The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I find no difficulty in supporting the provision for the limitation of material as stated in the Synoptic Analysis, providing it be understood that the limitation be extended to the material of air forces serving with the colours and to the material in reserve. By material in reserve is meant not only material immediately available to forces serving with the colours but also the material which is necessary to equip the trained reserves in the event of their being called to service with the colours.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am afraid I find some difficulty in accepting so very wide a provision as that. It would mean, I suppose, that you are going to limit all engines, for instance, or indeed all material from which engines might be made. I should have thought that was going very far; indeed, I confess that I had some doubt, and still have some doubt, as to how far it is practicable to limit reserve machines, because it is so easy to put them out of action by removing a little bit, and then they are no longer completely ready to replace another aircraft, and consequently it may be that they would not be strictly within this definition; but, at any rate, I should hesitate to go as far as Mr. Gibson proposes. I must say I should like very much to hear what other delegations think on that subject before expressing a final opinion.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I quite agree with Lord Cecil.

M. de Broückère (Belgium). — I do not want to raise the frightful question of reserve material; it is really too complicated for me. There is another more immediate question. There is, it seems to me, an intermediary point of view between that which is advanced in the left-hand columns of the Synoptic Analysis and that supported by Mr. Gibson: that is the view set out in the right-hand columns. If I understand him aright, Lord Cecil wishes us to take into account only the material actually in use in first-line units. Is it not rather difficult to define this?

I will take an example. You have a squadron of six aeroplanes. Normally, according to the army regulations, it ought to fly six machines. Only, as there is generally at least one machine which is not in very good condition — the material gets out of order very easily — a squadron is given two, three, four, five or six spare aeroplanes. What are we going to count? Are we simply going to count the aeroplanes in the establishment, or are we going to count the aeroplanes in the workshops? To count those entered on the establishment is good administration, but it is not disarmament. The ones in the workshops are those that must be counted; otherwise, what does it lead us to? One might say: “There might be pilots out of action; therefore it is wise to have twelve pilots in this squadron of six aeroplanes.” But there are also aeroplanes which might be out of action, and it is wise to have twelve aeroplanes. So, without any measures of mobilisation, one fine day we put the twelve pilots in the twelve aeroplanes. This makes two squadrons instead of one. In these circumstances, I think that we must count twelve aeroplanes and not six.

This is why, although perhaps I do not go so far as Mr. Gibson, I feel that we ought to go at least as far as the French proposals.

Count Clauzel (France). — I only wish to say for M. Paul-Boncour that he absolutely agrees with M. de Broückère.

General de Marinis (Italy). — After carefully following what Mr. Gibson has said about the British draft, I also must say that I agree with M. de Broückère’s view; I think that this is the most practical method. In this way we leave aside the question of material in reserve.

At the same time, we ought to make it quite clear what we mean by the expression “reserve aircraft” in the French draft. For the sake of clearness, we ought to say: “... and to reserve aircraft and dirigibles held at the disposal of that formation and forming an integral part of it.”

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — For the second time to-day I have had the pleasure of supporting the proposal of the delegate of the United States. As I have already had the honour to say, we consider that limitation of armaments, if it is really to deserve the name, must be applied to all material of war. If we did not touch upon this question when dealing with military armaments, we reserved the right to do so later, for our opinion is that the limitation of all material of war is indispensable if we are going to achieve limitation of armaments.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — In reading the right-hand column of this Point 3, I am not quite sure as to how the term “in commission” is to be interpreted, but, assuming that it means material in the hands of forces serving with the colours, then I feel that the provisions of the draft would not be effective as a matter of limitation of armaments. The restriction of the limitation to air armaments in the hands of forces serving

36. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 3.

Limitation shall apply:

**British draft.**

To aircraft of service types.

**French draft.**

To aircraft and dirigibles in commission, i.e., to aircraft and dirigibles normally included in any formation for current service and to reserve aircraft and dirigibles held at the disposal of that formation.
Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — There is no doubt that, if we were able to do everything we should like to do, we ought to limit not only aircraft but all war material of all sorts and kinds, down to the simplest rifle and revolver. That would be the right thing to do if we could do it, but everybody admits that we cannot do it, and that the only possible way of making that effective at this moment would be to induce the various countries to accept so rigorous a form of supervision as would be impracticable in the present frame of mind of the various Government and peoples, certainly of the Governments of the countries of Europe. The real question is, and it is an extraordinarily difficult question, where exactly are you going to draw the line? Some people would draw it a little further one way and some a little further the other way. My own feeling in this matter is that I should like to go the whole hog and have every kind of limitation, but I am very much afraid of doing something which will not work in the end. That would be the most disastrous thing we could do. If we put forward a proposition which, when it came to the point, would not work and could not work, we should have done a great deal of harm instead of doing good. Therefore, reluctantly, I would advise the Commission to proceed with great moderation and prudence in this matter. It is the first step we are taking towards disarmament and we cannot expect to go very far in the first instance. We shall have gone a good way if we do something in that direction and if we establish principles which go towards reduction. I am afraid the American proposition falls outside the difficulties which seems to be practicable at this moment. I quite agree that you may say with great force that, unless you limit all material which can be rapidly made into aeroplanes, you are not really limiting air armaments. That is true, but, if you can limit the actual aeroplanes in service that can be used to-morrow for an attack, you have done something, and you may be able to go a little further. I am not sure that my instructions permit me to accept anything further at this moment, but I should be prepared to recommend to my Government, with whatever authority I may command, the acceptance of the Italian formula, but I really am terribly grieved to have to say that I do not see my way to going further. I hate to appear to be on the defensive against any form of limitation of armaments, but, exercising my judgment to the best of my ability, I feel that what I am as far as it would be prudent for us to go in the first stage of disarmament, and that is what we must regard this as. We must not regard it as something we are doing finally, but we are just taking a slight step forward. It may be that it is a timid and a very slight step forward, but it is a step which we hope will be followed by greater steps when we find that it does not hurt so much as some of us think it may.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — Only too often, when one of our colleagues begins by saying that he does not wish to prolong the debate, we discover that we are in for a long statement, but in this case that will not be so. All I wish to say is that I do not propose to take up the time of the Commission in a long discussion, but I quite recognise the very many real difficulties in the suggestion I have put forward, and practical difficulties in the way of other delegations, no matter how they may wish to give effect to an extensive limitation, and for that reason I shall not endeavour to support these views at the moment, but I quite content myself with placing them before my colleagues on the First Reading.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — I entirely share Mr. Gibson’s view that it is desirable to limit not only material in commission but reserve material and stocks of military aeronautical material in general; in other words, the spare parts of military aircraft. The limitation of spare parts of military aircraft does not, however, seem to me absolutely necessary, for, even if it is laid down, it is very easy to replace these parts from civilian aircraft, since the two kinds of aircraft use a very high percentage of the same spare parts.

But, even if we need not extend the limitation to spare parts in depots, could we not go a little further than the French draft goes? The French draft does not even provide for the limitation of all aircraft at the disposal of the armed forces of a country, but only of aircraft “normally included in any formation for current service” and reserve aircraft destined to replace these machines.

When Sub-Commission A examined this question, several proposals were made. One of these seems to me worthy of our consideration. This is the proposal put forward by Spain. It is the method based on “the limitation of the total horse-power of all aircraft in service and in reserve of the military forces and the forces organised on a military basis”. Could we not also extend the French draft to all aircraft in service and in reserve of the military forces and the forces organised on a military basis?

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I wonder if the difference between the formula proposed by M. Hennings and the French formula is really so great as appears at first sight. Every State possesses the aircraft necessary for current service. Every formation obviously includes a certain number of reserve machines, which serve in the place of what I may call the active machines when an accident happens to one of the latter.

In the French formula these aircraft are limited. There remain, then, the reserve aircraft.
I am well aware that certain countries may have reserves which permit them to mobilise at a given moment a very great number of aircraft. But I should be extremely surprised if these were in their depots in the form of reserve aircraft. If they are wooden machines, they would not be mounted in advance, for then they would spoil. The depots would rather contain detached pieces. In the case of metal aircraft, I think that very often the case would be the same for any number of reasons, one of which is that aircraft take up too much room when assembled; another, that the detached pieces could be used to patch up aircraft in commission; and a third, that, if a Convention was in force, it would be enough to dismount the aircraft for them not to count as such. It only takes a very short time to reassemble them. A few hours are enough for this purpose, even for a comparatively unskilled workman.

If we are to go further than the French formula, we shall have to limit the number of detached parts. M. Hennings has pointed out the difficulty which would then arise. We should be faced with the frightful question of material in reserve.

Personally, I am quite convinced that we shall only achieve really effective results when we have limited in some way the material which is renewed annually. But it is a very large task to attempt to make an inventory of existing stocks, and I think it would be futile, because we should have to make the same footing stocks inherited from the war, stocks which have a certain value and stocks which have not. After a very long and complicated investigation, to which perhaps Governments would refuse to submit, we should have no doubt to admit failure.

We shall have then to resign ourselves to limiting only aircraft in commission and aircraft which are about to be put into commission; it is impossible to make the limitation applicable to machines which are in the workshops.

The President. — If no one has any further remarks to make, I think that we might consider the text of the Point 3 in the right-hand column adopted, with the amendment which has been made to it.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — I do not say that I accept the text — I could not go as far as that. What I said was that I would remit it to my Government, and therefore all I can do is to say that I do not oppose it for the moment, reserving my right to refer to it later on.

Point 3 (right-hand column) was adopted subject to reservation.

37. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 4.

British draft.

To shore-based aircraft maintained in commission in first-line combatant units.

French draft.

The formations in question shall be land, sea or air formations or formations organised on a military basis.

M. SATO (Japan). — When Sub-Commission A met, the Japanese delegation proposed to exclude aircraft belonging to vessels of war. We still maintain this point of view and I therefore venture to propose the following motion:

"The Japanese delegation is of opinion that aircraft on board vessels-of-war ought to be excluded, since such aircraft are covered by the limitation of naval armaments".

The President. — We have then two texts before us.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — We have, indeed, two texts before us and it is sometimes difficult to make a choice.

The text in the left-hand column states that limitation shall apply only to "shore-based aircraft"; while the text in the right-hand column provides for limitation of all aircraft belonging to land, sea or air formations. I do not quite see why we should make a distinction between shore-based aircraft and aircraft belonging to naval forces. M. Sato appeared to be in favour of making this distinction. I should like to point out that all naval aircraft are not carried on aircraft-carriers. There is an independent air force belonging to the navy; but, even in the case of aircraft-carriers, which we shall consider and limit in due course, the limitation imposed on them does not touch the aircraft which they carry.

We appear then to be faced by a very simple question: Is the limitation to be applied only to the air service of military forces, or is it also to be applied to naval air forces?

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — There are two questions raised by the left-hand text. One is whether the limitation should apply to aircraft which are shore-based and the other is — which I will not deal with at this moment, because I think we had better take them separately — raised by the rest of the left-hand text. That raises an entirely different question. I do not think there is really very much difference between the two texts in this respect. Shore-based aircraft include all aircraft, whether they are attached to the sea forces, the land forces or the air forces, which are not based on a ship; that is to say, which do not belong to an aircraft-carrier. Those are the only aircraft that are omitted, and the reason why they are omitted is quite simple, that an aircraft-carrier can only carry a certain number of aeroplanes. When, therefore, you have limited the size and number of your aircraft-carriers, you have limited the number of aeroplanes which can be carried on those ships, and therefore you have got a complete limitation of aeroplanes in that respect. It did not seem to us desirable to limit those aeroplanes twice over, first in the naval part of the Convention and then...
in the air part of the Convention. We think if they are limited once, that is enough. You cannot make the limitation more strict or more precise by doing it twice over, and therefore, merely as a matter of convenience and clearness, we thought it was sufficient to limit it once—namely, to limit it in the naval part of the Convention. Those aircraft which are attached to the fleet but which are not based on an aircraft-carrier would be limited by this phrase just as much as any other aircraft belonging to the high contracting party concerned. That really is the whole point. It is a question of whether it is desirable to limit some aircraft twice and other aircraft once, or whether it is not enough to limit them all once and only once.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — The proposal made by the Japanese delegate seems reasonable, and I should like to give it my support.

There is another point to which I should like to call attention, and that is the last part of the paragraph in the right-hand column referring to formations organised on a military basis. I have already stated my doubts as to the inclusion in a draft Convention of police, gendarmerie and other similar organisations which are described as formations organised on a military basis. While there are no such air organisations in my country which would come within the purview of this term, nevertheless I must admit that I have grave doubts as to the propriety or advisability of including such a provision in the Convention for the reduction and limitation of armaments. Further, I cannot but feel serious doubt as to the feeling towards such a provision in a draft that was submitted for ratification to the Senate.

The President. — It will be better if we keep for the moment to the first line: “shore-based”. We shall go on to the question of formations later.

From what Lord Cecil says, it would be better to say: “with the exception of aircraft carried on aircraft-carriers”.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I find that I ought to have added that on some ships a single scout aircraft is sometimes carried. That, of course, would not be “shore-based”.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I still fail to see what there is against using another expression, either for “shore-based” or for the English expression — which is obviously broader — and why, while we are on the subject of air armaments, we do not provide for the general limitation of aircraft, however used, whatever their point of departure, whether they leave from a shore-base, from an aircraft-carrier, or from a ship of the line. There are scouting ships which may carry several bombing aeroplanes. The aircraft carried and the vessels which carry them are two very different things. Aircraft-carriers were limited at Washington; but it was the ships that were limited, and not the number of aircraft which they could carry. I repeat that there may be other aircraft on ships which are not aircraft-carriers. Since we are trying to get comprehensible definitions, surely that which covers all aircraft of whatever sort, whether attached to land, sea or air forces, is preferable to that which leaves out a certain number of aircraft because they are carried on aircraft-carriers. I see no objection and I see many advantages in the more general expression “land, sea or air formations”.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am afraid I am not in a position to go further than I have gone, and therefore I shall have to reserve this matter until the Second Reading.

M. Sato (Japan). — In making my suggestion just now, I had no intention to exclude from limitation all aircraft carried on aircraft-carriers or cruisers. I simply wanted to postpone the discussion on that point to such time as we come to deal with naval armaments.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I am in favour of the French draft on this point; I think myself that it matters little to a man attacked by aircraft where the aircraft start from. If we confine ourselves to limiting aircraft which start from a shore-base or from the sea, without including in this limitation aircraft which take off from a ship, the figure in the table relating to aircraft will have no real value, for it will indicate only a figure relating to certain categories of aircraft. The limitation of aircraft will mean one thing to countries which, for financial reasons, cannot allow themselves the luxury of keeping aircraft-carriers, and something quite different to countries which can afford these vessels.

Further, to postpone this question until we come to discuss the limitation of naval material seems to me to be prejudging to some extent the question whether naval material is to be limited by classes or by total tonnage. If the limitation is made by total tonnage, there will be no limitation affecting aircraft which take off from aircraft-carriers.

I do not share Lord Cecil’s anxiety that no aircraft shall be limited twice. If we limited the number of ships by classes, we might limit the number of ships destined to serve as troopships, but this would be no reason for not also limiting the number of troops carried by those ships, as we have done by limiting military effectives.

In short, I have no scruples against limiting twice over; I think indeed that it affords extra security; we need not be afraid of that.

M. Yovanovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). — I entirely agree with the remarks made by the honourable delegate for the Netherlands. The situation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes is already very bad on account of our lack of civil aircraft, but it will be worse if we distinguish sea-based aircraft from aircraft on board aircraft-carriers; our situation will not be improved, but aggravated.
The President. — Before, we rise, I wish to remind you of a rather sad fact: in the course of April there are a considerable number of holidays. At Easter there will be three holidays, perhaps four. I wish to point out to you at once that we shall have, unfortunately, to interrupt our work at that time.

I think that you will all agree with me that the interruption should be as short as possible. We are here to work, and I think our Governments would be much astonished if we disappeared at Easter for several days. We must limit our Easter holidays to three days, or four at the most.

In these circumstances, I propose to you now to adjourn our meetings on the afternoon of Thursday, April 14th, and meet again at the latest on the morning of Tuesday the 19th, or, if you prefer, the afternoon.

The Commission rose at 7.15 p.m.

FIFTEENTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Saturday, April 2nd, 1927, at 10.15 a.m.

President : M. Loudon (Netherlands).


The President. — In accordance with the agenda you received last night, we will continue the discussion of Point 4. We will first discuss — in connection with the French text, which appears in the right-hand column — the phrase (British text) “shore-based aircraft”, to which it is proposed to add “with the exception of aircraft carried on aircraft-carriers”, the end of the text in the left-hand column remaining as it is.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — As to the first point with regard to “shore-based aircraft”, I thought we had arrived at a conclusion. So far as I am concerned, I can go no further, and I reserve any further observations I desire to make for the Second Reading.

The President. — In that case, we will open the discussion of the second part of the sentence.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — Here there is a question of a different nature. The expression is “maintained in commission in first-line combatant units”. The French do not really define what aeroplanes are to be limited; they merely say “formations”, and I confess that that seems to me to be rather a vague expression. I do not know exactly what it means, but, if they only propose to limit those aeroplanes that are organised in precise formation, I should have thought that was rather an unduly narrow limitation. I do not know enough about the future possibilities of tactics in the air, but I should have thought it was possible that there might be a certain number of aeroplanes that would not be organised in formations — at any rate, I should be rather reluctant to say quite definitely that there would not. We heard yesterday that it was the practice on some battleships to carry a single aeroplane for purposes of scouting and for the purpose of defending the ship against aerial torpedoes. If you say “formations”, I am not quite certain that aeroplanes of that kind would be within the definition at all. On the other hand, would it include such things as aeroplanes kept for experimental purposes and not utilised, and perhaps not even utilisable, directly for war but kept for the purpose of scientific experiments and discovery? Would it include aeroplanes kept for training purposes? I do not know, but many of those would not, I imagine, be suitable for use from a military point of view — at any rate, without considerable alterations and changes.

The British feel that here, as right through our Convention, what we desire to limit are those forces of war which can be utilised from the time of peace for an immediate attack — for purposes of aggression, to use the expression employed by M. Paul-Boncour the other day, which I quite accept as a sufficient description of what we desire to limit — and the phrase “maintained in commission in first-line combatant units” was intended to cover those aeroplanes, and only those aeroplanes. I understand there is some doubt as to whether that would cover all the aeroplanes utilisable for the purpose of aggression, but certainly that is the object which we have in view, and, if there is any question of wording, we shall be very glad to discuss it and shall be glad to accept any changes. But we feel the expression “formations” is rather too vague, and the great objection to the use of a vague word is that it may be construed in one way in one country and in another way in another country. Therefore, I do rather press that we should have something more precise than the mere expression “formations”.

Then, when you come to the expression “formations organised on a military basis”, which appears to indicate some kind of volunteer military organisation, we are not aware of any such machines existing at the present time, and it seems to me rather doubtful whether
they ever would exist. Certainly, I cannot imagine that machines of that kind could ever be used without, to use the French expression, some measure of mobilisation first, and therefore, I suppose, would not be within the object of the present Convention. I do not like the words “formations organised on a military basis”. Again the phrase seems to me too vague, and I venture respectfully to press the Commission, if it does not like the actual wording of our proposal, at any rate to adopt the principle of it — namely, that we want to limit those aeroplanes which can be immediately utilised for purposes of attack. I do not want to define the proposal more precisely than that at the moment. I think that will be a sufficiently clear definition. But I should like, in view particularly of a good many of the discussions yesterday, to make one general observation in conclusion.

