You may reply that this cannot be altered. Nevertheless, it is none the less true that it should be taken into consideration, and in my opinion compensations should be granted to States with small budgets. To revert to the simile which I used just now, I will add that the second man in my example can improve his situation by belonging to a health insurance society, a mutual benefit society or a State insurance institution.

Therefore, I say that I am in favour of the limitation of expenditure, which is admittedly necessary—in fact, indispensable; but, in applying such limitation, I think that provision should be made for States with small budgets to receive suitable compensation in some form to be settled, which would counteract the drawbacks I have pointed out.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands).—I am sure I am right in thinking that the members of the Commission are agreed on the desirability of reducing military expenditure. Every Government would be only too glad to see a reduction of the heavy burden which is keeping nations back on the road to prosperity and progress. It is one of the principal reasons that induced our Governments to send us here. It is also the reason why we are endeavouring to find some method that will lead to the limitation and reduction of armaments.

The limitation of military expenditure is one of the means that have been suggested for submission to all the countries of the world. This system of budgetary limitation is not justified by experience. As early as the first Assembly, the League of Nations adopted a recommendation to the effect that military expenditure should not be increased during the two years to follow. The result was far from satisfactory. Out of twenty-five Governments that replied to the questionnaire sent out by the Council, only fifteen stated that in principle they were in favour of the proposal; and of those fifteen a large majority entered various reservations. Several of them quoted a clause in the resolution saying that exceptional conditions notified as such to the Council in accordance with the Covenant would be taken into account.

This recommendation was again passed at the second Assembly, and the third Assembly approved a suggestion for reducing military expenditure in all countries to the 1913 figure. The result was even less satisfactory. The Council was notified by the Temporary Mixed Commission that the Assembly's recommendation was not practicable. The Council then decided not to take any further steps for carrying out this recommendation, and the fourth Assembly bowed to this decision. Nevertheless, it adopted a resolution later to the effect that, during the period necessary for the elaboration and adoption of the general scheme for the reduction of armaments, the total expenditure on military, naval and air armaments provided for in the budget of the current fiscal year should not be exceeded. The result was even more discouraging than the results of the previous recommendations.

At its twenty-ninth session, the Council, which had already adjourned the question twice, instructed the Secretary-General to send to all States Members of the League a resolution of the fourth Assembly recommending the Members of the League not to exceed the total expenditure on military, naval and air armaments provided for in the budget of the current fiscal year. At the meeting of the Council, the representatives of Great Britain, Italy, Sweden, France and Japan each made a statement in the name of his Government emphasising the fact that the Assembly's recommendation was not binding. Lord Parmoor further stated that he wished to make it quite clear that Great Britain would not be able to take any step in the direction indicated in the resolution.

We certainly cannot quote experience in favour of a system of budgetary limitation; nor can we quote the report of the Joint Commission submitted by our Sub-Commission B. This report says that it cannot be denied that limitation of budgetary credits for national defence would result in limiting armaments to some extent. The Joint Commission considers, however, that this method, if employed as the only one of limiting armaments, would suffer from several very serious shortcomings. Further on in the same report we read:

"Limitation by expenditure only would be inadequate as the basis of a Convention'.

If the contracting parties, however, agree on maximum figures to be laid down for effectives and material, the Joint Commission considers that it would be advisable to supplement these methods by also limiting certain broad categories as well as the total budgetary expenditure.

The Joint Commission does not, therefore, recommend limitation of budgetary expenditure except as a supplementary measure to limitation of effectives and material.

We cannot advance any logical argument in favour of limitation of budgetary expenditure. It seems to me that this system would be extremely ineffective. M. de Brouckère displayed great emotion and implied us, almost in despair, not to miss this last chance of success. I agree, however, with Lord Cecil that there is no need to despair. The question with which we are dealing at the moment does not seem to me to be so terribly serious, and I still maintain that by direct methods we shall eventually arrive at a less disconcerting result than we might imagine when we listen to M. de Brouckère. We have not yet definitely given up hope of limiting either trained reserves or war material—a subject we have not yet approached—nor naval effectives; need we despair of effecting all these limitations? Personally, I refuse to do so. Perhaps it is because in this sphere the country I represent has already made considerable progress towards reducing and limiting armaments, although it is a Continental country like Sweden. We have also agreed on certain points which are far from unimportant, such as...
limitation of land forces and limitation of length of service. I think that we may rest assured that we shall eventually agree on limitation of naval material, not to mention other limitations of less importance.

Pending the final result of our work, I am not prepared to adopt the rather desperate expedient of budgetary limitation. I say "desperate expedient" because it consists in dealing with symptoms instead of fighting the disease itself.

In Sub-Commission A's report we read that one of the advantages of the limitation of expenditure is that it is one of the most tangible forms of limiting armaments and probably the one that would appeal most forcibly to public opinion.

Granted, but we are dealing with effects and not with causes. Budgetary limitation affects the shadow and not the substance. The shadow may vary with the location of the body and the brightness of the light and various other considerations; similarly, there is no direct connection between the armaments of a country and its military expenditure. This is the essential flaw in the system suggested.

You cannot compare the armaments of a country with those of another country by comparing their expenditure. I think we are all agreed on that. The circumstances mentioned in the statement by six delegations of Sub-Commission A consist in differences in the price of labour, military organisation, general standard of living, rate of exchange, etc. These circumstances compel us to admit that a comparison of the military expenditure of different countries is not an index for a rational comparison of their armaments. Is there any need to enlarge on this point? It would be forcing an open door, as indeed was pointed out yesterday when we were considering the publication of financial statistics.

It might be advisable to remind you that, when the League of Nations undertook an enquiry into statistics of national armaments, an enquiry which led to the publication of a number of works on the subject, no effort was spared in the reports published to emphasise the fact that budgetary statistics do not admit of comparison between the figures for one country and those for another.

We are told that it is at any rate possible to compare the military expenditure of one State during any one year with the expenditure of the same State during the preceding and following years, and to reach some conclusion regarding the reduction or increase in the armaments of that State.

Is this true? Up to a certain point, doubtless it is; but it seems to me that there are too many disturbing factors in the comparison for limitation of budgetary expenditure to be adopted as a means of effecting reduction and limitation. When the military expenditure of a State increases or diminishes, it is not always because of a reduction or increase of armaments.

When a portion of the Dutch fleet hitherto stationed in home waters is sent out to the colonies, the expenditure on material and personnel increases considerably, but there is no corresponding increase in armaments.

There are other circumstances which exercise a more permanent influence on the question. There is the case, for instance, where the pay has to be increased considerably. I am told that there are still certain countries where regular officers consider that the social position and prestige attached to their calling count as part payment for services rendered to their country, but we can assume that such a state of things will not last for ever.

A country may also change its military organisation from voluntary service to conscription, or vice versa. A change of system will in any case entail considerable financial results without necessarily involving any increase in armaments. It has already been said that a reduction in the period of service may result in an increase in the number of regular officers and non-commissioned officers, and it may very well happen that a reduction of armaments coincides with an increase in budgetary expenditure. I might go on, but I prefer to refer you once again to the Joint Commission's report, which says, on page 19:

"If maximum figures of defence expenditure are agreed upon in addition to maxima of effectives and material, it will no doubt be necessary to provide for the possibility of revision in the event of certain exceptional circumstances, such as the adoption of a new form of defence organisation (voluntary army instead of compulsory service, or an appreciable reduction in the period of military service), a technical invention of first-class importance" — our Polish colleague has reminded us that there was nothing very extraordinary about this — "a marked change in the value of money" — I doubt whether this is anything very exceptional either in these days — "or a change in wage level".

Having agreed on the question of change in the purchasing power of money, the Commission goes on to say:

"Attention should here be drawn to the fact that the Convention should make provision for the measures which it would be necessary to take in the event of the States concerned not applying for a modification of the figures agreed upon in the Convention should such modification be justified by appreciation in the value of gold."

The Joint Commission, which enquired into the question of budgetary limitation so thoroughly, did not consider that it was one to be recommended except as a supplementary measure to the limitation of effectives and material.

The Commission then added a number of qualifying clauses which do not figure in the French draft. Are these qualifying clauses considered to be so complicated that the system
would become unworkable? I do not know, but I share the Joint Commission’s opinion that they are essential. Without them, the proposal would necessarily be wrecked on the reefs through which the Joint Commission wishes to steer it.

My thesis is that budgetary expenditure does not increase or decrease in direct proportion to the increase or reduction of armaments. I think I have proved this by the arguments which I have put forward.

This is not all, however: what concerns us is not merely whether armaments increase or decrease; we also want to know their present scale. There is at this time a great difference between the scale of armaments of different Powers, not only in respect of personnel but also in respect of material.

The present-day armaments of the various States would not be affected by budgetary limitation; such limitation would not eliminate a single gun, a single tank, or a single warship; it would not reduce munitions in reserve in the slightest degree.

If we intend to differentiate between rich countries and poor countries, the rich countries would then retain all their inevitable advantages; in fact, budgetary limitation would tend to standardise the present position in regard to armaments, and this would be a very serious matter. The basis for a figure would be the total present-day expenditure. This was the basis chosen by the Assembly for its attempts at limitation, of which I reminded you just now. When the Assembly took the figures of present-day expenditure on armaments as the basis for budgetary limitation, the great majority of States refused to conform. The limitation of the present-day expenditure was one more limitation to which they found themselves unable to agree.

Such being the case, if at most we can expect stabilisation of the present level of expenditure owing to the Assembly’s efforts, in all probability higher figures will be entered in the table by more than one country and I rather think that what our Polish colleague has just said justifies us in expecting something of the sort. Are we then to count upon a limitation or reduction of armaments?

The Netherlands Government is an ardent advocate of limitation and reduction. When the question of our joining the League of Nations was discussed by the Lower House in our Parliament, several members of the House (I had the honour to be one) put down a motion drawing the Netherlands Government’s special attention, in connection with the entry of our country into the League, to two or three points, one of which concerned the limitation and reduction of armaments. This motion was unanimously passed in agreement with the Government.

The military policy of our country and I think, if I may say so, the attitude adopted by the Netherlands delegation in this Commission is in accordance with the wishes of our Parliament: we have no more heartfelt desire than to continue co-operating with you in the hope of finding a practical method of limiting and reducing armaments. If limitation of expenditure were one, we would accept it.

We hope, like the rest of you, to attain a definite result from our work and I am firmly convinced that we shall help to lighten the crushing burden of military expenditure; but this will be the result of our work, and not the method adopted in setting about it.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I intended to speak later to support the proposal which I put before you, but I am afraid that our position may be misunderstood if I do not say a few words at this point.

I am not opposed to the reduction of armaments by limiting budgets, but I am inclined to regard this method as a supplementary measure; I accept it as such, but only after we have directly reduced effective, reserves and materials. If we did not succeed in reducing these three factors in a country’s armaments, I think that M. de Brouckère’s pessimism would be absolutely justified. By direct methods we must effect a reduction of the three items I have mentioned. I hope we shall succeed; co-operation from myself and the whole German delegation can be relied upon in any measure which might bring about this result.

M. de Brouckère said that the indirect method of limiting budgets could not be objected to because it did not allow of comparison between different countries. This is exactly the reason why I am opposed to it, because, in my view, comparison is the essential part of the disarmament question.

The Preamble to Part V of the Treaty of Versailles justifies me in upholding this opinion, and I would point out that Article 8 of the Treaty, which has been so much quoted to-day, does not mention limitation but only reduction of armaments. If we only succeeded in effecting a limitation of armaments, we should not be doing what the Covenant requires. We should not be doing what the Council, on the basis of the Covenant, requires.

If we drew up a Convention for the Limitation of Armaments, we should put a complete stop for at least five years to the progress of the League of Nations, that progress which promises such a marvellous future for the League, and of which M. Paul-Boncour, in his wonderfully eloquent speech, drew such an inspired picture. I quite agree that it is a wonderful future, but it will not be realised without a levelling-up of armaments.

Lord Cecil has told us that patience is a virtue in politics. I am entirely in agreement with him, and in conclusion I must say that the example of patience shown by the German people in regard to this question, and in other matters, is one without parallel in the history of the world.
M. COMNÈNE (Roumania). — The wide range of to-day’s debate compels all the delegations to state their attitude to the question which has arisen, though it is rather outside the scope of Point 5.

I should therefore like to state the opinion of the Roumanian delegation. My Government considers that limitation of expenditure is the surest means and the most direct and, as the experts in Sub-Commission A said, it is also the most tangible means, in the eyes of the public, of limiting armaments.

The Roumanian delegation is a staunch supporter of this idea, and it has already stated its opinion on various occasions in no uncertain fashion. This idea is in harmony with the urgent financial requirements of a country severely tried during the war.

Limitation of expenditure seems to us an improvement on other methods of limiting armaments; it seems to us, in particular, to be calculated to reassure to some extent those Powers which are dubious about the attitude taken up by the Commission with regard to civil aviation. I should like to draw the Commission’s attention to the special position of my country. After the war, our armaments comprised German, French, Russian, British and even Japanese and American material, equipment of all ages, not all of which was modern. These casually acquired armaments, improvised to a large extent during the tragic days of the war, cannot be retained indefinitely, for it will be readily understood that to do so might possibly endanger the safety of the country. My Government has therefore decided to renew and standardise these heterogeneous armaments. Since, however, we have not the necessary industries in Roumania, we are obliged to procure material in foreign markets, very often at high prices and under conditions that are made more difficult by variations in the rate of exchange, which unfortunately, appear likely to continue. In those circumstances, you will not be surprised to hear me say that our military budget is likely to remain for a number of years a great deal higher than we should wish. We believe, however, that we shall eventually be able to keep it at the level of what the Roumanian Government regards as a normal budget; it is to be hoped that this will be facilitated by the accession to the League of Nations of all the Powers that do not as yet belong, and especially by the effective realisation of the security guarantees provided for in the Covenant. Roumania’s special situation was, indeed, recognised in Sub-Commission A by the experts of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Italy, Poland, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Spain and Roumania, who stated (page 124 of the report) that account should be taken of...

The need of replacing worn-out material and... the factors which place certain countries in a special position — incomplete, out-of-date or worn-out material, small arms and guns of very different designs, industry comparatively undeveloped, thus not permitting of the manufacture of such material and necessitating the purchase of the greater part of the whole of that material abroad”.

The experts also called the attention of the Preparatory Commission to another and no less important side of the problem. They said:

“The above-named delegations declare that one of the technical consequences of certain methods of limitation of armaments considered in the present report would be that the defensive preparations of the different countries adhering to the Disarmament Convention would be disclosed to a certain extent. “By thus sacrificing, in part, the technical advantages of secrecy in regard to preparations for national defence, these countries would be placed in a less favourable position than at present.

“This consequence of the limitation of armaments would be particularly disadvantageous to countries situated in a region containing one or more States which did not adhere to the Disarmament Convention.

“Sub-Commission A draws the attention of the Preparatory Commission for Disarmament to the above-mentioned difficulty.”

I hope that the Commission will take this into account. In spite of the various aspects of the matter, the Roumanian delegation still thinks that limitation of expenditure is one of the surest means of securing limitation of armaments.

M. HENNINGS (Sweden). — Should the question raised by Count Bernstorff be discussed together with the question of budgetary limitation? Or is it intended that we should first of all finish the debate on budgetary expenditure and then begin to discuss the German proposal?

The President. — I suggest that we should first finish the discussion on expenditure and then go on to consider Count Bernstorff’s proposal. First of all, however, I would ask you to decide on Lord Cecil’s suggestion that we should hold a second meeting this afternoon.

The Commission decided to do so.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.
President: M. Loudon (Netherlands).

**60. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Expenses. Point 5 (continuation).**

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — There is no one among our colleagues who, in the course of our long discussions, has done more to keep our work on a firm basis of hopefulness than M. de Brouckère, no one who has contributed more in the way of resourceful solutions of our difficulties, no one who has been a more faithful or effective advocate of the limitation and reduction of armaments. For that reason, the note of discouragement in his remarks this morning is much more striking than if it had come from any other source.

Under the circumstances, I cannot but raise the question as to whether his discouragement is really justified by the facts. It is, after all, based on the assumption that we are on the verge of failure and that no generally acceptable solutions to our problems can be found. It seems to me that this is going to extremes of pessimism.

I cannot but feel that it is premature to say that there are no such solutions to be found. As a matter of fact, we have barely begun discussion of these problems. We have given some of them a cursory examination at this table, and have listened to a large number of formal statements as to the views of various Governments as to how they consider these problems could be solved. After this exchange of impressions, a number of the problems themselves have one by one been set aside for further consideration. This does not mean that we have thereby established our inability to agree. It means as a matter of fact that the essential part of our work begins at this point. After this preliminary exchange, we are in a position to begin the patient search for common ground of agreement.

We must remember three things: first, that we are sent here to reach agreements; second, that agreements can be reached only through negotiation, sometimes long and patient negotiation; and third, the essential fact that we have not yet begun to negotiate; for there is a broad margin of difference between exchange of formal statements on the one hand and, on the other, the give-and-take, the compromise and mutual concession that are involved in negotiations. This exchange of views to which I have referred is, of course, a necessary preliminary to negotiation, but it cannot take the place of negotiation. So we can say that we have not begun to negotiate, and, if that is true, it is certainly premature to say that we have failed or that we have attained our inability to deal with any of our problems. By this I do not mean to minimise the difficulties that exist. I realise that our problems are many and complicated and that our difficulties are very great. They will call for all our patience and good will, but that is certainly no reason to give way to discouragement. We cannot do that. We have no right to do that before we have exhausted all the resources of negotiation and of ingenuity to which we know M. de Brouckère will contribute so much. And, above all, we must not give up the hope that, by persevering in this spirit, M. de Brouckère may yet have the great satisfaction of finding that his momentary discouragement of to-day was not warranted by the facts.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — I should like to explain very briefly the attitude of the Swedish delegation on the subject of limitation of budget expenditure.

The Swedish delegation considers that limitation, whether of effective or of material, should be carried out as far as possible by the application of direct methods. I do not want to repeat here the arguments brought forward in the course of this morning's discussion and in Sub-Commission A against the application of the indirect method; I will merely quote the financial experts of the Joint Commission who point out, on page 5 of their report, that limitation of expenditure cannot be efficacious unless it is the outcome of a limitation of military factors, such as material and effective.

In the opinion of the Swedish delegation, our efforts should then be concentrated primarily on finding means of limiting directly the various military, naval and air factors. Once these means are found, ought direct limitation to be supplemented by budgetary limitation? This seems to us a question of secondary importance, since direct limitation involves automatically, and in all circumstances, limitation of budget expenditure.

The principal factors which make up the armed forces of a country are effective and material, naval, land and air. Hitherto, we have attempted to arrange for direct limitation of the effective of all three categories, and we have touched on the question of limitation of naval and air material. There remains, then, the question of limitation of land material, which is one of the most difficult but also one of the most important questions in the whole disarmament problem.

