LEAGUE OF NATIONS

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE 1936/37

Part II.

Geneva, September 8th, 1937.
NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.

The Annual Report on the Work of the League is issued, as usual, in two parts. Part I, dated July 28th, 1937, covered the work of the League from the session of the Assembly held in September 1936 to the end of June 1937.

Part II covers the work of the League from the end of June to the end of August 1937. This second part of the Report has two annexes, printed separately, namely:

“Ratification of Agreements and Conventions concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations” (document A.6(a).1937, Annex I. V) and

“Note by the Secretary-General on the Economic Situation” (document A.6(a).1937, Annex II).

September 8th, 1937.
## CONTENTS

### Note by the Secretary-General

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### A. Work of the League

#### 1. Mandates:
- Work of the Permanent Mandates Commission at its Thirty-first Session (May-June 1937) 
  | 7 |
- Work of the Permanent Mandates Commission at its Thirty-second (Extraordinary) Session (July-August 1937), devoted to Palestine  
  | 15 |

#### 2. Reduction and Limitation of Armaments

| 24 |

#### 3. Economic and Financial Questions:
- Publications of the Economic Intelligence Service  
  | 25 |

#### 4. Communications and Transit

| 29 |

#### 5. Health Questions:
- I. Studies on Housing  
  | 37 |
- II. Eastern Bureau, Singapore  
  | 40 |
- III. Enquiry into Popular Nutrition in Chile  
  | 40 |

#### 6. Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs:
- Work of the Permanent Central Opium Board  
  | 42 |

#### 7. International Assistance to Refugees:
- I. Nansen International Office for Refugees  
  | 43 |
- II. Refugees (Jewish and Other) coming from Germany  
  | 43 |

#### 8. Intellectual Co-operation:
- Work of the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation  
  | 45 |

#### 9. Legal and Constitutional Questions:
- Membership of the League of Nations  
  | 52 |

---

B. Permanent Court of International Justice.

INTRODUCTION .......................................................... 53

1. COMPOSITION OF THE COURT ................................... 53

2. THE REGISTRY ...................................................... 55

3. THE STATUTE AND THE RULES OF COURT .................... 55

4. JURISDICTION ....................................................... 56

5. ACTIVITIES OF THE COURT: CASES ......................... 60
A. WORK OF THE LEAGUE.

1. MANDATES.

I. Work of the Permanent Mandates Commission during its Thirty-first Session (May-June 1937).

A. Special question: Frontier between Tanganyika and Mozambique.

The Commission took cognisance of the documentation submitted to it in accordance with the Council resolution of January 22nd, 1937. In addition, the accredited representative of the mandatory Power for Tanganyika supplied it verbally with supplementary information.

It noted, in particular, that the object of the Agreement of May 11th, 1936, between the United Kingdom and Portugal with regard to the delimitation of the frontier between Tanganyika and Mozambique was to define the boundary more clearly and thereby to put an end to an undesirable state of uncertainty.

The Commission informed the Council that the material placed before it contained nothing which would justify it in affirming that the Agreement was incompatible with the interests of the mandated territory.

B. Observations on the Administration of the Territories under mandate.

The Commission made a number of observations on the administration of the territories with which it dealt at its
Territories under B mandate.

Tanganyika.

The Commission took note of the accredited representative’s statement, according to which the mandatory Power attaches no political significance to the issue of a common stamp for Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda.

It noted that the mandatory Power had not found any reason hitherto for introducing tariff legislation in the territory to permit discrimination between those States which are and those which are not Members of the League of Nations, and that no change was contemplated in this connection. It asked that the next annual report might state whether or not the mandatory Power considered itself legally obliged to apply the rule of economic equality to imports from non-member States.

The Commission was gratified to note, furthermore, that the mandatory Power had been successful in securing most-favoured-nation treatment for the products of Tanganyika from a great number of States.

The Commission noted the increasingly favourable situation of the territory, particularly as regards the railways, and asked for a full statement concerning the proposed imposition of a non-native income tax; it noted also that it was not intended to make a contribution from the Tanganyika budget in connection with the proposed fortification of the port of Mombasa (Kenya).

In view of the continuance of an increasingly favourable trade balance, the Commission asked that the next report might contain a statement on the measures contemplated for giving the natives a greater share in the prosperity of the territory.

In the matter of labour, the Commission noted the accredited representative’s statement that financial provision had been made for the re-establishment of a separate organisation to deal with labour and expressed the hope that an effective and specialised labour service might again be set up. The Commission was struck by the evidence in the report as to the continuance of low rates of wages for native labour in spite of the marked rise
in prices; it asked that the next report might contain particulars of the wage policy adopted by the mandatory Power. The Commission also noted the statement of the mandatory Power that the previously unsatisfactory conditions under which the natives were employed in the Lupa goldfields area had shown signs of improvement and that various measures had been taken with this object. It expressed the hope that such further measures might be taken as would effectively and rapidly put an end to the conditions in question.

The Commission was gratified to note that it was intended to increase expenditure on native education and expressed the hope that a further substantial advance might be made in that important sphere. It also expressed the hope that it might be possible to develop higher agricultural training.

As regards the liquor traffic, the Commission noted that measures had been taken to control the importation of methylated spirits with a view to the control of manufacture and sale. It asked for particulars of the results of the measures taken.

Lastly, as regards land tenure, the Commission asked for an account of the measures taken to protect native interests in connection with the scheme for white settlement in the Southern Highlands Province of Tanganyika.

*Cameroons and Togoland under British mandate: Observation common to both territories.*

The Commission took note of the statements of the accredited representatives to the effect that the mandatory Power is of opinion that States which are not members of the League cannot claim economic equality for their goods imported into a mandated territory, either under the terms of the mandates or under Article 22 of the Covenant, and that such States, in the opinion of the mandatory Government, can only claim equal treatment for their imports by virtue of agreements concluded to this end with the mandatory Power. It also noted that the mandatory has no intention at present of inviting the authorities concerned to promote legislation which would deprive States not Members of the League of the economic equality which in fact they now enjoy in territories under United Kingdom mandate. In this connection, the Commission again asked to be informed whether
the exports of the mandated territories enjoy reciprocity under the commercial regime in force between them and the aforesaid States.

