the League represented on the Council;

4. Accordingly requests its Rapporteurs for minorities questions, questions of international law and mandates, and the representative of Great Britain on the Council, to prepare, in consultation with the representative of the Iraqi Government and, if necessary, with a representative of the Permanent Mandates Commission, a draft declaration covering the various guarantees recommended in the report of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and to submit that draft to the Council at its next session;

5. Decides that, should the Council, after examining the undertakings which would be entered into by the Iraqi Government, pronounce the termination of the mandatory regime over that territory, such decision shall become effective only as from the date on which Iraq has been admitted to the League of Nations."

The Council examined on May 19th, 1932, the report submitted by the Committee which had been instructed under paragraph 4 of that resolution to prepare a draft declaration dealing with the undertakings to be entered into by the Iraqi Government before the termination of the mandate for that territory.

The Committee, in its report to the Council, stated that in performing its task it had throughout endeavoured, in accordance with the principles clearly laid down in the Council's discussions, to draw up a sufficiently precise and complete draft declaration, while remaining strictly within the limits indicated and without imposing on Iraq any obligations likely to hinder her free development as an independent nation. The Committee added that it was convinced that this declaration, which had been discussed with the Prime Minister of Iraq and which took full account of the wishes expressed by him, would in every way prove acceptable to Iraq. The Committee thought it necessary to add to the draft declaration certain explanations defining the meaning of a few provisions contained therein.

The draft declaration deals with the following questions: protection of racial, linguistic and religious minorities, most-favoured-nation clause, judicial organisation, rights acquired and financial obligations, freedom of conscience, and right of appeal.

As regards protection of minorities, the draft declaration contains provisions of a general character which are contained in the treaties or declarations already in force in a certain number of countries. The Committee pointed out that many of the constitutional and legislative
provisions of Iraq are based on a very liberal conception of the rights to be accorded to racial, linguistic or religious minorities. Furthermore, the draft declaration contains two special clauses relating to the personal status and family law of non-Moslem minorities, the use of the Kurdish language as an official language in the Kurdish districts, and the recruitment of officials.

As regards economic equality, Iraq must undertake to grant to Members of the League, on condition of reciprocity, most-favoured-nation treatment for a period of ten years from the date of her admission to membership of the League of Nations.

Nevertheless, should measures taken by any Member of the League of Nations be of such a nature as to disturb the balance of trade between Iraq and the Member of the League of Nations in question, to the detriment of Iraq, by seriously affecting the chief exports of Iraq the latter has the right to request the Member of the League of Nations concerned to open immediate negotiations for the purpose of restoring the balance.

Should an agreement not be reached by negotiation within three months from her request, Iraq could consider itself as freed vis-à-vis the Member of the League in question from the obligation of granting it the most-favoured-nation treatment. Furthermore, Iraq is given the right to conclude a Customs union and to grant certain advantages to adjacent countries in order to facilitate frontier traffic.

In the judicial sphere, the draft declaration provides for a uniform judicial system applicable to all, Iraqis and foreigners alike. Moreover, certain provisions of the Anglo-Iraqi Agreement of March 4th, 1931, shall remain in force during a period of ten years from the admission of Iraq to membership of the League of Nations. The holders of posts reserved for foreign jurists under the Agreement shall be selected by the Iraqi Government without distinction of nationality.

Subject to the right of denunciation provided for therein, Iraq shall consider herself bound by the international agreements and conventions to which she has become a party, throughout the period for which they were concluded.

Under the draft declaration Iraq, taking note of the Council resolution of September 15th, 1925, shall declare that all rights of whatever nature acquired before the termination of the mandatory regime by individuals, associations, or juridical persons shall be respected by her, and that she will fulfil all financial obligations of whatever nature assumed on her behalf by the mandatory Power during the period of the mandate.

Subject to such measures as may be essential for the maintenance of public order and morality, Iraq shall undertake to ensure and guarantee freedom of conscience and worship, and the religious, educational, and medical work of religious missions of all denominations, whatever the nationality of those missions or of their members.

The appeal procedure as regards the provisions relating to the protection of minorities is the same as that provided for in the undertakings of a similar nature entered into by other countries.

The last article of the draft declaration provides that any Member of the League of Nations can draw the attention of the Council to infringements of other provisions. Moreover, under that article, any difference of opinion that might arise between Iraq and any Member of the League of Nations represented on the Council with regard to the interpretation or execution of those provisions shall, at the request of that Member, be laid for decision before the Permanent Court of International Justice. The Committee, in its report to the Council, pointed out that is was evident that, if a Member of the League represented on the Council decided to refer a question to the court, the difference of opinion which it desired to submit need not necessarily arise out of a difference of interpretation between itself and Iraq, but also between Iraq and a Member of the League not represented on the Council.

The representative of Yugoslavia, as Rapporteur for mandates questions, stated in his report that, once the draft declaration had been accepted by Iraq in a manner constitutionally effective, it would afford, in accordance with the decisions of the Council, the guarantees to which the latter had decided that the termination of the mandatory regime should be subject. He also stressed the request made by the Committee that the Council should approve by a recommendation the action which the British Government is called upon to take, as mandatory Power, with a view to obtaining the consent of Powers whose citizens enjoyed capitulary rights in the former Ottoman Empire to the renunciation of those rights in Iraq for the future.

The Rapporteur recommended to the Council to accede to this recommendation of its Committee, since the new statute contemplated for Iraq renders superfluous the jurisdictional privileges which, in theory, should be revived in favour of the nationals of the so-called capitulary Powers as a result of the termination of the mandate, and since it takes account of the peculiar position of Iraq while at the same time respecting its status as an independent State. The Rapporteur further said that the termination of the mandatory regime in Iraq will not be effective until Iraq has formally ratified the declaration and has also been admitted to membership of the League in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Covenant.

The examination of the report submitted by the Committee was the object of a discussion in the course of which the representatives of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Poland, Germany, Norway, Irish Free State, and the Rapporteur dealt, inter alia, with the questions of the protection of minorities and economic equality.
The Council finally adopted the following resolution:

“The Council:

Approves the draft declaration and report submitted to it by its Committee in accordance with paragraph 4 of its resolution of January 28th, 1932;

Approves the report submitted this day by the representative of Yugoslavia, its Rapporteur;

Accordingly recommends that the Powers concerned, whose nationals enjoyed capitulation rights in the former Ottoman Empire, renounce, before the admission of Iraq to the League of Nations, the maintenance of these former jurisdictional privileges in favour of their nationals in future;

Request the Secretary-General to communicate this recommendation to the Governments of the States which the British Government, in accordance with the present resolution, will approach with a view to the proposed renunciation.”

2. FRONTIER BETWEEN SYRIA AND IRAQ.

At its session in December 1931, the Council examined a joint request by the British and French Governments relating to the delimitation of the frontier between Iraq and Syria, which territories are under their respective mandates.

These two Powers pointed out that differences of opinion existed between them as to the exact interpretation of the Convention signed by them on December 23rd, 1920, particularly in regard to the provisions of that Convention concerning the determination of the frontier between Syria and Iraq. They stated that, whatever interpretation was given to the Convention, a frontier drawn in strict conformity therewith would be likely to be unsatisfactory in certain sectors for military, political, administrative, economic, geographical and other reasons. They were of opinion that it was not within the competence of a Delimitation Commission such as that provided for in the 1920 Convention, to modify the frontier to an extent sufficient to remove the unsatisfactory features above mentioned. However, as they were desirous of obtaining a speedy, final and equitable settlement they requested the Council to examine the problem in all its aspects and to indicate a frontier which could be accepted definitively by the two parties.

On December 9th, 1931, the Council, accepting in principle the request of the two Governments, decided to set up a Commission consisting of three Commissioners, being nationals of countries not parties to the question, assisted by four assessors, to collect full information and particulars on the spot and to make such suggestions as might assist the Council in framing its decision on this question; this decision to be final.

The Spanish representative on the Council and the Yugoslav representative, Rapporteur for mandates questions, were requested to appoint the members of the Commission, after consulting the two Governments concerned. The Commission, which was set up in February 1932, was composed as follows:

**Chairman:** Colonel James DE REYNIER (Swiss), former President of the Danzig Port and Waterways Board, former Chairman of the Mixed Greco-Bulgarian Emigration Commission;

**Members:**
- M. Pedro Marades GOMEZ (Spanish), First-class Commercial Attaché at the Spanish Embassy in Berlin, former Consul at Damascus, Jerusalem, Beirut and Sélè.
- M. Carl PETERSEN (Swedish), Director of Section in the Secretariat of the International League of Red Cross Societies.

The Chairman of the Commission, Colonel de Reynier, was killed in an accident in Iraq in March 1932 and Colonel Frédéric ISELIN, engineer (Swiss), was appointed in his place.

3. SYRIAN-JEBEL DRUZE-TRANSJORDAN FRONTIER.

In January 1932, the Council received a joint request from the British and French Governments asking it to approve the provisions of an agreement concerning the Syrian-Jebel Druze-Transjordan frontier concluded on October 31st, 1931.

In his report to the Council on January 30th, 1932, the Rapporteur pointed out that the boundary between the territories detached from the former Ottoman Empire and placed under the British and French mandates was defined in the Franco-British Convention of December 23rd, 1920. He added that the first section of the frontier determined by the 1920 Convention — namely, the Syria-Palestine section — formed the object of a Protocol concerning the boundary line signed in 1923, and that the question of the Syria-Iraq frontier line had been dealt with by the Council in December 1931. In November 1931, the Council was informed by the two Governments that, as regards the Syrian-Jebel Druze-Transjordan section of the frontier — the third section —, the difficulties which had hitherto prevented the delimitation of the frontier defined by the 1920 Convention had been overcome, and that they had agreed, subject to the Council's approval, upon a line to be delimited upon the ground by the Commission.

1 See *Treaty Series*, published by the Secretariat (Volume XXII, page 355).
provided for in the said Convention. The Rapporteur stated that according to the information with which the two mandatory Powers had furnished him, the modifications made in the 1920 Convention had been inspired by the desire not to disturb the populations in the exercise of their rights and customs, to increase security by facilitating administration, and to ensure, in the present and in the future, the security of the vital communications between Iraq and Transjordan towards the Mediterranean. According to the Rapporteur, the arrangement submitted by the two Governments appeared to strike an equitable balance between these different factors. This agreement of *bon voisinage* would give the populations of the boundaries every facility for carrying on their daily life on either side of the frontier. In conclusion, the Rapporteur proposed that the Council should comply with the request of the two Governments.

A long discussion, in which several members participated, took place in the Council. The Italian representative laid particular stress on the procedure to be followed by the Council. As a general rule, proposed changes in the frontier between these two territories should, in his opinion, be examined previously by the Mandates Commission, the Council's advisory organ. He submitted the following draft resolution, which the Council adopted:

"The Council,

"Considering that, in their Agreement of October 31st, 1931, Great Britain and France have drawn up a frontier line which the Council has every reason to believe to be in the interests of the populations under mandate;

"Considering that, in these circumstances and in view of the importance of an immediate settlement of the question, it does not seem essential to refer the matter to the Permanent Mandates Commission, whose opinion in other circumstances it would certainly have asked;

"In response to the joint request of the British and French Governments:

"Approves the Agreement of October 31st, 1931, regarding the Syrian-Jebel Druze-Transjordan frontier."

In accepting this resolution, the representative of Great Britain pointed out that the formal approval of the Council had never been sought for the western section of the frontier dividing Syria and the Lebanon from Palestine, which was delimited in 1923. If necessary measures had been overlooked, the appropriate action would be taken, in agreement with the French Government, to remedy the omission at a future session of the Council.

IV. REDUCTION OF THE NUMBER OF SESSIONS OF THE MANDATES COMMISSION.

For financial reasons, the Assembly decided in 1931 to reduce the number of sessions of the Mandates Commission in 1932 from two to one. In its report on the work of its twenty-first session, the Mandates Commission drew the Council's attention to the consequences which this decision would involve if renewed. The Mandates Commission felt that in that case it would be absolutely unable to fulfil the duties conferred upon it by Article 22 of the Covenant.

At the Council meeting held on January 25th, 1932, several members of the Council expressed the hope that in spite of financial difficulties the Commission might be placed in a position to discharge its task in full. The Council decided to bring the Mandates Commission's observations to the notice of the Assembly and the Supervisory Commission, and to attach thereto the text of its discussions on this subject.

10.

SLAVERY.

I. EXECUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY'S RESOLUTION OF SEPTEMBER 25TH, 1926.

By its resolution adopted on September 25th, 1926, the Assembly requested the Council to prepare and communicate to the Assembly every year a document mentioning the laws and regulations transmitted to it by the parties to the Convention relative to slavery, in accordance with Article 7 of this Convention, together with such supplementary information as the States Members of the League might furnish of their own accord respecting the measures taken by them to bring about the progressive abolition of slavery and conditions analagous thereto.
In his report submitted to the Council on May 9th, 1932, the representative of the United Kingdom, as Rapporteur for Slavery questions, stated that the League of Nations had, since the twelfth Assembly, received no communication from Governments in virtue of the above-mentioned resolution. He added that this circumstance seemed to be explained by the fact that the Assembly had, in September 1931, requested the Council to appoint a Committee of Experts to examine the material supplied or transmitted by Governments since the signature of the Convention of 1926. The Council authorised the Secretary-General to communicate to the Assembly the information received in conformity with its resolution of September 25th, 1926, between the sixty-seventh session of the Council (May 1932) and the opening of the thirteenth Assembly.

II. COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS APPOINTED UNDER THE ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF SEPTEMBER 25TH, 1931.

On September 25th, 1931, the Assembly requested the Council to appoint for one year a Committee of Experts to examine the material upon slavery which had been supplied or transmitted by Governments since the signature of the Convention of 1926.

This Committee was to submit to the Council suggestions with a view to recommending to the thirteenth Assembly the measures of assistance which the League of Nations could render to those countries which had agreed to abolish slavery and which requested such assistance.

On September 29th, 1931, the Council adopted a resolution defining the Committee's task as formulated in the Assembly resolution.

By this resolution, the Committee was to examine the documents submitted to it and report to what extent, in the light of these documents, the 1926 Convention had been successful in putting an end to slavery and what obstacles, if any, existed to further progress in this direction. The Committee was further to consider and report by what methods assistance could be rendered to those States which had expressed a desire to receive it for the purpose of suppressing slavery within their territory. Finally the Committee was required to state whether any modifications of the existing machinery of the League, and if so which, would be desirable in order to attain the object in view.

On January 28th, 1932, the Council appointed the members of the Committee of Experts referred to in the Assembly resolution. The following are the members of the Committee:

- M. ANGOULVANT (French), Honorary Governor-General of the Colonies;
- Mme. DE CASTRO E ALMEIDA (Portuguese), Government Delegate to the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation;
- M. GOHR (Belgian), former Director-General at the Ministry for the Colonies;
- Lord LUGARD (British), Member of the Permanent Mandates Commission, former Governor of Nigeria;
- M. NEYTZELL DE WILDE (Dutch), Ex-President of the Legislative Assembly of the Netherlands Indies;
- Commander ZEDDA (Italian), former Secretary-General to the Government of Eritrea;
- M. Julio LÓPEZ OLIVÁN (Spanish), Minister Plenipotentiary, former Director-General for Morocco and Colonies.

The Director of the International Labour Office was invited to appoint an observer to follow the work of the Committee.

The Committee of Experts met at Geneva on May 4th, 1932. At its sessions of January and May 1932, the Council gratefully accepted a gift, as a contribution to the expenses of the Committee of Experts, of 10,000 Swiss francs offered by a client of the Friends' Provident and Century Life Office, London, and a gift of 10,000 lire offered by the Società Anti-Schiavista Italiana, Rome.

II.

WORK OF THE TECHNICAL ORGANISATIONS.

I. ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ORGANISATION.

A. SECTION OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS: WORK OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE.