We have now before us a concrete proposal on this matter. According to our agenda, and to the President's ruling in reply to my question of this morning, we have not to begin to study this proposal until we have finished the discussion on the question of limitation of budget expenditure. I need not say that I gladly fall in with this procedure, and that I shall therefore make no statement at present on the proposal.
I must, however, point out that, in the opinion of the Swedish delegation, the aspect which the question of limitation of budget expenditure will assume will depend very much on the result which we reach when examining the question of the direct limitation of land material. If we manage to reach a positive solution of the direct limitation of land material, I think that the Swedish delegation will be inclined, in view of the great difficulties presented by the limitation of expenditure, to identify itself with those who think it better, for the moment at least, not to limit budgetary expenditure on material.

The situation will, however, be quite different if no positive solution is reached in the matter of limitation of land material, with the result that the only alternatives left us are either to do nothing at all as regards land material or to have recourse to the method of budgetary limitation.

Once again, the question of the limitation of material (whether by direct or indirect methods) seems to us so important that, even if the method adopted to effect such limitation has considerable drawbacks, we should be inclined to think that it would be preferable to adopt that method, despite all its disadvantages, rather than do nothing at all.

My point of view is this: the direct method of limiting material is preferable to the indirect. But if the direct method is definitely rejected, is it not better to avail ourselves of the indirect method of budgetary limitation rather than leave aside altogether such an important part of the problem as the limitation of military material?

For these reasons, the Swedish delegation wishes to reserve its final opinion on the limitation of expenditure until the question of the direct limitation of military material has been discussed.

M. YOVANOVITCH (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes).—I did not intend to address the Commission, but, as several delegations have explained the attitudes of their Governments, I am obliged in my turn to explain the attitude of my own.

As regards expenditure on the purchase and manufacture of material, I have already explained, during the general discussion, the special situation of my country in this respect. Allow me now to return once again to this point, and to stress the fact that the expenditure which my country has had to incur has not by any means been restricted to expenditure on the upkeep of existing material, but has been chiefly devoted to the building up of a minimum stock of material for national defence.

After the war, we found ourselves faced with several different systems, patterns and calibres of weapons and, in order to secure unification of our armaments, we had to discard the greater part of our material and to replace it by more modern and uniform types. This task necessitated great sacrifices, which were the heavier since we have no arms factories and were obliged to make all these purchases abroad. The financial and economic difficulties to which the war gave rise and the fluctuations of our national currency have prevented our Government from finishing this task, the sole purpose of which is to assure ourselves the minimum of armaments indispensable for our national security.

If I have been led to make this statement, it is not that I wish to oppose any limitation of expenditure but only to justify the estimate of expenditure on material which my Government will put forward at the Disarmament Conference.

In any case, I am entirely in agreement with the statement made this morning by my colleague, M. Comnène; we agree that the method of limitation of expenditure, despite its drawbacks, is the only possible one in the present circumstances.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France).—This morning, when I said that our discussion had gone beyond the limits of the precise scope of the item under discussion, which is budgetary limitation, I did not anticipate that Count Bernstorff would intervene at the end of the meeting to make it wider still by drawing the Treaty of Versailles itself into the debate.

I am almost tempted to thank him for this. The question had to be raised, in order that all misapprehensions might be dispelled. I hesitated to raise it myself, for reasons which he will understand; but his own intervention, which forces me to reply, has removed my scruples.

The German delegate has done well to recall the Preamble to Part V of the Treaty of Versailles in conjunction with Article 8 of the Covenant. These two clauses are the reasons for our presence here; and this is the reason why the draft Convention which the French delegation has laid before you refers expressly to this treaty and to all other individual treaties between States represented in this Commission concluded prior to the Convention on which we are engaged, and remaining unaffected by that Convention.

It is correct that the Preamble to Part V of the Treaty of Versailles refers to the limitation of armaments imposed on Germany as a condition of and a first step towards a general limitation of armaments. This is what distinguishes this limitation very clearly from other similar limitations which have been imposed at the end of other wars known to history, and which, incidentally, have generally proved pretty ineffective.

What in this case gives its whole value to this stipulation is the fact that it is not only a condition imposed on one of the signatories to the treaty; it is a duty, a moral and legal obligation incurred by the other signatories, to proceed to a general limitation.

But I venture to point out to the German delegate that his statement only brought out one aspect of the problem: the obligation which rests on every nation to proceed to a general limitation.
The terms of the Preamble to Part V are very clear; this limitation is conditional on the observance by Germany of the limitations imposed on her, and it is this point which made it necessary to do as the French delegation has done, and insert in the text of the Convention an express reference to the Treaty of Versailles.

I venture to make a further observation to the German delegate. He has used expressions which may be exactly in keeping with his own thought but do not appear to me in keeping with the text of the Preamble or of Article 8.

The German delegate spoke of "comparison" and "levelling". Comparison is a thing which no one can prevent. It is quite inevitable, as we showed clearly enough this morning, that, the moment an international Convention has come into force, the moment that figures are given in this Convention, no one can prevent its readers from drawing the inevitable comparison.

But levelling is another matter. We cannot accept it. If we did, we should be running directly counter to what constitutes the very basis and purpose of our work. If we were only aiming at levelling — that is, reducing to a uniform level, whether based on earlier treaties or laid down in the Convention itself — the whole of the signatory nations, we should certainly not be faced with all the difficulties which we are encountering.

The problem would be simple, too simple. I have already pointed out many times, both this morning and on other occasions, why such levelling could not possibly solve the problem in a way which would be just and would form a lasting basis for security. Levelling is only apparent. In reality the problem is extremely complex, as is very clearly shown by Article 8, to which the German delegate referred, and which is the second basis of our work. "The Council", it says, "shall formulate plans for the reduction of armaments, taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances (as regards security) of each State". What constitutes the real difficulty of the problem before us, what occasioned a certain depression among us this morning, is precisely the fact that we have not to reduce armaments to a uniform scale, fixed in advance by treaties, or chosen arbitrarily in the Convention; what we have to do is to consider the results already reached and ensuing from the application of the treaties, to take into account the geographical situation and the particular circumstances as regards the security of each State, and then to decide what is the minimum of forces necessary to that State.

These circumstances are variable; a nation's situation may be exclusively maritime, or exclusively continental, or continental and maritime at once; a nation may or may not have a degree of industrial strength which of itself constitutes superiority; these circumstances are influenced by the whole mass of considerations which are the subject of the programme we have to lay before the Council.

Since the German delegate has referred to documents which are, indeed, the basis of our work, it was my duty to point out the exact purport of those documents.

M. Sato (Japan). — I venture to rise again in order to explain my point of view. I shall confine myself strictly to the agenda. I wish to speak on Point 5. In opening the discussion this morning, I most unexpectedly elicited M. de Broekère's rather gloomy observations. I rise again now in the hope that it may prove possible — although I doubt it — to make the question of the application of budgetary limitation seem a little less dark.

Among M. Paul-Boncour's observations this morning was the remark that, if the limitation of expenditure is complicated, the situation as regards the limitation of effectives must be exactly the same.

I fully admit that the difficulties and complexities of the two forms of limitation are to some extent analogous. Nevertheless, the limitation of effectives is a positive and tangible matter, while the limitation of expenditure is not very positive and is subject to many fluctuations. This is why I do not find it very practical. Everyone must admit that there are many difficulties in drawing up in advance a budget with accurate estimates for five or ten years ahead. I will not speak of the fluctuations in the purchasing power of money or in the rate of the exchange, which themselves already constitute a great difficulty in drawing up budget estimates. I will mention another point to show you the difficulties which prevent stability in a budget.

Take a country which has a definite number of effectives agreed to by the Conference, and which desires to increase the pay of its soldiers. This is a very desirable thing, especially in countries with conscription, since in these countries pay is generally extremely small and compulsory military service must be looked on as a kind of contribution. This increase in pay would necessarily be reflected in a sudden increase in expenditure, even though the number of effectives remained the same.

Experts in budgetary questions can adduce many similar examples.

I infer from these various facts that expenditure must inevitably fluctuate from year to year and on account of circumstances which are difficult to foresee, whereas, as regards effectives, if the number is fixed for several years, there will be few fluctuations. Hence this latter limitation is effective and practicable. The same factor of permanency is unfortunately not present in the case of budgets.

Furthermore, a country which agreed to the limitation of budgetary expenditure would be obliged to put down in the expenditure column the highest figure which it had reached during the previous five or ten years. If it did not do so, that country would be unable to guard against the consequences of possible unexpected fluctuations. But in that case, we should be defeating our own purpose.
These considerations lead me to the conclusion that, for the moment, we shall have to content ourselves with the direct limitation of effectives and not to have recourse to indirect methods, which are difficult of application.

While I lay these considerations before the Commission, I am, of course, always prepared to examine any other proposal put forward by my colleagues. I must also take this opportunity to add a few words on the progress of our work. Obviously there are still certain important questions which have been reserved for later discussion. The most important of them are the limitation of naval and air effectives, the questions of aircraft carried on board vessels of war, and that of vessels of war themselves. But here we have only temporarily adjourned our discussions; we have not definitely failed. If we succeed in reaching an agreement in a few days, as everybody wishes, the result will be perfect. Personally, I have not lost hope and I have good reason for my optimism, for all the delegates here are animated by an undeniable spirit of conciliation. I am well satisfied with the results already obtained, and I look forward to the future with confidence.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I should like to say a few more words, but, before dealing with the matter of limiting expenditure, I must thank those of my colleagues who have been so kind as to enquire into the state of my moral. In the first place, let me reassure them; I am in very good health and consequently not at all pessimistic.

I am convinced that, in the present state of Europe and of the world, disarmament is necessary and therefore possible. The only question which remains open, and in connection with which we may still entertain some doubts, is whether we shall prepare the way for disarmament here, or whether this will be done elsewhere, and at another time.

When recapitulating my speech, M. Paul-Boncour said that I had taken the bearing of our work. At any rate, I tried to do so. I tried impartially and without in any way despairing of our success here. I should welcome this success with all my heart. I hope for it and, in so far as it rests with me, I shall do all I can to bring it about.

And now I should like to return to the question under immediate discussion: the limitation of expenditure. I should like to reply to the very interesting and suggestive speech by the Netherlands delegate.

M. Rutgers says: "I do not want to limit expenditure. That is an indirect means. Expenditure is only a shadow . . ." Who said that gold was only a chimera? To say that gold is only a shadow is surely going a little too far. M. Rutgers says it is an effect, not a cause. My dear colleague, if we are going to discuss cause and effect, if we are to engage in a philosophic discussion, our labours will never end! But I shall try by a concrete example to explain why I think expenditure is neither a cause nor an effect, but may be a combination of both. I shall therefore choose an example which will not be so far from the question of the limitation of military expenditure as it may seem.

Take a man strolling along the boulevard at dinner-time. He goes into a restaurant, examines the menu and orders what he wants. At the end of the meal, he sees the bill, and he can gauge the extent of his appetite from the way in which he has satisfied it, and he may be right in saying that his bill is the consequence, in fact of his dinner.

But let us consider another consumer, a poor fellow who is hungry, who would also like a meal, but who has to search his pockets for some time before finding the few pence which will allow him to enter a cookshop. Should we not be right in saying that in his case the coppers are the cause of his dinner, as Leibnitz would say, the sufficient reason?

Either I am very much mistaken, or, in the present state of the world, most nations are, with regard to armaments, in the position of the poor devil who finds two coins in his pocket, rather than in that of the gentleman of means who before sitting down to his meal did not consider the consequences.

What really happens? What is it that in most countries limits military expenditure? The funds at their disposal and — I am tempted to add — fortunately! If countries were richer, they would spend more; they would have more soldiers, more guns, more up-to-date equipment, and, as we see them emerging by degrees from the economic slough of the post-war period, we observe that they tend very strongly to increase their military expenditure and their armaments.

There we have, indeed, the tragic side of the situation. Not only do armaments lead to war and increase war expenditure but they increase the risk of bankruptcy; they impede, they hinder, in a very obvious way, the economic recovery of Europe and of the world.

Even when the means of production increase, we find no way out of our misfortunes, for the new resources at our disposal are always employed in preparing new means of meeting the threat of war, so that we reach the paradoxical state of things in which, the richer a nation becomes, the more its riches are swallowed up in the threat of imminent war. What can we do? What, in the light of common sense, I might say in the eyes of the man in the street, is our problem if it is not the limitation of military expenditure, treating such expenditure not as something indirect but something essential? A solemn undertaking on the part of Governments that in future they will not increase their armaments in proportion to their wealth, that they will limit these armaments once and for all, and that newly acquired wealth will be directed to works of peace, would not only be of considerable practical value in limiting expenditure but would also be of considerable moral value.
M. Rutgers says : "I do not want to limit expenditure; such limitation would come as a consequence. I limit effectives, I limit material, and consequently I limit expenditure."

M. Rutgers says : "I limit effectives . . ." I hope we shall succeed in doing so: the encouragement which I have received to-day leads me to believe that we are perhaps nearer reaching an agreement than I thought.

He says : "I limit material . . .". That we shall discuss to-morrow. And if we find some practical solution, something more than an empty phrase to the effect that such material will be limited, no one will be more delighted than I. But, having limited this material and these effectives, are you sure that you will thereby have limited military expenditure? I should be sorry to lay too much stress on this point, but I must ask you to refer to the Military Yearbook and see whether there is a constant relation between military expenditure on the one hand and effectives and material on the other, and whether it does not happen that, in several very important cases, expenditure is continually increasing. Having observed this, are you not of opinion that it would be of some practical use to confirm the limitation of effectives and material by limiting expenditure?

M. Rutgers says : "Be careful: by limiting expenditure, you are going to stereotype the military power of countries."

No doubt, if Governments fix, as the limits of their future expenditure, the amount of their present expenditure, there will be no reduction. We should simply achieve the same kind of limitation as we have achieved in the case of effectives, and be in danger of substituting limitation for reduction to the same extent as we do in the case of effectives.

M. Rutgers says : "You are going to stereotype stocks: the result will be that every country will maintain the same quantity of arms as it possesses to-day and thus the quantity will not be limited at all."

Is this quite certain? I should be inclined to apply to stocks the remark that Lord Cecil made this morning with regard to politics and the general progress of humanity: Stocks also are dynamic in a certain sense, and are a function of time. Stocks which are ten years old have lost their value; and, if we secure, for lack of something better, a means of measuring with some accuracy the quantity of new material added year by year to a stock of material, the value of which diminishes as it gets out of date, shall we not succeed in effecting, to some extent, the liquidation of the old firm, and shall we not have brought about a new state of things, in which the stocks of material held by various countries will bear a more correct relation to their real needs for security, as stated and recognised?

Finally, M. Rutgers referred to precedents. He said : "The precedents are not encouraging. Is it because the precedents are encouraging that we suggest limiting effectives? Is it because the precedents are encouraging that you wish to limit trained reserves? You might perhaps find precedents. But I doubt whether you would find any that are very encouraging, or calculated to promote that peace of mind which we wish to secure by reassuring all parties to the contract. Do the precedents to which you refer with regard to the limitation of expenditure possess the great importance which you attribute to them? What has been done? The measures applied were those belonging to the period which we might call the age of innocence in disarmament, when we all had very simple and rather ingenuous ideas, perhaps because we had not fully appreciated the complexity of the problem. We have been reminded of what has been done at various stages in the League's history. It was suggested that all Governments should keep to their present expenditure, or, again, that they should increase their expenditure or reduce it in a certain ratio. The essential part of the work was entirely neglected, the part that was most difficult and most difficult, so difficult even that we do not dare touch it at the outset and accordingly postpone it till the Conference, namely, the problem of fixing for each country a standard scale of armaments, a certain quantity, a certain figure, which will satisfy them, and which will also satisfy other parties to the contract. And if the attempt was made without taking the necessary precautions, and without the necessary preliminaries, is it surprising that it should have failed, and can we really refer to it as a precedent? I should now like to say a few words in reply to the very weighty and impressive arguments advanced by Lord Cecil this morning, which have given me much food for thought. Will he allow me to say, before I start, how gratified I was and moved by the words he addressed to me? I very much appreciated the advice he gave me, with so much authority, to be content with a first step and not to be too impatient. My dear colleague — allow me to address you as such — I think you are right when you say that in politics one must have patience, more patience and again more patience. But do not let us make a trilogy of one word. In politics there is never a more than one quality. You have often proved this to us yourself, and have, in this respect, shown us an example. Might we not agree in saying that the three qualities required are patience in the first place (perhaps), but also audacity and determination? By uniting these qualities and employing them, each to the best of his ability, we may perhaps achieve something.

Lord Cecil said : "The danger is that each Government should fix too high a figure." I see this, but there is an equal danger that each Government will fix too high a figure for the limitation of effectives.
In all likelihood, when the Conference meets, each of the Governments represented there will cherish great ambitions. The difficulty of our work will indeed be to curb these ambitions, to induce each delegation to make concessions, provided its neighbours do the same and thereby become less of a menace.

But let us make no mistake. Possibly, at the outset, each Government will ask, as the lowest limit of its expenditure, more than it spends to-day.

The debates which have already taken place, the statements which we have heard here, seem to show that some Governments are determined to ask for larger contingents than they possess to-day. Thus the position is the same in this respect.

Lord Cecil tells us: "Be careful. This increase in expenditure, though slight, which each Government may ask, will lead to much larger, very much larger, amounts being spent on material, and, consequently, you will not have achieved the essential result, namely, that of limiting purchases of material by the various countries."

Lord Cecil is no doubt perfectly right. Nevertheless, he may have somewhat underrated the extent to which purchases of material already enter into a military budget, and it seemed to me that the figures he gave us probably did not make sufficient allowance for extraordinary budgets in which considerable expenditure on material is often to be found. Whatever the case may be, the remedy is simple. It is given in the right-hand column of the Synoptic Analysis under No. 6. We have only to arrange for separate limitation of expenditure on material.

Finally, Lord Cecil told us: "The difficulty lies in the fact that requirements in respect of material vary. Some unexpected discovery may occur, a new pattern of rifle or a new gun". This difficulty brings us to the very crux of the matter, which is the question whether we should not limit this constant renewal of material.

As regards naval armaments, those are limited. One of the essential features of the Convention proposed for naval armaments is indeed the slower renewal of material. A ship may only be renewed at the end of twenty or twenty-five years. Why should it be possible to renew a machine-gun every year? Is not the risk just as great? I should be inclined to say we should not limit this constant renewal of material.

This difficulty brings us to the very crux of the matter, which is the question whether, from some points of view, the risk may be even greater, and that it is very disturbing for a small country, which is not very wealthy, to think that its neighbours may constantly be outstripping it by acquiring new material and by always having the latest pattern of rifle, machine-gun or howitzer, while its own purchases are limited by the fact that it is not wealthy, and that it has agreed to limit the number of men which it can oppose to this material.

