7. The Reduction in the Staff of the Secretariat

The diminution in the activity of the League of Nations in certain fields led, as early as 1939, to a corresponding reduction in its staff. The outbreak of hostilities in Europe at the end of August of the same year made additional retrenchments necessary, so as to reduce expenditure still further in accordance with the desire of States Members. In May 1940, the invasion of Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium and France, and the effects produced by the invasion, created a situation to which it was necessary for the Secretariat to adapt itself immediately. Between May 1st and August 1st, the number of its officials was reduced from 423 to 208. The Administration has constantly endeavoured to achieve all the economies that could be effected in order to reduce the contributions of States Members, whilst ensuring the maintenance of vital or useful services and of the Secretariat itself as an international institution which had, as far as possible, to be protected from the effects of the confusion which then reigned in Europe.

It may be thought that the reductions in staff and the economies effected were even unduly great in view of the duties for the discharge of which the Secretariat continues to be responsible apart from those it may be asked to assume in the future. On April 15th, 1942, there remained in the Secretariat 82 officials occupying posts provided for in the budget, 32 of them belonging to the first division, 14 being ex-officials re-engaged temporarily, 5 officials in Branch Offices, 2 officials of the Pensions Fund and 4 officials of the Permanent Central Opium Board, to whom there should be added a few persons whose salaries are paid from grants of the Rockefeller Foundation.

This small staff is fully occupied, many of its members having to discharge the duties of two or three posts. It can be increased to the extent to which it proves possible to obtain financial means in view of preparations for post-war reconstruction.
Budgetary Results of the Reduction in the Staff.

The successive retrenchments which have taken place since the outbreak of hostilities have been reflected in a considerable reduction in the expenditure on the salaries of the Secretariat of the League of Nations.

This reduction was still further accentuated by reason of the fact that the members of the staff agreed to make a voluntary contribution from their salaries as from January 1st, 1940. The contribution is progressive in character; the lowest salaries are exempt, whilst in the case of the highest salaries it amounts to as much as about 25% of the gross salary.

The following table shows the downward movement of the salaries item of the budget of the Secretariat:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Budget Swiss francs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>9,667,822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>6,706,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>1,847,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>1,656,893</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The termination of the contracts of more than 600 persons—i.e. more than four-fifths of the staff still in service on September 1st, 1939—involved the payment, in accordance with the rules laid down by the Assembly, of the compensation that was legally due on the basis of the contracts. These compensation payments may be classified as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compensation</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Amount (Swiss francs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One year’s salary</td>
<td>310 cases</td>
<td>3,599,779.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six months’ salary</td>
<td>36 cases</td>
<td>137,829.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other compensation payments</td>
<td>104 cases</td>
<td>266,717.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I.e., in all</strong></td>
<td><strong>450 cases</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,004,327.15</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The resolution of the Assembly which provided for the payment of this compensation in several annual instalments made it possible to spread this charge, which represents a
considerable burden on the budget, over five financial periods — 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943.

8. Radio-Nations

In pursuance of a resolution adopted by the Assembly on September 24th, 1929, a radio-telegraphic station for the service of the League of Nations was officially put into operation on February 2nd, 1932. This station was not operated directly by the League of Nations itself, but by the Radio-Suisse Company. This arrangement was instituted for a period of ten years, as from the date of the opening of the station, by an Agreement with the Swiss Federal Council and a Convention with Radio-Suisse, both these instruments being signed on May 21st, 1930 (see documents C.191.M.91.1930.VIII and C.192.M.92.1930.VIII).

The Agreement with the Federal Council gave rise to no observations. The League of Nations considered, however, that, so far as it was concerned, the Convention concluded with Radio-Suisse was onerous. Accordingly, on November 3rd, 1938 ¹, the Secretary-General approached the Federal Council with a view to obtaining a revision of the Convention. The Federal Council agreed to the suggestion of a revision, but at the same time requested, in its letter dated February 13th, 1939 ¹, that the Agreement also should be revised. In this connection, the Swiss Federal Political Department, in its letter dated January 27th, 1940 ², informed the Secretary-General of the Federal Council’s decision to denounce the Agreement of May 21st, 1930, with effect as from the expiration of the ten-year period — i.e., as from February 2nd, 1942. This denunciation automatically involved the cancellation of the Convention concluded on the same date between the Secretary-General and Radio-Suisse. At the same time, the Federal Political Department stated that the Swiss Government was prepared to consider the possibility of establishing new arrangements concerning the Radio-Nations station.

¹ For the text of this letter, see document A.29.1939.
² For the text of this letter, see document C.56.M.53.1941.
Considering that, in the absence of the Assembly and the Council, I was not empowered to discuss the bases of a new agreement with the Federal Council, and pointing out, further, that circumstances did not seem to be particularly favourable for such a discussion, in agreement with the Supervisory Commission, I proposed to the Swiss Government, on June 14th, 1941\(^1\), that the Agreement of 1930 should be allowed to continue in force for a period of one or two years. In its reply, dated July 8th, 1941\(^2\), the Federal Political Department informed me that the Federal Council was not in a position to accede to this request and, further, that it found itself compelled to consider as lapsed the offer to enter into negotiations in regard to a new agreement. In these circumstances, the operation of the Radio-Nations station had to cease finally on February 2nd, 1942.