1. Economic "Rapprochements" in Europe.

The Economic Committee was requested, under the terms of a resolution of the twelfth Assembly, to study, on the basis of the preparatory work carried out by the Secretariat and with due reference to the observations of Governments, the whole body of problems relating
to "economic rapprochements in Europe". These rapprochements had been recommended in the report of the Sub-Committee of Economic Experts set up by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

As several Governments had not yet forwarded their observations to the Economic Committee, the Committee proceeded to a preliminary exchange of views. It was felt very strongly that any study directed towards a better organisation of European economy must necessarily begin by an impartial examination of the present situation. Consequently, the Economic Committee studied the effects of the crises on the regime of international exchanges.

In the course of this examination, the Committee arrived at one definite conclusion — namely, that the present situation was of such an exceptional character that it would perhaps appear premature to contemplate any plans for the future before international trade had returned to rather more normal conditions.


The Economic Committee devoted a large part of its sessions in October 1931 and January 1932 to examining the effects of the economic disturbances to international exchanges brought about by the present depression.

After surveying the development and characteristic phases of the present depression, the Committee, in its report to the Council on its October session, 1931, dealt in particular with the safeguarding and defensive measures resorted to by the States in order to overcome the present difficulties.

Safeguarding and Defensive Measures resorted to by the States.

The Committee observes that the public authorities of certain countries have been led to intervene in important spheres of commercial and financial activity and principally in relations with foreign countries. They restrict imports, endeavouring to redress the balance of payments and to render it favourable; they strive to ensure a surplus of foreign currencies so as to meet the financial obligations contracted towards foreign countries.

Furthermore, they bring under their control the trade in foreign currencies so as to reserve the latter either for the support of their own currency or for the purchases which are the most useful to the national economy.

Countries into which there is an influx of gold and whose monetary situation has remained relatively strong take restrictive measures in their turn, on the ground that abroad the diminution in purchasing power and the depreciation of the currency restrict their markets and cause a falling off in their exports, while at home the sales at low prices effected by countries in difficulties or favoured by the discrepancies in goods prices swell their imports to an abnormal extent. Threatened with an extension of unemployment, they, too, organise the defence of their markets.

Lastly, the restrictive measures taken by one country dictate those which other countries find themselves obliged to take in their turn.

The general introduction of import prohibitions and restrictions and the monopoly or control of dealings in foreign exchange form a system of which the world has already had experience. It developed shortly after the war, owing to the instability of some currencies and the rapid depreciation of others. But, after the lessons of the past, everyone must now realise the very serious drawbacks of such a system.

Control and restrictions provide an opening for arbitrary action. They make commercial relations precarious and unstable. If introduced generally, they will multiply the obstacles and may have the effect of paralysing international trade.

Moreover, the country whose currency is threatened is not the only one to take defensive measures. Other countries around it are at grips with the same difficulties and have recourse to the same remedies. The restrictions they place on their mutual relations counterbalance each other and tend to nullify mutually their effects.

It must doubtless be admitted that the measures in question are regarded by the countries taking them as at the moment imperatively necessary; they are steps taken for the public safety, justified by exceptional circumstances; they appear to these countries as being the only means of preventing a financial or economic collapse. Even if they cannot be avoided, however, it is still essential that they should be attended by precautions and guarantees calculated to limit their harmful effects as much as possible.

Guarantees to be established in order to limit Abuses in the Application of Restrictive Measures introduced by Various Countries.

In the opinion of the Economic Committee, it is desirable that a Government which, in order to meet a critical situation, finds it necessary to restrict the freedom of international trade should pay heed to the interests of other countries and should endeavour to reduce the damage the latter must inevitably suffer.

Whenever possible, such a Government should not put the measures into force until it has consulted the other Governments concerned. Restrictive measures would probably lose

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1 See document C.510.M.215.1931.VII.
some of their injurious character if they were concerted with the States which are bound to feel their effects. To obviate the abuses to which their application may lead, it may be well to refer to the guarantees formulated in certain international Conventions and in earlier recommendations of the Economic Committee.

Steps should be taken to prevent these measures being diverted from their immediate purpose and constituting a form of indirect protectionism.

It is also important that restrictions imposed by the present trend of business should be essentially temporary, and that their application should be strictly limited to the duration of the circumstances by which they were dictated.

**Essential Conditions for the Return of Prosperity.**

Whatever precautions may be taken, the safeguarding measures to which countries resort in the face of the financial crisis present, in the opinion of the Economic Committee, inevitable drawbacks both for the countries themselves and for others. The mere fact that such steps are taken, however, shows that the Governments are firmly determined to prevent at any cost a national economic collapse. There can be no doubt that, if an end can be put to the most serious disturbances of a financial and monetary nature which are at present in evidence, the resulting feeling of stability and security would be favourable to a return of more normal exchange conditions.

The re-establishment of normal financial relations and a return to the conditions existing for international trade before the recent financial and monetary disturbances will constitute an important factor in restoring confidence, but they will not in themselves be sufficient. It must not be forgotten that confidence cannot be finally restored until all uncertainty has been dispelled as to the solution of important international problems which are not all of an economic character.

When that time comes, States will have to be reminded that lasting prosperity can only be established on the basis of greater freedom of circulation of goods, capital and services than the world — and especially Europe — has known since the war.

The Economic Committee has always laid stress in the past on the necessity of securing the utmost possible freedom for trade. It is to-day convinced that the argument it formulated earlier has not been disproved by facts. There is little doubt that the present crisis would not have been as acute as it is if Governments could have pursued a policy more in conformity with that doctrine. Contemporary events afford a valuable lesson in this connection.

The present difficulties are not past all remedy, and are primarily due to psychological causes. The experience of previous crises shows that, if confidence is easily upset, it can also be quickly restored if Governments make it clear that they are determined to remain masters of the situation.

**Influence of the Financial Situation on International Economic Relations.**

This is the problem with which the Economic Committee was principally concerned at its session in January 1932. It found that the opinions it had expressed in October 1931, with regard to the measures introduced by the various countries, had been fully justified by the facts. It decided therefore that it would be well to emphasise once more the fact that “the general result of national measures to cope with the effects of the crisis is almost inevitably to prolong and seriously to aggravate the latter”.

As the relations between the creditor and debtor countries have recently given rise to very complicated problems which have had some influence on the conditions of international trade, the Committee studied, in the first place, the various means employed by each of these two groups of States to safeguard their interests.

In further explanation of its standpoint the Committee states that it considers that the rapidity with which the restrictive measures recently applied by most countries succeeded one another may be explained as a necessary consequence, even in the case of those countries whose finances are soundest, by the anxiety to safeguard their production or correct their balance of payments. For this, only two methods are available: action in the sphere of financial obligations towards foreign countries (debts), or measures designed to influence foreign trade (imports and exports).

While feeling that the charges resulting from debts (particularly private debts) contracted during the last three or four years may still have something to do with the present price level (an Eastern and Central European farmer requires 150 kilogrammes of wheat to pay off interest which he could pay off with 50 kilogrammes when he contracted his debt), countries are none the less unreservedly applying the second of these methods.

All the measures taken by the different States in the matter of foreign exchange and the regulations of exchanges are directed in the last resort towards two main objectives: they are designed either to protect the national currency and the country's credit against any weakening which would mean a reduction of its gold and foreign currency stock, or, on the other hand, to protect national production against the dumping of cheap goods — that dumping being in its turn determined very largely by the monetary situation of other countries.

Financial disorders were naturally bound to affect, in the first place, the debtor countries, the foreign payments of which are becoming heavier and increasingly difficult, to the extent of jeopardising their monetary stability. The majority of those countries are accordingly hastening to take measures which, simply from the standpoint of their financial administration,
are perfectly comprehensible and justifiable: they are introducing control of foreign exchange and restricting their imports and are, for the same reason, endeavouring to increase their exports.

The double consequence of this state of affairs in the creditor countries is that the latter's exports are diminishing, whereas their imports would tend to increase, if, to cope with this new situation, they, in their turn did not take defensive measures. These countries find that their credits and exports are alike endangered. Even when the reciprocal situation is not determined by a debtor-creditor relationship, but when, as in certain parts of Europe, a number of countries which have a considerable trade with one another simply take the same measures, with the object of safeguarding their monetary and financial situation, the general result is obviously to render those very measures ineffective to some extent and to reduce the volume of transactions to a very considerable extent.

The combined influence of the facts to which we have just directed attention brings about paradoxical situations, as a result of which the financial interests of the different countries are often utterly at variance with their economic interests.

Accordingly, the countries which are soundest financially and are in the position of creditors should, it would seem, be in favour of an increase in the exports of the debtor countries, that the latter may become possessed of the means necessary for them to meet their obligations. But since, on the other hand, countries the currency and finances of which are sound are anxious at seeing their exports reduced as a result of the measures taken by the debtor countries, and feel some apprehension also as regards their own balance of payments, they, too, are setting up barriers against foreign imports.

Once again these contradictory tendencies make themselves felt in the form of trade depression and hence economic depression.

Methods of remedying the Situation.

In view of the importance which monetary and financial necessities have assumed since the summer of 1931, as a factor in international trade, the Economic Committee was, for the moment, unable to formulate useful suggestions for trade policy until the necessary solutions had been found in the field of international settlements and suitable alleviations and adjustments had been effected to relieve the financial tension.

There is one essential conclusion, however, which seems to the Committee to have particular weight in present circumstances — namely, that the economic relations between the different countries are dominated, to an extent hitherto unknown, by the problem of international debts of all kinds, the burden of which debts has been increased conversely to the fall in prices. In theory, a country cannot pay its debts otherwise than by exporting gold or obtaining fresh credits or exporting goods. The first means is precluded by the smallness of the reserves held by most of the creditor countries. Complete loss of confidence is paralysing the international operation of credit, so that until confidence is restored the export of goods is the only means by which debtor countries can meet their engagements. These countries must therefore have a favourable trade balance, and the greater the volume of their debts the greater that favourable balance must be. Such a position would not be incompatible with the interests of the creditor countries; on the contrary, it would give them a guarantee for the payment of the debts due to them. But, under the pressure of circumstances, the extra-European and European creditor countries are following the general tendency to set up higher barriers to imports from abroad.

The Economic Committee fully realises that these countries, too, are acting under the pressure of internal and external circumstances, the importance of which the individual Governments are alone capable of appreciating. It cannot help realising, however, that, so long as the paralysis of international credit continues, the extraordinary and exceptional conditions of the present time will place creditor countries in a serious dilemma: either they must lower barriers to imports from debtor countries or they must expect to see the prospects of recovering their debts correspondingly reduced.

### 3. Enquiry into the International Situation of Certain Branches of Production.

#### A. Coal.

Resuming its investigation into the coal problem, which it had begun in 1929, the Economic Committee organised a consultation of experts (January 11th to 13th, 1932). All factors of production were represented: there were Government representatives, employers' and workers' representatives, and representatives of the consuming countries.

The meeting showed the urgent necessity for an international coal agreement. In its report to the Council, the Economic Committee emphasised the international importance of the tendencies expressed by the experts' at the present critical stage.

#### B. Timber.

The Economic Committee organised a consultation of experts on April 25th to 27th, 1932, to discuss the question of timber. Most of the experts were in favour of some regulation of exports which might help to improve the market.

As a result of this meeting, the experts of the exporting countries in Northern Europe immediately opened negotiations on a commercial basis. The Central European exporting
countries, as they may be termed for convenience, consider that the ideal would be a general agreement between all the exporting countries, and that the way should be paved by an agreement between the northern countries. They have decided to hold a meeting at Vienna on June 9th, 1932, to which representatives of all the countries concerned are to be convened.

C. Hops.

The Economic Committee held a meeting (February 22nd to 24th, 1932) of experts on hops. The experts were of opinion that the producing countries should be in a position to follow in detail the development of the cultivation of hops and, if necessary, to regulate it. The constitution of an International Hops Bureau, based on a body already in existence (the Central Europe Hops Bureau), would make it possible to strengthen relations between the producers of the various countries concerned on a really international basis.

4. AGRICULTURE.

The Economic Committee consulted the members of its Sub-Committee of Agricultural Experts as to the expediency of a further conference. The majority of the experts expressed the view that an agricultural meeting with a general agenda could not hope to achieve satisfactory results in the present circumstances, which are ill-adapted to practical schemes on international lines. They hope that a few months hence circumstances may be more favourable.

Studies relating to international agreements which may concern the production of, and trade in, certain foodstuffs are receiving their particular attention.

The Economic Committee decided in favour of the setting up of special commissions of experts who undertook an examination of the international situation in regard to certain products (timber and hops) and the possibility of improved organisation. The Economic Committee instructed the Secretariat to keep in close touch with present international action regarding wheat and wine.

5. CUSTOMS NOMENCLATURE.

During the four sessions which it has held since the 1931 Assembly, the Sub-Committee of Experts for the Unification of Customs Nomenclature has put the last touches to its draft nomenclature and drawn up the necessary explanatory notes. The work entrusted to it by the Economic Committee in 1927 has thus been completed. Draft and explanatory notes will shortly be sent to the Governments of all the States Members and non-Members of the League for their consideration and comments. The comments of the Governments will then be utilised by the Sub-Committee of Experts in giving the draft nomenclature the final form in which it is intended to be applied in practice.

6. INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRIAL AGREEMENTS.

In accordance with the recommendations of the World Economic Conference of 1927 and of the Economic Advisory Committee, the Economic Committee decided to keep in close touch with the economic aspects of international industrial co-operation and to secure the collaboration of experts now participating, or having in the past participated, in the framing or application of international agreements. It has succeeded in obtaining the collaboration of five experts of British, French, German, Italian and Luxemburg nationality.

In order to spread knowledge of the existence and effects of international industrial agreements and considering that only special studies could supply the information necessary to enable a judgment to be formed as to the whole economic problem thus raised, four of these experts drew up, with the assistance of the Secretariat and in the light of information derived from the most authoritative sources, a "review of the Economic aspects of several international industrial agreements." This study, which was published in the autumn of 1930, contains monographs on the development and economic activity of a certain number of very important international combinations and of movements to the same end.

Later, the same experts devoted their attention to the problem of international economic agreements regarded from the point of view of general economic policy. In the autumn of 1931, they published a "general report on the economic aspects of international industrial agreements":

This report commits no one but its authors and represents only one of the contributions supplied or to be supplied to the Economic Committee for its general work in connection with international economic agreements. The sole desire of the authors of the report is, in their own words, to add, in their industrial capacity, a new contribution to the information available on industrial agreements and, at the same time, to make known their opinions derived from their technical experience.

Apart from an explanation of the various forms of industrial agreements, the experts' report relates mainly to the effects of these agreements, first, on industries which have formed a

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1 See previous chapter.
2 Document E.614.
3 Document E.736.
cartel and, secondly, on consumers and workers. It also deals with the relations between international industrial agreements and tariff policy and with those between these agreements and the authorities.

7. Procedure for the Friendly Settlement of Inter-State Economic Disputes.

The last annual report to the Assembly mentioned that, under a resolution of the Assembly dated October 2nd, 1930, the Economic Committee had been instructed to submit definite suggestions with regard to a proposal put forward in March 1930 by the French delegation to the Conference with a View to Concerted Economic Action and providing that "a permanent organ for conciliation and arbitration should be set up for the settlement of all disputes of an economic nature which may arise between States".

On the basis of studies carried out by the Secretariat, the Economic Committee submitted at the Council session in January 1932 a report in which, after describing succinctly the present situation established by the system of bilateral and international agreements for the pacific settlement of disputes, the Committee declares that it would nevertheless be desirable to provide States with the possibility of resorting, if they so desire, for the settlement of their economic disputes, to a procedure which, while it would not affect rights and obligations arising under international agreements, would be elastic, rapid and simple to the desired degree.

For this purpose, the Committee suggests the appointment by the Council of a body of experts from among whom the parties could freely at any time select persons to whom they would entrust the settlement of their economic disputes, either by arbitration or by conciliation.

In a resolution supported by very full arguments, the Council, on January 28th, 1932, adopted the Committee's report and decided to "place at the disposal of the Members of the League and any States non-Members, which might wish to avail themselves of the procedure, a body of experts to whom they might submit their economic disputes for settlement by arbitration or for the bringing about of a friendly settlement by means either of an advisory opinion or of proposals for solution".

The Council also adopted the Rules of Procedure proposed to it and invited the Economic Committee to submit to it a list on the basis of which it might nominate the experts referred to in these Rules of Procedure.