The British Government are profoundly anxious to make a real step forward in the direction of limitation and reduction of armaments, and they see a very real danger if an attempt is made to make too complicated and complete a Convention in the first instance. That is why they really have felt it desirable, in this particular matter especially, to confine themselves to rather elementary propositions. They feel very, very anxious lest, in trying to do too much, we should fail to do anything at all. They may be unduly cautious and unduly prudent, but they do feel very strongly that it is not enough to show that a particular provision will do no harm or will not be any great evil, because they feel that every complication itself is an evil, and, before accepting even the simplest form of draft, we wish to be satisfied not only that it will not do any harm but that it will very positively do good. The test we must adopt is to see that a real practical advantage will flow from it, taking into consideration not only what might be done under its terms but what probably would be done under its terms. It is for that reason that I do press my colleagues to make a more precise definition of exactly what we mean in this paragraph, otherwise I feel that shall, in putting in a general phrase of this kind, probably do nothing at all to limit aircraft and we shall prepare a large number of international disputes which may do a very great deal more harm than good.

M. Sato (Japan). — I agree with Lord Cecil that it is essential to define clearly the term “land and air formations”. The remarks which I am about to make will constitute a request, as it were, in support of Lord Cecil’s proposal.

I asked you yesterday to exclude from the limitation of air armaments aircraft carried on warships, and in support of that proposal I should like to give the following reasons.

1. Aircraft on board warships may be regarded as the armament or equipment of those ships. Considered as armament, they can be compared with guns or torpedoes; considered as equipment, they may be compared with signalling apparatus, launches, high-speed motor-boats, etc. These aircraft form part and parcel of a warship, and their limitation can be usefully discussed when we consider the question of limiting naval armaments.

2. The number of aircraft which a warship can carry is limited by its tonnage. It follows that the limitation of these aircraft is automatically effected by the cubic space inside the ship, the deck area, etc.

Accordingly, I think that the question of limitation of naval aircraft could be examined when we come to naval armaments, but I repeat that I had no intention of opposing the limitation of air armaments so far as the navy is concerned.

Yesterday, the representative of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes expressed some fears regarding the security of his country. If I understood aright, he is opposed to my suggestion to exclude from the Convention aircraft carried on warships. I understand his anxiety, but I must add that, in order to meet his difficulty entirely, it would be necessary to go very much farther and include within this limitation not only all aircraft carried on warships but also aircraft-carriers. I am not sure that the naval Powers could accept such a decision, but, so long as these aircraft-carriers exist, I do not see that it makes much difference whether the aircraft-carriers carry a few aircraft more or less. This question will have to be more carefully considered when we discuss naval armaments.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — There is one point upon which there can be no discussion. Lord Cecil has just told us that, as regards the question of shore-based aircraft and their limitation, he desires further instructions from his Government before he can give us his opinion. It is sufficient, of course, that any member of the Commission should express a desire of this kind for the other members to accede. I would, however, express a respectful wish. Lord Cecil, I think, asked that the question might be postponed to the Second Reading.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire) (intervening). — I have said nothing about the general question, but, on the question of shore-based aircraft, all I said was that, personally, I could carry the thing no further than I had done up to now, and that, as far as I was concerned, I must reserve my decision to the Second Reading. I do not want to hold up the whole Commission, but my own feeling is very much with the Japanese and, as I understand it, with the American delegations that this is a matter which ought to be dealt with more in the naval discussions than in the air discussions. I do not, however, wish to press my views further than to reserve altogether the decision of my Government on this point.
M. Paul-Boncour (France). — My respectful wish is that, if the attitude of some of us is to be reserved on points of this kind, the fact should be brought to the knowledge of members of the Commission before the Second Reading. The attitude of some delegations in regard to land effective may vary according to the attitude of other delegations towards questions of air or naval armaments. It is a very important consideration which I have expressed throughout, namely, that some of the delegations will only accept in regard to military questions such limitations as apply also to air and naval questions. In order that the Second Reading may be clear and useful, it is well that we should know exactly the attitude of each one of us towards the whole problem, because a position taken up with regard to one part of the problem may influence the other parts.

While falling in with the wish to postpone the question of naval effective, I find it nevertheless essential to express the feeling not only of my own delegation but I think of very many Continental countries. I can assure my colleagues that for them this is a fundamental question.

We could not agree that limitation in the case of air forces should be confined to land armaments or even to what is called “shore-based aircraft” — a term which we are now discussing. Any limitation that we accept must apply to all the aircraft of a country, whether they are shore-based, or whether they are carried on warships or in some other way. We cannot accept any limitation which would only cover aircraft operating in connection with land armaments or land forces.

M. Sato seemed to be surprised just now because M. Yovanovitch, expressing the feeling of other countries in the same position as his own, was anxious concerning the inferiority which would be the fate of certain countries if a formula of the kind proposed were to be accepted. This position of inferiority is undeniable. If limitation were to be restricted to shore-based aircraft, it is certain that the big naval Powers, which have been recognised by the Treaty of Washington as having a superiority in aircraft-carriers over other countries, would, for this reason, have an undoubted advantage in the air, and accordingly other countries would be at a disadvantage.

This question could be included in the discussion of naval armaments, but when we come to this category of armaments it will be impossible to discuss this special point. To make any such provision would prejudice a point of vital importance. You are aware that some countries are compelled by their vital interests to consider, as regards naval armaments, total tonnage only. This point of view, however, obviously, does not prejudice the opinion adopted by the Commission. Should these countries be compelled to maintain their attitude, total tonnage alone could be contemplated, and accordingly the question of limitation by classes, whether aircraft-carriers or other vessels, could not be considered. But, even accepting this other alternative, the limitation of naval armaments may apply to the number of vessels, their tonnage or the calibre or range of their guns, but, when we come to discuss naval armaments, as you very well know, it will no longer be possible to limit the number of aircraft. You may limit the number of ships which carry the aircraft, but not the number of machines.

If we desire to limit aircraft, we must consider the matter now. If some countries have to take account of peculiar circumstances and if their delegations desire to define their position, we are quite agreeable. But certain Continental countries declare — and this is, in any case, the opinion of the French delegation — that the only possible limitation is that which would apply to all aircraft whatever their origin and wherever they are based.

M. Yovanovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). — The honorable delegate for Japan, M. Sato, alluded in his speech to certain fears which I expressed yesterday. I asked that the position of inferiority in which certain countries are placed owing to their lack of civil aviation should be recognised by the Commission and that it should not be aggravated by excluding aircraft on aircraft-carriers. Aircraft carried on warships are perfectly able to take part in aggressive operations, as was indeed recognised by Sub-Commission A in its report. Should these countries be compelled to maintain their attitude, total tonnage only. This point of view, however, obviously, does not prejudge the opinion adopted by the Commission. Should these countries be compelled to maintain their attitude, total tonnage alone could be contemplated, and accordingly the question of limitation by classes, whether aircraft-carriers or other vessels, could not be considered. But, even accepting this other alternative, the limitation of naval armaments may apply to the number of vessels, their tonnage or the calibre or range of their guns, but, when we come to discuss naval armaments, as you very well know, it will no longer be possible to limit the number of aircraft. You may limit the number of ships which carry the aircraft, but not the number of machines.

If we desire to limit aircraft, we must consider the matter now. If some countries have to take account of peculiar circumstances and if their delegations desire to define their position, we are quite agreeable. But certain Continental countries declare — and this is, in any case, the opinion of the French delegation — that the only possible limitation is that which would apply to all aircraft whatever their origin and wherever they are based.

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I may be allowed to read a few lines from this report to prove the truth of my statement:

"Their action is essentially limited to sea routes and against the enemy coasts, but they can also take action against the interior of the enemy territory if they include air forces the range of which is limited by their radius of action, or if they carry landing parties which they can land and subsequently reinforce and revictual".

Naval units can operate within enemy territory if they include air forces whose range is only limited by their radius of action.

M. Sato asked me whether I also include the abolition of aircraft-carriers. That is a matter which will be dealt with when we examine naval armaments. What I want is that limitation should include aircraft transported by aircraft-carriers.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — Evidently we are faced here with a singularly delicate question, and I should not like to say anything to increase our difficulty and make a final agreement less easy, for I still think that a final agreement is possible.
I should, however, like to give my country's opinion on this serious matter.

It seems to me exceedingly hard to establish a distinction between aircraft which take off from the land and aircraft which take off from ships. I will take the case of my own country, whose aircraft have only one possible point of departure, namely, the ground.

In the course of this discussion the representatives of various countries have, in the most friendly way, frequently made comparisons between themselves and their neighbours. In view of the excellent relations between my country and that of our President, I may be allowed to do the same thing. I will ask if it is just that an aircraft taking off from a Dutch ship on the Scheldt should not be counted because it takes off from the water, while a Belgian aircraft taking off from the river-bank would count?

I think, too, if I have understood the discussion, that we are all agreed on the necessity of limitation, and that our divergence of view is on the technical question whether it is necessary to establish a special system for the limitation of naval aircraft. On this point I am, of course, prepared to listen to any suggestions, but those which we have heard have not greatly impressed me with the merits of this method.

We have been told that the number of aircraft-carriers will be limited and therefore naval aircraft will also be limited. Is that certain? Is the number of aircraft that a vessel can carry strictly limited? M. Sato has told us that an aircraft-carrier can have a tonnage of 6,000. It can therefore carry a very large number of machines or spare parts. The number of which can, in a given time, land upon the deck of an aircraft-carrier is limited, but reserves aircraft could be carried and, as soon as an aircraft has taken off from the deck, it could be replaced by another. They can be carried in reserve in the hold. How much time is required to assemble them? The experts could tell us, but it is a time to be reckoned in hours and not in days. Besides, naval aircraft do not only include aircraft carried on ships. Even then, there are seaplanes, so that, although I am far from refusing to consider this technical problem, if anyone can prove to me that it is essential to have special methods for naval aircraft, I would personally prefer limitation to apply to aircraft as a whole.

We are trying to classify aircraft according to the point from which they start. That may be technically sound, but, from the non-technical and much more simple point of view, I should prefer, for my part, to classify them according to the points where their bombs fall. What I am concerned to know is the aircraft which can bomb us rather than to know where they start from. As Lord Cecil has very rightly said—and this raises my hopes of an agreement—if it is more precise, let us take it, and if it is not in days. Besides, naval aircraft do not only include aircraft carried on ships. Even then, there are seaplanes, so that, although I am far from refusing to consider this technical problem, if anyone can prove to me that it is essential to have special methods for naval aircraft, I would personally prefer limitation to apply to aircraft as a whole.

There is a word in the French text which he finds somewhat vague, the word “formations”. I am not a technical expert, but in the left-hand text I find the word “units”. Is that any more exact? Does it mean the same thing? If it is more precise, let us take it, and if it is the same thing, let us take one or the other. But there is another term in the left-hand text of the exactitude of which I am not convinced. Reference is made to “first-line combatant units”. I think that these first-line units should at least be defined, and it is possible that the definition would be as difficult as the definition of the front, which we unsuccessfully attempted a few days ago.

Another point. Yesterday, we took a step forward in that we succeeded in defining one characteristic of aircraft which ought to be limited. We said that it was not only aircraft officially on the establishment of a unit which ought to be limited but those actually with the unit. Should we not be undoing what we did yesterday if we were to limit only those aircraft which are with first-line units and not those with second-line units? Units can very easily be changed from one line to the other. If we have units with aircraft which can leave the ground and—what is, in my opinion, the main point—can drop their bombs, I think these aircraft should be counted. Personally, I should prefer that we spoke of all land, sea and air units instead of these “first-line combatant units”.

As regards “formations organised on a military basis”, Lord Cecil imagined that they referred to volunteer formations. If he will glance at Article 5, he will see that it includes something more. In regard to the limitation of land effectives, we took into account formations which can be employed without measures of mobilisation. The air formations come within this definition.

There are police aircraft which can drop bombs, as well as military aircraft. They, too, do not require to be mobilised and should therefore be taken into account. They are military aircraft. If we were to distinguish between them and others we should, I repeat, have created a loophole; we should have enabled a country to have a military air force without calling it such, but which would come to exactly the same thing.

To sum up, we are agreed that it is necessary to limit aircraft — the total number of aircraft — which can be used for an offensive operation. We must abide by our definition and not adopt a system the result of which in fact (a result not desired, but nevertheless obtained) would be to allow a part of police or other effectives not regarded as first-line aircraft to escape limitation.
If, after foregoing the direct limitation of civil aircraft as being dangerous, we end by excluding from limitation a part of aircraft which is nevertheless military, our work will have been entirely futile.

M. Comnène (Roumania). — I have been greatly impressed by M. de Broucqère’s remarks, and particularly by what he said at the beginning about river flying. That revealed to me a new aspect of the problem, namely, international rivers.

Let us consider the situation of countries which are near to large waterways like the Danube, the Rhine and others. You may have abolished aircraft-carriers, but you have not done away with the danger of the aircraft themselves, because, as you know, most of the countries situated on certain international rivers have undertaken to build no fortified works. The mouths of the Danube, for example, cannot be fortified, and therefore any ship can go up the river, more particularly those large barges with which you are familiar.

One of the honourable experts of the Netherlands was drawing my attention just now in private conversation to the fact that there are barges used on some rivers which have a tonnage of 2,000 or 3,000. You cannot call those nutshells. You know, too, that, in virtue of their construction, these vessels can furnish excellent platforms for aircraft. They require no special organisation. Their platform is so built that it is perfectly easy for an aircraft to take off from these barges. That being so, you can understand the fears of countries which have no developed military aviation, and which also have their capital near to or on the very banks of these rivers; Bucharest is about 40 kilometers from the Danube, as the crow flies, and what about Belgrade, which is on its very banks?

Accordingly, M. de Broucqère’s remarks must needs impress us and compel us to agree with him in demanding that limitation should be applied not only to the ships but to the aircraft themselves, of whatever kind they may be.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I fully explained yesterday the attitude of the Netherlands delegation towards the problem we are now considering. I am glad to say that this attitude conforms with what our honourable Belgian colleague has just supported so eloquently.

We are in absolute agreement with him in stating that it would be quite unjustified to exclude an aircraft taking off from a ship while including aircraft rising from the bank.

As for the example given by M. de Broucqère, his sentiment is exactly our own, and we entirely agree with him in his illustration.

I also concur in the observations just made by our Roumanian colleague. It is possible to use as an aircraft base ships of large tonnage, formidable carriers constituting veritable nests for aircraft. At the same time also smaller vessels can be used, which would be comparatively little affected by the limitation of naval material, and which could carry not only aeroplanes but hydroplanes. These ships would not even need a deck for the aircraft to take off from. These comparatively small vessels would suffice to exclude from air limitation the aeroplanes whose base they form. It seems to me that that would be an altogether too convenient means of avoiding the limitation of aircraft, and I think that this is a further reason for accepting the French draft on this point.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am afraid that we have drifted back from one subject to another, and that the simplicity of our proceedings has not been altogether secured this morning, because there are two questions raised here, and it is important to keep them entirely distinct. There is the first question whether or not the phrase used in the British draft, “shore-based aircraft”, is a satisfactory way of dealing with the problem so far as the distinction between aircraft carried on ships and aircraft based on land is concerned. Now as to that, I can only repeat, what I said at the beginning of the discussion, that I have listened with great attention to all the arguments of my colleagues. I recognise that there are certain points which have been put forward very forcibly which were perhaps not present to the mind of my Government when they drafted the expression “shore-based aircraft”. I have, as I am in duty bound to do, offered, to submit once again the point for the decision of my Government, and evidently, until I hear from them, I cannot proceed to express any further opinion upon that point. I can only say that I am quite sure that nothing is further from their wishes than not to limit the aircraft. It is only a question of which is the best method of limiting the aircraft. I quite admit that some considerations have been put forward which seem to show that a limitation by aircraft-carriers does not entirely cover the theoretical extent of the ground. Whether, in point of fact, there are any such cases as M. Rutgers, he is imagines of smaller vessels carrying aircraft I do not know. But, even if there are not, he is perfectly entitled to say that this might happen and therefore it is a danger against which it might be desirable to guard. Again, all I can say is that these arguments are very interesting and very important, and I will take care that they are submitted to my Government and I hope to be able to express their view on the matter at an early date. I recognise that it would not be right for us to reserve to the last moment of the Second Reading decisions on those points on which we have not been able to express a final view, or which we have offered to reconsider, and I should like very much to have liberty at some stage to deal with those points which are still undecided at a kind of supplement to the First Reading before we come to the Second Reading. I agree we should know exactly where we stand when we approach the Second Reading.

Now, I have to deal with two points, but since the discussion has ranged over the two points I am almost forced to deal with them both together. The question is to decide for the
moment the distinction between sea-borne aircraft and shore-based aircraft, what is the
definition that we propose to adopt for aircraft in general, and there you come to a little
complication. The word actually before us is "formations", but, in order to understand what
"formations" means, you must turn back to the previous page and you will see that it
is, as translated in English, "formation for current service". Well, "formation for current service"
would really have no meaning in England. But I believe that we desire to
describe the same thing. I believe that "aircraft in commission in combatant units" is as
nearly as possible the same thing as "aircraft for current service". It is a different way of
expressing the same thing. These are very technical matters and I apologise to the Commission
for dealing with them, but, if we are to deal with the matter at all, we have got to deal with it
technically. I am assured that a "unit" is a squadron as applied to aircraft, and that a
"formation" is a body of more than one squadron, and that, therefore, is not so precise as a
"unit". I may be entirely wrong, but that is what I am assured, and therefore we should
prefer to preserve the word "unit". Then the question is whether, if you accept that view,
a "unit in current service" would be a good expression in English. I do not mind, so long as
we are saying the same thing, what phrase is used in French, but we say a "combatant unit" is
a more accurate and more intelligible expression than "a unit in current service". I suggested
to my technical advisers whether we could not say "units in active service" or "units for active
service", and I do not know that there would be any final objection to that. But I am sure that
we should do no good by discussing these words in full Commission so long as we are all clear
that what we want to limit are those aircraft which are available for fighting purposes. I
said previously "aggressive purposes", but it is pointed out to me that, in dealing with aircraft,
that is perhaps not sufficient, because there may be aircraft which are mainly utilisable for
defensive purposes which ought to be included, since you cannot really distinguish in the case
of aircraft between what is aggressive and what is defensive. But "available for fighting
purposes", apart from technicalities, is what we mean, and I should have thought that, if
we asked two or three of our experts to get together and present to us an agreed expression
exactly carrying out the views of the Commission, we could have best dealt with it in that
way.