**Cameroons under British mandate.**

According to the annual report, a number of hamlets in the Gashaka district in the territory have been transferred to the Benue province in Nigeria. The Commission stated that it would be glad to receive an assurance that, despite the use of the word "transfer", this operation had not resulted in any change in the status of the district or of its inhabitants.

It noted that the mandatory Power was prepared to begin on November 1st, 1937 the demarcation of the eastern frontier of the territory and expressed the hope that the work of demarcation would be taken in hand and carried through without further delay.

Furthermore, the Commission expressed the hope, as it also did last year, that it might be possible to accelerate road building, as the present inadequacy of the road system is prejudicial to the good administration of the territory in general and of the northern areas in particular. In the matter of labour, the Commission was glad to note that an enquiry is to be instituted into the practice of paying part of the wages due to labourers in credit notes on company stores and said that it would await with interest the results of that enquiry.

The Commission was struck by the extreme smallness of the grant made for education in the northern part of the territory and hoped to see in the next report that the question had received the attention of the Administration.

The Commission felt concern at the appreciable increase in the importation of alcohol in the southern areas; it was confident that the mandatory Power would closely supervise importation so as to determine whether a stricter control of the trade in spirits is necessary.

Having observed a decrease in expenditure of Government funds on medical service, the Commission expressed the hope, in view of the improved financial and economic situation of the territory, that larger sums might be allocated to the public health services.
Togoland under British mandate.

The Commission noted with satisfaction the information supplied in the report, and amplified by the accredited representative, on the evolution of the system of indirect rule in the northern section of the territory and on the zeal, initiative and sense of public duty of the native authorities.

As regards public finance, the Commission welcomed the information on the satisfactory results of the system of direct taxation and of the native treasuries in the northern section. It asked that it might have full particulars with regard to the loans raised by the native authorities in the southern section and expressed the hope that measures might be taken to prevent any abuse in connection with the raising of such loans. In the comments which he submitted on this observation, the accredited representative pointed out that, in his examination, he had stated that he was not aware that the native authorities in the southern section had raised loans; he added that the Commission's observation could only be construed to mean that loans had to the knowledge of the Administration been raised.

The Commission again expressed the hope that it might be possible to obtain approximate figures, or at least an estimate, of the imports and exports passing over the western frontier of the territory. It also asked for information regarding the sources of imports and the destination of exports of the territory.

As regards land tenure, the Commission said that it would like to know to what extent land in the southern section had been sold or leased to "stranger natives" and what precise measures, if any, the Administration had taken in practice to control land transactions in accordance with Article 5 of the mandate.

The Commission was again concerned at the increased consumption of spirits by the natives of the southern section and expressed the earnest hope that proper measures might be taken with a view to exercising stricter control over the consumption of spirits by the natives.

In the matter of public health, the Commission enquired, lastly, whether compulsory treatment of sleeping-sickness was contemplated.
Territories under C mandate.

South West Africa.

The Commission noted that the mandatory Power "is of opinion that to administer the mandated territory as a fifth province of the Union subject to the terms of the mandate would not be in conflict with terms of the mandate itself". It also noted that the mandatory "feels that sufficient grounds have not been adduced for taking such a step". In this connection, the Commission stated that it did not express any opinion as to a method of administration the scope of which it had had no opportunity of judging and the adoption of which, according to the statement of the mandatory Power, was not contemplated, and that it confined itself to making all legal reservations on the question.

Furthermore, the Commission, having felt some concern on perusing the report of the "South West Africa Commission", expressed a wish to be informed in the next annual report whether the Government of the mandatory Power had taken any further action on the findings of that Commission, more particularly in the matter of native administration.

The Commission noted with satisfaction the accredited representative's statement that the relations between the different sections of the European community had improved. Having learnt, however, that certain measures restrictive of the political activities of the European population had recently been taken, it expressed the hope that it might be possible for the mandatory Power to report next year a substantial development in good relations and whole-hearted co-operation between the various sections of the population.

The Commission noted further the statement that the mandatory Power would place in a suspense account the full amount of the loans made by it to the territory before March 31st, 1937, and that the territory would be relieved of all payments on such loans until its finances improved sufficiently to allow of payments being made. It also noted, however, that the debt shown in the suspense account would be increased from year to year by the interest thereon. In this connection, the Commission said that it would be glad to know whether the mandatory Power had found
it possible to take action on the findings of the South West Africa Commission, according to which it was essential in the interests of the good government of the territory for the mandatory Power to afford the territory some measure of financial assistance which would not entail annual appropriations from the territory’s revenue for the service of this debt.

Furthermore, the Commission expressed the hope that the mandatory Power might find it possible to afford some direct assistance to the territory with a view further to improving conditions in native reserves.

Having learnt that, in certain cases, the activities of the missions tended to disrupt tribal law and customs and thereby created certain difficulties for the Administration, the Commission expressed the hope that the latter might succeed in supervising the activities of the missions in such a way as to avoid any dangers involved and to establish a closer co-operation between itself and the missions.

The Commission was again concerned at the inadequacy of the education afforded to the natives, and in particular at the difficulties in the way of getting suitable teachers.

It expressed the hope that greater efforts might be made to raise the standard of native education, more particularly by devoting a larger proportion of the education budget to this object, and that some means might be found of improving the training of native teachers.

Nauru.

The Commission asked for information regarding worked-out phosphates land which was not returned to the natives and also for information as to the use the natives made of worked-out land returned to them.

The Commission stated that it would follow with interest the efforts made by the Administration to encourage the natives to grow food crops.

New Guinea.

The Commission noted that there were two classes of “uncontrolled areas”, in one of which the Administration exercises
some measure of influence, while the other entirely escapes its influence, and said that it would like to find in the next report precise information as to the difference between the two classes of "uncontrolled areas". It desired, in particular, to know what non-natives are in principle and in practice authorised to enter the first class of areas and under what conditions such authorisation is granted. The Commission wished also to be assured that no private activities of any kind by non-natives would be allowed in areas where the Administration, which is responsible for the incidents to which premature contact between foreigners and natives may give rise, is not in a position to exercise real and effective control.

