Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I want only to say that, so far as the first difficulty is concerned, it really does not exist. We have no objection at all to the division between the colonial and home armies — only, so far as we are concerned, the distinction must be where they are stationed, because we have no other distinction to make. We should have to say that our overseas army was the army stationed abroad, and the home army the army stationed at home. If that distinction is accepted, it would be perfectly satisfactory to me.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I hope the Commission will believe that, if the question were as unimportant as M. de Brouckère would have us think, I should not insist on the point, but I think that the question is very important, and I will tell you why.

First, a word on the subject of procedure. The point of departure of the long discussion which lasted all through yesterday’s meeting, and which appeared to end in agreement, was one of the synoptic columns, namely, the French proposal regarding the two tables: home forces and colonial forces. Having heard the objections put forward — a practical one by Great Britain and an objection on principle by Italy — we decided to seek a common basis of agreement; and French and British experts accordingly drew up a draft which was read to you. Then, in deference to a recommendation from the Italian delegation, we decided to add Table IIa specifying the maximum number — not to be exceeded — of reinforcements for the colonial army stationed in the home territory. Now everything is again in the melting-pot, and new proposals are being put forward. This is not a good method. When a delegation thinks that agreement has been reached, after discussion, on certain principles laid down, and then endeavours, in agreement with other delegations, to make the requisite concessions, it would be better to keep the text which has been the subject of discussion.

So much for procedure. As regards the main issue, I think the question is important for the following reasons.

The tables are, in my view, the most important part of the proposal, and, if one of them does not show the limitation of forces intended not only to be stationed in the home territory but to provide for the defence of that territory, Article 8 will be robbed of one of its essential effects. If, on the other hand, a combined table shows the forces destined for home defence and those destined for the colonies, then, if Article 8 should come into operation, it will make things very difficult for countries which have a double burden to bear — possibly simultaneously — namely, the defence of their colonies and also that of the home territory. The British proposal lays down that colonial emergencies may justify an increase in the number of troops without the authorisation of the Council of the League. You will realise that this possible and considerable increase escapes the supervision of Article 8, but I agree to this proposal because, for the moment at any rate, it is an idea rather outside the scope of the League. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that if a country, rightly or wrongly, thinks that its security is endangered by its neighbours’ armaments, or for any other reasons, and, supposing the Convention to be in force, wishes to increase the strength of its forces, it will be obliged to apply to the Council of the League. If an inclusive limitation has been imposed on this country, without distinguishing between forces intended for home defence and those intended for colonial defence, it may ask for an increase and receive a reply of this nature: “It is not necessary, in view of the total number that is now allowed you.” Suppose that this State were compelled at the same time to face difficulties in the colonies, the troops at its disposal for colonial defence could not serve for home defence. Nations which may be compelled to defend their own territory and their colonies at the same time must be able to differentiate, whilst keeping to the limitations they have accepted, between these two kinds of forces, so that, in the case of events which you cannot but foresee, they may justify the increase which they ask for by specifying which limitation is involved. You see, therefore, that the question is of real importance, because it is a matter of principle and not merely a question of addition or subtraction.

Doubtless, the situation is not the same for everybody. Great Britain has told us that in point of fact she has no army for the defence of her territory. There are many reasons why we should envy Britain and other countries which can say the same, but do not let us forget that Britain has an excellent fleet which takes the place of this army. Consequently, it is permissible for our British friends to enter in Table IIa the army at their disposal. But for nations which, because of their geographical situation, are obliged to face the possibility of having to defend their home territory and their colonies at the same time, it is of the utmost importance, in regard to the operation of Article 8 — I must insist on this point and shall maintain my attitude whatever decision may be arrived at — that the tables should include one showing the limitation of the army intended for home defence.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — Evidently there is some grave misunderstanding in this matter. I have listened several times to the admirable discourses of M. Paul-Boncour, and I cannot understand what it is that he disagrees about. I wish I could understand it; but I have not the least idea what it is we are really fighting about. My attitude is exactly the same as that of M. de Brouckère. I have a slight preference for subtraction over addition, but it is so slight that I am prepared to have addition instead of subtraction. It makes no difference at all to me whether you begin by stating: home forces (1); colonial forces (2); forces actually stationed at home (3); and then leave the addition to be done; or whether you begin by stating: total forces (1); home forces (2); and forces stationed at home (3). I do not see any difference at all personally. M. Paul-Boncour says that it is essential from the point of view of Article 8. I thought I knew Article 8 pretty well. I immediately procured
The Members of the League recognise that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations. The Council, taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances of each State, shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration and action of the several Governments”, etc.

There is nothing about colonial forces and metropolitan forces in it that I can find. It is entirely concerned with the reduction and limitation of national armaments, including, I quite agree with M. Paul-Boncour, the fleet as well as the army, because both come in. But why any solution of this question should affect the operation of Article 8 I am entirely at a loss to understand. I do very earnestly ask M. Paul-Boncour once again to say what it is that he disagrees with in the four propositions which I have put forward. I am quite ready to argue about them if necessary. If it is a question of stating the total force of a country and then going on to say which part of that force is home and which is colonial, that is only a question of form. I am quite content to do it the other way round. But what is the point? That is what I want to know. What is the substantial point on which M. Paul-Boncour disagrees with me, not in the form of those propositions but in the substance of them? What is it that we are really fighting about, because it is not very credible to us to go on discussing a question not knowing after several hours what it really is we are discussing.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — May I assure Viscount Cecil that I know perfectly well what I am discussing and I know perfectly well what I want.

What I want is that, whatever the number of tables, there should be one showing the limitation of the home forces, that is to say forces intended for the defence of the national territory. My point is that, if I require some day, in accordance with Article 8 of the Covenant, to ask authority from the Council to increase the limit fixed in the Convention, I shall base my request on this table and on this table only. Everything else is a colonial concern and expressly provided for, and it is for this reason that I have the right to invoke Article 8.

I do not wish to connect this discussion — which is much more important than is thought — with the passage in the British draft which you have laid on the table. In paragraph 2 you say: “The provisions of the preceding article” — that is to say, the article providing for limitations which are to be the subject of the Convention — “shall not prevent any of the High Contracting Parties from increasing its armaments . . .”. In case of mobilisation well and good. But you add: “if it is threatened with a rebellion or an emergency involving serious military operations.” That is a domestic question, which would mean a change in the Convention. As the case of mobilisation is already covered, there is no doubt that the military operations in question are colonial operations, and, as the result of the British draft, these operations might cause the limits to be exceeded without any authorisation from the Council.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — We are now passing to an entirely different subject. Under what circumstances we can go to the Council or not go to the Council for a modification is a matter we shall have to discuss. That is entirely a different proposition. The proposition we are now trying to settle is how can you state the effectives in the first instance, whatever we do afterwards.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — That is precisely the point I wish to discuss, Viscount Cecil. As we know that it will be necessary to apply to the Council, I am asking which table would be put forward; I maintain that countries which have to face colonial emergencies at the same time as emergencies at home would find it necessary to have a table devoted solely to effectives for home defence.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — We have now been discussing this question for two days. I am rather surprised that the debate should still be going on, for I am convinced that agreement is reached on the principal points, that is to say, those enunciated by Viscount Cecil and to which M. Paul-Boncour has raised no objection.

The French delegate wishes that forces detailed for home defence should be shown in the tables. If I understand Viscount Cecil aright, he has no objection to this.

What are we asking for? We are asking that the total forces allowed to a country should be fixed and then that the total of home and colonial forces should be indicated separately. After that one would have to indicate the maximum forces which might be stationed in the home country. There remains to fix the total reinforcements stationed at home and which can be sent to the colonies. But, by fixing the total number of forces which might be stationed at home and the total of home forces — to satisfy the French delegate, whose wish it is that home forces should be distinguished from those intended for colonial reinforcements — we necessarily determine the total of the reinforcements. These reinforcements will be determined by the figures obtained by subtracting the home forces from the maximum forces which may be stationed at home.

With regard to Article 8, I think that it applies both to colonial and home forces, since it refers to all the forces in the service of the country.
M. Paul-Boncour said that, if a country should apply to the Council, it would have to refer to a table showing the total home forces, the total colonial forces and the maximum forces which could be stationed at home (home forces and reinforcements for the colonies).

Having reached this point, I think that we can agree upon a text, because, as I said, there is no fundamental difference of opinion. There may have been one at the outset of the discussion when we were not talking about troops stationed at home which might be utilised for colonial reinforcements, but, now that it has been agreed to enter the total number in the table — which proposal I support — it seems to me that we can very easily come to an agreement about the text.

M. Sato (Japan). — I should like to ask Viscount Cecil for an explanation of one point. I quite understand the British delegate’s anxiety about the possibility of reinforcing armies stationed in the colonies. It is obvious that a country having large colonial possessions must be able to reinforce its colonial forces if the need should arise. But I would ask Viscount Cecil whether he intends to maintain these reinforcements permanently.

The British colonial empire is scattered pretty well all over the world, and, some of the British colonies being close to my own country, if Great Britain intends to maintain these reinforcements in the colonies for a prolonged period, it would naturally be a matter of no little concern to Japan. The British delegate signifies that that is not his country’s intention. I am glad to note his denial. As the last paragraph of Article 2 of the British draft provides for the withdrawal of forces sent to the colonies as reinforcements, I am sure Viscount Cecil will give me satisfaction on this point, and I would ask the British delegate to be good enough to retain this paragraph in the text.

I must admit that I do not understand the French argument with regard to Article 8 of the Covenant. But if my difficulty is satisfactorily met, as it now is, perhaps this happy solution would also help to set the French fears at rest?

The total home forces and the total forces maintained at home for reinforcing the colonies have been settled: in case of necessity, a certain number of reinforcements would be sent to the colonies from the troops detailed for this purpose and garrisoned at home. But when the emergency which necessitated the sending of such reinforcements had ceased, the troops in question would be withdrawn. In these circumstances, the total number of home forces and colonial forces will become the same as it was before.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — It will remain the same; there will never be any increase.

M. Sato (Japan). — I am satisfied.

The President. — I think the time has now come to take a decision.

After this prolonged discussion, I think I may state that we fully understand each other and that consequently you will be ready to accept, with regard to Point 7, the formula providing for a certain number of tables, namely:

Table I, divided into three columns: the first column showing the maximum home forces properly so called; the second the maximum colonial forces stationed at home; and the third the maximum total forces stationed in the home territory (i.e., the total of the other two).

We might also have a second table showing overseas forces and a third showing the maximum land forces of each high contracting party.

This text could be distributed at once, and, if it is quite clear to you, we could take a decision forthwith.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — Naturally on condition that the additional text proposed at the beginning of the meeting is added.

The President. — Certainly, the text will follow.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I think as to the text there is no particular disagreement, but perhaps we should be much surer of that if we could see it on paper. I thought we all understood it pretty clearly when we began, but the more explanations were given the more confused I became.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I will ask for separate tables.

The President. — I do not think there is any objection to M. Paul-Boncour’s proposal. The first table will not be divided into columns and there will be five tables in all.

The Commission rose at 12.55 p.m.
ELEVENTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Wednesday, March 30th, 1927, at 4 p.m.

President: M. Loudon (Netherlands).


The President. — I hope that it will be possible for all the members to agree to the following text which is the outcome of our discussions this morning.

Substitute the text of the right-hand column of Point 7 by the following:

"... fixed in the following tables:

"Table I. Maximum home forces.
"Table II. Maximum overseas forces stationed in the home country.
"Table III. Maximum of total forces stationed in the home country.
"Table IV. Overseas forces.
"Table V. Maximum of the total land forces of the High Contracting Party.

"Each of the High Contracting Parties may, within the limits fixed by the above tables and should the conditions affecting its security so require, modify the distribution of the said forces between its home territories and its overseas territories.

"Any modification in this distribution shall be shown in the annual statements of particulars the preparation of which is provided for in Article 5 below."

You will note that the word "maximum" occurs in connection with Tables I, II, III and V, but that it does not occur in connection with Table IV. Needless to say, this is because we agreed that overseas forces might, if conditions of security required, be reinforced, but that such reinforcement would always take place to the detriment of the total number of forces stationed in the home country. I propose that, in the line which begins "Each of the High Contracting Parties may, within the limits. . .", we insert the word "maximum" before the word "limits".

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I should like to make a remark on Table V, "Maximum of the total land forces of the High Contracting Party". It is obvious that since, at Viscount Cecil's request we have agreed to defer the consideration of naval effectives until we deal with naval forces, we cannot include them here at the present moment. At the same time, I have already reserved the right to claim that naval effectives should be limited, in which case the word "land" would possibly be eliminated at the second reading, the land forces being part of the total forces of a country.

The President. — I think there would be no objection — in fact, there is considerable advantage in eliminating the word "land".

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I fully accept M. Paul-Boncour's remark that this point must be left open, but I do not want to close it in the other direction either. For instance, you could not possibly say that there are naval overseas forces and naval home forces; they must be treated as one.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — As we are dealing with the total forces, there is no longer any discrimination to be made.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I accepted entirely what M. Paul-Boncour had already said, but do not see that it is necessary to change the word at the present moment. I reserve the right to revert to this matter again when the other clauses of the Convention have been considered.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I think we are in agreement regarding the idea. From the outset it was decided that the question whether the limitation should apply to the whole of the effectives or only to land effectives would be reserved. We have endeavoured to carry that out by omitting the word "land" in the first four tables. If it is thought that the idea would be better met by leaving out the word "land" in the fifth table, I have no objection; it seems to me that both methods are calculated to achieve the same purpose. Personally, I see no reason for altering the proposed text.

General de Marinis (Italy). — It is quite agreed that the question remains open, but, as we have not mentioned the word "land" in connection with the first four tables, I think, with M. de Brouckère, that it would be reasonable that we should also omit it in the case of the fifth table.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I suggest that it would be better to leave a small space in front of the word "forces" in the case of each of the tables. This would show quite clearly that the matter had been left unsettled. This would apply to Table V too.
The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I understand that we are discussing Point 7, in which case we are dealing with land armaments. If this is so, I think we had better put it in. If not, I think, we ought to know it and make the proper reservations in connection with the separate questions which may arise later.

Point 7 (right-hand column) was adopted as follows:

"Table I. Maximum home forces.
"Table II. Maximum overseas forces stationed in the home country.
"Table III. Maximum of total forces stationed in the home country.
"Table IV. Overseas forces.
"Table V. Maximum of the total forces of the High Contracting Party.

"Each of the High Contracting Parties may, within the maximum limits fixed by the above tables and should the conditions affecting its security so require, modify the distribution of the said forces between its home territories and its overseas territories.

"Any modification in this distribution shall be shown in the annual statements of particulars the preparation of which is provided for in the article below."


8. French draft.

By "formations organised on a military basis" shall be understood police forces of all kinds, gendarmerie, Customs officials, forest guards, and, generally speaking, any organisation which, whatever its legal purpose, is capable, by reason of its cadres, effectives, training, armament and equipment, of being employed without measures of mobilisation.

The President. — We will now take up the consideration of Point 8. The Netherlands delegation has submitted the following amendment:

Second paragraph of Article 2 of French draft Convention or Point 8 of the Synoptic Analysis.

Replace by the following text:

"By 'units organised on a military basis' shall be understood police forces of all kinds, gendarmerie, Customs officials, forest guards and, generally speaking, any organisation which, whatever their legal purpose, are capable, by reason of their cadres, effectives, training, armament and equipment, of being employed as part of the war army without measures of mobilisation."

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I only wish to say a word to explain why we have put forward this amendment and in this connection I may refer to what Count Bernstorff has already said on this point. The draft for Point 8 submitted by the Netherlands delegation is the definition given in the report of Sub-Commission A (page 14 of the Document C.P.D. 28), and unanimously approved by that body. It reads as follows:

"Peace-time armaments comprise:

1. Peace-time effectives:
   "(a) Military (army, navy, air force) with the colours;
   "(b) Organised on a military basis (Police forces of all kinds, gendarmerie, Customs officers, and forest guards and any organisation which, by their staff of officers, establishment... etc."

There are a few words we have added, however, at the end, and those are the words "capable of being employed as part of the war army". I thake it that this Commission does not contemplate including in that definition such organisations as might be mobilised but would not actually be employed in the war army, being rather employed, for example, for economic purposes.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — There is nothing more for me to say after the remarks which have been made by the honourable delegate for the Netherlands. When I raised this point the other day, I presumed it was only due to an error that the change had been made, in view of the fact that it was agreed in this Commission that our work was based on that of Sub-Commission A, and therefore I took it that any draft which was unanimously adopted in Sub-Commission A could not give rise to further discussion in this Commission. I am, therefore, entirely in agreement with the honourable delegate for the Netherlands.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I have examined very carefully the text of the French draft, but I am not quite sure that I am entirely clear in my own mind as to its intent. I think the best way of expediting our discussion would be to clarify it as far as possible.
The application of the term “Units organised on a military basis”, which appears in Article 1 of the French draft and which is defined in the second paragraph of Article 2, and forms Point 8 of the Synoptic Analysis which is now under consideration, raises a question in the minds of the American delegation.

It will be remembered that, in the proceedings of Sub-Commission A during the consideration of Question I, it was contended by a considerable group of delegations that “peace-time armaments” included:

“Peace-time effectives ... (b) organised on a military basis (Police forces of all kinds, gendarmerie, Customs officers and forest guards, and any organisations which, by their staff of officers, establishment, training, armament and equipment, are such as to make them available without measures of mobilisation)”.

To the above-mentioned provision the delegation of the United States, in common with six other delegations, proposed the change:

“Police, gendarmerie, etc., which cannot be used as part of the war army without additional armaments or equipment are not included in peace-time armaments”.

As indicated by this addition, the original statement was not acceptable to the United States or to those delegations which associated themselves with the United States in the addition.

It will be noted that the term “units organised on a military basis”, which is now under discussion, differs in certain material aspects from the original proposition presented to and considered by Sub-Commission A. It is far broader in scope, more vague in its wording, and appears less susceptible of accurate interpretation than the original proposition.

I venture to remind the Commission of the statements made on several occasions before Sub-Commission A that the American Federal Government exercises no supervision or authority over police forces or other organisations of that character, administered by the States or their political and administrative subdivisions. Furthermore, Customs officers, forest guards, etc., who are in the employ of the Federal Government are unarmed and are not trained and they could serve no useful military purpose.

