M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I should first of all like to say that I am very grateful to the Japanese delegate for the friendly reception he has given to the French proposal and for his appreciation of our efforts at conciliation. If by accepting proposals of amendment we could hope to approach an agreement, we should naturally be prepared to consider such proposals, and particularly that which M. Sato put forward just now. But, now that I have submitted a proposal by way of a compromise, I see no advantage in agreeing to modify it unless such modification will make it easier of acceptance. If I cannot hope to achieve this result by accepting the proposed amendment, I think it preferable to keep my proposal in its original terms.

The President. — M. Sato informs me that he has no objection to reserving his proposal until the Second Reading.


3. British draft, the tonnage of any one ship.

French draft, the tonnage of the largest vessel of war.

4. the calibre of the largest gun mounted in each class of ship.

The calibre of the largest gun mounted in any vessel of war.

The President. — Points 3 and 4 need perhaps not be discussed now. We might leave this text in two columns.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — For the time being as the principle is not accepted, it is useless to discuss the details for the moment.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I have been careful not to intervene in this discussion, my country having no navy, but I think there is a small question of procedure here in which we might perhaps indicate a certain measure of agreement. I should like to point out that in this paragraph the only difference between the British and French proposals is in the figures which will be adopted. As for the moment we are not fixing any figures, it should be easy to find a joint draft.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am not quite sure that I understand M. de Brouckère’s suggestion. I do not think it is possible to take Point 3 without Point 2, because the British conception is that you should have classes and in each class the largest possible tonnage; that is to say, you would have a class (as under the Washington Agreement) of battleships, the largest tonnage of which is 35,000 tons, largest guns 16 inches; aircraft-carriers, say 20,000 tons; cruisers, 10,000 tons, with 8-inch guns. That was agreed to at Washington. If you have further classes as we suggest — not so many as seem to have frightened my Argentine colleague, but at any rate one more intermediate class between the very small craft which we have agreed cannot be limited at all and the cruisers — then you would no doubt have a superior limit for that and a gun limit, and so with submarines. That is really what is implied in this proposal, and I do not think it possible to deal with it separately; it must be dealt with as part of the general proposal.

70. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Naval Armaments. Point 5.

5. British draft, the calibre of the largest torpedo carried by any ship.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I have nothing to say in connection with this paragraph, which has nothing to do with the distinction between classes and total tonnage. It is merely a question: Ought you to limit the size of the torpedo as well as the size of the gun? In Sub-Commission A, British and other experts contended that it was desirable to limit that, since it was an offensive weapon, and in modern warfare it has been, as we know, a very important weapon. That is the point. We are out to limit as much as we can, and, unless there is some very strong reason why torpedoes should not be limited, it appears to me that they ought to be limited in the same way as the guns. There is nothing more to be said about this matter, so far as I can see.

The President. — Does anyone else wish to speak on Point 5?

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — It is very difficult to discuss matters of this sort before we know what general system will be adopted. I reserve my opinion on this point until the Second Reading.

M. Sato (Japan). — We have unfortunately been unable to reach an agreement on the most important points, Nos. 2 and 3.
We are taking no decision now as to the calibre of guns. As Lord Cecil said just now, this limitation is very difficult to decide upon when we do not know what limitation will be applied to ships.

The same is true with regard to the calibre of torpedo-tubes and torpedoes. Lord Cecil said that this was a separate question, to which a different reply could be given. Personally, I do not regard this problem in quite the same way. I should like to treat the calibre of torpedo-tubes and torpedoes on the same principle as the calibre of guns. At the Second Reading, when we know how we are going to limit the ships themselves, we shall be able to consider this problem.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I think there may perhaps be a slight misunderstanding. I agree that the question of the size of guns cannot be discussed now, because the conception is that you will have a different maximum size of guns on the different classes of ships, but the suggestion contained in Point 5 has nothing to do with the classes of ships. We are suggesting that there should, in principle, be one limit for the size of the torpedo-tubes for the total tonnage of all the ships. It is in the direction of total tonnage, if it is in the direction of either of the solutions, but it does not depend on the organisation of the fleet: it is merely a question of whether you ought to limit the size of this offensive weapon. It is not suggested that you should state at the present moment what that size should be. We suggest that that is a matter which could be left to the Conference itself; we are merely saying that, in principle, the size of torpedo-tubes ought to be limited, and we do feel rather strongly that it is wrong not to limit any of these offensive weapons, which are of the utmost importance, if it is possible to do so. It is entirely apart from any question of whether we are going to limit the fleets by classes or by total tonnage. Whichever decision is ultimately arrived at, we should still ask that the size of the torpedo-tube should be limited.

I venture very respectfully to submit those considerations to my Japanese colleague, because it may be that he misunderstood, in the very short observations I previously made, exactly what our proposal was.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I merely wish to add a word to support what Lord Cecil has said as to the desirability of limiting this particular weapon for the reasons he has given, and more particularly, from our point of view, on grounds of competition in destructive weapons of any sort. Whilst taking this occasion to support what Lord Cecil has said, I venture to suggest to him a possible improvement of the definition. Instead of saying “the calibre of the largest torpedo”, he used the expression “the maximum diameter of the torpedo-tube”. Unless my colleagues might be unduly impressed by my expert knowledge on this matter, I do not know why this is the case, but I am so advised by my technical associates.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I accept it for the same reason.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — Mr. Gibson, with typical American humour, has put the situation in a nutshell. This is going to be a contest of experts, and we shall be back again in Sub-Commission A. Not that I have any objection. I am prepared to pursue this discussion. But it is perhaps somewhat futile. We ask if we are going to limit torpedoes and we do not even know if we are going to be able to limit the ships which carry them.

Personally, I am quite prepared to limit torpedoes. If we could limit everything, even the range of all fire-arms, it would be still better. But I fail to see that a torpedo is a dangerous instrument and an ironclad an inoffensive one, and, rather than embark on distinctions of this nature, although personally I have no objections in principle, I should prefer to wait until the Second Reading.

The President. — We shall therefore retain in the left-hand column the British text with the slight modification proposed by Mr. Gibson.


The standard displacement of a ship is the displacement of the ship complete, fully manned, engined and equipped ready for sea, including all armour and ammunition, equipment, outfit, are intended to be carried in war, but without fuel or reserve feed water on board.

This assessment shall be made in metric tons?

The President. — Is everyone agreed in accepting this definition with the words “this assessment shall be made in metric tons”?

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — We are all agreed, even on the metric tons.


French draft.

In assessing total tonnage a fraction only equal to the assessment shall be calculated in the case of vessels of war which have exceeded the age-limit indicated in Table . . . of the Annex.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I do not quite know where we are at this moment. Are we trying to see how much we can agree upon apart from the question whether the main point can be agreed, or are we trying to formulate what is the French proposal and what is
the right to make any concessions on this point which may prove necessary. If we are trying to see how much we can agree upon, then I should have to explain why I hope that this particular proposal will not be insisted upon. I should like some guidance from the President as to exactly what we are trying to do, because I rather gather that my proposal as to limiting the torpedoes, which I think can still be dealt with quite apart from the main question in dispute, has been treated as if it was merely a part of my proposal and has not been dealt with at all as part of the general proposal on which we might arrive at an agreement. I think it is rather important that we should know exactly what we are trying to do; otherwise, it is quite useless for me to argue about anything in the right-hand column, just as it is useless for M. Paul-Boncour to argue about anything that is in the left-hand column.

The President. — Of course, if we can agree, so much the better. This would then be the only text.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — The size of torpedoes seems to me quite the kind of point on which we might arrive at an agreement. I personally am in favour of the policy the President recommends. I should like to see how far we can arrive at an agreement and isolate as far as possible the points on which we are not agreed. I should like to get rid of all the small questions and arrive at an agreement one way or the other about them.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — Sub-Commission A had long discussions on this question and was unable to reach an agreement. The experts gave a number of reasons against accepting a limitation in this branch. I do not say that the French delegation will not accept this limitation, but I prefer to reserve my views until the Second Reading.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — Then we can take this as agreed on First Reading, reserving our opinion for the Second Reading as with other reserved points.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I cannot accept this principle of limitation, but I do not say that, later on, I shall not be prepared to agree to it. I simply say that at the present moment I do not accept it, in pursuance of the opinion expressed by the experts on Sub-Commission A.

This point is by no means negligible. In the case of nations which only retain an extremely small percentage of capital ships, and consequently of big guns, the calibre of torpedoes is of considerable importance.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — We must see what all that means when we come to consider the procès-verbal.

I venture to appeal to the Commission not to adopt this very novel and complicated system. It appears to me to add to whatever system we ultimately adopt with regard to naval tonnage a complication which is very difficult to defend. I understand and very greatly approve of the idea which has been adopted in all proposals for naval disarmament that, when a ship comes to a certain age, it may be replaced, but I do think personally it is a very objectionable plan to say that the ship may be retained as part of the fleet and yet you may build a certain proportion of tonnage in addition to it, on the theory that because it is of such an age it has become of less value. That seems to me to be altogether wrong. If it exists it exists, and you ought not to build any tonnage to add to it. If you come to the conclusion that it is no longer serviceable for the purposes of war, you can replace it.