At its session in January 1932, the Council considered the report of the Economic Committee containing the result of the enquiries it had conducted in the light of the resolutions of the 1927 World Economic Conference and in connection with the elimination of unfair commercial practices and recourse to bribery as a means of competition.

This report, which is of an informatory nature, shows that many countries have already adopted legislation on this subject. The representatives of international commerce, however, believe that a further serious improvement would be possible.

The Committee also insisted on the need for securing the co-operation of commercial and industrial circles and the education of public opinion if the campaign against bribery was to become really effective.

The Council endorsed the Economic Committee's view that bribery and the commercial practices described in the report were forms of competition that should be condemned, and that Governments, as well as commercial and industrial communities, should be recommended to make every effort to put an end to those practices.

It also adopted the Economic Committee's suggestion that its report should be communicated to the various Governments in order that it might obtain further information on the question and might ascertain the views of the Governments regarding the possibility and desirability of an international convention intended to secure for the nationals of the contracting parties a minimum degree of protection in this respect.


At its meeting on September 1st, 1931, the Council approved the Economic Committee's report on its thirty-fifth session (June 1931). It authorised the Secretary-General to send to the Members of the League and the States non-Members the Committee's report on the question of marks of origin, drawing their attention to the conclusions of the report and urging them to conform to it as far as possible.

The Secretary-General despatched the communication in question on November 29th, 1931. In accordance with the Council's resolution, he requested the Governments to forward to him their observations on the matter, and especially as to the proposal for the universal application of the suggestion that three or four letters, which should be recognised as representing the name of the country of origin, should be affixed where this was required to be indicated by national legislation on foreign markets.

1 Document C.57.M.32.1932.II.B
2 Document C.74.M.39.1932.II.B, Appendix II.
3 Document C.427.M.177.1931.II.B, Appendix III.

As announced in the report to the Assembly drafted in 1931, a committee of experts appointed by a number of Governments sat during the twelfth Assembly to examine, in the light of the observations submitted by certain Governments, whether and how far the draft Convention prepared by the Economic Committee should be amended. The report by the Committee of Experts was submitted to the Second Committee of the Assembly, and, in a resolution of September 24th on the report of the Norwegian delegate, the Assembly decided immediately to open for the signature of the Members of the League and of the States non-Members the Convention the text of which had been submitted to it, and expressed the hope that the largest possible number of States would accede to it at the earliest possible date.

The object of the Convention is to prohibit the capture or killing of certain species which have become extremely rare and to secure the fullest utilisation possible of those whales of which the capture continues to be authorised.

On March 31st, 1932, the date of expiry of the period during which the Convention remained open for signature, it had been signed on behalf of the following countries: Albania, Commonwealth of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Greece, India, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Roumania, Union of South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United States of America, Yugoslavia.

On April 13th, 1932, the Convention was acceded to on behalf of the Sudan.

B. Economic Intelligence Service.


A special effort has been made, in collaboration with various statistical departments, to make the Year-Book as up to date as possible. Most of the tables contain figures for 1931. The number of subjects dealt with in the present edition has been considerably increased.

For the first time, the Year-Book contains indices of the world production of raw materials and foodstuffs established by the League of Nations, a table on balances of payments of some thirty countries expressed in dollars, and detailed statistics showing conditions of unemployment and employment by industries.

Efforts are still being made to enhance the value and usefulness of the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics. Thus the number for March 1932 contains, for the first time, the monthly figures for commercial banks' deposits. These figures are of special interest for the study of the financial crisis.

The Review of World Trade 1930, which was published in December 1931, brings out the main tendencies which have prevailed since the beginning of the economic depression in 1929—that is to say, in particular, the universal fall in commodity prices and the quantum of trade. Summary tables are given for the trade of all the most important countries of the world in recent years, and separate sections deal with commercial balances, trade by classes of commodities, the direction of trade, index numbers of import and export prices, etc.

The volume of International Trade Statistics, 1930, published in April 1932, covers the years 1926, 1929 and 1930, and also gives figures for 1931. It contains detailed statistics of sixty-four countries, showing, in particular, imports and exports of merchandise and of bullion and specie, imports and exports by countries, by articles, by classes of commodities and by countries of destination.

The volume of Balances of Payments 1930, which is to appear in June 1932, includes an analysis of capital movements in 1931. This document contains data concerning international transactions (in goods and services, and gold, long- and short-term capital operations), and concerning the most important international liabilities and assets of about thirty countries. Most of these data relate to 1929 or 1930.

The Review of World Production is a continuation of the Memorandum on Production and Trade, of which five editions have been previously published. The latest edition, which appeared at the end of 1931, covers the period from 1925 to 1930, and, as far as information is available, 1931.

In the same field, the statistical material got together by the Economic Intelligence Service was extensively drawn upon in the preparation of the document entitled "Etude relative au problème des rapprochements économiques européens", première série: Chiffres essentiels du commerce extérieur des pays danubiens (document E. 770), which appeared in April 1932.

The Memorandum on Commercial Banks, published in January 1932, covers some thirty different banking systems. It comprises, in particular, data regarding loans and discounts, investments, cash reserves, capital resources, earnings and expenditure, utilisation of profits, etc. Before this publication, there was no reference book giving in a single volume, a scientific analysis of the development of commercial banking in the world as a whole and of the position of the banks in each country.

2 Document A.64.1931.II.B.
The Economic Intelligence Service has now in preparation in accordance with a resolution adopted by the Assembly on October 2nd, 1930, a World Economic Survey (1931-32), to be published in August 1932. This survey presents, in a popular form, a description and an analysis of world economic developments. This is a first edition, which will be followed by others at intervals of one year. Part of this first edition is devoted to the study of the tendencies at work in the past decade, against the background of which recent phenomena can alone be studied in their true perspective; but the survey will be carried up to the first few months of 1932.

The work provided for under the terms of the Statistical Convention of December 14th, 1928, has been suspended for reasons of economy.

For similar reasons, the Council decided on January 29th, 1932, in agreement with the trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation, which had granted a subsidy, to suspend publication of the Collection of Banking and Monetary Laws.

As in previous years, the Economic Intelligence Service has furnished various statistical data which have been incorporated in the Armaments Year-Book.

C. ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS: RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE AT ITS SIXTEENTH SESSION.

On May 5th, 1932, the Director of the International Labour Office transmitted to the Secretary-General — who at once communicated it to the Council — the text of the following resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference at its sixteenth session.

"Whereas, as is shown by the report of the Director to the sixteenth session of the Conference, the general economic crisis from which the world is suffering has continued to grow in severity during the last three years, and is at present the cause of the unemployment of at least 25 million workers;

"Whereas the increasing falling-off in industrial activity, if it continues, must eventually enhance still more the suffering and privation which afflict the unemployed and also threaten the workers in employment;

"Whereas the situation is such that more than ever the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled;

"Whereas the International Labour Organisation was founded in order to remove this menace by the establishment of social justice;

"Whereas social justice requires order and equilibrium in the economic system, and this can only be secured as the result of the efforts of all nations and international institutions;

"Whereas the economic and financial bodies of the League of Nations have, through the work of their experts, succeeded in reaching solutions which have been sufficiently worked out and only await decisions;

"The sixteenth session of the International Labour Conference, composed of representatives of Governments, employers and workers, requests its Secretary-General to draw the attention of the Council of the League of Nations and of all the Members of the International Labour Organisation and of the League of Nations to the considerations set out above and to the necessity of endeavouring to restore general prosperity by appropriate decisions.

"The Secretary-General is requested more particularly to bring to their attention the following suggestions:

"(1) That Government delegates duly authorised to that effect should as soon as possible be given instructions to draw up a list of big international works for economic equipment and for national works on a large scale calculated to encourage the general development of the economic situation of the countries concerned, to make the necessary financial arrangements therefor and to have them put in hand without delay;

"(2) That, in order to help in securing a final settlement in harmony with the general interests of world economy — a settlement the necessity for which is of ever-increasing urgency — the League of Nations and the International Labour Organisation should be invited to the forthcoming Conference which is to meet at Lausanne to settle the problem of reparations and other international political debts;

"(3) That States should take joint action to settle the general problems of currency and credit and to lay the foundations for an international monetary system possessing the necessary qualities of stability;

"(4) That the problems of production and international trade should be examined by Governments in collaboration with delegates from the most representative organisations of employers and workers in each country, for the purpose of concluding, in a severely practical spirit, such international conventions as will ensure the resumption of economic activity, on the basis of broad concerted plans, taking into consideration the gradual and systematic increase in the consumption of the masses and the co-ordinated extension of international trade.

"The Conference also requests that whereas among the public works proposed, public health works have the advantage of increasing the welfare of populations and raising their standard of living, the Governing Body should instruct the International Labour
Office to request the Governments concerned to place upon their programme of public works intended to diminish unemployment, public health works, and, in particular, hydraulic works, water-supply, abolition of unhealthy conditions, construction of workers’ dwellings and electrification of rural districts.”

At its meeting on May 21st, 1932, the Council examined, in the presence of the Deputy Director of the International Labour Office, the report prepared on this question by the Spanish representative, Rapporteur.

On the latter’s proposal and after a brief discussion, the Council took note of the resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference at its sixteenth session with reference to the economic and financial crisis.

It referred the resolutions of that Conference to the Assembly, requested the Committee of Enquiry on public Works and National Technical Equipment to accelerate its proceedings, and declared that the various League Organisations will be at the disposal of the Lausanne Conference, should the latter express a desire for their assistance.

It also decided to lay before the Assembly the question of the summoning of a world conference to consider the problems of international production and trade with a view to the conclusion of international conventions designed to bring about a resumption of economic activity, and requested the Secretariat to make the necessary preliminary investigations.

D. WORK OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE.

I. FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION WORK.


During the period since the last report submitted to the Assembly, the Financial Committee has been very fully occupied with the constantly increasing difficulties in which the world depression has involved those States which have in the past reorganised their finances with the aid of the League of Nations.

Four sessions have been held since the beginning of September last which, together, have extended over a period of about two and a-half months.

The Committee pointed out in the report on the first of these sessions that “the causes and circumstances of the present position are radically different” (from those which the League had to face when it undertook its various reconstruction schemes).

“They are not local inflation with rising money prices, but, on the contrary, a fall of money prices in all parts of the world, with a consequent increase in the real value of money wages and in the burden of money debts, and decreases in the profit of enterprise again accentuating the financial burdens of the State.

“The Committee cannot therefore hide from itself, and does not wish to hide from the Council, that, necessary as undoubtedly are the individual methods of reconstruction which they have discussed with reference to particular countries, their success is closely dependent on the early solution of a general world price problem which did not exist in the earlier cases. This problem is not confined to Europe, it is equally pressing in the great primary producing countries of the world — in South America, Australia, India and in the United States of America — and has in its turn been accompanied by severe credit disturbance.”

The event has proved the justice of this anticipation, and the Committee, while devoting special attention to the problems of individual States, has repeatedly reverted to the importance of these general issues. Thus in its last report — that of March 29th, 1932, on the work of its forty-fifth session — it remarked:

“When the Committee wrote these words, and again when it met in October 1931 at Budapest, it was in the hope that the interested Powers would be able to take prompt action in connection with certain major financial problems, such as political debts. The need for prompt action had already been emphasised by the Committee appointed on the recommendation of the London Conference in July 1931 and was again emphasised by the Special Advisory Committee appointed in the autumn in connection with the Young Plan.”

In the same report it summarised the situation as it then stood in the following words:

“The Committee is now faced by the fact that, of the four countries with which the League has been particularly concerned, one (Austria) has already been compelled to arrange for a Stillhalte covering the principal of most of her banking debts, a second (Hungary) has already declared a moratorium of transfer on the great bulk of her external obligations both public and private, and the two others (Greece and Bulgaria) now declare their inability to meet in full the service of their foreign debt in foreign currencies. This inability to obtain the necessary foreign exchange is not peculiar to Europe. In recent months, many extra-European countries have failed to meet their coupons.
The fundamental causes of these failures are not to be sought in defects in internal administration or policy. Some countries may have over-borrowed; others may have failed to maintain budgetary equilibrium or to reduce costs. But neither of these unhappy events, if they had occurred at all, would have been so serious had it not been for the collapse in world prices. Wholesale prices of raw materials and foodstuffs (in gold) have fallen since 1928 by approximately 40 per cent and, in consequence, the burden of fixed charges on producers of these goods has increased by some 70 per cent. To pay in commodities (formerly worth 100 units) a fixed charge of 100 gold units, they have to part with about 170 units of commodities.

Since these words were written, the Greek Government has failed to meet the service of its external debt in foreign currencies and amortisation in drachmae. The Bulgarian Government has transferred only 50 per cent of the service due on its debt. A few months earlier, Hungary had decided on a transfer moratorium for most of its foreign debt service; Austria is finding it more and more difficult to continue transfers.

As a direct result of this, the trade of the world was gradually being strangled. It was of paramount importance, in the opinion of the Financial Committee, that creditor States, realising these facts, should take steps to remove the barriers established to the detriment of countries which had been forced to adopt temporary measures for the control of their currencies.

The Financial Committee drew attention to the effects which the fall of prices had had on State budgets, and pointed out that it had been struck by the relatively high proportion of expenditure on war supplies and armaments.

In order to avoid aggravating the present disequilibrium it was urgently necessary that positive action should be taken. The Committee therefore recommended a system of secured loans, the proceeds of which should, on suitable terms, be placed at the disposal of certain Governments requiring financial assistance.

The Committee considered it desirable to establish at the earliest possible moment closer economic relations in Central Europe, and drew attention to the position of Bulgaria, who might find herself isolated if she were not included in the group of countries under consideration.

Finally, the Committee submitted to the Council, in the same report of March 29th, 1932, certain considerations concerning the action which should be taken by a country which could not meet its foreign obligations, at the same time warning the debtor States against taking steps which might in the future do irreparable harm to their credit.

After discussion, and on the proposal of its Rapporteur, the Council decided, at its meeting on April 12th, 1932, to adjourn until its May session the examination of the general section of the Financial Committee's report, as summarised above.

The Council proceeded to a further examination of the report at its meeting of May 21st, 1932. After the Financial Committee's representative, M. Kempner, had, on the Committee's behalf, pointed out to the Members of the Council the necessity for taking urgent measures in respect of the questions dealt with in the report, the Council, on the proposal of the Rapporteur, the representative of Norway, took the following decision: it requested the Financial Committee to appoint a delegation which should forthwith consider, with the Government experts who had already dealt with the question and such others as might be designated by the President of the Council, in consultation with their respective Governments and the Council's Rapporteur on financial subjects, the financial problems raised in the general section of the Financial Committee's report on its forty-fifth session, so that proposals might be submitted to the Council.

The Council further expressed the hope that an agreement on constructive measures might be rapidly reached.

The situation of the countries with which the Financial Organisation has had to deal and the action taken is summarised below.

2. Austria.

The Austrian Government addressed a letter to the Secretary-General on August 7th, 1931, requesting that the Council should examine the economic and financial difficulties of Austria and endeavour to find means to overcome them. On receipt of this letter, the Secretariat immediately took steps to ascertain the proportions of the problem. The Deputy Secretary-General went to Vienna, with the director of the Financial Section. On September 4th, the Council forwarded the application from the Austrian Government to the Financial Committee, which devoted most of its September session to the Austrian question.

The Committee was of opinion that the budget position of Austria, though difficult, was substantially different from what it was in 1922, and much more favourable. The investment policy of the Railways and the Post Office, in the first place with the assistance of loans and, later, by means of short-term advances, had substantially increased the difficulties encountered by the Treasury, which were rendered acute owing to the failure of the Creditanstalt in May 1931, when the Austrian Government was obliged to come to its assistance by making cash payments and by guaranteeing the majority of its deposits.
The National Bank of Austria, which had been in a very strong position at the beginning of May 1931, had to place considerable sums at the disposal of the Creditanstalt by rediscounting its bills and to meet the requirements in foreign exchange resulting from the withdrawal of foreign credits and the flight of Austrian capital. Although fresh amounts of foreign exchange had been made available for it by means of a loan accorded by the Bank for International Settlements and by the advance granted to the Austrian Government by the Bank of England, its foreign exchange reserve continued to fall.