However, it may be possible that the French draft does not contemplate the utilisation of organisations such as the State police and State and municipal officers such as I have just referred to, which obviously cannot be utilised with or without measures of mobilisation.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — It seems to me that both in the Netherlands re-draft and in the original draft there is a little ambiguity. As I understand it, what we all desire is to include all these kinds of organisations if they can be used in war-time without mobilisation. I agree. I do not know whether it is so in French, but in English there is not the certain meaning of what is being stated. It may mean Police forces of all kinds, gendarmerie, Customs officials, and forest guards can in any case be treated as part of the peace army, and in addition to those any organisation which, whatever its legal purpose, is capable, by reason of its cadre, effective and so on, of being so treated.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — It is not exact in the translation — “whatever their legal purpose”. That makes all the difference.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am not quite sure that a change from “its” into “their” would really help you. If we are all agreed as to the meaning, I suggest it might read like this:

“By ‘units organised on a military basis’ shall be understood organisations of all kinds, whatever their legal purpose, such as Police forces of all sorts, gendarmes, Customs officials or forest guards, which are capable, by reason of their cadres, ...” etc.

I think that would make it absolutely clear in English. This is a mere question of drafting and I do not want to detain the Commission on it.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I think it would be wise to follow the advice of Count Bernstorff and, in view of the fact that we have a unanimous text of Sub-Commission A, to adopt the terms of that text. It differs from the French draft only in the matter of a plural. I quite agree that in that respect the French draft contains a mistake. The text is:

“... (Police forces of all kinds, gendarmerie, Customs officers and forest guards and any organisation which, by their staff of officers, establishment, training, armament and equipment, are such as to make it available without measures of mobilisation).”

I quite agree that that the language is awkward, and in order to improve it we might perhaps say “and all organisations” in the plural. If we change that singular into the plural, surely that text unanimously adopted Sub-Commission “A”, seems to me quite adequate.

The objection I would raise to Viscount Cecil’s proposal is that if we use in the first place the word “organisations ...” such as “that enumeration may be interpreted as being limitative. The text of Sub-Commission A is more clear and concrete, for example “... police forces, gendarmerie”, etc. In view of the fact that the text cannot cover everything, we have added “and any organisation which, by their cadres, effective, training, armaments and equipment, are capable of being employed without measures of mobilisation”.

I suggest, therefore, that it would be preferable to keep to the text of Sub-Commission A.
I would further reply in similar terms to the honourable delegate for the Netherlands. There is a unanimous opinion of Sub-Commission A. This opinion did not include in its text the words “as part of the war army”; it omitted them deliberately. I would reply to the Netherlands proposal two criticisms in the first place, the words “war army” are not at all clear and have no meaning; and, secondly, that this is not enough. The idea is to cover all these organisations which can be used without mobilisation. What will be the nature of the use of these organisations? Evidently, they will not be used in an economic sense. We are dealing at the moment with military effectives. It has been agreed that we eliminate all consideration of use in an economic sense. At the same time, the ways in which the men of these organisations can be used may be very various. There are many who do not serve in the fighting army—an expression more accurate than combatant army—but who can be used for replacement of units, and who can therefore be sent to the combatant army. Therefore I think the idea is clear that all such organisations which, by reason of their cadres, etc., are available for the State without measures of mobilisation are to be covered by this definition.

M. YOVANOVIČH (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes).—I do not want to discuss this matter at length, but, after the statement made by M. Paul-Boncour, I may say that I entirely agree with him, and am quite prepared to adopt the text unanimously accepted by Sub-Commission A.

Count BERNSTORFF (Germany).—I do not want to prolong this discussion, which turns on a question of drafting, and, in any case, I am convinced, of course, that the honourable delegate for France will produce a much better draft in French than I could. I prefer the text unanimously adopted by Sub-Commission A, but I am ready to accept any other text if it is clear that the words “which, whatever their legal purpose”, and so on, in that text clearly refer to the police forces of all kinds, gendarmerie, Customs officers and forest guards.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire).—I am very sorry to prolong this debate but, with the greatest respect for Sub-Commission A—and I have the highest admiration for their military attainments—as grammarians I do not think they are particularly well qualified, and this is entirely a question of drafting. I am perfectly certain that in the English—I say nothing about the French draft—as it is drafted, there is an ambiguity. It is not quite certain what it means, and all I desire is that that should be put right, but I suggest that this is not worth while debating any further. We shall no doubt have to have a drafting committee to put the Convention in final form, and when we come to the drafting committee I hope that it will take note of a statement which I venture to make on behalf of the British delegation, and I think I may add of the American delegation, in this matter, because I am sure that any English-speaking nation will agree with me that there is undoubtedly an ambiguity in the form that is used. As long as that is made clear and made straight, I do not care a bit how it is done.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France).—There is no question of ambiguity but it is a question of substance. Is it quite clear that this definition is to cover all organisations whatsoever?

Viscount Cecil (British Empire).—Certainly; there is no question of that.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America).—I just want to point out that, in drawing up this, there should be taken into account the declaration made by the six delegations in bringing out the point about those “who cannot be used as part of the war army without additional armament or equipment” not being included in peace-time armaments. Further, in reply to what M. Paul-Boncour said, that anything not at the disposal of the State would obviously not be included, unless it is made clear that these people are to be distinctly within the same character of military value, and so on, as a fighting army, I think we run certain risks. For instance, in my country we have one organisation which conforms to all the literal conditions laid down here, but which I do not think is essentially part of what Viscount Cecil might call our striking strength. It is organised on a military basis, wears uniform, holds encampments, and draws rations from the Government, but the minimum age of these gentlemen is something over 80 years of age. They are veterans of our Civil War. We want to carry out the provisions of this literally, and without running the risk of bringing in people we do not add to our fighting strength.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands).—I should like to thank the Commission for the reception it has given to our amendment in so far as it proposed the change from the singular to the plural. With regard to the addition of the words “as part of the war army”, I think we can withdraw that part of our amendment. It is in fact quite clear that it concerns armed forces which by their armament are capable of being used. It would be an excess of cautions to put in the words, “in the war army”. We can take the text of Sub-Commission A.

The President.—I think we are all agreed with regard to the substance of this matter, and you will perhaps be willing to leave the Bureau to prepare the final draft.

Point 8 was adopted, subject to drafting.

**French draft.**

By “mobilisation” within the meaning of the present Convention shall be understood all the measures tending to provide the whole or part of the various corps, services and units with the personnel and material required to pass from a peace-time footing to a war-time footing.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — As regards the English text, at any rate — I do not know about the French text — it seems to me that this leaves it rather vague by putting in the words “tending to provide”. The generally accepted definition we have had of mobilisation in the past has been “measures to provide military, naval and air forces of a nation with the personnel and the material required to pass from a peace-time footing to a war-time footing”. Under this definition I think, if it were applied with any rigour, it might be considered that the employment of an additional gun-borer in an arsenal would be a measure tending to mobilisation, because his employment would be a measure tending to provide material. At the same time, a tender to provide shoes or mess-tins or kits for troops for an inactive organisation would be in the nature of mobilisation because it would be tending to provide material and it would seriously interfere with any step towards providing a reserve. I think we should take that carefully into consideration because as it stands now I think it is open to doubt.

The President. — We might then substitute “tending to” for the words “for the purpose of”.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — Point 9 says:

“By ‘mobilisation’ within the meaning of the present Convention shall be understood all the measures tending to provide the whole or part of the various corps, services and units with the personnel and material required to pass from a peace-time footing to a war-time footing.”

In this definition no account is taken of the large number of new units and headquarters staffs which are organised at the time of mobilisation and constitute an important factor in that mobilisation. Such new units are composed not merely by drawing on the trained reserves, a factor which some delegates here think ought to be taken into account, but they are also formed by means of officers and cadres taken by the peace-time army. It is therefore suggested that the paragraph in question might be followed by another paragraph bringing this point out, which might be as follows: “It also includes the organisations of reserve units and services”.

The President. — Would Count Bernstorff kindly give us a few more explanations and illustrate what he means by reserve units and services.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — All I wish to say is that in a modern mobilisation you do not only mobilise reserves for the sake of embodying them in the active units already existing in peace-time but you also build up fresh units in formations by means of these reserves.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — With all respect to Count Bernstorff, I do not really think it is necessary to deal with that at all. We are merely saying what is the meaning of mobilisation for the purpose of settling what existing forces are real forces in peace-time and what are not. It is perfectly true that there are other forces which are created by mobilisation, but those are not included, because they do not exist at all in peace-time as forces. As I understand Count Bernstorff’s point, it is this. In addition to changing, let us say, a territorial battalion or calling up reserves to the army, you may, on mobilisation, create entirely new corps by people who are not reserves at all. That is quite true, but they will not be affected by this. We are deciding what forces which actually exist in the country are to be limited. Evidently we do not propose to limit forces which do not exist.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I did not wish to make a formal proposal, but as this question of the meaning of the term “mobilisation” was discussed on several occasions in Sub-Commission A, I wish to make it quite clear what is understood by “mobilisation”. If it is not desired to include in that term the organisation of completely new units, I shall not press my proposal.

Point 9 was adopted.


**French draft.**

Each of the High Contracting Parties shall prepare, on the model of Tables I, II, III, IV, V, VI and VII, an annual statement of the average daily effectives on service with its armed forces, and a statement of the actual effectives on service in its units organised on a military basis, in respect of its armed military, naval or air forces and its units organised on a military basis.

The President. — Point 9 a is the first paragraph of Article 5 of the French draft.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — For the time being, we are leaving a blank with regard to the words “naval or air”.

Point 9 a was agreed to.

French draft.

The "average daily effectives" mentioned in Article 5 and Tables I and II annexed to the present Convention shall be reckoned by dividing the total number of days' duty by the number of days in the budgetary year.

The "actual effectives" mentioned in Article 5 and Tables III and IV annexed to the present Convention shall be the actual number of men shown, up to the time of their discharge from the active army or during their periods of training, in the statement of effectives which determines grants of every kind for these effectives, including men who, for any reason whatever, are absent from the units to which they are allocated.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — It would be better to leave the numbers of the tables blank.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I wonder whether it would not be better to consider this when we come to the article which deals with budgetary matters, as this bears more directly on budgetary matters. There will be a general discussion on that matter when we come to it.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I think I can agree with the proposal of Mr. Gibson, which I understand is to postpone discussion of the definitions in Point 10, which deal with matters which are more of an administrative and budgetary character, until we come to deal with budgetary questions. I understand that Point 9a, which we have just adopted, will remain.

The President. — Certainly.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I should like to make one remark. This article has a close connection with the article we are about to discuss. It is a very complicated and technical question, and I am not quite sure that I understand it, but as far as I do understand it, this article is really the basis of the next article, and I do not think that we can dissociate the two. I do not wish to oppose Mr. Gibson's suggestion, but perhaps, in referring to the budgetary part, we might have liberty to revert to it again when we come to the next article.

The President. — I presume we shall nevertheless adopt Mr. Gibson's proposal.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — As far as I am concerned, I have no objection.

Mr. Gibson's proposal was agreed to.


British draft.

Limitation shall extend to all army effectives, whatever their peace-time situation, which could within . . . of the outbreak of hostilities be despatched to the fighting line.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — We have already dealt with this, and I do not ask that the debate be reopened at the moment. Later on, when my colleagues have had time to reflect, it may be found that their views have been modified.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — Viscount Cecil has allowed us a certain time to think this matter over, but I feel sure it was not so short a period as has elapsed since yesterday, because we should not have had time to be converted in the meantime.

27. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Effectives. Point 12.

British draft.

The number of serving regular officers (Officiers de carrière actifs) shall not exceed one in fifteen of the number of men serving with the colours.

The number of regular soldiers serving in the rank of warrant officers and sergeants (sous-officiers) shall not exceed one in nine of the number of men serving with the colours.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I find it somewhat difficult to lay down a definite ratio in this connection, because it depends upon the kind of military organisation. I do not say it is impossible, but, personally, I should not care to shoulder the responsibility of laying down a definitive figure, as has been done here. I should have to see whether such a provision would fit in with a given kind of military organisation. Let me illustrate what I mean. For instance, the reduction in the period of service and the incorporation of the annual contingent in three separate batches. Such measures as those would inevitably involve the necessity
for a larger staff of instructors than would be necessary in the case of a professional army. Therefore, I think such a provision might run counter to what Viscount Cecil himself desires — for instance, the reduction of the period of service. In the tables we lay down the figures for officers. In these conditions, I think this is a point to be left to the ultimate Conference because they are a portion of the effectives.

Viscount Cecil is perfectly right — and our tables should give him satisfaction — when he says that in a Convention it is necessary to have laid down the maximum number for the effectives, and that you should also lay down the maximum number for the commissioned officers, warrant officers and non-commissioned officers in relation to that maximum, but I think it is dangerous to fix the proportion.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — It seems to me that there is a certain connection between this proposal and the British proposal for the limitation of trained reserves. If, for instance, you consider a conscript army, it is conceivable that the number of regular officers, warrant officers and non-commissioned officers required to train the troops might exceed the proportion laid down in Point 12 if the trained reserves were not taken into account in the calculation. I therefore suggest that it might be as well to hold over this matter and not discuss it until we have finally settled the question of trained reserves.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I would beg the Netherlands delegate not to press his proposal for postponement. We have postponed so many subjects that this mass of questions which is being held over is making the discussions extremely difficult. I am all the more inclined to make this request to reconsider Point 12 as I note that the three previous speakers are agreed in principle. They are agreed that the number of officers should be limited as well as the total forces, and if the consequence of that limitation is a limitation of trained reserves, so much the better for those who are in favour of the limitation of trained reserves. We have only to agree as to the method of limitation of the officers. But as to the methods, I see two possibilities — the system of Viscount Cecil and that of M. Paul-Boncour. If we adopted the former, we would have to have a blank space left as regards the actual figure and say “one officer to every x men” which would be one more blank to be filled in, but, in filling in that blank space, it would be necessary to have a figure which would be suitable for everybody; in other words, the highest proportion claimed. M. Paul-Boncour’s proposal is, I think, preferable, because it allows of closer limitation. It would allow a different proportion to be laid down in the case of each army — a proportion which would, of course, be discussed — and the countries coming to the Conference with their definite proposals and anxious to show their good will and anxiety to disarm would, we can be sure, only claim the minimum number of officers which they considered necessary for their needs of security. Therefore, I think that the figures given in that respect would afford a very valuable indication as to the character of the armies of those various countries. I suggest that what we ought to do at this point is simply to omit the passage, saying that, apart from the limitation of the effectives themselves, it is desirable to apply the limitation to the number of officers.

General De Marinis (Italy). — I share the views of the French delegation. I think it is difficult to lay down a flat rate for each country, as the ratio will necessarily change with the character of the organisation. I entirely agree with Viscount Cecil, however, that we should take into account the regular officers, and not only the regular officers but also the regular soldiers. I suggest, however, we should show not only warrant officers and non-commissioned officers but also the ordinary regular soldiers, because these have a military value which cannot be neglected.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am very grateful to my colleagues for the sympathetic way in which they have received this suggestion. I realise the great difficulty of fixing the number and I realise the great disadvantage of having to use, in M. de Brouckère’s words, another blank. I should be satisfied with an article laying down the principle that there should be a proportion between the officers and men. I have been trying, in the few minutes at my disposal, to draft such a proposition, but I do not think it would be respectful to the Commission to submit a draft which had been arrived at very hurriedly. I hope that we may reserve that point to this extent — that I may be allowed to bring up at a later stage a definite draft establishing the principle. I do attach importance to that, with all respect to my colleague from the Netherlands, because we have not at present succeeded in limiting trained reserves, which makes just the difference. If you conceive the aggressive power that we must necessarily have in our minds, if that power is allowed to have large units really consisting of officers and non-commissioned officers, it is quite plain it could put into the field immediately a very much larger proportion of its trained reserves than it could if it had not got those resources; because it is clear that the difficulty really is to improvise officers and non-commissioned officers. If you have good officers and good non-commissioned officers, you can go into battle with a much less highly trained force than you otherwise could. Therefore it is really important to have some limit to the number of officers and non-commissioned officers.

I recognise that something in that line is intended by the table attached to the French scheme, but, as a matter of fact, they do not provide for any limited proportion as between officers and men, and I should prefer, I confess, to lay down in the body of the Convention the general principle which would be worked out in the tables. If the tables did not conform to that general principle, they would no doubt not be put forward. They would not be accepted in any case.
With regard to the other suggestion made by General de Marinis, that we might add professional soldiers as another item, I think that is a proposal which certainly ought to be considered. It is a little new, and there is no definite proposal before this Commission at this moment, but, if he would bring forward a definite proposal as to what exactly he proposes about that, I think it ought certainly to be considered. In the meantime, I should like the Commission to arrive at this conclusion; that there ought to be a normal proportion between officers, non-commissioned officers and men; I think that ought to be capable of being drafted.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — As I said before, I entirely agree with Viscount Cecil when he says that it is necessary to apply limitation to regular officers, non-commissioned officers and even men. I may point out that it has already been provided for in the French tables. Therefore I have no objection to stating that principle here, and saying, if you like, that the number of regular officers, non-commissioned officers and men shown in the table, shall be considered as the maximum not to be exceeded during the currency of the agreement.

I disagree, however, with regard to the idea of a proportion. I do not think you can lay down a proportion between the officers and non-commissioned officers on the one hand and the men on the other, as that proportion is necessarily determined by the nature of the military organisation. Obviously, in a professional army the proportion of officers and non-commissioned officers to men can be less, because the men, being so highly trained, can carry out duties for which non-commissioned officers are required in a conscript army. In a conscript army the limitation of the period of service is a factor which influences the proportion of officers and non-commissioned officers, because, in proportion as that period is short, so will the periods of training become more frequent, and when you have a system of embodying the annual contingent in several batches, you may reach the stage where training courses are begun three times a year. Obviously, in such circumstances the work of the officers and non-commissioned officers would be greatly increased, and their number would consequently have to be increased. If you take the period of short service in its extreme form — that is, under the militia system — it is obvious that according to this system the staff of officers and non-commissioned officers would have to be nil, because there are no men, strictly speaking, with the colours, but in actual fact, since all those men are at home, an even larger proportion of regular officers and non-commissioned officers is required.

In a word, I think this proposal would run counter to the efforts to reduce the period of service, and would make it more difficult to introduce the militia system, which is, after all, what we all desire.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia). — I quite agree with the remarks made by M. Paul-Boncour and M. de Brouckère, and especially with the remarks which have just been made by M. Paul-Boncour. Take the extreme case, the case of the militia. Under this system which is proposed, Switzerland would, in order to secure its proper proportional allotment of officers and non-commissioned officers, have to obtain soldiers, because at the present moment it has no soldiers in this sense, and in order to obtain its officers it would have to obtain those soldiers.