I desire to remove altogether from the minds of the delegates for Roumania and the
Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes any conception that we wish to have a kind of
hidden force of aircraft or to allow anybody else to have a hidden force of aircraft. That is
not our object at all. We are only anxious regarding a very difficult technical matter. Do
not let us forget that, of all the subjects with which we have to deal, the subject of air arma-
ments is the most difficult, for two admirable reasons — first, there is much less experience
regarding it — it is much less fixed in tradition than in the case of either naval or land
armaments; and secondly, it is a progressive service. It changes every year, every month,
and it is therefore necessary to use greater care and caution when making provisions with
regard to it, for fear of producing some altogether unforeseen and undesirable result. To
suggest that we are anxious not to limit aircraft is really flying in the face not only of all our
assertions but to attribute to the British Government something less than common sense.
There is no Government in the world that is more anxious, from its geographical situation
and otherwise, to limit air armaments; it is the one armament with which our fleet cannot

M. SATO (Japan). — As my proposal does not find unanimous support, I prefer, for the
moment, to withdraw it. It deals with a minor question and there are certainly many other
more important questions which must be settled. Still, I reserve the right to revert to this
point at a suitable moment, with a view to finding a reasonable solution for the limitation of
aircraft carried on warships.

I should like to add something in order to remove a misunderstanding. With reference
to remarks of mine, M. Paul-Boncour said that I had shown some surprise at the anxiety of
the representative of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. But this is not so.
I was not in the least surprised at his anxiety but, on the contrary, thoroughly appreciated it.
If, this morning, I made a proposal regarding aircraft carried on warships, it was because I,
too, had my fears. I think, therefore, that I may say we are in complete agreement.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I accept Lord Cecil's proposal to call upon the experts
to find a suitable term for what we have called "land, sea or air formations". The difficulty
is all the greater for the reason that the words do not always mean exactly the same thing
in both languages.

The French draft contains the word "formations" because that word includes units and
something more, whereas the word "unités" only refers to units. As regards aviation, there
is an organisation which is in possession of many machines, and often very good ones: I refer
to the training schools. Too restricted a term would exclude all the schools, that is to say,
a very large number of aircraft. This shows how important is the choice of words.

It must be understood, however, that the discussion only covers the first passage in
which the word "formations" is used, for on the second occasion this term has an exact
meaning. We used it in the sense in which it was defined for land armaments, because there
are formations organised on a military basis, which, like police forces, make use of aircraft and
to which limitation must apply.
Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — With regard to the second point, I confess I am in a little difficulty because I see the definition as finally agreed upon, "by ‘formations organised on a military basis’ shall be understood police forces of all kinds" — I never heard of a police force which existed solely on aircraft — "gendarmerie, Customs officials, forest guards, which, whatever their legal purpose can be used without mobilisation, by reason of their staff of officers, established training, armaments or equipment, as well as any organisation complying with the above condition". There may be such formations, though I am not aware of them, in the British Empire. They may exist elsewhere. If they exist, I do not see any particular reason why we should not deal with them, but I do not want to put in words merely because they have been put in with regard to the land if they have no application to the air.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I rose yesterday afternoon to support the proposal of the Japanese delegate as to the method and time of considering naval aviation. He has now withdrawn from his position to facilitate the discussion in a manner which is most acceptable to the members of the Commission. I feel I cannot lag behind him in consideration of the convenience of the Commission. For that reason, I would gladly have been instructed to put forward is the simple view that you should only try to limit the difference of view as to the best way of approaching this problem. I can only say that I go further.

The first step, and that you could see how things went, and in four or five years you could do something very simple, recognising that it would not be complete at all, but that it would be an order to save time, we will call military and naval aircraft is reserved’ Next, as regards aircraft belonging to military formations, the experts, in conformity with Lord Cecil’s wish, will be instructed to find another term than "formations organisées sur un fondement militaire". There may be such formations, though I am not aware of them, in the British Empire. They may exist elsewhere. If they exist, I do not see any particular reason why we should not deal with them, but I do not want to put in words merely because they have been put in with regard to the land if they have no application to the air.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — Can anyone tell me whether there are countries with forces organised on a military basis which possess aircraft?

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — Lord Cecil’s question is rather difficult to answer. It is always a delicate matter to mention the name of a given country. I can, however, tell him that there certainly do exist countries where the police forces dispose of aircraft. That, I may say, is the case in my own country. I think it necessary that nothing should be allowed to escape. We already have one big loophole in the form of civil aircraft, and we know that they could be made use of. We must therefore, as far as possible, cover all aircraft in service, of whatever kind it is.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — The difficulty is that the word “formations” is used in one sense at the beginning and in another sense at the end of the phrase. I am quite sure that there are no air units (let me say) which are organised on a military basis in that sense. I do not believe there are such things. There may be aircraft attached to the police. We do not have them in our country, but they may exist. They conceivably may exist in some of the outlying parts of the Empire; but there are no formations.

I think the experts, when they come to re-draft this, should see what phrase can be used to avoid confusion. I venture to assure my French friends that their phrase: “formations organised on a military basis” has no conceivable meaning. I should not myself know what was meant. I misread it altogether. I thought it meant the aircraft units which could be used as auxiliary military units. It seemed to me a very doubtful question whether there were such things which could possibly be regarded as useful except after mobilisation. Some different wording must be adopted to make the phrase intelligible in English. I do not know whether it is intelligible in French or not.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — It is understood, then, that the question of what, in order to save time, we will call military and naval aircraft is reserved. Next, as regards aircraft belonging to military formations, the experts, in conformity with Lord Cecil’s wish, will be instructed to find another term than “formations militaires”, it being understood, however, that account will have to be taken not only of units in commission but also of training schools.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I thought we had arrived at an agreement that what we wanted to limit was the combatant units, but I understand M. Paul-Boncour wishes to go further than that, for reasons which are very powerful reasons. He wishes to include also the aeroplanes which are in the schools. I am afraid this all comes back to the fundamental difference of view with which the British and French Governments approach this problem. The British Government thought it so difficult that the great thing to do was to try to have something very simple, recognising that it would not be complete at all, but that it would be the first step, and that you could see how things went, and in four or five years you could go further.

The French Government have desired to be more comprehensive, and that is a fundamental difference of view as to the best way of approaching this problem. I can only say that I quite agree with him that I do not think there is any use in sending it to a committee of experts until we have settled exactly the basis on which we are to go. At present, the view that I have been instructed to put forward is the simple view that you should only try to limit the combatant units, but if that is not the view of the Commission, then I am afraid that there, too, I shall have to seek further instructions.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — The French Government is inspired by the same wish as the British Government, and we have been trying to do something very simple. I do not think that there is any difference between limiting aircraft used in training schools and
limiting aircraft in commission with squadrons. The whole question is whether a country does or does not wish for this limitation.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am sure that M. Paul-Boncour does not suspect me of underrating the force of his argument. I think there is a great deal of force in it. All I can say is that the British Government, having considered the matter, did think it added a complication, and that if you limited the fighting force you limited training establishments. That is the point of view which they adopted. As I say, I am very anxious not to delay matters by merely repeating arguments, and I should be glad to know if we could ascertain with simplicity the general view of the Commission on that point, as to whether it is desirable to limit the fighting forces only, or whether you should go further and limit the training forces as well. That is the point of view. In order to inform my Government on the whole position, I should be very glad to know what is the opinion of the Commission, if it can be ascertained with rapidity and without too much discussion.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I should like for my own small part to reply to Lord Cecil’s question.

Are we to say “formations” or “units”? I confess that I am not technically competent to distinguish very clearly between these two words, but if the problem is put in another way, and I am asked whether training schools should be limited, I see two reasons for saying that they should.

In the first place, I do not see that there is any clear distinction between a school and a squadron. The school has pilots, and very good pilots too, since they are engaged in teaching others how to fly. There are, also, good machines in the schools, for the reasons which have just been given by M. Paul-Boncour. And then, to repeat the opinion expressed yesterday, you will have only to post the pilot to the machine and you have your squadron.

Another reason is this. At every stage we are continually coming up against this difficulty of trained reserves. Many of us think that their limitation is either undesirable or impossible. There are, however, some among us — and I am one of them — who are concerned, nevertheless, to find a means of preventing these trained reserves from being used for sudden attack, and who would do means of avoiding them they can avoid the undue growth of trained reserves.

If the training schools are to be left alone, would it not result in the creation of further trained reserves? If you allow a country to have training schools, pilots and machines — in a word, to train a very large personnel — the result will be many more machines and many more pilots, and might therefore end in the building up of large reserves available in the event of mobilisation.

From this point of view, too, I think that we ought to seek a formula which will include the training schools. At the very least, we should include the pilots and those machines which can be used in war.

Once again, I think that it would be better if we could include the whole of the personnel and all the machines in the schools.

M. Yovanovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). — The fears which I have already expressed compel me to support M. Paul-Boncour in his proposal to include under limitation training schools and police aircraft.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — With regard to all the points in the draft, I have always urged that the Convention should cover as many as possible of the essential factors utilisable in war.

In my opinion, military training schools are a factor of great military importance, as is also the material used in those schools. For that reason, I support M. Paul-Boncour’s arguments.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I am in agreement with the opinion just expressed by our Serb-Croat-Slovene and Swedish colleagues.

M. Sokal (Poland). — I reserve the right to address the Commission with regard to aviation in general, but, for the moment, since Lord Cecil has put the question, I cannot do less than reply that I am entirely in agreement with the opinions expressed by M. Yovanovitch, M. Hennings and M. Rutgers.

The President. — In that case, we will now suspend this discussion and proceed to Point 5.

40. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 5.

British draft.

... within the limits of each State which is a Party to the present Treaty.

French draft.

By limiting separately:

The air material of military, naval or air formations for the defence of the home country;

The air material of formations organised on a military basis and stationed in the home country;

The air material of military, naval or air formations allocated to the overseas forces or intended for their reinforcement;

The air material of formations organised on a military basis and stationed in overseas countries.
Any limitation that is placed upon the material should, I think, be general in character and separately for purposes of limitation air material under the four headings that are given.

is to know not the formation to which an aircraft belongs but the aircraft which can drop from that territory, are questions of an administrative importance only. What is important in separately limiting it by creating distinctions according to the separate uses made of avia-
tion material in time of war.

forces and colonial forces. I pointed out the grave objections to this distinction if colonial forces were to be regarded as unable to guarantee the security of the country and of no value if it meditated an attack.

forces serving with the colours or for equipment of trained reserves of the air force.

right-hand column, I am faced with some doubts as to what useful end can be served by listing units, and forces stationed in the Far East or in Equatorial Africa, or even in the Near East, without their dangers Further, what a daring airman can do cannot be done by established transport will be almost the same as those which were shown to exist in regard to military effective.

I rise to say that I feel a great deal of sympathy with the Italian point of view, and my only doubt is whether it is practicable to draw a distinction, but, if he can produce some watertight distinction between colonies that are near the home country and colonies that are far from it, I should be very glad to consider it.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). - In examining the text in the right-hand column, I am faced with some doubts as to what useful end can be served by listing separately for purposes of limitation air material under the four headings that are given. Any limitation that is placed upon the material should, I think, be general in character and apply to totals, and be subdivided into two heads only — that for the air forces serving with the colours and that for those in reserve, by which is meant the material which is held in reserve either for forces serving with the colours or for equipment of trained reserves of the air force.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I entirely agree with Mr. Gibson's proposals, namely, that there should be only two limitations.

I have already expressed my opinion regarding a distinction between a country's home forces and colonial forces. I pointed out the grave objections to this distinction if colonial forces were to be regarded as unable to guarantee the security of the country and of no value to it if it meditated an attack.

If these objections apply to land forces, they are of very much greater importance in regard to air forces. For each country the air fleet constitutes a whole, and I see no advantage in separately limiting it by creating distinctions according to the separate uses made of aviation material in time of war.

Whether an aircraft is attached to the home forces or to a formation organised on a military basis, whether it is stationed in the home territory or at a few hours' flying distance from that territory, are questions of an administrative importance only. What is important is to know not the formation to which an aircraft belongs but the aircraft which can drop bombs and take part in a sudden attack. All the air forces of a country are capable of being used for the same purpose, which means that, for purposes of limitation, the air force should be considered as a whole. We can, I repeat, consider air units separately and distinguish them according to the unit they belong to, but that is only of administrative value. The limitation of all air forces should be considered together as a whole. That, at any rate, is the view of my country.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — The French text makes two points, and we should ascertain whether we are agreed on these points. The first is that the air forces in the colonies should not be excluded from limitation, the second, that, if they are not excluded from limitation, they should, like military effectives, be divided into those which are in the home country and those which are in the colonies. General de Marinis questions this, and I am far from denying that the arguments which I think weigh in favour of distinguishing between home effective and colonial effectives in the case of armies lose some of their force when we come to aviation. Still, I think the distinction is useful. In the first place, because it makes things clearer, and also because — apart of course, from the event of mobilisation — the forces which are posted by countries for duty in the colonies would not be in the home country; we should thereby effect a certain limitation. Moreover — and I now touch, for a moment only, on technical matters — General de Marinis exaggerated a little when he said that the whole of the air forces could easily be brought back to the home country. I know that the Press is every day exciting our wonder by tales of daring flights across the oceans, but these are not without their dangers. Further, what a daring airman can do cannot be done by established units, and forces stationed in the Far East or in Equatorial Africa, or even in the Near East, could not be transported home as squadrons with the same facility. The difficulties of transport will be almost the same as those which were shown to exist in regard to military effective. I think, therefore, that, even from a technical point of view, the distinction is justified and is something more than a mere administrative distinction. Then, again, from the point of view of the Convention — which is our concern — I consider that the distinction is of great importance, because we cannot compare air effective which are stationed in a distant colony for the defence of that colony with air effective in the home country. Here, too, I see no serious disadvantage in this distinction, which I think would make for clearness. I therefore recommend it to the Commission.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I must thank my friend M. Paul-Boncour for his explanations, which seem to support the argument I advanced a few days ago with regard to this distinction between home forces and colonial forces. M. Paul-Boncour points out that there are certain colonies from which aircraft might quickly reach the home country and that there are others — in the Far East, for example — from which aircraft would take a considerable time to return home. That argument brings us to the distinction which I proposed the other day. I quite understand that there may be countries requiring this distinction between home forces and colonial forces, and for other countries the only distinction which need be made is between colonies which are near the home country and colonies which are distant from it. That distinction would be fair and logical. I can only repeat what I have already said to the Commission, that I should be quite prepared to accept this distinction provided that the colonies are divided into two kinds: colonies which are near to the home country and colonies which are distant.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I rise to say that I feel a great deal of sympathy with the Italian point of view, and my only doubt is whether it is practicable to draw a distinction, but, if he can produce some watertight distinction between colonies that are near the home country and colonies that are far from it, I should be very glad to consider it.
Meanwhile, on the general proposition, I am prepared to accept the French point of view that it would be convenient to have some distinction between overseas air forces and home air forces. I presume that, when the French phrase says "by limiting separately", it means, of course, in accordance with Tables I to V, which we discussed in connection with land effectives; otherwise, it would be impossible for me to accept any more rigid form than that. I do not think there is anything more I can say except this, that evidently, when we come to present our claims for quota, the British claim for overseas aircraft will probably be a very large one, or a relatively large one, because there are so many countries which have to be dealt with and so many interests which have to be safeguarded. But that does not affect our present proceedings. I see no objection to the French proposal providing that "by limiting separately" does not mean more than Tables I to V.

I ought to add that I still desire to retain my doubts as to the exact sense, in relation to aircraft, "formations of a military character" would have. I understand that we are going to look into this a little further. This point belongs to the previous discussion.

Count Bernstorff (Germany).—Just now the honourable delegate for Sweden expressed an idea which exactly reflects the mind of the German delegation. He reminded us that throughout our discussions the Swedish delegation had urged the necessity of securing the fullest possible measure of disarmament. For that reason, the delegation has always supported proposals aiming at the speediest and most complete attainment of this object. That is exactly our own point of view.

In the particular case with which we are dealing, we are in favour of the French text of Point 5. I may add that the German delegation has listened most sympathetically to the observations of General de Marinis. If I have properly understood the point of view of the Italian delegation, it desires the limitation of all air forces regarded as a whole. If this proposal could be summarised in a text, the German delegation would accept it.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire).—I want to make one point clear and that is that I am, of course, speaking for the British Empire and not for the British Dominions; the Dominions must speak for themselves in this and other matters.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands).—As regards the Netherlands, the question assumes the same aspect as in regard to military effectives. If a crisis arose, we could not reinforce our colonial air forces by means of aircraft from the home country, owing to our distance from the colonies and the particularly exposed nature of our communications. We therefore desire that this distinction should be maintained. For only in that way can the Netherlands justify the figures which they will wish to insert in the tables. It seems also only logical to proceed in the same way with material as we did with personnel.

The President.—Agreement on Point 5 is pretty general. Does General de Marinis wish to propose an amendment?

General de Marinis (Italy).—As I said just now, I can only accept limitation as a whole and I do not see how that could hamper countries with a vast colonial dominion. No one has the right to interfere in the use which these countries make of their forces. For my part, I am sorry to say that I must make a formal reservation.

M. Paul-Boncour (France).—I cannot allow what General de Marinis has just said to pass without a correction. I am glad of the opportunity to furnish an explanation which applies both to military effectives and to air forces. General de Marinis appears to think that the demand for a distinction between home effectives or air forces and colonial effectives or air forces is made in the interests of countries with colonies. This is not so. General de Marinis is perfectly right in saying that limitation as a whole and separate limitation would lead to the same result and that the figures furnished by the States would have to be exactly the same in both cases. The distinction, however, is proposed in the interests of supervision by the League, which is quite another thing. It is a matter of indifference to a country with many colonies whether it places the total forces it asks for in one column, justifying them by its needs, or whether it shows the forces it requires in two columns, which even so weak a mathematician as myself could easily add up. But let us not forget Article 8, which is the keystone of the structure we are trying to build, and which requires that countries applying for armaments over and above what is granted by the Convention shall state the reasons for their request. From this point of view, it is exceedingly important to distinguish between home and colonial forces. When I demand that this distinction should be made, it is not in the interests of States but in the interests of supervision by the League of Nations.

Count Bernstorff (Germany).—I suggest that we take total horse-power as the basis for material, using the same subdivisions as those laid down for army effectives in Tables I to V.

M. Paul-Boncour (France).—I quite agree.

General de Marinis (Italy).—I, too, accept this proposal, subject to my reservation.
M. RUTGERS (Netherlands). — Could we not have the same tables for personnel and for material?

M. SATO (Japan). — I, too, am prepared to accept the proposal by the German delegation, it being understood, however, that we should adopt in this case the conjunction between table and text which was applied to land armaments.

The Hon. Hugh GIBSON (United States of America). — I should like to call attention to the fact that we must understand we are not anticipating the standards of measurement for aircraft. I think we want to reserve that.

Point 5 was adopted, with the reservation submitted by the Italian delegation.

The Commission rose at 1 p.m.

SIXTEENTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Monday, April 4th, 1927, at 10.15 a.m.

President: M. LOUDON (Netherlands).

41. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 6.

British draft.

The number of such aircraft shall be limited by each of the High Contracting Parties to the figure set out in the tables annexed hereto.

French draft.

Such aircraft shall not represent a total engine power, expressed in horse-power, superior to the figures laid down, in each case, for each of the above-mentioned categories of material in the tables annexed hereto.