After examining the position with the Financial Committee, the Chancellor made a statement in which he enumerated the measures he intended to take to remedy the position. These were substantially as follows:

(a) Immediate reduction of expenditure, making it possible to reduce by 35 million schillings the deficit estimated for the current financial year;
(b) Reduction to 1,900 million schillings (as against nearly 2,200 millions estimated in the original budget for 1931) — or approximately to the 1929 level — of the budget expenditure for 1932;
(c) Constitution in 1932 and 1933 of a margin of supplementary receipts of 100 million schillings a year for the redemption of the floating debt;
(d) Re-establishment of financial equilibrium on the Railways and the Postal and Telegraph Services;
(e) Reduction of the expenditure of local administrations;
(f) Revision of banking legislation;
(g) Policy of reducing costs of production in order to adjust the economy of the country to the new conditions;
(h) Co-operation between the Austrian Government and a representative of the Financial Committee in Vienna.

M. Rost van Tonningen was sent as representative of the Financial Committee to Vienna, where he is working with the Austrian authorities and M. Bruins at the National Bank of Austria. He keeps the Committee regularly informed of events in Austria and submits a detailed report to it each quarter. It appears from the examination of the position in Austria carried out by the Financial Committee at its recent sessions in January and March 1932 that the Government has given effect to most of the items in its programme: the reductions in expenditure announced have been effected, and the State budget for 1932 established on the basis contemplated. On the other hand, the Railways still have a deficit, and a fresh effort will have to be made. A foreign expert, M. Herold, has been entrusted with the detailed study of this problem.

In February 1932, M. van Hengel was appointed General Manager of the Creditanstalt and has elaborated a scheme for the reorganisation of this bank in connection with which negotiations with its creditors are now being conducted. In spite of these efforts, and in the absence of the external assistance which had several times been recommended by the Financial Committee, the situation in regard to the supply of foreign exchange had grown steadily worse. In a letter of May 9th, 1932, the Federal Chancellor felt obliged to call the attention of the Council and the Financial Committee to the seriousness of the situation. In order to retain the foreign currencies necessary for the payment of the imports essential for the Austrian population, the Federal Government felt obliged to contemplate very shortly a suspension of the transfers for the service of its external debt.

The Council, to which this letter was submitted at its meeting of May 21st, 1932, decided to refer it to the meeting between Government representatives and the delegation of the Financial Committee decided upon at the same meeting, and addressed an earnest appeal to the Austrian Government to do all that lay within its power to avoid a failure to meet its obligations.

The Financial Committee had emphasised, in its reports of January and March, the necessity for Austria to form closer economic relations with neighbouring and other States. In its letter of May 9th, 1932, already mentioned, the Austrian Government announced that it intended very shortly to make definite proposals for the opening of commercial negotiations to the Danubian States and to other States prepared to take action.

3. Hungary.

At the beginning of May, the Hungarian Government applied to the Council, asking it to have the “financial position of the country examined by experts”.

On September 7th, the Council submitted this request to the Financial Committee, which immediately undertook a preliminary study of the position. It soon appeared to it that an enquiry on the spot was indispensable, and, with the approval of the Council, it appointed a delegation, which went to Budapest at the beginning of October. When the enquiry was sufficiently advanced, the delegation was joined at Budapest by the other members of the Committee, who held a special session there from October 16th to October 22nd, 1931.

The results of the Committee’s detailed enquiry are summarised in its report, which deals with the budget, the national debt, Hungary’s indebtedness to foreign countries, the trade balance and the banking position.

As regards the budget, the considerable fall in receipts during the last year gave rise to a disquietingly large deficit and entailed difficulties for the Treasury. The measures already taken by the Government to balance the budget did not seem sufficient to obviate the risks of a deficit, and the Committee therefore urged that fresh reductions of expenditure should be effected. The Hungarian Government undertook so to reduce expenditure as to avoid increasing
the deficit already ascertained for the current financial year (July 1st, 1931, to June 30th, 1932), and strictly to balance the budget for 1932-33 at a figure which it then fixed at 830 million pengő (or less than the expenditure for the financial year 1927-28). It asked that a representative of the Financial Committee should be appointed in Budapest, with whose assistance it would frame the detailed programme of budget economies and necessary administrative reforms. It further undertook in future to exercise very strict control over foreign public and private loans.

The report draws special attention to Hungary’s large foreign indebtedness, the service of which amounts to some 300 million pengő per annum. On the other hand, the trade balance was seriously affected by the general fall in the price of wheat and other Hungarian exports, and trade has suffered a steady and uninterrupted decline. As a result of these circumstances, of the increasing difficulty which Hungary experienced in obtaining fresh credit and the partial withdrawal of those obtained, the reserves of the National Bank had suffered a steady attrition. In agreement with the Government, the Committee arranged that the National Bank should appoint an Adviser to work with the Bank as long as the Financial Committee should deem necessary. Mr. Bruce was appointed in this capacity.

At the end of October 1931, the Financial Committee appointed Mr. Royall Tyler as its representative in Budapest; since then, Mr. Tyler has advised the Hungarian Government and kept the Committee informed of the position in his quarterly reports.

At the end of December, in view of the progressive fall in the Bank’s foreign exchange reserve, the Hungarian Government issued a decree providing for the partial suspension for twelve months of transfers in foreign exchange for debt service. The service of the 1924 Reconstruction Loan continued to be paid: the equivalent in pengő of the foreign exchange due to foreign countries is paid into a fund managed by the National Bank. Without minimising the seriousness of this measure, the Financial Committee recognised that, in the circumstances and in the absence of any improvement in the general world position, it was difficult for Hungary to find any alternative. It also found, at its March session, that there had been a certain improvement in the budget position, thanks to the efforts of the Finance Minister. The Government has prepared the 1932-33 budget on the basis of about 805 million pengő, or less than the figure proposed by it in October (830 millions). On the other hand, it has not yet been able to balance the budgets of the Government undertakings.

Negotiations are in progress with the foreign creditors for the conclusion of Stillhalte agreements. While recognising that these steps can, in view of the general uncertainty, only be regarded as provisional, the Committee has stated that it is prepared subsequently to facilitate a definitive settlement of the long-term debts, of which the transfer has now been suspended, by appointing one or more persons of international reputation and experience to work with the Hungarian Government, with a view to bringing about an agreement between all parties concerned. The Council approved this suggestion at its meeting on April 15th.

4. **Bulgaria.**

The Financial Committee has at its various sessions devoted special consideration to Bulgaria, where the effects of the general depression have taken the form of ever-increasing budget and banking difficulties.

At the end of the January session, the Bulgarian Government asked the Committee to send one of its members to Sofia. With the permission of the Council, Dr. Kempner was appointed to go there with M. Charron who, although he left Bulgaria in April 1931, agreed to continue to act as Commissioner in an honorary capacity. The delegation, which reported on its work to the March session of the Committee, examined in particular the transfer and the budget problems.

The reserve of the National Bank, in spite of a surplus in the trade balance estimated at 1,274 million leva, fell in 1931 — from 2,248 million leva on January 1st (to which must be added 413 millions constituting the balance of 1926 and 1928 loans) to 1,768 millions on December 31st.

As Bulgaria has practically no invisible receipts, she has to rely almost entirely on her commercial exports for procuring foreign exchange; her principal markets, which are in Central Europe, are however gradually being closed to her.

The service of the Bulgarian public debt amounted for 1931 to 1,118 million leva and for the six months from April 1st to September 30th to 547.5 million leva, involving an average monthly transfer of 91 millions.

The Committee was of opinion that, in view of the requirements which the National Bank would inevitably have to meet in respect of certain invisible imports, the Bulgarian Government would be justified, in order to avoid entirely exhausting its foreign exchange reserves, in reducing by 50 per cent during the six months April-September all transfers in respect of its external public debt, it being understood that the portion not transferred would be paid to the National Bank in leva to a blocked account at the disposal of the Commissioner. It was also of opinion that a restrictive action was necessary with regard to private debts.

Taking note of this situation, the Council, at its meeting of April 15th, 1932, indicated that it was for the Bulgarian Government to come to an agreement with the bondholders, who were alone competent to consent to any waiving of their rights under the loan contracts. As the Bulgarian Government immediately suspended the transfer of half the service of all its foreign debt, the trustees for the loans issued under the auspices of the League of Nations in 1926 and 1928, and the establishments issuing these loans, protested to the Bulgarian
Government and to the Council. At its meeting of May 21st the Council referred the question to the Financial Committee.

The budgetary problem with which the Financial Committee dealt at each of its sessions was carefully studied by the delegation. At the time of the enquiry, the budget deficit for the year 1931-32 ending on March 31st seemed likely to be in the neighbourhood of 600 million leva (as against 350 millions previously estimated). The probable deficit for 1932-33 was estimated at about 1,300 million leva (7,300 millions of expenditure against about 6 milliards of receipts). The steps contemplated by the Government in collaboration with the delegation would have made it possible to reduce this deficit to 300 millions. The Committee was of opinion that the budget should be balanced at all costs and that the Government could do this by a radical reorganisation of its financial administration. The Committee asked the Commissioner to study with the Bulgarian Government a complete plan of reform which could be carried through at once. The Committee also urged the need for the strict application of the system of monthly budgets. It believed that it will in this way be possible to secure budget equilibrium. M. Watteau, Adviser to the Bank, who represents M. Charron in Sofia, was entrusted with the duty of submitting periodical reports to the Financial Committee on the budgetary and financial situation of Bulgaria.

The Committee also noted in its January report the work done for the settlement of refugees, which may be regarded as practically terminated. A total of 31,057 refugee families (numbering on an average four members each—i.e., a total of approximately 125,000 persons) have been settled and a total area of 107,788 hectares has been distributed to them. Half this land was unsuitable for agriculture or had hitherto remained uncultivated. It was therefore necessary to improve it either by mechanical clearing and ploughing or by drainage. Houses to the number of 10,203 were built, the majority comprising a complete set of farm buildings with sheds and byres. Moreover, 6,947 families have been settled in the houses left vacant by Greek emigrants. The remainder of the refugees have built their houses themselves. In order to promote the development of the colonies, important public utility works have been carried out. Although the work of settlement was completed, the Council considered that the financial situation required the maintenance in Sofia of the League of Nations Commissioner. M. René Charron, who had agreed to continue after April 1st, 1931, to carry on his duties in an honorary capacity, requested, by letter of April 13th, 1932, to be finally released from this mission. The Council asked him if he would be so good as to remain in office until the appointment of a successor.

5. Greece.

In January last, the Greek Government and the Bank of Greece asked the Financial Committee to send one of its members to Athens to study the position in Greece. This was authorised by the Council on January 29th, 1932.

The results of the enquiry into the financial position of Greece may be briefly summarised as follows.

There was a small deficit for the year ending March 31st, 1932. Receipts began to fall off about the middle of 1931. There is a large prospective deficit on the year 1932-33 (which was estimated before any reforms were carried out at 1,800 million drachmae). The execution of a programme which had already been initiated for irrigating the valleys of the Struma and the Vardar with the help of loan funds seemed likely to be arrested owing to lack of money.

There was a steady and increasing fall in the foreign exchange resources of the Bank of Greece (the reserve falling from 4,240 million drachmae on December 31st, 1928, to 1,353 millions on February 29th, 1932). The commercial balance of Greece has always been passive, and the fall in the prices of agricultural products unfavourably affects Greek exports, the main items of which are tobacco and currants. The balance of payments in normal circumstances was brought into equilibrium by very considerable invisible receipts—shipping, tourists, and, in particular, emigrants’ remittances. Greece has in recent years also been in receipt of considerable foreign loans.

The problem which appeared to the Committee to be the most urgent and difficult was that of transfer. The Committee was of opinion that, in present circumstances, it was not possible for the Greek Government to continue to transfer the whole of the funds necessary for the service of its external debt. In these circumstances, it felt compelled to make a proposal of the Greek Government, contained in a memorandum addressed to the three Governments represented on the International Financial Commission, for the suspension of the transfer of the amortisation payments in respect of the external Greek loans. The Committee recommended that the drachmae amounts on account of amortisation should continue to be paid into an account opened with the Bank of Greece, from which advances might be accorded to the Government for the continuance of the irrigation programme.

The Financial Committee, in addition to its other recommendations concerning the budget, drew special attention to the necessity of balancing the budget of the Greek railways and suggested to the Government that it should organise an expert enquiry into the position of the railways with the assistance of a foreign railway expert. The Council instructed the Chairman of the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit to appoint this expert.

At the Council meeting on April 15th, the Greek Prime Minister stated that, owing to the increasingly critical position with regard to the reserves of the Bank of Greece and in the absence of the foreign assistance for which it had asked, the Greek Government was obliged temporarily to suspend, not only the amortisation of its external debts, but also the transfer
of the sums necessary to meet the interest. The amount in drachmae needed for such service would be temporarily paid into a blocked account at the Bank of Greece and would bear interest for the benefit of the holders.

Since that date the Greek Government, without getting into touch with the bondholders, had suspended the transfer of all sums required for its foreign loans, in spite of the protests of the Governments represented on the International Financial Commission. Supported by the French representative, the representative of the United Kingdom made a protest before the Council, and the Council, at its meeting on May 21st, urged upon the Greek Government the necessity of making every effort to comply with its obligations and emphasised that "failure to have due regard to their international financial obligations on the part of those countries which had benefited from loans issued under the auspices of the League must have the gravest consequences, not only on the credit of such countries, but also on the ability of the League to render collective assistance in the future ".

II. GOLD DELEGATION.

The work of the Gold Delegation has been continued during the year. The Delegation held its last session on May 2nd, 1932, and is preparing for publication its final report, which it will be possible to summarise in the supplementary report to the Assembly.

III. RATIFICATIONS OF THE CONVENTION FOR THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL MORTGAGE CREDIT COMPANY.

Only five countries — Greece, Latvia, Switzerland, Roumania and Poland — have so far ratified this Convention. Since, in these circumstances, the Convention could not enter into force on January 1st, 1932, a Conference must be held between the States which have ratified in order to enable the Convention to come into force. This Conference cannot be contemplated until the general situation has improved and further ratifications have been received, enabling the International Agricultural Mortgage Credit Company to form a sufficient reserve fund.

IV. FISCAL COMMITTEE: ENQUIRY INTO THE APPORTIONMENT OF PROFITS.

At its session in May 1931, the Fiscal Committee noted the results of the enquiry into the system of income-tax and the methods of apportioning taxable income in force in Germany, Spain, the United States of America, France and the United Kingdom, and decided that this enquiry — for which the Rockefeller Foundation had granted a subsidy of 450,000 Swiss francs — should be extended to other European and non-European countries.

The present (second) phase of the enquiry is being carried on in accordance with the same principles and methods as the first phase. In view of the progress made with the work, the Secretariat will probably be in a position to submit to the Fiscal Committee by the beginning of 1933 a full statement on the methods of apportioning profits and of the fiscal treatment of foreign and national undertakings in some thirty countries.

This work should enable the Fiscal Committee, which has not met his year, to draw up one or more draft conventions relating to the apportionment of profits and make it easier for States to acquaint themselves with the legislation of other countries with which they might desire to conclude conventions on double taxation, especially in connection with undertakings possessing establishments or carrying on business in more than one country.

Volume IV of the Treaty Series (on Double Taxation) was published in the autumn of 1931. No volume will be published this year.

II. COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT ORGANISATION.

A. FOURTH GENERAL CONFERENCE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT.

The Fourth General Conference on Communications and Transit, summoned by resolution of the Council dated January 19tth, 1931, met at Geneva from October 12th to 24th, 1931.

Forty-three States¹ were represented, and also, in an advisory capacity, the Governing Commission of the Saar Territory.

Numerous international organisations also took part in the work of the Conference.²

¹ Union of South Africa, Albania, Argentine Republic, Austria, Belgium, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Ceylon, Czechoslovakia, Free City of Danzig, Egypt, Estonia, United States of America, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Portugal, Portugal, Roumania, Siam, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Uruguay, Yugoslavia.
² The Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit, the Central Commission for Rhine Navigation, the International Danube Commission, the International Elbe Commission, the Permanent Technical
I. Work done by the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit since the Last General Conference.