But I do not want to prolong this criticism, and I should like to show Lord Cecil that I am trying to make use of his advice. I am trying to discover what we have achieved and what those who are in favour of limiting expenditure have positively and definitely achieved. It may be much less than I hoped but, in any case, it is something. Lord Cecil suggested, if I correctly interpreted his remarks, that we should insert in the Convention or in the Preamble to the Convention, or in some part of the Final Protocol of our work, a statement of principle, to the effect that limitation of expenditure is to be aimed at. He also adopted a suggestion which I thought fit to make: that it would be possible to limit material as soon as a further Convention, ensuring publicity with regard to manufacture, was added to the Convention on the Traffic in Arms.

Well, on that basis we may achieve something. I do not know whether, in the present state of our work, it would not be premature to draw up a text, but I note the idea, and, if we agree as regards the idea, we shall no doubt agree in the end on the words in which it may be expressed.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I very much appreciate the amiable tone of M. Paul-Boncour's reply. If I ventured to address you this morning, it was on the strength of a remark of his, for one day, in one of his fine speeches, he told us that we should speak here quite frankly: that is what I tried to do.

I was very pleased to observe that the French delegate recognised the bilateral character of the Preamble to Part V of the Treaty of Versailles, which is bilateral not only in respect of legal but also moral obligations.

Once this has been recognised, there is hardly any difference of opinion as to principle left between the French delegate and myself, and M. Paul-Boncour is well aware that no one is more desirous than I am of removing such differences of opinion as remain with regard to the application of the principle.

With regard to Article 8 I only said that this article calls for reduction of armaments and not limitation. I think there can be no doubt on this point.

I should not have spoken at all this morning had the French delegate not drawn so attractive a picture of the League of Nations' future when, all the world would, thanks to this institution, enjoy security. And what did I ask of him? Only that he should allow me to come into his picture. But the picture can never become a reality if only one great people in the heart of Europe is completely disarmed, with no means of self-defence and insufficient equipment for it to fulfil its obligations towards the League of Nations. It would indeed be asking too much of Germany to expect her now to sign a Convention which would do no more than perpetuate this situation. Really it would be impossible.
Finally, I should like to say that, in an official document recently issued by the French Government, I read yesterday a remark which greatly impressed me, and which I should like to repeat here. It said: "France is fighting for the equality of nations." Well: "Hic Rhodus hic salta." I should be gratified, if the French delegate would fight for the equality of nations. Then all nations, particularly the two of which I am speaking, would be the best friends in the world.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — M. de Brouckère asked me whether we were agreed on the substance of two suggestions which he formulated, and, as I understood them, I think we certainly are agreed. He suggested that we should put something into this Convention recognising the desirability of limiting expenditure on armaments and hoping that it may be done in the future. I have drafted something very roughly on the spur of the moment, and it is only just an indication of what we are aiming at. It must obviously be much more carefully considered before we could put it into a draft treaty; but this is the kind of thing:

"Whereas it is in the general interest that the expenditure on armaments should be limited, and whereas the High Contracting Parties are not at present agreed on any satisfactory method of accomplishing this object, and whereas the High Contracting Parties consider that as a preliminary to such limitation of expenses full publicity should be secured, so that on a future occasion it may be possible again to approach this question with better hope of success.

Therefore, we go on to enact the full provisions as to publicity. That is very rough, I am afraid. It would have to be very carefully considered before we could put it into the Convention, but that would give an indication of the kind of thing that is in my mind.

M. de Brouckère then made one other reference to something that I had said, namely, that he hoped to see supervision of the private manufacture and the public manufacture of armaments as well as the Convention on the Traffic in Arms. About that, I quite agree with him. I do think that that would be an important step towards the direct limitation of armaments and I agree with him that it would be very desirable that it should be carried out. I do not think that can very well be put into this Convention, because it refers to another matter which is already the subject of international discussion. But for what it is worth, I may say that I entirely agree with what I understood M. de Brouckère to mean.

The President. — The Commission will no doubt leave it to the Bureau to draft this formula, which will then be put forward for discussion.

Has no one any further remarks to make with regard to Point 5? I need only note that we have not agreed on this point and that we now turn to Point 6.

M. de Paul-Boncour (France). — I should like to say that, if we are not agreed on Point 5, it is a waste of time to discuss the subsequent points.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — It might be well to point out that the delegations may not necessarily take up the same attitude with regard to Point 5 as they do to Point 6. In fact, the statement of the Swedish delegate seemed, unless I am mistaken, to make a distinction in this respect.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — I think the Netherlands delegate understood me perfectly. I consider that, as regards effective, the direct method already contemplated in the course of our discussions would be sufficient and that it would be neither necessary nor expedient to supplement it by a method aiming at the limitation of budgetary expenditure.

Furthermore, as regards material, I think the direct method of limitation is preferable to the indirect method, namely, that of limiting budgetary expenditure. I wonder if this latter method is not preferable to a negative attitude. That is why I reserved my right to return to the question of limiting budgetary expenditure on material, when we discuss the proposal before us aiming at direct limitation. In my opinion, there really is some difference between Point 5 and Point 6, if I have understood them correctly.

The President. — Before examining Point 6, we might discuss the German proposal relative to direct limitation of material.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — I agree with the President's suggestion that we should postpone the discussion of Point 6 and subsequent points until we have examined the question of limiting land material. I did not ask that we should deal with this latter question immediately, but, if the President thinks we should do so, I have no objection.

The President. — As it is already late, I suggest that we open that discussion to-morrow morning.

It was decided to do so.

The Commission rose at 6.50 p.m.
TWENTY-FIFTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Saturday, April 9th, 1927, at 10 a.m.

President: M. Loudon (Netherlands).

61. Examination of the German Proposal relative to direct Limitation of Material.

The President. — The German delegation proposes that a new chapter, framed as follows, be inserted in the draft Disarmament Treaty:

"CHAPTER . . . LIMITATION OF THE MATERIAL OF LAND FORCES.

"The High Contracting Parties agree to limit the maximum material of their land forces in service and in reserve to the figures fixed in Table . . . , annexed to the present Treaty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material in service and in reserve</th>
<th>Maximum number of arms</th>
<th>Quantity of ammunition for the various arms (rifles, machine-guns, etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Rifles or carbines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Guns, long and short, and howitzers of a calibre below 15 centimeters.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Guns, long and short, and howitzers of a calibre of 15 centimeters or over.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. All types of mortars.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Tanks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Armoured cars.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — The day before yesterday, M. de Brouckère, in his usual courteous and conciliatory manner which we all admire, told me that he hoped I would convince him of the possibility of directly limiting the material of land armies. I am well aware that it is very difficult to convince an international Conference, because behind the delegates you have the experts, and behind the experts the Governments.

I know, as Mr. Gibson pointed out yesterday, that the result of our Conference (a result which we all desire) will be the outcome of negotiations between the Governments. At the same time, I think it is my duty to indicate all the possible ways by which we may achieve disarmament.

Why is direct limitation so imperative? First, gentlemen, because each State must know the armaments in respect of material possessed by other States, which it must take into account in its estimates. Only in this way can it procure a basis on which to estimate the scale of its own material armaments. No one will question the fact that particulars relating only to expenditure will never afford an accurate idea of the armaments in material of any country; in particular, it will afford no idea of the stocks of arms and ammunition existing when the Disarmament Convention comes into force.

How is any conclusion to be drawn with regard to the accumulation of material which a State may possess from the total increase or reduction of expenditure? This would be entirely impossible. And yet it is clearly a point of decisive importance.

In the second place, the direct limitation of material is essential, because we are all agreed that it is important to restrict the possibility of aggression. It is particularly in this connection that the limitation of material is a decisive factor. The reserves of material and the stocks of offensive weapons and especially of ammunition determine the striking power of a country. No doubt material is useless without the man who wields the weapon, who lays the gun and who drives the tank. At the same time, even an army of heroes cannot fight without good weapons and adequate war material. To prevent accumulations of war material is the most reliable means of restricting the use of men with military training for purposes of aggression.

But how are we rapidly and effectively to prevent, by means of the limitation of expenditure, the accumulation of war material if a country is already in possession of large stocks of war material at the time when the future Convention comes into force?
Another point should also be mentioned. The technique of modern weapons increases the fighting power of a man. The fighting power of a machine-gunner represents many times that of a man handling a single rifle. A heavy gun has a greater range and greater destructive power than a light field-gun, although the number of men serving them may be the same. A tank manned by a few men can go through and destroy whole battalions which are not armed with anti-tank weapons. It follows that a reduction in effective missiles can be compensated to a very large extent by material factors. Accordingly, a system of disarmament which only covered effective missiles would be at the same time covering material would not be worthy of the name of disarmament. Sub-Commission A unanimously noted that:

"Useful indications in regard to the defensive character of the armed forces of any State may be afforded by the fact that these forces are unfit for aggression, as they do not possess the trained men or material necessary for modern offensive warfare".

The report states clearly that the essential factor is "the trained men or material necessary for modern offensive warfare". How could any idea be gained of a country's armaments, by what means could you estimate its powers of aggression, and what basis would you have for the limitation of its armaments if you had not previously obtained an entirely clear idea of its reserves of material. And once more I note that it is impossible, or practically impossible, by limiting expenditure to gain an idea of the material armaments which a State really possesses. You would be ignorant of the number of its cannon, of its machine-guns and of its tanks. If you wish to cover the material of the land forces by the method of the limitation of expenditure, you could apply the same method to effectives, to aircraft and to war-ships. In this way you would arrive at a Disarmament Convention which would be extremely simple but not very effective.

I know that this problem presents difficulties. Against the direct limitation of war material it has been objected that it would be difficult to exercise supervision. I have no intention of going into the problem of supervision now. But if it is thought possible to exercise supervision with regard to the number of aircraft, and even their total motive power, it should also be admitted that the supervision of arms is possible, especially if it were limited to a few main categories. Is it really proposed to give up the idea of the direct limitation of material, which is of decisive importance, for the only reason that opinions differ as to the possibility of supervision? Would the element of good faith play no part at all, that element without which any disarmament, even by the method of the limitation of expenditure, becomes impracticable? The Members of the League of Nations nevertheless remain bound by the last paragraph of Article 8 of the Covenant, which clearly says that:

"The Members of the League undertake to interchange full and frank information as to the scale of their armaments, their military, naval and air programmes," etc.

Are we to take it that arms and material are not armaments, and that particulars regarding this material are not necessary to judge the scale of armaments? Who would shoulder the responsibility, gentlemen, of laying down the principle that stocks of arms and munitions are not capable of supervision and that it would consequently be impossible to insert definite indication regarding the material of land forces in a Disarmament Convention?

Reference was then made to the necessity of maintaining the secrecy of mobilisation. This would be practically tantamount to doing away with the last paragraph of Article 8 of the Covenant, which requires States to give full and frank information on their armaments. The world expects to know the forces in men and material at a country's disposal after the Disarmament Convention. Unless these facts are forthcoming, a levelling down of armaments is impossible. I venture to propose that such levelling down should be undertaken with regard to trained men, whether they are effective in service or trained reserves. I should also like to propose such levelling down with regard to material, whether it is in service or in stock.

I cannot agree that the secrecy of mobilisation prevents particulars being given regarding the number of arms and the stocks of ammunition. If this principle of the secrecy of mobilisation is insisted upon, I do not see how a satisfactory Disarmament Convention can be achieved. I admit, however, that, as regards the manner in which a State proposes to utilise the stocks of material and trained forces which may have been assigned to it, it can and should be allowed to maintain secrecy.

It has also been objected that war material in reserve would be supplemented, in the event of mobilisation, by requisitioned material. This material would form part of the war potential and the conclusion which is drawn from that is that material in stock cannot be limited, as the war potential is not limitable. This is a similar objection to that raised against the limitation of trained reserves. To that argument I desire to answer as follows. What we have in view is the limitation of forces, both in men and material, which have been exclusively created with a view to war, and not of the factors which would exist even if a country took no military measures. These two factors may be clearly and definitely separated from each other.

I am entirely in agreement with the majority of the Commission that disarmament should be made as simple as possible. I therefore do not want the Convention to cover more than a few of the factors of armament material, and then only factors which cannot be requisitioned at all, or hardly at all, for economic purposes.
I therefore propose to prepare a table, a draft of which has already been distributed to the delegates, which only provides for seven categories of material. These are, without exception, arms which cannot be rapidly manufactured or improvised. They are essentially the same as a country will prepare in time of peace if it desires to arm for aggression or defence. I desire to emphasise the importance I attach to particulars regarding munitions. It is precisely great accumulations of munitions which are the first essential of an aggression, and it is upon them that the striking power of a country depends.

The number of arms and the quantity of ammunition per arm should therefore be indicated. Is not this proposal so simple that even the man in the street could understand it? It would also be in keeping with the opinion expressed by the Preparatory Commission in its report to the Council (document C.P.D. 20):

“That every Government should have in view for the proposed Conference for the preparation of a disarmament agreement definite and quantitative proposals, accompanied by reasons in support, calculated with reference to the degree of security existing at the date when the Conference meets.”

How can definite and quantitative proposals be made without including effectives in service as well as trained reserves, material in service and material in stock, and giving definite and quantitative data regarding them?

A country which considered that it was not in a position to reduce its trained reserves or its material in stock, out of regard for its security, would have an opportunity of stating its case. A country whose material was out of date or worn out could bring forward evidence in support of its contentions.

I therefore see no reason why war material should not be included by the simple method I propose.

These last few days we have discussed our work in a general way. At the moment, it seems to me that the greatest danger which threatens us is that the results of the proposed first stage should be too small to satisfy public opinion, and I desire to state most emphatically that I could not consider a Disarmament Convention as a satisfactory solution of the problem if it did not include, by some simple method, the main categories of material.

Many references have been made here to public opinion, which is following our work with anxiety and impatience. Public opinion demands that the countries should lay down their arms. It is waiting; it will accept no evasions and wants concrete facts. It would never accept the possibility of achieving a limitation of material solely through the limitation of expenditure.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — I should like to state very briefly the Swedish delegation’s views with regard to the direct limitation of land material.

As I had the honour to inform the Commission during the general discussion, the Swedish delegation is of the opinion that the proposed Convention should as far as possible cover all the essential factors of peace-time armaments, even if, from the point of view of the reduction of armaments, this first Convention can only have a limited effect on each of these factors.

In order to dispel any misunderstanding, I desire to add that I quite realise that the work of the forthcoming Conference will in many cases amount only to fixing a limit for armaments, and not a reduction, either owing to the special position of certain States with regard to security or because the armaments of other countries have already been reduced to the strict minimum consistent with their national security.

As I had the honour to point out yesterday, we have already examined several armament factors of essential importance. We have all agreed that the future Convention must contain stipulations relating to the limitation of land effectives, and we have begun the discussion of the limitation of air and naval effectives and material. The question of the limitation of another factor of equal importance, that of land material, still remains.

No one has disputed the desirability of achieving such limitation. We all have in mind the powerful and convincing arguments so eloquently put forward by M. Paul-Boncour and M. de Brouckère. Starting from the simple truth that without arms a man is a comparatively inoffensive being, especially in modern war, they showed us that the limitation and reduction of arms is the best method of reducing a country’s power of aggression. Whereas certain delegations contemplated other methods for the limitation of trained reserves, they maintained that the limitation of arms was the only sure and practical method of limiting the utilisation of these reserves — a form of limitation which has so long and, in my opinion, so rightly engaged this Commission’s attention.

I entirely agree with M. de Brouckère when he says that, without a limitation of land material, the value of our work would be greatly diminished.

There is no need for me to repeat here all the arguments already so eloquently and convincingly adduced to show that our Convention, which will already cover air and naval material, should also cover land material. I would like to emphasise the fact that, at a time when technical developments provide armies with weapons which are increasingly formidable and which are capable of replacing an ever greater number of effectives, it would be inadmissible not to contemplate a limitation of land material.

If, as I believe, we agree in recognising the desirability of limiting land material, the question arises as to what is the best method or methods of achieving the desired end.
I am the first to recognise that the problem is a difficult one, perhaps even the most difficult that we have to solve. But should not the very importance of the problem stimulate us to try and find the most effective and the fairest method?

The French proposal aims at a limitation of land material by an indirect method, i.e., through the budgets. At first sight, this method perhaps appears the simplest, but if one looks into it closely it can be seen that it has serious drawbacks, as was shown by yesterday's discussion. I do not wish to revert to that discussion, but I simply wish to emphasise two of those drawbacks which appear to me to be specially deserving of attention.

The first is that the limitation of credits by itself only affects the replacement of arms and does not touch all the arms already possessed by a country, whether in service or in stock. The figures of limitation of the different countries might on this account give a false impression of the situation. A country with a powerful equipment in material might be content with comparatively small credits, whereas a country having smaller stocks would be obliged to devote considerable sums to the purchase of the necessary arms.

The other drawback is this. The French proposal has in view the limitation of credits for distinct categories of material. I have some difficulty in seeing how such a limitation could be carried out without coming into conflict with the legitimate interests of a country, which might find itself obliged in a given year to assign specially increased credits to the replacement of a category of arms of a type no longer corresponding to technical requirements.

For these and other reasons, the Swedish delegation prefers the direct limitation of land material, supplemented if necessary by budgetary limitation. We consider that only a direct method can give equitable results by covering all the armaments existing in a country.

In Sub-Commission A, a certain number of delegations expressed the opinion that the limitation of material in stock was "possible, though difficult". Others said that "such limitation could be carried into effect", that is to say, they also admit the possibility of direct limitation.

I recognise all the difficulties which attend the application of such a method, but I do not think they are insurmountable or, indeed greater than those we encounter at every stage of our work.

In any case, I do not see why it should be more difficult to limit, for example, the number of tanks and heavy guns than to limit the number of aircraft.

It is obvious that a direct method, as Count Bernstorff pointed out, should be as simple as possible, and should only refer to the total quantities of a few main groups of arms and munitions.

We must not go into too great detail. We must be content with total figures only, giving an approximate idea of the resources of a country in the matter of arms. A few hundreds or thousands of rifles more or less do not greatly affect the aggressive power of a country.

I will go even further. If a direct limitation of all the categories of arms and munitions is not considered possible, we might at any rate consider a limitation of certain categories which are specially easy to distinguish, such as tanks and heavy guns.

Gentlemen, I am familiar with the principal objection to any direct limitation of land material—supervision. Like Count Bernstorff, I have no intention of anticipating the discussion which will take place when the question of supervision comes up for consideration. But, whatever the system of supervision or of exchange of information on which we may agree, it seems to me that the position is the same as regards land material as it is with a large number of other provisions of the Convention.

After all, is it easier to ascertain whether a country is discharging its obligations with regard to its effects or its air material than with regard to its land material? Is it easier to count the rations than the guns, or to check the horse-power of aeroplanes than the number of tanks?