Engine power shall be measured according to the rules established by the International Air Navigation Commission.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — We now come, of course, to the most important part of the air-armament proposals, namely, the actual proposals for limitation; and I am perfectly free to admit that I am not very well satisfied with either of the proposals which are made. I am afraid that is inevitable, in view of the great difficulty of the subject and the rapid growth of the development in our knowledge, but, after considerable thought, the British Government and their advisers are, on the whole, of opinion that a limitation by numbers is the most effective and the most practical method that we can devise at this present time. You want something which will make a real, serious limitation, and you want something which can be easily controlled — something that does not lend itself, more than is inevitable, to mistake and to misunderstanding. The British Government think that to count the actual number of aircraft in the service of any of the parties to the Treaty would not be a very difficult matter, and would be controllable probably, at any rate in democratic countries where parliaments exist — and that is practically the whole of them — by the programmes and the estimates which are submitted to parliaments, because in all those cases the number of the aircraft is always stated, and therefore you would get something which was fairly easily controllable, apart from deliberate deception, by the published statements of the various Governments. It is admitted that it is not by any means a complete control. It is quite evident that a mere control by numbers leaves a great opportunity for variety, leaves a great many things unknown which, for the full purpose of disarmament, ought to be known, but is perhaps the best step that can be taken at present. At least, that is the British Government's view.

They have observed with great interest the other proposal, the proposal to limit aircraft — I take first the aircraft heavier than air for the moment, because there are two different proposals with regard to aircraft heavier than air and aircraft lighter than air — by the total horse-power. With regard to the aircraft heavier than air, the proposal is that there should be no attempt to limit the individual aeroplanes, but that the total horse-power of the whole of the aircraft should be limited. Well, it is evident that that will give extremely little information; it will not even say how many aeroplanes actually exist. Evidently it will not give any information whatever as to the size of the aeroplanes or as to their nature. An enumeration of the number of aeroplanes would, in practice, no doubt say broadly the kind of aeroplanes they were and the formations in which they existed, the number of squadrons, and so on. You would get a certain amount of information in that way, but this information of mere total horse-power really gives almost nothing.

There is another great difficulty which the British Government feel about it. They feel that it would be extremely difficult to control. I do not know what the practice of other nations is but, as far as I know, there is no statement made to our Parliament or in our estimates of the total horse-power of the aeroplanes, and it is evident that to check such a statement would be an extremely difficult job, because the only way to check it would be by measuring the horse-power of each particular aeroplane and then adding the whole together and finding whether or not the total horse-power was exceeded. The British Government feel that, unless you are going to have an amount of inspection which would be quite impracticable in the present state of national feeling, it would be impossible to check. More than that, even if you had such an inspection, if you could conceive such a state of things as a power to send...
actual inspectors to measure all the aeroplanes in every country, I venture to say that, even in that case, the amount of control you could get would be extremely small. Therefore the British Government feel that to measure it merely by the total horse-power would be a very unsatisfactory way of doing it. They do not pretend that there is any very satisfactory way available at this moment. They think that, on the whole, if you are to have one simple test, then the test by number is more likely to be informative and effective than a test in any other way — certainly a test by total horse-power. But they are quite ready to consider any compromise or amalgamation of the two plans which could be suggested. All they want to do in this matter is to go as far as they can in the present state of knowledge of aircraft, and to adopt, as far as possible, a practical and efficient system of check, even if it is not by any means a complete one.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — If, in the light of the observations contained in Sub-Commission A's report, we examined the proposal to employ, as the only standard of limitation, the number of aircraft, it seems impossible not to recognise as well grounded the objections which have been raised against the employment of this method. These objections are too serious to be neglected.

On page 115 of Sub-Commission A's report you will find the following:

"This method leaves the various countries free to increase the power of their aircraft; they would thus gain predominance while actually keeping within the letter of the Convention";

and further:

"It would encourage the building of large high-power bombing aircraft which is par excellence the offensive weapon of the air".

In my opinion, this would create a very serious position. While keeping within the letter of the Convention, States would be free, and would to a certain extent be actually encouraged, to increase the construction of certain types of aircraft which are par excellence the offensive weapon in war. For my part, I find this objection not only serious but decisive.

A method which would bring about such results — namely, the encouragement of the construction of heavy bombing aircraft, etc., cannot therefore be employed as the only standard of limitation of aircraft. Besides, the other method — limitation of total horse-power — indubitably presents, if used as the only standard of limitation, certain disadvantages not perhaps so serious as those of the first method, but none the less important. This second method would not encourage the increase of horse-power but the increase in the number of aircraft.

According to the view of the Swedish military authorities, there exist machines whose military value does not depend chiefly on their horse-power. Certain medium-horse-power aircraft — "scouts", for example — can be of as much use in war as other aircraft which possess a higher horse-power. This fact would seem to show that it would be advantageous to limit also the number of military aircraft.

For these reasons — to return to the idea already touched upon by Viscount Cecil in his speech — it seems to me that the most logical and most efficacious method would be to employ conjointly the two methods of limitation proposed by Great Britain and by France and to limit the number of aircraft as well as their total horse-power. In this way, we should avoid the construction of heavy bombing aircraft at the expense of a number of machines, and should also prevent countries from increasing the number of their machines at the expense of the horse-power of each of them. If my proposal is accepted by the members of the Commission, we shall find ourselves in the unusual position of being able to accept both plans instead of having to choose between the two.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I should like to support the proposal made by the honourable delegate for Sweden, which seems to me to offer a very reasonable way out of our difficulty; in fact, he stated conclusions which had been arrived at independently by the American delegation. We like both of the proposals that have been made, each as far as it goes, but we feel that neither one of them really goes far enough and that either one of them, taken separately, is likely to produce inaccurate and perhaps misleading results. But by combining them we get about as definite and accurate results as we can hope to achieve, and for that reason I think we would do well to combine the two methods and consider that our method of limitation.

M. Yovanovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). — I regret that, as regards the limitation of aircraft, I am in agreement neither with Viscount Cecil nor with my Swedish colleague nor with Mr. Gibson.

It is obvious that the method of limitation of aircraft is a purely technical question, and it seems to me that the best method of arriving at a solution of the problem would be to follow the opinion of Sub-Commission A regarding standards of limitation.

Sub-Commission A agreed unanimously that the chief standard for limiting aircraft is total horse-power. In my opinion, it would serve no useful purpose to reopen the discussion on purely technical questions and I refer you in this respect to page 49 of the report.

Moreover, the value of an air force does not depend solely upon the number of aircraft but also on other factors, the most important of which is horse-power. If the number is limited and not the horse-power, States would be led to construct increasingly powerful aircraft, which would be at the same time most deadly and extremely costly. This would place small States at a considerable disadvantage.
I should like to recall to your minds in this respect the following observations on page 55 of the report:

"If a powerful aircraft were placed on a level with a small machine possessing a limited range of action, small States would be at a disadvantage, since they generally require small aircraft, whereas States with extensive territory have to employ powerful machines, even for defensive purposes.

"Hence, if the number alone of the aircraft were taken into account, small States would appear, in relation to their territory or population, to have more powerful air forces than the big States, a situation which would be at variance with the actual facts."

For all these reasons, the delegation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes holds the view that the best method of limitation consists in limiting total horse-power.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). - I have been very much impressed by the observations made by the honourable delegate for Sweden. I regret that I cannot agree with M. Yovanovitch.

I wonder, moreover, if a slight error has not crept into his statement: the quotation which he read from page 49 of the report of Sub-Commission A does not refer to methods of limitation but to methods of comparison.

It is obvious that the simplest way of limitation is by number, but the Swedish delegation has shown — incontrovertibly, I think — that this is insufficient.

I support M. Hennings's proposal if we are agreed as to its exact scope: he intends, namely, that each country should state its maximum number of aircraft and its maximum horse-power? States should not, however, be requested to draw up a detailed table of the number of aeroplanes, with particulars of the horse-power of each, for this method would entail once and for all the standardisation of the air force.

My proposal is simply this: each State should accept a number of aircraft and total horse-power which it undertakes not to exceed. I think that this proposal is reasonable and I am quite prepared to support it.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). - I have very little to add to the statements made by the last three speakers.

The German delegation desires to support the proposal put forward by the Swedish delegation and supported by the United States delegation. We think that this would be the best way out of the difficulty, and, as our reasons are precisely the same as those put forward by the Swedish and United States delegates, there is no occasion for me to take up more of your time.

M. VEVERKA (Czechoslovakia). - I must state that I feel a good deal of sympathy with the arguments put forward by my friend M. Yovanovitch.

As the representative of a small State, I wish to prevent my country from being put into a position of inferiority. I should therefore like to ask the Swedish delegate if the particulars regarding horse-power and the number of aircraft could be set out in two columns, one showing the total horse-power and the other the number of aircraft for each State.

If this could be done, I think we could support the proposal.

M. HENNINGS (Sweden). - I should merely like to say that M. de Brouckère and M. Veverka have correctly understood my proposal.

It is not my intention to endeavour to distribute the total horse-power between the different aircraft. I consider that there should only be two figures; a maximum figure for the number in one column, and a maximum figure for the total horse-power in the other column. I think that, in this respect, M. de Brouckère and M. Veverka have fully grasped my meaning and that we are in complete agreement.

At the same time, I should like to tell my friend and colleague M. Yovanovitch that I think he made a slight mistake when he stated that Sub-Commission A unanimously agreed that the total horse-power was the principal standard for the limitation of military aviation.

He referred to page 49 of the report. It is true that a number of delegations accepted the total horse-power as the principal standard, but other delegations mentioned three standards, without indicating which was the most important. These latter delegations declared that the standards should be the total horse-power, the total wing area, and number combined, but they did not say which of these was the chief one.

M. YOVANOVITCH (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). - May I be permitted to point out to my Swedish colleague that I am not under the misapprehension of which he spoke? As regards the standards of comparison of aircraft submitted to Sub-Commission A, total horse-power with respect to aircraft and total volume with respect to dirigibles were unanimously accepted; but certain delegations considered that this criterion should only be taken in conjunction with other standards. No agreement was reached on this point.

M. COMNÈNE (Roumania). - We might perhaps reach an agreement more readily if M. de Brouckère would be good enough to reply to the following question:

It is obvious that machines with high engine power are, generally speaking, and according to the opinion of experts, more especially adapted for offensive action; small machines, on the contrary, are used in the main for defensive action. If we adopt the two-columns system, we may perhaps introduce the following modification: When the maximum in one column...
Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I should like to clear up the point of difference as to what exactly the Sub-Commission said. I think, if M. Yovanovitch will look again at the report, he will see that the Sub-Commission proceeded in this way. It first tried to determine in what way you could compare air armaments with one another. It did not actually determine that, but, having arrived at certain conclusions with regard to that, it then went on to the question, which is evidently a different question, how far those methods of comparison could be usefully applied towards limitation, because other things enter into the consideration besides comparative value when you come to adopt methods of limitation. You may find a very good way of comparing one machine with another, but if, in practice, it is not possible to apply it, then it ceases to become a useful method of limitation. You have to bear in mind those two aspects of the matter: first, what is theoretically the best method of comparison; secondly, what is the best practical method of applying some method of comparison in order to produce a method of limitation.

In fact, the Sub-Commission — which may have many charges brought against it, but certainly cannot be charged with having acted in an illogical way — kept those things distinct. On page 46 and onwards it was considering entirely the question of comparison, and it did not consider the question of limitation until very much later, somewhere about page 110 or 112. There was no kind of unanimity then as to comparison. I think it is quite true to say that all the members thought that horse-power was one of the things by which you ought to compare aeroplanes, but the majority of them also thought that number was an essential element of comparison, and to exclude one of those things is really to go against the opinion of the majority. You may say that horse-power was universally admitted as one method but the majority also wanted to include number. Nine Powers in fact were in favour of number as well as horse-power; eight Powers were not. So that there is no kind of unanimity.

Then with regard to M. Comnènes’s proposal I am not sure that I understand it. What is quite clear is that you should have, according to the proposal made by the Swedish delegation and concurred in by the American and Czechoslovak delegations, two columns. I do not quite see how you can say that, because you have fewer aeroplanes, therefore you are to be allowed to have a larger horse-power. That seems to me to be a very dangerous thing, from the point of view particularly of the smaller countries. I should have thought that would mean if they had a large number of aeroplanes, then they would have a smaller horse-power, which is exactly what I understand they do not want to be limited to.

With regard to the proposal of the Swedish delegation, I admit I am very sympathetic to it myself; but I should very much like to know from the French delegation, merely as a practical matter, how exactly it thinks the limitation by horse-power could in practice be applied? It seems to me a difficult method practically, and that is the only reluctance I have at present in saying that — at any rate, for the purposes of the First Reading — I could assent to the Swedish proposal. If I could be satisfied that the proposal to limit horse-power was really a practical thing, which could be done — not a thing which could be done on paper, but which could be done in practice — then I should have nothing more to say. I do not see at present how you could do it without accepting the statement of each country of what total horse-power it had. It may be that that is what we shall have to do to a large extent.

M. Comnène (Roumania). — In reply to Lord Cecil, I should like to explain briefly that, according to my proposal, States should be invited to give a definite undertaking to limit total tonnage, e.g., horse-power, and to enter this figure in the first column. As regards the number of machines, no definite undertaking would be assumed, so that each State would be at liberty to distribute the total horse-power allotted to it between the number of aircraft considered necessary for its security. A declaration to this effect would be given in accordance with the system of publicity adopted annually by the Conference, and the figures would be entered in the second column.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I may say, in answer to Lord Cecil, that the French delegation, when it was led to include limitation by total horse-power in its draft, was guided principally by the work of Sub-Commission A. Doubtless, reservations were made as regards limitation, but, when the experts of the different States were seeking to find the best method of comparison, the only point on which they agreed was on the horse-power. On other methods of comparison there was no unanimity. Without being bound by the findings of Sub-Commission A, I consider that, since the question under discussion is a technical one, it would perhaps be wise to abide by the decision of this Commission. It is for this reason that the French delegation chose total horse-power.

I may say frankly to Lord Cecil that I was impressed by some of his arguments: there is no doubt that a method based on numbers is far simpler and far easier to supervise than any other method. Lord Cecil knows that I attach great importance to this question of supervision in connection with limitation. At the same time, we know from the representatives of the small States that it would be advantageous for them to distribute the total horse-power allotted to them over as many small machines as possible. In this case, as happens also with regard to Sub-calibre armaments, small machines are more adapted for defensive purposes than offensive, and I do not think therefore that it would be in the interests of the Commission to go counter to this tendency.

But I clearly see that these two methods of limitation could be combined, on the understanding that no ratio should be established between them and that States would be at liberty...
to have as many aircraft as they desire so long as they keep within the limit of the total tonnage allotted to them. They would therefore be at liberty to construct as many small aircraft as they desired. I think therefore that on this basis agreement could be reached.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I must say I think M. Paul-Boncour's speech has made an agreement in all probability quite possible. There is only one point I should like to be quite clear about, and that is with respect to how you are to control the limitation by horse-power.

If M. Paul-Boncour says that, in this matter, he thinks the only thing to do is to rely upon the statements made by the various countries, I shall know exactly where we stand, and I shall be disposed to agree with him; but if he has any other method in his mind, I shall be glad to know exactly what it is. My technical advisers are a good deal disturbed about that particular point, and if M. Paul-Boncour could clear that point up, I think we could then reach agreement.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — My answer to Lord Cecil will be in the form of another question: How does he intend to apply supervision to numbers?

This obviously raises the serious question of supervision, which we shall examine later in due course. Doubtless it is easier to count the number of aircraft than to estimate their total horse-power. But, if you admit that supervision must be applied according to a form of procedure that will be decided upon later, it is not impossible to determine, when once a country has given a figure showing its total horse-power and has also set forth under the Convention the number of its aircraft, whether its air force is in excess or not of the total horse-power allotted to it. The French delegation, in considering this practical side of the question, laid down clearly that "horse-power shall be measured according to the rules established by the International Air Navigation Commission". These rules are as follows:

"The power of an engine is the average power that the engine generates during two trials of one hour each during which it runs without stopping at a pressure of 760 millimetres of mercury in dry air and at a temperature of 15°C. This engine power will be measured in horse-power of 75 kilogramme-metres a second and will be expressed to the nearest horse-power for engines not exceeding 50 horse-power within 5 horse-power for engines between 50 and 200 horse-power and within 10 horse-power for engines exceeding 200 horse-power".

It is hardly necessary to point out that these types are known and that each type corresponds to a horse-power which is determined according to the rules of the International Air Navigation Commission. Total horse-power taken as a whole, as I have just shown, and characterised by the number of machines, will permit therefore of supervision when the form of procedure of this supervision has been fixed.

General de Marinis (Italy). — As I understand this proposal, each country will be called upon to furnish two figures, one the total horse-power of its air force, and the other the number of its machines.

I could support this proposal, but I should like the following point explained with reference to statements which M. Comnène and M. de Brouckère have just made. Would the number of machines at the disposal of a country which must represent a total within the limits of the aggregate horse-power allotted to it remain fixed during the whole period of the Convention or as I think I have understood the proposal — would a State, while always remaining within the total horse-power allotted to it, have the right to change annually in the Yearbook the number of the machines?

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I should like to reply to General de Marinis.

If I can obtain only a declaration of the number of aircraft, I shall have to be content with that, but if we can agree on the question of limitation of the number of aircraft, I think that would be much better. Why? I quite appreciate the importance of the standard of limitation by horse-power. Horse-power must certainly be limited. The reasons for this have already been stated; I will not repeat them. But the supervision of this method of limitation would indubitably be a difficult and delicate task. If, therefore, we only limit horse-power, we shall have a Convention the observance of which will be left to the good faith of all parties. This would be a guarantee in itself, but the Convention would lack that objective character and simplicity which are necessary.

Is the engine of a given aircraft necessarily always the same? Only within certain limits. For example, a machine can fly with a 400-h.p. engine, but it could fly even better with a 650-h.p. engine. Therefore, if only total horse-power is limited, would there not be a danger that a certain number of States would be tempted to give a modest estimate of the horse-power necessary for their engines in time of peace and that they would keep in reserve a certain number of large machines to replace the small ones.

If we do not limit the number of aircraft we cannot escape this consequence. I perfectly understand that certain States are asking: Is it prudent to give an undertaking for a long period of years? I reply that it is quite as difficult to give a definite undertaking as regards total horse-power. We do not know what the progress of aviation in the future will be. A very few years ago we should have shrugged our shoulders at the idea of engines of 1,000 and of 2,000 horse-power. Lord Cecil has said that the undertaking is not for several years but for five years only. We must decide whether, in the case of aviation, this period of five years should not be subject, to a certain extent, to revision. I was impressed by the fact that, in the work of Sub-Commission A, our experts laid great stress on the undertaking being given
for a fairly short time. We should remember that, when we come to draw up our Convention, it might be advisable to allow a certain elasticity. Certain possible exceptions must be provided for — also the manner in which these exceptions should be, if I may say so “administered”. This will be the moment when the question will arise. At present, we must advise countries to sign a Convention for a reasonable time, and also to give a liberal estimate of the number of aircraft which would meet their legitimate requirements during that period.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I should like to thank M. de Brouckère for his explanations. I note also the point that he has made — namely, that it is necessary to decide whether, in the case of aviation, the period agreed upon should not to a certain extent be subject to revision. I agree with him as regards the second column, on the understanding that the title of the second column should be “maximum number”. This would allow more elasticity.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I have listened with great satisfaction to the discussion which has just taken place; it seems that we are about to reach a compromise. Agreement in two proposals is perhaps rather contradictory; it has been rather rare so far!