The Conference first of all examined the report on the work done by the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit since the last General Conference, held in 1927, and the report submitted by the Secretary-General of the League on the measures taken in execution of the decisions of previous Conferences. It adopted two resolutions, the first on the international transport of goods by rail, and the second on barriers to maritime navigation.


The Conference recognised the utility, from the economic and commercial point of view, of the creation of a negotiable transport document for the international transport of certain goods by rail over certain routes. But it considered that the introduction of such a transport document might involve difficulties of a legal, administrative, technical and financial nature in certain countries.

Hoping, however, that it would be possible to surmount these difficulties, the Conference requested the Communications and Transit Committee to continue the work in connection with this question. It also asked the Council to draw the attention of the Governments to the importance of the problem.

(b) Barriers to Maritime Navigation.

The Conference proceeded to an exchange of views regarding barriers to maritime navigation. It noted the statements made by several delegations communicating the measures taken by their countries to remedy these barriers, and requested the Communications and Transit Committee to study, in collaboration with the interested Governments, any measures calculated to remove such barriers to maritime navigation as had been, or might in the future, be brought to its notice.

II. Renewal of the Membership of the Communications and Transit Committee.

The Conference proceeded to renew the membership of the Communications and Transit Committee. The following States were called upon to appoint members of the Committee: Argentine Republic, Belgium, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Uruguay.

III. Recommendation concerning Measures to be taken in Cases of Serious Interruption of Transit Routes.

The Conference was of opinion that, should international transit through the territory of one or more States suffer serious interruption, those States whose means of transport could be of help in establishing traffic temporarily in place of the interrupted traffic should co-operate, each in its own territory, in the establishment of such temporary traffic.

IV. Calendar Reform.

The Conference examined the expediency, from an economic and social standpoint, of (a) fixing movable feasts, (b) simplifying the Gregorian calendar.

These questions had been studied by a Preparatory Committee for the Conference, and by a large number of national committees in the different countries. As regards the first, an Act was adopted involving on the part of the Governments having voted for it, or subsequently acceding thereto, a declaration that they consider, from the economic and social standpoint, that the common good calls for the stabilisation of movable feasts.

As regards the date of Easter, the majority of the Governments pronounced in favour of the Sunday following the second Saturday in April. The Conference requested the Council to bring this Act to the notice of the religious authorities, and to notify the Governments invited to the Conference, before April 30th, 1933, of any views expressed by the religious authorities on this Act, and on the action which they might propose to take upon it.

As regards the simplification of the Gregorian calendar, nearly all the delegations were of opinion that the present was not a favourable time for making any change. The Conference did not think fit to express any opinion on the principle of the reform, but it considered that the

Hydraulie System Commission of the Danube, the International Commission for Air Navigation, the International Air Traffic Association, the International Meteorological Committee, the International Central Railway Transport Office, the International Railway Union, the International Office of the Telegraph Union, the International Broadcasting Union, the International Chamber of Commerce, the International Shipping Conference, the International Federation of Transport Workers, the International Federation of Syndicates of Christian Factory and Transport Workers, the National Committee on Calendar Simplification of the United States of America, the Church of England, the Universal Council for Life and Work, the Religious Authorities in the Netherlands, the International Israelite Committee concerning the Reform of the Calendar, the League for Safeguarding the Fixity of the Sabbath, the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists, the Australasian Conference Association and the Australasian Union Conference, the International Religious Liberty Association, the International Calendar Organisation, the World Calendar Association, the Union of German Towns, the University Association for the Study of Calendar Reform, the British Parliamentary Committee on Calendar Reform.
efforts made up to the present had not been in vain. For the first time, public opinion as a whole had been in a position to discuss the advantages and drawbacks of simplifying the Gregorian calendar.

The Conference requested the Communications and Transit Committee to continue its efforts for the purpose of enlightening the public as to the advantages or disadvantages of calendar reform.

B. CONTINUATION OF THE WORK OF THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON ROAD TRAFFIC.

I. Commercial Motor Transport.

The Communications and Transit Committee noted the resolution adopted by the European Conference on Road Traffic held at Geneva in March 1931 concerning the suspension of the work on commercial motor transport. It requested the Secretariat to collect material regarding the national laws of the various States concerned relating to commercial motor transport, and regarding economic conditions prevailing in the different countries which were liable to influence the development of such transport. The Commission asked its Permanent Committee on Road Traffic to take such action on the European Conference's resolution as might be necessary, and to secure the co-operation of experts who were specially well qualified to deal with the economic and legal aspects of the question.

II. Light-signalling.

The Communications and Transit Committee decided to refer to its Permanent Committee on Road Traffic the recommendations adopted by the European Conference on Road Traffic relating to the problem of light-signalling.

III. Signals to be made by Officials directing Traffic and Drivers of Vehicles.

A recommendation on this question was also adopted by the European Conference, and was referred to the Permanent Committee on Road Traffic by a resolution of the Communications and Transit Committee.

C. CONTINUATION OF THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE FOR THE UNIFICATION OF RIVER LAW.

I. Attachment (saisie conservatoire).

The Communications and Transit Committee decided to refer to its Committee on River Law the recommendation adopted by the Conference for the Unification of River Law held at Geneva in November and December 1930, to the effect that a convention relating to attachment should be prepared in the near future.

II. Assistance and Salvage.

The Communications and Transit Committee decided to bring to the notice of its Committee on River Law the recommendation adopted by the Conference on the Unification of River Law relating to assistance and salvage in river navigation, and to draw its special attention to the passage of this recommendation in which the conclusion of a convention on assistance and salvage was advocated.

D. PUBLIC WORKS.

In execution of a resolution adopted by the Assembly on September 24th, 1931, the Council entrusted the study of the question of large-scale public works to the Committee of Enquiry on Questions Relating to Public Works and National Technical Equipment set up by resolution of the Communications and Transit Committee, dated June 2nd, 1931.

The Committee met for the first time at Geneva on October 14th and 15th, 1931. It prepared a circular concerning programmes for large-scale public works, inviting Governments to send to the Secretary-General the schemes for public works contemplated by them, the execution of which might help to mitigate the present economic crisis and reduce unemployment where it is most acute or help to develop national technical equipment where such is inadequate. Experts in the different branches of public works were appointed as Rapporteurs of the Committee, and made a preliminary examination of the schemes received from the Governments. Only after this preliminary study had been completed did the Committee feel that it could usefully examine the schemes of works submitted to it.

At its second session, held from March 30th to April 2nd, 1932, the Committee first of all discussed what criteria it should apply in formulating a judgment on the schemes of public
works submitted. It decided upon three main points, on the basis of which it endeavoured to make its selection among the schemes:

(1) Value of schemes from the point of view of the mitigation of unemployment in its different aspects, both for the country in which the scheme is carried into effect and for other countries through the material supplied by their industries.

(2) Productivity of the public works contemplated. — The Committee did not go so far as to require evidence in advance that the works would be completely self-supporting, but it considered that they ought to be productive in the sense that their more or less immediate effect on the national economy of the country in which they were carried out should be to improve the industrial or agricultural situation in that country.

(3) International interest of the schemes submitted. — The Committee considered the schemes from this point of view owing to the fact that a spirit of international solidarity would, in any case, be necessary to obtain an adequate financial backing.

The Committee submitted a report on its first two sessions to the Council at its meeting of May 10th, 1932. It is stated in that report that the Committee has already retained a few schemes, but that it should pursue its work by examining other schemes which have already been submitted to it, but about which it was deemed that the Committee had insufficient information, and also such new schemes as would be transmitted to it subsequently.

The Council requested the Committee to pursue and accelerate its work.

E. COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE CHINESE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND THE ORGANISATION FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT.

The Chairman of the Communications and Transit Committee was authorised by the Committee to appoint experts to advise the Chinese Government on the proposal to regularise the Hwai River, and on various other technical problems. In execution of this resolution, the Chairman of the Communications and Transit Committee appointed three experts, who proceeded to the spot.

The Chairman further appointed two engineers, representing the Communications and Transit Organisation, to collaborate with the Chinese National Government in the preparation and direction of studies in connection with the construction of roads. They are at present at work in China.

F. NEGOTIABILITY OF RAILWAY TRANSPORT DOCUMENTS.

The Special Committee of Enquiry on the negotiability of railway transport documents met from November 16th to 18th, 1931. It considered concrete proposals submitted by the International Chamber of Commerce and the International Railway Union.

The Committee studied the two proposals. Without examining in detail the changes which it might be necessary to make in the Berne Convention, it confined itself to proposing some general rules, on the understanding that, before these rules were put into force, certain indispensable technical regulations would have to be framed.

The Council considered the resolution of the Fourth General Conference on Communications and Transit, and decided at its meeting of January 25th, 1932, to draw the attention of the Governments to the importance of the problem of the negotiability of international transport documents, particularly for classes of transport subject to the provisions of the International Convention concerning the Transport of Goods by Rail (C. I. M.), requesting them to examine it in the most favourable spirit and to take the necessary steps to enable the next Conference for the revision of the Berne Convention to deal with this problem and to find an adequate solution. The Secretary-General communicated the text of the Council's resolution to the Governments, and also submitted to them, and to the Central Office for International Railway Transport, the report of the Special Committee on the Negotiability of Railway Transport Documents appointed by the Communications and Transit Organisation (document C.981. M.546.1931.VIII).

G. LEAGUE WIRELESS STATION.

The construction of the buildings for the wireless station was completed on September 1st, 1931, the purchase of the ground being completed during the same month.

The work of installation and equipment of the station was, in the main, finished by February 2nd, 1932, on which date the station began to be operated in connection with the opening of the Disarmament Conference. Communication was established with China and Japan, and — for the duration of the Disarmament Conference — with the United States of America, in accordance with the principles laid down in the Convention of June 9th, 1930, between the Secretary-General of the League and the Radio-Suisse Company. Communication with South America will not be opened until the second half of May, after the completion of the installation works, the greater part of which could only be proceeded with during the period when the work of the Disarmament Conference was suspended (April-May 1932).

1 See also page 77 (Chapter 14).
III. THE HEALTH ORGANISATION.

1. DECISIONS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND THE COUNCIL.

The reduction of 24 per cent in the budget of the Health Organisation for 1932, as compared with the previous financial year, made it necessary this year, inter alia, to forego the habitual spring session of the Health Committee. The latter noted that this reduction was due to exceptional circumstances, but expressed the hope that the credits allotted in future would be sufficient to enable the Committee to carry out the work entrusted to it by the Council and Assembly.

When the Council, on January 25th, 1932, approved the Health Committee’s report on its October 1931 session, the Norwegian representative expressed the opinion that, in the case of very technical reports, it would perhaps be advisable for the Rapporteur and the Secretariat to consider whether, in future, the Council should not confine itself to noting the work of technical committees, approving only those points to which the Rapporteur thought he should draw special attention.

On the same date, the Council confirmed the appointment of Dr. Lasnet, Inspector-General of the Public Health Services of the French colonies, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Dr. Lucien Raynaud. It also appointed Professor Hussamettin bey, Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in Ankara, as member of the Health Committee.

2. APPEAL BY THE LEAGUE ON BEHALF OF THE VICTIMS OF FLOODS IN CHINA.

Following on the appeal launched by the last Assembly on behalf of the victims of the floods in China, the Council’s resolution inviting the Health Organisation to undertake the co-ordination of the international anti-epidemic campaign was communicated to all Governments. A letter was also sent by the Health Section to the Directors of national health administrations, indicating the character of the contributions needed in respect of the anti-epidemic campaign.

The Governments or certain State Institutions of Belgium, Denmark, Egypt, Indo-China, the Netherlands, the Netherlands East Indies, Poland, and Spain responded to this appeal and sent sera, pharmaceutical products, field laboratories and medical personnel to China. Other Governments (Canada, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Yugoslavia) offered anti-typhoid and other vaccines, but the representatives of the League’s Health Organisation in China have since stated that the Chinese laboratories were fully able to supply all the vaccines required, except those for oral administration.

From the outset, generous contributions were made by the Japanese Government and its Institutions in the form of material, personnel and transport facilities. In September 1931, however, the Chinese Government declined any further offers of assistance from this source.

The Health Organisation has done its utmost to assist in organising refugee camps and in combating epidemics; from the middle of September until the end of December 1931, its Medical Director acted as technical adviser to the National Flood Relief Commission in regard to all medical and health questions.

Dr. B. Borcic, whose services had been placed at the disposal of the Chinese National Health Administration in July 1930, has, since the beginning of the floods, helped to organise medical and health units in the Hankow district, and was placed in charge of the medical relief division of the National Commission.

In October 1931, two members of the Health Section, Professor M. Cuca, secretary of the Malaria Commission, and Dr. T. F. Huang, were sent out to China; Professor Cuca’s task was to organise the campaign against malaria and cholera in refugee camps; Dr. Huang, after he had spent a fortnight in surveying the flooded region in the Province of Anhwei, was placed in charge of the medical and health units in the Wuhan area.

The National Flood Relief Commission is short of medical material and has addressed a further appeal to the Health Organisation for sera, chemical and pharmaceutical products and two or three field bacteriological laboratories. The Health Organisation has taken steps to comply with this request.

3. CO-OPERATION WITH THE GOVERNMENTS OF VARIOUS COUNTRIES IN PUBLIC HEALTH MATTERS.

1. CHINA

For the past year, the Chinese National Government has been faced with immense difficulties owing to the floods in the Yang-tse valley and recent events at Shanghai. In spite

1 See also page 77.
of the financial sacrifices which it has been obliged to make and the necessity for concentrating
the activities of its health services on the protection of refugees and assistance to the wounded,
the three-years' scheme of reorganisation submitted to the Council in May 1930 has been
vigorously pursued.

The last report to the Assembly stated that the National Quarantine Service, which was
reorganised as the result of an enquiry undertaken by the experts of the Health Organisation
and of the Communications and Transit Organisation in co-operation with the Chinese officials,
was already working at Shanghai and Amoy. Since then, notwithstanding the political
difficulties, this service has been put into operation in the ports of Hankow, Nanking, Swatow,
Newchwang and Antung. It will be extended shortly to the ports of Tientsin, Tsintao and
Chinwangtso. On the other hand, the quarantine station of Shanghai, situated at Woosung,
was destroyed during the incidents of January and February 1932.

The Central Field Health Station was inaugurated in May 1931 and several of the sections
provided for in the scheme have already begun work. A model district has also been established
at Tangshan, near Nanking, to serve as a practical demonstration of modern methods of hygiene
and sanitation.

The School Health and Physical Education Section has set up a health service in two of the
chief training colleges in the country at Nanking and Peiping. A similar service is to be instituted
later in fourteen other colleges.

The Maternity and Child Welfare Section has established a school for midwives at Peiping.
Another school and a maternity hospital are under construction at Nanking.

The services of Dr. B. R. Dyer, a sanitary engineer of American nationality, have been
placed by the Rockefeller Foundation at the disposal of the Sanitary Engineering Section for a
period of three years.

Dr. W. W. Peter, Medical Director of the American Cleanliness Institute, has spent six
months at the Central Field Health Station of Nanking, where he helped to organise the
Education Section.

Lastly, the campaign against cholera and smallpox in the Shanghai area is being pursued:
more than 500,000 anti-cholera vaccinations and 300,000 anti-smallpox vaccinations were
performed in 1931.

2. GREECE.

The Health Centre at Athens, which was established by the Greek Government according
to the reorganisation plan drawn up in concert with the Health Organisation, is now in full
activity. The School of Hygiene, which forms one of the divisions of this centre, and has
been working since March 1931, has prepared a class of twenty-seven candidates for the public
health diploma; most of these have already occupied posts in the Greek Health Administration;
the Ministry of War has asked the school for its assistance in training military medical officers.

With the help of the Health Organisation, arrangements were made for foreign scientists to
give a series of lectures at the school; these were most successful and have helped to strengthen
the ties between the medical profession and the School of Hygiene.

In collaboration with the Greek authorities, the Division of Malariology, which is under
the direction of Dr. M. C. Balfour, is giving field demonstrations in an urban district
(Drama), a rural district (Marathon) and a coastal district (Egion); these demonstrations
afford excellent opportunities for the students of the School of Hygiene to gain practical
experience.