Furthermore, the Commission stated that, without underestimating the difficulties connected with the construction and upkeep of roads in hilly and thickly-wooded country such as New Guinea, it felt sure that the mandatory Power would realise the desirability of accelerating road construction as a means of extending the Administration's influence and of assisting the economic development of the mandated territory.

Lastly, the Commission observed that it was concerned at the possibility that the numbers of native labourers recruited in some districts for employment away from their villages might be such as to endanger the economic and social life of the native communities; it said that it would be glad to find in the next report detailed information concerning the methods now employed to avert this danger.

C. Petitions.

The Commission considered two petitions, one relating to Syria and the other to New Guinea. As regards the second, the Commission, in its conclusions, expressed its regret at the facts which had occasioned the petition. As the latter dealt, among other things, with the general problem of the admission of non-natives to areas which are not yet under the control of the Administration, the Commission referred to the observations which it was submitting to the Council in connection with the examination of the report on the administration of this territory.  

1 Reference document: C.274.M.178.1937.VI.
II. WORK OF THE PERMANENT MANDATES COMMISSION AT ITS THIRTY-SECOND (EXTRAORDINARY) SESSION (JULY-AUGUST 1937), DEVOTED TO PALESTINE.

The Commission held its thirty-second (extraordinary) session from July 30th to August 18th.

In his opening speech, the Chairman of the Commission recalled the events which led to the convening of this meeting.

The disturbances in Palestine started in April 1936 and lasted until October of the same year. The Commission, at its twenty-ninth session (June 1936), was unable to complete the examination of the annual report for 1935, as the accredited representative had stated that he was not in a position to analyse the causes of the unrest which had made itself evident in Palestine in 1935, and still less was he in a position to make any statements that might anticipate the findings of the Royal Commission which the mandatory Power proposed to set up. The Commission accordingly reserved the right to revert later to the examination of such points in the report for 1935 as were connected with the causes, circumstances and significance of the disturbances of 1936; it expressed the hope that information as to the disturbances would be furnished at its autumn session of 1936.

In September 1936, the United Kingdom representative informed the Council that a Royal Commission had been set up to investigate the disturbances in Palestine and stated that his Government would not be in a position to furnish the Mandates Commission with the desired information in time for the autumn session.

At its thirtieth Session (autumn 1936), the Mandates Commission decided to hold an extraordinary session in the spring of 1937; this decision was approved by the President of the Council, in accordance with the customary procedure. However, the date of the meeting had to be postponed till the end of July.\(^1\)

In a letter dated July 6th, 1937 (document C.319.1937.VI), the United Kingdom Government stated that the Royal Commission's report and the Government's conclusions thereon were being communicated to the Mandates Commission and that

---

\(^1\) The reasons for this postponement are mentioned in Part I of the present report, page 91.
the United Kingdom Government proposed to raise the question of Palestine before the Council of the League at its September meeting. It added that the Council would presumably wish to obtain the views of the Mandates Commission on the whole matter before reaching a final decision. In view of the urgency of the question, the United Kingdom Government was anxious that all possible steps should be taken to avoid any unnecessary delay in dealing with it. It expressed the hope that the President of the Council — if necessary after consultation with his colleagues — would request the Mandates Commission at once to take into consideration the report and recommendations of the Royal Commission and the statement of policy of His Majesty’s Government thereon, in order that it might be in a position to give the Council the benefit of its preliminary views at its September session.

It was stated in the letter that such procedure would not exclude the possibility of a further reference of the question to the Mandates Commission after the September Council meeting, should the Council consider this necessary or desirable.

The President of the Council consulted his colleagues, who gave an affirmative answer. The Commission was therefore duly requested by the Council to examine the Royal Commission’s recommendations and the mandatory Power’s statement of policy.


In its report to the Council, 1 the Commission first of all pointed out that it had been given a task that was entirely new to it. It was no longer a question of “examining the annual reports of the mandatories and advising the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates”, as its mission is defined in the Covenant itself; nor was it a duty, such as that assigned to it by the Council in 1931, of determining whether a mandated territory had reached a degree of maturity justifying

1 Document C.330.M.222.1937.VI.
its emancipation. Its task was to express a preliminary opinion “on the intentions of a mandatory Power which proposes to the Council the termination of the mandate it has been carrying out for fifteen years, and which, in support of this proposal, adduces, not so much the attainment of maturity by the ward, as the difficulties of guardianship”.

The Royal Commission sent by the mandatory Power to Palestine in 1936 had concluded that a radical transformation of the existing regime was necessary. Deeming that the application of the mandate had brought the mandatory administration to a deadlock, it proposed either that various provisions of the mandate and their interpretation should be amended, or that the mandate should be abrogated and replaced by an entirely new Statute. Of these two reforms, the second was the one favoured by the Royal Commission, the first being regarded as a mere palliative. This second reform, however, involved, besides the abrogation of the present mandate, the division of Palestine into three separate political units. Of these, one — to which the most extensive but least fertile territory would be allotted — would be attached to Trans-Jordan, the whole being made into an Arab State; the second — with a smaller area, but comprising the coastal region and the adjacent plain — was also to be given independence and to be set up as a Jewish State; and the third — within whose narrow frontiers lie Jerusalem and Bethlehem — would be connected with the sea by a corridor and, with certain other enclaves, would remain, or would be placed once again, under British mandate.

The Government of the mandatory Power, in its statement of July 1937, announced that, in its opinion, a plan of partition on the general lines recommended by the Royal Commission constituted “the best and most hopeful solution” of the problem.