For my part, I think that, in general, when there is a choice between two methods, the best thing to do is to accept both of them. If a State refuses to adopt a method of limitation, it must have very serious reasons for doing so, and we must always remember that the acceptance of a method of limitation still leaves open the question of the actual application of this method to the different countries. This will be a task for the future Disarmament Conference.

I think that it would be unnecessary to introduce a new table of information, as this will be contained in the Armaments Yearbook of the League of Nations.

My delegation agrees with M. de Brouckère that small engines can easily be replaced by powerful ones, and this fact constitutes one of the weak points of the method of limitation by total horse-power. For this reason, I consider the two methods proposed should be combined.

I should like to make quite clear that, when I stated that the first method might be accepted by certain States and the second method by others, I did not intend to say that each State should include figures in the two columns; but that the figure included by one Government in one column might lead another Government to reduce the figure it was intending to insert.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia). — I wish to make sure that I am quite clear as to what has been agreed upon, especially after the statements made by General de Marinis and M. Rutgers.

I take it that the two columns will, as it were, give an idea of a programme of construction by fixing a figure which may not be exceeded. It is understood that the acceptance of this principle will not in any way preclude the possibility of certain adjustments, of which we will speak later when we come to examine Article 8 of the Synoptic Analysis.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I think I am now in a position to say that, on First Reading, I can accept this proposal, reserving all right to my Government to take a different view on the Second Reading. That is a part of our general understanding in this matter. I also wish very emphatically to take note of the observation of M. Paul-Boncour, for which I thank him, that he agrees with me that it would not be possible in any conceivable system of control to verify by actual experiment the horse-power of these machines, and that therefore — this is my own comment — we shall, in this matter, have to rely on the good faith of countries. So far as the number of machines is concerned, I might just say to him that we are not in quite so bad a position, as every country makes a report to its Parliament of the number of machines it has, and usually there is — at any rate, in most countries — a sufficiently active group who desire to see that the fighting forces of the country are not extended beyond what is reasonable and proper, and therefore there is a certain guarantee in that respect.

I should like to add that the meaning of the following sentence in the French text: “exceeding the figures given for each of the categories of material” is not quite clear to me. I venture to ask what is meant by these words.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I would like to say first, in reply to Lord Cecil, that the categories mentioned in Point 6 are those shown in Tables VI, VII, VIII and IX, which distinguish between aeroplanes and dirigibles in commission.

Further, I should like to make clear certain remarks of mine of which Lord Cecil has taken note. I did not say, nor am I of opinion, that it is impossible to keep any check on horse-power. Lord Cecil asked me: “How do you define horse-power?” I replied, saying: “Horse-power will be defined according to the rules established by the International Air Navigation Commission.” These rules are very precise since they provide for trials of aircraft engines. I said that, if a check were kept, it would not entail making such trials since these have already provided the basis of calculations, well-known in all the air services, and showing that each type of aeroplane corresponds to a given horse-power. Any military attaché or inspector can, when he sees an aeroplane, state its horse-power in the general terms of a Convention.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I merely wish to say that I had misunderstood M. Paul-Boncour and it is therefore necessary for me to say that the British Government, in accepting this proposition at the First Reading reserve to themselves all question of trial and all questions which deal with verification, their opinion being that it is impracticable to control the horse-power of aeroplanes except by accepting (and this is a very important point) the statements of countries to which they belong.
General de Marinis (Italy). — The agreement we have reached does not imply that I accept the proposal to insert a table. On this point I make the same reservations as I have already made with regard to the division of home and colonial forces, reinforcements for colonial forces, etc.

We should have to limit the aggregate horse-power of air formations in the home territory and overseas, as well as the aggregate horse-power of air formations intended for the reinforcement of overseas forces but stationed in the home territory. Further, we should have to limit the number of aeroplanes in the home territory, the number in the colonies and the number of those intended to reinforce aircraft in the colonies, etc. I consider these divisions very artificial.

As regards the principle, I quite agree, but I make reservations with regard to the table.

M. Comnène (Roumania). — With all due respect, I would ask the President to note that, in view of the formal instructions given me by my Government on the point which I raised previously, I cannot agree with the proposal which is apparently being adopted. I shall return to the matter at the Second Reading, when I receive further instructions from my Government.

M. Sato (Japan). — Since most of my colleagues have agreed to the Swedish delegation’s proposal, I also accept it, out of deference to the Swedish delegation, but only on my own responsibility, since the instructions given me so far by my Government do not quite tally with the proposal in question. Consequently, should my Government not approve of my action in so doing, I shall have to withdraw my agreement at the Second Reading. I would add that, while I now accept the Swedish proposal, I share M. Veverka’s view that acceptance of the principle in no way prejudices any later decision with regard to Point 8 of the Synoptic Table.

In some countries civil aviation is still in its infancy, while in others it has reached an advanced stage of development.

With regard to Point 8, M. de Brouckère has made a proposal which aims at affording civil aviation freedom of development while preventing its utilisation for military aviation. This, at any rate, is the meaning I attach to M. de Brouckère’s proposal. The suggestion seems very reasonable, yet I think it unlikely that in the present state of things, and for some time to come, civil aviation will be quite independent of military aviation. Military aviation will, when necessary, have recourse to civilian pilots and engineers. Hence the concern of some countries whose civil aviation is as yet rather undeveloped.

I hope the Commission will be good enough to take these circumstances and this concern into account. It is precisely this concern which compels me to make a reservation and leads to my acceptance being conditional upon that of the French proposal relating to Point 8 or any other suggestion similar to the French text.

The President. — While noting the reservations which have been made, I am of opinion that the Commission is nearing an agreement as regards combining the two texts which appear in the columns of the Synoptic Table.

42. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 7.

French draft

Further, the dirigibles defined above shall not represent a total volume, expressed in cubic meters exceeding the figures laid down in the table, attached hereto for each of the categories of material mentioned above.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I suppose here, too, the numbers are to be considered as well as the volume in the same way. If that is understood, there is no objection.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — In order to complete the method, it seems to me we should have volume, number and total horse-power as well. I would suggest that it might be supplemented by a conditional provision providing for number.

The President. — I would point out to Mr. Gibson that the word “further” occurs in the text.

Count Clauzel (France). — I think I might reply to Lord Cecil’s question by a counter-question, just as M. Paul-Boncour did a moment ago. We have two paragraphs in the proposition contained in the right-hand column; one deals with aeroplanes and therefore with aggregate horse-power, while the other deals with dirigibles and consequently with aggregate volume. The much shorter formula in the left-hand column deals, of course, both with aeroplanes and dirigibles; as regards Mr. Gibson question, we agree that there are, in short, two limitations for aeroplanes and three for dirigibles.

43. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 8.

French draft.

The limitations laid down are accepted by each High Contracting Party in the light of the present development of civil aviation in other countries.

The President. — I notice that an amendment proposed by M. Comnène is being circulated at present. I regret to observe that M. Comnène has disregarded the decision we took
a few days ago, namely, that amendments should be distributed twenty-four hours ahead. Provided the Commission sees no objection, we can, of course, discuss this amendment. Let us, however, examine the first point.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — May I ask a question? Are we to understand that M. de Brouckère’s proposals will be substituted for Point 8, or that they will come at the end of this article?

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — In my view, should the proposals be adopted, they would be inserted at the end of the chapter, whatever happens to Point 8 as it stands — that is, whether it is adopted or rejected. I think the proposals will be to the point in either case.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — Without prejudice to a stand being taken upon the proposals of M. de Brouckère, but merely on Point 8, which I understand is under discussion, I should like to say, in regard to civil aviation being considered in the matter of provisions for the limitation of air armaments, I desire to reiterate the stand taken by my Government as given in Sub-Commission A, to the effect that:

“The delegation of the United States of America desires that it be clearly understood that it cannot accept any consideration of, or taking into account, either the personnel or the material of civil aviation in any method proposed for the reduction or limitation of air armaments” (document C. 739. M. 278, page 133).

M. Hennings (Sweden). — I do not quite understand Point 8. Does it simply mean that, when the contracting parties submit their proposals to the general Conference, they may take into account the present state of development of civil aviation in the various countries? Is that its only meaning? I should be glad if Count Clauzel will kindly explain this point to me.

The President. — Before continuing the discussion, I should like to remind you of the commentary on Point 8, where it is stated that:

“In a second paragraph . . . measures are contemplated to cover cases in which the development of civil aviation might constitute a possible danger for the security of some of the High Contracting Parties.”

I would also refer you to second paragraph Article 11 of the French draft, which provides that:

“If, during the term of the present Treaty, civil aviation in one or more of the contracting countries or military or civil aviation in one or more of the non-signatory States experiences such a development as to constitute a possible danger to the security of some of the High Contracting Parties, the latter shall report this change of circumstances to the Permanent Disarmament Commission under the conditions laid down in Article 25 of the present Treaty”.

We shall refer to this matter again later.

Count Clauzel (France). — I am prepared to assure M. Hennings that his interpretation is quite in conformity with the views of the French delegation, as expressed in the first paragraph of Article 11 of its draft Convention: the Governments will be allowed to take into account the present development of civil aviation in other countries in order to justify their proposals regarding the limitation of their own military aviation submitted to the Conference.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — I thank Count Clauzel and wish to say that I am quite satisfied with the explanations he has just given me.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — As to the first paragraph, I am not quite sure that I understand exactly what its purpose is. Every high contracting party will, of course, be entitled to take any matter into consideration which it likes in presenting its case for air strength or for land strength or for sea strength — why not? — and if it thinks that one of the things it has to consider is the civil air strength of a neighbouring country, then it will do so. If that is all that is meant by this first paragraph, I doubt a little whether it is desirable in the interests of clearness, before the final Conference, that we should state this one single proposition if we are not going to state all the other propositions which each country may consider of importance in making its claim for armaments. I confess that I had read the paragraph differently, and I think it will have to be altered a little in drafting if that is the only meaning of it. I thought it meant this: that if, after presenting its claim and getting its agreed allotment of air strength, the civil air strength of a neighbouring country became greatly increased, then that would be a ground for it to say it could no longer be bound by the obligations of the Treaty with respect to air strength. That, I think, would be rather a doubtful provision to put into a Treaty, because it would add an element of doubt and uncertainty to the Treaty, which I think is very undesirable if it can be avoided; but, if I understand Count Clauzel rightly, that is not what the French delegation intends by this first paragraph. It merely intends that it is to be one of the matters which each country may consider in putting forward its claim to a particular amount of air strength. In that case, I should like to ask him whether he really thinks that that is a proper thing to put into a Convention. I think it is quite a proper thing to make the subject of a declaration or a resolution on the part of the Commission, if that is desired, but I should have thought there was a little danger in putting one provision of that kind into the Convention unless we are going
to lay down elaborately — which I hope we shall not attempt to do — all the considerations which a country may put forward to justify a particular air strength or land strength or sea strength.

Count Clauzel (France). — It was intentionally that I referred to the first paragraph of Article 11 in the French draft, whereas Lord Cecil has just referred to the second paragraph dealing with the possible development of civil aviation in a country. The French delegation took the view that the Convention would have to include a very explicit clause in this respect owing to the universally recognised importance of civil aviation and, in particular, the fact that civil aeroplanes can very quickly be adapted for aggressive purposes. This view has already been expressed in the explanations given by the representatives of several delegations and is shared by the French delegation.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia). — I do not yet know whether the French delegation is in favour of retaining or deleting the first paragraph. If it were not to be retained, I should propose a resolution which would clearly express the same view. I quite understand Lord Cecil’s argument when he maintains that such a reservation need not have been mentioned in the Convention, as it was obvious. But I take the liberty of replying in the words used by Talleyrand at the Congress of Vienna, when he was asked why he insisted on the insertion of a clause which was self-evident. He replied: “It will be more self-evident if stated in writing”.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — No one here would think of questioning Talleyrand’s authority, but I should like to point out that, since his day, a considerable advance in the methods of diplomacy has been made.

Nevertheless, I think that the clause may well be accepted. I am only uncertain as to whether this is the right time and place. If paragraph 1 is separated from the following paragraph, it becomes a sort of general statement, which would be more appropriate in the preamble, whereas it would then describe how each of the States will put forward its precise and quantitative proposals and on what grounds it will seek to establish its case. But I think the clue to the meaning of the first paragraph of Article 11 is to be found in the second paragraph, and that Article 11, as a whole, constitutes a particular application of Article 25. We have here a group of provisions which form a whole, and from which it seems difficult to take away a part. The discussion would, in my opinion, become very much clearer if we postponed examination of this paragraph until we come to discuss it jointly with Article 25 — that is, when we consider the machinery by which the Convention will be applied. A separate discussion is likely to give rise to misunderstandings and complications, and would seem to serve no useful purpose.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I entirely agree with M. de Brouckère that the first paragraph of Article 11 is not in itself desirable, and might even be dangerous. If we examine this paragraph, we observe that it contains one of the reasons for which the contracting parties are signing the Treaty. It would be impossible to mention all the reasons which lead the Powers to sign the Treaty. It would indeed be necessary to mention all that happens in the various Cabinets, and explain the attitude of such-and-such a Power with regard to the limitation accepted by a neighbouring country, the extent to which a given statement may be trusted, etc. Diplomacy has not reached the stage where one can state all the motives for which signatory Powers accept a treaty as a whole, and the risk involved when only one motive is mentioned is that, should the cause disappear, the effect would likewise disappear: in other words, should the reason for these limitations disappear, this would entail the disappearance of the limitations. In support of this view, I would quote an example taken from the Civil Code of my country. When a will states the reason for which the testator has made a legacy and when it is shown that the reason is invalid, the legacy is withheld. But if the reason is not given, whether it exists or not, the legacy remains valid.

The point of the French draft is to be found in the second paragraph. I therefore think it would be preferable not to examine the first paragraph now, for the reasons I have just given, but to postpone its discussion until that of Article 25 of the French draft.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I asked leave just now to put the following question: Is M. de Brouckère’s proposal to be substituted for Point 8 or to supplement it? I was anxious to have information on this point because it seemed to me that, to a certain extent, M. de Brouckère’s proposal contradicted Point 8. Indeed, the proposal is based entirely on the decisions taken unanimously by the Commission at Brussels in the course of its deliberations in February last. With regard to civil aviation, the Commission observed that the method of limitation laid down in document C.P.D. 28, page 119, would be prejudicial to the development of such aviation, inasmuch as the statement went no further than saying that the method would “take account” of the development of civil aviation when limiting military aviation. Point 8, which states that the limitation of air material should be accepted “in the light of” the present development of civil aviation in other countries, would have the same regrettable effect on civil aviation as was denounced by the Brussels Sub-Commission.

M. Sokal (Poland). — As we are discussing Point 8, which deals with civil aviation, I should like to make a few general remarks with regard to this question, for the discussion seems to have strayed into a secondary issue, described by M. de Brouckère as the administration of the Convention.
If we are going to discuss civil aviation, we must first of all ascertain the facts. What are these facts? The Sub-Commission of Military Experts came to the conclusion that it would not be possible to separate the question of civil aviation from that of military aviation. Aircraft can be used either for civilian or military purposes. On page 152 of Sub-Commission A's report, it is stated that:

"Though it is obvious that civil and military aircraft have not the same object, they considered that any distinction between them based on the 'object' or, more accurately, the use for which they were built, is artificial. An aeroplane is already designed to have the best possible flying qualities, and these are then applied indifferently or with slight changes to civil or military uses".

The report of the Committee of Experts is being quoted very often and some technical details are mentioned. Without taking up too much of your time, I should like to deal with a few technical points.

What, for instance, are the main features of bombing aircraft? The machines which are capable of raising the heaviest tonnage have the most decisive effect. Now, this kind of aeroplane, which represents only a small proportion of the military air force, is to be found in large numbers among civil aircraft. Indeed, it is in the very nature of commercial aeroplanes that they should have a transport capacity and technical characteristics which make them suitable for large-scale air raids by night.

If, again, we consider the second category of civilian aeroplanes, namely, sporting machines, we observe that they have the same characteristics as fighting planes, for they are built for speed and for reaching great heights.

Moreover, all civilian sporting aeroplanes may be used for auxiliary war service.

Thus the question of the excessive development of civilian aviation beyond the economic requirements of a country clearly arises. The discussion which we have just had, has shown that these normal requirements must be defined. The Polish delegation thinks such a definition possible since some international agreements contain similar provisions.

I now pass to the question of subsidies. M. de Brouckère has already mentioned this point. It is by means of subsidies that, in some countries, the mileage of established air communications has been doubled or trebled in two or three years. Each commercial machine receives, out of the public funds, a substantial bonus, calculated on the number of kilometers flown. This bonus amounts, in some cases, to ten gold francs per kilometer flown. In one small country, the credits utilised by the Government for constructing a large air-port have amounted to ten gold francs per head of the population.

No expert on Sub-Commission A has been able to point to universally recognised characteristics which would distinguish civil aviation from military aviation. Gentlemen, these are the facts and the present position.

Several speakers have already eloquently described the part to be played by aviation in a future war. Recently, one of my colleagues, speaking here on air forces — which are already so considerable and will be still more considerable in the near future — only spoke of military aviation and said nothing of civil aviation. It would be well to recall the fact that this modern weapon of aviation is closely connected with another terrible weapon, namely that of chemical and bacteriological warfare.

I shall not again describe the part which aviation may play in a future war, and I shall immediately proceed to our own work, which can be summed up as follows: How can we limit aviation?

We have to limit armaments and, consequently, all armaments — that is, land, naval and air armaments.

How can we limit air armaments if we exclude civilian aviation?

Gentlemen, Count Bernstorff quoted just now the report of the experts on civilian aviation who met at Brussels and who, as you know, were opposed to the limitation of civilian aviation.

But I shall take the liberty of quoting the following extract from the experts' report, which is very important:

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

I will also remind you of another extract from the report of the Sub-Commission of Military Experts, which refers to an opinion expressed by the experts at the Washington Conference. This extract is very interesting and proves that experts are not always of the same opinion. At the Washington Conference, in 1921, the experts observed that the development of civil aviation and that of the military air forces of a country were inseparable and that, unless civil and commercial aviation were strictly limited, a country which was anxious to secure an air force in excess of the limits imposed or accepted would develop its civil and commercial aviation as much as it pleased.

This opinion was expressed at the Conference by the representatives of the United States, the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan.
Lord Cecil said at the outset that our object was to limit what is known as striking power, and not to weaken in any degree the defensive power of a country. Can one talk of limiting striking power if full freedom of development is left to aviation, which is a first-class means for carrying out a surprise attack?

I am glad to see that, as regards limiting land armaments, the Preparatory Commission has reached provisional agreement upon certain important points. If, as I hope, we reach a similar agreement as regards naval armaments, but are unable to do so as regards aviation, there would, in my opinion, be a dangerous disturbance of the equilibrium, in consequence of which essential guarantees would be denied to a number of countries whose civilian aviation is but little developed.

The Polish delegation thinks it should draw the attention of the Commission to the consequences of such a state of things, particularly as some delegations maintain in its entirety the view expressed by their military experts and do not seem inclined to come to a compromise on this important point.