The Division of Sanitary Engineering is giving theoretical and practical training to twelve
sanitary inspectors.

Dr. J. Tandler, who was appointed in 1930 to draw up a plan for the organisation of the
health services in the Athens-Piraeus area, has accomplished this task.

The Health Organisation has granted scholarships to five Greek medical officers desirous
of studying abroad modern methods of health administration, the sero-diagnosis of syphilis
or drinking-water supply systems.

3. CHILE.

On March 16th, 1932, the Chilian Government wrote to the Secretary-General requesting
the co-operation of the technical organisations of the League, and in particular of the Health
Organisation, for a study of the problem of popular nutrition in Chile. This request was submitted
to the Council on May 9th, 1932. The Council invited the Health Committee and the Economic
Committee to consider and report upon the request of the Chilian Government, and requested
the Chilian Government to supply these two Committees with such information as might be
of use for the preliminary study of the question.

4. RURAL HYGIENE.

The European Conference on Rural Hygiene (July 1931) drew up, in consultation with the
Directors of European Schools of Hygiene, a programme of international studies dealing

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1 For details of this scheme, see report to the 1931 Assembly (document A.6.1931, page 114).
with the training of health visitors and sanitary engineers, the cost of medical and health
services in rural districts, the milk supply in country districts, the anti-fly campaign, the
epidemiology of typhoid fever and methods of analysing drinking-water and sewage.

The study of the first item on this programme was entrusted to the Health Organisation, the
services of an expert being placed at its disposal for this purpose by the International
Council of Nurses.

The other questions are being investigated in the Institutes and Schools of Hygiene of
Budapest, Copenhagen, Madrid, Prague, Warsaw and Zagreb.

All these enquiries are being co-ordinated by the Health Organisation, and they will
probably be sufficiently advanced to justify a meeting in 1932 of the staffs of the institutes
concerned with a view to preparing general reports and conclusions.

5. WORK OF THE REPORTING COMMITTEES AND TECHNICAL COMMISSIONS.

1. As stated in the report to the 1931 Assembly, the Health Committee has appointed
committees to report on the present state of practice and knowledge in certain branches of
public health or social medicine which are of general interest.

The Reporting Committee for Maternal Welfare and Hygiene of Infants and Children of
Pre-school Age submitted its report to the Health Committee in October 1931. This report
is based on the conclusions arrived at as a result of enquiries previously undertaken by the
Health Organisation in the matter of infant mortality. During 1932, the Committees which
have been asked to report on the welfare of children of school age, the campaign against
tuberculosis and venereal diseases will also complete their work. Their reports will represent
an international consensus of opinion and will contain practical conclusions for the guidance
of national health administrations.

2. The Commission for the study of the treatment of syphilis will likewise complete in 1932
its large enquiry, which has involved the sifting of 25,000 individual case records.

3. During the past year, the Malaria Commission has studied the value of anti-malarial
preparations other than quinine, and the question of malaria in deltas. It has carried out an
enquiry into the geographical distribution of malaria, and the world requirements of quinine.
This enquiry has so far elicited seventy replies from States, colonies, protectorates and mandated
territories. The object is to collect a vast amount of documentary material in preparation
for a Government conference at which the various aspects of the problem of the world’s supply
of quinine are to be dealt with.

International courses in malariology, instituted under the auspices of the Health Organisation,
will be held this year at Paris and Rome. The courses of field work which are to follow will
be given in Spain, Italy and Yugoslavia. Scholarships have been offered by the Health
Organisation to candidates recommended by the health administrations of Bulgaria, Colombia,
Egypt, Greece, Guatemala, Indo-China, Italy, Persia, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and Yugoslavia.
Six of these countries will also send students to the courses at their own expense.

4. The Opium Commission published in October 1931 a recapitulatory list of all
preparations exempted from the International Convention of 1925, in application of Article 8
of that Convention. This list was communicated to all States whether signatories or not of
that Convention and whether or not Members of the League.

The Commission is continuing the enquiries entrusted to it by the Council in regard to
the determination of the amount of morphine in various samples of opium and the treatment
of drug addicts. It is anticipated that they will be completed during 1932.

The Health Committee has also been asked to give its opinion on the methods of determining
the normal consumption of narcotics in the various countries, with a view to facilitating the
task of the supervisory body provided for in the International Convention for Limiting the
Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs. 1

5. The Permanent Commission on Biological Standardisation is at present devoting its
attention to the choice of a diphtheria prophylactic to serve as an international standard, the
standardisation of diphtheria toxins used for the Schick test and the adoption of an international
standard for oestrone.

Last year, the Commission recommended the adoption of international standards for
vitamins A, B, C and D, to facilitate the control of the activity of numerous preparations
containing vitamins now on the market. In future, an institute will be made responsible, in
each of the principal countries, for the distribution of these vitamin standards.

6. Next summer, the Health Organisation proposes to convene a meeting of scientific
workers to consider the possibility of achieving international uniformity with regard to certain
methods used in studying the dietary habits of population groups.

7. In the field of physical education, a programme of research has been prepared to
extend over a period of two years, dealing with the effects of intensive muscular exercise
on the human organism.

The standardisation of methods of measuring the human body during the period of growth
is to form the subject of an enquiry to be carried out immediately among public health

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--- See page 96. ---
administrations; the final object of this enquiry is to arrive at a standard method of gauging the effect of gymnastics on adolescents.

8. The Commission on the Fumigation of Vessels completed its work by the adoption in April 1932 of a report analysing the various methods of clearing a vessel of rats by fumigation and stating the points of detail on which fuller researches might usefully be carried out.

6. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL INTELLIGENCE AND PUBLIC HEALTH STATISTICS SERVICE.

(a) Geneva.

The Health Organisation has continued to provide for the transmission of the epidemiological data it receives.

The following articles have appeared in the monthly epidemiological reports: a study of the increase in population in various countries since the beginning of the twentieth century, and reviews on plague, smallpox, typhus, poliomyelitis and measles.

In view of the need for economy, it has been decided to change the monthly report into a periodical appearing every two months.

(b) Singapore.

As most of the members of the Advisory Council were unable to go to Tokio, where the annual session was to have been held in the spring of 1932, it was decided, after consulting Dr. Uchino (Japan), the Chairman in office of the Council, to adjourn the session until 1933. In these circumstances, it appeared that the link between public health administrations and the Eastern Bureau could only be maintained and strengthened by means of personal contact between the heads of those administrations and the Director of the Eastern Bureau. The latter has accordingly visited China, Siam and the Netherlands East Indies during the present year.

In response to the desire expressed last year by the Advisory Council, the Director of the Eastern Bureau has prepared a comprehensive review of the researches carried out in the Far East, in accordance with the plan of work drawn up in 1927 by the Commission of Experts on plague. He has also drawn up a memorandum on port health procedure in Eastern ports, summing up the observations noted during the study tour of quarantine medical officers in 1930.

7. "QUARTERLY BULLETIN" OF THE HEALTH ORGANISATION.

Up to the present, those who wished to follow the work of the Health Organisation have been obliged to consult the records of international conferences, the Minutes of Committees, reports by experts, etc. In order to make this material more accessible and consequently more widely known, it was decided to embody it henceforward in a Quarterly Bulletin to be published in two editions—English and French. The financial advantages of this arrangement are obvious. This new publication is primarily of a technical nature, as shown by the contents of its first number, which appeared in March 1932, and includes:

(1) The resolutions of the Conference of Experts on immunisation against Diphtheria (London, June 1931);

(2) A report by Sir George Newman, of the British Ministry of Health, on medical education in England (this is the first article of a series which is to be devoted to the study of the problems raised by medical training at the present day—a study arising out of a request made to the Health Organisation by the Chinese National Government);

(3) A report by Professor R. Burri (Berne) on the milk supply of North American cities (this report is the outcome of the enquiries undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the European Conference on Rural Hygiene);

(4) A survey of tropical pneumonia (material collected by the Director of the Eastern Bureau of the Health Organisation at Singapore at the request of the Advisory Council of that Bureau);

(5) An analysis of the annual statistics relating to anti-rabies treatment in the various Pasteur Institutes of the world (this task was entrusted to the Health Organisation by a decision of the International Rabies Conference (Paris 1927));

(6) A report by the Medical Director on the work undertaken to co-ordinate the campaign against epidemics resulting from the floods in China in 1931.

Certain articles in the Quarterly Bulletin also appear in German in the Archiv für soziale Hygiene und Demographie, by arrangement with the editor of that review.
8. INTERNATIONAL LEPROSY CENTRE AT RIO.

In April 1931, the Brazilian Government offered to set up at Rio de Janeiro an International Leprosy Centre to be placed under the auspices of the League. This offer was accepted by the Council in September of that year. It is hoped that this centre, the statutes of which will be based on those of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation and the International Educational Cinematographic Institute, will be able to start work early in 1933.

9. INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF ADVANCED HEALTH STUDIES.

In October 1930, the French Government offered to establish at Paris an International School of Advanced Health Studies, to be placed under the auspices of the League. This offer was accepted by the Council.

The Chamber of Deputies, at its meeting on March 30th, 1932, passed a Bill providing for the establishment of this school. As soon as the law has been promulgated, the Organising Committee, set up at the request of the French Government, will make the necessary preparations to enable the school to open its doors before the end of the year.

12.

CO-OPERATION OF WOMEN IN THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE.

On September 11th, 1931, the Spanish delegation submitted to the Assembly the following resolution on the co-operation of women in the organisation of peace:

"The Assembly,

"Convinced of the great value of the contribution of women to the work of peace and to good understanding between the nations, which is the principal aim of the League of Nations:

"Requests the Council to examine the possibility of women co-operating more fully in the work of the League."

The Council considered this resolution, at its meeting on September 29th, 1931, and decided, as a first step, to consult the women's organisations, in order to ascertain their views upon the means of giving effect to the resolution. It instructed the Secretary-General to carry out this consultation, adding that the latter should refer both to the ways in which women could co-operate at the Disarmament Conference and also to their co-operation in the general work of the League.

The results of this first enquiry were submitted to the Bureau of the Disarmament Conference. The result of the second will be submitted to the Assembly.

13.

CO-OPERATION OF THE PRESS IN THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE.

Pursuant to the resolution of the twelfth Assembly, which requested the Council to consider the possibility of studying, with the help of the Press, the problem of the spread of inaccurate information which may threaten to disturb the peace or the good understanding between nations, the Council, in a resolution dated October 2nd, 1931, suggested that a report should be submitted to the thirteenth Assembly, which would deal both with the results of a conference to be summoned at Copenhagen by the Danish Government and with those of a consultation of the Press Associations.

The Conference of Government Press Bureaux and of Press representatives met at Copenhagen from January 11th to 14th, Mr. Poulsen, Director of the Danish Press Bureau, presiding. Thirty-four Governments, eleven Press agencies and three international journalists' organisations were represented. The Conference discussed not only the question of inaccurate
information, but also the action taken or to be taken as a result of the Conference of Press Experts held at Geneva in 1927, and the co-operation between Government Press Bureaux.

On the question of false information — the only one to be covered by this report — three committees of the Conference, consisting respectively of the Directors of Government Press Bureaux, of the representatives of Press associations and of the representatives of certain international journalists' organisations, have arrived at separate conclusions. When the Council was made acquainted with these conclusions at its January session, it noted with satisfaction that they point to a certain community of ideas between the Directors of Government Press Bureau and the Representatives of the Press who took part in the Conference.

Moreover, the Secretary-General had the consultation of Press associations which had been decided upon by the Council carried out in sixty-five countries, Members or non-Members of the League of Nations. These associations were made acquainted with the discussions which had taken place in the Assembly and the Council on the question of the spread of inaccurate information which may threaten to disturb the peace or the good understanding between nations, and they were requested to send in such observations, suggestions or proposals as they might think advisable.

As regards Europe, the Information Section of the Secretariat approached eighty-nine Associations whose addresses had been furnished, at its request, by the Government Press Bureaux. For the overseas countries, the consultation was, as far as possible, arranged for through the intermediary of the official Press Bureaux or of other qualified organs, the latter having been asked to communicate the existing documents and the request for suggestions to those Press associations which were to be consulted.

As a few answers have been promised for a later date, the time has not yet come to give a complete survey of the results of the consultation.

14.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND CHINA.

Since the Assembly of 1931, the scheme of co-operation between the technical organisations of the League and the National Economic Council, set up by the Chinese Government to plan and conduct the work of national reconstruction, has been actively pursued, in spite of the many difficulties encountered.

NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL.

The National Economic Council was set up to "accelerate economic reconstruction, to improve the people's means of livelihood and to regulate national finances". It is further laid down "that all State projects for economic reconstruction or development, for which the requisite funds are found in whole or in part by the National Treasury, must be investigated and considered by the National Economic Council before submission for approval to the National Government."

The Council consists of the President and Vice-President of the executive organ of the Government, known as the Executive Yuan, corresponding roughly to the posts of Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister in an ordinary Parliamentary constitution, who are respectively Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Economic Council; of the Ministers for Home Affairs, Finance, Railways, Communications, Industry and Education; of the responsible heads of the various central Government organs connected with economic reconstruction; and of eleven other members appointed by the Government.

The National Economic Council was constituted at the beginning of June 1931 and held its first meeting at Nanking on November 15th, General Chiang Kai Shek, President of the Executive Yuan, presiding. It at once appointed sub-committees on industry, agriculture, banking, communications, education and health, and set up a permanent technical secretariat to supplement the normal machinery of the individual ministries in so far as it has not proved possible to organise them adequately for the very special and urgent task of national development.

In order not to disperse its efforts, the National Economic Council decided to concentrate on a few well-selected schemes and to draw up a programme of the most urgent work that is practicable during the next few years. That programme is known as the "Three-Year Plan" and is concerned with the subject of land reform and agriculture, the organisation of a technical civil engineering station in Nanking for the training of civil engineers, a scheme of harbour development in the area of Greater Shanghai, road-river making, conservancy and land-reclamation schemes, a plan of reforms in the system of education, industrial development, financial policy and problems of public health and medicine.

1 See report on the work of the League since the eleventh session of the Assembly, document A.6.1931, page 121.
WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS TECHNICAL ORGANISATIONS.

The League of Nations technical organisations co-operated with the National Economic Council on the lines laid down in the Three-Year Plan.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

A permanent liaison officer, stationed at Nanking for nearly two years, gave advice and assistance in connection with the establishment of the Central Field Health Station and the development of the Central Hospital as a nucleus of the National Health and Medical Services. The National Quarantine Service has been extended to four new ports in collaboration with the Eastern Bureau of the Health Organisation at Singapore. The floods and certain consequences of the political situation in the Far East have combined to diminish the resources of the health service and to compel a concentration during several months of all available staff upon epidemic control and Red Cross work (see also page 72).

FLOOD RELIEF.

Sir John Hope Simpson was appointed Deputy-Chairman and Director-General of the National Flood Relief Commission by the Chinese Government on the recommendation of the Secretary-General, made with the approval of the Council. Three health officers were sent out for a period of some months for anti-epidemic work. Assistance of various kinds was secured from various sanitary administrations (see also page 72).

EDUCATION.

In pursuance of the plan of educational reform and development, a group of educational experts visited China in the autumn and winter of 1931-32 (see page 98).

CIVIL ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS.

A permanent liaison officer between the Transit Organisation and the National Economic Council, with much experience of road-making and planning, has been appointed and is assisted by a civil engineer, specialised in hydraulic questions. Both are to help in the establishment of a Technical Civil Engineering Station to facilitate the training of civil engineers. They have already completed a preliminary road survey and are now assisting in the planning of a roads programme for the Provinces of Kiangsu and Chekiang. The National Economic Council has set up a Roads Department and financial and technical steps have already been taken for the carrying out of the immediate programme. As regards river conservancy and land reclamation, the Three-Year Plan provides, first of all, for certain surveys on the Hwai River and other Northern Chinese rivers. To assist in this work, three specialists in hydraulic engineering were sent out for a few months last winter — namely, Mr. Coode, one of the chief consulting engineers of Messrs. Coode, Wilson, Mitchell and Vaughan-Lee and a member of the British Institute of Civil Engineers; M. Sieveking, Director of the Port of Hamburg; and M. Perrier, French Inspector-General of Roads and Bridges and former Chief Engineer of the Suez Canal Company. M. Sieveking also gave advice in connection with certain proposals in the Three-Year Plan relating to harbour development in the area of Greater Shanghai.