In conclusion, Mr. President, I think that nothing will lend greater significance to our work in the eyes of the general public than the insertion in the Convention of provisions providing for an effective limitation of war material which includes land material, a limitation which, in the opinion of the Swedish delegation, can best be carried out by direct means.

M. SATO (Japan). — The German proposal which is now on the agenda was thoroughly discussed in Sub-Commission A. In that Commission our experts explained the reasons why we cannot accept the German proposal in its present form. I do not wish to repeat these reasons, as you will find them on pages 71 and 72 of Sub-Commission A’s report. I merely desire to say that we prefer not to commit ourselves to an undertaking to which we could not adhere.

That being so, I prefer to support Lord Cecil’s draft, which does not refer to this matter.

The Hon. Hugh GIBSON (United States of America). — I am very glad that the question of a direct limitation of material has been raised by Count Bernstorff. While I have not had sufficient time thoroughly to study the German proposal, I desire to call attention to the position of my Government with reference to the limitation of material. During the sessions of Sub-Commission A, my technical advisers consistently advocated a direct limitation of material. This direct limitation included material in the hands of forces serving with the colours and material in reserve. By material in reserve was meant not only material in reserve for forces serving with the colours but also that material which is held in reserve for the purpose of providing for an effective limitation of war material which includes land material, a limitation which, in the opinion of the Swedish delegation, can best be carried out by direct means.
of arming and equipping the trained reserves in the event of mobilisation. While I am not disposed at this time to give an opinion as to the details of the German proposal, I can state that I am in hearty accord with the general principle upon which that proposal is based. The application of this principle, however, will call for very careful study. It must be borne in mind, as I have previously stated, that, on the outbreak of war, the military power of any nation is determined largely by two factors: the personnel factor, which includes the active army and the trained reserves; and the material factor, in which is included the material with the active forces and the war reserves of material with which to equip the trained reserves. My Government is of the opinion that it is highly desirable that a limitation be placed upon the size of military forces and that it is equally desirable that a limitation be placed upon peace-time reserves of material.

M. ERICH (Finland). — On many occasions in the course of our discussions the enormous importance of material as a factor of military power has been emphasised. The Preparatory Commission was unanimous in recognising that, in naval and air forces, material was the chief factor and that without material these forces would have no combatant value. Accordingly, it was unanimously agreed that, to achieve a limitation of naval and air forces, the direct limitation of that material would be necessary. In the case of land forces, on the other hand, different views were expressed regarding the importance to be attached to material. In Sub-Commission A there was a strong body of opinion which contended that man power was of main importance and that the factor of material was only of secondary importance. Other delegations contended, on the other hand, that the same value should be attached to material as to man power. The main reason adduced in favour of the first argument is that land forces, in order to come into action, require enormous quantities of material, such as vehicles, barbed wire, telephone wire, wireless telegraphy apparatus, motor-cars, etc., that is to say, material belonging to the war potential of a country, and therefore incapable of limitation. This material is as indispensable to land forces as war material proper. Since the war potential cannot be limited, a direct limitation of war material could not be attempted either, in view of the intimate connection between the two factors. It was also argued that it would be necessary to allow each nation to select its material according to its requirements for defence. At the most, an indirect limitation of this material would be admissible in the budgets.

Is an indirect limitation of material sufficient from the point of view of the limitation or reduction of armaments? I should like you to consider the position of certain small countries — for instance, that of Finland. We do not enjoy a climate similar to that of the majority of the countries here represented. The winter is long and severe in the northern countries and this involves providing the army with special equipment and precludes all possibility of economy in this direction. It is also necessary to have special material for a winter campaign.

It will no doubt be answered that there is no reason why the special position of countries of this kind should not be taken into account by allowing them to devote larger sums to the purchase of material than certain other countries. But even if a small country was able, if put to it, to devote large sums to the purchase of material, it would thereby seriously reduce its power of providing for its economic, social and other needs. It would therefore be in a position of inferiority as compared with countries which will not to the same extent be obliged to spend their money for such unproductive purposes. Very costly material, such as artillery and machine-guns, can only be acquired in limited quantities. This holds good even if the League of Nations succeeds in organising financial first aid to States victims of an aggression, a form of assistance which figures on the programme of questions to be solved by the Conference.

It is quite clear that, if we wish to spare small nations the obligation of devoting excessive sums to the purchase of war material, we must prevent their larger and richer neighbours from acquiring and maintaining incomparably larger quantities of material than those possessed by the smaller States. In this connection, I am glad to be able to refer the Commission to the very apt remarks made yesterday by M. de Brouckère and especially to his ingenious parable about the rich young man and the poor man.

The stocks of material should therefore be compared in relation to the armed forces of the various States.

For these reasons, we ask that war material should be limited directly, and direct limitation should also cover the material which will be acquired in each future year as well as the material which is already in reserve and therefore already exists.

With regard to the methods of limitation, the Finnish delegation is in agreement with the German proposal in its main outlines.

In our view, it is perfectly possible to arrange the principal materials under the seven categories proposed and to limit the number in each category. To be effective, this method would require a system of supervision. At the same time, even if we cannot ultimately agree on the question of supervision, this should in no case exempt each State from the obligation of publishing figures of its stocks and of its annual purchases of material.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I should like, first, to state that I am entirely in agreement with the essential point dealt with by Count Bernstorff and M. Hennings, and I am particularly glad to note this agreement, as I may perhaps have to record a difference of opinion as regards questions of application, questions which are also important in themselves, although they involve less important considerations as to principle.
I agree with them, and I might remind you that I said so when I first took part in this
discussion, I agree with them that it is impossible to conceive of a Disarmament Convention
which makes no mention of arms, and that we should have failed in our object if we did not
succeed either directly or indirectly in limiting material.

I might add that this would involve grave injustice to those countries which are exposed
to attack by land.

We have discussed at length the methods for limiting naval material. In modern
warfare, material is assuming a growing importance in the case of land armaments. Exactly
the same reasons exist for limiting the material of the land forces. I am prepared to make every
possible effort to do this and to support any practical and efficacious system, any system
amounting to more than a futile gesture.

At the same time, I am obliged, and should indeed be ungrateful if I failed, to take into
account the solicitous and even affectionate advice which each of my colleagues gave me
yesterday. They urged me to be patient. Well, I am trying to be patient. They told
me that we must proceed step by step. I should like to be sure of every step I take, and I
can assure my colleagues that, if I see the possibility of taking two or three steps instead of
one, I shall not lag behind.

I now come to consider what methods are applicable, and shall classify them according
to the facility with which they can be applied.

The first is the limitation of expenditure. This we discussed at great length yesterday.
I still believe that it would prove an efficacious method; I still believe that it is essential,
even if we adopt others. But I agree with M. Hennings, Count Bernstorff, the delegate for the
Netherlands and others that, if we can add other more direct methods, so much the better.

What are these methods? There is one to which I have repeatedly drawn my colleagues'
attention: the limitation of purchases. This appears to me both feasible and efficacious.
At the same time, as I have already pointed out, it can only be applied if certain preliminary
conditions are fulfilled, and, as this is not yet the case, I have not submitted my text. If they
are fulfilled before the end of this session, I shall have a proposal to put forward.

What are these preliminary conditions? They amount to this: that the manufacture
of arms, like the traffic in arms, shall become public, so that we may have a perfectly clear
view of the situation.

The objection has been raised that the limitation of purchases is insufficient. This
may be so, but I might point out that it really does something in the matter, and in this
particular case solves a question which certain delegates, anxious for limitation, were loath
to touch in a different connection.

I desire, as far as possible, to keep out of the discussion on naval matters, in which I am
not very well versed. I followed that discussion closely and, unless I am mistaken, the point
at issue was total limitation and limitation according to categories. If we limit purchases, we
shall be applying limitation by categories, as regard land material. The only total limitation
conceivable is the limitation of expenditure. I should like to draw your attention to this
point. This may be a difficulty to be solved: I shall have no hesitation in the matter, if the need
arises, and here again I am only waiting, before submitting a proposal, until the necessary
preliminary conditions have been fulfilled.

A further objection has been raised, namely, that, if we limit purchases only, there still
remains the serious question of stocks. This is undoubtedly a most serious question. I
stated a few days ago, in reply to Count Bernstorff, that, if a means could be found of solving
the technical difficulties, I should be quite prepared to follow the lead. I have listened to
to-day’s discussion, but no method has been put forward for solving the technical difficulties.

The difficulty to my mind is not that the limitation of stocks would mean divulging military
secrets. I interpret Article 8 as Count Bernstorff does: Members undertake to exchange full
and frank information as to the scale of their armaments.

My country has understood the significance of this undertaking, as I have just said; and
as other speakers have said before me; if my colleagues will refer to the
Armaments Yearbook,
they will find, on page 44, a complete table of the armaments at our disposal. Further reference
to the Yearbook will show that Belgium is one of the few countries that have given this table.
We have given particulars down to the last carbine, down to the last pistol. I might add
that we have not mentioned the number of swords but this, as you will readily believe, hides
no dark intention.

Publicity thus appears to me both feasible and opportune, and the best proof that it is
possible is to be found in the fact that we have agreed to it.

Limitation, however, implies something else: it implies a method. Far be it from me
to utter the word supervision; I promised our President, at the last meeting, never to speak
of it again. This, however, I will say: the principal, the essential effect of limitation, its
fundamental importance, is that it would create an atmosphere of security, which is only
possible under a system of publicity. Any method of limitation would be quite illusory if
it failed to convince the public in every one of the contracting States that this limitation was
actually being observed. I wonder, then, how the matter is to be settled. If you will
suggest a system, I am prepared to consider it. If the President would release me for a moment
from the promise which I gave, I should like to remind him that I am not opposed to supervi-
sion; at the same time, I remember the advice that I have received. I have been told that
there is a contradiction between the beginning and end of M. de Brouckère’s statement. We had agreed that, in the case of aircraft in service, aircraft of a type that is easily recognisable, and aircraft whose horse-power can, to some extent, be deduced from the actual type itself. We agreed that, in such a decision were taken, I should venture to ask for the experts to be called in. They would be able to tell us whether it is as simple in the case of tanks as in that of aeroplanes to distinguish between those in service and those not in service, and to say whether limitation of the tanks in service would not simply amount to one of those vain and purely illusory gestures of which I was speaking just now.

Are we to limit the number of guns? The same remarks apply, and I might even add another, namely, that it is difficult to ascertain the military value of a big gun unless one also knows the number of shells available. The question of munitions is of such importance that it is essential to limit the number of shells; the difficulties of supervision would become greater than ever.

M. Hennings asked me how I could urge that there should be no supervision as regards the number of guns when the Commission had been won over to supervision of the rationed strength. I asked for supervision of the rationed strength on active service, for whom supplies are required every day. It is quite easy to check the numbers, for these can be obtained from the budget, so that I come to that valuable form of limitation which we were discussing, the limitation of expenditure. We have to deal with figures that are public property, with an open mind; other speakers may perhaps demonstrate the possibility of supervision; they may perhaps show that it is possible to examine into the whole military organisation of a country to this extent. If this is possible, we are prepared to be told so and will then proceed to consider methods of procedure. Until then, however, if we are obliged, for the practical reasons which I have just indicated, to give up all idea of such strict, general limitation, even if we cannot at present decide upon limitation of purchases according to categories, the Commission, I venture to hope, will at all events agree to the method of limitation that still remains: the limitation of expenditure. We shall thus have the satisfaction of feeling that something has been done and that the first step taken is in the right direction.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — May I be permitted to ask M. de Brouckère a question? I think I understood him to say that Belgium published complete figures for her armaments down to the last pistol. Why could not the other Powers do the same? It seems to me that there is a contradiction between the beginning and end of M. de Brouckère’s statement. All the arguments mentioned at the end of the speech are destroyed by what he said at the beginning.
M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I said that I interpreted Article 8 as you did, that is, I thought that the obligation to exchange full and frank information implied a statement in regard to stocks. I said that Belgium complied with this undertaking, and I see no reason why other States should not follow what I regard as a good example. I directed your attention, however, to the difference, as shown by our discussion, between publication and limitation. If these two words bore the same meaning, there would be no point in our Conference, as nearly all the States represented here are Members of the League and, in virtue of their membership, have entered into an undertaking as regards publication.

There still remains the question of limitation, which is different. The figures published by Belgium constitute interesting data and I trust that no doubt exists as to their accuracy. The publication of these figures, however, does not represent the fulfilment of a contract. Belgium has not undertaken not to exceed these figures. If she entered into such an undertaking and if this undertaking affected her neighbours, supervision would at once become necessary — and supervision is not necessary simply in the case of publication.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I listened with pleasure to the speech of the delegate for Sweden, who, with his usual lucidity, explained the reasons for which he prefers the direct method for the limitation of material for land forces to the budgetary limitation of war material.

Being entirely in agreement with him, I do not propose to repeat these reasons, but simply wish to direct your attention to certain points.

Budgetary limitation leaves a State free to allocate its credits to certain categories of armaments and thus accumulate armaments the number and calibre of which are not limited or even known. Here a parallel might be established between the limitation of war material and limitation by total tonnage or according to categories. M. de Brouckère referred just now to this parallel. There is, however, a great difference between these two forms of limitation. The collection of war material intended for the land forces — material which is neither limited nor known — would constitute a real element of surprise at the time of mobilisation. This constitutes the difference between naval material — even if limited only according to total tonnage — and land material.

The factor of secrecy and the possibility of surprise are not accidental, but they constitute one of the chief reasons quoted in Sub-Commission A by the opponents of direct limitation of the material for land forces.

The following passage occurs on page 71 of Sub-Commission A's report:

"If limitation extends to the materials in reserve, the mobilisation powers of the different States can be calculated, and this removes the character of secrecy of the measures taken by each State for the organisation of its national defence, which is a very important factor in the effectiveness of this organisation."

This line of argument appears to me contrary to the spirit and letter of Article 8 of the Covenant, and I am convinced that M. de Brouckère, whose views concerning the publicity of armaments and supervision are the same as those of the Netherlands delegation, does not agree with the reasons quoted in Sub-Commission A. Such being the case, I wonder whether he could not adopt our view of the question, or, at all events, submit a proposal — if he is still opposed to the direct limitation of armaments for land forces — providing for the annual publication of war material in service and in reserve for land forces. I believe that such publicity might meet with M. de Brouckère's approval.

M. de Brouckère also mentioned the connection between direct limitation of material for land forces and supervision over private manufacture. I would ask him not to refuse absolutely on these grounds all suggestion of direct limitation. If he did refuse, could he still support the idea of indirect limitation? If private manufacture rendered direct limitation purely illusory, would it not render indirect limitation equally illusory? Further, if this connection constitutes an obstacle, but one which, if I understand M. de Brouckère aright, is not insurmountable, would it not be preferable to formulate a reservation rather than to oppose direct limitation entirely?

In conclusion, I desire to support the suggestion submitted by the delegate for Sweden, that, if the direct limitation of all categories of armaments suggested in the German proposal is unacceptable, limitation should be applied to heavy guns and tanks. The latter, I might point out, constitute an essentially offensive form of armament. They constitute the real weapon of aggression, the real weapon of attack. By reason of their dimensions, their armoured-plating and their suitability for mass attack, tanks form, as it were, the fighting squadron of the land army, and big tank units will constitute one of the chief means employed by the aggressor to break down enemy resistance. Since the war, competition in tank armaments has increased. Several States the nature of whose country would permit of the use of tanks are taking steps to procure them, and to increase their number or improve their quality. Other States are thus obliged to do the same. This is quite logical, for in future the tank alone will be a match for the enemy tank. Every effort is being made to prevent chemical and bacteriological warfare. It is surely essential to prevent, or at all events to limit, tank warfare, which is certainly easier to supervise than chemical warfare. One might ask why, if the limitation of capital ships was brought about at Washington, it should not be possible to bring about the reduction of armoured land-ships, and even to prohibit them entirely.
M. de Brouckère established a parallel between tanks and aircraft and mentioned that we had confined ourselves to limiting aircraft in service. I think that the parallel between tanks and war-ships is more important. Why did we confine ourselves to limiting aircraft in service and not include in the limitation aircraft in reserve? The reason was that these reserve aircraft would be difficult to supervise and because, if they were limited, we should have to consider the limitation of engines and it is so easy to unmout aircraft.

I think that, from this point of view, tanks invite comparison with war-ships rather than with aircraft. So far as I am aware, tanks are not kept in reserve unassembled, as might be the case with aircraft. Hence the fact that we confined ourselves, in the case of aircraft, to limiting those in service is not a reason for doing the same in the case of tanks, since the latter, I repeat, are comparable with war-ships rather than with aircraft. M. de Brouckère’s parallel does not solve the question of the limitation of tanks.

M. Yovanovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes).—The proposal submitted by Count Bernstorff on behalf of the German delegation has two serious drawbacks, which I regret make it impossible for me to accept it. As the proposal is mainly technical in character, I might refer to the opinion expressed by our experts in Sub-Commission A.

I should like, first, to quote the unanimous opinion of Sub-Commission A as regards the disadvantages of this method:

“I. The effect which this method might have on the limitation of reserves would be greater in countries which are unable to manufacture war material.”

Thus great inequality exists as between countries which can manufacture war material and those unable to do so. It might be reduced if a Convention were concluded concerning the manufacture of arms. It would be even greater in the event of a long war. A country which does not possess an arms factory or even modern industrial equipment might find itself in a dangerous situation, whereas a country which could manufacture material would be quite safe.

I must apologise for having spoken of the possibility of war on an occasion such as this, but we have to admit that it is not entirely out of the question. Even if it were, and we had the guarantee of adequate security, we might still go on with disarmament, like the Emperor of China to whom reference was made. It would simply be necessary to provide that armaments shall be abolished and all vessels sunk. We must proceed, however, by easy stages.

Our experts expressed the following view, in paragraph 4:

“It is certainly difficult to obtain an equitable and effective result by a direct limitation of materials, because of their diversity and complexity, of the combination of these various materials which vary in different States according to their special circumstances, and because of their quality, which plays a prominent part and which cannot be limited.”

Paragraph 5 reads as follows:

“Lastly, this method would not be effectual unless similar material of the army, navy and air force were subject to the same limitations.”

Guns and machine-guns representing enormous naval reserves might easily be employed in the land armies.

In paragraph 6 we read:

“It raises the serious difficulty of supervision, for it is altogether ineffectual, and therefore inadmissible, unless accompanied by permanent and effective supervision.”

I think, however, that the Commission realises the difficulties which would stand in the way of really effectual supervision. In the first place, this would require an enormous personnel to visit and inspect depots, barracks and even private houses, as already mentioned. M. de Brouckère said that automatic pistols could be hidden in a house. I know of cases in which not only automatic pistols but even machine-guns were hidden. If supervision is not really effectual, it is out of the question.