The compromise suggested by the French delegation and M. de Brouckère's proposals, which latter are based on the recommendations of the experts on civilian aviation, afford no guarantee that the striking power of aviation will be at all reduced. Should the Commission be unable to achieve some such result, it should, in my opinion, provide special guarantees for Powers which, as a result of the unequal limitation of land and naval armaments on the one hand and air armaments on the other, would be at a disadvantage. I do not wish to discuss, for the time being, the nature of these guarantees. I shall return to the matter when, after the First Reading, we shall examine the results of our work and recapitulate what has been done towards limiting land, naval and air armaments.

The President.—This afternoon we shall continue the discussion on Point 8 and examine the proposals of M. Commène and M. de Brouckère.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire).—With reference to the Roumanian amendment, I ought to say immediately that I do not think I shall be in a position to discuss that this afternoon, because it is an entirely new proposition and one which raises very important commercial questions.

The Commission rose at 1 p.m.

SEVENTEENTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Monday, April 4th, 1927, at 4 p.m.

President : M. LOUDON (Netherlands).

44. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 8 (continuation).

M. PEREZ (Argentine).—Hitherto I have taken no part in the discussion in the name of the Argentine delegation, because the questions discussed at the earlier meetings especially concerned the European nations; M. Sokal, however, has forced me to come forward now. We were only asked to discuss the relation between military aviation and civil aviation, but now, if I understand it aright, M. Sokal has raised the problem of the limitation of civil aviation. I am therefore obliged to declare, in the name of the Argentine delegation, that my Government will be unable to accept a Convention in which any limitation whatever of civil aviation is laid down.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire).—I want to support what M. de Brouckère has said. It seems to me that it is very difficult to consider the first paragraph of the French Article without the second paragraph. It seems to me quite impossible to consider the second paragraph until we are in a position to deal with it as a matter of control. I quite admit that this question of how far you are to consider civil aviation when you come to the question of control is a very serious and important one and one which I should certainly desire to approach with a perfectly open mind. I do not think we can usefully carry the discussion further until we know what we are to control. That does not prevent us dealing with the proposals put forward by M. de Brouckère, which do not touch control but lay down general principles which we can discuss quite well; but upon the actual point I beg to move that we adjourn that discussion until we are dealing with the question of general control.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France).—I want to point out the importance of this question of civil aviation. I beg my colleagues not to forget the point from which we started. When we began, we all agreed in recognising that the limitations which we might impose as regards aircraft must be imperfect and insufficient, because if there is any field in which an instrument
of peace can be easily converted into an instrument of war, with hardly any delay, it is the
field of aviation.

We were agreed also on a second point: that it appeared impossible, as things are at
present, I will not say to limit civil aviation — the limitation of productions which can be
useful in time of peace would indeed be an unfortunate consequence of a Disarmament
Conference — but to proceed to international measures which, by leaving aviation free to
develop, might yet prevent its conversion for purposes of war.

We said then, and this was the third point on which we were agreed, that we ought to
limit visible, tangible objects, existing in time of peace, which constitute a preparation for
war — that is to say, military aviation.

If we accept this starting-point, you must remember that there are some countries —
I am not speaking for my own country, for we are quite at ease on this point — which will
be placed in an impossibly difficult situation the moment military aviation is limited.
These are those countries which have little or no civil aviation, yet will be obliged to accept, or rather
to propose — since what we have to do is to put forward proposals to a Conference — the
limitation of military aircraft. They may do so, but with what misgivings!

I think therefore that it would be well, when we are speaking of military aviation, to
recall that there is an inter relation between it and civil aviation. Whatever decision is
taken — I do not want any difficulties to prevent us from going forward — you cannot avoid
this problem. When these countries bring forward their figures for military aviation, it is
certain that, in presenting them, they will be seriously influenced by the fact that they have no
civil aviation. This, however, is a consideration of a type which need not occupy us here.

The Convention which we have to draw up is a framework; all the blanks and all the figures
will be left to the Conference, and will be settled by the exchanges of views which will be
held later. But since the nature of civil aviation is what it is, since at the beginning of our
discussion we were obliged to admit this truth; that one accomplishes little by limiting
military aviation and leaving civil aviation untouched as a potential force — I think it well
to remind ourselves of this fact. In any case, I venture to state it most decidedly; and I
repeat that, I am not thinking of my own country when I do so, but of general interests,
and in particular of certain countries which have little or no civil aviation. This is a deciding
factor in estimating certain figures when one comes to limitation. It is an entirely different
problem from the second question, which is this: if the question of the existence or non-
existence of civil aviation in a given country may influence the figures of the military aviation
allowed that country, then, if the situation of one country as regards civil aviation is seriously
and considerably modified, to what extent can other countries demand an increase in the
aviation allowed them? This, I admit, is part of a general question which is the concern
of Article 8, of the Covenant, or, if preferred, of a more elastic procedure which we have to
determine. I am prepared to agree to the point's not being treated at once, if the adjournment
does not mean that we are preparing to disregard the point altogether. When we come to
discuss Article 8 of the Covenant, it will be essential for us to establish in what manner a
country may adduce the undue development of civil aviation in another country as a ground
for claiming for itself an increase in the figures allowed it by the Convention.

The President. — As we are dealing with a question of procedure, the specific point
being whether we are to adjourn the debate on this point or not, I should prefer that this
discussion should close. Two delegates have asked to speak; of course, if they wish to speak
on the point of procedure, I shall make no objection.

M. Comnène (Roumania). — I remember that, during the French Revolution, someone
who was about to be guillotined put the point in the following way: I am not interested in
knowing how I am going to be killed; I am interested in not getting killed at all. In other
words, what interests us is not when this problem is going to be discussed, but how we shall
be allowed to express the points of view which we represent here, and to support the important
interests which it is our duty and our right to defend.

On the point of procedure, then, if the Commission prefers, in the interests of the debate,
to postpone consideration of this point, I shall raise no objection. I venture, however, with
all respect, to ask you to take note that we reserve to ourselves the right of discussing the
problem when it comes up in all the detail which it calls for.

M. Sato (Japan). — I should prefer, if it were possible, that we should not postpone the
discussion of this problem to a later occasion. The problem is a very important one, and I
should like at least the principle of Point 8 to be examined and, if possible, adopted by the
Commission.

This morning, when I accepted the limitation of military aircraft, I pointed out the impor-
tance of this Point 8; and this was precisely because, in accepting limitation for military
aviation, I was obliged to take into consideration the development of civil aviation.

I think the whole Commission will agree with me that it is undeniable that civil aviation
can be converted at any moment into military aviation. If I am not mistaken, the experts
in Sub-Commission A admitted with hardly a dissenting voice that this could be done.

I have no objection to allowing civil aviation to develop freely. I said so again this
morning. But the moment we consider civil aviation, even remotely, in the light of its possible
transformation in case of emergency into military aviation, I must say that it is absolutely
just to take into consideration the development of civil aviation.
We do not know what the future developments of civil aviation will be. It makes fresh progress every day, almost every hour. There is a danger in that, although at present latent. Nevertheless, in case of war, or even of a threat of war, we get an immediate conversion, which can provide one of the belligerents with armaments of formidable strength.

I venture to quote the example of my own country, which is the easiest for me to take. In Japan, civil aviation is not developed to a sufficient point, which is the easiest for me to take. Suppose, however, that, by the wave of a fairy’s wand, our aviation were to reach a degree of prosperity which might cause them anxiety (I am not speaking of the United States, for in any event, it will not be threatened by Japanese civil aviation). Our neighbours would then have the right to say that civil aviation in Japan represents a danger for them against which they must guard themselves. This is quite natural the moment that these countries, my neighbours, have accepted in advance the limitation of military aviation.

In these circumstances, I think I am justified in asking the Commission to examine and accept without delay at least the principle set out in Point 8. Nevertheless, if Lord Cecil or any other delegates, for other reasons, see any drawbacks in approaching this problem at once, if they prefer to put off the discussion on this point until we have studied the question of supervision, I shall not insist in asking this; but otherwise I shall ask the President to let the debate continue.

M. VEVERKA (Czechoslovakia). — I quite agree with Lord Cecil’s suggestion that we should put off the discussion of Article II of the Covenant until we come to examine Article 25 or the question of supervision. It seems to me probable that Article II of the Covenant will be taken as the basis for the administration of the Convention. In this way, we shall be able to determine how far the second paragraph of Article II of the Covenant can be logically taken as bearing on a disquieting development of civil aviation.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I only wanted to say to my Japanese colleague that I am, of course, most anxious to meet any view he may express about the proper procedure for us to adopt, but, if he will look at Article II of the French draft, I think he will agree with me that it is very difficult to discuss usefully the first paragraph of that article without discussing the second paragraph. That is my difficulty. If it were possible to divorce it altogether from the second paragraph, evidently the subject would be quite different, but what I think is that to lay down the principle in the first paragraph without going on to draw the conclusion which is drawn in the second paragraph leaves one rather in doubt as to what one has really agreed to in the first paragraph: and I do not see how we could possibly adopt the second paragraph without knowing what we are going to do generally about supervision. That was not my argument; it was M. de Brouckère’s argument, but that argument, I admit, convinced me that it was very difficult to deal with this subject until we got to the Control Commission.

I wish to say to the delegate of Roumania that I quite agree with him that this is a subject which must be dealt with, and it is not at all with a view to evading dealing with it that I accepted M. de Brouckère’s suggestion; on the contrary, it is because I want to deal with it thoroughly and completely.

M. SATO (Japan). — I thank Lord Cecil for his explanation, which is perfectly satisfactory to me. I see no objection to postponing the discussion on this point provided we have an opportunity later on of examining the question thoroughly.

The President. — In the circumstances, I think it needless to put the question of adjournment to the vote.

Point 8 was adjourned.

45. Examination of the Proposals by M. de Brouckère on Civil Aviation.

“I. If the High Contracting Parties intervene in any capacity, whether directly or indirectly, wholly or partially, in civil aviation undertakings, they agree that the State organs dealing with the matter shall be quite separate from the organs dealing with military aviation. The suggestion made below should apply to all civil aviation undertakings. It is agreed that this undertaking does not prevent the union of civil and military aviation under a single Ministry, provided that it contains two completely autonomous and separate branches.

“2. The High Contracting Parties shall refrain from prescribing the embodiment of military features in the build of civil aviation material, so that this material may be constructed for purely civil purposes, more particularly with a view to providing the greatest possible measure of security and the most economic return.

“3. The High Contracting Parties undertake not to require of civil aviation undertakings that they should employ only personnel specially trained for military purposes. They undertake to avoid seconding personnel from military to civil aviation.

“4. The High Contracting Parties undertake not to subsidise civil air-transport lines established for strategic and not for economic or social purposes.

“5. The High Contracting Parties undertake to encourage as far as possible the conclusion of economic agreements between civil aviation undertakings in the different countries.”
The President. — I open the discussion on M. de Brouckère’s proposals. The purpose of these proposals is to separate, as far as possible, the military from the civil element.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I already had an opportunity some days ago of explaining my reasons for making these proposals. I shall thus be able now to confine myself to a few very short considerations.

First of all, these proposals are, officially, mine, but I should like it to be clearly understood that I cannot really claim the credit for them. I am not their father but only their foster-parent. These proposals are transcribed almost word for word from the conclusions reached by the Committee of Civilian Experts.

These conclusions are the more worthy of consideration because the Committee of Civilian Experts — among which were experts from nearly every country in which aviation is of real importance, from countries which have a highly developed civil aviation, and from countries which have none, but which might fear the development of that of others — was, unlike other Committees, whose labours did not reach such successful results, absolutely unanimous.

What is the purpose of these proposals? Is it to eliminate the danger to the security of a country which might arise from the development of civil aviation? These proposals make no such claim. Whatever measures one may take, it will probably always possible to use civil aviation for war. It is more closely we examine the whole problem of disarmament, the more clearly we perceive that the entire industry of a country can be utilised for war. Only to convert a factory of pen-nibs into a cartridge factory or a motor-car factory into a shell factory takes time. The particular danger to international peace which lies in the development of civil aviation is the fact that, in a great number of cases and for very many types of machines, a few hours suffice to-day to fit out a passenger aeroplane to carry bombs, or even to carry out other military operations.

I have already had occasion to say why this is so. Nevertheless, the civilian experts declare that, if civil aviation were left to itself, the military and civil types would soon become strongly differentiated. Clearly, a lot might be said on this point, but I have many reasons for not going into the subject exhaustively. I will follow the advice which Lord Cecil gave us on another occasion and content myself with giving one reason: that I do not consider myself to have sufficient technical experience to deal competently with such a subject. If, however, the course of the discussion were to show that it would be useful, I should try to recall the arguments of the experts and repeat such of them as I could remember. I may add that their conclusions were very definite.

There are, however, two difficulties. The first is one of time; aviation is young. The types have not yet become differentiated.

The second difficulty arises from the fact that civil aviation has not yet become independent. We have not yet reached an age when civil-aviation undertakings are self-supporting commercial enterprises. At present, they are only in part supported by the fares and rates from the passengers and goods which they carry. Most of their resources usually come from State subsidies. This is where we come to the real contradiction which faces us. On the one hand, it is said that we ought to consider civil aviation and military aviation separately because they have nothing in common. On the other hand, a considerable number of States say to their civil aviation concerns: “We shall only give you subsidies on condition that you organise yourselves in such a way that you can be of use in war”.

Obviously, a State has a right to exercise its sovereignty in this way; it has a right to organise its civil aviation in such fashion that it can serve in time of war; but then it ought to admit that this aviation has become military. If it wishes us not to take account of civil aviation, it should allow it to pursue its purely civil purpose without interference.

Can we at this stage take measures the result of which would be suddenly to establish a difference between civil and military aviation such as to eliminate the danger of the former being used for military purposes? I do not think so. But we can make a move in that direction. The proposals which I transmit — I do not say that I make them, but that I transmit them — are simply such a move.

What is their nature?

The first proposal is that the management of civil aviation should be absolutely distinct from that of military aviation. If the two kinds of aviation are blended into one, if the machines are placed under the same authority and the same control, how is it possible to prevent civil aviation being directed along military lines? But the civilian experts tell us we are obliged to bear in mind the fact that several important countries actually have to-day one single Air Ministry, and they think that an important reform would be accomplished, or at least a serious guarantee would be given, if — as all the experts of the countries concerned assure us — the case in their respective countries — this single ministry contained two completely autonomous branches, one controlling civil aviation and the other military aviation.

The experts suggest that, if States grant subsidies to civil air lines, they should not make the grant of their subsidies conditional on the aeroplanes embodying certain military features. For it is quite certain that, if a State says that it will only grant subsidies to machines which can be used for war, that means that it proposes to use these machines for war, and in that case these are military machines.
The same applies to personnel. It has often been stated that there is a clear distinction between the military and the civil pilot. I think that this is becoming more and more true. Then, if a State makes the grant of a subsidy conditional on air pilots having their military certificates, this means that it wants to use them for war. And the conclusion to which each of my arguments has led is true in this case also.

It is also suggested that the establishment of civil air lines for strategic purposes, where they serve no economic or social needs, should be prohibited.

Here a word of explanation is necessary. It was the civilian experts themselves, not their modest mouthpiece, who added the word "social" to the word "economic". They thought it possible to imagine lines, they thought indeed there were already lines, which did not serve any obvious economic interest, but have yet been established in the interests of certain portions of a country's population which are cut off from ordinary communications, as, for example, the populations of an island. When these populations are inconsiderable, one cannot pretend that the lines serving them have an economic interest; but there is a social interest in maintaining them.

It has been answered that lines which have an economic or social interest usually have also a strategical interest. This is clearly the case. The routes followed by armies are usually the same as those followed by commerce. All the same, while all railways have a strategical interest, it is possible to distinguish those whose primary interest is economic and their strategical interest incidental from those which were constructed for strategical purposes, without the economic interest playing more than a subsidiary part. We may make an analogous distinction in the case of air lines.

I now come to the last proposal. It is quite certain that when air lines, instead of being strictly national in character, are managed to some extent jointly by the different countries, and closer international understandings than those at present existing come into force, the danger of seeing civil aviation used for war will be immensely lessened. Personally, I think that this will prove, at least at a future date, the surest guarantee. But that is looking ahead. All these proposals are, of course, more interesting for the future than for the present. It has often been said that the disarmament at which we are aiming will be a continuous creation, and we can foresee the future from the present.

Once again I must say that the Committee of Civilian Experts did not in any way claim to enunciate a body of rules which should solve the problem of civil aviation once for all. It simply pointed out a way; and its capacity and technical competency is undeniable. I now ask the Commission to follow the civilian experts along the path which they pointed to us.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am very much in favour of the general objects which M. de Brouckère has in view, and I would remind the Commission of the position in which this matter stands. The question of military and civilian aviation was referred directly to Sub-Commission A, but, doubtless owing to the extreme difficulty of the subject, they did not arrive at any unanimous recommendations, and the matter was then sent to a special Civil Committee, consisting of experts from eleven or twelve countries, and they arrived at an absolutely unanimous conclusion and recommendations. I certainly feel that it would be very improper for us to disregard so important an expression of opinion.

On the First Reading I am able to say that I support M. de Brouckère's proposal, but there are one or two trifling alterations to which I should like to call his attention. The first is purely a matter of drafting, and refers to the following sentence in the first paragraph:

"The suggestion made below should apply to all civil aviation undertakings".

It is quite true that comes from the report, but it does not seem to have any great meaning there, because the text goes on to describe certain things which are to be applied to civil aviation, and there is no suggestion that there should be any exception. I suggest that it is not really necessary at all, but at any rate it should not be inserted in its present position. I also have some difficulty about the last sentence of the first paragraph:

"It is agreed that this undertaking does not prevent the union of civil and military aviation under a single ministry provided that it contains two completely autonomous and separate branches".

As stated it could not be done, because in a single ministry you cannot have an autonomous branch; it must be under the ministry, otherwise it is not in the ministry at all. I think this phrase is putting the matter rather strongly, and I suggest that the following words might better meet the case:

"... provided that the two subjects are considered separately and independently of one another".

The only other trouble I have is the one to which M. de Brouckère referred — Paragraph 4:

"The High Contracting Parties undertake not to subsidise civil air-transport lines established for strategic and not for economic or social purposes".

I could not accept that as stated because, to take the British Empire, we certainly do propose to subsidise — and I rather think we are subsidising at this moment — airways going from one end of the British Empire to another, from India to England, for instance, and, though we hope and believe that the main purpose of those airways will be social and economic, they
would have undoubtedly some strategic value; they might, for instance, be used to convey
an officer of high rank suddenly from one part of the Empire to another. We should have
great difficulty in accepting that provision though I should be ready to accept it with the
addition of the word “solely” before the words “for strategic and not for economic or social
purposes”.

This matter has not been considered by my Government, because the report of the
Committee of Experts only came to hand just before we met here and I do not think they had
an opportunity of considering it. On the other hand, this is only the First Reading, and I
am prepared to accept the text with the modifications mentioned.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium).—I will try to reply to the objections raised by Lord Cecil,
First of all, Lord Cecil has asked whether I see any objection to suppressing the phrase :
“The suggestion made below should apply to all civil aviation undertakings”.