In accordance with Article 26 of the Convention, after consulting the Chairman and Rapporteur of the Supervisory Commission, I informed Radio-Suisse that the League of Nations waived its right to resume possession of the installations, which consequently became the property of Radio-Suisse, the latter having to pay the League of Nations their marketable value. The purchase price was fixed by the Committee of Experts provided for in the Convention\(^2\).

The Radio-Nations Wireless Station consequently ceased to operate as a League of Nations station on February 1st, 1942, at midnight.

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\(^1\) For the text of this letter, see document C.56.M.53.1941.

\(^2\) For the text of the report by the Committee of Experts, see document C.11.M.11.1942.
IV. LIBRARY

The heavy reduction in staff and in purchasing funds made it necessary for the Library to concentrate on what seemed essential—i.e., the keeping up to date of collections of material and of those periodicals which later on might be very difficult to obtain. The statistics given below show that good results have been achieved; the collections have been enlarged by material which—as is already clear from various enquiries—is possessed by very few other institutions. The Library will consequently be able, on the return of normal conditions, to offer unique working facilities in certain fields, thereby realising the expectations both of the Assembly and of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., whose generous gift permitted the building of the Library and has greatly helped in its development.

1. Collections.

Books and periodicals: 5,384 additional volumes (2,250 in 1940), 5,100 of which (1,800 in 1940) were gifts or exchanges, were catalogued in 1941. 937 periodicals (750 in 1940) from all parts of the world are received regularly, 718 of which (497 in 1940) are gifts or are in exchange for League of Nations publications.

This marked increase (notwithstanding the reduction in purchases and subscriptions) is the result of a persistent development of exchange relations. Many periodicals are also sent to the Library with a view to their contents being mentioned in its Monthly List of Selected Articles.

Government documents: 2,638 volumes were added to this collection in 1941 (2,196 in 1940); the Library receives regularly
430 periodical Governmental publications (418 in 1940) and 116 official gazettes (134 in 1940).

The total number of volumes in the Library at the end of 1941 was about 312,000 (302,000 at the end of 1940).

The fact that it was, for the first time, impossible to keep the book stacks at a normal temperature during the winter has not done any harm to the collections, thanks to the combined system adopted for airing and for closely supervising dampness.

In general, publications continue to be received regularly from all countries with which Switzerland maintains postal relations. In spite of delays in communication, no serious gaps have occurred in the period under review. In cases where the transmission of certain publications to Geneva has proved to be impossible, they have been deposited with institutions in the respective countries. The Library has, for instance, at present such deposits in the United States, Canada and Latin-American countries.

The concentration of the services of the Library has made possible the reorganisation of its exchanges and certain improvements in the arrangement of its collections, so as to compensate somewhat for the inevitable restriction in incoming material. Through lack of staff, however, the public catalogues have not been continued in the elaborate form that was found to be desirable and was in use until May 1940. Although the provisional form now in use is sufficient for present needs, further work will be necessary before it will be possible to consider the full resumption of the Library's activities, including a comprehensive service to the general public. Means for ensuring the continuation of many collections (not considered to be indispensable at present, as there seems to be no danger of their going out of stock) and also for binding publications other than the essential ones which are all that can actually be bound now will be the vital need of the Library at this later stage.

2. Consultation and Publications.

Among the institutions and persons who made considerable use of the Library were the International Red Cross Committee,
various legations and consulates in Berne and Geneva; Swiss use of the Library has greatly increased, particularly in the field of overseas medical periodicals, many of which are not to be found in Switzerland except in this Library.

The *Monthly List of Selected Articles* continues to be published; the gap which occurred in the second half of 1940 has been filled, so that this *List* now presents an uninterrupted survey of material published in the various fields of social and political science since 1929. Compiled from periodicals received from all over the world, it has developed into a publication which is at present unique of its kind, and the increased demand for exchanges would seem to show a growing interest, as a result of which the Library receives much valuable material.
PUBLICATIONS

ISSUED BY THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

in 1941
Publications issued in 1941.

Note. — The documents whose titles are followed by an asterisk (*) contain both English and French texts. In all other cases, documents are published in separate editions in English and in French.

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Periodical Publications.

**Treaty Series.** Treaties and International Engagements registered with the Secretariat of the League of Nations:

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Special price for any series of twelve consecutive volumes already published ........................................... £7/10/0 37.50

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**Monthly Bulletin of Statistics,** Volume XXII, Nos. 1-12, 1941 * .... 20/- 5.00

Single number 1/9 0.45

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**Biological Standardisation:**
Vitamins B₁, D₂, D₃ and E.
Tetanus Antitoxin.
Antivenenes.
**Monthly List of Selected Articles:**

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**Financial Section and Economic Intelligence Service (II.A).**

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Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs (XI).

Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs. Minutes of the Twenty-fifth Session, held at Geneva from May 13th to 17th, 1940. (C.162.M.147.1940.XI) (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1941.XI.1). 2/6 0.60

Convention of July 13th, 1931, for limiting the Manufacture and regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs. Estimated World Requirements of Dangerous Drugs in 1942. Statement issued by the Supervisory Body under Article 5. (C.61.M.58.1941.XI) (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1941.XI.2) ...................................................... 1/6 0.40


International Assistance to Refugees (XII.B).


General Questions.

Brief Statement on the Activities of the League of Nations and its Organs in 1940 and 1941 submitted by the Acting Secretary-General. (C.41.M.38.1941) (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1941.1) .... 1/- 0.25
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