I also agree with General de Marinis when he points out that the proportion would vary according to local circumstances. Thus, in my country, for instance, unfortunately we have inherited certain districts in which the people can neither read nor write, and that obviously necessitates a proportionally greater staff of instructors than would otherwise be necessary.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — We are all agreed, I think, in principle that it is desirable to limit the number of officers, warrant officers and sergeants, and the Netherlands delegation is in agreement with those speakers who have pointed out the great technical difficulties which are entailed by any attempt to lay down a fixed proportion, M. Paul-Boncour among them. We also agree with the speakers who have proposed that the limit should be set down in the tables annexed to the Convention, but I think possibly this particular point is really covered by the last sentence in the first article of the French draft, where we read that the high contracting parties undertake that their distribution shall conform to that laid down in the said tables. Therefore I have no objection to stating that principle here, and saying, if you like, that we desire the Convention to be adhered to by as many States as possible, by countries which are in different circumstances, either geographically or as regards material. It would be difficult, therefore, to lay down a definite proportion as between officers and men. As I said just now, circumstances being different for each State, the proportions are probably different. The proportion depends on many things, the life of the people, their customs, material conditions, physique, etc. These conditions vary even in the interior of the State itself, as M. Paul-Boncour pointed out. In Japan, the period of service, at present, is twenty-two months. If the Japanese Government reduced this period to eighteen months, it would be necessary to increase the number of officer instructors. I should, however, accept the proposal of the French delegation that the total number of the effectives should be limited and also the number of officers, warrant officers and non-commissioned officers, but that no proportion should be fixed between these various items.
General DE MARINS (Italy). — As I have pointed out, I think it quite right and necessary that we should follow Viscount Cecil’s proposal and lay down, in the text of the Convention, the principle that some limit should be set with regard to the proportion of officers, warrant officers and sergeants on the one hand and effectives on the other. But if we agree that that proportion must be laid down, it must also be understood that that proportion will not necessarily be the same for all. Each country will make proposals with regard to that proportion. In other words, a country must not merely say: “My total effectives are 100”; it must also say: “Among these I have 10, 15 or 20 regulars”. In reply to Viscount Cecil, I would like to say that it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that in conscript armies there are grades of soldiers who are not non-commissioned officers and yet can be considered as professional soldiers. There are also soldiers who enlist for a longer period than the ordinary period of service in order to obtain the bounty which is given for long service or in the hope of being one day promoted to corporal. It is necessary to take these men into account and have the text amended as follows in order to do so: “officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, corporals or professional soldiers.” These corporals and professional soldiers of peace-time become the non-commissioned officers of fresh units which are formed on mobilisation. They are therefore of considerable importance and must be taken into account. In this way, one can have accurate information on the constitution of an army.

M. COMNÈNE (Roumania). — I would like to draw attention to a new aspect of this question which is now emerging. M. Veverka raised very serious objections, a few moments ago, pointing out that certain countries are handicapped owing to the inadequate education of certain recruits. A similar difficulty occurs in connection with the difficulties of language in certain countries. In some countries of recent origin in particular there are a considerable number of troops who belong to linguistic minorities who have not yet learnt to speak the language, and therefore a regular staff of officers and non-commissioned officers, to which M. Paul-Boncour and General de Marinis alluded, is necessary to overcome that difficulty. For these reasons, I think it would be difficult to standardise the proportion of officers, non-commissioned officers and men for all countries, and I think that several delegates would be unable to accept such a proposal.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I do not desire to make a speech. I only wish to put forward a proposal. It seems clear from the remarks of the various speakers that there is a considerable amount of common ground, and therefore I would like to read out this proposal, which we might think over and possibly discuss to-morrow morning: “In order to ensure that the number of officers, warrant officers and sergeants shall not exceed the legitimate requirements of each army, the tables referred to in Point 7 above shall show the maximum in respect of the officers, warrant officers and sergeants which the States concerned will undertake not to exceed.”

According to that proposal, each State would itself lay down its own requirements and would itself consider how that limitation was to be applied. The text I have submitted does not take account of the very interesting proposal put forward by General de Marinis, which at first sight I confess is a very attractive one. But, owing to the technical points which it raises, I should like to have an opportunity of thinking it over between now and to-morrow morning. Moreover, I think it would be best considered in connection with Point 13, which provides that the countries shall include in the tables the period of service in respect of each class of recruit. Therefore, when we deal with that, we shall be able to see from those tables which are the soldiers of ten years, five years and so on.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — I am very much obliged to M. de Broückère for his suggestion. At first sight, subject to consideration, I think it does meet the kind of point I had in view and is perhaps as far as we can hope to go in a Convention of this kind. I should therefore very much like to have an opportunity of considering it during now and to-morrow morning, and I hope then to be able to express a definite opinion on it.

General DE MARINS (Italy). — I propose that we have a long meeting every morning from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m., or every afternoon, but I consider that one meeting a day would give us an opportunity of reading the minutes and documents distributed to us.

After a discussion, in which Viscount CECIL (British Empire), Mr. GIBSON (United States) and General DE MARINS (Italy) took part, it was decided that the Commission would not meet on Thursday and Saturday afternoon.

The Commission rose at 6.15 p.m.
TWELFTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Thursday, March 31st, 1927, at 10.15 a.m.

President: M. Loudon (Netherlands).


The President. — Does everyone accept the text proposed by M. de Brouckère? (See preceding meeting, No. 27.)

Colonel Requin (France). — I propose drafting the end of the sentence as follows: “. . .which each State undertakes not to exceed . . .”

M. de Brouckère’s amendment, as modified by Colonel Requin’s suggestion, was adopted.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I should like to complete the stipulation of Point 12 by an additional clause limiting the number of regular soldiers. We think it necessary to limit the number of officers, warrant officers and sergeants, knowing as we do that these ranks enable a State to organise new formations. On the same principle, we should consider the question of soldiers who enlist for a period longer than that laid down in their respective countries. I appeal to all experts present here. For organising units, cadres of officers, warrant officers and sergeants are not enough; specialists are required for handling certain implements of war, for instance, ranging and sighting instruments, and to carry out certain duties which require a more complete training. I would recall the number of statements made in Sub-Commission A, with reference to the superiority of volunteer armies over conscript armies, the former consisting of more able and experienced soldiers than the latter.

I hasten to reply to an objection which may be raised. Suppose a State has limited the period of service to six months. Let us suppose that its army includes a fairly large number of soldiers who, for instance, have enlisted for two years. If the provision which I suggest is adopted, soldiers enlisting for two years will be treated as regulars. On the other hand, I take a country in which military service is limited to two years. In the tables given for that country, soldiers serving for two years will obviously not be treated as regulars. One might imagine that that is a contradiction, but, on thinking it over, one sees that such is not the case.

At first sight the country in which military service lasts six months has agreed to a reduction in the length of service, while this is not the case as regards the country which has a period of service of two years. But, if the country which has reduced its period of service to six months has a large number of soldiers serving for two years, it is essential that the number of soldiers serving for two years in the first State should be mentioned in order that the real position should be clear.

I therefore think we should agree to insert the provision which I suggest. If we did not accept it, we should be neglecting an important aspect of the principle which we wish to apply. We must not forget that the draft Convention which we are preparing is to be sent to all Governments, some of which are not represented here. If we do not take all necessary precautions, to see that the information we ask for does not satisfy everybody, the general staffs consulted will raise such objections that the Governments will be very perplexed as to what attitude they should take at the definitive Conference, and even as to whether they should participate in this Conference.

I propose adding a second paragraph to the formula which the Commission has just adopted, reading as follows:

“Similarly, and for the reason already given, the above-mentioned tables shall indicate the maximum number, which each State undertakes not to exceed, of the other troops whose period of service is longer than that laid down by the law of the country for the majority of the contingent”.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I think General de Marinis’s idea will be favourably received by us; nevertheless, I am not altogether sure that the text proposed is suitable. Let us, for instance, try to apply it in a concrete case, and let us take the Netherlands army, since that country’s delegation has been good enough to explain the position of its army. In Holland, a third of the contingent is embodied. The length of service for the majority of the contingent is therefore reduced to nil. Thus we should have to count as regular soldiers all those the length of whose service is greater than nil; and this would lead to a rather unfortunate result. I think the contradiction follows simply from the form, and not the substance, of General de Marinis’s idea. A slight alteration of the text proposed would put this right. Would it not be more equitable to give a more consistent definition of a regular soldier; not to describe him as one whose length of service exceeds the average period served by the militia but to mention a definite number of months or years? Unless we do this, we shall meet with further difficulties. In many countries — in Belgium, for instance — the length of service is not the same for all the militia. The cavalry serve two or three months longer than the rest; they would therefore be regarded as regular soldiers. Further, it has
been proposed that persons who have received a higher education should serve longer. Should one say that soldiers in the militia who will to-morrow be lawyers, doctors, etc., are regulars? No. These difficulties can be avoided by altering the text.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia).—Would General de Marinis allow me to ask him the following question? M. de Brouckère’s amendment makes for a shorter period of service, and in my country, where the length of this period is at present eighteen months, we are preparing to reduce it to twelve months. Will the men who are at present serving eighteen months be regarded as regulars as soon as the period of military service is reduced to twelve months?

Viscount Cecil (British Empire).—I am thoroughly sympathetic with the idea underlying General de Marinis’s proposal, but I am anxious to know how it would affect a voluntary army. There may be a complete answer to it. I have just enquired and I am told that in England a man can engage for seven years and then prolong his service to twelve years and, if he likes, to twenty-one years. Now you would therefore have to fix, I imagine, twenty-one years as the normal period of service, and therefore we should have no professional soldiers at all unless we had some beyond twenty-one years. That would be an absurdity. I am not quite sure how this can apply except in countries which have a compulsory service, where, of course, a different situation arises. But I do not want to throw difficulties in General de Marinis’s way. I am only anxious to know how he contemplates applying it to countries with a voluntary service.

General de Marinis (Italy).—I should first like to thank M. de Brouckère for having supported my proposal and then to deal with Viscount Cecil’s criticism that my draft only applies to conscript armies and has no bearing on the volunteer system.

I have some difficulty in following M. Veverka. He tells us that in his country the period of service is now eighteen months, and that it will be reduced to twelve months. He therefore asks whether men who have served for eighteen months should be regarded as regulars. I would reply that, if a period of twelve months is to be taken as the standard, men who have served for a longer time should be regarded as regulars.

I understand that, strictly speaking, a man who serves eighteen months is not really a regular soldier, but I have already stated why I think it desirable to show separately all soldiers serving for a longer period than the average.

I will now consider the general question of length of service.

The difficulties which arise in connection with the length of service strengthen my conviction that it is almost impossible to adopt general rules in this connection. These rules cannot apply to all countries. Take, for instance, the case of Italy. The length of service is fixed by law as eighteen months, but, in fact, only a portion of our contingent remains eighteen months with the colours; a large proportion of our contingent only serves six months and yet another proportion only three months. I think it would be better to leave it open to the Governments to decide what will be the length of the period and to go no further than limiting budgetary effectiveness. This would settle all the difficulties contemplated.

M. Hennings (Sweden).—I should like to say a few words in connection with the remarks made by General de Marinis.

I ask you to glance at Table V, annexed to the French draft. You will notice that the army effectives are divided into two categories: (1) regular troops apart from cadres; (2) the annual levy. The footnote gives a definition of regular troops as including all cadres and other ranks who have contracted engagements to serve.

Thus the first column should show all volunteers, whether it refers to a volunteer army, properly speaking, or to a conscript army, which often includes a number of volunteers.

The footnote states further:

“They also include warrant officers, sergeants and other ranks who, on account of their special circumstances, serve for a longer time than the normal period of service in the country in question.”

As M. de Brouckère has said, in some countries students and specialists serve for a longer time than the normal period. I share his opinion that it would not be fair to regard them as regular soldiers, since they only serve for a few months longer than the annual levy.

Under these circumstances, I wonder whether it would not be well to subdivide the category “annual levy” into two columns, one of them showing the proportion of the annual levy serving for more than the ordinary period, the other showing the proportion of the annual levy serving for the ordinary period.

We should then have three columns: (1) regular troops properly speaking (without stating whether they are embodied in a conscript or a voluntary army); (2) the annual levy. This category would be subdivided into two columns, one of which would show the number of men serving for more than the average period and the other the men serving for the ordinary period. In this way, I believe all the difficulties can be overcome.
M. VEVERKA (Czechoslovakia). — I repeat my question and wish to point out at the same time that I do not disagree in principle with General de Marinis’s suggestion. Nevertheless, I revert to my concrete instance: in Czechoslovakia, the period of service is eighteen months. If we reduce this period to twelve months, we shall, for six months after the recruits join up, have a surplus of regular soldiers. Obviously, this will only be a transition period, but it will be necessary to find a means of avoiding the difficulty of erroneously treating for six months men who are not regulars as if they were.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — I am now altogether puzzled. I cannot see what point General de Marinis wants to cover which is not covered by Article 7 and Table V of the French draft. I wish he would look at the draft very carefully, because I am entirely in sympathy with him. Article 7 of the French draft reads as follows:

“In each Contracting State and during the application of the present treaty, the total period of service which the men constituting the effective mentioned in the present treaty are compelled or may volunteer to fulfill shall remain in conformity with that fixed for each category of effective in the relevant columns of Table V annexed to the present treaty.”

It says quite definitely that they are not to exceed the period of service stated in Table V. When I look at Table V (French version — the English translation being very inaccurate), I find that it says:

Effectifs de l’armée de terre:

Troupes de carrière autres que les cadres  Troupes du contingent annuel.

There is a note explaining what “troupes de carrière” means: “Les troupes de carrière comprennent tous les cadres et hommes de troupe ayant contracté un engagement.” That is quite clear. Then the principle of that is stated of the “troupes de carrière” — the professional soldiers — the soldiers who, irrespective of their legal compulsion under the conscription law, serve by contract for a greater period. Opposite that you have “durée du service”, and you will find the whole thing stated. You also have “troupes du contingent annuel”. That meets General de Marinis’s difficulty, because there can be several different periods of service provided they are adhered to. I understand that, in Italy, there are some men who serve for eighteen months, some for nine months and some for three, and all that would be stated in this table.

I entirely agree with him in thinking that it is important to limit the proportion of professional soldiers in a conscript army, but I should have thought that that was exactly what was done. When we come to discuss Article 7, I shall ask the French delegation to explain to me how exactly that would apply in the case of a voluntary army. I am not disposed to raise any difficulties, and, if they can tell me what modifications there would have to be in this case, I should be prepared to accept their suggestion.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — Viscount Cecil has made my task a great deal easier. I also think that Table V annexed to Article 7 of the French draft should overcome General de Marinis’s difficulty. That is why I have, in the course of the discussion, always referred to the article in question.

If General de Marinis thinks it necessary to lay down explicitly, in a special text, that the number of regular soldiers should be limited, I could examine this draft, but on one condition, namely, that it should in fact deal with regulars. If General de Marinis wishes me to say that a man who is serving eleven months instead of ten in Belgium, or three months instead of two in Switzerland, is a regular soldier, then, with all the good will in the world, I cannot accept his view.

I shall now say a word or two in reply to the Swedish delegate. He proposes to subdivide the second column of Table V of the French draft into two parts. I would draw his attention to the fact that we are not dealing with the kind of data to be found in the Military Yearbook, where there is no objection to setting out information in great detail; we are drafting a series of undertakings to be given by countries which declare that they will henceforth fix the period of service in conformity with a given stipulation in the Convention.

Can we ask these countries to give undertakings expressed in such detail? Can many Governments bind themselves for a fairly long time not only to a limited average period of service but also to limit the thousands of conscripts who will serve, for instance, eleven, ten or nine months? This entails very inconvenient restrictions.

I think that if we try to do too much we shall only raise a series of objections to the Convention when we present it to our own countries.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — I think we are all beginning to find the question we are dealing with somewhat entangled, but I see that we are agreed on the main issue. I am therefore confident that we shall succeed in solving the problem.

M. de Brouckère asked me just now if I thought it expedient to affirm the principle. Yes, that is just what I consider most expedient: I am prepared to accept any amendment which M. de Brouckère thinks fit to make in my formula, but I am anxious that the principle should be laid down. I think we shall be able to find a formula on which we can agree.
I should like to explain to Viscount Cecil the difficulties I have in accepting Article 7 of the French draft, and, in order to do so, I must go back to the example I gave of my own country, in order to explain more clearly the workings of the period of service.

As I said, we have three periods of service: eighteen months, six months and three months, but it sometimes happens that the proportions of the levy to which the periods of three, six and eighteen months are applied vary; that depends on budgetary and various unforeseen considerations.

For example, it may happen that in one year one-third of the levy is serving eighteen months, one-third six months and the remainder three months. But in the next year, only one-half of the levy may be serving three months, a quarter six months and another quarter eighteen months; the proportions vary. For these reasons, it is impossible for us to accept a rigid rule, such as appears in the French text. We must find a formula which can be adapted to the requirements of all countries, and it is on these lines that I should like to see the French text amended.

With reference to the suggestion made by the honourable Swedish delegate, I should like to say that I am in full sympathy with it. I think it would be well to accept it, in order to make Table V clearer. It would not matter if this table were rather long, since this would make the position of the various countries quite clear as regards effective.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — May I make a suggestion to General de Marinis ? I suggest that, in M. de Brouckère's draft, we should say

"Similarly, and for the same reasons as those given above, the above-mentioned table should show the maximum number of professional soldiers which each State undertakes not to exceed."

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I think I may, at this point, ask for some information with regard to Table V. I do not wish to raise any objection of principle; I have heard no suggestion with which I should disagree. There are, however, points in Table V and in M. de Brouckère's proposal which do not seem quite clear to me.

What is meant by the ordinary period of service in a country ? Table V contains two columns, one for regular troops other than cadres and the other for the annual levy. A question arises in this connection: How will the figure in the column relating to the annual levy be tabulated ? In the French draft, they are not maximum figures but figures which the States undertake to observe.

The Swedish delegate proposes subdividing this column into two. Still, I wonder whether, in the event of our retaining the one column, every State would not have to give several figures. These might be given one above the other, or side by side; obviously, that entails no difference of principle.

As regards the difficulty mentioned by M. de Brouckère, which always arises when Governments have to give detailed undertakings, I think it is inherent not in the form of the undertakings but in their very nature. I think it would be far more difficult for Governments to give general undertakings, especially as the French draft, in its original form, does not mention maximum but fixed figures. It would, for instance, be difficult to give indefinite undertakings for the artillery and infantry.