I hope we shall not enter on the distinction as to whether a ship which is twenty years of age is worth 50 per cent of what it was when it was new, and that when it gets to be twenty-five years old that it will then be worth 25 per cent. All these things will add greatly to the complication and make any practical limitation of tonnage additionally difficult and additionally obscure. The one thing, as M. Paul-Boncour has very often insisted, and quite rightly insisted, to aim at is something clear and simple that everyone understands. I hope, therefore, we may arrive at the conclusion that this proposal ought not to be accepted.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — Lord Cecil appeals to my weak spot when he speaks of the necessity of clearness. For this is what I and indeed all of us are seeking. I will tell you why I should like the French delegation’s position in this question to be made quite definite, at least at the First Reading. It is not that the proposed system is of great importance to us personally; but the idea of this method was put forward by us because it met difficulties which were expressed in Sub-Commission A by countries which, if I may so put it as to hurt no one’s feelings, are not very well off, and are not in a position to replace their ships as quickly as richer countries. The delegations of these countries, and we ourselves, thought it right that, when a vessel had passed the replacement time-limit fixed in the Convention, it should not be counted in estimating the total tonnage of countries which were not in a position to replace it. You are all aware how quickly fashions change in naval matters, and how expensive these changes of fashion are. It is true that the fact of counting these out-of-date ships at a lower tonnage a complication which is very difficult to defend. I understand and very greatly feel, are not very well off, and are not in a position to replace their ships as quickly as richer countries. The delegations of these countries, and we ourselves, thought it right that, when a vessel had passed the replacement time-limit fixed in the Convention, it should not be counted in estimating the total tonnage of countries which were not in a position to replace it. You are all aware how quickly fashions change in naval matters, and how expensive these changes of fashion are. It is true that the fact of counting these out-of-date ships at a lower tonnage is of considerable importance.

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Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — Then it will have to go down as one of those points on which we have not reached agreement.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I always try to meet Lord Cecil's views whenever I can. He evidently wishes to reach agreement on as much of this document as possible. We shall shortly come to a whole page of the British draft which can be accepted. This will represent a considerable volume of agreement, and those who cursorily read the results of our work will be able to say it is extraordinary how these people are able to agree in these matters. There will, however, be a few points on which we shall not be in agreement.

It is now for the delegations of the countries who asked us to take their views into consideration to define these views. If they consider it unnecessary, I am quite ready to yield the point.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — Sweden is one of the countries to which M. Paul-Boncour referred just now as being less well off than others, and obliged to keep their warships even when they had reached a certain age-limit. I do not know if the British delegation intends to stipulate that war-ships which have reached this limit should be scrapped.

I gather from Lord Cecil that the reply is in the negative, but I must also ask him if he considers that war-ships having reached this age-limit should be counted in the total tonnage.

Lord Cecil (British Empire). — Yes.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — In that case, I think it would be only fair to count these ships at only a fraction of their actual tonnage. There can be no doubt that the tonnage of a fleet loses much of its value when it has reached a certain age, and it is only fair that this depreciation should be taken into account.

M. Sato (Japan). — The Japanese delegation's views with regard to the French proposal are as follows.

It is true that the value of war-ships diminishes when they have passed the age-limit, varying according to the class of ships; but the real scope of the clause contained in the French draft can only be accurately appreciated after the percentage left blank has been fixed.

It also seems to me somewhat arbitrary to say that vessels subject to the age-limit suddenly on a fixed date become subject to a specified reduction of the percentage of their real tonnage, particularly as the power of a ship can be reinforced to some extent, irrespective of its age, by making suitable modifications and improvements.

Take, for example, the case of a country having a cruiser of 10,000 tons which has reached the age-limit. According to the French proposal, this ship will only be counted at a percentage of its real tonnage, say 50 per cent. This country will thus have 5,000 tons at its disposal for fresh construction.

I do not know how the percentage figures are going to be determined, but in any case, in the Japanese delegation's opinion, it is too much to ask that this sudden depreciation should be taken into account.

We therefore consider that the clause relating to this point should not be inserted in the text.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — May I just put in a single sentence the difficulty which I feel about this? The proposition amounts to this, that a ship of 10,000 tons twenty-one years old (the period of replacement being assumed at twenty years) is the equivalent of an absolutely new ship of 5,000 tons, whereas the new ship of 5,000 tons is not more than the equivalent of a 10,000-ton ship nineteen years old. The thing is really unarguable, to say that you can reduce to figures that kind of obsolescence by age. Evidently, in the two cases, the country which is entitled to build another ship of 5,000 tons would have a very great advantage over the country whose ship was only nineteen years old.

M. Yovanovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). — M. Paul-Boncour alluded to countries concerned in this question which defended their point of view in the Sub-Commission. I am no expert and I do not wish to repeat once again the advantages referred to in the report by Sub-Commission A. I should, however, like to remind you that my country is unfortunately not a very rich country, and the reckoning of a certain percentage for old ships would be of advantage to it. It is indeed our only compensation for being unable to build new ships.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — Lord Cecil's arguments have not convinced me, in spite of the example he gave. At the same time, it is incontestable that an old ship has a smaller fighting value than a new ship. For this reason, Mr. President — this is a very important question for the small countries — I cannot, even on the First Reading, agree to a text on naval armaments which does not embody a clause of that kind.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I should like to bring my humble complication to this problem. It seems to be pretty complicated, but there is one thing which I think has not been touched on. We say that a ship, on attaining a given age, loses a certain amount of its value, but we have overlooked the possibility of re-conditioning a ship. I do not think I am giving away any naval secrets when I say that we have some very old ships which have been re-conditioned and which are quite as good as they were on the day they were turned out of the shipyard, and that, if we adopt this method of depreciated tonnage, we are
going to risk increasing naval armaments rather than limiting them. A country which has a large ship, on its attaining the age-limit, would have so many thousand tons counted off. It could then be re-conditioned, re-acquiring its original value, and have a smaller ship added to the fleet. I think that should be taken into consideration before we adopt anything so radical as this.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — In Sub-Commission A, a system of total depreciated tonnage was discussed whereby, to take an example, a ship of 3,000 tons was assessed after six years at only 95 per cent of its value and, after fifteen years, at 50 per cent which represented the final figure in a scale of descending values. It seems to me, that in this system Lord Cecil’s objections to a depreciation by as much as 50 per cent disappear. It is only fair, however, to consider that, if we do not adopt this system of gradual depreciation, there is something arbitrary in fixing on a given date after which the tonnage value is suddenly reduced to 50 per cent.

On the other hand, it seems to me just as easy to argue the contrary, and Lord Cecil’s arguments could be used in the case of persons reaching their majority.

I do not think the question is of much importance. We discussed here some time ago the question of recruits and of military effectives. The question was asked whether all military effective were to be counted, including even young men who have only served for one day with the colours and who could not be used. The answer was that they should be counted because it was simpler, but that the high contracting parties would know that among the military effective were men who had done no service and who could not be used immediately on mobilisation.

Very well then: if we are to count among military effective recruits with one day’s training, we may also include ships of over twenty years among naval material. Obviously it is not the same thing, but the position is similar.

The factor can be taken into account when we come to include the figures in the table. Those Powers which are keeping a ship in service that has reached its age-limit will furnish higher figures, and the high contracting parties will know that the figure for total tonnage includes a certain number of ships which have no great fighting value.

The President. — I think you will all agree that there is no necessity to continue the discussion. It is understood that Point 8 is not yet adopted on First Reading.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I cannot accept it as one of the points on which we are in agreement. I regard it as of great importance in itself and of importance as a symptom of the way in which we are going to deal with this subject. Unless we are going to deal with it apart from these excessive refinements, we shall not get anywhere at all. We shall not get any agreement if we discuss in this academic way the details of every solution. I feel very strongly on the question of putting this in, and, if other members wish to put it in, all I can say is that it cannot go in as part of the agreed matter on First Reading.

The Commission rose at 7.20 p.m.
75. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Naval Armaments. Point 10.

British draft.

Except as provided in Article IX of the Treaty of Washington, no ship designated in the present Treaty to be scrapped may be reconverted into a vessel of war.

No preparations shall be made in merchant ships in time of peace for the installation of warlike armaments for the purpose of converting such ships into vessels of war, other than the necessary stiffening of decks for the mounting of guns not exceeding six-inch (152 millimeters) calibre.

No vessel of war constructed within the jurisdiction of any one of the Contracting Powers for a non-Contracting Power shall exceed the limitations as to displacement and armament prescribed by the present Treaty for vessels of a similar type which may be constructed by or for any of the Contracting Powers; provided, however, that the displacement for aircraft carriers constructed for a non-Contracting Power shall in no case exceed 27,000 tons (27,432 metric tons) standard displacement.

In the event of a Contracting Power being engaged in a war, such Power shall not use as a vessel of war any vessel of war which may be under construction within its jurisdiction for another Power, or which may have been constructed within its jurisdiction for another Power and not delivered.

Each of the Contracting Powers undertakes not to dispose by gift, sale or any mode of transfer of any vessel of war in such a manner that such vessel may become a vessel of war in the navy of any foreign Power.

The President. — I suggest that we examine this point paragraph by paragraph.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — So far as the French delegation is concerned, particularly in the case of this Article 10, which is only included in the British proposals, we have no objection to make. This is a repetition of the Washington regulations, and, naturally, France, which was a signatory to the Washington Treaty, respects that Treaty in the same manner as all other treaties which she had signed previously.

I would only like to point out that the second paragraph, which indeed applies one of the Washington rules, makes it quite clear that permission is given for the decks of merchant ships to be stiffened for the mounting of guns not exceeding six-inch calibre. This confirms an argument that I have several times brought forward, namely, that the existence of merchant ships which can be very speedily converted into auxiliary cruisers is a factor of which we must take full account when considering the question of disarmament as a whole.

General de Marinis (Italy). — The Italian delegation fully agrees with this Article 10, which indeed only reproduces one of the provisions of the Washington Treaty, which was signed by Italy. But by very reason of the great importance which the Italian delegation attaches to this paragraph, I would beg to point out that this text does not cover Article XVI of the Treaty of Washington. We attach great value to this part of the draft; but in the text which is before us Article XVI of the Treaty of Washington is not covered, and it is said in the commentary that that point would be dealt with in the discussion on exchange of information. If possible, we should prefer it to be perfectly clear now that Article XVI is accepted.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I have really nothing to say, except that I am very much obliged to General de Marinis. He is perfectly right. In Article 9 of our project the whole of these articles should be re-enacted, in order to make it quite clear that they apply to the new system as well as to the old.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — In the Naval Committee, the delegation of the Netherlands upheld the point of view that only merchant ships which were built and equipped with a view to their being converted into war-ships (auxiliary cruisers) could be regarded as having a military value. The provisions of Point 10, which is equivalent to Article XIV of the Washington Treaty, limits preparations with a view to such conversions. The first sentence of the second paragraph is entirely satisfactory to us; it reads: “No preparations shall be made in merchant ships in time of peace for the installation of war-like armaments for the purpose of converting such ships into vessels of war”. That clause is similar to M. de Brionnère’s amendment with regard to civil aviation.
The second clause of this paragraph is less pleasing to us. It reads: "other than the necessary stiffening of decks for the mounting of guns not exceeding six inches (152 millimeters)."