* * *

The Mandates Commission considered that its function was simply to facilitate the Council’s task by formulating, on the basis of the available information, its views on the desirability of maintaining the existing mandate and showing, in so far as was possible, the advantages and drawbacks of the various systems which might be contemplated as providing a solution of the problem.
Experience over a number of years having shown that the aspirations of the Arabs and the Jews in Palestine were constantly growing more irreconcilable, the mandatory Power had hoped that, by dividing the territory between them in accordance with the general views of the Royal Commission, it would be possible to establish a regime more in accordance with justice and less opposed to the conflicting interests at issue.

Although the obligations of the mandate did not appear to be irreconcilable, the aspirations of Arabs and Jews in Palestine have constantly clashed ever since the mandate was established. This antagonism was accentuated and exasperated by circumstances which could not be foreseen twenty years ago. The disturbances of 1936 showed how widespread and intense was the hostility of the Arabs to Jewish immigration, and the repressive measures perforce taken by the mandatory Power only confirmed its doubts of the possibility of applying the mandate without resorting to the constant use of force.

The Mandates Commission expressed the view that "the present mandate became almost unworkable once it was publicly declared to be so by a British Royal Commission speaking with the twofold authority conferred on it by its impartiality and its unanimity, and by the Government of the mandatory Power itself".

The Mandates Commission therefore considered that it was worth continuing the examination of the advantages and drawbacks of a new territorial solution. It appeared to it quite natural and legitimate that the mandatory Power, rightly anxious to give satisfaction to the conflicting aspirations of Arabs and Jews in Palestine, and having failed to do so by the institution of common administration for the whole territory, should be empowered to contemplate in some form or other the establishment of a regime in which these aspirations would each be satisfied in a part of the territory.

With reference to the various difficulties involved by the application of the partition scheme, the Commission laid special stress on the delicate problem of the transfer of populations from one territory to the other which might be necessary if there was a partition.

As regards the proposal to withdraw the Holy Places from the domination of Arabs and Jews and place them under a special
regime, the Commission thought that such a step could only be of advantage to general peace, provided that this regime was based on Article 28 of the present mandate.¹

As it was merely called upon to give a preliminary opinion, the Commission did not think it necessary to examine more closely the scheme proposed by the Royal Commission.

While declaring itself favourable in principle to the examination of a settlement involving the partition of Palestine, the Commission was nevertheless opposed to the idea of the immediate creation of two new independent States. In the Commission's view, such States might find it difficult at the outset to comply with the general conditions for the emancipation of a mandated territory laid down by the Commission and approved by the Council in 1931.²

The Commission considers that a prolongation of the period of political apprenticeship constituted by the mandate would be absolutely essential both to the new Arab State and to the new Jewish State. This apprenticeship might be carried on in one of two forms: "provisional cantonisation" or two mandates.

In the former case, the Commission contemplates the possibility, for a period to be determined by experience, of the co-existence of two States, but the latter, while enjoying a very wide measure of internal autonomy, might be provisionally united under a regime analogous to that rejected by the Royal Commission under the name of "cantonisation". Each of the two cantons would be free to organise itself as it wished, provided that it adhered to the principles underlying any form of good government and, more particularly, that it respected the rights of subjects of the other canton settled in its own territory. Common matters, such as defence, foreign affairs, and probably also Customs policy, would be in the hands of a body on which both parties would be equally represented and presided over by the mandatory Power. It would not necessarily be open to subjects of one canton to settle in the territory of the other,

¹ Article 28 of the Mandate deals more especially with the arrangements to be made at the termination of the mandate for safeguarding existing rights in respect of the Holy Places and free access thereto, and also for honouring the financial obligations incurred by the administration of the territory.
² See Minutes of the Twentieth Session of the Mandates Commission (document C.422.M.176.1931.VI), page 228.
for the two cantons should from the outset have the right to regulate immigration as they thought fit.

In the latter case, the Commission suggests that the two new entities resulting from partition might become fully independent of one another, but that each might remain under a mandate until such time as it had given sufficient proof of its ability to govern itself. The proper moment for granting self-government would not necessarily be the same for both States.

As for the mandatory Power, the Mandates Commission stated, *inter alia*, that “the concern with which it has for nearly twenty years sought to appease the antagonistic feelings prevailing in Palestine must awaken in any man of goodwill a degree of admiration all the higher in that it was exercised in a world in which ruthless violence often stills the voice of humanity”.

The Commission’s report ended with the following passage:

“Let the Jews, who all too often, and without justification, show impatience at the delay and hesitation which the mandatory Power has felt compelled to bring to the building-up of their national home, ask themselves whether there is any other nation by which they have been so little persecuted and to which, for generations past, they owe so many benefits. Let the Arabs, whose opposition to what is nevertheless a measure of higher justice which cannot be carried out without a sacrifice from their side can be readily understood, remember the origin of their national emancipation. Without British efforts, certainly, there would have been no Jewish national home; but also there would have been, on the threshold of the twentieth century, no independent Arab States”.

B. Observations on the Administration of Palestine and Trans-Jordan.

In a General Observation, the Commission gave a brief account of the course and characteristic features of the 1936 disturbances. It fully recognised the difficulty of preventing such occurrences. At the same time, it intimated that it was not convinced that it would not have been possible to adopt more decisive measures at an earlier stage with a view to putting down the armed resistance.
On the other hand, the Commission expressed the opinion that the 1936 disturbances revealed a state of great political tension due to underlying causes to which reference was made in the "preliminary opinion" tendered by the Commission to the Council. Those causes were largely responsible for the great difficulty experienced in putting down the disturbances and for the continuance of conditions of political instability.

In its Special Observations on the administration of Palestine, the Commission remarked that the events of 1936 had necessarily affected, to a considerable extent, the application of the provisions of the mandate and the action of the mandatory administration during that year.

It asked to be informed, in due course, of the measures taken by the mandatory Power to give effect to the conclusions and recommendations of the Royal Commission as regards reforms of an urgent character.

The Commission stressed the special importance in present circumstances of hastening the completion of the land survey.