In these circumstances, it will be necessary to give details of some kind. Seeing that there is a column provided for the period of service of the annual levy, and seeing that it will be absolutely necessary to give various figures, the question arises as to what is the normal period of service and what warrant officers, sergeants and other ranks, on account of their special circumstances, serve for more than the normal period. I can find no answer to this question. It seems to be obscure and I cannot see what we shall have to treat as the normal period in each case.

Another question arises: Where will the cadres be found in Table V ? The first column includes regular troops other than cadres; the second includes the annual levy. Will the cadres provided by the annual levy be found in the second column ? The footnote to the table indicates that warrant officers and sergeants who, on account of their special circumstances, serve for a longer time than the normal period of service shall be treated as regular troops. I therefore cannot see in which column they will appear, and it seems that regular warrant officers, sergeants and other ranks would not be included in Table V. I am not sure that this is a satisfactory explanation, and I wonder if it is correct.

I should like to ask another question: What will be the significance of the figures given in Table V ? Will they be fixed or maximum figures ?

Finally, I should also like to ask for an explanation with regard to M. de Brouckère's proposal. The Belgian representative wishes to reserve the right of the high contracting parties to reduce the period of service for the annual levy. I quite agree, but I should like to know whether this applies to the whole of the annual levy incorporated or to a part only. In the latter case, which part shall it be ? That is the question I should like to ask with regard to M. de Brouckère's amendment.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I thank Viscount Cecil for the suggestion he has made in connection with my proposal, and I am quite prepared to accept it. The text will therefore read as follows:

"Similarly, and for the same reasons as those given above, the above-mentioned tables should show the maximum number of professional soldiers which each State undertakes not to exceed."
M. HENNINGS (Sweden). — I take the liberty of drawing your attention to the fact that Table V deals with maximum figures — in order words, each country is free to give, in respect of troops serving for a longer time than the normal period of service, a maximum figure which it undertakes not to exceed.

I do not ask that the various States should be bound to mention a definite period of service for each of the various categories of specialists. I only ask that a column should be provided for troops serving for more than the ordinary period. Only one figure need be given, a maximum figure.

In any case, I think it better to distinguish clearly, by entering them in two separate columns, men serving for the normal period and those serving for a longer period than that determined by law. This classification seems preferable to that which includes conscripts who have had a higher education — for instance, students — among the regular troops.

Instead of amending Article 7 of the French draft as proposed by M. de Brouckère, I suggest that he should substitute, for the words “that the period of service shall remain in conformity with that fixed” in this article, the words “shall not exceed that fixed”. In this way the amendment would be superfluous, since the various States would be prevented, as M. de Brouckère said, from increasing the length of the period above that proposed by the said States themselves at the future Conference, though they would be free to reduce it.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — May I, with all due respect, express the hope that we shall be quite clear as to what has been adopted and what has not. Has M. de Brouckère's amendment to Point 13 of the French text been adopted? I refer to the following amendment:

"Nevertheless, the High Contracting Parties reserve the right to reduce, during the term of the present treaty, the period of service in respect of troops in their annual contingent, but may not in any case exceed the numbers laid down in Table V for that part of the contingent."

The PRESIDENT. — We have adopted M. de Brouckère's proposal beginning: "In order to prevent the number of officers, warrant officers and sergeants . . ." This is the paragraph to which General de Marinis wishes to add his proposed text. M. de Brouckère's amendment to Point 13 has not yet been discussed.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — If M. de Brouckère's amendment — which, for my part, I entirely accept — has not yet been adopted, allow me to point out that this discussion has no object. What are we discussing at present? We are discussing a further limitation which has been suggested, in addition to the limitations already proposed, regarding the number of regular officers, warrant officers and sergeants, to which General de Marinis wishes to add other regular ranks.

I am very much in favour of all limitations, but I warn you that, if we look for too many, we may secure none at all, and that we must try to limit that which can easily be limited. I personally see no objection to the limitations proposed: nevertheless, I draw your attention to the fact that if, as I hope, we accept the amendment proposed by M. de Brouckère with reference to Article 7 of the French draft and Point 13 of the Synoptic Analysis dealing with the period of service, and if at the same time you limit the number of regular officers, warrant officers, sergeants and other ranks, you will run counter to the idea of M. de Brouckère's amendment. This amendment, which we have discussed simultaneously with the other, thereby introducing some confusion into our debate, seeks a further limitation of the period of service. Table V of the French draft has been discussed at length. Allow me to say that, if M. de Brouckère's amendment is adopted, Table V no longer exists. It was drawn up on the assumption that the period of service would be fixed for the whole period during which the Convention remained in force. M. de Brouckère holds out prospects which are particularly pleasing to me — namely, that while the Convention is in force — a period which will necessarily be limited — some countries may nevertheless contemplate reducing the period of service. Even if this were not to be, the idea is too full of possibilities for us to leave it out of the Convention. But please note that Table V, although it has a restrictive value, is no longer possible. The classification of regular officers, warrant officers, sergeants and other ranks on the one hand and the annual levy on the other is of importance in connection with the period of service.

You will be unable to prevent a nation which wishes to reduce the period of service from adapting its army to any such reduction. There are, without doubt, duties, the least important, the most elementary and indeed the least military, which, in an army where the period of service is very short, must be discharged by soldiers who serve for a longer period than the legal one and who attend to all that makes for the normal life of a military unit. The proportions mentioned are related to a given kind of army and a given period of service. If you wish to introduce, at the same time, the possibility of further reductions in the period of service below the figure determined by the Convention, while retaining the proportion fixed by countries in respect of the present period, I do not think you will encourage them to reduce the period of that service. We must therefore, while embodying the principles which you wish to lay down, find some means of showing that all this is in proportion to or, to use an accurate and almost mathematical expression, a function of the period of service.

This leads me to mention General de Marinis's amendment and the formula proposed by Viscount Cecil, of which General de Marinis approves. I must point out that the value of this formula will depend on the definition given of a regular soldier. If, as M. de Brouckère has said, you mean by a regular soldier — taken in the proper sense of the word — one who...
serves for a given number of years, accepting, however, the limitation of officers, warrant officers and sergeants, you have no reason for not accepting the limitation of other ranks, since, in view of the length of their service, they form, as it were, permanent cadres, the strength of which it is interesting to know in order to gauge the exact strength of a military organisation. But, for this, you must determine the length of time for which a man must serve in order to be regarded as a regular soldier. Personally, I hold that a regular soldier is one who serves for a longer time than the normal period of service in conscript armies, and we may say that at present, except perhaps in the Russian army— Russia is not as yet a party to our discussions—the maximum period of service is between eighteen months and two years. It would therefore be natural to define a regular soldier as one who serves for more than two years. But if, on the other hand, you treat as a regular soldier one who serves for a shorter time than a conscript of an army where the length of service is longer, because the normal period of service in his own country is shorter, you depart from the logical definition. That is why we should, I think, fix a period—that of the maximum period of service for the conscript armies of the countries represented here. I accept the proposal in this form, but I would draw your attention to the fact that Table V, as drawn up by the French delegation, will have to be altered, and that the discussions and requests for explanations which have arisen in this connection have no object, since the table was drawn up on the assumption that the period of service would remain constant so long as the Convention was in force.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire).—I am very anxious to be quite clear about what we are doing. If I remember rightly, what we have done is this: when we adjourned last night, I had made a proposal (Point 12 in the Synopsis) regarding which certain difficulties were raised. M. de Brouckère made a suggestion which seemed to solve the difficulty. We adjourned at that stage, and I have said that I would accept the proposal. This morning, the first thing we did was to move M. de Brouckère's proposal and adopt it. We then began to discuss the next point, whereupon General de Marinis rose and said: "You must not discuss the next point because I wish to add something to what has already been adopted with reference to officers". He thereupon moved his amendment, which is still under discussion, it not yet having been agreed upon. I made a suggestion to modify that amendment, which General de Marinis accepted, and the question now before us is whether General de Marinis's amendment, as amended by my suggestion, shall be adopted.

In the course of the discussion of General de Marinis's amendment, several delegations pointed out that it was perhaps unnecessary on account of the provisions in Table V, but General de Marinis still wished the amendment to be inserted, and therefore we are still discussing the question whether we want this addition to Point 12 in the Synopsis. When we have decided that, we can discuss the definition of "troupes de carrière", which will properly come under the discussion of Table V of the French draft. M. Paul-Boncour now tells us that the definition given in that table will probably not answer if we adopt another amendment which we have not yet discussed—namely, M. de Brouckère's amendment to Article 7. At the present moment, however, what we have to settle is the question of General de Marinis's proposal.

M. Paul-Boncour (France).—I entirely agree with Viscount Cecil on the question of procedure, but, if we adopt his suggested amendment to General de Marinis's amendment, some of the delegations would have to accept something without knowing what it was, because the point on which acceptance depends is precisely that of the definition of the term "regular soldiers". I therefore venture to make an amendment of my own to Viscount Cecil's amendment. To sum up, this is how we now stand:

M. de Brouckère's amendment to Point 12 was adopted.

We now have General de Marinis's amendment, which runs as follows:

"Similarly, and for the reason already given, the above-mentioned tables shall indicate the maximum number, which each State undertakes not to exceed, of the other troops whose period of service . . ."

Here I go on:

". . . is longer than the maximum period of service at present in force in countries having conscript armies".

General de Marinis (Italy).—I only want to ensure that our text contains the principle that regular soldiers shall be considered on the same footing as regular officers, warrant officers and sergeants.

I thank Viscount Cecil and M. Paul-Boncour for having agreed to embody this idea in the Convention, and I am quite prepared to accept the two amendments suggested. Nevertheless, I think that, by adding the words proposed by M. Paul-Boncour, it would be impossible to obtain an idea of the military preparation of a country.

It would not be correct to consider that a country has less military preparation than another country simply because the former has a shorter period of service. It is obvious that, if a country reduces its period of service and at the same time increases the number of soldiers enlisted for a longer period than the normal period of service, that country could adjust the situation by creating a contingent of picked, well-trained troops, and even increase the value of its army. However, in a spirit of conciliation and in order to give satisfaction to my friend, the delegate for Czechoslovakia, I will not insist on my objections.
Nevertheless, it would be better, in M. Paul-Boncour’s amendment, to complete his idea by adding the words “High Contracting Parties”.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — You are quite right.

The PRESIDENT. — The text before the Commission reads as follows:

“Similarly, and for the reason already given, the above-mentioned tables shall indicate the maximum number, which each State undertakes not to exceed, of the other troops whose period of service is longer than the maximum period of service at present in force in the conscript armies of the High Contracting Parties”.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I offer my excuse for intervening at this point, but I am not quite clear as to the intention. I thought, when General de Marinis presented his proposal, it was intended to be applied solely to countries with a conscript system. From this last wording I am not quite clear as to whether that is still the case. If it applies only to countries with conscript systems, naturally I have no objection to offer. If that is not so, I think we ought to have the text very clear.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — The text can only refer to conscript armies.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I must say I am very much attracted by the definition of “troupes de carrière” contained in the note to Table V of the French draft. It seems to me that has been very carefully thought out and contains everything which can be said to be “troupes de carrière”. I dare say the new definition proposed by M. Paul-Boncour is a better one. I am not sufficiently an expert to say. But I must say, reading the note to Table V, it seems to me a more complete and more carefully limited definition than the one which he has now proposed. I do not quite understand why he wishes to substitute a new definition for “troupes de carrière” for the one he has already proposed. I should like to know why he has changed it.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — Table V, as originally submitted, was really nothing more than an administrative return. But as soon as we wish to fix a limitation, and consequently to constitute an international undertaking, we must give a more exact definition of the term “regular troops” than Table V contains.

Under the first arrangement, for example, a soldier who, on account of special circumstances or under an engagement, served one month longer than those who were serving their six or twelve years would figure in this table. But if you try to fix a limitation, it can obviously only be applied to what are called regular troops, that is, soldiers who, in view of their length of service or their training, can be considered in the same category as regular officers.

We are now concerned with engagements and with limitation. No nation can accept limitation unless it is really applied strictly to regular troops. This is why we have agreed on this exact definition: a regular soldier is a soldier whose period of service is longer than the maximum period in force in conscript armies.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I accept this draft, but I must emphasise the fact that this does not commit us to Table V. I accept, as I have already said, the definition of regular troops as given us by M. Paul-Boncour.

We shall see later what form we are going to give to Table V, and, with regard to this, I accept the proposals by the representatives of Sweden and the Netherlands.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I am sorry to have to press my point again; I shall try to be as short as possible.

I note that what we have before us at present — Viscount Cecil was quite right to remind us — is General de Marinis’s amendment. You must allow me, however, to refer briefly to the amendment which follows, as I cannot otherwise explain matters in an intelligible fashion.

The amendment which follows deals with the reduction of the period of service — a reduction which is essential, for, important as it is to know what tables will appear in the Convention and in what form they will be drafted, it is even more important — in fact, it is the essential point — to have a number of concrete factors in order to effect a reduction in the period of service.

I do not want for the moment to go into the question of what the character of Table V was or what it may be in the future. It is certain, however, that, once General de Marinis’s amendment is adopted, the number of regular troops is limited. I turn to the reduction of the period of service, and I realise that, if we adopt the definition of regular troops given in the French draft, which was drawn up to meet other circumstances, the inevitable result of reducing the period of service will be to increase the number of regular troops. In Belgium, for example, regular troops to-day are those who do more than ten months’ service but in this case they would be those who do seven or eight months’.

If my country should approach the League of Nations and say: “We have made a fresh effort to disarm: we have reduced our period of service”, the League would reply: “You have broken your pledge; you have increased the number of your regular troops”. And yet not a single man would have served a single day longer. This is, of course, absurd, but it is what would happen if we did not adopt the clear, unambiguous definition that “regular troops are troops whose period of service exceeds a specified number of months or years”.

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The President. — Are we all agreed, then, on the following text?

"Similarly, and for the reason already given, the above-mentioned tables shall indicate the maximum number, which each State undertakes not to exceed, of the other troops whose period of service is longer than the maximum period of service at present in force in the conscript armies of the High Contracting Parties."

The text was adopted.


13. French draft.

Limitation of the Period of Service.

In each Contracting State and during the application of the present Treaty the total period of service which the men constituting the effective mentioned in the present Treaty are compelled or may volunteer to fulfill shall remain in conformity with that fixed for each category in the relevant columns of Table V, annexed to the present Treaty. For each man the "total period of service" shall be the total number of days of service with the active army and days during his period of compulsory or voluntary training.

M. de Broückere (Belgium). — We have discussed the question of the duration of the period of service at length, and I assume we need not reopen this discussion of principle. I merely note that Point 13 (Article 7 of the French draft), if I understand it rightly, introduced a third limitation beside the two already laid down: the first was the limitation of effectives; the second the limitation of the number of officers, warrant officers and sergeants. We now come to the limitation of the period of service itself.

But the text of the service does not perhaps correspond entirely to the intentions of its authors. We are saying, in fact, that the period of service ought to remain in accordance with what is laid down for each category of effectives, and, if we took this in its literal sense, the text of Article 7 would prohibit us not only from increasing the period of service but also from reducing it; that is an undertaking which, speaking for my own country, I could not give. I quite understand that, if no provision were made for reduction, the possible results might be disagreeable to some members of the Commission. It might happen that a State, without increasing its average number of effectives, might, by reducing its period of service, correspondingly increase its contingents with the colours. Many people are certainly anxious to prevent such a result. I think this could be managed by adding the following amendment after the first paragraph of Article 7:

"Nevertheless, the High Contracting Parties reserve the right to reduce, during the term of the present Treaty, the period of service in respect of troops in their annual contingent, but may not in any case exceed the numbers laid down in Table V for that part of the contingent."

I say "Table V" because this is the number at present: but it will have to be changed. In this way, States would have the right to modify their periods of service, but they would not be able to make up for reducing their period by increasing the number of their troops with the colours.

M. Sato (Japan). — I venture to place before you the attitude of my own Government on the period of service.

1. The period of service is determined by circumstances peculiar to each country and in particular by the physique of the population, the intensity of the training, the difference between civil life and barracks life, the conception of national defence, etc. For the above reasons, it is very difficult to make any comparisons on this question which do justice to all the different States; yet this is a necessary preliminary if we are to arrive at a fair arrangement on the period of service.

2. It cannot be denied that, since the war, pre-regimental training and military training outside the regular army are carried on more and more extensively in the various countries (see page 68 of the report of Sub-Commission A). This fact often makes any regulation of the period of active service valueless. Furthermore, this pre-regimental or extra-regimental training is not given in a uniform fashion in different countries, and any comparison of the period of active service in different States is very complicated.

3. In my opinion, the number of effectives with the colours ought to be fixed according to the requirements of national defence in each country. It is only after this fundamental point has been settled that we can proceed to examine the questions of contingents and period of service.

In countries which only call up for service with the colours a proportion of the able-bodied men, the natural consequence of reducing the period of service, once the total number of effectives has been fixed, is an increase in the strength of the annual contingent of conscripts. For example, a country which needs 100,000 men for its national defence will call to the colours annually a contingent of 50,000 men if the period of service is for two years, thus giving a figure of 50,000 trained reservists annually. If, however, the period of service is reduced to one year, 100,000 men must be called to the colours each year instead of 50,000; the result..."
of the period of service would be to get 100,000 trained reservists annually, or twice as many as when the period with the colours was two years.

This is a most important point in view of the effort which several delegations are making to limit the trained reserves in order to diminish aggressive power.

In countries which incorporate every man who reaches military age, the probable result of limiting the period of service would be to increase the number of volunteers in order to make up the deficit in the number of effectives present with the colours. Such developments would run counter to the purpose we have in view, which is to prepare a Convention for the limitation of armaments.

4. There is one fact the importance of which must strike everyone. Since the war, every country in the world has been making all possible efforts to reduce the number of military effectives to the strict minimum indispensable for national defence. Similarly, countries have shown an increasing tendency to reduce the period of service for reasons of international policy. It is a gratifying and undeniable fact that countries with conscription are engaged in reducing the period of service with the colours on their own initiative.

5. On account of the difficulties of limiting the period of service and the doubtful efficacy of any such limitation, I venture to say, in conclusion, that, in the opinion of our delegation, it would be preferable to leave it to the free judgment of each country to settle the period of service with the colours on their own initiative.

I should like to add a few words more. I think it was the day before yesterday that General de Marinis desired to move an amendment to the point now under discussion, No. 13. It was a question of modifying the part commencing with the phrase: "the total period of service," etc., and of making it run: " . . . to what each State shall fix for each category of effectives" (instead of: "is what is fixed for each category . . . ").