We propose to add to this paragraph:

"Each of the High Contracting Parties shall communicate to the Secretariat of the League of Nations the name and the tonnage of any vessel thus constructed. With regard to existing vessels of this type, this communication shall be made within two months after ratification of the present Treaty. With regard to vessels to be constructed, the communication shall be made on the date of completion."

I think that we all desire the fullest publicity in order, as far as possible, to eliminate the danger of surprise.

M. Hennings (Sweden). — I should be very glad if Lord Cecil would give me an explanation with regard to the meaning of the first paragraph of Point io.

Lord Cecil told us yesterday that the British delegation did not think that a ship when reaching the age-limit must necessarily be broken up. He added that the various Powers would be entitled to keep their ships after they had exceeded the age-limit, but on condition that they would have to be reckoned in their total tonnage. Now the first paragraph of Point io reads as follows: "Except as provided in Article IX (of the Treaty of Washington), no ship designated in the present Treaty to be scrapped may be reconverted into a vessel of war."

I do not quite understand the exact meaning of the words "no ship designated in the present Treaty to be scrapped", since, according to Lord Cecil, no Power can be obliged to scrap or demolish its war-ships.

I would draw your attention to the fact that this article is identical with Article XIII of the Treaty of Washington. Now the Washington Treaty was based on the very principle that, once a war-ship has reached its age-limit, it should be scrapped.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire).— I hope you will allow me to deal with this last point first and then dispose of Paragraph 1 altogether. Then we can go on to the next. I think if we try and discuss several paragraphs at the same time we shall get into a great confusion.

The answer, I think, to M. Hennings is this: that, under the Washington Convention and let us hope under this Convention — it was provided that certain ships which exceeded what was the limit allowed to the various Powers under that Agreement should be immediately scrapped. I told the Commission yesterday that no less than 7,851,600 tons of ships were scrapped under that provision. They were not old ships; they were in some cases quite new ships. There was a new ship belonging to the Japanese Government which they were good enough to allow to be treated in that way. There were other ships belonging to other Governments which were also treated in that way. It has nothing to do with the old ships. Once the tonnage is allocated to the different countries they can go on keeping it; they are not bound to scrap the old ships at all.

I did not say that ships which had reached a certain age had to be scrapped, but certain named ships, whether they had reached the age-limit or not, had to be scrapped under the Washington Treaty.

The President. — Since no one else asks to speak, I will regard paragraph 1 of Point io as adopted.

The discussion on paragraph 2 was opened.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — The French delegation supports the amendment proposed by the delegation of the Netherlands.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — The suggestion, if I understand it, made by the Netherlands delegation is this: That a list should be furnished of the merchant vessels which have in fact had their decks strengthened so as to carry a six-inch gun, or more than one six-inch gun, but that it is not suggested they should be limited in any way. We are agreed with Sub-Commission A that it is impossible to limit the merchant vessels of a country; and, that being so — I have not any direct instructions on the point — all I can say is that I cannot see any fatal objection at the moment to that suggestion and I will submit it to my Government. In the meantime, it can be inserted in the Convention on First Reading, full liberty being reserved to my Government if on a reflection they should think there was some objection which does not occur to me at this moment.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I see that the Netherlands amendment refers to the name and tonnage of any vessel thus constructed. In the other paragraph to which it refers there is no question of the construction of ships but merely of preparations which may be made for the strengthening of decks, and so on. I think that should be corrected so as to be in conformity with the paragraph to which it refers.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I am much pleased with the reception that has been given to the proposal of the Netherlands delegation and the support that it has received. The interpretation that Lord Cecil has given to the idea which we desired to express is quite correct. As for Mr. Gibson's remarks, I think that they are justified, but that it would be better to deal with this point on the Second Reading. It would perhaps be better not to make changes at this moment, all the more since Mr. Gibson's remark does not affect the substance of the amendment.

The President. — I presume M. Rutgers will not object to our referring this question of drafting to the Bureau.
76. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Naval Armaments. Point 1 (continuation).

The President. — I suggest that we should go back to Point 1, which deals with "effectives."

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — My Government took the view, at the first discussion of this matter, that a limitation of naval effectives was really unnecessary and superfluous, because they were automatically limited by the limitation of the number of ships — that if you limited the ships of a country you limited the crews of the ships, because the ship was no good without the crew, and there was no advantage, but the reverse, in carrying on board a ship more men than were necessary to sail and to fight her. On the other hand, when we discussed it, it was evident that there was a considerable feeling in the Commission that, whether that was true or not, it opened up the possibility — the theoretical possibility, as my Government considered it — that the land forces of a country might be increased by increasing the naval effectives, or by attaching nominally to ships effectives that were really intended to be used on land, and it was pointed out that in recent wars, not only in the world war but in other wars, use had been made of these forces for the purposes of land warfare.

My Government desire in this matter to meet the views of other members of the Commission as far as they can, and they are prepared to agree that the number of naval effectives should be the subject of limitation; but, of course, they have to point out, however, that limitation can only be effected if all the Powers here represented equally agreed to that limitation.

My Government, evidently, could not agree to a limitation of naval effectives unless it was also agreed to by other Powers. I am asked to make that quite clear, though, according to the principles on which we have been conducting these discussions, it is already sufficiently guarded. Further, I should have to say in this as in other matters, if there are any, with respect to naval effectives belonging to the Dominions, evidently they will have to say whether or not they will accept this limitation when they are asked whether they will or will not adhere, to the Limitation of Arms Convention or Treaty, or whatever it may be. That also goes without saying, because they are independent Members of the League of Nations to that extent, and evidently we cannot control them unless they desire to accept any particular provision. However, I think I may say that I do not myself anticipate that any difficulty will arise as things are worked out on that point. The only important qualification that I have to put forward on behalf of my Government is this, that they inform me that administratively it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to limit the number of officers as compared with the number of men.

They tell me that that is so, for a variety of technical reasons, some of which I am afraid I should only murder by trying to convey them to the Commission, but one of which seems to me, at any rate, fairly comprehensible. They say that the number of officers compared to the number of men varies according to the ships in which they are employed. If, therefore, there is a variety in the composition of the fleet, there will be a variety in the proportion of officers to men, and that therefore it would be very difficult, particularly in view of the proposals that are made, allowing a considerable variation in the quality of fleets, to agree to a fixed proportion of officers and men; since, if the character of the fleet were altered, that proportion would have to be altered too. They are content, in spite of that, to have a total limitation of officers and men. Beyond that I am afraid I am not authorised to go, but I venture to think that that carries out all that is essential in this requirement. The British Government themselves were anxious to limit the proportion of officers to men in land forces, because it is evident that if you do not do that there is a far greater power of expansion in an army than there would be otherwise. That reasoning does not seem to apply in the case of a fleet, because, as I have already said, there must always be, quite apart from what we do about the direct limitation of effectives, a limitation from the very nature of the employment of the crew as to the character and numbers which they have.

Therefore, the proposal I have to make on behalf of my Government is that we should accept, at any rate for the time, a limitation of the total of the effectives of the fleet, but should not go as far as to limit the proportion of officers and men.
The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — In so far as the American Government is concerned, it is not practicable to apply to our navy some of the distinctions that have been made in this paragraph on effectives as to the distinction between "home forces," "overseas forces," etc. Our navy is organised for service in all parts of the world according to necessity. The ships and personnel are frequently changed from one part of the world to another. Thus, a ship and its personnel may be doing service in one ocean at one time and at another time very shortly after the same ship and personnel may be doing service in another ocean. The American delegation has consistently urged that we should strive to arrive at conclusions that would be simple, equitable and effective, and, in our opinion, to introduce in a draft Convention such distinctions as to naval personnel and ships as "home forces," "overseas forces," etc., for the navy would only lead to endless confusion and would be utterly impossible of execution. Naval organisations must be dealt with as a whole, and any attempt to separate them into administrative parts for the purpose of evaluating them with a view to reduction and limitation will lead only to confusion. The American delegation, in conjunction with the delegations of the Argentine, the British Empire, Chile and Japan, clearly set forth the views of my Government in the report of Sub-Commission A on page 132, in which views I fully concur and I take the liberty of now repeating those views:

"The above named delegations consider that the term 'naval personnel' refers to all personnel, active and reserve, trained essentially for service afloat. A vessel of war-to-day combines within itself the most highly developed and complicated specialised technical organisation known, in which each unit must be co-ordinated to the fullest degree to insure efficiency.

"To effect this requires considerable time and, furthermore, the necessary training can only be given afloat. Accommodation afloat of ship is restricted and hence an effective limit is imposed upon the number of men who can receive real naval training. It is realised that a certain percentage of naval personnel is employed on shore at schools of instruction and also to carry out essential naval activities related intimately to the fleet, but it should be recognised that such naval activities on shore naturally will be based on the size of the fleet. It may be asserted, therefore, that trained naval personnel and reserves are, in fact, governed and automatically limited by the size of the war fleet."

The delegation of the United States, together with a number of others, has emphasised their opinion that, where definite and tangible objects for limitation exist, as is the case with naval armaments, the addition of auxiliary factors, such as naval personnel, can only complicate the problem of the reduction and limitation of armaments and thus jeopardise seriously our prospects of success.