The Commission found that the application of the rule of economic equality constituted a heavy burden on Palestine's industry and commerce owing to the absence of reciprocity. Recalling the recommendation which it made in 1930 to all States Members of the League to accord to products of territories under A and B mandates advantages corresponding to those enjoyed by their own products in these territories, the Commission noted that, in some cases, the mandatory Power had obtained certain advantages for Palestine, and expressed the hope that the mandatory Power would be able to improve the present unfavourable position by obtaining concessions from a large number of States.

While regretting that most of the Arab Government schools were closed during the disturbances, the Commission noted with interest that, in spite of a general fall in revenue, it was the intention of the mandatory Power that there should be no standstill in the development of educational facilities.

At the same time, the Commission noted the mandatory Power's decision to reduce Jewish immigration temporarily as from August 1st, 1937, to 8,000 persons for the next eight months. While not questioning that the mandatory Power, responsible
as it is for the maintenance of order in the territory, may on occasion find it advisable to take such a step, and is competent to do so, as an exceptional and provisional measure, the Commission drew attention to this departure from the principle, sanctioned by the League Council, that immigration is to be proportionate to the country’s economic absorptive capacity.

Regarding *Trans-Jordan*, the Commission noted that order had been maintained in 1936 without undue difficulty. It also noted that, if disorders of the kind experienced in Palestine should occur in Trans-Jordan, the mandatory Power would probably have to secure reinforcements for the police forces from outside.

The Commission expressed the hope that, notwithstanding the limited resources of the budget of Trans-Jordan, it might be possible further to develop the public health services.

In the last place, the Commission noted that, despite the fact that the administrative structure of the territory was still undeveloped, it had never been possible to balance the budget without large yearly subsidies from the mandatory Power.

C. *Petitions.*

The Commission had to deal with a large number of petitions concerning the 1936 disturbances, the policy of the mandatory Power and the scheme for a Legislative Council. As regards the petitions relating to the disturbances, the Commission drew the Council’s attention to its General Observations formulated on the occasion of the examination of the annual report. The Commission formulated no specific conclusions on the group of petitions relating to the policy of the mandatory Power, the terms of the Mandate and Article 22 of the Covenant, as, in view of their object and of the arguments they contained, they fell within the general scope of the main question on which the Commission was sending a preliminary opinion to the Council. As regards the petitions relating to the scheme for a Legislative Council, the Commission considered that no useful purpose would be served in studying these petitions until a decision had been taken concerning the future status of Palestine.
In addition to the communications falling within the three groups mentioned above, the Council examined five petitions relating to particular questions. One of them concerned the drawbacks of the absence of reciprocity in the system of economic equality which the mandated territories are required to apply. In its Conclusions, the Commission drew attention to the Special Observation which it was submitting to the Council on the difficulties reported in this connection.
2.

REDUCTION AND LIMITATION OF ARMAMENTS.

The Secretary-General has been informed by the United Kingdom Government that, as the instruments of ratification of all the signatories of the Treaty for the Limitation of Naval Armaments signed in London on March 25th, 1936 have now been deposited with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, the provisions of that Treaty are, in accordance with Article 30 (2) thereof, in force as from July 29th, 1937.

The United Kingdom Government has also communicated to the Secretary-General the texts of the Anglo-German and Anglo-Russian Agreements signed in London on July 17th, 1937.¹

¹ See Part I of this Report, page 82.
3.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS.

Publications of the Economic Intelligence Service.


This work is the central source of the documentation prepared by the Economic Intelligence Service. Published in July 1937, the data which it contains cover the year 1936, and even in some cases the first quarter of 1937. The statistical tables are arranged in such a way as to facilitate so far as possible a comparison between one country and another, and refer, among other subjects, to the following:

- Territory and population;
- Labour conditions (unemployment, employment, wages, hours of work);
- Production (agricultural, dairy farming, fisheries, minerals, metals, chemical products, electricity, etc.); indices of world production of raw materials and of industrial production;
- International trade and balances of payments;
- Transport (merchant vessels, railways, air navigation);
- Public finance (budget accounts, public debt);
- Banking and money (circulation, gold and foreign assets reserves, exchange rates, discount rates, banking deposits, market value of shares, yield on bonds, capital issues, etc.);
- Prices (wholesale, retail, prices in gold francs).

The present edition of the Year-Book contains a great deal of new material, especially in regard to production, air traffic,
monetary conditions, movements in the capital markets, the fertility and reproduction rate of the population in a number of countries, etc. Moreover, the explanatory notes, so valuable for an understanding of all collections of statistics, have been considerably increased; thus, the notes regarding rates of exchange and the returns of the banks of issue describe the measures taken in the monetary sphere — exchange restrictions, devaluation, new parities, etc.

Revue of World Trade, 1936.

This publication contains a general synopsis, presented in a clear and orderly form, of world trade during the year 1936. The figures of that year are compared with those for the years immediately preceding, and with the figures for 1929. The volume begins with a general summary of the chief results and of the deductions of a general character to be drawn from the data given. The succeeding chapters deal with the following questions: value and quantum of world trade in the years 1921-1936; trade by main groups of articles; trade by continental groups; trade by countries.

Then comes a detailed examination of the trade of the principal countries in 1936, in order to analyse its structure and tendencies, and of the trade in certain staple products. The last chapter deals with the influence of discriminatory measures on the geographical distribution of trade. It is pointed out in this chapter that the geographical distribution of the trade of certain countries was determined, not by the prices prevailing in the import and export markets concerned, but by discrimination rendered possible by commercial policy. In particular, this is true of countries applying exchange control.

Money and Banking, 1936/37.

Monetary phenomena and their numerous repercussions of all kinds, the changes of structure which are occurring in the banking equipment of the world, the financing of Government expenditure, etc., are problems the complexity of which is daily increasing. This publication undertakes their study in two volumes.
The first is a "Monetary Review". This analytical study of currency adjustments, gold movements and interest rates, covers the whole period of depreciation and recovery since 1929. This phase of monetary development is one of the most agitated in the history of international finance. It provides the material for this volume, the chapters of which are as follows: the course of foreign exchanges; the market in forward exchanges; exchange stabilisation funds; gold supply and central monetary reserves; interest rates.