This corresponds absolutely with my own ideas and I entirely support General de Marinis's proposal.

When making this proposal, General de Marinis asked whether I agreed, and I signified my assent. I now make this statement to reaffirm my complete agreement.

Now we have an amendment by M. de Brouckère. I must explain the situation of Japan on this point. As I told you just now, the total number of effectives is fixed in Japan by considerations of national defence. We take into account various factors, the details of which I will not enter into here, in fixing the period of service. I would mention, however, that the period thought necessary to turn out a good soldier is fixed for the moment at one year and ten months, although the law still establishes the period of service at two years. We are even considering the possibility of again reducing this period by a few months; thus, for certain categories of soldiers, we shall during the course of this year, have a period of service of eighteen months.

In our case, the total number of effectives considered necessary for national defence is already fixed. This is doubtless a question which we shall have to discuss at the Conference itself, but, in order to make our point of view clear, I reiterate the fact. The present period of service, as I have said, is one year and ten months. If we wished to reduce the present period to eighteen months, we should be obliged to increase the strength of the annual contingents, in order to keep up the total figure of effectives indispensable for national defence.

In my opinion, a reduction in the period of service is desirable. The general tendency of the day is towards reduction, and we are therefore prepared to do it. But if we do so by some months, we must be able to increase, by national means, the number of the annual contingent unless we agree to reduce the total number of our effectives. We cannot support M. de Brouckère's proposal, because, according to his draft, the number of the annual contingent is absolutely fixed, although the period of service is to be eventually reduced. For this reason, I repeat, I cannot, to my regret, support M. de Brouckère's proposal, and I request that each State be left full liberty to fix the duration of its period of service, which is exactly what General de Marinis proposed.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — As we are now about to adjourn, I would like to ask my colleagues whether it would not be possible, after all, to meet this afternoon, because we are now in the middle of a discussion of great importance.

The President. — I was about to make the same suggestion, and I hope it will be accepted. I think that even Mr. Gibson will agree that we have not been going unduly fast this morning. At the same time, that we may have more time, I suggest that we meet at 5.30 and rise at 7.30.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I am sorry to be obstructive in this matter, but, after all, we did have an understanding yesterday. I think yesterday there was a good deal of talk about half-holidays, but I think it is rather regrettable that it is put on that basis. The half-holidays we have had so far have resulted in my delegation working from twelve to eighteen hours a day and they cannot continue at that rate much longer. So far as public opinion is concerned, after all, I do not think in a serious matter of
this sort we should be stampeded into meeting when we can work better in other ways. I confess that I have not been able to catch up with the work to date or with the work to be done. If this proposal is not agreed, I shall have to put in a blank reservation on the entire texts until I can catch up.

M. HENNINGS (Sweden). — I absolutely agree with what Mr. Gibson has said. The working out of a Convention, such as this on which we are now engaged, is so important a task that it is indispensable that it should be done with the greatest care and that the delegates should have time to study it with their experts.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — I support Mr. Gibson's proposal, for it is our duty to study the questions before us very carefully. Obviously, the delegations which have submitted drafts worked them out carefully enough to be able to judge of all their implications, but this is not the case with other delegations.

Personally, I am not in a position at present to appreciate the full bearings of M. de Brouckère's proposal. It is particularly necessary for me to have time to think it over, because M. Sato has just made a very important statement on this point. I do not even understand the text which has been laid before us, and I should be grateful to M. de Brouckère if he would kindly tell me what is meant by the phrase "that part of the contingent".

The PRESIDENT. — Before calling on M. de Brouckère to reply to General de Marinis, I ought to say that, in view of the grave objections which have been raised, I do not feel justified in insisting on our holding a meeting this afternoon.

I venture to point out to you that our discussions often get prolonged because the amendments are not distributed in time. They should be distributed at least the evening before the discussion, and I ask all delegations to do all they can to conform to this rule.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I should like to reply to General de Marinis while the question which he has asked me is still fresh in my mind. He asks the meaning of the phrase "that part of the contingent". I would beg him to remember that we are speaking here of Table V, and that this table is divided as regards land effectives into two columns, one of which is headed "Annual contingent". The 'other part of the contingent' is that part which is not the annual contingent.

If the phrase is in any way ambiguous, I am perfectly ready to meet objections halfway and to substitute the expression "that part of the effectives" for "that part of the contingent", although the former formula is less exact. If this modification will allow us to get on with our work more quickly, I am willing to accept it.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — I thank M. de Brouckère for the explanation which he has given me.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — When we only have one meeting a day, I think we should have time if we fixed it for the afternoon and began rather early.

The PRESIDENT. — It is understood, then, that we shall not meet this afternoon; that we shall hold a meeting to-morrow morning and that, as regards next week, we shall have to discuss the suggestion put forward by M. Paul-Boncour.

After the question of effectives, we shall start on the naval question.

The Commission rose at 1.15 p.m.

THIRTEENTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Friday, April 1st, 1927, at 10.15 a.m.

President: M. LOUDON (Netherlands).


The PRESIDENT. — Before resuming the discussion on the period of service, I think that we should decide on what we are going to discuss to-day.

Before breaking up yesterday, I suggested that we should examine the question of naval armaments after land armaments. Shortly afterwards, I heard on various sides that it would be preferable to begin with air forces. There is no reason why we should not adopt this suggestion, unless you have any serious objections.

This was decided.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I offer no objection to that course. It is quite agreeable to me to deal with the question of air forces, but, as a matter of convenience to all the delegations, could not we make it a practice to circulate an agenda each day dealing with the work to be done on the following day? I confess my delegation has been thrown into a good deal of confusion because, at the conclusion of yesterday's meeting, we decided to talk of naval disarmament; afterwards you told me of the decision to talk about air armaments; and in the evening I was told that a decision had been reached to talk about naval armaments, and now it is air armaments. My technical associates have been very busy, and I am afraid we are at sixes and sevens. I think most of these difficulties could be obviated if we had an agenda circulated each evening.
The President. — I entirely agree with Mr. Gibson's opinion, and I can inform him that the Bureau likewise agrees. From now onwards, this agenda will be sent out regularly to the delegations. I may add that, in future, once we have taken a decision on the subject of the work to be undertaken, we shall not subsequently alter it.

31. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Effectives. Point 13 (continuation).

M. Comnène (Roumania). — After yesterday's discussions, and especially after hearing the interesting statement by the Japanese delegate, we discovered, in the course of various private conversations, that a certain amount of confusion had arisen in the minds of some of our colleagues, and I think it would be advisable to clear up this point, so as to avoid all misunderstanding. Some of our colleagues thought that the Conference proposed to set up an organisation empowered to compel high contracting parties to include certain figures in the various tables annexed to the Convention; and that it was proposed to institute, so to speak, a standardisation of the period of service.

For my part, I considered this to be a mistaken point of view, because I am convinced that the authors of the draft entertained no such idea. Nevertheless, in order to reassure such of our colleagues as may have become uneasy, I thought it would be advisable that this point should be definitely settled. It is understood that no assembly or international organisation will be able to compel the high contracting parties to include certain figures in the tables, and the high contracting parties will remain the sole judges of what figures are to be shown — it being understood, however, that, once these figures are included in the tables, which are an integral part of the Convention, the high contracting parties will be bound by them, and will not be able to alter them without the assent of the international organisation which is to be set up and which is provided for in the Convention; this organisation will be the only one entitled to authorise changes in these figures. This is without prejudice to the special treatment accorded to certain Powers by reason of their exceptional situation recognised in the Convention. I wish to emphasise this point, so that M. de Brouckère may give us any explanation which he still thinks necessary, but which, for my part, I do not consider to be necessary.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I wish to thank M. Comnène for having pointed out the considerable difference of interpretation given to my very simple proposal, and I wish to make a short statement, as clear and precise and simple as possible, to reassure those of my colleagues who may have felt some anxiety.

In several quarters I was told: "You want to fix a normal period of service and to compel all the States to conform to it". I was also told: "You wish to compel all States to adopt six months' service". Will you allow me to say that this does not figure in the text of my draft and I can assure my colleagues that it was in no way intended to be read between the lines.

I was further told: "You want to compel all the States to reduce their period of service for the duration of the Convention". This is not contained in the text of my proposal nor is it to be assumed.

Lastly, I was told: "You are going too far and you want to impose on States too drastic regulations". Please allow me to point out that my draft does not entail any kind of obligation for any State and consequently the obligation cannot be too drastic. The only result of the amendment would be to release a certain number of States from an obligation which they might have undertaken. The proposal that I submitted is not an independent text. It constitutes an amendment to Point 13 of the agenda, or if you prefer it, to Article 7 of the French draft. In order to understand it, it should be read in connection with Article 7 and would become paragraph 2 of that Article.

We are now faced with a rather long text — the longer it is, the more difficult it will be to understand. This is perhaps the time to remember the advice that M. Paul-Boncour gave us, quoting the motto of the great Descartes: "Let us try to reduce the difficulty to its component parts"; or, if we want to fall back on a rather less illustrious example, we should bear in mind the advice of the sergeant who teaches the parts of the rifle by taking it to pieces. My amendment can only be understood if we bear in mind paragraph 1 of the French draft, which reads:

"In each Contracting State and during the application of the present Treaty the total period of service which the men constituting the effectives mentioned in the present Treaty are compelled or may volunteer to fulfill shall remain in conformity with that fixed for each category of effectives in the relevant columns of Table V annexed to the present Treaty."

This is confirmed by the table annexed to the French document.

After yesterday's discussion, it seems that some changes will require to be made in Table V, and in any case the footnote seems already to have changed its character.

What remains, however, is columns 4 and 5, namely, the category "Annual levy", divided into two columns: "Number" and "Period of Service". Without making any figure compulsory for any country, each State will be asked to show, whilst retaining its full sovereignty, the number of its contingent and the period of service. It is here, gentlemen, that the contracting Governments will enter into an undertaking; but the undertaking, as strictly provided for by the French proposal, goes perhaps a little far, because it not only provides that States should undertake not to exceed the period of service but that they should also bind themselves to apply the period fixed. The result of this would be that, if the text were
that I have just explained is contained in the first phrase which reads:

"Nevertheless, the High Contracting Parties reserve the right of reducing, during the term of the present Treaty, the period of service in respect of troops in their annual contingent".

Whilst thus releasing the high contracting parties from one of the obligations undertaken when Table V was replaced, my amendment does not release them from the other obligation, namely, to adhere to the maximum contingent fixed, and my object in doing this was simply that, being a modest man, I only wished to release them from one obligation and not from both.

Perhaps the fact that the high contracting parties are not released from this second obligation gave rise to some anxiety among my colleagues, but, if the high contracting parties wish to be released from the second obligation, it is not my amendment that should be discussed but the French text.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — As M. de Brouckère has just said, his proposal constitutes an amendment to Article 7 of the French draft.

I should like to remark that Article 7 has not yet been discussed, consequently there is no need to consider M. de Brouckère's proposal until Article 7 has been adopted.

A number of difficulties have already been raised regarding Article 7, and I would point out among others M. Sato's objection, with which I heartily concur. If a certain amount of confusion has arisen in the course of the discussion, it was not for reasons of procedure but because the questions overlap.

I had occasion the other day to mention the situation of my country and to explain that we have three periods of service. Owing to budgetary and social and economic requirements, we eventually decided, after a number of experiments, on the present system. We are now trying a period of service of eight months. But even with this period my country encountered certain difficulties; for instance, agricultural labourers have to be free for their work during a portion of the year, and climatic conditions have to be taken into consideration in enrolling troops at certain periods of the year rather than others. After these statements, I do not see clearly what the results of M. de Brouckère's amendment would be.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — If General de Marinis will allow me, I would like, if possible, to clear up the situation.

We are now discussing M. de Brouckère's amendment to Article 7 and that leaves us perfectly free to judge if we should adopt the said article. To ensure order in our debates, it would be better to go on with discussion of M. de Brouckère's amendment. I would like to mention to General de Marinis that I myself have several remarks to make on Article 7.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — I venture in my turn to point out to Viscount Cecil that I said at the very beginning that I was only rising to make the position clear. I repeat that M. de Brouckère's proposal is an amendment to Article 7 of the French draft. It seems to me illogical to discuss an amendment to an article without having previously discussed at least the principle on which the article itself is based. Certain delegations are not agreed on the principle embodied in the article, and the Japanese delegate, as well as myself, asked whether it would not be better to suppress the article.

As I have already said, I see no use in fixing the period of service.

Now, I want to know whether we are keeping Article 7 or not, because, if we reject it, M. de Brouckère's proposal would become something quite different; it would become a general recommendation. This was the reason why I asked for Article 7 to be discussed first of all. I do not, however, want to drag the discussion out, and I leave the decision to the President. If we go on with the discussion on M. de Brouckère's amendment, it is understood that acceptance of this amendment does not imply acceptance of Article 7.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — We are discussing the amendment according to parliamentary procedure, before the text, but General de Marinis has pointed out that this gives rise to a certain amount of difficulty for some of our colleagues. I wonder if we could not get round this in the following way. If Article 7 were accepted, and my amendment were also accepted, my amendment would become paragraph 2 of Article 7. Can we then not discuss Article 7 paragraph by paragraph? First of all, we should examine paragraph 1 of the French text, then my amendment and finally paragraph 2 of the French text.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I understood yesterday from M. Paul-Boncour that, if M. de Brouckère's proposal were accepted, Table V relating to Article 7 would be completely changed.

If we open the discussion on the first paragraph of the article, it is well to know whether the table, in its present form, is retained or rejected. This question ought to be settled before M. de Brouckère's proposal is taken.
M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I do not think that the point raised by the delegate for the Netherlands is so important as he supposes. It is true that the tables are very important and the French delegation thought it right to put them forward in order to give some concrete expression to its ideas, and to show a practical example of how an international Convention for the limitation and reduction of armaments could be effected. But the principle comes before the table. The actual form of Table V itself may be modified, according to whether M. de Brouckère’s amendment is adopted or not.

What is important, and what we ought to discuss now — for, if I understand aright, the question has been reopened by General de Marinis — is the principle, the limitation of the period of service. In other words, we have to decide the important question of whether an international draft should contain a limitation of “period of service” as well as limitation of “effectives.” I think that this is absolutely indispensable. It would not be carried out in the way imagined by some of our colleagues, whose ideas were explained just now by M. Comnène, for it is obvious that we cannot think of imposing a uniform standard period of service. First of all, you must allow me to say that this question arises not only on this special point of “period of service” but on every point relative to the limitation which we hope to impose. Once for all, it must be understood that there is no scale and no prescribed standard in the Convention which we are preparing. The word “limitation” means that, once a figure has been included, this figure will remain in force for the duration of the Convention.

That is the exact meaning of limitation. These limitations will be determined by what the different States, after a preliminary exchange of views, agree to adopt, but there is no single figure which can be laid down, either as regards period of service or as regards number of effectives. Let us get this idea out of our heads once and for all.

To proceed, just as we lay down a maximum figure for effectives, so we must insert in the Convention a maximum figure, settled by the nations themselves after discussion among themselves, for the period of service. I consider this essential for the reasons which we mentioned yesterday.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — We are discussing M. de Brouckère’s amendment.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — No: the original article.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — The President has, I think, decided that we are discussing M. de Brouckère’s amendment.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — How can we discuss M. de Brouckère’s amendment if we follow General de Marinis?

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — This happens in Parliaments every day; in any case, it certainly happens in the English Parliament; one starts by discussing the question of how a draft will be drawn up. I do not really care which way we proceed, but the President has put the position quite clearly. He has said: “We are engaged in discussing M. de Brouckère’s amendment”. Well, since we are engaged in discussing this amendment, I beg my colleagues to follow the procedure laid down by the President: let us examine M. de Brouckère’s amendment and see first of all whether we ought to adopt it.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — Since the purpose of M. de Brouckère’s amendment is to correct Article 7, I absolutely fail to see how there can be any interest in discussing this amendment if the French text is not to be adopted. In that case, what is to happen to M. de Brouckère’s amendment? I fail to understand. If you want to discuss this point, I am quite ready.

The PRESIDENT. — Let us follow the procedure above all.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — If we are going to abandon the point at present before us and start on another subject, we must make it clear what we are doing. The essential point is to follow some sort of order.

The PRESIDENT. — We will discuss Article 7, first paragraph.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — If we are all agreed, well and good; it is all one to me.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I proceed, then, to put the case for Article 7, that is to say, for entering in the Convention a maximum figure for the period of compulsory service during the application of the Convention; to which General de Marinis objects.

General de MARINIS (Italy). — Excuse me.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — You did not object? Well and good. If you will allow me to depart from my usual method and put direct questions, I could, I think, shorten my explanations by putting the following question: In each contracting state and during the term of the present Treaty, is the total period which the men constituting the annual levy are compelled to serve to be accepted as a figure which must not be exceeded during the application of the Convention? If all my colleagues agree to this, I have nothing more to say.
General DE MARINIS (Italy). — One may imagine three or four different categories of the annual levy, and in that case there will be three or four total periods of service. But M. Paul-Boncour asked just now whether we are going to introduce into the text of the Convention a limit fixing the maximum period of service. I should have many objections to make to a text which fixes the length of service, but I should have much fewer objections to what M. Paul-Boncour has just said, that is to say, to the maximum period of service, because that would allow of having periods of service below the maximum for various parts of the annual contingent. On the other hand, I consider that fixing the period of service is not of great importance when we undertake to keep the number of effectives at a stated amount. In doing this, we have undertaken all that is desirable.

I repeat, if M. Paul Boncour’s proposal alludes to a maximum total period of service, I think that we can reach agreement on that point.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — General de Marinis’s answer is, in point of fact, tantamount to agreeing with me, and I thought I saw the Japanese delegate (who is unfortunately sparing of his words) indicate by a movement of his head that he, too, agreed.

Therefore, I think that we have reached agreement on the interpretation which I give to this article, that is to say, that the Convention will embody a figure for a period of service which the high contracting parties will agree not to exceed during the term of the Treaty.