LAND REFORM AND AGRICULTURE.

Great importance from the economic, social and political points of view is attached by the National Economic Council to the question of land reform and agriculture. Professor Dragoni (Italian), former Secretary-General of the International Institute of Agriculture, is shortly going out as an agricultural expert. The Chinese Government has further asked for an expert in sericulture.

* * *

In a general way, the system of liaison with the National Economic Council has been maintained by the constant presence in China of a director of one of the technical sections of the Secretariat, who gives information on the working of the technical organisations and the manner in which they can be utilised by the Chinese Government. Dr. Rajchman, Director of the Health Section, who was sent out as the first general liaison officer, was relieved at the end of the year 1931 by Mr. Haas, Director of the Transit and Communications Section.
15.

REQUEST OF THE LIBERIAN GOVERNMENT FOR ASSISTANCE.

By its resolution of January 24th, 1931, the Council appointed a Committee to enquire in what practical manner it would be possible to assist the Liberian Government to carry out its decision to give effect to the recommendations and suggestions of the International Commission of Enquiry. 1

The Committee, considering that the preparation of a plan of assistance called for certain detailed information which only experts on the spot could supply, decided to send to Liberia three experts with special competence in matters of general administration, finance and public health.

The report submitted by the experts in September 1931 proposed to recommend a certain number of reforms to the Liberian Government in matters of general administration, public health, finance and justice. It further proposed that the Liberian Government should obtain the services of qualified foreign specialists to be chosen by the League and to be given executive power by Liberia. The report further made provision for an extensive programme in regard to public-health reforms, prospecting and the development of the road system.

At the same time, the report found that the present financial resources of Liberia were inadequate to cover the cost of a programme of assistance, and that it was impossible to find the necessary funds on the market for financing the plan.

The experts accordingly suggested negotiations with the two American groups — the American Finance Corporation, which had given a loan to the Liberian Government, and the Firestone Plantations Company, which had obtained a rubber concession from the Liberian Government — in order to find means of realising the reforms proposed. They were of opinion that this solution would be profitable to all the parties in question.

The American Finance Corporation, on being approached, indicated that, without being prepared to commit itself for the present, it was disposed nevertheless to give sympathetic consideration to such proposals as might be made, provided that the experts’ plan formed the basis of a definite programme affording sufficient guarantees from the administrative, financial and judicial point of view. The Firestone Plantations Company also indicated that it was prepared to make the utmost possible allowance for the general interests of Liberia, and that it would be perfectly ready, in consideration of the well-being of the population, to take account of competent opinions.

During its last session (May 6th to 18th, 1932), the Council Committee carefully examined the experts’ report.

For a number of reasons, mainly financial, it was of opinion that the entire programme of assistance proposed by the experts should be curtailed, and a limited programme put in its place.

On this new basis, the experts prepared a detailed scheme of assistance, taking into account certain suggestions made in the course of the discussion. The Committee indicated the general principles embodied in this scheme, which it regarded as a minimum below which it would be impossible to go if satisfactory results were to be achieved.

These principles may be summarised as follows: The Government of Liberia should take into its service six foreign specialists for administration and two foreign specialists for the public-health services. For finance, the Liberian Government should retain the present Financial Adviser and his assistants provided for in the Loan Contract with the American Finance Corporation. Certain new arrangements would, however, be made. In addition, a Chief Adviser, appointed by the League of Nations, would be attached to the Central Government. In the event of difficulty in the application of the plan of assistance, an appeal might be made to the Council of the League.

On the basis of these principles, the Committee proposed that an agreement should be sought with the American groups concerned, with a view to securing from them a moratorium, the payment of a certain sum for the financing of the plan of assistance and the readjustment of the existing contracts.

On the Committee’s proposal, the Council, on May 20th, 1932, asked the Liberian Government to state whether it accepted the general principles recommended. It suggested that, in the case of an affirmative reply, negotiations should take place in August between the parties concerned for the purpose of fixing the terms of a detailed plan.

* * *

At its last session, held from May 6th to 18th, 1932, the Committee was informed of the hostilities which had taken place in the Kroo region between the tribes and the Frontier Force, and which had resulted in loss of life.

A large number of Kroos having taken refuge in the forest on the eve of the rainy season and being without shelter or means of subsistence, a serious situation had arisen.

As, owing to lack of confidence, the Kroos refused to make any response to the offers of the Liberian authorities to negotiate, the Committee unanimously recommended the Council to send to the Kroo region, after consultation with the Liberian Government, a representative to secure the pacification of the Kroo tribes and to persuade them to return to their homes.

The Council, in agreement with the Liberian Government, adopted this recommendation on May 21st, 1932.

16.

HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

A. TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

The Committee on Traffic in Women and Children held its eleventh session from April 4th to 9th, 1932. The principal work of the Committee during the past year has been aimed at securing new accessions to the Convention of 1921 on the Traffic in Women and Children, and studying the question of amendments to the Conventions of 1910 and 1921 with a view to strengthening them.

1. Ratifications of and Accessions to the Convention of 1921.

In the course of last year, the Governments of Lithuania, Egypt and Monaco acceded to the 1921 Convention, the latter country also acceding to the 1904 Agreement and the 1910 Convention. The Committee recorded with satisfaction the ratification of all three instruments by the following British colonies, protectorates and mandated territories: Gambia, Uganda, Tanganyika, Palestine (including Transjordan), Sarawak, Gilbert and Ellice Islands, British Solomon Islands, Zanzibar.

The Committee noted with regret that fourteen States Members of the League have not yet acceded to the 1921 Convention.

The Council, at its meeting of May 10th, 1932 decided, upon the suggestion of the delegate of Panama, to urge the Governments Members of the League which had not yet acceded to the Convention of 1921 to do so as soon as possible.


(a) Abolition of the Age-Limit in the Conventions of 1910 and 1921.

For several years past the Committee on Traffic in Women and Children has studied the question of eliminating the age-limit contained in Article 1 of the Convention of 1910 and Article 5 of the Convention of 1921. These Conventions provide for the punishment of anyone who, in order to gratify the passions of another person, has procured, enticed or led away with or without her consent a person under the age of twenty-one years for immoral purposes. In addition, the Conventions aim at suppressing in the same manner the traffic in women over age whenever the trafficiker has used fraud, violence, threats or any other method of compulsion or has committed an abuse of authority. The Committee has been studying the possibility of providing also for the punishment of traffic in women, even if these women are over age and freely consent to become the victims of the traffic.

A consultation of the Governments parties to the Conventions enabled the Committee to express the opinion that the traffic in women, even if the victims are over age and consent, should be punished. It accordingly asked the Council to approach Governments with a view to obtaining the introduction of the necessary modifications in their national legislations and in the two conventions.

(b) Protocol on the Punishment of Souteneurs.

At its tenth session (1931), the Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children drew up an additional draft Protocol to the Convention of 1921 providing for the punishment of souteneurs.

1 The Government of Mexico has acceded to the 1921 Convention since the Committee met. It notified the Secretariat to that effect on May 10th, 1932.

2 Mexico's accession reduces the number to thirteen.
This draft Protocol has been submitted to the Members of the League and parties to the Convention on the Traffic in Women and Children. When the Committee met for its eleventh session in April 1932, one-third of the Governments consulted had sent in their answers. The Committee felt that it would be better to wait until a majority of Governments had sent in their observations and it asked its Legal Sub-Committee to meet before the next session and prepare a report to the Committee, taking into account the observations submitted.

3. CENTRAL AUTHORITIES.

The Committee considered the report of the Secretariat on the organisation and practical work of the Central Authorities established under Article I of the 1904 Agreement on the Traffic in Women and Children. It examined the possibility of establishing closer contact between the Secretariat and the Central Authorities and of organising an International Central Information Bureau on such questions at the seat of the League of Nations. It recommended that the Secretariat should maintain close contact with organisations such as the International Criminal Police Commission at Vienna, which dealt with cases of traffic, and requested the Council to ask the Governments to examine if it was possible to improve the organisation of the Central Authority, to strengthen its power of action, and to encourage its relations with voluntary organisations, with a view to rendering its work more effective.


In examining the annual reports on traffic in women the Committee noted that a large number of States did not yet report regularly to the Secretariat. As the Committee considers these reports of great importance for the progress of the work, it asked the Secretariat to make special efforts to obtain more information from the Governments in answer to the questionnaire sent out annually by the Committee.

In 1931, a revised questionnaire had been established by a Sub-Committee with a view to the compilation of more accurate information on cases of traffic. This revised questionnaire, which had been sent to the Governments represented on the Committee for study and approval, was adopted at the last session of the Committee. At the request of the Council, it has been sent to the States Members of the League and to all the signatories of the 1921 Convention, the hope being expressed that, by means of this revised questionnaire, fuller and more accurate information would be henceforth obtained on all questions of traffic.

The Committee drew particular attention to the fact that, in order to discover any loopholes in existing laws, it wished these annual reports to give details of the reasons which led to the failure of the prosecution of traffickers, and insisted on the necessity of making very clear distinctions in the report between national and international cases of traffic.

5. USE OF WOMEN POLICE.

Following on a resolution of the twelfth Assembly, the question of women police was once more brought before the Committee, which decided to keep it on its agenda, and to instruct the Secretariat to collect further information.

6. REPATRIATION OF FOREIGN PROSTITUTES.

The delegate of Uruguay submitted a detailed report on the question of the repatriation of prostitutes, in which she surveyed the history of the various proposals already made in regard to this question. The report dealt with the possibility of compulsory repatriation of foreign prostitutes, the penalties for the illicit return of repatriated prostitutes, and the problem of voluntary repatriation. The Committee felt that it was not in a position to come to final conclusions, and asked the delegate of Uruguay to continue her study and to submit a definite report in 1933.

7. PROTECTION OF YOUNG FEMALE ARTISTES.

The British delegation submitted a report on this subject, which has been on the agenda of the Committee since 1922. Various measures had been recommended to Governments in order to protect young women artistes going abroad, such as supervision in the home country whenever they applied for passports, close supervision of music-halls and similar establishments, etc. A special kind of measure contemplated was supervision by the competent foreign representatives abroad whenever artistes renewed their contracts and requested a prolongation of visas.

The Committee felt that it could not recommend for the moment any new measures in this field. It considered that the resolutions which had already been passed and the documents...
which had been prepared would be of assistance in helping Governments to take necessary measures of protection for young artistes, and decided that, while keeping the subject on its agenda, it would postpone further study of the problem to a future session.

8. EXAMINATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS.

The Committee examined the annual reports of the voluntary organisations, and heard statements from the representatives of the International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children, the Women's International Organisations, the International Catholic Girl's Protection Society, the International Federation for Aid to Young Women, the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Young Women, and the International Union of Catholic Women's Leagues. The reports of the voluntary organisations showed that systematic work was being done by all these organisations in favour of the closing of licensed houses.

The report of the International Federation for Aid to Young Women reported on the station missions and hospitals which had been opened, especially in the Baltic States, Yugoslavia and Roumania.

The representative of the Women's International Organisations dwelt on the necessity of creating women police or auxiliary services for the protection of children and women. She dealt with assistance given to prostitutes under age by the organisations engaged in rescue work, and stated that the vast majority of Women's International Organisations had declared themselves opposed to the expulsion of foreign prostitutes. She also reported on the efforts made by these organisations to obtain the ratification of the 1923 Convention for the Suppression of Obscene Publications. The representative of the Women's International Organisations, as well as the representative of the International Federation for Aid to Young Women, called attention to an appeal issued by the more important women's associations on behalf of abolition and sent to all the Governments which still maintained the system of regulated prostitution, in the hope of prevailing on them to put an end to this exceptional regime.

The representative of the International Union of Catholic Women's Associations also dwelt on the attitude taken up by her organisation in regard to the problem of the abolition of licensed houses, which it strongly advocated.

The International Catholic Girls' Protection Society dealt mainly with the provision of employment for girls abroad, and the conditions and laws governing immigration into various countries.

The International Bureau for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children reported, inter alia, on the work done by the Federation in Egypt and India and on the study made regarding the utility of propaganda films against the traffic.

The Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women dwelt mainly on the work done in oversea countries.

9. ENQUIRY INTO THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE EAST.

The Committee of Enquiry into the Traffic in Women and Children in the East has completed its task. The Travelling Commission has returned to Geneva and is preparing its report, which, in conformity with a decision of the Council of May 14th, 1930, will be examined by a committee composed of Government delegates before being submitted to the Council and the Assembly.

At its meeting held on May 10th, 1932, the Council took note of the report of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee on the work of its eleventh session.

B. CHILD WELFARE.

The Child Welfare Committee held its eighth session at Geneva from April 9th to 15th, 1932. A report on the work of this session was submitted to the Council on May 18th, 1932.

1. ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN.

The Committee considered various means of improving the position of illegitimate children — among others, social insurance and official guardianship.

The first of these means was studied in close collaboration with the International Labour Office. The Committee noted with satisfaction that, in a large number of countries, the illegitimate child was entitled to the same benefits as the legitimate child under social insurance legislation.

Information had been collected on the various methods of official guardianship of illegitimate children in force in Germany, Austria, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland. The
Committee considered that compulsory guardianship, whether official or not, constituted in certain countries one of the means of enabling the lot of the illegitimate child to be improved and requested the Council to recommend its study to Governments.

The Committee also requested the Council to point out to Governments that the establishment of paternity was an essential condition for improving the lot of the illegitimate child, and to invite them to consider what amendments they might deem it expedient to introduce for that purpose in their respective laws.

The Fifth Committee of the twelfth Assembly had recommended the Committee not to neglect the examination of measures calculated to facilitate the marriage of parents with a view to the legitimation of children. The Committee noted that the marriage of foreigners, particularly when they did not possess the necessary financial means, encountered in certain countries serious obstacles arising out of the complication of administrative formalities and the expenses and delay connected therewith. It requested the Council to draw the attention of Governments to the importance, from the point of view of child welfare, of international agreements simplifying the formalities and expenses of marriage for foreigners, at all events when the latter did not possess the necessary financial means.

2. CHILDREN’S COURTS.

The Child Welfare Committee had previously decided to make a thorough study of special jurisdiction for minors. The enquiry was divided into four parts: (1) auxiliary services of children’s courts, (2) organisation and working of the courts, (3) institutions for erring or delinquent minors and (4) other measures which may be taken in the interests of minors.

This year, the Child Welfare Committee gave special attention to the second part of the enquiry, taking as a basis a large body of material which had been prepared by the League Secretariat and the International Prison Commission acting in concert. It drew up the questionnaire which will be used for collecting material for the third part of the enquiry.

The Committee further decided to renew the declaration made at the 1931 session — namely, that all confinement in prisons should be absolutely excluded in the case of delinquent children. The treatment applied to them should be prompted by a desire for their education and training, and not for their punishment.

3. ENQUIRY CONCERNING BLIND CHILDREN AND CHILDREN EXPOSED TO MORAL AND SOCIAL DANGERS.

The Committee continued its study of the best means of protecting and educating blind children and its enquiries concerning children exposed to moral and social dangers. The investigations on the spot in different countries were concluded and a general report will be submitted to the Committee at the 1934 session.

4. OTHER ENQUIRIES.

The Committee further instructed the Secretariat to carry out various enquiries, in particular concerning the social aspects of the report by the Health Organisation’s Committee for the protection of mothers, infant hygiene and the hygiene of children of pre-school age and concerning the age of admission of children to cinematograph performances. The results are to be submitted during the Committee’s next session. The latter enquiry will be conducted in collaboration with the International Educational Cinematographic Institute at Rome.

5. SPECIAL TEMPORARY COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS FOR THE STUDY OF ASSISTANCE TO DESTITUTE FOREIGNERS AND THE EXECUTION IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES OF MAINTENANCE ORDERS.

During its 1931 session, the Child Welfare Committee asked the Council to set up a special committee, for the formation of which the Governments of certain countries would nominate experts, with instructions to examine the question of assistance to destitute foreigners and the execution in foreign countries of maintenance orders.