Many speakers have attacked paragraph 3, especially as regards the matter of secrecy. On behalf of a country which does not possess a single arms factory and whose industry is not highly developed, I may say that, if secrecy exists, it is to be found in countries which possess big factories and works that could easily be converted into factories for war material. If the German proposal were accepted, we who have no such factories would be obliged to publish everything, while the big Powers with big works might still have secrets concerning the material which they could manufacture.

I regret, therefore, that my delegation is unable to accept the proposal of the German delegation.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium).—I rise not to oppose the arguments put before us but to reply to three definite questions which M. Rutgers addressed to me.

The delegate for the Netherlands asked me if I was prepared to submit a proposal in regard to publicity. I have already stated that, in my view, publicity is provided for under Article 8. I see no need to repeat a provision which is already in force. I might add that, even apart from this objection, there is another: I should regard it as an act of discourtesy towards M. Rutgers to submit in my own name proposals which he has really worked out.
M. Rutgers asked me a second question; he asked me if I did not think that indirect control presented the same difficulties as direct control, or, to put the matter more explicitly, he said: "You claim that direct control of purchases is not possible, owing to private manufacture. Private manufacture, however, makes budgetary supervision impossible". His observation would be very much to the point if private factories were in the habit of giving away their arms for nothing, but this is not the case, and armaments manufactured by private factories leave their traces in the budget; thus budgetary limitation preserves its full efficacy.

The delegate for the Netherlands also asked me if I was not prepared to support Count Bernstorff's proposal, subject to a reservation. I have repeatedly declared that this proposal would not have a really practical bearing unless real and effectual supervision could be achieved. Until it has this practical bearing, I have no desire to support it, even subject to a reservation, for I have decided, once and for all, to have nothing to do with useless gestures.

M. Comnène (Roumania). — States with a powerful industrial organisation, which have natural resources enabling them to obtain raw material without difficulty, and, which in time of emergency can thus procure the material required for defence within their own territory, will always be in a superior position, as M. Yovanovitch has just pointed out, as compared with new States which have neither industrial organisation nor raw materials.

States with little capital, which at times of emergency cannot always find the necessary funds at once for purchasing material abroad — even supposing that foreign countries are willing to sell at the moment, and even if transport presents no difficulties — would obviously be in an inferior position as compared with States which are richer or can obtain credit abroad more easily.

Permit me here to bring to your minds the tragic memory of my country during the early days of the war, when, hemmed in on every side, without long-range guns, with an insufficient quantity of machine-guns, mine-throwers, flame-throwers, masks, tanks or aircraft, etc. — all the formidable material required in modern war — it had only its soldiers to confront the enemy. I ask you to consider this tragic aspect of the problem which does not seem to have been sufficiently emphasised, and which is an argument in favour of the views put forward so brilliantly by M. de Brouckère.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — M. de Brouckère said that he would go on strike against useless gestures. I should not like to make M. de Brouckère do this, but I must tell him that, if he goes on strike against direct limitation, he must also strike against indirect limitation. If private manufacture makes direct limitation futile, does it not also make indirect limitation futile? M. de Brouckère thinks not, because armaments produced by private factories are not given to States for nothing, and the cost of purchase figures in the budget. I should like to point out to M. de Brouckère that, when we say that private manufacture constitutes an obstacle, we are not considering the production of arms which are sold but the production of arms which are held in stock and which are not touched either by direct or indirect limitation. I still think, therefore, that, if armaments produced by private factories are not touched by direct limitation, we cannot apply indirect limitation to them.

M. de Brouckère, when I asked him to propose at least a yearly statement, answered that statements are already provided for by Article 8 of the Covenant. The argument is not decisive, in my view, either for M. de Brouckère or for the Commission. Several proposals have already been made to us with a view to obliging the High Contracting Parties to issue annual statements. General de Marinis has made one proposal and M. Comnène another, and we have already accepted the principle of the annual publication of expenditure. I do not think that Article 8 of the Covenant would be an obstacle to the inclusion in our draft Convention of a provision obliging States to issue new annual statements.

In any case, if the German proposal is not accepted, and if direct limitation of war material in general is rejected, the Netherlands delegation will submit a proposal imposing on States the obligation to issue annual statements concerning war material.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — As has already occurred on several occasions — and as is quite natural — when the Commission cannot agree unanimously on a proposal, that proposal is rejected.

As several of our colleagues have refused to accept the German proposal, I note, to my great regret, that it cannot be maintained.

I thought that it would be possible to accept our proposal, since it is based on Article 8. In reality, we ask for nothing but what is contained in this article, and after M. de Brouckère's speech I am more convinced than ever that our arguments were inspired by Article 8 of the Covenant. This article is based on good faith, and if we eliminate this from our Convention we cannot arrive at a conclusion and we shall never succeed, for a detailed scheme of supervision is quite impossible. If we do not consider good faith as the fundamental basis of our Convention, I do not know how we can ever achieve success.

It is natural that material should be for us almost the essential point of the Convention, because we are now entirely deprived of all war material. I should like to thank our Roumanian colleague, M. Comnène, for having sketched such a moving picture of my country's present position.
M. COMNÈNE (Roumania). — You, however, have an industrial organisation which Roumania unfortunately does not possess.

Count BNRENFSTORFF (Germany). — But it is an industrial organisation which cannot work, since very few factories are allowed to deliver war material. I am right, therefore, in saying that my country's present position is just the same. Such being the case, you will understand that I attach great importance to this question of material, and, as our colleague from the United States said that he would like to make an exhaustive study of the question, I should be very glad if we could proceed to do this later. I therefore intend, in any case, to revert to this subject, either at the Second Reading, during the negotiations which will naturally take place between the two readings, after the Second Reading or before the Conference. I do not know quite when, but, in any case, my Government will certainly revert in due course to this question, which is all-important for us.

I should like, therefore, to make a short statement.

In the proposal which I submitted to you I touched on a question to which I must attach particular importance. The method which I propose has the merit of having been tested by experience. The attitude which the States represented here will take up towards this method will show what is the true purpose that the contracting States have in view in the Convention that we are drawing up.

I have the honour to ask the President to have this reservation inserted along with the texts adopted at the First Reading.

The PRESIDENT. — As nobody wishes to make any observation, and as Count Bernstorff has stated himself that his proposal did not meet with general agreement, I propose that we now go on to Point 6.


French draft:

In each of the Contracting States the total expenditure on the upkeep, purchase and manufacture of war material in the strict sense of the term, for the duration of the present Treaty, shall be limited . . .

M. HENNINGS (Sweden). — I ventured just now to emphasise the importance which the Swedish delegation attaches to everything that concerns war material and more especially land material.

I did not disguise the fact that, in my opinion, the direct method of limitation is preferable to the indirect method of limitation, that is, by means of budgetary supervision.

We showed this morning that the possibility of reaching an agreement on the limitation of land material by applying the direct method should be considered if not as altogether out of the question at all events very remote. We have therefore to consider the alternative, to which I alluded yesterday: either to do nothing at all to limit this material or to limit the budgetary expenditure allocated to it.

In these circumstances, I should like to state that, in view of the primordial importance, from the point of view of disarmament, of limiting land material, I should be inclined, in spite of the disadvantages, to support the limitation of budgetary expenditure as regards material, without, however, giving a definite opinion now on the details of the French proposal.

M. RUTGERS (Netherlands). — When I explained the views of the Netherlands delegation yesterday concerning budgetary limitation, I confined myself to the form of limitation actually under discussion, namely, general limitation.

We are now dealing with the question of the limitation of expenditure on war material. While recognising that the objections which I raised against budgetary limitation in general do not apply or do not apply with the same force to the budgetary limitation now under discussion, I must make it plain that we still have doubts as regards the limitation of expenditure on material.

The Netherlands delegation has advocated the direct limitation of material, both in Sub-Commission A and in this Commission. We must recognise that, for the moment, unanimous agreement concerning the direct limitation of material is impossible.

There is very little hope of seeing this direct limitation included in the draft Convention that we are drawing up. Nevertheless, the Netherlands delegation, while still holding the views expressed at the beginning of our discussion and still doubtful as to this method of limiting expenditure on war material, would not venture to take the responsibility of wrecking this plan, imperfect as it is. My delegation accordingly accepts this proposal provisionally and subject to subsequent examination by the experts.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — I do not desire to renew the discussion which continued the whole of yesterday. The reasons which I then gave on behalf of the British Government apply obviously to this proposal just as much as to the general proposal; indeed I treated the whole thing as one and gave my reasons against both proposals. The British Government believe that, by securing full publicity with some such preface as I have suggested, and perhaps some reference to that preface in whatever control clause we adopt, a better limitation would...
be secured than anything that could be secured by a direct limitation at the present moment. I would only add this, that I have been very much struck with two speeches delivered by the delegate of Roumania, because they appear to me to be a very interesting example of the difficulties which, as far as I can see, attach to this method of limitation of expenditure. Yesterday he told us that his country was so much deprived of weapons and other equipment for its army that it would be quite essential for it, as I understood him, to spend considerable sums in the near future in re-equipping its army, and that therefore any limitation of expenditure it would have to put would be pretty high. I may have misunderstood him, but that was the sense of his observations as I understood him. That shows, it seems to me, the grave defect of this system of limitation — that you would have countries necessarily, and very properly from their point of view, putting an outside figure on their limitation which would be, if they will allow me to say so, worse than useless as a protection against the competition in armaments in the future. Then he said this morning, and I was a little surprised at the argument, that he was against the direct limitation of armaments because his country had no great factories and therefore would have to buy its armaments and stock them in large quantities against emergencies — at least, again, so I understood his argument. I admit that that does not seem to me to be very consistent with any real limitation of expenditure, because evidently that would hamper them still more than a direct limitation of the possession of armaments. However, the two speeches seem to me, if I may say so very respectfully, to be the strongest argument against this type of limitation that has been delivered in this debate. I would only add this one sentence about direct limitation of armaments, because I am quite aware that it would not be right for me to go into that subject now. I have personally been very much struck with the arguments on that subject and I shall certainly make it my business to see that that proposal which was put forward by Count Bernstorff is most carefully considered by my Government.

63. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Effectives. Point 10.

The PRESIDENT. — I note that agreement is not unanimous on this point either. There can be no question, therefore, of examining Points 7 to 17. I propose to pass on to the discussion of Point 10 of the Synoptic Analysis, Effectives, which we decided to deal with under Expenses.

Point 10 (Effectives) was adopted without observations

64. Procedure: Arrangement of Work.

The PRESIDENT. — We still have to settle the agenda for our meeting on Monday. Shall we discuss naval armaments or shall we revert to the question of air armaments?

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — I thought the aerial matter was coming at the end. I would be in favour of going on with the control question, but, if the Commission desires to take the naval discussion, I should be prepared to make a proposition. I see no difficulty myself of discussing control after the naval and air matters. The principle will remain the same.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I have no desire to do anything that would make our work more difficult or prevent our having time to discuss those points on which agreement has not yet been reached. Nevertheless, I must draw your attention to the grave objection to discussing the question of supervision and, in general, questions relating to the administration of the Convention. We are not yet agreed as to the nature of the limitations. Are we to limit men, material, guns? Are we to limit expenditure? These questions have not yet been decided. We cannot discuss questions of supervision very definitely until we know exactly what is to be supervised. If we embark on this discussion now, we shall be obliged to confine ourselves to generalities. We could not really go into the matter; we should be forced to put off the real discussion to the Second Reading. I should prefer, therefore, to resume our discussion on naval and then on air armaments, and, when we are agreed upon these points, to deal with the other questions.

65. Discussion of the Preamble submitted by Viscount Cecil with reference to Expenses.

"Whereas it is in the general interest that the expenditure on armaments should be limited; and
"Whereas the High Contracting Parties are not agreed at present on any satisfactory method of accomplishing this object; and
"Whereas the High Contracting Parties consider that, as a preliminary to such limitation of expenses, full publicity should be secured so that on a future occasion it may be possible again to approach this question with better hope of success."

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — Before discussing the naval question I would like to know what has happened to my Preamble. I thought that we had not adopted anything yesterday. I think we ought in the First Reading to adopt it or leave it, one way or the other.
The President. — We can discuss it now if you wish, but I understood that it would be held over for the second reading.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — If we discuss the Preamble now, we shall find ourselves in a difficult position.

I thanked Lord Cecil for having made his proposal, because it shows that, in any case, the supporters of limitation of expenditure will at any rate obtain something. But at this stage of the discussion and since indirect supervision has not yet been definitely rejected, I can hardly approve of the examination of this question being deferred to better times. Indeed, it is not yet at all certain that it ought to be deferred. Lord Cecil told me himself that more firmness was needed than I had shown. I should like, therefore, to wait until we encounter a refusal to limit expenditure before supporting this proposal. I thought that this proposal formed part of the body of questions which we had held over and on which we were to give an opinion later.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I do not follow that criticism and I must say I am a little surprised that it has been made. We are in the process of drawing up a First Reading, subject, of course, to alteration. Evidently, if we come to an agreement, this would be altered a little. For the purpose of the First Reading, and in order to understand how far we have got in the First Reading, it seems to me essential to put this in, because it is part of the proposal which the British Government makes as an alternative to the French proposal. I thought we were all agreed in going as far as this. The question whether we can go further is evidently open for the Second Reading, and the whole matter could then be reconsidered. I confess I am a little astonished that, having been asked to make this proposal by M. de Brouckère and having made it for the purposes of the First Reading, he should now say that he does not wish it to be considered at all until the Second Reading. If I had known that, I would have taken more time and given a more careful consideration to this draft, which I drew up entirely to meet him.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I think that there is certainly some misunderstanding. We had to consider, before Lord Cecil’s proposal, two other proposals: one, on which unanimity was reached, concerning the publication of expenditure; and one, concerning the limitation of expenditure, on which unanimity has not yet been reached. This proposal, however, has not been rejected but has simply been held over for consideration at a later date.

In my opinion, Lord Cecil’s proposal is a kind of alternative to the French proposal. There is no question of rejecting limitation; the suggestion is that we should indicate that limitation may be possible at some future date.

I requested Lord Cecil to express his idea in a correct form, and this request did not represent an agreement but simply a rapprochement between two opinions.

I am quite ready to treat Cecil’s proposal as the French proposal was treated just now — that is to say, to discuss it and to declare subsequently that a definite decision on this proposal and on the French proposal will be taken at the Second Reading. If Lord Cecil thinks that it would be better to discuss his proposal now, I am ready to do so, on the understanding that supporters of the method of limitation of expenditure shall reserve their rights and that we shall be allowed to return to the subject later.

If this procedure is adopted, I should like to ask whether we are to maintain the last sentence of the Preamble in which the question is deferred to better times. It has not yet been shown that these better times are very far off.

General de Marinis (Italy). — The formula put forward yesterday by Lord Cecil was in the nature of a compromise. After all yesterday’s differences of opinion with regard to limitation of expenditure, it appeared to me very opportune.

To-day’s discussion has thrown still more light on these differences of opinion and has shown how profound they really are. It will be very difficult to arrive at an agreement on the question of the limitation of expenditure. It seems to me, therefore, that this formula of compromise has an even greater value to-day than yesterday. I think that we should do well to accept it at the First Reading, and I therefore give it my full support.

Count Clauzel (France). — As I understand that M. Paul-Boncour’s proposal is involved in this discussion, I would ask permission, in his absence, to associate myself on his behalf with the view expressed by M. de Brouckère. I might say that I do not regard Lord Cecil’s proposal exactly as a compromise. Though the first paragraph may have this character, the second is more what I might call a record of failure, since it states that the high contracting parties — or, rather, the members of the Commission — have reached no agreement as regards a satisfactory method of accomplishing their object. Lord Cecil’s text, moreover, does not simply say that the members of the Commission have not reached an agreement, but says that the high contracting parties are not agreed.

I would urge that we should not go so far, but that, as M. de Brouckère asked, we should reserve the right to revert to this question, making it clear that, if the text is passed at the First Reading, it is only subject to the reservation that its fate shall be bound up with the decision on the question of budgetary limitation, and that texts concerning this limitation shall be submitted to the Commission in the same way as Lord Cecil’s.
Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I want to make it quite clear that the only way in which I ask the Commission to adopt this is merely that we are in the First Reading drawing up a text which we think would be worth discussing in the Second Reading. We are none of us bound to anything in that text. On the contrary, I should certainly have had to decline to agree to a great many things which have been done in this Commission if it were not that I reserve for my Government the full power of expressing their opinion at the Second Reading. That was fully understood from the outset absolutely and without any kind of hesitation or doubt. I had in mind that, if we were to put forward a proposal for consideration at the Second Reading, it ought to be put forward as a complete whole, and I should therefore have preferred that this should be put in. Of course, if M. de Brouckère and Count Clauzel think it would be better on the whole not to include my proposal now, but to leave it over until the Second Reading, they are evidently entitled to say that. I wished only to have something which we could put before the Commission and the public as the subject of our discussion in the Second Reading. I hope in the Second Reading that, instead of having two texts, we shall have one text, so that we shall be able to express our agreement or disagreement clause by clause with that text, discussing it as a definite project which we are going to accept or reject, and I wished to make it as complete as possible at the First Reading.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — We now have only two suggestions in regard to procedure before us. I desire to support Lord Cecil’s suggestion. We can adopt this text at the First Reading, on the understanding that the advocates of budgetary limitation have not abandoned their position, but reserve the right to revert to the question at a Second Reading.

The President. — You are doubtless all agreed as regards this procedure. Lord Cecil’s formula is therefore adopted, on the understanding that it does not in any way prejudice the decision to be taken at the debate on the Second Reading.

On Monday morning we will deal with naval questions.

The Commission rose at 1.20 p.m.

TWENTY-SIXTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Monday, April 11th, 1927, at 10 a.m.

President: M. Loudon (Netherlands).


The President. — The Commission has before it the French proposal which replaces Point 6 of the Synoptic Analysis.

The limitation of naval armaments agreed to by each of the High Contracting Parties is shown in the annexed Table X.

The figures in Column I of this table represent the total tonnage that each of the High Contracting Parties considers it essential to attain for the purposes of security and the defence of its national interests.

The figures in Column II represent the total tonnage that each of the High Contracting Parties considers it necessary to complete before the expiry of the Convention.

The figures in Column III represent, for each of the High Contracting Parties the division of the total tonnage stated by it in Column II into total tonnage by groups. This total tonnage by groups applies to all vessels classed as follows: a) capital ships; b) aircraft carriers; c) surface vessels under 10,000 tons; d) submarines.

Each of the High Contracting Parties, while keeping within the limits of total tonnage stated in Column II, can alter such division as it deems necessary for its security, subject to informing the Secretariat of the League of Nations of the changes effected in the division of its total tonnage, at least one year before laying down the portion of the tonnage which is to be transferred.