In conclusion, I should like to say that my Government has given the most earnest consideration to what concessions it is in a position to make in regard to this question. I felt that I should state our views very frankly in order that they might be on record, but I feel warranted in saying now that, provided we can reach some generally acceptable measures for the limitation of fleets by the fundamental method which we all recognise as sound and essential, of limitation by tonnage, the limitation of naval effectives will not, in the view of my Government, constitute an insuperable obstacle. I fear it would be difficult to extend that limitation beyond the effectives that pertain essentially to ship duties, while taking into account that a certain percentage are necessary on shore for the trade schools and the carrying out of other essentially naval duties. My Government would be disposed to deal with this matter very generously, but I do feel obliged to make it abundantly clear than any concession on this point must be made entirely contingent on the reaching of a generally acceptable agreement for the limitation by tonnage.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I only desire to add what I ought to have stated originally, that I entirely agree with my American colleague that, of course, we could not possibly assent to anything which indicated a division of the fleet into home forces and overseas or colonial forces. According to every theory in which we have been brought up in naval matters, a fleet is one, and cannot be divided into sections for the purpose of estimating the number of men who can receive real naval training. Accommodation afloat is restricted and hence an effective limit is imposed upon the number of men who can receive real naval training. It is realised that a certain percentage of naval personnel is employed on shore at schools of instruction and also to carry out essential naval activities related intimately to the fleet, but it should be recognised that such naval activities on shore naturally will be based on the size of the fleet. It may be asserted, therefore, that trained naval personnel and reserves are, in fact, governed and automatically limited by the size of the war fleet."

With regard to the other point made by Mr. Gibson — namely, that necessarily any agreement as to effectives depends upon an agreement as to tonnage — that of course is naturally and inevitably a truth. If we do not arrive at an agreement about the larger matters of naval reduction, it is evident that it would be useless and improper to deal with the smaller matter of the limitation of effectives.

M. Sato (Japan). — We desire to concede as much as possible in order to reach agreement. It is for that reason that, since Lord Cecil informed me of the British Government's new attitude with regard to naval effectives, I immediately asked my Government for fresh instructions. Unfortunately, my Government has informed me that it maintains its opinion that, where definite and tangible objects for limitation exist, it will be utterly impossible of execution. Naval organisations must be dealt with as a whole, and any attempt to separate them into administrative parts for the purpose of evaluating them with a view to reduction and limitation will lead only to confusion. It is evident that it would be difficult to extend that limitation beyond the effectives that pertain essentially to ship duties, while taking into account that a certain percentage are necessary on shore for the trade schools and the carrying out of other essentially naval duties. My Government would be disposed to deal with this matter very generously, but I do feel obliged to make it abundantly clear than any concession on this point must be made entirely contingent on the reaching of a generally acceptable agreement for the limitation by tonnage.
What I can definitely state here and now is that my Government could not under any circumstances agree to a sub-division of naval forces into two categories: home fleet and overseas fleet. In view of the mobility of the fleet, it does not appear possible to make such a sub-division.

I have several times had an opportunity of explaining the reasons for which the Japanese delegation cannot accept such a sub-division. On this question, we are in full agreement with the British, American and Italian delegations.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I have only two words to say. The other day, when we first discussed the question of effectives, we suggested a limitation of effectives in proportion to tonnage. I have had a chance to explain in the committee of the whole House the idea (and we desired to meet their wishes), was that there should not be a number of officers and had therefore met their wishes beforehand — or at least what might have been their wish for the home and colonial forces. The reason for the distinction is exactly the same.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I think in reply to General de Marinis), is that we should abandon the distinction between the home fleet and the colonial fleets. In view of the mobility of the fleet, it does not appear possible to make such a sub-division.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I think there is only one difference after all between the views of Count Bernstorff and the view of the American Government on this point. Count Bernstorff proposes that we should establish some method of limitation of effectives in proportion to the tonnage of the ships, whereas the contention of the American Government is that if you once have the tonnage of the ships, that tonnage automatically limits the personnel, and that it is superfluous to set up some additional method of limitation. I fear we are not quite in accord as to the results to be achieved.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I answer that, to my mind, there is no difference, because we consider that if you say that the effectives are limited automatically by the amount of tonnage, that means that the proportion is established? We thought, therefore, that we were asking the same thing.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I think there is only one difference after all between the views of Count Bernstorff and my own. Count Bernstorff feels that, once you have got the possibility of effecting a limitation, you should embody it in some sort of agreement, whereas we feel that, once we have got that effective limitation imposed by facts, we should leave it at that.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I think that this discussion has been robbed of much of its interest by the statement made by our Japanese colleague and that we cannot therefore reach the single column which is our object in the latter part of this discussion on the First Reading.

That being so, I will merely explain the position of the French delegation on this point.

I naturally can only welcome with pleasure the admission, at least in principle, that the British Government has given to the limitation of naval effectives; that limitation would have been too valuable for me not to make — or I should rather say not to have made — every effort to reach a single text.

Nevertheless, even before the speech of our Japanese colleague, I should have had to make the following reservations: It is quite understood that the agreement which might be reached with regard to naval effectives is subject to the agreement that might be reached on the question of tonnage; the greater involves the lesser. One question is obviously secondary as compared to the other. We quite agree on that. But I would merely take the liberty of pointing out to my colleagues that it is not only the agreement on effectives which is dependent on the agreement with regard to naval tonnage, it is the whole Convention, not merely one point in it. We quite agree on that.

The second point, with regard to which I make no objection (indeed, I said so yesterday, in reply to General de Marinis), is that we should abandon the distinction between the home and the colonial fleets. If we made that distinction, it was for reasons (perhaps exaggerated) of clearness, and, so far as we are concerned, I would say of honesty. In certain colonies we had a sort of the tonnage indeed, such as gunboats, etc., and a few native sailors. We thought it preferable, in order that our figures might be clear, to show them separately. We see no disadvantage in not showing them separately.

The same does not apply to the much more important question as to whether in the total effectives (you see the difference in the use of “total”) we should include seamen (crews, to use a more administrative expression) and officers.

I would not offer any absolute opposition to the British Government’s proposal should we have been able to agree on a single text. But I would wish to make this very important reservation; so far as this point is concerned, we cannot admit of any distinction between land and naval forces. There is no reason either to make any distinction so far as the navy is concerned between officers and men, or to make such a limitation between officers and men in respect of land forces. The reason for the distinction is exactly the same.

So far as land forces are concerned, the idea of those who asked for such a distinction — they did not even need to do so since we made it in the table submitted by the French delegation, and had therefore met their wishes beforehand — or at least what might have been their idea (and we desired to meet their wishes), was that there should not be a number of officers shown out of proportion to the number of men, since that was an indication that these unemployed officers did not correspond to a normal number of rank and file. These were obviously cadres ready for the utilisation of reserves.

The case is exactly the same so far as navies are concerned.
The surplus officers are the obvious commanders of these auxiliary cruisers into which merchant ships can immediately be converted. The administrative difficulty exists. It is undeniable. Exactly the same thing applies to land forces. In a modern army there are large numbers of specialists, and all the very real difficulties which have been pointed out by our colleagues representing the great naval Powers, in order to show that it would perhaps be undesirable to make a distinction between officers and men, are the very same as those found in the case of the problem of land forces.

Therefore, if we had been able to agree on a single text, I could only have accepted it on the first reading, subject to the reservations that either the distinction between officers and other ranks would not be made, or that it should also be made in the case of naval effectives.

With regard to the proportion of effectives which has been referred to, I should like to point out that it was set aside at our First Reading, as a result of the opposition of certain delegations, and set aside even so far as land effectives were concerned.

What was admitted was the distinction and its being made public, but the idea of a fixed proportion was not accepted. The same reasons therefore apply to naval effectives.

M. VALDEZ (Chile). — A few minutes ago, the Hon. Mr. Gibson quoted the declaration to which Chile subscribed in Sub-Commission A. I need not repeat the reasons for which we declared that we could not agree to the limitation of naval effectives. There is also another special reason — the development in Chile of certain administrative services connected with the navy which we did not think that we could limit. That is to say, we could not accept Table II of the French draft as it now stands. Nevertheless, in view of our desire for conciliation, we are ready to consider (nay, more, we think that we can accept) a total limitation, no distinction being made between officers, warrant officers and sergeants, and men, subject, of course, to the eventual decision of our Government, which we referred to on this matter yesterday.

General de MARINIS (Italy). — I have only a few words to say to thank M. Paul-Boncour for accepting my proposal that we should not make a distinction between home and colonial fleets. This proposal is supported by several other delegations. I did not have an opportunity of moving it yesterday. I was very glad to be able to do so to-day.

I should like to add that I am in full support of all that was said by M. Paul-Boncour with regard to the principle on which the limitation of effectives should be dealt with. There is no reason to make a distinction between land and naval effectives. If you take account of officers and regular soldiers in the land forces, a similar principle should be applied to naval forces. If we accept the principle of a total limitation of all naval effectives without any restriction in respect of seamen, warrant officers or officers there is no reason to keep such a distinction, so far as land effectives are concerned.

I therefore entirely support the views expressed by M. Paul-Boncour.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I do not think that my Government will insist upon having separate tables for home and colonial naval effectives. The Netherlands delegation, for the moment at all events, will not oppose limitation by total numbers. It may, however, be worth while to point out that the question of this distinction may once more arise at the moment when Governments have to explain the figures proposed for the various tables; this may partially apply to our country, since our colonies are at a very great distance. Indeed, it is most unlikely that in time of emergency the Netherlands will be able to reinforce their colonial forces from the home establishment.

Lord Cecil, by accepting a limitation of naval effectives, has understood the argument adduced by other delegations to the effect that naval effectives could be used to fight on land; for example, the forces employed on coast defence. At the same time, if I understand Mr. Gibson aright, the American Government would be ready to accept the limitation of naval forces, but only of those on board ship. This would leave a gap in our limitations, for the forces not on board ship, particularly those used for coast defence, would not be limited.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I think I can reassure M. Rutgers with regard to my statement. I think it covers very fully the strictly naval personnel, in that I said we could consider the limitation of the naval personnel that "pertain essentially to ship duties, while taking into account that a certain percentage are necessary on shore for the trade schools and the carrying out of other essentially naval duties." I think M. Rutgers may be under a certain misapprehension as to the organisation of certain other services which in other countries are sometimes under the jurisdiction of the navy. For instance, the coast-guard to which M. Rutgers referred is an entirely separate organisation, which does not come under the orders of the Navy Department in any way in time of peace. While it is organised to a certain extent on a military basis, it is subject only to the orders of the Treasury Department, but passes automatically into the navy on the declaration of war, and to that extent may be considered a peace-time organisation which on measures of mobilisation comes into the naval organisation.