What is the advantage — the great advantage — in stating this figure? Some of the arguments put forward by General de Marinis himself yesterday give the reason. The fact is that the aspect of an army changes completely according to the period of service, and the very nature of its effectives is modified; the composition of its officers, its warrant officers and sergeants, its regular cadres — all this varies according to the period of service. For example, a high contracting party lays down so many officers, so many warrant officers and sergeants, etc., as its maximum figure of effectives. During the term of the Convention, while it keeps the same number of men, it finds some means of increasing the period of service. Its army then takes on an entirely different aspect; the value of its men, its cadres, becomes entirely different. Well, what we are attempting to do (this is the principal but not the only purpose of the Convention) is to stabilise what is done during a certain period, and thus to induce a more peaceful frame of mind. It is no less indispensable to stabilise the period of service than to stabilise the effectives themselves.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — Then it is the fault of the text.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I think that General de Marinis’s text would conform better to his own ideas if it were slightly modified. What is its literal meaning? The maximum duration of the period of service is the longest period of service which a man can do. Well, to take the Belgian army as an example, we should have to give the figure of forty-six years, for, unless I am mistaken, a man may become a soldier at the age of 16 and remain one to the age of 62. It is therefore necessary to put in the conception of the annual levy and I think that General de Marinis agrees on this point.

But there is something which must be left out. We cannot go on saying; “The total period of service which the men are compelled or may volunteer to fulfil”. This would lead us to another unforeseen result. Yesterday we settled on one category: that of regular troops. These are the troops which serve longer than the longest period in force in any army for the annual levy. But all the other men may volunteer to fulfil a slightly shorter period of service, so that everybody ought to give a uniform figure of four years.

I think we should get a rather clearer result if we said that we are dealing with the maximum total period of the time of service of the annual levy.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I think that the following text would correspond not to what we have agreed on (we have always been agreed) but to the interpretation which had been given to the text and which seemed to give rise to disagreement. We will say simply:

“In each Contracting State and during the application of the present Treaty, the total period of service which the annual levy is compelled or may volunteer to fulfil shall not exceed the figure laid down in the present Treaty.”

M. SATO (Japan). — I beg to thank M. Paul-Boncour for the explanations which he has given us. I accept the proposed amendment, which is in conformity with the ideas I expressed yesterday. Would it not be well to make clear that the period of service will be fixed by each State for itself?
M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France).—This is put quite clearly, since Article 7 says: “In each Contracting State . . .”

M. SATO (Japan).—I should propose the following text:

“. . . the total period of service which the annual contingent is compelled to fulfill shall not exceed what is laid down by each State.”

M. RUTGERS (Netherlands).—I note with some satisfaction that the French proposal now suggests a maximum, and not a fixed period of service, which is both a maximum and a minimum.

Again, if I have understood M. Paul-Boncour’s explanations aright, the table will only contain one figure: the period of service which the annual levy is compelled to fulfill. There will be a figure for each State. Consequently, in a country where the infantry serves for five and a half months and the cavalry for fifteen months, the figure will have to be that of fifteen months.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France).—No; different figures can be given.

M. RUTGERS (Netherlands).—I am glad of that, for I do not think it would be wise in this case to lay down a single figure for each State. I also wish to make a remark on the proposal made by the honourable delegate for Japan. If we adopted his proposal, we should be giving a false impression of the general character of the Convention. Each signatory State will have to agree to all the figures laid down in the Convention and in particular it will have to accept all the figures entered in the tables. When we discussed the paragraph relating to effective periods, we did not add the words “which are fixed by each State”. Neither can we put a phrase to this effect in Article 7. As M. Comnène said, before the Convention can be signed, the States will have given their free consent to all its stipulations.

M. DE BROUCKERE (Belgium).—We have reached such a happy agreement that it would perhaps be a pity to prolong the discussion by attempting to settle points of detail. If he thinks about it, I believe that the representative of the Netherlands will discover that the question which he has just raised is not quite so important as it may now seem to him. It is quite clear that any State can mention several figures, especially when a large proportion of its effectives perform a period of service which is much shorter than the maximum.

There remains a certain doubt on the question whether this is applicable to all armies or only to the conscript armies. M. Paul-Boncour’s expression, however, “the annual levy”, seems to show clearly that we are referring to conscript armies. But if it would be clearer to say so explicitly, I am sure M. Paul-Boncour would have no objection. The text suggested by the French delegation has the great advantage of making my amendment unnecessary and thus simplifying our work.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire).—In the first place, may I make an amende honorable by saying that I was wrong in thinking that we had better discuss M. de Brouckère’s amendment first, because we now hope to avoid discussing it altogether.

In the second place, I am not quite happy about the exact form of words suggested by the honourable representative of Japan. I quite agree with his object, but I do not quite like saying that anything in a Treaty shall be fixed by any particular party to the Treaty. The thing that fixes it must be the agreement between all the parties to the Treaty. I suggested to him, and I am glad to say he agrees, that, instead of saying “fixé par chaque Partie”, you should say “accepté par les Hautes Parties Contractantes”, if M. Paul-Boncour has no objection to such a phrase.

I was glad M. de Brouckère suggested that some definite statement should be made as to whether it does or does not apply to a voluntary system, because it is quite evident that it could not apply in its present form to a voluntary system. I think as a matter of clearness we ought to say “each Contracting State where the system of conscription prevails”. I do not attach any great importance to it if anyone objects to those words being inserted.

M. SATO (Japan).—I accept Viscount Cecil’s amendment.

M. VEVERKA (Czechoslovakia).—It now seems quite settled that each State is to have the right to reduce the period of service during the application of the Convention. I should say that, if this amendment had not been made, it would have been impossible for me to accept Article 7 as originally put forward by the French delegation, because my country in fact intends to reduce its period of service during the application of the Convention; but I think there is a logical connection between accepting this amendment and adopting that of General de Marinis, for, as my experts have already told me, it would not be possible for Czechoslovakia to reduce the period of service without increasing proportionally its number of regular warrant officers and sergeants and regular soldiers. I shall come back to this point at the Second Reading.

General de Marinis (Italy).—I will not prolong a discussion which has led to so happy an agreement, and I gladly accept the amendment proposed by M. Paul-Boncour, which indeed corresponds to my own wishes. I hope that we shall now be able to place on record our unanimous agreement, that we shall accept the amendment suggested by Viscount Cecil, and lose no time in discussing points of detail.

The President.—The text of this article as amended is as follows:

“In each of the Contracting States having a system of conscription the total period of service which the annual levy is compelled to fulfill shall not exceed the figures accepted by the High Contracting Parties”.

M. Paul-Boncour (France).—I had proposed the wording “... not exceed the figure ...”. Thereupon the delegate for the Netherlands put forward some interesting arguments in favour of modifying this to “the figures”. Personally, I am afraid that, if we introduce the idea of differentiation, we may be giving rise to some obscurity, and we may also be binding the contracting States too closely. I see no advantage in this amendment; on the contrary, I think it is a disadvantage.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands).—We are not here only to reach an agreement; we have to express this agreement in a text which, it must be remembered, will be examined by people who have not been present at our discussions.

It seems that we are all in agreement on the following point: that the States should be free to fix several figures; this is certainly preferable. Take my country as an example; the infantry serve for five and a half months, while a relatively small proportion of the cavalry do fourteen months’ service. It is important that we should not simply put down a figure of fourteen months, which would seem as if it were applicable, to the whole levy. Therefore it seems to me preferable to say “the figures accepted by the High Contracting Parties”. The plural would express our thoughts more accurately.

M. De Bruckère (Belgium).—Don’t you think, Mr. President, that, as has happened several times before, the purpose of our discussions is getting obscured? Some delegates want to write “the figure” and others “the figures”. At any rate, we are all agreed that we want at least one figure. Let us then begin by registering our agreement on this point, and attack the difficulty by stages. Are there any great drawbacks in a country’s only giving one figure? No, because that country cannot secretly bring its effectives up to the maximum strength under cover of this figure, since it has to indicate the number of days’ duty.

On the other hand, there may be some advantage in putting down several figures. I refer here to the argument put forward a moment ago by the delegate of the Netherlands. All the same, there is nothing to prevent a country from giving several figures. After all, the Convention lays down what a contracting party is bound to do, and it contains no clause forbidding that country to do more. A country will always have the right to put down as many figures as it wishes. We undertake to give a figure, but obviously we have a right to give more than one.

Once this principle is clearly established, there is no objection to our adopting the singular (“figure”).

The President.—I think it is now possible to say that general agreement has been reached on this point.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands).—In these circumstances, I do not press the point for the time being.

The text as above was adopted.

The President.—I open the discussion on paragraph 2 of Point 13. The text before us is:

“For each man ‘the total period of service’ shall be the total number of days of active service and of days of service during his period of compulsory or voluntary training.”

M. Paul-Boncour (France).—I do not want to raise any objections, but personally I think that we ought to keep the word “voluntary” in order to have a clear view of the position. Apart from legal compulsion, there may be cases where volunteers have to undergo training which increases the period of service. I think it is desirable to cover this point.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire).—I do not quite follow that. I do not think it would read then.

M. Paul-Boncour (France).—I propose that we make the paragraph read as follows:

“For each man the ‘total period of service’ shall be the total number of days of active service and of days of service during the period of training which he undergoes.”

In this way the words “compulsory” and “voluntary” come out.

The President.—M. Paul-Boncour proposes to suppress the words “compulsory or voluntary”. Do the members of the Commission accept this amendment?

Viscount Cecil (British Empire).—I want to be quite clear. Is Table V suppressed altogether?

The text of this paragraph as thus amended was adopted and Table V was suppressed.

32. Procedure.

M. Hennings (Sweden).—We have now finished the first reading of the two chapters which deal with the limitation of military effectives. A certain number of amendments have been put forward, and a number of decisions taken. As it is not always very easy to know exactly how the modified text runs, I ask the Bureau to be good enough to let the delegations have the text as it stands at the end of the First Reading.

The President.—We shall do as the Swedish delegation wishes. The delegations will receive a text this afternoon giving a summary of all the work done by our Commission up till to-day.
Viscount Cecil (British Empire). There is just this question of whether and, if so, how, we should fix the number of men in the air service. I feel there is a certain difficulty about this because, as was pointed out I think by the French delegation and others, in Sub-Commission A, it is exceedingly difficult effectively to fix the number of men in the air service unless you fix the number of men in civil aviation as well as in the military aviation. That is a practical difficulty which I am bound to put before this Commission for its consideration. There then is another difficulty, which was also alluded to in the discussions in Sub-Commission A, namely, that there is a great variety in the nature of the air service. In some services, officers, and only officers, are included as pilots. In other services, that is not so, and, I am afraid, unless you drew up a careful schedule, you would get a very confusing account of the different air services, because they are not at present comparable with one another. I do not want to take up an altogether irreconcilable attitude, but I must say, as at present advised, that my Government feels great difficulty in limiting the number of airmen unless it knows exactly what it would amount to and what the form of the schedule is going to be. Certainly it could not, I think, accept the view that you can divide them in the same way as the military effective are divided. There is no sense in having a colonial and a home service in airmen. The division would not be applicable at all, so far as I can see, though it would no doubt be more applicable than it would be in the case of seamen. So far as we are concerned, I do not know that there is any such division in colonial airmen at all. These are difficulties which might possibly disappear if one saw, in the form of a table, exactly what it was proposed to do with reference to the airmen. One thing quite certain is that you cannot simply take the provisions that you have agreed to with regard to the army and say they shall apply to the air. The two things are quite distinct and that would be a mistake. One great difficulty is pointed out to me and that is this: How far are you going? Whom are you going to include? You are going to adopt a system which might possibly disappear if one saw, in the form of a table, exactly what it was proposed to do with reference to the airmen. One thing quite certain is that you cannot simply take the provisions that you have agreed to with regard to the army and say they shall apply to the air. The two things are quite distinct and that would be a mistake. One great difficulty is pointed out to me and that is this: How far are you going? Whom are you going to include? In some countries, all the mechanics have to deal with the air service, are part of the air service, and are enrolled just as much as if they were actually fighting pilots or observers. In other countries, that is not so; they remain civilian altogether, as I understand it, and the work of repair and maintenance of the aeroplanes is conducted outside the air service altogether. It is evident that you would have to arrive at an agreement as to which system you are going to adopt — as to whether it is to be the inclusion of all the mechanics or the exclusion of some of them. These are practical difficulties pointed out to me which I am bound to put before this Commission. I should be very glad to see a definite table submitted, so that we might know exactly what we are doing, before we assent to a proposal of this kind, which at present I see great practical difficulties in doing.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — Before entering into the discussions upon air armaments, I should like to make clear in a brief statement the general attitude of my Government on this subject. I should like to have it clearly understood that, in presenting this statement, I am dealing with the subject purely from a technical standpoint.

As was frequently stated during the discussion of this subject of air armaments before Sub-Commission A and its subordinate Committees, the United States does not possess a separate air force. There are comprised in both the army and navy air organisations which pertain to those arms. In consequence, any limitation of air armament which may result from our deliberations will affect a portion of the personnel which is permanently included in both the American army and navy. I assume, of course, that any limitation placed upon air personnel will be considered in the light of this statement. My Government is firmly of the opinion that practical progress in the matter of the limitation or reduction of air armaments can be made only by means of methods which are applicable to visible and tangible armaments which are actually in existence. These visible and tangible armaments which are in existence consist of two principal classes — personnel and matériel.

In regard to personnel, methods of limitation should be brought to bear upon, first, forces maintained with the colours and, second, upon trained reserves. It must be borne in mind, in order that there may be no confusion on the subject, that the term "trained reserves" in its application by my Government means "those men who have received a military training with the colours or in organisations authorised officially to give such training and who are under a legal liability to be recalled to the colours in case of mobilisation."
It seems to us that any effort to apply a more extended definition of "trained reserves" by including in such a term a portion of the civil population which, though possessed of some degree of special technical training, has had no military training whatever is open to grave objections.

In regard to matériel, methods of limitation should in our opinion be confined to material actually in service with the forces serving with the colours and to material held in reserve, whether for those forces or for the purpose of arming and equipping the trained reserves in the event of mobilisation. My Government believes that any effort to make limitation dependent upon the present development of civil aviation in other countries, or to make it dependent upon matériel normally in the hands of the civil population and not subject to exclusive Governmental control for war purposes, will inevitably foredoom such methods to failure.

My Government does not believe in the efficacy of any method proposed for the reduction or limitation of air armaments which takes into account either the personnel or matériel of civil aviation. Any method of limitation or reduction whose application extends beyond dealing with visible and tangible air armaments is not acceptable to my Government.

I believe that, generally speaking, provisions of limitation for the personnel of air armaments should be the same or similar to provisions of limitation for the personnel of land armaments. I believe that the limitation to be applied in the draft Convention should deal with air personnel with the colours and with air personnel in the trained reserve. I realise the value of pilots and, in consequence, we might well consider an additional column both for air force personnel with the colours and for air force personnel in the trained reserve, in which columns might be entered a limitation as to the number of pilots, whether they be officers, warrant officers or enlisted men.

I have merely stated our views briefly in the hope that, having them on record, the explanations which we shall have the privilege of hearing from the French delegation will show that there is some method of reconciling the views which I have put forward.

M. YOVANOVITCH (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). — Mr. President — At the time of the general discussion I was obliged to make express reservations on the subject of the limitation of air effectives contemplated by the two draft Conventions. I pointed out that my country is in this respect in an altogether peculiar situation. We have no civil aviation and we have no factories for the manufacture of aircraft. The consequence is that in practice, as regards air effectives, we have no reserves, neither of flying personnel nor of technical personnel, and it seems to me needless to point out how difficult it is to build up reserves of pilots and technical personnel. For these reasons, we deeply regret that it is quite impossible for us to agree to be treated on the same footing with Powers which possess an important civil air force and aeronautical industries which enable them to renew not only their material but also their personnel; we claim that the special position of my country and of countries in an analogous situation be recognised.

I wish to state at once that at the Disarmament Conference my Government will take these factors into consideration in estimating its air force.

M. COMNÈNE (Roumania). — I desire to express my complete agreement with the statement just made by my colleague, M. Yovanovitch. The point of view of my Government is absolutely clear. My Government is convinced that any limitation applied solely to military aviation would be perfectly useless, because it could be compensated for by a corresponding increase of civil aviation. The validity of this argument was, besides, admitted up to a point by Sub-Commission A, and I venture to draw your attention to the passage dealing with this point on page 112 of the report of that Commission:

"Sub-Commission A was unanimously of opinion that civil aircraft might play a very important part in future warfare, but it considered that, since the primary rôle of civil aviation is economic, it was not qualified to pass an opinion on a question which had grave political and economic consequences.

"It places on record, however, the fact that it has not discussed this matter in detail, not because it did not consider it a most important one but on account of its economic and political implications."

I consider, therefore, that this question has been held over and it is for us now to consider it and settle it.

I should like to add one thing more. I forgot to remind you that a Committee of Experts has already met at Brussels (see Annex 6) and examined the economic aspect of the question. We have documents which may help us and among them I find the following important consideration put forward:

"It must be recognised that hitherto the development of civil aviation in a certain number of countries has been closely bound up as regards both technique and organisation with the requirements and development of military aviation."

It is equally clear that all the information collected and examined at the Brussels Conference may be of the greatest service to us, but, obviously, only for information, and of course, it remains for us to settle the question.
M. HENNINGS (Sweden). — Since we have begun this discussion on rather general lines, I should like to say that, in Sub-Commission A, the Swedish delegation supported the same views as those expressed by Mr. Gibson. I must therefore place it on record that, in principle, I agree with what the delegate of the United States has said.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — It was inevitable, gentlemen, that the moment we approached the question of the limitation which could be applied to air services, the close connection between civil aviation and its use in time of war should immediately be brought up, and it was therefore inevitable that any effort which we might make, if we confined ourselves to the military aspect of the question, should instantly appear to be limited, and to a certain degree compromised. The normal conclusion which should be drawn from this fact is that which the French draft would have embodied had other considerations not intervened. I must admit that our draft as it now stands is not a complete and exact representation of our ideas; it is an attempt to adapt them to the different views which were put forward during the labours of the technical organisations. But the logical conclusion is that aviation is essentially an international matter, and the only way to secure ourselves against a possibility humiliating to humanity, the only way to prevent the splendid and undreamt-of conquest of aviation element from being turned into a new danger, the worst of all dangers, especially if combined with chemical warfare — the only effective way to guard against this danger, to avenge, as it were humanity for this humiliation to which it is exposed, would undoubtedly be to internationalise all aviation concerns. This would indeed give an effective guarantee that this new conquest shall not be used in future warfare.

We do not abandon the hope of realising this great idea in the future; but to-day, in the present state of ideas, we confine ourselves perforce to proposing what seems practicably possible.

As M. Comnène reminded us just now, this serious question was raised in the course of the labours of our technical organisations. Certain unanimous recommendations were made. I think that, limited — very limited — and imperfect as our present work must be, we ought to base it upon those considerations.