The Council decided to invite the following countries to appoint experts: Argentine, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Up to the present the Argentine Republic, Denmark, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom have intimated their acceptance of the invitation sent to them. The Committee will sit after the Disarmament Conference, probably in October 1932, subject to any changes which circumstances may necessitate.

* * *

On May 18th, 1932, the Council took note of the report of the Child Welfare Committee on the work of its eighth session, and expressed the desire that the Committee should pursue its work along the lines contained therein.
C. JOINT MEETING OF THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN AND CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEES.

The Advisory Commission considered that certain questions on the agenda were of interest to both Committees — viz., the adoption and exploitation of children, the constitution of the Commission, and the publicity given to the work.

1. ADOPTION AND EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN.

The Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children, having found in the course of its examination of the summary of the annual reports for 1930 that it was impossible within the limits of the annual reports to devote to the very serious question of adoption the attention which it deserves, agreed to discuss the matter in a joint meeting with the Child Welfare Committee. It was decided to make a study of the systems of adoption at present in force in the various States, and to examine whether certain defective systems did not present dangers for the exploitation of minors.

The British delegate observed that adoption, in very many cases, was governed by custom and not by legislation. This question deserved careful study.

The Committee, on the suggestion of the Danish delegate, decided that the Mixed Committee should invite the delegate of the United Kingdom to submit a preliminary memorandum to the next session of the Child Welfare Committee on the various aspects of adoption, on the systems at present in force and on their results. The Child Welfare Committee is to decide, after taking note of this memorandum, whether there are grounds for undertaking a detailed study of the question, and, if so, on what lines.

2. CONSTITUTION OF THE ADVISORY COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

On the initiative of the Council, the Commission had been invited to examine, at its session in 1932, certain questions concerning its own statute and composition. From the discussions which took place on the subject, it is clear that the Commission needs three different elements to achieve useful work — the assistance of Government delegates representing the views of the various administrations, of representatives of public opinion through the intermediary of the big international voluntary organisations, and of experts who are specialists in the questions on the agenda.

As regards the representatives of the organisations, the opinion was expressed that their help was essential to enable Governments, supported by public opinion, to give effect to the resolutions adopted by the Commission. The importance of ensuring fuller expert assistance in the work of the Commission was also duly urged. The Commission unanimously agreed that the time had come to examine its composition and methods of work and decided to appoint a Sub-Committee which would examine the changes and improvements to be introduced. This Subcommittee is to report to the two Committees at their next session. It has been given full latitude to suggest whatever solutions might seem best.

The following were appointed members of the Sub-Committee: Madame ROMNICANO (Chairman), M. REGNAULT, Mr. HARRIS, Count CARTON DE WIART, Dr. BÄUMER, Mlle. GOURD, Mlle. DALMAZZO and Mr. COHEN.

All the members and assessors of the Commission were requested to submit to the Secretariat in writing, before August 1st, 1932, their suggestions as regards the reorganisation of the Commission, in order that the Sub-Committee may be informed of the views of the Commission as a whole.

3. PUBLICITY FOR THE COMMISSION’S WORK.

At its 1931 session, the Commission had pointed out that the work of its Committees were not given all the publicity desirable and did not always reach the circles directly concerned. It requested the Secretariat to submit suggestions with a view to improving the position.

The Secretariat memorandum explained the difficulty of interesting the daily Press in problems unconnected with topical matters. It suggested that publicity might be obtained through various technical organs dealing with social questions in the different countries, and by means of lectures, broadcasting, etc. Various suggestions were made, such as inducing the Foreign Affairs Press Bureaux in the different countries to take a more active interest in the work of the Advisory Commission. It was also suggested that the members of the Commission should ask their respective Governments to give publicity to the reports submitted by them on the work of the session.
D. PENAL AND PRISON QUESTIONS.

In 1931, the Assembly, having noted the observations of the members of the League and non-member States and of the organisations which had been consulted regarding the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, and considering further the results already achieved by means of a number of international Conventions and the action taken by certain organs of the League and various institutions to obtain a gradual unification of penal law and the co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime, requested the Secretary-General:

1. To refer to the International Penal and Prison Commission the replies and observations received regarding the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, and also the report and Minutes of the Fifth Committee, and to ask it to reconsider these rules in the light of the aforementioned replies and observations;

2. To develop the policy of co-operation with organisations dealing with the international aspect of penal and prison problems;

3. To ask the International Labour Office to continue its study in connection with prison labour;

4. To forward the report and the Minutes of the Fifth Committee to the International Penal Law Association, the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law, the International Criminal Police Commission, the Howard League for Penal Reform, the International Law Association, the International Penal Law Union, and any other international organisations which may be proposed by the Governments to the Secretary-General, and to ask them in what manner they consider that the assistance of the League of Nations might be of value with a view to achieving a gradual unification of criminal law and the co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime;

5. After having received the observations of these organisations, to forward them, together with the report and Minutes of the Fifth Committee, to the States Members of the League, and to ask them whether they wish the League of Nations to lend its assistance also in regard to the questions referred to in No. 4.

6. After having received the answer of the International Penal and Prison Commission on the Standard Minimum Rules, to ask the Governments of States Members of the League whether they consider that the League could best assist in connection with the treatment of prisoners by co-operation with the International Penal and Prison Commission, or by setting up a special Committee of the League to study this problem.

In accordance with this resolution, the Secretary-General referred the "Standard Minimum Rules" and documents mentioned in paragraph 1 to the International Penal and Prison Commission. This organisation has not yet stated what action it proposes to take in regard to the Assembly's request.

In accordance with paragraph 2 of the resolution, the Secretary-General has developed the policy of co-operation with organisations dealing with penal and prison problems. He was represented by an observer at the fourth Conference for the Unification of Penal Law, which met at Paris in December 1931 under the auspices of the French Government.

The International Labour Office which, in accordance with paragraph 3, had been asked to continue its study in connection with prison labour, has published the memorandum on this question which it submitted last year to the Assembly.

In accordance with paragraph 4 of the Assembly resolution, the Secretariat transmitted, in December 1931, to the international organisations mentioned therein, the report and Minutes of the Fifth Committee, asking them in what manner they considered that the assistance of the League of Nations might be of value with a view to achieving a gradual unification of criminal law and the co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime.

The Howard League for Penal Reform has already replied in a memorandum dated April 2nd, 1932.

Moreover, in conformity with the recommendation in the report on Penal and Penitentiary Questions, adopted in 1931 by the Assembly, to the effect that "it is desirable that the representatives of the institutions consulted should arrange to hold a meeting to discuss the different problems referred to them, so as to arrive at conclusions taking into account the various aspects of those problems."

All the international organisations mentioned in paragraph 4 of the Assembly resolution sent two or more delegates to a meeting which took place at Geneva in May 1932, and at which the League Secretariat was represented by two observers.

The Rapporteur on penal and prison questions to the twelfth session of the Assembly had prepared an introductory memorandum and draft resolution which were taken as a basis of discussion by the meeting.

1 This chapter not only forms part of the annual report, but also constitutes the report which the resolution of the twelfth Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to its thirteenth session on all questions mentioned in the said resolution.

On the termination of the meeting, the Chairman transmitted to the Secretary-General of the League the following resolution, which was adopted unanimously:

"The representatives of the organisations consulted by the League — namely, the International Penal Law Association, the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law, the International Penal and Prison Commission, the International Criminal Police Commission, the Howard League for Penal Reform, the International Law Association and the International Penal Law Union:

"In response to the request made by M. Pella, Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee at the twelfth Assembly of the League, and to the recommendation contained in the report adopted by that Assembly (document A.70.1931.IV);

"Having met at Geneva in the League Secretariat on May 8th, 9th and 10th, 1932, and

"Having considered, with a view to replying to the request contained in the Assembly resolution, 'in what manner the assistance of the League might be of value with a view to achieving a gradual unification of criminal law and the co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime';

"Have agreed upon the following conclusions:

"1. The League could render very valuable assistance with a view to the progressive unification of criminal law by preparing and inducing States to adopt conventions dealing in particular with:

"(a) The standardisation of the definition of offences the suppression of which is important from the international point of view;

"(b) The standardisation of the fundamental rules of criminal law, starting with those intended to ensure the effective suppression of offences of an international character;

"(c) The inclusion in all penal legislations of standardised definitions of offences which States agree to regard as a danger to international relations;

"(d) The more extensive unification of certain branches of criminal law in the case of countries whose civilisation possesses certain common features.

"2. The League's assistance in co-operating with States for the prevention and suppression of crime should relate primarily to the following points:

"(a) The improvement and unification of rules for the extradition of accused and convicted persons. Unification and improvement of the rules for the despatch and execution of letters of request;

"(b) International police co-operation and determination of the methods of this co-operation;

"(c) Improvement of the fundamental rules for the execution of penalties and preventive measures involving imprisonment;

"(d) International assistance and agreements for the repatriation of foreigners who have been discharged after being subjected to penalties or preventive measures involving imprisonment.

3. The development of the League's activities in the matters mentioned under Nos. 1 and 2, and without in any way prejudging future needs, does not involve the creation of new organisations which, in certain cases, might overlap the work of existing institutions.

"As regards some of the above-mentioned matters, the League might enlist the co-operation of specially qualified organisations. Needless to say, this co-operation would not in any way prevent the League, in certain cases, from entrusting preparatory studies to some particular person, setting up ad hoc committees of experts or approaching any institution whose assistance it considered helpful;

"(a) With a view to the gradual unification of criminal law, it is recommended that the League should co-operate with the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law which has been re-organised in accordance with the draft statutes attached (the latter were provisionally approved by the meeting and will be submitted to the organisations consulted for ratification);

"(b) With a view to international police co-operation, the League might collaborate with the International Criminal Police Commission;

"(c) In question of applied criminal law, the League might usefully co-operate with the International Penal and Prison Commission;

"(d) The League might also co-operate with the Howard League in the action taken by it in order that the suppression of crime may assume a more and more humanitarian character, might support the efforts of that organisation to assist prisoners and, finally, might encourage the creation of an international federation of the various prisoners' aid associations in each country;

"(e) As regards other questions, it is desirable that the League should develop a policy of co-operation with organisations dealing with the international aspect of penal problems and should submit to those institutions, for their joint study, problems coming within their province, with special reference to the problem of extradition and cognate questions.
4. In the recommendations contained in points (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) of No. 3, it is not intended to draw a hard and fast line between the fields of activity of each institution, since the complex nature of the questions connected with the prevention and suppression of crime often makes it necessary for each of those institutions to deal with problems which are to some extent outside the principal domain of their activities.

The foregoing resolution, which has the advantage of expressing the unanimous views of the representatives of all the organisations consulted by the League Secretariat, in accordance with the resolution of the 1931 Assembly, has been submitted to those organisations for ratification.

II. TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.

A. CONFERENCE ON THE SUPPRESSION OF OPIUM-SMOKING, CONVENED UNDER ARTICLE XII OF THE GENEVA OPIUM AGREEMENT.

The Conference convened to review the position in regard to the application of Chapter II of the Hague International Opium Convention of January 23rd, 1912, and of the Geneva Agreement of February 11th, 1925, and to consider the suggestions made by the Commission appointed previously by the League of Nations to enquire into the control of opium-smoking in the Far East, met, by invitation of the Siamese Government, at Bangkok from November 9th to 27th, 1931. The following States were represented: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, India, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal and Siam. In addition, the Government of the United States of America sent an observer to the Conference.

The Conference concluded an Agreement and a Final Act, which were signed at Bangkok on November 27th, 1931.

1. BANGKOK AGREEMENT OF NOVEMBER 27TH, 1931.

The Bangkok Agreement, which is supplementary to the Geneva Agreement, contains seven articles, the most important of which may be summarised as follows:

Article I provides that the retail sale and distribution of opium shall, in principle, take place only from Government shops.

Article II prohibits persons under twenty-one years of age from smoking opium and from entering any smoking establishment, and specifies that severe penalties shall be provided for anyone inducing a person under 21 years of age to smoke opium.

Under Article III, the High Contracting Parties agree to give a legal basis to the practice of selling prepared opium for cash only.

Article IV makes it permissible for a Government monopoly to be supplied with prepared opium from the factory of a Government monopoly in another territory of the same Power.

Article V lays down that the Agreement applies only to the Far Eastern possessions or territories of the High Contracting Parties in which the use of prepared opium is temporarily authorised.

2. FINAL ACT.

The Conference further adopted a series of recommendations addressed to the Governments concerned and to the Council of the League of Nations.

It recommended:

I. That all possible steps should be taken to bring about an agreement for the effective limitation of the production of opium, and that the proposal to that effect made by the Commission of Enquiry of the League of Nations should be submitted to the Governments concerned for consideration;

II. That the Governments of the territories in which opium-smoking is temporarily authorised should examine the possibility of applying, in those regions where the illicit traffic does not constitute a serious obstacle, the system of licensing and rationing;

III. That the Governments of those countries that have not yet adopted any form of registration should consider the possibility either of issuing an identification card to each smoker, or recording, at the time of the sale of opium, the name and address of the purchaser;

IV. That a programme of development of medical and health services should be treated as an important part of the opium policy of all the Governments concerned;

V. That a special opium account (revenue from the monopoly, expenditure of all kinds) should be prepared annually and annexed to the annual report submitted by the Government of the territory to the League of Nations;
VI. That the Governments should provide, in the laws in force in their territories, the penalty of imprisonment in the case of persons proved to have taken steps for the carrying out by others of acts of illicit traffic in opium;

VII. That all practicable measures should be taken to obtain the return to the Government of the dross produced by the smoking of prepared opium;

VIII. That the arrangements contemplated by Article VIII of the Geneva Agreement for the exchange of information and views in regard to the illicit traffic in opium should be extended to cover all matters of common interest in connection with the suppression of the practice of opium-smoking, and that conferences should take place from time to time between the representatives of the services concerned;

IX. That all the Governments concerned should make adequate provision for the treatment of all persons genuinely desiring to be cured of their addiction;

X. That arrangements should be made for research, on a plan to be agreed between the Governments concerned, into certain questions, such as the physiological and psychological effects on the individual of the practice of smoking opium, methods of cure of addiction to opium, etc., and that the assistance of the Opium Advisory Committee and the Health Committee of the League should be obtained in preparing a programme for such research;

XI. That the Opium Advisory Committee of the League should be asked to prepare, for the use of the Governments of territories where the use of prepared opium is temporarily authorised, a form of annual report which would include particulars as regards certain additional matters;

3. Declaration in regard to the illicit traffic in opium.

The members of the Conference further considered it necessary to inform both the Council of the League and public opinion of the position in regard to the production and smuggling of opium. For that purpose, they drew up a declaration in regard to the illicit traffic in opium (document Conf. O.F.B.35), dated November 26th, 1931. This declaration calls attention to the difficulties which the illicit traffic in opium from China and Persia causes to the Governments of Far Eastern territories in the accomplishment of the international obligations which they have assumed in regard to the use of prepared opium.

* * *

Some of the recommendations of the Final Act require the co-operation of certain League organs — namely, the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs and the Health Committee. At its meeting of January 30th, 1932, the Council authorised these organs to give the assistance requested by the Conference.

At the same meeting of the Council, the Chinese representative explained the reasons why his Government did not take part in the Bangkok Conference. China therefore remained as heretofore bound only by the Hague Convention of which she was a signatory.

B. Work of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs (Fifteenth Session).

The Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs held its fifteenth session from April 15th to May 4th, 1932.

1. Mission to Persia and Turkey of the Director of the Opium Traffic and Social Questions Section.

The Committee, in addition to the usual progress report, received from the Director of the Opium Section an account of the visits which, on his return from the Bangkok Conference, he had made to Persia and Turkey, where he had discussed the drug situation with the competent authorities.


The Committee unanimously decided to ask the Secretary-General whether he could see his way to make an exception for the Minutes of the Opium Advisory Committee to the decision that Minutes of Committees should not be printed this year. The Committee considered it essential to secure that publicity which it regards as one of its chief weapons. Moreover the Committee considered that its Minutes were of the greatest aid to Governments far from Geneva and to their administrations in their work of control and in the initiation of new measures.