There is another organisation which M. Rutgers may have had in mind, and that is the Marine Corps. But that again is a separate problem, because entirely separate appropriations are made for the Marine Corps and it would have to be considered separately from strictly naval personnel.
M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I should like to thank Mr. Gibson for his explanations, but I am not sure that they dispose of this matter. I gather from them that in case of mobilisation the American coastguards would be attached to the navy. If I understood Mr. Gibson rightly, he is of opinion that this corps would be limited in time of peace. But if we merely limit the naval effectives on board, that rule would apply to formations organised on a military basis; they would not be limited, since they would not be on board ship.

When I made my remarks, I was not thinking primarily of the United States; I was thinking rather of the difference between the position in France and that in my country. If I am rightly informed, the coastguard in France is under the navy, whereas in the Netherlands it forms part of the land forces. If we confine ourselves to limiting naval forces on board ship, it would be sufficient for the Netherlands, for instance, to transfer our coastguard from the land forces to the navy to escape any limitation; the coastguards, not being on board ship, would not be limited. Nevertheless, I understand from what Mr. Gibson has said that the United States does not intend to leave on one side those naval forces which are not on board ship.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I think that for the moment we are safe in resting on my assurance to M. Rutgers that the American delegation is not seeking to avoid any measures of limitation of real effectives, but we can more profitably discuss this question when we come later to the problems more directly bearing upon it. The rather complicated administrative features of this matter will have to be taken up in due course, but the American delegation is merely trying to limit the discussion for the moment to what, under our administration, are really naval effectives, and I can assure M. Rutgers that there is no disposition on our part to conceal or to exempt from limitation anything that should properly come in for limitation.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — Of course, it was only a point of drafting. There was no idea of suspicion on my part.

M. de BroUCKERE (Belgium). — Although we are at present discussing the question of limiting naval effectives, what we really have in mind is the limitation of land forces. Although I have decided not to take part in the naval discussion, as my country was not directly concerned, I think I might intervene here to point out one fact. The question of limitation of naval effectives causes us considerable anxiety. If no such limitation is carried out, the result may be that it will be found impossible in practice to limit land forces for the reasons which M. Rutgers has explained. In certain countries, large bodies of troops which are capable of fighting on land are under the Navy; there are the marines, and artillery guarding the coast which M. Rutgers has explained. In certain countries, large bodies of troops which are capable of fighting on land are under the Navy; there are the marines, and artillery guarding the coast which may be used for other purposes. There are even colonial forces under the navy, which not only include infantry but may form complete divisions of all arms, even comprising cavalry. The case has also been brought to my notice of marines having used mountain artillery. Since even cavalry can be included in the navy, one may wonder what limitation of land forces would be left.

The exchange of views which has just taken place, if it has not led to the drawing up of the text, does, however, appear to have brought us to a unanimous agreement on the principle. It would seem that we are all agreed that, when limiting land forces, we must include all forces capable of fighting on land, whatever be their administrative situation and whatever Ministry they are under. If we have managed to record an agreement on this point, I think that we shall have made considerable progress in our discussion.

The President. — If no one desires to speak, we might close the discussion at this point. Obviously, complete agreement has not yet been reached on the question of naval effectives, but we may hope to arrive at this result on the Second Reading.

We might instruct the Bureau to find a formula clearly indicating the position, with a view to our meeting after Easter.

Agreed.

77. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 1 (continuation).

The President. — I declare the discussion open on Point 1, “Effectives” of air armaments, which has been held over until now.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — In the first discussion of this matter I was not authorised to accept a limitation of air effectives, for the reasons which I then gave and to which I need not return. Further consideration by my Government, I am glad to say, now enables me to accept the principle of limitation of air effectives. My Government desire me to make one observation on the subject which does not affect the agreement in any way, namely, that, owing to the organisation of the British air service, a number of mechanics and other experts of that kind are included in the air force, whereas in many other countries the mechanics are not, as I understand it, included in the air force, though they do work for the air force. Therefore, when we come to the question of numbers, it will probably appear that the British claim for numbers is in excess of the claim of some other countries because of this difference in their organisation. That is a matter which we can discuss when we come to the final Conference on Disarmament. My Government were anxious, as a matter of candour, to make that statement at the earliest stage, in order that the position should be clear. The other condition is
the same as that which I made with reference to the navy, but I think with even stronger reason. My Government feel very strongly that it would be misleading, in the case of the air force, to adopt a division between officers and men. The truth is that the air force in all countries is in a state of growth. It is a very new service. It practically only came into existence for any serious purpose during the late war. It was only just beginning before that, and therefore there are a great many points of organisation on which the different countries differ entirely. Among them is this question of the proportion of officers and men. For instance, in the organisation of the British air force the great majority of aeroplanes do not go into the air unless they are accompanied by, or piloted by, a commissioned officer. That is a rule which the British Government have made, rightly or wrongly. In many countries that is not so; the non-commissioned officers are allowed to act as pilots. Evidently, therefore, the proportion of officers will be very much larger under an organisation such as the British than it would be under an organisation which takes a different view of the proper arrangements for the air force. But there is no purpose whatever in sub-dividing the total effectives into officers and men unless it is for the purpose of comparison and indication of the different forces in service. The instance I have given shows very clearly, I think, that in this case no such comparison is practicable. If you have in the land forces a very exceptionally large number of officers compared to other ranks you are really entitled to assume that in such a case there is some purpose for such a large number of officers, and the purpose that may easily underlie such a number is that the force so organised is really of a more highly aggressive character than a force which has a comparatively small number of officers. That is a serious matter and a matter of legitimate comparison between the forces of the country. When you come to the air force, owing to the fluidity at present of the principles on which air forces are organised in the various countries, no such comparison is possible, and to insist on a division between officers and men in this case would produce such different results in different countries as to cause, not additional information, but additional suspicion and doubt and misunderstanding.

I feel, therefore, very strongly that in this case we should not be driven by a passion for uniformity to insist on applying to entirely different forces with entirely different characteristics exactly the same rule. This is not a case in which the British Government can be accused of desiring to save a force in which it is especially strong as compared with a force in which it is not so strong. Everybody knows that the British air force is by no means the strongest air force in the world. It is not for that reason; it is merely for the reason that the Air Ministry, as I can assure my colleagues, is most anxious to facilitate in every way this movement for the reduction and limitation of armaments. I have had the honour to converse with the chiefs of that Ministry and I can assure the Commission on my own responsibility that there are no people in the whole of my country who are more anxious for the success of this movement. But they do feel that to insist on this division will not promote the real objects of the movement but that it will promote misunderstanding and not clearness, and that therefore they cannot accept the division into officers and men. They are, however, prepared to accept the total limitation of both officers and men.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — I have already stated that my Government would find difficulty in accepting the differentiation between "home forces" and "overseas forces" in this connection. I will not weary the Commission with a repetition of the reasons I have given, as they are already on record, but I feel that I should mention them in connection with this fresh discussion. Furthermore, any inclusion of forces organised on a military basis, either at home or overseas, does not apply to my country as we have no such forces, and I should like to have that clearly borne in mind if it is decided to retain this text. In regard to the last sentence: "They undertake that their distribution shall conform to that laid down in the said tables", I should like to say that my Government cannot bind itself to a fixed and rigid distribution of its air service units. There is no independent air service, it is a component part of the navy and of the army. Each has its own air force, and they are so organised that they must be used when and where either the army or the navy may require them. Any limitation of air personnel for my country would necessarily be composed of two figures, one being the total of air personnel which forms a component part of the army and the other being the total of the air personnel forming a component part of the navy. This is merely a practical and administrative detail.

M. SATO (Japan). — I entirely agree with the opinion expressed by Lord Cecil. We cannot accept a sub-division into officers, warrant officers and sergeants in air effective. I should like to add a few words with regard to the particular situation of my country. Our air force is a recent creation, we have not yet succeeded in establishing a final proportion between officers, warrant officers and sergeants, specialists, etc. It would be very difficult for us at the present moment to lay down such a fixed proportion in a convention. We are, however, quite ready to accept a total limitation of air effectives. We are also unable, for the reasons already given, in the case of naval forces, to accept a sub-division of air forces into home and overseas forces.

Colonel Kasprzycki (Poland). — The Polish delegation welcomes with the greatest satisfaction the agreement which has been reached on the principle of limitation of effective in each of the three categories of armaments; this principle is in entire accordance with the idea of the interdependence of armaments, which we have always maintained.

When our Commission entered on the discussion of the limitation of land effectives, we noticed a tendency to take their real value into account, and to lay down an indirect limitation...
of trained reserves by sub-dividing effectives into their essential elements — that is to say, into cadres and levies — and to consider regular officers, warrant officers and sergeants and soldiers under separate headings.

In the case of air effectives, we must logically ask whether they should also be subdivided in the same fashion. We cannot hesitate in our reply. The three categories of armaments ought to be treated equally in every respect. Is it possible to assert that the relation of the regular officers, warrant officers and sergeants and soldiers of the air force towards the mass of the levy is different from that of the cadres of land formations? Certainly not.

Allow me to put forward some further arguments. First, there is the very special importance of the highly specialised pilots and mechanics. The great majority of this personnel (80 to 90 per cent) is composed of regular officers, warrant officers and sergeants, and soldiers. Let us take the pilots first. It is needless to emphasise their primary importance for aviation. It is absolutely necessary to consider the officers, warrant officers and sergeants who furnish the majority of pilots under a heading to themselves. It is impossible to draw a sufficient number of pilots from the levy or recruits, and the difficulties are increased as the period of service is reduced. The number and quality of the pilots determine the value of the air force itself, and this is true not only in the case of the fighting squadrons, but also for all other categories of aviation.