The essential monetary statistics for the years 1929-1936 of some forty countries, are summarised as far as possible on a uniform basis in seventeen tables annexed to the volume. The Tripartite Monetary Agreements of autumn 1936, which may be said to have provided the mechanism for an orderly experiment in the field of international stabilisation of currency, are studied with their consequences.

This work, owing to the importance of the subjects with which it deals and the variety of the facts which it contains, greatly facilitates the understanding and study of problems of the most up-to-date interest, such as the gold problem and the trend of interest rates.

The second volume is entitled "Commercial Banks". It is chiefly a statistical work showing in a series of tables the changes which have occurred since 1929 in the monetary and banking situation of forty-five countries. In order to make it easier to compare the accounts of commercial banks in one country with those in others, the statistics have been arranged as far as possible to conform with a standard balance-sheet and with a standard form for profit and loss accounts. Each table is accompanied by detailed notes summarising legislative and other measures introduced during the period under review.


This review covers the period from July 1936 to the beginning of August 1937. It begins with an account of the monetary adjustments made in September 1936 and their immediate consequences. The acceleration of the recovery which has taken place in the majority of countries is described and assessed, with special reference to the increase in production, rising prices
and the recent tendency towards an expansion of international trade. A special study is made of the effects of these developments on the prosperity of agricultural-exporting countries, and of the symptoms of a boom in certain industrial countries. In this connection, comments are made on re-armament programmes.

As in previous years, the general study given in this Survey is placed in an international setting. The outline of events up to the end of July 1937 recapitulates the measures taken in the national and international sphere during the financial crisis in France at the beginning of the summer.

*World Production and Prices, 1936/37.*

This volume presents a new world index of stocks, which provides a link between the two world production indices compiled last year.

These indices are analysed in detail in Chapter I of the volume, and supplemented by various information. The first section of this chapter deals with the production, stocks and consumption of primary products. The second section is concerned with industrial activity, studied in conjunction with unemployment and profits.

Chapter II deals with changes in world production, trade and shipping. Chapter III contains a study of the movement of prices both in world markets and in various countries.

This data and analyses given in this publication show the developments which have taken place in the different countries during 1936, alike from the industrial, agricultural and commercial points of view.
4.

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT.

The Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit held its twentieth session at Geneva from August 31st to September 4th, 1937. The conclusions which it has reached and the resolutions it adopted in regard to the various questions with which it deals, form a principal part of the present chapter.

MARITIME TONNAGE MEASUREMENT.

In accordance with a previous decision of the Advisory and Technical Committee, the report drawn up at its request by the Chairman and Rapporteur of the Technical Committee for Maritime Tonnage Measurement has been communicated to the Governments concerned.

Acting on a suggestion submitted by the French Government after study of the report in question, the Advisory and Technical Committee decided that the drafting committee instructed to consider the action required with a view to the adoption of a uniform method of maritime tonnage measurement should meet again in order to put into final form a definitive text giving the fullest possible effect to the wishes expressed by the different Governments.

---

POLLUTION OF THE SEA BY OIL.

In its report of October 10th, 1936, the Assembly expressed the opinion that the anticipated results of the proposed Agreement in regard to the Pollution of the Sea by Oil would not be obtained unless all countries with fleets of any size were parties to the Agreement. The Advisory and Technical Committee endorsed this view, which was also recorded by the Council at its ninety-fourth session, and itself expressed the hope that Governments generally would co-operate in the settlement of this problem.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE HYDROGRAPHIC CONFERENCE OF MONACO.

(a) Buoyage of isolated rocks.

(b) Despatch by the various Governments to the International Hydrographic Bureau of the results of the hydrographic work carried out by authorities other than the National Hydrographic Services themselves.

On the above two questions, the International Hydrographic Conference of Monaco, which was held in April 1937, adopted the following conclusions:

(a) The International Hydrographic Bureau is invited to draw up in respect of each sea a list of dangers situated in the high seas, at present unbuoyed, and likely to be perilous on account of their presence in the proximity of shipping routes, and after consultation with the competent international organisations to state its opinion as to the advisability of marking each such obstacle.

The said lists to be communicated to the Advisory and Technical Commission of Communications and Transit: the latter to take the measures necessary for the marking of the shoals in question by the States concerned.

(b) The International Hydrographic Bureau to compile and periodically bring up to date the collection of charts

---

2 Document C.499.M.235.1935.VIII.
containing the soundings effected in estuaries and deltas used by seagoing vessels and of documents relating to the corresponding tidal river movements issued by the harbour authorities and other similar services which are independent of the national hydrographic services.

The Conference considered that it would be of great utility if these various publications were sent regularly by the competent services of each nation to their national hydrographic services to be forwarded by the latter to the International Hydrographic Bureau: the documents to be filed, and a periodical list thereof published, by the latter.

With regard to the States which do not belong to the Bureau but are Members of the League of Nations, the Conference expressed the hope that the Communications and Transit Organisation would take the necessary steps to obtain this information.

The Advisory and Technical Committee approved these proposals in principle. As regards their practical application, it requested the Chairman of the Committee to follow the matter up with a view to giving effect, as and when occasion occurred, to the suggestions made, after receipt of the requisite information as to the procedure to be followed and as to the exact scope of the action to be taken by the Committee.

**Stowaways.**

The question of stowaways having been raised by the International Shipping Federation, the Advisory and Technical Committee decided to instruct its Permanent Legal Committee to consider the question at its next meeting.

**Road Traffic.**

The Permanent Committee on Road Traffic dealt, *inter alia*, with questions connected with the international regulations relating to road traffic and motor traffic, problems relating to road signals, level-crossings, statistics of road traffic accidents, civil responsibility and compulsory insurance of motorists, and

---

1 See its report, document C.322.M.217.1937.VIII.
safety of pedestrians. The conclusions reached by the permanent Committee and the proposals formulated by it were in their turn examined by the Advisory and Technical Committee, which passed various resolutions regarding them. The following points in particular may be noted:

*Unification of Statistics relating to Road Traffic Accidents.*

The report of the Committee for the Unification of Statistics relating to Road Traffic Accidents will be communicated to Governments in order that the recommendations of the report may be applied by them as far as possible. Governments will be requested at the same time to communicate to the League of Nations, before the end of 1940, any information concerning their experience in applying these recommendations, together with such observations as they may wish to submit.