Note. — Each of the High Contracting Parties states in Column III the division of its total tonnage, either into the four groups of vessels as stated in paragraph 4 or only into those groups which it considers necessary for its needs of security.
Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — Before I say anything about the question of naval tonnage, I should like, if I may be permitted to do so, to make a statement which will perhaps give satisfaction to some of my colleagues as to the attitude I am authorised to assume on some of the reserved questions, because I think it may show that we are desirous of reaching an agreement if we can. If my colleagues will be kind enough to refer to the Synopsis relating to the aircraft, for a moment — I am not going into it, I am only going to mention it — they will find that there are several points which were reserved, namely, 1, 3, 4 and 4a; that is, Points 1, 4 and 4a were reserved, and on Point 3 there was a reservation by the British Government.

Let me take Point 4 first — shore-based aircraft. The point there was whether it was right to bring the aircraft based on ships into the general account of aircraft permitted to the various Powers, and on that point I am able to say that the British Government are content that that should be so. The only observation I wish to make, and which I shall have to make about all these things, is that it must not be suggested that that concession will in any way hamper or limit our negotiations in what I may call, if I may be permitted so to call it without disrespect, the Coolidge Conference. I do not see how it could, but just out of precaution I am asked to say that. There will also have to be a little consideration between the Home Government and the Governments of the Overseas Possessions of the British Empire before the actual Disarmament Conference as to the allocation of the aircraft based on ships.

Then, secondly, as to the question of aircraft in schools, on which a little controversy arose, there again I am authorised to say that my Government is prepared to include in the aircraft all the combatant aircraft in schools.

Then there is the question reserved. You will remember it was suggested that reserve aeroplanes and dirigibles held at the disposal and forming an integral part of any formation should be included. Well, I have enquired about that, and I find that in the British system there are no such reserves, and therefore, though I do not know that there would be any great objection from our point of view in putting that phrase into the Convention, we should have to warn our colleagues that we should not in fact be able to fill in any number about those reserves.

Then as to the more important question of air effectives, the British Government are prepared to include air effectives, but they desire to make two qualifications. One is that they think it ought to be a total figure, not divided into officers and men, for technical and administrative reasons which I can go into if necessary when we come to discuss the point; and the other is that they desire me to say expressly — though, indeed, it is true of all concessions — that that concession, of course, depends on other members of the Commission accepting that solution. That is scarcely worth mentioning, because, according to the whole principle on which we have gone, none of these concessions is valid unless we are all agreed.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE X.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total tonnage of vessels employed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total tonnage of vessels employed in the</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for home defence.</td>
<td>defence of overseas territories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonnage essential to be completed before the expiry of the Treaty.</td>
<td>Tonnage essential for the purposes of security and the defence of national interests.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total tonnage of</th>
<th>Total tonnage of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital ships</td>
<td>Capital ships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft-carriers</td>
<td>Aircraft-carriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vessels under 10,000 tons</td>
<td>Vessels under 10,000 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submarines</td>
<td>Submarines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>b.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Then there is one little point which I ought also to mention about naval effective, and that is that, in making that concession, we can only make the concession, obviously, for ourselves, and if there are any naval effective belonging to our Dominions they will have to be heard, and will have to deal with it themselves. But I do not think that that, in practice, will turn out to be a serious difficulty.

I now come to the actual point of our discussion. In an earlier stage of our discussion I endeavoured to explain to the Commission the difference in the attitude that we must necessarily adopt with regard to questions affecting the naval aspect of the matter and questions affecting the armies. I cannot pretend to be convinced that the provisional solution at which we have arrived about the army is, from our point of view, a satisfactory one. We still believe that some account ought to be taken of the trained reserves or, at any rate, some portion of the trained reserves of different countries. We have felt, and I have stated it all along, that that is a matter which, however strongly we may feel about it as a matter of principle, does affect other countries very much more than ourselves, and that, if a limit can be arrived at which would not include any limitation of trained reserves amongst the other countries, then I do not think it would be at all likely that my Government would insist on its view with respect to that.

We return to the naval question, as I told the Commission, the matter is very different, and we are there bound, for the reasons which I gave on the last occasion, to insist on a solution which seems to us real and complete, a thing that will really give satisfaction and security. I think it might clear the matter if I ventured to lay down two fundamental principles for which the British Government feel bound to contend in this matter.

In the first place, they must have a limitation which will give them security — which will, as they think, give everybody security, but at any rate will give themselves security — and will avoid the chance of naval competition as far as that can be avoided. They feel that as a most vital condition.

Secondly — and this is another condition which I do not think I have mentioned up till now — they feel it to be absolutely vital that they should not agree to anything here which would in any way interfere with the settlement arrived at in the Washington Treaty about reduction of naval armaments or in its reasonable extensions for which they hope as a result of the Coolidge Conference.

I will come back to the first point about security and competition directly to explain this second point, but I should like to remind the Members of the Commission of the very great benefits, as they think, which were derived from a disarmament point of view from the Washington Treaty. When looking into it, that, as a result of the Washington Treaty, Great Britain scrapped 21 ships, Japan 17 ships, and the United States 30 ships; that is, a total of 68 ships were scrapped, of an aggregate tonnage of 1,861,000 tons. Now, that is a tremendous amount of destruction of actually existing armaments; but of course, that was by no means all that the Washington Treaty did. It fixed a limit for these big ships, and put an end to the chance of competition, at any rate between the Powers that were represented at Washington, in that very important matter. As far as we are concerned, and as I am authorised to say by a recent message from President Coolidge, as far as the United States is concerned, and I believe — though my Japanese colleague will naturally speak for himself — as far as Japan is concerned, it has worked perfectly well and smoothly. I do not mean that it has not worked well and smoothly with regard to other Powers, but I have nothing to do with that for the moment, because they have so far not announced their intention of taking part in the Coolidge Conference; but, so far as the three Powers which I have named are concerned, it has worked perfectly well and smoothly, and it has been fully and completely carried out by each and all of them.

No serious difficulties have arisen with respect to carrying it out, and in order to fortify myself I will venture to read one sentence from President Coolidge’s recent message: “The Signatories of the Washington Treaty have fulfilled their obligations faithfully, and there can be no doubt that that treaty constitutes an outstanding success in its operation.” With that sentence my Government is in hearty accord. I think that that treaty constitutes an outstanding success in its operation. “No serious difficulties have arisen.” That is that, in making that concession, we can only make the concession, and if we succeed in laying down a scheme of proceedings for the Disarmament Conference, and the Coolidge Conference succeeds in carrying still further the principles of the Washington Agreement, it will enable the Powers there represented to bring to the final Disarmament Conference definite proposals for limitation and security. I think it might clear the matter if I ventured to lay down two fundamental principles for which the British Government feel bound to contend in this matter.

In the first place, they must have a limitation which will give them security — which will, as they think, give everybody security, but at any rate will give themselves security — and will avoid the chance of naval competition as far as that can be avoided. They feel that as a most vital condition.

Secondly — and this is another condition which I do not think I have mentioned up till now — they feel it to be absolutely vital that they should not agree to anything here which would in any way interfere with the settlement arrived at in the Washington Treaty about reduction of naval armaments or in its reasonable extensions for which they hope as a result of the Coolidge Conference.
and, I trust, also for reduction of naval armaments. That, it seems to me, will be nothing but a gain for the final Conference. They will have before them a very important set of proposals—at least, we hope they will be important—embracing disarmament policy so far as naval forces are concerned of some of the most important naval Powers. That will be attending that Conference. I am not a prophet and have not the power of prophecy, but I trust very much that it will not only be a question of limitation but a question of reduction of naval armaments. How far it may be possible to carry that reduction may well in fact depend upon how far we can reach a real and effective system of naval disarmament in our present armaments. How far it may be possible to carry that reduction may well in fact depend upon how far we can reach a real and effective system of naval disarmament in our present proceedings, and if, as I believe it will be, we shall certainly do our best to make the Conference a reality and a success, and if it is a reality and a success, that will be a great point achieved in the direction of making the final Disarmament Conference also a reality and a success. Now, important as all those considerations are to us, and I should think possibly to other Powers, they are not so important if we are satisfied that the proposals for naval disarmament are going to be really such as will put an end to naval competition and give to all the world a greater sense of naval security, and it is with a very anxious desire to be satisfied that the proposals which have been made by my French colleagues would achieve those results that I have examined their proposals, and I am satisfied that my Government has also examined them in the same spirit. In the first place, let us just consider what those proposals amount to. They have been described as a programme. I do not think that word can very rigidly be applied to them. A naval programme would consist of much more detailed information, in the ordinary sense, than can be derived from the acceptance of what I will call, for the sake of brevity, the French proposals. They are rather an application of the system of total tonnage not only to the whole of the tonnage to which countries may agree but to certain classes of that tonnage also; that is to say, they propose that there shall be a total tonnage of say 500,000 tons or a million tons or more to that total tonnage, or that may be, allowed to any country, and that of that, so many thousand tons will be allocated to capital ships, so many thousand tons to cruisers under 10,000 tons, so many thousand tons to aircraft-carriers, and so many thousand tons to submarines. In addition to that, there is the power, with a year's notice, to transfer any number of those tons from one class to another. As I understand the scheme, except in the case of the cruisers, which are governed, of course, by the Washington Treaty, it is not proposed to have a superior limit for the tonnage of any vessel in any of the classes. The capital ships, of course, are governed by Washington, the aircraft-carriers are also governed by Washington, and the cruisers are governed by Washington up to 10,000 tons. But beyond that there is to be no limit of the smaller vessels or of the submarines. Further, with respect to the calibre of guns, the calibre of the largest gun, 16 inches, which was fixed at Washington, is preserved. I am not quite sure whether it is proposed to preserve the limit of 8 inches for the cruisers, it is not so stated, but it may be that that is intended. Certainly no superior limit to the size of guns is put under this scheme, and, though in our proposals we do make a suggestion, which we think is of great value from a disarmament point of view, that there should be a limit to the size of torpedoes, that also is apparently not accepted. The result, as my colleagues will easily see, is this, that, apart from the Washington limits of size, no limit of size or power of any vessel within each of the classes is proposed, and under this system any Power would be entitled to build very powerfully armed vessels, commerce destroyers, or the like, and no limit, no security, is given as to their size or the power of their armament. I need not remind my colleagues how vastly important this question of gun power is, as was proved on more than one occasion in the naval combats in the late war, and this may be extended by the dispensing power, if I may so call it, the power, with a year's notice, to extend any class to any extent within the limits of the total tonnage; this power of building, as I say, particularly powerful, newly designed vessels to any extent, and that is equally true of submarines. Now, the British and French Governments feel that such a system as that puts practically no limit on competitive building, or very little limit on competitive building. An Admiralty would have to consider anxiously in every year of its programme what possible combinations under the tonnage system and the dispensing power system could be adopted by any of the other Powers, and would have to recommended to its Parliament such a programme as would deal with any possible combination of that kind. I am grateful to my French colleagues for having made the offer, and it is quite true that, by the year's notice, the element of surprise is largely if not altogether abolished. This is a great improvement, and I am extremely grateful to my French colleagues for having modified their proposals to that extent and I am satisfied that my Government will be equally grateful for their effort, but they cannot conceal from themselves that, though in that way the evil of surprise is to some extent, and perhaps altogether, abolished, the evil of competition still remains.

General de Marinis made an observation with reference to this which was, as usual, worthy of the closest attention of his colleagues. He said: "After all, this power of building ships is not a very extensive one because it is governed by the replacement provisions which would be agreed upon as part of the system of naval limitation. Only such ships could be built as would replace existing ships, subject to the conditions which we may agree upon with respect to them." That is so, but we have to consider at any rate the possibility of some country (I am not, of course, going to mention any particular country) in future building to the full extent of its allocated tonnage, say, in battleships, in each year; under this system there would be a great amount of tonnage, so to speak, in its pocket, which it could allocate, with the aid of the dispensing power, to any particular part of the battle fleet, or, and, though it may be true that, once it had built up to the total of its allocated tonnage, there would, at any rate, be the security of knowing that it could only build to a relatively limited extent each year—notably, to the extent to which the existing ships became obsolete by time and subject to replacement—yet if that country had in its hands this large amount of tonnage which it had not used, evidently that security would be very largely gone.
It is for these reasons that, after giving the matter the most anxious consideration, I confess that I have arrived at the conclusion, and my Government has arrived at the conclusion, that they are unable, as far as they can see at present (though, of course, they are fully ready to consider the matter further and to hear any arguments on the subject, keeping as far as they can a completely open mind) to accept the view that the proposal would be a satisfactory one. It seems to them to open wide a door of competition with respect to the power, the size and the gun power of ships and, with the dispensing power and the working of the replacement provisions, also to make it possible for an entirely new development of naval building to take place such as would call for the continued prevision and consequent competition of other navies under the system. In these circumstances, we are unable at present to make any fresh proposal than that which is contained in our draft, except this: We have been very much moved by the case of the very small navies, which are undoubtedly in a very difficult position, and if, after the fullest consideration, these very small navies should desire some freer system, some system approaching the system of total tonnage, then that would be a special case which my Government would certainly be anxious to consider.

It is obvious that, when you come to comparatively small amounts of tonnage, there is not the same danger of competition, and there is not the same danger of any radical change in the naval aspect of things which might be wrought by a change in policy of one of the more important naval Powers.

That is the position at which the British Government have arrived. They recognise that a desire has been shown to meet their requirements. They deeply regret that they have been unable to see that the proposals now made really do meet what they regard as essential. In this matter they feel most profoundly that they would be false to their responsibilities if they accepted any system which did not give real security. In land matters they may say, perhaps legitimately, that “other countries are more concerned than we are; if they are satisfied with the system, even if it seems to us an incomplete system, we would not press our opinion to the last point on a matter of that kind”. But on naval questions they feel they have a special responsibility; they feel that their experience is at least as great as that of any other nation in the world in this matter. They feel that their interests, that the happiness and, indeed, the existence of their people depends upon no mistake being made in that respect, and, therefore, with the greatest possible regret, they feel bound to scrutinise with great care any proposal put before them, and, as at present advised, the result of their scrutiny has been to convince them that the French proposal does not comply with the minimum requirements of security and avoidance of competition which they feel they must lay down as a condition of any successful or tolerable system of the reduction and limitation of naval armaments.

We do not wish to publish a programme of naval shipbuilding when the Conference meets, because one of our objects is to reduce naval construction to the lowest possible minimum. On the other hand, shipbuilding depends on various technical, political and financial considerations which cannot be easily foreseen. We earnestly hope the different States will be able to keep below the total tonnage which they accept and do not want to encourage competition in armaments by a formal statement of our naval programme.
Under the Washington Treaty, Italy could have retained ten capital ships. She has already scrapped four and is considering scrapping a fifth. We were authorised under the treaty to lay down 35,000 tons in capital ships, starting this year. At the moment we have no intention of doing so, but that does not mean that we are prepared to give up our right to do so.

Of all the Powers signatories to the Treaty of Washington, Italy was the weakest at sea, and was thus most anxious to guard against any sudden increase in the naval armaments of non-signatory Powers. As regards this point, Article XVI of the treaty gave us, and still gives us, every satisfaction, because it binds the contracting Powers to notify each other as rapidly as possible of the date on which the contract is signed, the date on which the keel is laid and the characteristics of any war-ship which they undertake to build on behalf of a non-contracting Power.

This notification, if made immediately, gives a country time to meet any possible danger, either by increasing its own armaments not limited under the clauses of the treaty, or by non-contracting Power.

As regards the Convention under review, the Italian Government would consider itself sufficiently safeguarded by an undertaking, similar to the one contained in Article XVI of the Treaty of Washington, as put forward in my proposal. In order to satisfy the views of other Powers, I am authorised to submit to the Commission the following proposal:

"Each of the High Contracting Parties, within the limits of the total tonnage which it undertakes not to exceed, may distribute and average its tonnage to the best advantage for its national interests, subject to communicating to the Secretariat of the League of Nations, at least six months before laying down the keel, the characteristics of each vessel of war which it intends to construct in conformity, for example, with Article XVI of the Treaty of Washington."

This proposal provides for notification being forwarded to the Secretariat of the League at least six months before the laying down of the keel of any war-ship which it is proposed to build. This should dispose of any anxiety regarding the possibility of surprise which might be felt by countries wishing to be forearmed against dangers that might arise from shipbuilding by other Powers, and would at the same time meet the objection of my country and other countries to the announcement of a naval programme in advance.

In conclusion, I may say that my Government could give no further undertakings in regard to naval disarmament.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — In spite of the interesting and striking criticisms just advanced by General de Marinis against the French proposal, which provides for two separate tables for the home fleet and the part of the fleet detailed for the defence of overseas territory, I would venture to declare that this consideration is only of secondary importance as compared with what I have to say in reply to Lord Cecil.

I might also mention that, in a discussion of this nature, there are certain fundamental principles which States cannot abandon, either for reasons concerning their security or because of their views on general security and on the object which we have in view. There are other points, however, in regard to which a compromise is perfectly feasible. As regards this division into two tables, I shall not adopt an uncompromising attitude. The division is explained by the fact that the French delegation has always aimed at having as many divisions as possible in order to make matters perfectly clear. It seemed to us that, for certain countries, which have units of their fleet specially detailed for the defence of certain overseas territories, it might be useful to show these units separately and to give other States a guarantee that, on mobilisation, they would not serve in territorial or even European waters. It would be ungracious on my part to insist upon this division, if it is not approved.

But, as I said before, this problem is of secondary importance as compared with the general problem, the basic problem with which we are dealing to-day.

I must thank Lord Cecil for having mitigated to some extent not my surprise — he had loyally forewarned me — but my emotion, an emotion which is doubtless shared by the other members of the Commission, by mentioning a certain number of points concerning air and naval matters on which agreement is possible. This shows that, even in the course of this discussion, whatever may be the general opinion, agreement has been reached on a certain number of points. In fact, when we come to add them up, we shall find that these questions outnumber those in regard to which agreement is not feasible. The latter, it is true, are fundamental points, and the question on which we now hold divergent opinions is also a fundamental one.

I very much regret — and only my desire not to imply any criticism of the State in question prevents my expressing this regret more fully — that the proposal, essentially in the nature of a compromise, which was officially substituted on Saturday for the first French draft was not approved by the British Government. Its conciliatory nature may be gauged by comparing it, representing as it does the extreme limit of concession that my country could make, with the first proposal for a total tonnage figure not limited by any other provision.
The reason for which my country and a large number of Continental and Maritime countries put forward the suggestion of total tonnage and the reasons which compelled them to reject the system of limitation according to classes were explained last week and there is no need to revert to them. I simply propose to summarise them in order to bring out the essentially conciliatory character of the proposal now before the Commission.