The material without the pilots is, from the point of view under which we are considering it, quite worthless. I must draw your attention to the fact that material which does not exist in time of peace but can easily be manufactured in a few weeks after the outbreak of hostilities can be utilised immediately if the pilots are available. The situation is different if the pilots have to be trained; that takes whole months.

The second important group among the air officers is that of the observers, who have to be first-rate officers capable of making reconnaissances. Should not the same limitations be applied to air officers as to officers of the land forces?

Finally, take the technical personnel; the mechanics, wireless operators, photographers, etc., whose rôle is also very important. The great majority of these are regular soldiers, warrant officers and sergeants, and it is hard to see why they should not be treated on the same footing as regular soldiers of the land forces.

In view of the arguments which I have now put forward, and in conformity with the attitude adopted by the Polish experts on Sub-Commission A, the Polish delegation would like to see the headings for the air force (regular officers, warrant officers and sergeants and men) further subdivided, over and above what is required for the land forces. We should like to see them divided into pilots and non-pilots. In view, however, of the fact that these proposals met with a certain amount of opposition even in Sub-Commission A, and that we have found no supporters of this principle in the present discussion, the Polish delegation, since it does not wish to prevent a working compromise from being reached, will not, for the moment, insist on this point.

To sum up, the Polish delegation considers that the minimum solution which it would accept, which is also a perfectly just and logical solution, would be the application to the personnel of air forces of the same principle of limitation which has been adopted for land forces; that is to say, separate limitation of trained officers, warrant officers and sergeants and soldiers.

It has been argued that the necessary criteria, from the administrative point of view, are rather more difficult to lay down here than in the case of land forces. We shall have, however, when we come to fix the figures, to set to work and find similar criteria for the different organisations.

For example, when the mechanics form part of the cadres of another arm, this fact will have to be specified in the supplementary calculation of the different headings, and a simple addition will then give the total figures.

It is said that aviation is a new creation and that it is not yet so far developed as to make it easy to give undertakings on the subject of the proportions of trained officers, warrant officers and sergeants and soldiers. I think that all arms are in a process of evolution. Let us look at the proportion of officers, warrant officers and sergeants in infantry regiments in 1914 and again in 1918. The comparison speaks for itself. Proportions have changed completely in four years. Evolution also proceeds in time of peace. New weapons appear with important results for all three categories of armaments.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I have great pleasure in supporting the judicious and interesting remarks which have just been made by the Polish delegate. As regards air effectives, the attitude of the French delegation is exactly the same as it was on naval effectives. In the first place, we are extremely grateful for the effort which has been made to reach an agreement on this extremely important point.

With reference to the concessions which have to be made, my attitude is the same, but I must say that the distinction between the effectives of overseas forces and those of home forces, to which certain delegations are opposed, is one which I abandon with rather more than the usual regret.

The arguments recently put forward on the mobility of fleets and the consequent facility of transporting personnel from the home country to overseas territory and vice versa do not, as I have said, affect the very small units stationed in some of our colonies which the French table had in mind. These arguments are also not applicable to aviation. No doubt one naturally associates the idea of mobility, and consequent facility of transportation, with aviation even more than with navies. But technically, as everyone knows, the situation is different.
We read every day in the papers of splendid long-distance flights, individual long-distance flights; but the collective transportation of organised squadrons is not possible; the gulf of the oceans forbids it. In reality, the collective transportation of organised squadrons from the home country to overseas dominions and vice versa presents almost the same difficulties as does the transportation of land forces.

At the same time, it is undeniably difficult to draw these distinctions in States which do not at present make it. And, obviously, all the provisions of an obligatory character which appear in our Convention must be based on such general principles as to be equally easy of application by all States. Only, as the delegate for the Netherlands so justly remarked when discussing navies, be quite sure that, even if you discard the obligatory distinction between the home country and overseas dominions, you will never prevent nations which possess these two distinct forces from placing this distinction clearly before the whole of the contracting parties in order to justify their figures of effectives.

As to the distinction between officers and men, which has been rejected by some of our colleagues, including Lord Cecil, who rejects it at the moment that he makes us this important concession, my attitude is exactly the same.

For the sake of reaching an agreement, I am willing to give up (but with a regret which I will not conceal) the distinction between officers and men. I make the same reservation as I made just now on naval effectives — that, if this rule is accepted for naval effectives and air effectives, it should be accepted under the same conditions for land effectives. And I beg the Secretariat most urgently, now that, as I hope, we are going to be able to draw up a common text, to take note that the French delegation makes an express reservation to the effect that the same rule must be applied to land effectives.

I most earnestly beg Lord Cecil to believe that I am not animated by desperate yearnings after uniformity. There was a French writer in the seventeenth century who said that “uniformity gave birth one day to boredom”; let us try not to be too gloomy. It is much more than a desire for uniformity. It is something higher than that. It is a need for justice.

Not one of the reasons which have been invoked in the case of naval effectives and air effectives cannot be applied to land effectives.

Lord Cecil has told us that the principle which the British Empire has adopted (as it was free to do) for its air force involves maintaining a much higher proportion of officers, on account of the regulation under which an aeroplane never flies without an officer on board; but I could quote him many cases where analogous reasons might be invoked for land effectives in support of the demand that no proportion should be established (incidentally, we have accepted none, and the Commission has not wished to lay any down) between the number of officers and the number of rank and file.

I venture once again to correct (if I may so express myself) this idea, which seems to me contrary to the real facts, that a disproportion between the number of officers and the number of men in land forces might indicate that a State had aggressive intentions, any more than it would in air or naval forces. Lord Cecil has said that since we have here a certain principle adopted by a State regarding its air forces, no deductions can be drawn from it. We are quite convinced of this. But, when we were examining the problem of land effectives, I quoted a very striking example of a country which, by reducing its period of military service, is often obliged to increase the number of its officers, warrant officers and sergeants, because it has to have more instructors.

If the country in question judges (as it is free to judge), as you judge (as you are free to judge) in the case of air effectives, that by reason of this reduction in the period of service it must, in order to maintain a certain equilibrium with its permanent forces, arrange to call up its levies two or three times a year instead of once only, then immediately the number of instructors at its disposal may have to be doubled or trebled, according as the calling up takes place twice or thrice instead of once only. The moment a country reduces its period of service — which does not generally imply aggressive intentions — it may very well be obliged to give a higher figure of officers, warrant officers and sergeants than it had previously given.

If we push this argument to extremes, we arrive at militias. This is not the usual system in practice, but it is the ideal of many people in many countries. Then we reach the following results — the rank-and-file spend a very short time with the colours, while the number of officers warrant officers and sergeants is increased. The disproportion is obvious. Consequently, the reasons are the same for the other two categories of armaments, and the rule ought also to be the same.

We may perhaps find a working compromise in the Second Reading. Here we come again to this idea of total limitation, which is obviously at the heart of the limitation of naval effectives, as of air effectives. I agree, but then we ought also to have total limitation for land effectives, and we must have publicity with regard to the organisation of armies and their distribution into officers, warrant officers and sergeants and men. In this case, each country will be free to fix what proportion it likes; but it will be obliged to inform the other contracting parties of it.

I only touch on this question. The moment has not yet come for us to seek a working compromise of this nature. This will be the object of the Second Reading. I will confine myself to saying that I am very anxious to reach a common text, and that I demand that this common text be based on the application of the same rule to the three forms of armaments.
Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I see that the discussion on air effectives is drawing to a close. I should, therefore, like to make a quite small reservation in a few words; have not changed my opinion on the question of trained reserves.

The question of trained reserves is for us one of principle, and one of the highest importance. Personally, I should be unable to accept any solution of the problem of reduction of effectives which did not cover trained reserves. I do not want to repeat all my arguments, because repetition is useless.

My reasons are the same as those which I have already set out as regards land effectives and trained reserves of air effectives. I simply wished to repeat that I have not changed my opinion.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am not going to enter now on the question of trained reserves, which Count Bernstorff has just raised. That is a matter which, if we are to discuss it, must be discussed on the Second Reading. I only want just to emphasise that I am afraid I am not convinced that there is no distinction in this matter between the air forces and the land forces. The Polish delegate, in his interesting speech, emphasised the desirability of a limitation of pilots and observers. That might or might not be desirable. It is not before us now, because he withdrew the proposal, and it is not a matter which I would desire to discuss; but it does indicate that there is a great distinction in the air force between the officers and men which does not exist in the land forces. The officers and men have not the same distinction of duties as they have in the other services, because the real distinction is between pilots and observers and the other people attached to the air force. It seems to me, therefore, that there really is a fundamental difference between the two organisations; but a much more fundamental difference is the one to which I ventured to allude in my opening remarks, and to which I regret to note that none of my colleagues has alluded, and that is that the air force is an organisation which has not reached its maturity at all. It is in the process of growth, and therefore any attempt to tie it down by strict rules and regulations is bound to be impracticable at the present stage. We have not really got sufficient knowledge or experience to apply to the air force limits which may properly be applied to the older forces. That does seem to be a fundamental difference between the air force and the other arms — that you cannot apply the same rules to the three forces. However, I do not seem to have succeeded in moving those of my colleagues who tie themselves to the formula that you ought to have the same for all three services. I suppose it is national but I hate these general principles; they seem always to mislead you, always to lead you into what is really injustice on the pretext of being excessively just. That, I suppose, is due to having been born in the island from which I come.

With regard to the other matters, I need not say any more. I personally have no desire to abolish, in this case, the distinction between home and colonial services, and I agree with M. Paul-Boncour that, whether you abolish that in form or not, undoubtedly it will play a great part when you come to the consideration of what numbers should be allotted. I personally should rather have kept it, but I do not attach great importance to it.

I am grateful to M. Paul-Boncour for agreeing to a common text in this case, and, of course, I cannot have any kind of objection to the note that he desires to attach to that common text. I can only say that, so far, we have made a great many concessions. We have not had many concessions in return.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — Non multa, sed multum!