*Simplification of Travel Documents.*

The international motorists' associations had made certain proposals with a view to standardising the new models for driving licences and registration cards, in order to permit of the recognition of the national documents with which motorists are provided by the authorities and agents in all countries. These proposals will be brought to the notice of Governments, and recommended with a view to the adoption by Governments of the proposed system.

*Revision of International Conventions relating to Motor Traffic and Road Traffic.*

In the report ¹ which it adopted on the work of the Transit Organisation, the Assembly (seventeenth ordinary session) recommended the Organisation actively to pursue its task of international codification in the sphere of road traffic and signals, and to see whether any useful purpose would be served by revising the existing Conventions and, if necessary, regrouping the provisions contained in them with a view to obtaining a more systematic whole.

---

In pursuance of this mandate from the Assembly, the Advisory and Technical Committee instructed its Permanent Committee on Road Traffic to make a study of these various problems.

**CIVIL RESPONSIBILITY OF MOTORISTS (THIRD-PARTY RISKS) AND COMPULSORY INSURANCE.**

The Advisory and Technical Committee, having had before it the preliminary draft uniform laws framed by the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law at Rome, concerning the question of civil responsibility and that of the compulsory insurance of motorists, examined these drafts. It decided to set up a special Committee consisting of legal experts and experts on road traffic and insurance, to study the texts. The Rome Institute will be invited to send a representative to sit on this Committee. This Committee may also invite the co-operation of the international associations concerned and of insurance representatives. The Committee will then report to the Advisory Committee.

**PASSPORTS.**

The Secretary-General carried out an enquiry among Governments in execution of a decision of the Advisory and Technical Committee concerning the action taken on the recommendations of the Passport Conference held in 1926.

The Advisory and Technical Committee, after having noted the replies already received, expressed the hope that Governments which have not yet replied will do so as soon as possible. In the light of these replies, the Committee will then examine the situation in regard to this matter.

**SIGNALS AT LEVEL-CROSSINGS.**

In conformity with the Council's request (January 1936), the Secretary-General enquired of Governments whether, in their opinion, the text prepared by the Transit Organisation might be taken as a basis for the conclusion of an international conven-

---

tion, and whether they would be prepared, if called upon, to take part in a conference convened by the League of Nations for that purpose. A certain number of countries — most of which are situated in Europe and some of which are particularly important from the point of view of transport — replied that they considered the programme drawn up by the Transit Organisation a useful basis for discussion and that they would be prepared to take part in the proposed conference.

The Advisory and Technical Committee accordingly instructed the special Committee which had framed the texts in question to prepare, on the basis of the replies already received from Governments and of those which might still be received, a draft convention which the Committee will then examine.

CO-ORDINATION OF TRANSPORT.¹

The Assembly of the League of Nations, at its sixteenth ordinary session (September 1935), asked the Communications and Transit Organisation to undertake a study of the problem of the co-ordination of transport. In pursuance of this decision and on the instructions of the Advisory and Technical Committee, the Secretariat, with the help of certain experts, defined and classified the various questions connected with this problem, and the Secretary-General requested the Governments to send him any information they might possess on the relations at present existing between transport by rail, transport by road, and transport by inland navigation.

The material contained in the replies of the Governments will be systematically classified by the Secretariat and in due course a committee of experts will be set up to give directions regarding the analytical examination of the data thus classified and to make a report to the Committee.

In the report ² which it adopted on the work of the Transit Organisation, the Assembly (seventeenth ordinary session) endorsed the suggestion made by certain delegates that the Transit Organisation should be requested to enquire whether, owing to the growing competition between transport by rail

² Official Journal, 1936, Special Supplement No. 157, pages 77 and 78.
and transport by road, certain provisions of the International Convention on the Transport of Goods by Rail (C.I.M.) of October 23rd, 1924, could not be made more elastic.

This question having been referred to the Advisory and Technical Committee, the latter expressed the opinion that the special committee which it was proposed to set up to study the co-ordination of transport might also examine this problem.

PUBLIC WORKS.\(^1\)

The Advisory and Technical Committee has noted with satisfaction the procedure jointly arranged by the Secretary-General and the Director of the International Labour Office regarding future co-operation between the Communications and Transit Organisation and the International Labour Organisation in regard to public works, account being taken in particular of the conclusions regarding the problem of public works adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1937.

LEAGUE WIRELESS STATION.\(^2\)

The Advisory and Technical Committee has had occasion to study the manner in which the representative of the competent organ of the League of Nations should participate in the work of technical organisations of an international character in regard to telecommunications, and particularly in the Conferences and Committees of the International Telecommunications Union, with special reference to the Cairo Conference of 1938, on the agenda of which this question has been placed. The Committee requested the Secretariat to examine whether sufficient account was taken of the special position of the wireless station as an official organ of an international character, and if necessary to study by what means the competent organ of the League of Nations could be given an opportunity of co-operating in the most appropriate manner with the different technical organs of an international character dealing with telecommunications.

---


\(^2\) Ibid., page 128.
REFORM OF THE CALENDAR.¹

The Advisory and Technical Committee examined the draft Convention submitted by the Government of Chile and the replies sent by the Governments to the Secretary-General's Circular Letter on the subject.

On the one hand, it recognised once more the undoubted advantages from the economic and social point of view of the simplification of the Gregorian calendar and the stabilisation of movable feasts. On the other hand, it emphasised that such a reform could only be considered if it met with practically universal approval. After analysing the replies received and observing that numerous States had not yet replied, the Committee was bound to recognise that this practical unanimity did not yet seem to exist.