It looks as though Lord Cecil and the authors of the proposal differed not in their purpose
but, if I may say so, in a matter of words. Lord Cecil thinks that this goes without saying.
Accordingly, for exactly the opposite reasons to those invoked this morning by M. Veverka.
I shall answer: “If this goes without saying it is needless to say it, but only if it is quite
understood by everyone that it goes without saying”. If this is the case, it does not matter
much if the phrase goes out.

Now we come to the question of the “two perfectly autonomous and separate branches”.
To make my point of view clear, I should like to recall what happened in the Committee of
Civilian Experts. Originally a different wording from that now before you was adopted. The
experts of several countries observed, however, that they had a single air ministry. We then
asked these experts to find a formula which would satisfy them. That formula is the one
before you, and I hoped that it would meet with Lord Cecil’s approval. I think that the
amendment which he proposes would not go far enough. I do not see how a phrase saying :
“It is agreed that this undertaking does not prevent the union of civil and military
aviation under a single ministry provided that it contains two completely independent
and autonomous branches”
can be binding on Governments.

Possibly we shall find a formula in the course of the discussion which will satisfy Lord
Cecil and at the same time constitute a positive undertaking. If, however, the formula
suggested by Lord Cecil can command unanimous consent, I am quite prepared to accept
it, but in this case I make the same reserve as he does — that is, that the question be reopened
on the Second Reading.

As regards paragraph 4 of my proposals, I tried to explain just now that States could
not undertake not to establish a line simply because it had a strategic interest. All lines have
a strategic interest. The important point is that the determining factor should not be stra-
tegic. To make the idea contained in paragraph 4 clearer, Lord Cecil proposes to say :
“solely for strategic purposes”. Undoubtedly this idea is clearer but the meaning of it is
extraordinarily restricted, for it is not easy to see what line can be “solely” strategic. The
day may come when a civilian will use this line. Could not Lord Cecil agree to an amendment
as follows: “principally for strategic purposes”?

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America).—You will remember the last time
this question was up for discussion I assured M. de Brouckère that the American delegation
would be very glad to examine in the most friendly spirit any proposal which he might make
with a view to solving this very difficult problem. We have examined his proposal in the
most friendly spirit, and while, of course, my Government has not had an opportunity of
examining the text, I feel warranted, on behalf of the American delegation, in giving it my
support in principle, with the usual reservations, on First Reading.

This proposal of M. de Brouckère appears to us to be clearly intended to carry into effect
the salient recommendations of the Committee of Civilian Experts which appear in document
C.P.D. 39. The American delegation believes the effect of adopting this proposal will be to
remove one of the most important causes of past differences of opinion as to civil and military
aviation and will aid in differentiating more and more clearly between civil and military
aviation.

I should like to suggest one or two minor drafting changes. In paragraph 4, to bring
the text more directly in conformity with the actual wording of the report of the Civilian
Experts, I suggest we insert after the word “subsidise” the words “directly or indirectly”:
and, again, to strike out the word “strategic” and substitute the word “military”, which was
also that used by the Committee of Experts. If I might venture to do so, I suggest that, after
the word “established”, it might meet the views that have been expressed if we used the word
“primarily" instead of “principally”.

General de Marinis (Italy).—I have no grave objections to raise to M. de Brouckère’s
proposals, but I am not yet able to pronounce on them, and I beg my colleagues to allow me
to express my opinion at the Second Reading.

M. Perez (Argentina).—Could we not discuss the proposals paragraph by paragraph,
beginning with the first?

The President.—I was going to propose that. I ask you to examine paragraph 1.
M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I have only one remark to make. I imagine that I have correctly understood M. de Brouckère's views when I say, regarding the first paragraph, that no difficulty will arise in the question of services such as radio-telegraphy, publication of meteorological information for the use of aircraft and medical services which are used both for civil and military aviation.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — As to the second sentence, I am trying to find some intermediate phrase, but I cannot find one. It seems impossible for us to say, if it is under the air minister at all, that it is autonomous, because it will always be under the air minister, but what you can require, and should rightly require, is that the two things should be worked entirely independently — that when the air minister is considering a civil proposition he should consider it as a civil proposition, and when he is considering a military proposition he should consider it as a military proposition. If one said that the two subjects are to be "dealt with", instead of "considered", separately and independently of one another, I should have thought that would have satisfied M. de Brouckère. I am very anxious to meet him, but I really do not see how I can do it exactly in the way he proposes.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — In reply to the question raised by the representative of the Netherlands, it seems to me that the establishment of meteorological or other similar service would in no way constitute a breach of the undertaking, any more than the French Government can be accused of developing its naval services because it subsidises research into weather conditions. Work of this sort can be useful for vessels of war as well as trading vessels. It is scientific work. If military aviation can profit by it, this is only incidental; it has a right to profit by the development of science.

As I was saying just now, I can accept the suppression which Lord Cecil desires so long as it is quite understood that this really does go without saying. With regard to the second sentence, we might provisionally accept Lord Cecil's suggestion, but each of us must reserve his right to return to it on the Second Reading.

The first proposal was adopted in the following form:

"If the High Contracting Parties intervene in any capacity, whether directly or indirectly, wholly or partially, in civil aviation undertakings, they agree that the State organs dealing with the matter shall be quite separate from the organs dealing with military aviation. It is agreed that this undertaking does not prevent the union of civil and military aviation under a single Ministry provided that it contains two completely autonomous and separate branches."

The second proposal was adopted without any observations.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — I should like to put two definite questions to M. de Brouckère about the third proposal. M. de Brouckère suggests the following text for the second sentence:

"The High Contracting Parties . . . undertake to avoid seconding personnel from military to civil aviation".

As you know, in the north of Sweden distances are extremely long and the population very sparse. Besides this, the railways are very little developed. For these reasons, we have organised there an air service to transport sick persons from distant villages to central hospitals. The organisation of this service is such that, I think, civil machines are used, whereas the personnel is military; the pilots are soldiers belonging to the army. To use the term quoted above, they are "seconded" from the personnel of military aviation to serve with the civil aviation.

I venture to ask M. de Brouckère whether the organisation which I have just described does not conflict with the proposed wording of the second paragraph. If it does, it will be impossible for me to accept this clause.

I venture to ask a second question. The second sentence of the third proposal aims at avoiding the seconding of personnel from military to civil aviation, but, in the report of the Brussels experts, there is also a stipulation tending to prevent the seconding of material from military aviation to civil aviation. This stipulation is included as clause 2 of paragraph 4 in the following terms:

"In this connection and with the view to differentiating still further between the material of civil and that of military aviation, it would be particularly desirable as far as possible to avoid using military aviation material for civil aviation undertakings, and in particular for the operation of air transport lines".

I will ask M. de Brouckère why he thought fit to exclude from his proposals the stipulations which I have just read to you.

M. Sato (Japan). — I also should like to suggest a modification for the second sentence of this third proposal, but my reasons are different from those of the Swedish delegate. In Japan we have a special section for civil aviation, attached to the Ministry for Communications. We already conform to the first proposal, since the services of military and civil aviation are absolutely separate. But, on the other hand, in the special section for civil aviation there are two or three military engineers who are specialists appointed to give technical
advice. If this second sentence in the third proposal goes so far as to prohibit this sort of "seconding" of technical military experts, it would obviously be difficult for us to accept this stipulation. I do not, however, think that M. de Brouckère's proposals were made with this end and, in order to make it more clear; we could perhaps add the word "undertakings" after the words "civil aviation". The passage would then run as follows:

"They undertake to avoid seconding personnel from military aviation to civil aviation undertakings".

Thus modified, the drawback stated above would disappear.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — If the Netherlands Government organises, as it probably will do, an air mail service from Sabang, our first colonial port where steamers touch, to Batavia, the great centre of our colonial administration and trade; it is not certain that this service could be maintained from the beginning solely by civil personnel, seeing that civil aviation in our colonies is still in a very undeveloped state. I do not think that there could be any great obstacles from the point of view of the limitation and reduction of armaments in temporarily using military aircraft for this purpose. I think the text proposed to us — on the principle of which we are entirely agreed — would be better adapted to the case I mention if it followed more closely the conclusions reached at Brussels. The second paragraph of the third of M. de Brouckère's proposals stipulates that the high contracting parties

". . . undertake to avoid seconding personnel from military aviation to civil aviation undertakings".

Thus modified, the drawback stated above would disappear.

M. Perez (Argentine). — I should like to support the proposal of the Swedish delegate, and for the reasons which he himself gave. I suggest that the second paragraph of the third proposal should read as follows:

"They undertake to avoid as far as possible seconding personnel and transferring material from military aviation to civil aviation undertakings."

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia). — I, too, should like to put a question to M. de Brouckère. In Czechoslovakia we have a military and scientific institution which is very thoroughly equipped, and which is therefore frequently consulted by civilian undertakings for an expert opinion. I take it that the text submitted to us would not exclude an institution of this kind.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — Obviously, gentlemen, I shall be satisfied with what I can get, and, if the original text is not unanimously approved, we must accept an amended form. The latter will have an advantage over my own in that it will include material which I had excluded; its disadvantage — or advantage, according to the point of view — is that it will prohibit nothing at all. It is obvious that no State will employ military aviation instead of civil aviation, or vice versa, except when it considers it to be reasonable or useful, and therefore, in doing so, a State will always be able to justify its action. It was precisely in order to avoid this elasticity that I limited my text to personnel and made no mention of material. Why? Because the civilian experts who met in Brussels said that a fixed rule would be possible for pilots but that, as things are, it would be very difficult to apply it to material. When first establishing a new line and making trial flights, such as a voyage to India, or with some similar object, it is frequently necessary to make use of military material; but you can generally use civilian personnel. Therefore, as it seems possible to establish rigid regulations for personnel, but very difficult in the case of material, I prefer strict and limited regulations rather than more general but vague rules.

For my part, I greatly prefer the amendment proposed by the Japanese delegate. M. Sato's suggestion answers several objections which have been expressed and the force of which I recognise. Instead of the possibly too general wording "seconding personnel from military to civil aviation", we should say "seconding personnel from military aviation to civil aviation undertakings". I think that this formula would satisfy most of the objections which have been made.

Let us take the example mentioned by M. Veverka. Clearly this is not a civilian undertaking and it is therefore excluded from the provision in question.

If we consider the case, quoted by the Swedish delegate, of sick persons carried on civilian aircraft by military pilots, I presume that these pilots are on the establishment of their military unit and would therefore be shown as military pilots. That being so, you could
That paragraph, but, as we can only act by unanimity, the paragraph will be rejected if that
the deletion of the second paragraph. For my part, I still maintain my proposal regarding

general and vague propositions lead to accusations of bad faith and do more harm than good.

and of the Advisory Board for Aeronautics. I should have to look into the matter and see
in order to safeguard the rather peculiar position of the personnel of our Bureau of Standards
takings" in this paragraph, because if it is left out I should have to make the same reservation
to such seconding in circumstances where there is evidently no aggressive intention. I think
that if we say “they undertake to avoid as far as possible”, the stipulation will lose a great deal
of its point.

Personally, and as far as I can, I shall resist the addition of these words. If we cannot secure
unanimity on the Japanese amendment, I shall have to bow to the inevitable. But
I think we should have reached a reasonable compromise, capable of satisfying all legitimate
interests, if we were to replace the words “... seconding personnel from military
to civil aviation” by the words “... seconding personnel from military aviation to
civil aviation undertakings”.

M. Perez (Argentine). — M. de Brouckère will allow me to insist upon my proposal.
I would remind my European colleagues that, when we are engaged in concluding conventions
at international conferences, we must avoid thinking only of Europe.

The wording proposed by M. de Brouckère is not suited to the geographical conditions
of my country, which has an area of 300 million hectares, and in which it takes six days by
steamboat proceeding at 15 knots an hour to go from the capital, in the centre of the Republic,
to the extreme south. The problem of civil aviation has its own particular features in my
country, and I am compelled to intervene in this discussion, which is of more particularly
interest to Europe — that is to say, to the nations which, from the point of view of size, are
the small nations. In a country like my own and like almost all those of the American Conti-
nent, first and foremost the United States, the problem has its own very special characteristics.
Accordingly, the text should have that very elasticity which M. de Brouckère desires to avoid.
It is for that reason that I venture to insist upon the inclusion of the words “as far as possible”.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I certainly do not wish that this Commission should
disregard the interests of non-European countries, but I have a very clear recollection of the
discussion we had in the Committee of Civilian Experts and of the eloquent speeches by the
United States representative, who pointed out to us that in this country, owing to the enor-
mous distances, it was easier than in Europe to conceive of a self-supporting and purely civil
aviation. He laid great stress on the importance of our drawing up a rigid text, and said
that we Europeans must not think only of conditions in our own countries but also of those
which obtain in the United States.

If the Commission insists upon this elasticity of wording, I must give way. But if it is
elastic to that degree, most of the hopes which we have built upon these regulations will be
disappointed. It will be no more than a vague recommendation, containing no definite
undertaking for any country.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I should like to say a word to
support the proposal of the Japanese delegation regarding the addition of the word “under-
takings” in this paragraph, because if it is left out I should have to make the same reservation
in order to safeguard the rather peculiar position of the personnel of our Bureau of Standards
and of the Advisory Board for Aeronautics. I should have to look into the matter and see
what was covered by the proposed text.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — Is this really a proper provision to insert in a
Convention? I am afraid of these rather vague and general propositions. I see the difficulty
of a precise rule that you can in no case use civil aviation for military aviation, but these
general and vague propositions lead to accusations of bad faith and do more harm than good.
If, as seems clear, some countries cannot accept a definite proposition, I would rather see the
whole paragraph left out.

M. Perez (Argentine). — I agree to the deletion of the whole of this paragraph.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — The question is not whether we do or do not accept
the deletion of the second paragraph. For my part, I still maintain my proposal regarding
that paragraph, but, as we can only act by unanimity, the paragraph will be rejected if that
unanimity is not secured.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I find there is apparently a strong difference of
opinion. I cannot conceal from myself that the recommendation of the Commission itself
was only “as far as possible”. I do feel, though, that is a very proper recommendation, yet
to put it into a Convention appears to me to be a dangerous way of proceeding; and it is only
because that seems to me to be the view of the Commission and, I am bound to add, the view
of the Expert Committee that I suggested its omission.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I should like to ask whether
M. de Brouckère’s original text does not itself leave a certain amount of elasticity?
M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I certainly think that the text as it was proposed, and especially as amended by the Japanese delegate, affords a large measure of elasticity. No doubt there are degrees of elasticity, and Lord Cecil is right in saying that we must avoid drafting resolutions which are too vague and elastic. If there are delegations which consider the text in the form mentioned not sufficiently elastic, it should perhaps be placed on record that this original text does not command unanimity.

M. PEREZ (Argentine). — I propose the following amendment:

"They undertake provisionally not to authorise the seconding . . . ."

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I must thank M. Perez for his proposal. Certainly I should have preferred a less elastic text, but I understand the difficulties, and I think the text he proposes for us is sufficiently definite to be included in our convention.

I gather that the word “temporary” is suggested instead of “provisional”; I prefer the latter, for it implies the notion of beginning, whereas “temporary” may mean “at any stage”.

M. HENNINGS (Sweden). — I, too, can accept the proposal on condition that the Japanese amendment is also adopted.

The President. — It is quite understood that the Japanese amendment is retained. We are unanimously agreed on the following text:

“They undertake not to authorise except provisionally the seconding of personnel or the transferring of material from military aviation to civil aviation undertakings.”

I now open the discussion of the fourth of M. de Brouckère’s proposals.

M. PEREZ (Argentine). — I propose the following amendment to the fourth proposal:

“The High Contracting Parties undertake not to subsidise directly or indirectly any civil air transport lines except those having exclusively administrative, economic and social purposes.”

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — What does “administrative” mean? If it means civil or military, it means all the possible purposes for which you could subsidise an air line.

M. PEREZ (Argentine). — It refers, of course, to a civil administration, such as the posts, police, etc.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — M. Perez’ amendment reproduces in part the amendment proposed just now by Mr. Gibson, which consisted in adding, after the word “subsidise”, the words “directly or indirectly”. I think this amendment is an improvement on the text and I willingly agree to it. But we are now faced with another complicated and difficult question. Several forms have been proposed for the fourth proposal. Mr. Gibson suggested that we should say “lines established primarily (or principally) for military purposes”. A long discussion took place as to whether it was better to say “principally” or “primarily”. If we adopt his amendment, I think it would be well to say “primarily for strategic purposes” in order to show clearly that that was the most important purpose. I am not sure that, strictly speaking, the word “essentiellement” has any very definite meaning.

M. Perez suggested that we should not indicate the lines which a Government should not subsidise but those which a Government may subsidise. He defines the latter as lines having administrative, economic or social purposes. The chief difficulty which arises is in regard to the definition of the word “administrative”. Is this word not already covered by the term “social”? That is the first difficulty. Next we come to Lord Cecil’s objection, according to which it is impossible to exclude all air lines which may conceivably be put to military or strategic purposes. All lines may be used for strategic or military purposes. Obviously, both civilian and military persons can be transported from one part of a country to the other, and circumstances may arise in time of war when these lines have to be used, to carry officers, for example. It is impossible to imagine lines which have no strategic or military importance, and I think that the term “exclusively” is a little too strong. I therefore suggest that we adopt the word proposed by Mr. Gibson and say “primarily”. In that case, our only difference of opinion turns on the questions whether we should use the word “administrative” or some word with a more definite meaning, and whether the word “military” should be used instead of “strategic”, as suggested by Mr. Gibson. Or would it be better to indicate clearly what we desire to avoid, namely, the establishment of lines serving primarily military purposes? As we appear to be agreed on the main issue, I think that these questions of drafting should be easily settled.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I support M. Perez’ proposal. His amendment shows far more clearly than any other that civil aviation is an absolutely civilian matter and has hardly any relation with military questions. That is a point of view which my delegation would like to see clearly indicated.
M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — M. Perez might perhaps accept the following wording, which takes account of what has been said by the various speakers:

“The High Contracting Parties undertake not to subsidise directly or indirectly civil air transport lines which are established primarily for military purposes instead of being established for economic, administrative or social purposes”.

The above text was adopted.

The fifth proposal was adopted without any observations.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I should like to make a statement. I have kept silent during this discussion, but that did not signify any disapproval. On the contrary, I heartily agree with M. de Brouckère’s proposals and am willing to accept them even in their original form, and I am quite resolved to recommend them to my Government. But now that they have been adopted, I venture to draw the attention of the Commission, and especially of M. de Brouckère, to the fact that the adoption of such measures anticipates our decision on two subsequent questions, those of budgetary expenditure and supervision. Excellent as these measures are, my friend M. de Brouckère will find that, if by mischance, this double check were not established, such undertakings would merely prove detrimental to the States which fulfilled them. If there is one matter on which it is necessary to see what is going to happen, it is this one. Here we are no longer dealing with concrete matters, with armaments prepared in peace-time for use in war, but with the subsidies which Governments pay, and more particularly with the conditions which are attached to those subsidies.

The central idea of M. de Brouckère’s proposal is this: at present subsidies are given to encourage a form of social activity which is certainly worthy of encouragement, since it involves the conquest of a new element. In return for subsidies, the machines which are subsidised may be used for military purposes. States are being asked to give an undertaking to impose no such condition in the future.