General considerations, the spirit of the League, and the very nature of our discussions all go to prove the impracticability of tonnage by classes — and this is the view of a large number of countries. It is further confirmed by special considerations mentioned. We cannot agree to the fixing and limitation of tonnage by classes, because we regard it as unfair to apply to the navy rules which are not in force for the other forms of armaments. When we consider that there was no question, and can be no question, of any but total limitation for land effective, when we consider that, for the very sensible reasons pointed out on Saturday by M. de Brouckère, it is impossible to apply such limitation to land material, how could you ask certain countries to agree to this particular form of limitation, which was not even contemplated in other sections, without disregarding the fundamental law which should govern our work, which prevents us from classifying armaments any more, and compels us to adopt general, uniform rules?

There are other reasons which do not depend on individual circumstances which apply to the majority of the naval Powers represented here — with the exception of the three big naval Powers — reasons which arise out of the consequences of the Washington Treaty, so often and so pertinently quoted by Lord Cecil, and out of the post-war situation. Lord Cecil was perfectly right — and I hope he will allow me to say that it was hardly necessary to remind us of it — when he pointed out that the limitations of the Washington Treaty hold good and continue to bind the Powers which signed that Treaty. In this connection I can at once clear up one of the points about which Lord Cecil appears to be concerned. The French proposal does not contain any mention of the calibre of guns and other matters, as Lord Cecil would wish, simply because all the provisions of the Treaty of Washington are still considered binding on all the signatories to the Treaty, whether they apply to the limitation of capital ships or to that of guns. My country agreed to a greater measure of limitation than will ever be reached in any of the limitation schemes that we are now considering, or that may be contemplated by some of the great naval Powers, when it reduced the tonnage of capital ships at its disposal to 1.75, as compared with 5.5 and 3. Treaties signed prior to the Convention that we are now drawing up create a situation which it is impossible for us not to take into account.

May I be allowed to say that this question of previous regional treaties also affects the position as regards this Convention of which we are trying so hard to lay the foundations, and the meeting which overshadows our discussions and to which Lord Cecil several times alluded, the Conference proposed by President Coolidge. No one, and certainly not the French delegation, will imagine that the nations represented on our Commission, after agreeing to general, uniform rules of procedure, are to lose the obvious right of discussing more definite limitation among themselves if they consider this necessary in their own interests or in the interests of all concerned.

The Conference which was announced before the convening of our Commission, and the nearness of which necessarily affects our discussions, the Conference in which my country, for reasons already explained and further elaborated by me to-day, could not agree to take part, despite the interest in this question — this Conference, I say, is for a definite purpose, namely, to define more precisely and more completely the limitations contemplated by certain Powers, which feel compelled, by reason of their large naval interests and other common interests in certain parts of the world, to meet together.

I am simply reversing the suggestion which Lord Cecil was considering just now. I think that the rules to be drawn up at the proposed Conference might be based on those that we have discussed here. The rules now being discussed by all those represented at Geneva might be supplemented and more accurately defined at that meeting.

Having said so much, and in order to show the close connection between the regional Treaties and the Convention that we are discussing, I may say that we cannot think of agreeing to any provisions which might in any way encroach upon our liberty to dispose of what tonnage is left to us to the best advantage, and under conditions which may change with changing circumstances.

Such freedom of action, which is essential for all, is especially necessary in view of the post-war political circumstances which compelled a number of States represented here to build up a navy.

In the course of last week's discussions you heard certain States say: "We have no fleet, and the geographical situation arising out of the reparation of Europe forces us to build one; as yet we have no comprehensive plans — in fact, we have no idea what programme we may draw up or decide to carry out. In the circumstances, how could we agree to include in an international Convention matters in regard to which we have not yet reached a national decision?"
Other countries which for a long time had, but now no longer have, fleets not so very disproportionate to those of the big maritime Powers find themselves similarly placed, by reason of the fact that the Treaty of Washington and the reductions agreed to have had a disturbing effect on the plans which they had drawn up, and the further fact that, during the four years of the war and in the ensuing years, owing to the lack of financial resources, no shipbuilding could be undertaken; their entire production and financial resources had to be applied in other directions. These countries are at present faced with a blank sheet of paper, on which they are still endeavouring to trace a general plan which they hope to carry out later.

If we agreed to stricter definition, which, as I shall show, would be equivalent to tonnage by classes, we should be agreeing in an international Convention to points which our own Parliaments have not yet discussed. I am too well aware of the great Parliamentary traditions of my colleague, Lord Cecil — who is also, unfortunately, more often than either he or I should wish, my opponent — to have any doubts about his earnest desire to respect the prerogatives of the national Parliaments.

In these circumstances, we could not, and we cannot now, agree to anything which might restrict our liberty to distribute our reduced tonnage, as fixed by the Treaty of Washington, according to whatever method appears best in the interest of our national security. Notwithstanding, I am anxious, more anxious than I can say, to find a solution even — if this means overcoming my own country's objection to drawing up programmes not yet adopted by the French Parliament — realising as I do the feelings of the big naval Powers which advocate tonnage by classes; and, having duly weighed the important pronouncement that Lord Cecil made the other day regarding the peculiar circumstances of his country and the requirements of maritime security, I have done my best to win acceptance for the compromise submitted to you to-day. At the same time, while listening to and appreciating the arguments put forward by Lord Cecil, when he described with such feeling the position of a great maritime Empire, dependent on its relations with its colonies and with the whole of the world, and unable for a moment to entertain the idea that its freedom of communications might ever be threatened, I could not help thinking of certain continental States which still bear in their fields, their houses and their territory the marks of past invasions. These nations would also like to have the same definite security in continental matters and in the matter of land armaments as is required by the great naval Empire on whose behalf Lord Cecil spoke so feelingly.

In thus suggesting a compromise, I would ask the great naval Powers to consider that we are offering them a privileged position, which no continental country can ever hope to occupy if the Convention on which we are working materialises. No other nation would have the same clear and definite guarantees or, consequently, the security afforded to the great naval Powers by the compromise we have suggested. At the present stage of our work, armaments and budgets would be limited, but in no part or chapter of the Convention would any nation have clear guarantees, such as the French compromise offers in naval matters, when it comes to a question of distribution of armaments, classes of armaments or classes of formations which these nations might have to face. Our proposal is far removed from total tonnage. What do we propose? We suggest that the distribution which we advocate should be entered in the Convention itself. I am speaking on behalf of my country — because General de Marinis said just now, speaking on behalf of Italy, that he could not go as far as this compromise — makes the problem even more difficult of solution. We propose that the Convention should contain a classified list of categories of all vessels, capital ships, aircraft-carriers, surface ships, of less than 10,000 tons, and submarines and this would be the system of distribution on which we should act explicitly, loyally and clearly. You may well believe that this would have required a great effort, because, as I said before, this system of distribution, this naval programme, according to tonnage of classes is still so new that our own Parliament has not even discussed it.

I have reason to think that, up to the time when this compromise was laboriously conceived, there was never any question of submitting to Parliament a naval programme based upon such specific distribution. This could in any case only be done each year, when the budget is voted according to the credits available.

We have done more. As regards possible changes, changes which are inevitable as I have just pointed out, and as I explained when we were concluding the first part of our discussion on naval matters, an important suggestion has just been considered at Lord Cecil's request — this we now accept — between notification to the League of Nations and the laying down of the keel.

It is both logical and natural that great naval Powers, which have more powerful fleets at their disposal, should also have more powerful machinery and consequently be able to build ships more rapidly, and the fixing of a period of one year constitutes an assurance for them that, whatever changes might supervene, they would always be able to keep up to and ahead of any such changes. The security demanded is an exceptional privilege in favour of the great naval Powers; it does not occur in any other chapter of the Convention and results from the inclusion of the table and from this compulsory period of one year.
I wonder, gentlemen — we may well wonder — what has happened to the total-tonnage figure which we regarded as a vital factor for France and a sine qua non of any general Disarmament Convention. There simply remains — and on this we cannot compromise — freedom to distribute the total tonnage and the possibility of modifying it. As I said before, I do not think that this can cause any uneasiness to the great naval Powers on the grounds of legitimate security. In conclusion, I would sum up the fundamental reasons which I have endeavoured to put before you: to eliminate this principle would be to create an exception to every rule and to the whole of the rules contemplated in the Convention. This would compel such nations as have already effected large reductions under the Treaty of Washington to renounce their right to distribute the restricted tonnage left to them as they may think best in the interests of security.

M. Sato (Japan). — With regard to this new French proposal, I must first of all say that I have not yet received definite instructions from my Government: there has not been time for them to reach me. My object in addressing you now is rather to explain the Japanese delegation's views; we may perhaps modify these views after receiving our Government's instructions to-morrow or the day after to-morrow. In any case, I can assure you that my delegation's opinion is based on very close study. We have considered this French proposal carefully and sympathetically, realising the efforts made by the French delegation.

I heard this morning speeches by Lord Cecil and by General de Marinis and, lastly, I listened to M. Paul-Boncour's speech, which impressed me greatly and made quite clear to me the exact purpose of his proposal.

I cannot pass over in silence the important remarks that Lord Cecil was good enough to make this morning on the Washington Conference. It was one of the most interesting speeches that I have listened to since our work in this Commission began. I am especially grateful to Lord Cecil for having emphasised the sincerity with which the signatory Powers have carried out the Washington Treaty — among others, he spoke of the Japanese Government.

I desire most specially to thank Lord Cecil, in my Government's name, for his words. I should like to say that we are proud of having carried out the Washington Treaty. This is quite natural, for when we signed this Treaty we did so at great sacrifice to ourselves; as Lord Cecil explained to you this morning, we had to destroy seventeen ships. Japan has only just arrived at that — still very modest — stage of development in her shipbuilding industry which permitted her to produce such ships. We were proud of having reached such a stage of modernised industry within less than thirty years. You will easily understand that Japan was in a difficult position when the question arose of destroying an industry which had reached such a stage of development only after much effort and many difficulties.

However, we carried out the provisions of the Washington Treaty with sincerity. We have destroyed and sunk these seventeen ships — not without great regret certainly — for the reasons that I have just stated, but at any rate we did it without hesitation.

The result has been excellent and Lord Cecil pointed out to you this morning in his speech that the Treaty has been most advantageous from our point of view. As regards the consequences of this Treaty, I have nothing to add to what he said. We all appreciate at every rate in Japan, the Washington Treaty and, in this atmosphere of good will it has created, we now receive President Coolidge's invitation. Up till now I have not dared to speak of this before the Commission, but, since Lord Cecil has mentioned it in his speech, I cannot, for my part either, omit to speak of this invitation which was inspired by such a lofty and humanitarian spirit.

I believe everyone is aware that the Japanese Government has just appointed its delegates to the Conference President Coolidge has proposed. The first delegate, Admiral Saito, is leaving Japan almost at once; the second delegate, Viscount Ishii, will be able at any moment to attend the Conference as he is quite near Geneva.

All this will show you how much we appreciate President Coolidge's invitation and how glad we are to respond to it.

As far as Japan is concerned, we wish to co-operate in all efforts towards general disarmament. Since the League of Nations began, my country has always co-operated in this task, perhaps in a very modest measure, but with all the means at its disposal; in this present Commission, where we are discussing the very important question of general disarmament, the Japanese delegation is making every effort to obtain a result satisfactory to everybody.

We have accepted President Coolidge's invitation because, in our opinion, the aim of the proposed Conference is not in any way in contradiction with the aim which we are seeking to attain here. On the contrary, we are firmly convinced that an agreement regarding limitation of warships, even if confined to a few Powers, is strictly in conformity with the League of Nations' general policy of disarmament. Lord Cecil has explained this to you so clearly that I do not think it necessary to add anything to his remarks. The Japanese Government is ready to take part in President Coolidge's Conference in the spirit I have indicated, and at the same time to co-operate in the work of the Preparatory Commission. I hope there will be no misunderstanding on this point.
Now, I will say a few words on the subject of the new French proposal. We all recognise that the French delegation has made great efforts — by mutual concessions — to arrive at an agreement. We all also approve of the table wording of this new proposal, and we wish to express our appreciation of the French delegation for its endeavours. Certain points of this proposal seem to us rather difficult to accept. I shall not raise here fundamental issues of principle but I must mention the following points — on which, however, I think it should not be difficult for us to reach an agreement after further discussion.

Our delegation is of opinion that it is sufficient to indicate the numbers provided for in column II of the table presented by the French delegation; this column should read as follows: “Total tonnage which each State undertakes not to exceed during the term of the Convention”. In this way we should do away with the first column.

Further, in view of the mobility of naval forces, I do not see any reason for distinguishing between vessels employed for home defence and vessels employed in the defence of overseas territory. This point has already been raised by General de Marinis, and, unless I am mistaken, follows: “Total tonnage which each State undertakes not to exceed during the term of the Convention”. In this way we should do away with the first column.

Doubtless the Japanese delegation is not the only one. I have merely put forward the point of view of a naval Power far removed from Europe, a State which is more or less disinterested, and which has no direct interest in the political relations between the European countries.

On the other hand, Lord Cecil has pointed out to us the difficulties which his Government would have if this proposal were to form the basis for discussion. The question is obviously a very serious one and it must be solved in the first place by the Powers directly concerned. Until a solution has been found, the Japanese delegation will not be in a position to give an opinion on the French proposal. But I continue to hope that an agreement will be reached in a satisfactory manner, in spite of the difficulties pointed out by Lord Cecil.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — The question which we are dealing with to-day is of such vital importance and is so very complicated and delicate that we have a common interest to avoid any possible misconceptions, misunderstandings, or any risk of misconstruction. I will confess that I have felt certain misgivings this morning from some of the remarks made in the course of the discussion. Those were the remarks which touched, however lightly, upon the Three-Power conversations. It is important to avoid any misapprehensions as to the scope or purpose of these conversations. They have, I think, been made very clear in the Message which the President of the United States addressed to Congress and in the communications sent to the principal naval Powers signatory to the Washington Treaty, but I would like to claim your indulgence for a few moments in order to touch briefly on one or two points.

As regards naval questions, our fundamental objective is the same as that of every other delegation here — we want to reach some solution, we want to reach general agreement if possible. Failing that, the American delegation is desirous of reaching a limited agreement in the hope that that may open the way to a general agreement. We want a solution; if we can get it here and now, so much the better. I think this was clearly brought out by the President’s Message, to which Lord Cecil referred this morning, or rather in the invitation which figures as an appendix to that Message. Towards the end of that invitation it is said: “The American representatives at the forthcoming meeting at Geneva (i.e., the Preparatory Commission) will, of course, participate fully in the discussions looking to the preparation of an agenda for a final General Conference for the Limitation of Armaments. In addition (and I should like to emphasise those words), they will have full powers to negotiate definitely regarding measures for further naval limitations...” What I wish to bring out is that the fundamental task of the American delegation is to contribute as far as it possibly can to the success of the work of this Commission; that there is no desire and no thought of subordinating the success of this Commission’s work to the Three-Power conversations of or any other effort. Our fundamental effort now is to make a success here, and the full contribution of the American delegation will be offered to that end.

We must, however, scrutinise very carefully every naval proposal which is brought before this Commission. Why? Because we have a very firm and honest belief in the efficacy of one method of naval limitation. You all know what it is. We believe that the method of limitation by classes has given proof of its efficacy in operation. We believe that it is the best method and the fairest method. Holding that belief, we cannot do other than examine with the utmost care any proposal that is brought before us to make sure that it does not prejudice that principle. We should be very remiss if we did not scrutinise proposals with that care, because we hope still, after the long and patient negotiations, discussions and exchanges of views, to find some solution on the basis of that system, a solution which would be at the same time workable and practicable from our point of view and acceptable to those who do not yet share our views as to the workability of that system, and we are naturally most anxious to avoid doing anything that would be in conflict with these convictions, which, after all, are our honest convictions.

I will not this morning offer any comments on the proposal submitted by the French delegation. In view of the present situation, it would be superfluous for me to do so, but I should like to say this (not so much in regard to this special proposal as in regard to any proposals which may come before us), that we shall examine them in the most friendly way in the hope that each fresh proposal may open the way to a solution. We shall examine them on their merits, and solely on their merits, in the hope of finding a solution, and, if we are unable to
accept them, it will be because we cannot honestly believe that they will work and not because of any desire to deal with the problem in a different way through the Three-Power conversations or in any other manner. It will be because we believe that the scheme itself is less good than something else which we can eventually work out.

In conclusion, I should like to make it as clear as possible that the American delegation is anxious to contribute in full measure to the success of this Conference, and that, if we can find some general agreement which will be acceptable to all the delegations here, it will be a matter of immense gratification to the American delegation and to the American Government.

M. Yovanovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). — At the first discussion regarding naval armaments, I pointed out to you my country’s special position. I explained why we could not accept any other limitation than limitation by total tonnage, while reserving to ourselves freedom to distribute this tonnage as we considered best.

As we think the French proposal would facilitate an agreement between the countries concerned, I declare, in my Government’s name, that I am ready to accept the French proposal without reservation.

M. Perez (Argentina). — As I have already stated at the first discussion on limitation of naval material, the Argentine delegation supports the method of limitation and of reduction by classes, a method which was advocated by its experts in Sub-Commission A.

Following this statement, Lord Cecil was good enough to submit for our consideration Table II of Annex I of the British draft Convention.

In spite of its adherence to the method of limitation by classes, the Argentine delegation wishes to make a statement on this Table II.

In the document I have just mentioned, the British draft embraces nine different classes of ships. This number seems to us excessive. M. Paul-Boncour said one day: “I am in favour of total methods of limitation, but not to that extent”. We in our turn say: “We are in favour of limitation by ‘classes’, but not to that extent”.

If one applies the method of limitation by categories, the more subdivisions of ships there are, the easier the comparison between the different navies will be. This would certainly be an advantage. On the other hand, the fact that countries bound by a Convention would have to develop their naval programme within the framework of the numerous subdivisions indicated in Lord Cecil’s proposal would constitute a very serious drawback for countries with a weak navy or a navy in course of formation.

The Argentine delegation has stated that it is ready to submit to its Government any compromise proposal intended to harmonise these two theses which we are now discussing.

When I arrived this morning I was full of confidence. I said to myself: Now we are on the right road, the road of compromise we desire.

I will tell you that the French amendment attracted us, and still attracts us, because it is the reproduction of a text adopted by the Pan-American Conference at Santiago. We were attracted by the wide spirit of conciliation with which it is imbued; but this morning’s speeches seem rather to justify those who believe that our efforts are vain. Nevertheless, it is my duty to state that the Argentine supports the French amendment, subject to the approval of its Government. At this stage of our debates we have an obvious duty to fulfil, and that is to do our best to find the formulas which will put an end to or lessen differences of opinion, and which will reflect the mutual concessions which national interests and the higher interests of humanity seem to demand.

M. Valdez (Chile). — I am very glad to be able to support what M. Perez has just said. My country has always shared with his the highest aspirations for the good of humanity.

I should like to give the Commission my delegation’s opinion on the point which we are discussing.