Moreover, the Committee recalled that, in the previous studies undertaken by the League of Nations on this subject, the opinion of the religious authorities has always been taken into account. While the majority of the Orthodox and Protestant Churches do not oppose a stabilisation of movable feasts, declaring, however, that this stabilisation should be conditional on the consent of all the Christian Churches, the Holy See appears, if anything, to have accentuated its previously stated attitude — namely, that it could not consider any changes as regards the date of these feasts without a decision by an Ecumenical Council, and then only within the framework of a general reform of the calendar.

Moreover, as regards this reform, the Holy See could not agree to blank days, which would break the continuity of the weeks and would be incompatible with venerable and long established traditions.

In these circumstances, the Committee expressed the opinion that, for the moment, it was not expedient to arrange a conference for a reform of the calendar, which, in present circumstances would seem to have no chance of being accepted, and that accordingly the question should not, until further notice, be retained on its agenda.

5.

HEALTH QUESTIONS.

I. STUDIES ON HOUSING.

The Housing Commission sat from June 23rd to 29th, simultaneously with two Sub-Committees of experts which were discussing the hygiene of environmental conditions and noise abatement.

These two questions stood first on the programme of research drawn up by the Commission at the end of 1935, which covers the manifold problems involved by the hygiene of buildings and dwellings and of national, urban, and rural planning; so that, when it has studied the various points by stages, the Commission hopes to be able to submit a series of conclusions on the subject of healthy urban and rural housing and healthy town and country areas.

The investigations are being conducted through the agency of the national committees which, at the Health Committee’s request, have been set up in various countries. The Housing Commission itself is merely an emanation of these national committees, being composed of their representatives. The status of the committees varies in different countries, but, whether they are official or unofficial, they are representative of all the persons and institutions in any way interested in the hygiene of housing.

In the Commission’s opinion, this method of work has proved remarkably effective. In the national field, these bodies provide

---

1 United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia, France, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, and the United States of America.

the necessary co-ordination and endeavour to secure the practical application of technical progress in this direction, so as to contribute to the improvement of living conditions. In the international sphere, they afford the most extensive and rational method of co-operation, the necessary liaison being provided by the Housing Commission. They organise and direct the execution of the programme drawn up by the Housing Commission, and are in the best possible position to utilise and disseminate the results of their joint international work. It would therefore be a good thing if similar bodies could be formed in countries where they do not as yet exist.

The Commission laid particular stress on the desirability of extending this form of co-operation to tropical countries, owing to the special problems involved in housing in tropical climates, and because housing is a very important factor in acclimatisation.

The Commission announced that it is ready to collaborate with the International Institute of Statistics and any other international bodies in seeking to improve the international comparability of housing statistics.

*The Hygiene of Environmental Conditions.*

The primary object of housing is to protect the individual from climatic discomforts. The environmental conditions it provides must therefore be such as to ensure the maintenance of thermal equilibrium in the human body, and, from a more general standpoint, such as to promote physical and mental fitness and a feeling of well-being.

The principal environmental factors are the temperature, humidity, and movement of the air, and the radiant temperature of the surroundings (walls, ceiling, flooring, windows, etc.).

It is impossible to establish uniform standards for all countries. Obviously, the optimum environmental conditions regulating the heat exchanges of the human body must vary according to climate and season. The sensation of comfort, too, is purely subjective.

The Commission's report therefore aims at ascertaining the present state of knowledge and the principles followed in certain countries, and at presenting a survey of the systems and processes
at present available for heating, cooling, ventilating, and conditioning the air.

Those responsible must choose their weapons from this armoury in the light of economic and physiological necessities and the circumstances peculiar to different parts of the world.

The Commission points out the harm that may be done to the adaptive faculty of the human body by the tendency — increasingly marked in some countries — to a continuous increase in, and a too constant maintenance of, the temperature of dwellings.

The Commission observes that much of the research on which our present knowledge rests has been done in the laboratory, but not tested in practice. Hence it is essential that the results of these theoretical calculations and scientific research should be compared as between urban and rural centres and between different climates. It is also desirable that the national committees should encourage research into the physical processes and physiological reactions that underlie the relations between the human body and its thermal environment.

**Noise-abatement.**

A wide variety of processes are in existence for protecting a dwelling from noise, both external and internal, both air-borne and structure-borne.

The Commission studies these processes and classifies them according to cost. Here, as in the case of environmental conditions, no universally valid rules can be laid down; but it is to be noted that some protective measures against noise are also effective against heat and cold.

In addition, the report contains a list of technical questions which are to be further investigated under the supervision of the national committees.

Lastly, the Commission calls attention to the importance of securing a wide distribution of all this information. The noise problem, in particular, has become acute owing to modern scientific inventions, and it is incumbent on all concerned to see that existing knowledge is applied practically.
II. EASTERN BUREAU, SINGAPORE.

In April of this year, cholera was widely epidemic in parts of Siam and, in spite of the precautions taken by the Siamese authorities, a case was landed at Singapore, and a few days later a second case was landed in Sumatra. This aroused natural anxiety in the quarantine services of the countries in the vicinity of Siam.

On April 27th, the Siamese Government cabled to the Eastern Bureau inviting its Director to go to Bangkok and inform himself of the preventive measures taken by the authorities, so as to enable the other Far-Eastern countries to organise their own precautions accordingly.

The following day the Director flew to Bangkok, and within three days he was back in Singapore. Through the courtesy of the Siamese authorities, the Bureau was able to facilitate the co-ordination of the preventive measures taken by the various Governments in connection with air traffic, shipping, labour traffic, and general cargo interchange.

III. ENQUIRY INTO POPULAR NUTRITION IN CHILE.

It will be remembered that the Chilian Government's request for the assistance of the technical organisations of the League of Nations in investigating problems relating to popular nutrition in Chile led, in 1935, to the carrying-out of an enquiry by Professors Carlo Dragoni and Etienne Burnet.¹

The report of these two experts was submitted to the Chilian Government late in 1936, and the latter authorised the Secretariat to publish, at the same time as this report, the text of the provisions it had adopted with a view to the improvement of the standard of popular nutrition in Chile. These documents will be found in the August 1937 issue of the Health Organisation's Bulletin.