The utilisation of aviation in time of war depends closely upon the development of civil aviation. I therefore agree, when some of our colleagues say: "When we come to lay down definite figures, we must take into consideration that some States have no civil aviation; States must be allowed a claim to military aviation in inverse ratio to their civil aviation."

There is another view which I accept, and which is contained in the proposals of the French draft. It is impossible that the organisation, whatever it may be — we shall discuss that later — which is to be set up during the application of the Convention to co-ordinate the results of the international Convention and to supervise its execution — this organ cannot always be watching the development of civil aviation. The reasons which might be invoked for bringing Article 8 of the Covenant into play, that is, the circumstances which might give a State opportunity to the Convention the right to increase one or more categories of its armaments, cannot, as regards aviation, include among them the argument that another State is unexpectedly, unduly and largely increasing its civil aviation.

Should it, in these circumstances, be accepted as a third alternative that we ought perhaps to do nothing at all? I would warn my colleagues that such a course would destroy the possibility of concluding the Convention as a whole. If we laid before the Conference a Convention which limited everything, except the one weapon which would certainly be the first and perhaps the most extensively used in a future war, we should, gentlemen, be making ourselves ridiculous and the Conference impossible. We must look for limitations which are possible, even while we point out their insufficiencies.

The French delegation has proposed a series of measures to be taken. I think that it would be better to examine them in the order in which they come in the texts, according to the wise method which we have adopted hitherto. I have only prefaced the texts by these general observations because the observations which have been made here and the declarations which some of our colleagues have made in the name of their Governments, seemed to me to necessitate this. But the discussion is being opened on a definite point Article 1 of the Synoptic Analysis relating to air armaments: the limitation of effectives (men).

Well, gentlemen, if we agree that there must be some limitation of air armaments, notwithstanding the difficulties which it presents and its inevitably partial character, I do not see how we can fail to agree that the effectives of the personnel must be limited.

The delegates of the United States, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Roumania, said, quite rightly, that the existence of large numbers of civil aircraft constitutes a fact which dominates the question. I agree with them; logically, we ought to limit civil aircraft. But this would mean limiting, for military considerations, the very development of human enterprise, of industrial enterprise, and this is impossible. Besides which, this would mean attempting to limit the war potential. You know that if some delegations, my own chief among them, have insisted continuously on the conception of war potential, it is not with the absurd idea, so unjustly attributed to them by certain persons, of wishing to limit these potential resources. On the contrary, it was to show the impossibility of limiting
them, but also and at once to draw the conclusion that, if it is impossible to limit war potential, it is inadmissible, unjust and unacceptable for a whole number of nations to claim to limit the trained reserves which are only one form of this war potential.

But if we are neither desirous nor able to limit the material of civil aviation, there is yet one element which can be limited — the men who, by reason of their military status, receive special and permanent training in peace-time in the use of this civil material for purposes of war. I see quite clearly that difficulties are going to arise when we come to limit material: but the difficulty of limiting effectives is less clear to me. If there is one thing which can be limited, it is personnel: the men who, by virtue of their profession or of their military duties during the time which they pass with the colours, are trained for the immediate utilisation of the material for purposes of war.

I do urge more strongly that we agree on this limitation, at least in principle. I cannot conceive of such a self-contradictory absurdity as an international Convention which limited armies to the last man sweeping out the barrack yard or oiling the rifles (as many delegations insisted when we were discussing military effectives) but which allowed Governments to arm themselves with as many aviators as they liked to have sailing about the air unhindered. Besides, there would then be a very easy way of getting round the Convention. It would be sufficient to attach to the air force a certain number of men in an army, and let them serve afterwards in another corps: the thing would be done. This cannot be allowed. It is true that all countries are not organised alike. Some of them have a separate air force, while others make no such distinction. But this difference really presents no difficulty whatever. If air personnel is entered among the general effectives and does not constitute a separate corps, they are still units which help to form the total sum. They are bound by the general limitation. If, on the other hand, these units constitute a separate corps, as in France and many other countries, special limitation will be laid down for them.

Lord Cecil, with his practical mind, said just now: "Show us the tables and we shall see if this is possible". But, Lord Cecil, the tables are there; the French delegation has submitted them; they were the tables of general effectives. Tables I, II, III, IV of the old numbering contained, respectively, military armaments, naval armaments, air armaments. Instead of taking these effectives as a whole, you preferred to study, first, military effectives, then naval effectives and then air effectives. Very good. Consequently, the third column of each of the Tables I, II, III and IV suggested by the French delegation constitute the table which we suggest for the limitation of air effectives, and it is exceedingly simple. You ask how it is possible to distinguish military personnel from the other? Simply by the fact that military personnel is with the colours or in units organised on a military basis as we have defined them. We shall now again be meeting with all the definitions which we have just discussed at such length, and I think, with such good purpose, for the French delegation meant these definitions to apply to the different armaments as a whole. We have decided to separate them for the moment — we shall not admit that they will be separated in the final synthesis — and we find exactly the same definition for each of these armaments: men, warrant officers or sergeants with the colours or officers with the colours; men, warrant officers or sergeants or officers who serve a longer period than the men of the annual levy; men belonging to the annual levy; men — in the case of nations which are able to make such a distinction; I see that it cannot be made compulsory — allocated to overseas forces; and men on home defence. I agree that, in the case of air armaments, this distinction is much less important owing to the greater ease of transport; but there are nations, my own for example, where this distinction does exist; they must be allowed to show it. We must now repeat all the work which we have just done on military effectives with air effectives, and we shall certainly go much faster, since we have had a detailed discussion, as regards the land army.

But, on the question of principle, I must point out that it is most illogical not to limit air effectives if we have limited land effectives. You would see how illogical it was when we came to the naval question if we did not limit naval effectives. It would leave open an obvious way of getting round the Convention, for it would be enough to attach all the effectives which one wished to have over and above the limit to that branch of armaments where there was no limitation. Further, this would make it impossible for some nations to consent to the first limitations which they had originally agreed to accept.

The Commission rose at 12.55 p.m.
34. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 1 (continuation).

M. YOVANOVITCH (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). — In order to dispel all possible misunderstanding, I desire to state, in reply to certain of my colleagues who enquired this morning whether my declaration was designed to preclude the possibility of limiting air armaments, that this was in no sense my intention. My object was to point out the inequality that exists as between Powers whose civil aviation is highly developed and those which have no such aviation. This means that the assessment of effectives must also vary.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I have very little to say on the subject of effectives. It has to be considered whether we are to limit air force effectives in the same way as land effectives. In the case of my own country, I do not see how we can limit the one without the other. In Belgium — as in the United States, from what Mr. Gibson said this morning — there is no independent air force; we have an army which includes certain air services. Hence the tables which we have undertaken to fill in, will, ipso facto, include land forces and air forces. Is it suggested that we should furnish these returns separately? This would be difficult, as air formations are included in the land formations, neither they nor their effectives being entirely independent.

M. Paul-Boncour spoke this morning of the necessity of limiting the effectives with the colours and air effectives separately. If one went as far as this, it would be very difficult to distinguish between air effectives and land effectives, because, as a rule, a man is on the air force establishment to begin with and then, after four or five years, is transferred to the infantry, so that the same individual might be regarded as with the colours for the purposes of aviation and on the reserve for the other services.

While it would be a simple matter for us to give combined total figures, it would be quite impossible to supply separate figures. This, at all events for my country, is a very strong argument for supplying comprehensive figures.

You spoke this morning, Mr. President, of opening a sort of general discussion on air armaments. I should like to take this opportunity of saying a few words on the serious and difficult question of civil aviation. The reason that I mention this now is that I desire to submit a proposal which my colleagues should have before them as soon as possible.

M. Comnène has already referred this morning to the unanimous conclusion of Sub-Commission A. This conclusion is of such importance that you will perhaps allow me to read it once again:

"Sub-Commission A was unanimously of opinion that civil aircraft might play a very important part in future warfare . . ."

This is a general statement, but Sub-Commission A went on to say that it was not qualified to pass an opinion on a question which had economic consequences. That is a most excellent reason. The military experts were unwilling to go beyond the terms of their mandate or to exceed their competence. The essential point, however, is that civil aviation will play an important part.

Mr. Gibson, in a speech to which I listened with the closest attention and in which I was delighted to find much that is indicative of future agreement, said something which, I must admit, did not entirely satisfy me. He said that civil aviation would perhaps play some part, but that we were dealing with a very complex problem and that it would be better if we left it out of account.

This will not do. It seems to be much too simple a way of settling the problem. Examples of this method are to be found if not in military history at all events in legend. May I remind you of the well-known case of the thin man who was fighting a duel with a fat man, and who, with a laudable desire to be perfectly fair, marked out a circle on the big man's stomach and said: "If I touch you outside this circle, it won't count". Unfortunately it did count, as the fat man felt it.
To suggest a parallel, then: The bombs that destroy our towns, the bombs dropped from civil aircraft, will not count? I should be quite satisfied but that will not prevent them from destroying our houses. If the problem were to determine which blows should count and which should not count, this might perhaps settle the difficulty in theory, but the question of real disarmament would still remain unsolved.

We are still faced with this difficulty, and no expedients can help us to escape it. How, then, is it to be settled? It has been suggested that we should attempt to limit civil aviation. I may say quite frankly that that is, in my opinion, an entirely illusory suggestion. To limit civil aviation because it may be dangerous would be something like trying to limit railways because they might be used for the transport of troops. One cannot run counter to progress. Aviation is bound to develop and we are bound to know it. If we are pessimistic, we may say that humanity is “condemned” to know aviation, but, in any case, know it it.

It may perhaps be necessary to lay down the reservation that, if civil aviation makes great progress, we shall be released from our undertakings, but this cannot be regarded as a solution, because it might result at any given moment in our finding ourselves without any disarmament treaty at all, or with only a very limited treaty. Such being the case, can we say that there is nothing to be done?

Sub-Commissions A and B made what was, in my opinion, an excellent proposal when they suggested that the question should be referred to civilian experts. It was my privilege to preside over the meeting of these civilian experts and I may say that I have rarely found a body of men better qualified to examine an important problem in a spirit of idealism and at the same time with so sure a grasp of practical realities.

It would be truly regrettable if, after having attached due importance to the conclusions of Sub-Commission A, we were to pass too lightly over the conclusions of these civilian experts (see Annex 6). I do not say that they offer us a solution of the difficulties, but I am convinced that they have at all events pointed out the way that leads to that solution.

They declare that the present difficulty is entirely due to the fact that the types of military aircraft are not sufficiently distinct from the civilian types. The reason of this is twofold: in the first place, aviation is of recent birth and the types are not yet sufficiently differentiated; we have not yet succeeded in building an essentially military or an essentially civil type, whereas warships now have hardly any features in common with merchantmen.

In the natural order of things, however, the very force of evolution will probably — indeed, quite certainly — result in differentiation, and of this the signs are already apparent. In the matter of aviation, however, so we are told by the civilian experts, evolution has been delayed. Why is this? It is because civil aviation is not yet independent, because it is not yet self-supporting, because it depends upon State subsidies and because these State subsidies are nearly always military in character. The civilian experts demand that the States should be made to face their responsibilities. How is this to be done? Many States declare here that they do not want civil aviation and military aviation to be considered together, because they are distinct and have nothing in common. These very States, however, are granting subsidies to civilian companies on the express condition that the civil aircraft shall conform to military specifications and can be used for military purposes. These States will have to choose one thing or the other; they cannot have both.

To return to the civilian experts’ suggestions. What are their suggestions? What they say is: do not try to limit civil aviation. Content yourself — if I may so express it — with “civilising” it; confine yourself to taking such precautions as may be necessary to make it really civil in character. The experts then expressed their views in the form of a series of concrete proposals, urging that the grant of subsidies should not be conditional upon certain military qualifications in civil aircraft, the establishment of lines of purely strategic importance, or military qualifications in the civil aviation pilots. They submitted other recommendations of the same nature. I shall not detain you by mentioning them all. You will find them all in the Sub-Commission’s report.

My rôle, a very modest rôle, is to place them before you. Suggestions as serious as these, suggestions of such importance, should not, in my opinion, pass unnoticed, but should be given their proper place in our discussions.

I have ventured therefore to quote them on a single sheet, with a very slight modification of form, and, whenever the civilian experts recommended that we should pass a decision, I have simply drafted the text, so that, if the proposal meets with your approval, it may serve as a decision.

I have formulated five such proposals and now venture to submit them to you for consideration. I was anxious to lay them before you at once, in order that you may have time to consider them and also that they may be regarded as coming formally within the scope of your discussions and not simply as a document from the Sub-Commissions. Whether they will meet with unanimous support I cannot say. If they fail to win your approval, I shall feel that something essential has been omitted from our treaty; but, as I said when I first rose to speak, I think that there are at present many forms of disarmament which are technically and morally possible but which we must admit are not yet politically possible. Refusal on the part of certain delegations to accept these proposals will show whether this applies to them, and it will be for us to draw our conclusions accordingly.

Even if certain delegations refused to be bound by definite texts, we should still endeavour to do something. I should ask you to reconsider these resolutions in the form of recommendations for the purposes of a future Conference and in the future interests of disarmament.
The President. — The text of M. de Brouckère's proposals will be distributed. It cannot, of course, be discussed until we come to deal with Point 8 of the Synoptic Analysis, which you have before you.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — Germany possesses no military air forces, so that the German delegation finds itself in a peculiarly detached position as regards air armaments.

It is in the main entirely in agreement with the views expressed by the United States delegate, and will confine itself accordingly, with further reference to the statements made by the German delegation in Sub-Commission A, to submitting certain technical observations.

The decisive factor in determining the military value of air forces is the extent to which such forces can be rapidly employed for the purposes of combat. The sudden use of air forces might make it possible for war to break out with a lightning rapidity. The stronger a country is in military aviation, personnel and material, the greater the menace to peace. The first decisions in any combat will rain down from the air long before the guns on land or at sea have shown the measure of their power. Concentration in the country which is the victim of aggression will be interfered with on the very outbreak of war. Industry will be wrecked and the great ports employed in the importation of war material destroyed; fleets will be weakened and demoralised by bombing air-squadrons. Hence military peace-time air forces should be limited so as to guarantee international security as far as this is possible. The ideal to be aimed at is undoubtedly the complete abolition of military aviation.

The other decisive factor is to be found in the reserves which military aviation possesses in the form of personnel with military training, and of such material as it may have accumulated. Possibilities as regards the vigorous pursuit of air warfare and the equipment of the major forces available for fighting purposes shortly before the outbreak of war, and further as regards the equipment of reserve vessels with military aircraft, undoubtedly depend upon the preparations that a country has made in time of peace. Hence, stocks of military aviation material prepared in time of peace should be stated numerically, as should the effects of the trained air reserves.

As regards civil aviation, it is unnecessary for me to submit the remarks which I had proposed to lay before you, as I am entirely in agreement with what M. de Brouckère has just said.

The German delegation is quite of opinion that the best procedure would be to adopt the proposals of the Brussels Sub-Commission. I have not yet read the points which M. de Brouckère is about to lay before us, and reserve the right to discuss them when we are actually in possession of them. We are in full agreement with the general principle just enunciated by M. de Brouckère.

The assessment of air armaments should be considered from the following points of view:

1. Military air material and personnel.
2. Trained reserves and material in reserve for military aviation.

It would be inconsistent on the one hand to consider the possibly negligible military value of civilian aviation in a country, and on the other hand not to take into account, for the purposes of limitation, the trained reserves and stocks of material for military aviation, whose military value is undoubtedly far higher than that of civilian aviation in the belligerent country.

In conclusion, I desire to repeat that, in the matter of military aviation, the German delegation fully approves the proposals of the United States delegation; as regards civil aviation, it accepts M. de Brouckère's proposal, while reserving the right to submit observations when the suggestions in question are actually before us.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I should like to ask M. de Brouckère a question on this special matter of personnel. I cannot deal with the other part of his speech at this moment. As I understand it, what he says is this: there is no distinction between the air personnel and the land personnel in the Belgian army, and therefore you cannot set out what is specially air personnel; all you can do is to limit the whole of the army. That does not seem a very good way of limiting aircraft or air forces, because it does not limit them at all. It may limit the total fighting strength of the country, but it does not in itself limit the air force, because the whole of the army may be used as air personnel.

Since I addressed the Commission this morning, I have had an opportunity of reading a very interesting speech, which I venture very respectfully to commend to the French delegation, which was made before Sub-Commission A on September 3rd last year by Colonel Mouchard, the French air expert. I will not trouble to read the whole of his speech, but he explained with great elaboration how impossible it really is to limit the air force of a country by seeking to limit the air personnel. One example he gives is this. He says that, in the French organisation, a man may be trained as an airman; he may practise as an airman for six or seven years; he then goes back to the ordinary land force; he is no longer an airman. Another man may be trained in the same way, and in that way you will have five or six times the number of trained air pilots in the air force, and yet, if you made any return at all under such a table as is contemplated by the French delegation, you would only return one-fifth or one-sixth of those, namely, the people who were actually engaged in air work at that moment.
I do not know whether I have made clear to my colleagues the point that Colonel Mouchard made with extreme clearness; but that is by no means the only point he made. He dealt very strongly with the point of the extreme difficulty of distinguishing between military-trained air pilots and civilian-trained air pilots. It is for that reason that I venture to ask the French delegation exactly what it proposes to put into its table, and I venture very respectfully to say, in face of Colonel Mouchard’s speech, that I really cannot think for a moment that any such table as Table I would be very satisfactory, because, so far as I can see, neither the French nor the Belgian delegation would be able to fill up the special columns dealing with air forces.

The truth, of course, is that the whole air army is in process of evolution, and in every country it is being organised in an entirely different way. The difficulty I have stated would not apply in the case of the British organisation, because there the air force is largely, but not wholly, organised separately. The result would be that you would have figures which would not be in any way comparative as returned by the British from those which were returned by the French or the Belgians. In the circumstances, I do very seriously suggest to my colleagues that limitation of air forces by limiting air personnel is not really a practical solution. It is no use putting into our Convention something which is not practical. M. Paul-Boncour has insisted on that over and over again, and rightly. Things which, in point of fact, are not going to operate as a limitation of armaments should not be put in the Convention. I venture to think that, if M. Paul-Boncour would be good enough to read the speech of Colonel Mouchard made on September 3rd of last year, he will see a great deal which at any rate seems to raise great difficulties in the way of this proposal.