The Commission rose at 12.30 p.m.

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TWENTY-NINTH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Tuesday, April 12th, 1927, at 4.30 p.m.

President: M. Loudon (Netherlands).

78. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Naval Armaments. Point 10 (continuation).

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — If you will permit me, Mr. President, I will revert to the question of the enumeration of the mercantile vessels with strengthened decks alluded to by M. Rutgers this morning. I feel on reflection that there is a difficulty about the question, which is as follows: Hitherto our principle has been only to consider armaments that could be used immediately without mobilisation. We adopted that principle right through in all the armaments, and evidently it is one of the principles you must adopt for all armaments or for none. None of these vessels would be immediately available without mobilisation; they would all have to be put into a position of being utilised as auxiliary cruisers, and therefore I quite see that some difficulty might be felt in treating them in this convention in another way. We are trying to deal with other reserves, and until we deal with other reserves it is very difficult to deal with what are, in fact, naval reserves and not immediately utilisable forces.
I mention this because I rather gave the Commission to understand that I was accepting it subject to anything my Government might say, but I think I must vary that phrase and say that all I can do is to submit it to my Government without giving any undertaking in regard to the question at all.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — There is no question of disregard these ships. Our proposal really constitutes an amendment to the British draft, which, indeed, confines itself to reproducing the text of the Washington Treaty. Now this Treaty does not, any more than the British proposal, leave on one side this class of ships. The question which arises is not whether these ships should or should not be left on one side, but whether or not they are to figure in a public statement.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I quite agree to that and will submit the matter to my Government. I cannot say further than that at the present moment.

79. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 1 (continuation).

M. Yovanovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). — I do not intend to prolong the discussion by repeating the arguments put forward this morning by M. Paul-Boncour and the Polish delegate in favour of applying to the limitation of air effectives the principle adopted for the limitation of land effectives. The three categories of armaments form a single whole, and I think that it would be absolutely justifiable, and even useful, to apply the same method to them.

I followed Lord Cecil's speech this morning very carefully. I understand the difficulties which he pointed out; nevertheless, I think it possible to find a formula which, while safeguarding the application of the same principle to the three categories of armaments equally permits its application to the limitation of air effectives.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I should like to make the Italian delegation's position quite clear regarding the question of air effectives. We do not refuse to limit them and we accept all the arguments put forward by those who advocate their limitation.

As to the method of application, the Italian delegation shares M. Paul-Boncour's point of view and is of opinion that there is no occasion to consider land, sea and air effectives from different points of view. The same principle should be applied to all these effectives. We therefore accept total limitation of air effectives without distinction between officers, warrant officers and sergeants and other ranks, just as we have accepted it for naval effectives, but on the same condition as the French delegation proposed, that is to say, that this same method should be applied to land effectives.

I come now to the distinction between home air forces and overseas air forces, a distinction which, since the beginning of our discussion on aerial armaments, I have said we are not able to accept. I am glad to see that M. Sato and Mr. Gibson share my view to-day.

If I correctly understood him, M. Paul-Boncour will have difficulty in abandoning this distinction. I do not wish to raise a technical discussion, but I should like to make a few reservations regarding the general application of the technical arguments M. Paul-Boncour adduced to show that this distinction can be better justified with respect to air forces than to naval forces. I do not think that this would be so in many cases, but I will not insist on the point. I hope, however, that M. Paul-Boncour will apply to the distinction between home air forces and colonial air forces the same principle which he has suggested for the total limitation of air effectives — a principle which I am disposed to admit.

The French delegate said that he would accept this total limitation, but only on the condition that it was accompanied and supplemented by the publication of certain supplementary data. I take this publication to mean that at the Conference each country, when undertaking to give a single total figure for its air effectives, would furnish at the same time a statement justifying this figure — that is to say, it would indicate how it had arrived at the estimation of its total figure; it will consequently have to publish the number of men, non-commissioned officers and warrant officers and other ranks, just as we have accepted it for naval effectives, but on the same condition as the French delegation proposed, that is to say, that this same method should be applied to land effectives.

I (continuation).
the British draft — and that it is not a question of principle for him. If we agree on this point, the publicity which we undertake to give to the distribution of air forces will, I hope, suffice to show this distribution as Lord Cecil wishes.

Finally, I should like to say that I support Lord Cecil’s views as regards merchantmen. The Italian delegation agrees with his statements regarding the amendment proposed by the Netherlands representative. I may also add to Lord Cecil’s remarks that it would be very difficult to establish a clear distinction between ships whose decks are sufficiently stiffened to carry guns and ships with unstrengthened decks. The Italian delegation is therefore in complete agreement with the British delegation.

Colonel Kasprzycki (Poland). — I must apologise for rising to speak again, but the Polish delegation thinks it very important that an effort should be made to settle this very important question and that nothing should be omitted which would help us to obtain a definite result.

The British delegate did me the honour to refer to two points in my speech this morning, but I fear that a slight misunderstanding has arisen.

What I pointed out this morning as conforming to our point of view was not a mere distinction between pilots and observers but the idea that, in aerial armaments, the factor of personnel is more important than in any other arm, because of its specialisation above all as concerns flying personnel. Until we are able to direct aircraft by means of wireless, the pilot will be a sine qua non in the operation of the aircraft.

We are all endeavouring to diminish the threat of immediate aggression and to limit the striking power of a possible aggressor who might disturb world peace. As the German delegate has pointed out many times, this unhappy aggressor would have to fight against all of us. I very much hope that we shall rapidly attain such a degree of security.

But, in the meantime, we must do what we can to lessen what is perhaps the most dangerous form of aggression, that is, aerial warfare. We cannot allow the formation of flying personnel to be exempt from all limitation. If we have abandoned direct limitation of pilots we must, all the more, insist at least on the necessity of an indirect limitation by limiting cadres. I hope my explanations will have made it clear that this is a considerable concession on the part of the Polish delegation.

I have followed with much interest the arguments of those delegates who, unfortunately, cannot go farther along the road of compromise. While reserving the right to reopen this question at the Second Reading, I would suggest another compromise solution. We have been told that it is difficult to make a distinction between officers, warrant officers and sergeants and specialist personnel. The organisation of the different armies, especially as regards aviation, is very varied. On the other hand, we want all the same to limit a factor which is of capital importance, that is, the factor of air specialists. As I have said before, this factor is recruited, in all armies, principally from among professional personnel and very much less from the annual contingent. Could we not then find a solution, by confining ourselves to limiting personnel under two headings only instead of three or six? One of these two headings would deal with the annual contingent, the other with professional cadres. This second heading would comprise officers, warrant offices and sergeants and professional specialists. This would at least be a good way of getting round the difficulty.

I should like to raise yet another question — the question of what has been called “the infamy of aviation”. This morning we were reminded that it was difficult to foresee what the future evolution of this form of armament will be. This objection is not so serious as it has been stated, since we all agree that the period during which this Convention remains in force must be limited. It seems that everybody agrees that the undertakings regarding naval armaments shall bind the High Contracting Parties for ten years, undertakings for land forces for five years, and limitations of aerial armaments for an even shorter period, for example, two, three or four years. It will thus be quite easy for us to adapt our undertakings to the technical progress of air forces.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am very much obliged to the Polish delegate for his further contribution, which I think is an exceedingly valuable and interesting one. I am not quite sure that I understand his suggestion of a compromise. Of course, he does not forget that we have no annual contingent. We have no conscript army in England, and therefore we have no annual contingent. I do not know, therefore, that his suggestion would apply to the British air force at all; but, if it does, I am not sure that I know what he means by “specialists”. As far as I know, we have no special category of specialists beyond the actual artisans who are employed in the business of mending and putting together and keeping in order the machines. I could not agree to put them in a different category from the other soldiers in the air force; indeed, I am afraid that, though the suggestion is an interesting one, nobody would be able to accept it, least of all the French delegation, because it would introduce a new principle of classification, to which I understand they are opposed. Therefore I am afraid it will not do as a compromise, but I am none the less extremely grateful to the Polish delegate for the spirit in which he has made such a proposal.

Colonel Kasprzycki (Poland). — I have not, properly speaking, made a proposal, but only a suggestion. It certainly involves a system applying rather to conscript armies, but we have already adopted several similar methods.
I merely suggested that we have two columns and that we indicate in the first everything which is not part of the annual contingent; this would comprise officers, warrant officers and sergeants and professional specialists. The other column would show the annual contingent.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I accept that proposal.

Count Clauzel (France). — I had hoped that M. Paul-Boncour would be able to reply personally to General de Marinis, but he unfortunately has another engagement.

I should like in his name to thank the Italian delegate for his courteous words when he said just now that he would support M. Paul-Boncour’s method for the total limitation of air effectives in the same way as for other effectives. As regards the distinction between home and colonial effectives, M. Paul-Boncour was glad yesterday to be able to satisfy a point raised successively by General de Marinis and M. Sato regarding this distinction in naval forces. Unfortunately, the question is not quite the same for air effectives, especially as it has been the great desire of M. Paul-Boncour, and, I may say, of the French Government — this was formally indicated in our delegation’s instructions — to apply the same regulations and the same method to air effectives as to land effectives. Nevertheless, M. Paul-Boncour will certainly be very much interested in the remarks which General de Marinis has just made regarding publicity, and the Italian delegate may be sure that the French delegation will examine this question very carefully and will always do its best to find a common basis of agreement. This desire to establish one method for land and air effectives leads me to say to the Polish delegate and to Lord Cecil that the Polish delegate’s request is not in any way contradictory to the French proposal. I would only point out to the Polish delegate that the first distinction which he contemplated between pilots and observers would perhaps be a little complicated, but I think that he will be quite satisfied if we keep the formula which figures in the French table — that is to say, the distinction between officers, warrant officers and sergeants and other ranks. This formula is, at any rate, one on which we can all agree.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I think there is a little misunderstanding on the part of Count Clauzel. The situation this morning was that after discussion the British Government explained that they were able to accept a limitation of the total personnel employed in the air service, but that they were not able to accept, for reasons which I then gave, a division of that personnel into officers and non-commissioned officers and other ranks. That was the position we had reached this morning, and M. Paul-Boncour had been good enough to say to us that in the circumstances he would accept, as the text of the First Reading, limitation of the total personnel of the air force, subject to his reserve that on the Second Reading he would return to the proposition of the inclusion of officers; and, if he were unable to obtain that for the air force, then he would ask that the same system should be adopted with regard to land forces. That was the position we had reached this morning. Then the Polish delegate has now made a new proposal. He says that, assuming that we cannot agree to the distinction between officers, non-commissioned officers and men, we might at any rate agree to the distinction between professional soldiers and conscript soldiers. If you look at Article H, which we adopted with regard to land effectives, he proposes that, if we cannot apply the first paragraph, we should at any rate apply the second paragraph to the air effectives as to the land effectives. As far as that is concerned, I am quite ready to accept the suggestion, if it meets with the approval of other members of the Commission. It evidently does not affect me, and therefore I am ready to accept it.