In Sub-Commission A, the Chilian delegation declared itself to be in favour of a method based on limiting the total tonnage of different categories of ships, while bearing in mind the practical possibility of combining certain methods in applying this general method, which, taken as a whole, coincided with principles which my Government has always held regarding the regional limitation of naval armaments in South America.

Taken in this way, this method constituted in our opinion a fair system for estimating the naval forces of a country, while at the same time it permitted a sufficient measure of elasticity for adapting armaments to special conditions of security.

We would not, therefore, have been able to support Point 2 and the following points of the French proposal in their original form, for reasons already explained in the Sub-Commission, which I shall not repeat here.

On the other hand, the wording of the British draft does not entirely meet our view, for it does not allow sufficiently for the various aspects of the method as we had imagined it, nor leave the minimum of elasticity which we thought should be one of the fundamental principles of all limitations of armaments.

The new version proposed by the French delegation is much nearer our point of view. It allows for total tonnage by categories, and does away with the uncertainty which we disliked in the system of total tonnage as originally put forward, with the added security of notification within a year of all change within the limits of this tonnage which, as a minimum, is acceptable to us.
The Chilian delegation has recommended to its Government the new French proposal, and—without prejudice to its decision at the Second Reading—it would be glad to contribute to the adoption of a compromise proposal which would have such a great influence on the success of the work that we are so anxious to terminate.

M. SATO (Japan). — I should like to put forward now a supplementary proposal, so that members of the Commission may have time to consider it. I made this morning certain remarks regarding two points of the French proposal: (1) the second paragraph of the French table; (2) the subdivision of naval forces into vessels employed for home defence and vessels employed in the defence of overseas territory. I am now speaking of Column III. The French proposal provides for division of total tonnage according to the nature of the ships. It further provides for the possibility of altering this division according to circumstances. I should like to propose an amendment, that is to say, a derogation from this general rule, couched in the following terms:

"The provisions of the present article shall not affect Conventions in force or which may be concluded between the High Contracting Parties with a view to limiting their own naval armaments to the tonnage determined and divided for each of the categories of vessels mentioned in the above table".

The object of this amendment is to prevent certain countries making changes in the division of the total tonnage. I respectfully submit this proposal for the Commission's consideration.

The PRESIDENT. — It is now 1.15 and the discussion on Point 2 has not yet come to an end. I therefore propose that, if you have no objection, we should continue it this afternoon. I would ask you to shorten the debate as much as possible, but to continue at the same time with the First Reading of this chapter. I think it is absolutely necessary for us to meet this afternoon, for we must endeavour to finish the first part of our task.

The Commission adjourned at 1.20 p.m.

TWENTY-SEVENTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Monday, April 11th, 1927, at 5 p.m.

President: M. LOUDON (Netherlands).


The PRESIDENT. — We will now resume this morning's discussion and I hope very much that we shall be able to finish the examination of the chapter on Naval Armaments to-day. I propose that, this chapter being finished, we take that on air armaments to-morrow morning. I hope we shall be able to finish that chapter to-morrow, and on Wednesday and Thursday discuss the question of organisation. As regards organisation, I think we may be able to confine ourselves to discussing questions of principle only. We could meet again after Easter, that is, on Tuesday, April 19th, to draft the First-Reading text of all the work we have done. I think that we should then do best to break up; we all require to consider matters in our own homes. We would agree on a later date for the discussion on Second Reading.

At the moment, then, we are concerned only with the First Reading. Accordingly, we can discuss questions of principle, and leave it to the Bureau to draft the texts, which will be submitted to you on Tuesday the 19th.

This procedure was adopted.

68. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Naval Armaments. Points 2 and 6 (continuation).

The PRESIDENT. — We will now continue this morning's discussion, beginning with Point 2, which we could take along with Point 6, and also the Japanese amendment and General de Marinis's amendment.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — From the statement made by Lord Cecil this morning and from M. Paul-Boncour's speech, it seems that the small countries like my own are more or less eliminated from the discussion on which we are engaged to-day. I think that, even though the objections and doubts of some of us are not yet satisfied by the French proposal, there will be no difficulty in meeting them on the Second Reading, and therefore I need not discuss the text of the French compromise proposal. I believe that Lord Cecil and M. Paul-Boncour are agreed in thinking that naval limitation in the case of the small naval Powers raises no insuperable difficulties and that that is not a vital question for Great Britain's security.
In rising to speak, I am not seeking to defend any interests of my own country but because I desire to contribute as far as possible to the success of our work. We have before us two proposals, the British proposal, which goes further, and the French compromise, which is covered by the British proposal. In these circumstances, I do not see why we could not do what we have done more than once before — that is to say, when we are unable to agree on the proposal which goes further, we begin by accepting the one which does not go so far, but which is covered by the other.

Since resolutions have to be unanimous, and in view of the grave objections put forward by several delegations to limitation by classes, it would seem that the question before us is no longer that of adopting limitation by classes, but turns upon whether we shall or shall not accept the French compromise. Are we to accept this proposal or shall we finish our discussion of this point without reaching any result?

I listened very carefully to Lord Cecil's arguments this morning. If limitation by classes is not unanimously accepted, as we must anticipate, is there any reason why we should not adopt the French compromise proposal? If I understood Lord Cecil and Mr. Gibson aright, they had only one argument against accepting the French proposal. According to Lord Cecil, it was that no proposal can be acceptable unless it agrees with the principle of the Washington Convention. Mr. Gibson expressed almost the same idea in other words. He did not mention the Washington Convention or President Coolidge's Conference, but he said that limitation by classes was a desirable arrangement and that we must at any cost avoid prejudicing that principle. I think that is a fair statement of the only argument urged against the French proposal.

I should like to ask whether it is true that the result of the Coolidge Conference, as it is called, would be endangered or, to quote Mr. Gibson, whether the principle of limitation by classes would be prejudiced supposing we were to adopt the French proposal to limit total tonnage and to publish distribution in classes.

Which circumstances would be more favourable for the extension of the Washington principles, that is, the adoption of limitation by classes, by the States which will take part in the Coolidge Conference? Which conditions will be the more propitious? Would it be better that, as a result of a decision taken here, all the Powers should be bound by the undertaking contained in the French proposal, namely, the acceptance of limitation by total tonnage? Or would it be better that all Powers should remain free and that the only question for the Coolidge Conference should be the question whether the States represented would accept limitation for themselves (and themselves alone)? I do not think that acceptance of the obligation in the French proposal would prejudice the acceptance by certain specific Powers of other limitations which would go further.

In a previous declaration by the Netherlands delegation on this point, we already suggested that, after all Governments have accepted limitation by total tonnage in the draft which we are preparing, it will still be left open for certain Powers for reasons of their own to accept other and more extensive obligations.

Lord Cecil stated this morning that the degree of limitation which would be accepted by the Coolidge Conference would depend upon the scheme adopted here.

I should like to ask whether it is certain that that Conference will confine itself to discussing the figures to be entered in the scheme which we shall have considered. Is it not possible that it will also discuss limitations which are not included in the scheme which we adopt here — limitations which would to some extent supplement that which had been accepted by all the Powers?

The Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — May I interrupt you for a moment?

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — By all means.

The Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — I think there is a little misunderstanding. I have been told that it exists elsewhere and probably it is due to the extremely imperfect way in which I expressed myself. What I meant to say was this — that the extent of the reduction that it would be possible for the three large maritime Powers to agree to (my own country among them) would necessarily depend a little (I do not say altogether) upon the policy which other Powers were going to adopt with regard to their naval armaments. If they adopted a system which gave us a feeling of full security, evidently we should feel able — subject, of course, to agreement with our two other colleagues — to go further than we could if they adopted a scheme which did not give us such full security.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — Lord Cecil's explanation does not in any way weaken my argument. If the attitude of the large naval Powers is to depend upon the policy adopted here and upon the obligations which are accepted by the other Powers, it follows that it is of great importance to the success of the proposed Conference that we should not separate without having done something in regard to limitation of naval armaments. It is therefore better to accept at least limitation by total tonnage together with publication, as contained...
in the French proposal, than to accept nothing at all. Lord Cecil’s intervention has also confirmed my belief that Great Britain will co-operate with us and that if, as seems likely, she does not obtain acceptance for her proposal for limitation by classes, she will unite with us in accepting the French proposal.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I should like to say a few words with regard to the proposal which I submitted this morning amending that which I had put forward earlier.

When I made my first proposal, it was pointed out to me that mere notification of the characteristics of a ship at the time when it was laid down did not afford sufficient guarantee against the possibility of surprise. I thought that this objection would be met if it were provided that such notification should be made six months before the ship was laid down. I should like to explain the difference between this proposal and that of the French delegation.

The latter, as I understand it, is that each country shall give an undertaking at the Conference to distribute its total tonnage as follows: so many tons for capital ships; so many tons for aircraft-carriers; so many tons for ships below 10,000 tons, and so many for submarines. It is understood, however, that each country reserves to itself the right during the term of the Convention to transfer a part of the tonnage thus distributed from one class to another, increasing the tonnage of one class and correspondingly reducing that of another. It would, of course, be necessary to notify this transfer at least a year before laying down the portion of the tonnage which is to be transferred.

My proposal seems to me to solve the question more simply and possibly more precisely. It takes account of the requirements of countries which desire to know in advance the naval programme of other countries, and also of the difficulties which certain delegations find in stating their naval programme in advance. The proposal is, in short, that, whenever it is intended to build a new ship, the characteristics of that ship should be notified in each particular case at least six months before the ship is laid down.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — The honourable delegate for the Netherlands in the course of his remarks addressed certain questions to me, which, I am afraid, are based on some misapprehension as to the character of my remarks this morning. I tried to make it clear in what I said this morning that I was not discussing the French proposal and not criticising the French proposal. I was concerned entirely with making clear the attitude of the American Government as to the Three-Power conversations and as to the scope and character of those conversations. I do not feel that I can discuss the French proposal profitably at this time. When the very important proposals were made I telegraphed them textually to my Government, and I am sure they are being given the very careful study they deserve. But I am not yet in receipt of the views of my Government, and I feel that I cannot profitably contribute to the discussion of the text of the French proposal.

There is one point which M. Rutgers raised in one of his remarks, and that was the possibility that we could accept the French proposals and then go on to accept any stricter measures we might desire to apply to ourselves, on the theory, I take it, that the French proposals would be included in any stricter measures. I am not prepared to say at this moment how far I can agree with him on that, and I do not wish my silence to be interpreted as acquiescence.

I think that this is a very involved and delicate matter and calls for the most careful study. I am sure it is being given that study by my Government at this time. I know it is being given careful study by my technical associates, but I shall have to reserve an opinion on that and not give one at the present time.

General Dumitresco (Roumania). — The Roumanian delegation has from the very beginning of our proceedings been in favour of the method of limitation by total tonnage, for reasons which I may call reasons of force majeure, since my country is one of those which has only a small navy, and therefore few classes of ships. The Roumanian navy is intended solely for the defence of our shores. Therefore the method of limitation by classes is not applicable. As it is our wish, however, that there should be complete agreement between the two conflicting views, in order to arrive at the conclusion of the Convention, we give our support to the French proposal, which is in the nature of a compromise. We may point out at once, however, that we shall have no figures to insert in the first two sub-columns of Column III regarding capital ships and aircraft-carriers.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — During the general discussion which took place at the beginning of our session, I stated that, in the view of the Swedish delegation, a basis for conciliating the two opposing contentions (limitation of the total tonnage and limitation by classes) should be looked for in the undertaking by the different States to publish their naval construction programmes in advance and in respect of a definite period.

I repeated this opinion a few days ago when we entered upon the study of naval questions. It is therefore with particular satisfaction that the Swedish delegation has noted that the compromise proposed by the French delegation is based on this principle.

Admiring as it does the spirit of conciliation on which the proposal is based, the Swedish delegation wishes to state that, if an agreement between the two contentions can be reached on the basis of this proposal, it will be glad to support it.
At the same time, in view of the difference of opinion which has arisen during discussion, I should like to add that, as regards the methods of application of the principles contained in this proposal, the Swedish delegation will be glad to consider any suggestion, giving rise to the same principles, which may be made with a view to finding a solution acceptable to all countries, whether they are advocates of the limitation of tonnage by classes or of the limitation of total tonnage.

M. Paul-Boncour (France).—As regards the first point, as I said this morning in reply to General de Marinis, I think that our proposal made for greater clearness. After all, these are not questions on which we want to adopt a rigid attitude. We simply proposed a distinction which it would be regrettable to eliminate.

With regard to the third point, proposing the addition to Article 14 of the French draft of a paragraph which is obviously of great importance, it embodies an idea which I put forward this morning, namely, that the obligations which we establish by means of a general Convention cannot affect those which may have been established by a previous treaty—these have been covered by Article 28—nor those which may result from treaties concluded between several nations having common interests. I am not sure that the draft which is proposed to us is not rather dangerous; while it may be admitted that nations which hold conferences may, if they think fit, define the limitations more clearly than the general rules of the Convention require, they obviously cannot be allowed to restrict the rules laid down by the Convention, and it might be as well to say this. The Japanese draft as it stands can be read with either meaning. It reads:

"... Shall not affect Conventions in force or which may be concluded between High Contracting Parties with a view to limiting their own naval armaments to the tonnage determined and divided for each of the categories of vessels mentioned in the above table."

"Limiting to the tonnage determined and divided" seems to me to refer to the possibility of certain nations agreeing among themselves to a limitation by classes. That is what it comes to. But, if so, should it not be stated more clearly? I merely raise the point.

As regards the second point, I see no decisive objection. At the same time, the original French proposal had a considerable value as being quite clear. The difference between naval programmes and other armament programmes is that they take longer to carry out. The French proposal fully met the views put forward by the great maritime nations when they asked for greater clearness and precision with regard to naval armaments than with regard to the other clauses of the Convention. Will not the fact of indicating not only the tonnage which will be attained while the Convention is in force but the total tonnage which it is desired to attain by means of a naval programme give full satisfaction to this desire? If in one column you have only the tonnage reached while the Convention is in force, which, as everyone, I think, is agreed, will have to be limited, you will not have the precise information regarding the entire naval programme and future composition of a fleet which we offered in our first column.

I should like to add one word more. You have put to me a question and I have endeavoured to answer it and give explanations. But the Japanese amendment will only be of value if the French proposal is accepted. We are now discussing an amendment without having accepted the proposal. My remarks are therefore subject to reservation.

M. Sato (Japan).—M. Paul-Boncour is quite right. The Japanese amendment has no meaning if the French proposal is not accepted. But the reason I proposed a kind of amendment was that I hoped to find some way of arriving at an agreement. To prevent any misunderstanding, and with the President's permission, I will give a few explanations regarding this amendment.

The President. — The French delegate has expressed some doubt as to the third point of my amendment. The wording perhaps does not correctly express the idea I should like to submit to the Commission's appreciation.

M. Paul-Boncour (France).—The French delegate has expressed some doubt as to the third point of my amendment. The wording perhaps does not correctly express the idea I should like to submit to the Commission's appreciation.

The French proposal, says:

"Each of the High Contracting Parties, while keeping within the limits of total tonnage stated in Column II, can alter such division as it deems necessary for its security, subject to informing the Secretariat of the League of Nations of the changes effected in the division of its total tonnage at least one year before laying down the portion of the tonnage which is to be transferred."
I propose, as an exception to this general rule, that a convention could be concluded between any Powers which did not wish to avail themselves of this clause. These Powers could agree not to change the division already agreed to by them, i.e., not to change the distribution of the tonnage allocated to each class of ships.

The reason I am submitting this amendment is that we have certain points in mind at the present time in connection with President Coolidge's Conference. Reference has already been made to this Conference this morning. It is a question which is engaging my Government's attention and my Government naturally does not want the general Convention we are discussing to tie its hands with regard to the Convention which may be concluded, and which will be an extension of the Washington Treaty. The countries which have accepted President Coolidge's invitation, although they cannot foresee the result of the Conference, assume, judging by the principles on which the Washington Treaty was based, that a more rigid division will be made than that provided for in the French proposal.

The reason I have put forward my amendment is that I did not want the possibility of concluding such a Convention to be precluded. This is the idea I had in mind, but I leave it to the Bureau to embody it in more suitable wording.

The second part of my amendment consists in omitting the first column in the French proposal and leaving the second column with a different heading.

The French proposal allows certain countries which wish to possess a navy or have not yet completed their naval programme to make known the total tonnage they desire to attain; these countries should indicate in the second column the maximum tonnage they propose to attain while the Convention is in force. I see no point in indicating the tonnage in two separate columns. I will show you what I mean with the help of an illustration.

Japan at present possesses 746,000 tons (total tonnage). If you leave the first column, my Government will perhaps ask for four times its present tonnage or even more. That will depend on certain strategic, economic, political or financial circumstances. Looking at the situation merely from the geographical point of view, my country, possessing an extensive coast-line — which it must protect — having far-flung trade routes and having before it the Pacific Ocean (which it is perhaps going to divide with America), can lay claim to a very considerable tonnage. China, too, with her vast territory, practically as large as Europe, her long maritime frontiers, her dense population, etc., could also claim a large navy.

You will see, gentlemen, that, instead of obtaining a limitation or reduction in the total tonnage, we should only increase the claims of the different countries. I know that the examples I am giving you are purely theoretical but, in order to avoid such claims, I have proposed to omit the first column and to keep only one column, indicating the maximum total tonnage which a country may desire to possess during the period of the Convention.

The PRESIDENT. - As this is only a First Reading, we might draw up a text including the two columns we have before us and the third column proposed by General de Marinis. I should like to ask M. Paul-Boncour if it is understood that the text of the Synoptic Table is replaced by the text of the proposed compromise.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I agree. I should like to add that, if necessary, I am quite willing to consider any of the methods proposed by the Japanese delegate. But such a discussion would be to no purpose unless the acceptance of the Japanese amendment was likely to lead to the adoption of the French proposal.

The PRESIDENT. — M. Sato's proposal will not be left out of account and I propose that it be inserted as a foot-note.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I should like to know if M. Sato's proposal will be placed in the text of our First Reading.

The PRESIDENT. — Yes, as a foot-note.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I raised the question because, if this text is adopted, I shall later have a reservation to make with regard to Article 28 of the French proposal, which will also refer to this paragraph.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — Evidently it would ill become me to make any suggestion of an amendment to the French proposal since my Government is not prepared to accept it. At the same time, I rather hope that, if at all possible, we shall be able to make it quite clear what the proposal is. I am a little nervous about adding numerous notes; it will look rather as if we did not know what we were really laying before the public.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I think it is better to put the two texts, one following the other.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — If the French delegation are prepared to accept my Japanese colleague's amendment as an improvement on their suggestion, that is one thing. If not, if I might respectfully suggest it to my Japanese colleague, perhaps it would be better to reserve that until the Second Reading altogether, until we know what the thing really is. I am a little nervous of making the thing too complicated.