I would remind you that we have included in the Convention clauses which absolutely necessitate supervision by the budget and direct supervision. I also draw this conclusion which no one will dispute — that M. de Brouckère’s proposal and the long discussion to which it gave rise prove the undoubtedly close connection between civil and military aviation.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I only want to say one word in reply to the apposite remarks so eloquently expressed by M. Paul-Boncour. I would simply tell him that, when we come to discuss the chapters on the budget and supervision, he will see how fully I am in agreement with him.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — I only wish to say that, interesting as I find M. Paul-Boncour’s observations, I am afraid I could not undertake to say that I agree with them.

46. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Points 1, 3 and 4.

The PRESIDENT. — We still have to take a final decision on paragraphs 1, 3 and 4.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — The Commission was good enough to postpone the consideration of these questions because I informed it I was consulting my Government on the matter. I did consult my Government, but I have not yet received a reply. I cannot ask the Commission to hold its hand further, but I cannot at the moment take any further part in the discussion.

The PRESIDENT. — We can postpone our decision until after the discussion on naval armaments.

The Commission rose at 6.40 p.m.

EIGHTEENTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Tuesday, April 5th, 1927, at 10.15 a.m.

President : M. LOUDON (Netherlands).

47. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Naval Armaments. Point 1.

French draft.

The High Contracting Parties agree to limit the number of men on service with their armed (military), naval (and air) forces or units organised on a military basis to the effective laid down in Tables I (Home Forces), II (Overseas Forces and their reinforcements), III (Units organised on a military basis and stationed in the home country) and IV (Units organised on a military basis and stationed in overseas countries) annexed to the present Treaty. They undertake that their distribution shall conform to that laid down in the said Tables.

The PRESIDENT. — As no one wishes to speak on general questions, I propose that we begin with Point 1.
The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — We, the American delegation, have given careful consideration to the possibility of effecting naval limitations by limiting the number of effectives, but, from whatever angle we have been able to approach the subject, we have been invariably brought back to actual combatant vessels as the basis on which all other factors must rest. It seems to us, therefore, that the attempt to introduce other factors as contributory bases merely complicates the problem and tends to imperil the hope for success in reaching definite conclusions. We believe firmly, examining this question from a sound technical point of view, that when a limit is placed on the actual combatant ships in which operations are carried on, that automatically limits all things that pertain to combatant ships. It seems to me that the surest test on this question is that, when a warship is put out of action or sunk, even if the entire personnel is saved, it is of no value for operations on the sea and cannot be utilised until such time as another ship can be procured or built and equipped. During the interval the crew might just as well have been destroyed, so it is difficult to see where the factor of naval personnel comes in. I do not wish to be contentious on this subject; far from it. If any solution for this can be found which we can accept, we shall be very glad to take it into account, but I should be glad to hear from the proponents of this thesis just how they expect to arrive at a practical estimate of the personnel and how they are going to limit it. If they could show us any practical way of doing it, I would like to give it the most careful and friendly consideration.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — The Netherlands delegation considers it advisable to limit naval personnel as well as land forces. Allow me, in this connection, to put forward an argument which I hope may carry some weight with the British delegate.

We discussed the question of trained reserves and Lord Cecil reserved the right to revert to that question later. If we do not extend the limitation to naval effectives, we shall be setting up a very serious obstacle to its extension to trained reserves. To appreciate the force of this remark, I would ask you to consider the countries which have conscription. The training given to the portion of the annual contingent which is intended for naval service is undoubtedly very different from that given to the portion incorporated in the land army. It does not follow that it would be impossible to substitute naval personnel for land forces. Coast defence could be entrusted entirely to naval personnel; landing parties might be increased and naval militia could be used for land operations. In short, the limitation of trained reserves for land forces might be largely invalidated as the result of an increase in the naval reserves.
Hence, in our opinion, a necessary corollary to the limitation of trained reserves is the extension of limitation to naval forces.

To avoid all misunderstanding, I might repeat that, when I speak of limitation of naval effectives, including trained reserves, I am using this latter expression as defined in Sub-Commission A by the seven delegations mentioned at the beginning of the Sub-Commission's report.

Further, if only land forces were limited in time of peace, the arguments which I have just put forward would still hold good. They were dealt with in Sub-Commission A and are to be found on page 110 of the Sub-Commission's report, where it is stated that a limitation of naval personnel "prevents an unknown quantity of naval personnel being transferred to the land and air forces". If an unknown quantity of naval personnel could be transferred to the other two forces, the limitation of land effectives would be entirely inoperative. The Netherlands delegation considers, therefore, that the limitation of land effectives necessarily involves the limitation of naval effectives.

M. SATO (Japan). — Allow me to explain the Japanese Government's view of the limitation of naval effectives as defined in the French proposal.

The Japanese delegation is doubtful of the advisability of such limitation. In point of fact, material elements constitute the main factor in naval armaments. The limitation of naval tonnage automatically involves that of effectives. Other arguments may be quoted in support of our view.

1. Every effort is now being made in naval shipbuilding to reduce the space allotted to the ship's crew. From this point of view, the ideal solution would be to reduce the number of crew required to the bare minimum by substituting mechanical improvements wherever possible. It is extremely improbable that any Power would wish to maintain naval effectives in excess of the minimum required.

2. In the second place, naval effectives consist for the most part of men specially qualified for certain kinds of work. Hence the question of quality outweighs that of numbers, and numbers of themselves do not constitute an indispensable factor in naval power. Under these circumstances it seems to us superfluous to suggest that limitation should be applied to naval effectives.

3. The naval Powers are now endeavouring to cut down budgetary expenditure by limiting their naval effectives to the strict minimum and including in the reserve fleet as many vessels as possible other than those actually in commission. These reserve ships are stationed in various ports with a view to reducing the number of naval effectives. Hence, in peace-time, the number of naval effectives rarely exceeds the minimum required.

In conclusion, I might say that I do not see any likelihood of there being naval effectives in excess of the strict minimum, so that, in my opinion, the limitation of naval effectives, which is our present object, would necessarily follow from a limitation of ships.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — My position is particularly difficult: I have to support one of the texts now before you, but at the same time Lord Cecil's speech makes me think that, at all events for the moment, any discussion would be useless. Lord Cecil stated, as he did when we were discussing air forces, that he was waiting for instructions from his Government. It is quite certain that no discussion of the question of naval effectives or any other naval question is possible unless Great Britain states her point of view, and unless we know whether she will accept our point of view or whether we can accept hers. Consequently, any discussion would, in my opinion, be devoid of practical result — at all events, at present. Nevertheless, as this discussion has already been started, I should not like my silence to be interpreted as acquiescence in certain statements made. Unlike some of my colleagues, more particularly the representatives of the great naval Powers, other delegations think it impossible even to contemplate a general limitation of armaments if naval effectives are to be left out. We are undoubtedly agreed that, in naval matters, material is the really important factor, but I would ask those of my colleagues who represent the great naval Powers to remember that this is not a unilateral condition or one peculiar to naval matters. We shall find this point cropping up again when we come to budgetary expenses. The same thing applies in the case of land effectives: unarmed soldiers are not soldiers, or, at all events, they do not constitute a very serious menace. We are dealing with those to be armed, and not only with their individual rifles but also with machine-guns, field-guns and all the complicated equipment of a modern army. Consequently, the difference between naval matters and land matters as regards the predominance of material over personnel is not as great as our colleagues might suppose. Obviously, in naval matters, the essential point is to limit the actual ships.

Nevertheless, since the preparatory work for this Conference is based upon the essential idea — otherwise we should not be here — of the interdependence of all armaments and the fact
that, in the matter of limitation, all armaments are indissolubly linked together, I cannot conceive of any Convention which would leave out naval effectives, and this both from the point of view of the interdependence of armaments and from that of the actual ships.

To consider the matter from the standpoint of the interdependence of armaments, nothing would be easier than to appoint a large personnel to the fleet, and thus evade limitation of land forces. Naval effectives are not employed exclusively for manning the ships. Navies also include landing parties, and nothing would be easier than to turn these landing parties into expeditionary forces. In a number of navies the personnel detailed for coast defence is attached to the navy like the naval air force. Thus a large number of personnel would be outside the scope of the limitation.

I should like to revert here to the argument that I put forward in connection with air matters, anticipating to some extent to-day's debate: the last war showed that naval effectives could also be employed on land. I do not think that it would be possible to bring about general limitation without dealing with the limitation of naval effectives.

As regards the navy itself, I have no intention of repeating the arguments that the Netherlands delegate put to us with his customary precision and moderation. I must be logical. The question of the limitation of trained reserves cannot, in my opinion, be dealt with — at all events, in the Convention that we are now framing — because we have no material or accurate means of ensuring their limitation. I shall therefore not fall back on those arguments, which would help me in to-day's controversy, but which are not in keeping with my general views. In naval as in land and air matters — setting aside, in the last-named category, possible war forces, immediately available, in fact much more readily available than in the case of land forces — we must adopt one method and keep to it; I am not considering the question of trained reserves and I shall only be obliged to consider it if it is dealt with in the case of land forces. One argument, however, put forward by the Netherlands delegate, is very striking, especially in the light of certain statistics; those who study the evolution of the merchant service will have noticed that in nearly every country — this is much more marked in some than in others — there has been an enormous increase in the tonnage and speed of certain types, so that such vessels, if fitted with guns, might become available for war purposes directly mobilisation is ordered. The Chinese delegate suggested a very simple method of naval limitation and one which would satisfy public opinion — namely, that we should all agree to sink our naval armaments simultaneously. Even so, we should not have equality. We should simply have made a motion, not even as striking as might be supposed, towards disarmament. There would still be merchant ships, some of which, by reason of their speed and tonnage, could immediately be converted into auxiliary cruisers. If you take the trouble to study the evolution of certain merchant fleets, you will notice a considerable increase in these ships. There is obviously no question of limitation. They constitute what I might call "trained reserve material". My method, however, would cover them, for if you imagine that these merchant-ships, these ships which could be rapidly transformed into auxiliary cruisers, had at their disposal surplus naval effectives, they could be utilised immediately on the outbreak of a war.

Our Japanese colleague, who rejects the very idea, the very possibility of limiting naval effectives, said that, on the contrary, countries with a large navy, which constitutes so heavy a charge on the states, are not included in the limitation you can all realise how pointless our work would be. If, however, we leave out the important factor of naval effectives, which might be increased out of all proportion if they are not included in the limitation you can all realise how pointless our work would be.

I think that I have said more than enough to explain the position of a certain number of countries on this point, especially as we are prevented from carrying the discussion any further, for reasons of propriety, since Lord Cecil feels compelled to keep silent.

General de Marinis (Italy). — We have to deal with two different suggestions: we have, on the one hand, the British proposal, which does not contemplate the limitation of naval effectives, and, on the other, the French proposal, which limits these effective separately, distinguishing between them and land and air forces.

I wonder whether it would not be possible to find some formula in the shape of a compromise including naval effectives in the total effectives. In this way, they would not escape limitation and the French delegate's requirements would be complied with.

As naval effectives are far fewer in number than land effectives, it seems to me that, by including them in the total effectives, the limitation agreed to would be elastic enough to satisfy those countries which are anxious not to be too closely bound in the matter of naval effectives. These countries could always borrow their naval effectives from the total of their land effectives to suit their convenience, without the increase or reduction in the number of naval effectives having any very marked effect on their land effectives, as the naval effectives only constitute a small proportion of the total forces.

My proposal would take into consideration the point raised by the Netherlands delegate, and is in conformity with my country's views in the matter. The Italian experts and experts of other countries explained in Sub-Commission A that a general disarmament Convention should include limitation of all the personnel of land, sea and air forces.
This proposal would be in perfect harmony with the principle of the interdependence of armaments admitted by all delegates and referred to by M. Paul-Boncour a few moments ago.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I entirely share the unwillingness of M. Paul-Boncour to push these discussions so far or so fast as to prejudice any position which Lord Cecil may be called upon to take up in a later discussion; indeed, I have always advocated working slowly enough to leave an ample margin of time for the reaching of compromise and to give ground for the hope that we could get more clearly the point of view of different delegations, and find room for conciliation, concession and understanding. However, I do not think there need be any question of prejudicing the position of any delegation but I do feel that it would be very profitable to all of us if we could have a general discussion of the French proposal. Indeed, I do not see how we can hope to get down to final decisions until we have been somewhat enlightened as to the purpose of those proposals, and just how it is expected to put them into effect. I confess that I do not quite understand them now. I should like to understand them. Possibly, in the light of the explanations which may be offered, we shall be able to modify our views, but I confess that, on the basis of the mere text, I do not see anything new which would warrant me in asking my Government for fresh instructions. It may be that, if we could have the benefit of fuller discussion, this might be the case; we might find a fuller ground for agreement.

I should like to make it clear that we have not taken up our position on this question on the basis of the desirability of limitation. It has been on the ground of its practicability. The American delegation has not been able to see how this can be achieved, or how it would do more than needlessly complicate the situation. As on all other things, it is open to conviction, but first it must have at least a statement of the views of the proponents of the text which is before us before it is in a position to take any fresh decision.

M. Paul-Boncour in his remarks said, if I understood him correctly, that it was natural that the great naval Powers should take that position. It is not on the basis of representing a great naval Power that the American delegation has based its decision, and I beg M. Paul-Boncour to believe me when I say that it is based entirely on practical grounds and nothing else, without any political considerations being involved.

I should be very grateful if M. Paul-Boncour would answer the question which I raised when I first spoke. I venture to point out that he did not allude to it in the remarks which he made, and that is to explain just how, as a practical matter, he expected to put the limitation of naval personnel into effect.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — In the course of the general discussion I said that the Swedish delegation considered that the limitation of naval armaments should apply to personnel. I should like to enlarge on this statement.

I am entirely in agreement with Lord Cecil, Mr. Gibson and M. Sato, who maintain that the principal question when dealing with the limitation of naval armaments is the question of tonnage; but this does not alter the fact that the question of limitation of personnel, though a secondary one, is of great importance. In this connection, I should like to remind you of the findings of Sub-Commission A, which were as follows:

"Such limitation prevents an unknown quantity of naval personnel being transferred to the land and air forces.

"It may in certain cases lead to a decrease of the percentage of armed floating material, which thus reduces the possibility of sudden aggression.

"It reduces the possibility of rapidly using merchant ships as auxiliary cruisers."

This is a very weighty argument in my opinion, and I would add another one: there are considerable naval forces which are not employed on war-ships and which are used for coast-defence purposes. If naval personnel were not to be limited this portion of the forces, which, though on duty ashore, yet not belonging to the land forces, would not be dealt with.

Sub-Commission A only found one disadvantage as compared with the advantages resulting from the limitation of naval personnel:

"If this limitation was carried out to such an extent as to prevent the manning of the different units of the fleet by the effective in service, it would lead to an appreciable reduction of the fighting value of that fleet, which might not then be sufficient to ensure the security of the country."

I wonder whether this disadvantage really exists. If the suggested procedure for the general Conference is adopted, every country will fill in the blank spaces in the proposed Convention and each country will therefore be free to show what forces it proposes to retain for the needs of its security. It will not limit its fleet personnel to such an extent that it would not have sufficient crews for its war-ships and for the organisation of its maritime defences.

Consequently, I consider that the risk of limiting naval personnel to such an extent that this personnel would not be sufficient to man the country's war-ships constitutes an entirely theoretical obstacle, which does not actually exist in practice.
It has also been said, in the course of the discussion, that the limitation of naval personnel would be too complicated, and that it would be impossible to put such limitation into practice. It is possible that real difficulties exist; but it is no less difficult for a country having land forces to state a fixed number of effectives that this country may not exceed. I do not know whether there is any less difficulty concerning the personnel of land forces than when it is a question of a number of naval forces.

The above reasons make me think that the limitation of naval armaments should apply not only to tonnage and material but to personnel as well.

The proposal put forward by the Italian delegate is, in my opinion, extremely important and fully deserving of consideration. I am not in a position to make a statement immediately on the subject of the question raised by this proposal, but I think I may say that I consider it preferable that this proposal be considered in the nature of a compromise.

To sum up, I would prefer that personnel should be limited in such a way that the limitation of sea, land and air personnel be carried out separately for each category.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I am rather diffident about speaking, as this discussion will probably have no practical results — at all events, at present. Nevertheless, since some questions have been put to me, it is best that I should answer them.

Mr. Gibson said that, if we could point out a practical method for limiting naval effectives, perhaps his Government would not refuse to consider such a possibility.

Allow me to tell you that I cannot understand how the idea could arise that it is more difficult to limit naval forces than land forces. Is it a question of computation, or of substantiating the figures to be submitted? If it is a question of substantiating figures (I have repeatedly said this, but cannot say it too often), we have not yet reached that point; everything connected with figures and their substantiation is to be dealt with by the Conference and by means of negotiations between the Governments before the Conference. At the moment, we are dealing with a preliminary draft or a model Convention as a basis for the work of the Conference: this is the only duty that the Council has entrusted to us. We have no other. Such being the case, do not let us talk of substantiating figures. Each country will draw up an estimate according to its needs. The difficulty is no greater than in the case of land forces. It is even less serious, because at least we can count on one certain factor: the number of ships; whereas in the case of land armies we have nothing of this sort as a starting-point.

It is a matter of computation, then the position is exactly the same as in the case of land forces; the nation recruits its fleet in the same way as it recruits its land forces, that is to say, by conscription, maritime registration or enlistment.

Whatever the method adopted, the country knows how many men are serving with the fleet at any given time, or are attached to the fleet, just as it knows that its armies and subsidiary services comprise a certain number of men provided for under its military system.

I will now revert to the familiar comparison of my friend, M. de Brouckère: the ration strength. The navy has its ration strength just as much as the army, and the navy likewise has budgetary effectives, like the army. Although I have endeavoured to discover in all sincerity the practical difficulty before us, I cannot really see any difficulty peculiar to naval matters as compared with land forces.

General de Marinis just now suggested something in the nature of a compromise, which (although it is understood that naval forces would be limited) would consist in including them in a total figure with the land forces.

To which I reply exactly as the Swedish delegate did a few moments ago, and my meaning is the same: many other Powers besides my country would greatly prefer limitation of naval effectives by themselves, just as they prefer separate limitation of air effectives. I am very much in favour of all-round methods and, somewhat later in the debate, I will prove this, but not on this point.

I really think that, if we wish to be clear about how to deal with the total force of any country on land, sea and air — and this is the object of the Convention — the material of the country must be treated in the same way as its effectives, but I have a marked preference for the system that I have pointed out to you, and I think that the Convention would have a greater value if it made this distinction.

I shall offer no fixed objection if this will enable you to find some common ground for agreement. Allow me, however, to say that it seems to me rather premature. Certainly, when Lord Cecil explains his attitude, after receiving instructions from his Government, if it seems to me that an agreement of this nature facilitates an understanding, this is so eminently desirable that everything should be done to bring it about.

In any case, there is something premature about this proposal, because I do not know whether, if we came to an agreement (I should very much regret this because, as I said, the Convention would lose very much in accuracy), this would really constitute a basis for agreement.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I agree with M. Paul-Boncour in thinking that our discussion can serve no useful purpose until we know whether Great Britain can accept the limitation of naval effectives.

Nevertheless, since the delegate of the United States has brought the discussion down to practical realities and told us that, so far as he is concerned, the question at issue is not so