I am extremely reluctant to find myself in opposition to any proposal for increasing the practicability of disarmament; but I do think that, before we adopt this in the rather too simplified method which is proposed by the French delegation, we ought to think very carefully what we are doing, because we are in danger of writing into our Convention something which in a great number of countries will have no operation whatever, and in other countries will operate quite differently. I do not desire to elaborate this matter further, but, unless I can be satisfied that there is some answer to these difficulties, I venture to ask the Commission not to take any decision at the first meeting, but to leave it over until we have had an opportunity of seeing whether some really practical scheme can be devised for limiting air personnel. No one would be more glad than I if that could be done; but I hope we shall not put something into the Convention which we could not defend outside this room.

I would like to read this statement at page 113 of the report of Sub-Commission A:

“The delegations of Belgium, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Roumania and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes are of opinion that this method” — that is the method of limitation of the total air personnel of every category employed in peace-time — “is not acceptable for all countries unless due regard is paid to the personnel, and particularly to pilots in service in civil aviation.”

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I should like to speak for a moment to reassure M. de Brouckère on a point which appeared to cause him some concern. I am afraid that my remarks this morning at the beginning of the general discussion may have been inadequate; in fact, they must have been inadequate if I gave the impression that in any way my Government began with the conclusion that it was unwilling to deal with civil aviation, and proceeded from that point to find the reasons for it. On the contrary, we have desired to study the question in the most earnest way. We have gone into it very fully in the desire to find a solution, and through that process we have reached the conclusion that it is not practicable — at least, we have been unable to find any solution which, on the one hand, affords any effective limitation without, on the other hand, seriously interfering with legitimate commercial enterprise, and I think we are all in agreement that any method which would prevent the development of civil aviation would be very undesirable — just as undesirable as would have been methods to interfere with the development of the railway or the steamship. I have stated this merely as our conclusion, not as an absolute and final résumé of the truth. We do not claim to have a monopoly of wisdom on the subject, and we feel that the essential purpose of our being here is to find solutions, and that, if one delegation has not found a solution, another one may have found it; and I merely stated our conclusion that we have been unable to find it and, on the basis of the material at our disposal, we did not feel that there was a solution available.

However, I want to make it very clear that, if any means can be found to deal with the question effectively, without at the same time interfering with legitimate commercial enterprise, we shall be glad to give it most careful consideration.

I am glad that M. de Brouckère is bringing in a proposal, because any proposal that he brings in always commends, and is entitled to, the very fullest consideration that we can all give it. I want to reassure him fully and to say that we have not taken an unyielding attitude or closed our minds on this subject, and — to revert to his story — above all, I do not propose to draw any circles on M. de Brouckère.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — We now have to decide whether we are going to accept this text or not, and whether we are going to accept it in principle, subject to possible modification.

If I understand Lord Cecil aright, he is questioning the very principle of the limitation of air personnel and suggests that we should either settle that question in the negative or at all events adjourn it, although we did not do this in the case of land effectives.
I regret that my Government is unable to support this view. The very fact of adjourning the question of the limitation of air personnel would appear to indicate that this personnel, like that of the navy, might be treated under the terms of an international Convention differently from the land effectives. That we cannot agree to. We see no reason to apply limitation to certain forces and not to others: it must apply to all or none.

Is this limitation of air forces really so difficult a matter? The limitation of land effectives was not simple, but we reached an agreement notwithstanding. Aviation undoubtedly presents more serious difficulties, but these are no greater in the case of personnel than in that of material; on the contrary. If the chapter concerning the air forces is simply to be left blank, the international Convention will come to nothing, for we should be leaving out the very form of armaments that is most readily available for use.

Lord Cecil referred to the statements of Colonel Mouchard, the French air expert. I might point out that Colonel Mouchard by no means disregarded the utility or possibility of limiting air effectives. I have re-read what he said and also the opinions given by the technical Commission. I do not propose to read these now, as this would obviously take too long, but I shall not, I think, be misrepresenting matters if I say that Colonel Mouchard's explanations and the technical Commission's opinions amount to this: limitation of the personnel alone in aviation matters would not be sufficient.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire) interrupting. — I do not agree with that.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — In that case, might I be allowed to refer to a passage in Sub-Commission A's report:

"After enumerating three advantages attending the limitation of air personnel, the text indicates two disadvantages, the second being that the method does not take into account the personnel of civil aviation which has an immediate military value for purposes of war".

This is the question with which we have been dealing this morning, the question on which M. de Brouckère has just spoken. We must either decide that all limitation of aviation is impossible or eliminate that consideration from our discussions. Our task is fraught with difficulties, but these do not justify us in deciding that, simply because whatever solution we adopt is bound to be imperfect, it is preferable not to adopt any solution at all. Sub-Commission A's conclusion as regards both personnel and material was to the effect that any limitation of air armaments that failed to take civil aviation into account must obviously be imperfect. This we readily admit, but does this mean that limitation is absolutely out of the question? I refuse to accept such a conclusion. On the other hand, is it impossible to limit personnel? It would be so if we could not define it. Not only is it quite possible to define it, however, but in certain countries the air forces are even independent organisations, with their own officers and air marshals, who undoubtedly have men under them: I demand that these men who constitute the air forces, like those who constitute the land forces, should be mentioned in one of the tables and that they should be subject to limitation. Such limitation would no doubt be imperfect, even more imperfect than in the case of the land army, on account of civil aviation. The personnel of the air forces is a shifting personnel, owing to the very special qualifications required, and, after a certain time, these men are transferred to the land forces. At the same time, they actually remain for a number of years in the air force and air effectives are included in the administrative lists of all the armies in the world. There is no reason why limitation should not be applied to them separately. They are still service men and, even if they are not separately mentioned, they will be included in the total limitation of the army as a whole. Here I would remind you of the reasons which I quoted when we were establishing the distinction between the home and colonial armies. Such distinctions permit of a clearer view of the situation and thus make supervision possible. We want to see quite clearly into the matter and, if we are to do this, we cannot have big general limitations covering quite different kinds of armaments. This is specially desirable, since, whatever we do, the sum total of machines will always be much higher than what will figure in the returns of any army, and these surplus machines simply require trained men to be ready for use. If we failed to provide in the Convention for the limitation of air effectives (as in the case of the land and naval forces), if these effectives were simply included under general limitation, a country would have countless advantages and, on the outbreak of war, these effectives would immediately rank as part of the striking force and take charge of civil aircraft.

Any international Convention for the reduction and limitation of armaments appears to me a sheer impossibility unless it includes limitation of air personnel and material. If this is not to be included, the whole question of the limitation of land effectives would also be affected.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — I warmly support the proposal of the French delegation.

I have no further arguments to contribute, M. Paul-Boncour having already dealt with the question in so comprehensive and convincing a manner.

I should like, however, to go even further and to limit trained air reserves. I quite realise the difficulties, and, if it proves impossible to limit such reserves, it is at all events
essential, in my opinion, if the Treaty is to be complete, that we should not confine ourselves to the limitation of material but should also limit effectives. Such limitation, while not complete, would still be better than nothing as a complement to limitation of material.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I am in entire agreement with the delegate for Sweden and support the French proposal.

I do not wish to reopen the discussion on trained reserves, as our opinion is already known to you.

I might point out, however, that the question of trained reserves is not of the same importance when we come to consider the limitation of air personnel. Reference to page 113 of Sub-Commission A's report shows that certain delegations, among others the Netherland delegation, expressed the opinion "that this method is not acceptable for all countries unless due regard is paid to the personnel, and particularly to pilots in service in civil aviation. If this condition is fulfilled, disadvantage (c) disappears". This disadvantage is framed as follows: "It does not take into account the existing trained reserves of army air forces". The explanation is that the trained reserves of army air forces are engaged in civil aviation.

I am entirely in favour of the French view.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I do not wish to prolong the debate unnecessarily, but, as M. Paul-Boncour has thought it right to express an entirely different view as to what Colonel Mouchard said, I am afraid I must ask leave of the Commission to read a passage from what Colonel Mouchard did say, because, if M. Paul-Boncour will forgive me for saying so, I attach great importance to my own accuracy, and I am quite sure that what I said was true. I will read from page 9 of the Minutes of the eighteenth meeting of the Air Committee:

Colonel Mouchard said:

"...If, in the French method, direct limitation of personnel was not contemplated it was because, after studying the matter, the French delegation had come to the conclusion that such direct limitation was not practicable. It did not mean that they wished to exclude entirely from consideration the limitation of effectives and pilots as a method of limitation; that was a point which would have to be considered, but the French delegation were not convinced that it was a practicable method, though they were open to conviction".

On being asked by Colonel Ujejski to give his reasons, Colonel Mouchard replied:

"...that he should set forth the disadvantages of the system, although he would have preferred that some one should first set forth the advantages, because personally he could see several disadvantages and no advantages.

Colonel Mouchard continues for a further three and a half pages to explain in detail why he was opposed to the attempt to limit air personnel, but I will not ask the Commission to listen to these explanations. I venture very respectfully to say to M. Paul-Boncour that I have correctly repeated what Colonel Mouchard said.

I will not repeat again the passage from the report. There is not the slightest doubt that the delegations which I read out said, in so many words, that they did not think that the limitation of air personnel was acceptable unless it was combined with the limitation of civil personnel. Those are the facts. They are not binding on us; we have got to make up our own minds, but it is just as well to see what the facts are before we take a decision upon them.

Then I am still in the dark as to how it is proposed to apply this system to those countries where there is no distinction between the air service and the land service, and where all that happens is that certain members of the land service are detailed from time to time to do the air duty of the country. Merely to state that those are the only people would evidently not give a fair description of the number of air pilots there were. They enter the service, learn their course, doing their duties for a year or two, then go back to the land service, other people taking their places, and in that way there is a perpetual succession of people who are being trained in the air service. It is perfectly true that these difficulties would not apply to the same extent in the British system, where you have a completely separate air service. As long as a man is capable of doing his duties as a pilot or other officer, he remains as a pilot or other officer, entirely separate from the land service, and there is no such roulement between the two services as apparently exists in Belgium and other countries. But after all, we are asked to accept a particular statement here and a particular table. I venture very respectfully to say that it is no use making eloquent observations on the subject; we have got to show that that table will work out and will in fact produce a practical result. If it will not, then we must find some other system if we are to limit air personnel. It is not only true of the pilots and of the other flying officers, it is equally true of what is quite as important a part of the air service of a country — the mechanics. In some cases the mechanics are quite a separate organisation; that is the case in Great Britain, and it would be much easier to do it in my country than in most countries. In other countries you have them as part of the military mechanics. I gather from Colonel Mouchard's speech that that is true in some countries, though I am not

1 Note by Secretariat. — The text of the French Minutes referred to does not contain the last sentence "because personally...advantages".
...sure that it is the case in France. In other countries you have civilians quite outside the army altogether who do the mechanical work. All these things ought to be considered very carefully, and you must have a table drawn up in a proper way.

I venture to think that the principle which M. Paul-Boncour has announced more than once — of the necessity of dealing with the land, air and sea forces — a perfectly sound principle in itself — is being ridden to death. They are different things; you have got to deal with them, I agree, but to say that you have to deal with them all in exactly the same way seems to me, if I may be permitted to say so, wanting in common sense. In fact, it cannot be done. With regard to the sea, we limit primarily by limiting the ships; that is the primary limitation, and every expert agrees that if you limit the ships you do, in fact, limit the naval strength of a country. As regards the air, in my judgment — and I think that is the conclusion of the Sub-Commission — you must primarily limit the aircraft; that is the primary limitation. Let us hope we can find other limitations. I am not against that — but that is the primary limitation. As regards the land, we do not propose to have any direct limitation of matériel; it is not proposed in the French scheme nor is it proposed in the British scheme. There is to be an indirect limitation, but we are dealing with it in a different way. I quite agree, because the things are different, and, though it is quite right that you must limit all three, to say that you must limit them all in precisely the same way is to defy the actual facts of the case and will reduce our Convention to something like absurdity unless we are very careful.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I do not want this discussion to degenerate into an argument on what words have been used, but Lord Cecil has quoted the example of my country and my own statements, and I am therefore obliged to answer, not that he has misquoted me, but that I may have expressed myself so confusedly as to make myself unintelligible.

Lord Cecil imagines that, with the present organisation of the air force of my country, we could not accept this limitation, and he believes that I said so. I should have been very clumsy if I had begun my plea for the limitation of forces by saying that it was impossible.

On the contrary, it is possible. And I am going to prove this by giving figures. Lord Cecil said: "You cannot say how many men there are in your own organisation". In 1926, we had 1,548 men in the active service and 50 men in the auxiliary service, a total of 1,607 men. My point is quite different. I said: "If you do not limit air forces, you will make it difficult for me to draw up a table for land forces". Why is this? Because in my country land forces and air forces form part of the same united whole. The air force forms a distinct branch of the whole army, but there are a certain number of services which are common to both. Among these, 1,607 men have I not counted the share of the "intendance" service or of some of the staff services which would be allotted to the air force if this was an independent organisation. If you establish general limitation, this does not much matter, but, if you ask me to establish limitation for my land forces independently of my air forces, this might be an important point.

What I also said was that this method would become much more difficult still if, as some of my colleagues suggest, we limited not only forces with the colours but also reserves. We should then be faced with a situation which in practice it is almost impossible to make. Why is this? Because, when I am making out the reserves for the land forces, what am I to do with the time-expired members of the air force? They have been trained in aviation, they can be used for other purposes than that of aviation, but after some years they can no longer be used for anything but aviation. Where am I going to put them? I cannot answer this question if the limitation is to be partial; the problem is comparatively easy to solve if the limitation is general.

There is another point that I wish to make, and this is really why I rose; that is, that we should get a limitation of land forces which would be entirely misleading. Why is this? Because my aviation personnel can serve in war as land forces, with the infantry. At some given moment the captive-balloon sections are short of material, so the men are employed in the infantry. Then again, if you do not limit the air forces, you will make it difficult for me to do this, instead of earmarking 1,607 men for aviation, I earmark 16,070 and say that I have only left the difference between 38,344 and 16,070 for the land army. Then, the day that war is declared, what is to prevent me from quietly taking 1,607 men for aviation, I earmark 16,070 and say that I have only left the difference between 38,344 and 16,070 for the land army. Then again, if you do not limit the air forces, what is to prevent me from doing this: in my contingent of 38,344 men, instead of earmarking 1,607 men for aviation, I earmark 16,070 and say that I have only left the difference between 38,344 and 16,070 for the land army. Then, the day that war is declared, what is to prevent me from doing this? Because, when I am making out the reserves for the land forces, what am I to do with the time-expired members of the air force? They have been trained in aviation, they can be used for other purposes than that of aviation, but after some years they can no longer be used for anything but aviation. Where am I going to put them? I cannot answer this question if the limitation is to be partial; the problem is comparatively easy to solve if the limitation is general.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am extremely sorry if I misquoted M. de Brouckère, but I rather think there is, at any rate, some ground for the use I made of his observation. I quite agree that the argument I used with regard to Belgium no longer exists. As far as the rest is concerned, having nothing further to say, I must leave the matter as it is.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — If I made a mistake in my first expression, I apologise.
M. SATO (Japan). — I have listened with great attention and great interest to all the debates which have been held here, but, now that the very principle of the limitation of air effectives is being discussed, I feel obliged to state my views.

The view of my Government is still that the limitation of air armaments will be brought about by a general limitation of air effectives present with the colours in time of peace.

My Government does not consider that this is the best method of limiting air forces, but we consider that this method must be adopted in default of a better.

There were not many of us in Sub-Commission A who supported this view; there were only two, the Japanese and the Swedish delegations. We shared the honour of being the pioneers of this method. We were very strongly criticised by nearly all the other delegations. Colonel Mouchard, whose eloquent arguments are now being used by Lord Cecil against the French method, was one of our severest critics. Lord Cecil, in making use of Colonel Mouchard's speech, was very strong at the beginning, but a little weaker later on, because he found himself where Colonel Mouchard's speech had been mistranslated.

I repeat, however, that we propose the method of limitation which I mentioned in default of a better. I still abide by my opinion, and personally, when you have discussed the question of the limitation of air material, I am pretty certain you will find yourselves involved in some fairly complicated debates. It will be very difficult to reach an agreement. In these circumstances, I foresee the moment will arrive when everyone will see that there is hardly any other method which can be adopted except the one I have just proposed; then perhaps we shall reach an agreement by adopting the Japanese proposal as the only one possible.

This method was not very popular with Sub-Commission A, as I said just now. But now I see that Mr. Gibson agrees that this method should be adopted, and I see also that the French draft quite definitely adopts it. Well, gentlemen, one more effort and perhaps Mr. Gibson, M. Paul-Boncour and I can agree in adopting it as the only possible method of limiting air forces.

I regret very much to be in disagreement once more with Lord Cecil, but presently, when we come to discuss the naval problem, I assure you that I shall be at Lord Cecil's side up to a certain point.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I have only a small remark to make. We have been told that in Sub-Commission A there was one member who, when the discussion began, saw no advantages in this method. That may be so. In any case, there were a great many speeches made in Sub-Commission A. It is possible that delegates who made speeches at the beginning changed their minds at the end of the discussion. Lord Cecil mentioned a member who saw no advantage in this method. Well, there are three advantages, if I am not mistaken, which are unanimously recognised by Sub-Commission A on page 113. The first is that it is easy to determine definitely the number of personnel existing in air units.

I think that, if we read these conclusions to which Sub-Commission A came, we need not trouble ourselves about the speeches which were made in this Sub-Commission. Perhaps as a general rule we had better confine ourselves to taking note of the conclusions and formal declarations of Sub-Commission A. We might keep to that without being obliged to read all the Minutes of Sub-Commission A. Personally, I should hesitate to undertake that task.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I do not at all wish to read the Minutes of the discussion of Sub-Commission A. I agree that that would be a task which it would be very serious to put upon any of us. I only used the observations of Colonel Mouchard because they seemed to me to express very clearly and very forcibly the objection which my Government feels to this matter, and, since I could put in the language of a very distinguished French officer, I thought that would give it additional weight.

As to the advantages, though I quite admit that I should have fallen into the same error myself, I am assured that the printing of those advantages does not mean that they were universally adopted but merely that they were put forward as the advantages and disadvantages. The subsequent discussion does not mean that those advantages or disadvantages were all adopted, but merely that they were put forward as parts of the rather complicated procedure which prevailed in Sub-Commission A. I am assured of that by a member of the Sub-Commission.

The President. — In these circumstances, it is difficult for me to place on record that we have reached an agreement. The best way to proceed would be, perhaps, to hold over till to-morrow the decision on the question of personnel and to take the question of material.

This was agreed to.

35. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 2.

"In each of the Contracting States the air armaments shall be limited, under the conditions named below, to the figures mentioned in the tables annexed hereto."

Point 2 was adopted without remarks.