Colonel Kasprzycki (Poland). — I must add a few words in explanation of my suggestion. I explained it in reference rather to the conscription system, but I think that we may be able to find, perhaps by analogy, a similar system which could be applied also to voluntary armies.

I cannot, at the moment see a solution, but I can imagine it. For example, if we replaced the words “annual contingent” by the words “other ranks”, we should already be approaching a system which it would perhaps be possible to adapt to the two methods of army organisation. I should like to emphasise again that this is not a definite proposal but rather a suggestion on which I should like to know the other delegates’ opinions.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am afraid that that does not carry us any further. It is obvious that that would merely apply to the voluntary army the system to which I object, while not applying it to the conscript army.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — I hold to the views which I explained to you this morning and have nothing to add.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I thought that we were on the brink of an agreement, and I note with great regret that this is not so. In these circumstances I am obliged to inform the Bureau that I cannot accept Article I as it stands; it is evident that we are not agreed on it.
Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — Do you mean the question of colonial forces?

General de Marinis (Italy). — Yes.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — So far as I am concerned, I will accept either solution, either to divide them or not to divide them. I do not think, from my point of view, it has any great importance. You either divide them formally in the Convention or, when you come to make your application for numbers, you say in fact we want so many thousand men, or whatever it may be, because we want so many to man our overseas forces and so many to man our home forces. I do not think it matters a bit whether it is put one way or the other.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — As regards the special point of air effectives, which are not very considerable (there are, indeed, possibilities of transfer, which, though much less than has been stated, may justify to a certain extent the objections raised), it must be understood that any concession I may make does not denote any weakening of our general position, which has been stated, may justify to a certain extent the objections raised), it must be understood not very considerable (there are, indeed, possibilities of transfer, which, though much less than

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — With regard to Point 3, the reservation that I made was with reference to the question of including "reserve aeroplanes and dirigibles held at the disposal and forming an integral part of that formation". I have communicated with my Government on that point and have received in reply a statement that no such reserves exist, properly speaking, in my country. There are no reserve aeroplanes and dirigibles held at the disposal and forming part of a formation; that is to say, that, naturally, when a squadron of ten or twelve aeroplanes is on service there are attached to it from the general reserve two, or it may be three, other aeroplanes, but they do not form an integral part of that squadron. On the contrary, they are constantly changing; they come in and out of the general reserve and are part of the general reserve and must be treated as part of the general reserve. The Commission as a whole were agreed that it was at this stage impracticable to attempt to limit the general reserve and therefore evidently, so far as we are concerned, we cannot limit part of it unless we limit the whole of it. I agree with great reluctance that it is impossible at this stage to limit the general reserve. Any such limitation could be evaded with such extreme ease that it would really be unwise to impose it at the present stage of our discussion. I am sorry to have to arrive at that conclusion. In those circumstances, I do not know that my Government would very much object to this phrase being inserted if it were inserted on the clear understanding that, in point of fact, it had no application to the British air force.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I thank Lord Cecil for the spirit of conciliation of which he has just given fresh proof. Unfortunately, I do not know whether in practice this proposal would lead us very far. Let us take as an example a squadron of six aircraft, which is generally composed of more than six machines, either seven, eight or nine. The question arises whether the squadron must be counted as six machines or as seven, eight or nine. In many countries, supplementary aircraft are an integral part of the squadron, and we therefore asked that they should be included. Lord Cecil now tells us that in his country the organisation is different, and that these aircraft form a part of the general reserve. This is a difference of administration and I realise its importance. But this importance is administrative, not military. If we kept the sentence in question, after Lord Cecil's explanation, we should arrive at the following result: a squadron of six aircraft would be counted as six in England and nine in Belgium. This procedure would only produce apparent agreement between us. If Lord Cecil's attitude is final, if the British delegation thinks that we cannot limit the number of aircraft which go to make up the squadrons, I fear that the only solution will be to revert to the first formula; that is to say, the formula which provided for the least measure of limitation. We shall then have made no progress along the path of limitation.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am much obliged to M. de Brouckère, but his explanation really shows that whatever we do we shall not have a satisfactory result if we include these machines. He tells me that in a squadron of six there are two or three reserve machines. I am told that in a squadron of twelve we have only two, or it may be three, reserve machines. Therefore, we should be doing an injustice to Belgium if we said she had (taking a double squadron, which would be the comparable thing to our squadron) eighteen machines
when we had only fourteen. For actual fighting purposes we should be exactly equal, but Belgium would appear to have eighteen and we should appear to have fourteen machines. I think, therefore, that in order to give a really clear and definite picture it is better to adhere to the number of squadrons actually in use, because these reserve aircraft are merely to take the place of those which become useless through some accident or by some other means; they are not to be used at the same time as the squadron, and do not form part of the squadron in that sense. Therefore, to know what the fighting strength of a country is you really want to know how many actual squadrons it has got and what the number in each of those squadrons is, and, while I agree with M. de Brouckère that it is unfortunate always to cut down the larger phrase, I believe you will get a more accurate picture of the fighting air strength of a country if you adopt the smaller phrase. In any case, my instructions are quite clear and definite and it is impossible for me to take two or three machines out of the general reserve without dealing with the whole of the general reserve at the same time.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I am sorry that our discussion is leading to repetitions of arguments which have already been put forward. I will therefore confine myself to a few words. The discussion between M. de Brouckère and Lord Cecil has proved to me more clearly than anything that has yet been said that the view of the German Government is sound. That view is that we should reduce and limit all material. If M. de Brouckère's proposal were accepted, a large quantity of material would not be limited; Lord Cecil, on the other hand, holds that it is impossible to limit material in reserve owing to the absence of supervision.

For these reasons, I repeat, it is the opinion of the German delegation that all material in service and material in reserve must be limited and that we should base the convention upon the good faith of the parties. Unless we accept this principle of good faith, I am afraid that we shall never succeed in concluding a convention, for it will be impossible to supervise everything that we undertake to limit and reduce.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I do not think that it is at the present moment of much use to enter upon a general discussion regarding the necessity of limiting material in reserve and still less to anticipate to-morrow's discussion on supervision. Nor does it seem to me particularly desirable to continue the discussion of this special point. I am reminded of Lord Cecil's little story of the thirty reasons why the Lord Mayor did not ring the bell, of which the first was that he had no bell to ring. As Lord Cecil tells us that he has no instructions from his Government, I do not think that our Commission can continue this discussion. As things are, and as I consider it impossible to treat British aviation differently from Belgian aviation, we shall have to give up the idea of certain forms of limitation which we had hitherto thought possible.

The President. — If you are all agreed, then, we will delete the last words of Point 3: "and to reserve aeroplanes and dirigibles held at the disposal and forming an integral part of that formation".

Point 3 was adopted with this deletion.

81. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 4 (continuation).

The President. — The discussion of Point 4 is now open.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — With regard to this point, I am able to say that the British Government withdraws its objection. It is a point to which a great many of my colleagues attached a great deal of importance (I hope they will not think me unduly tenacious of my opinion if I venture to add, an undue importance); however, they did attach a great deal of importance to it. The question is whether aeroplanes based on aircraft carriers and the like should be included in the general limitation of aircraft. We thought that the limitation of aircraft carriers in itself limited such aircraft, but it was pointed out to us that, though that might be in practice the case, at the present moment such a gap in the limitation might easily lead to considerable evasion. That point of view was taken into consideration by my Government and still less to anticipate to-morrow's discussion. Nor does it seem to me particularly desirable to continue the discussion of this special point. It can be dealt with at a later stage.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am reminded of Lord Cecil's little story of the thirty reasons why the Lord Mayor did not ring the bell, of which the first was that he had no bell to ring. As Lord Cecil tells us that he has no instructions from his Government, I do not think that our Commission can continue this discussion. As things are, and as I consider it impossible to treat British aviation differently from Belgian aviation, we shall have to give up the idea of certain forms of limitation which we had hitherto thought possible.

The President. — If you are all agreed, then, we will delete the last words of Point 3: "and to reserve aeroplanes and dirigibles held at the disposal and forming an integral part of that formation".

Point 3 was adopted with this deletion.
Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I ought to explain that my concession is of course dependent on all the members of the Commission ultimately being in the position to make the same concession.

Point 4 as set out in right-hand column of the question was adopted, note being taken of M. Sato’s reservation.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — We are often informed that the President notes the adoption of a text. I should like to know what this means, since the present text is certainly not adopted unanimously, numerous reservations having been made by myself and other delegates. Does it mean that we pass on from one point to another without having obtained unanimity on a given point, or does it mean that we cannot agree to it?

The President. — I will be careful to say each time “if there is no objection, the point is adopted.” If there is the least doubt, I hope the delegations will inform me of the fact.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — With regard, for example, to Points 1 and 3, the German delegation has made reservations. Therefore, if these points are adopted, it is naturally subject to our reservations.

The President. — Naturally.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am not quite sure of the exact way of establishing the agreement which I understand has now been arrived at on that point. I was not considering so much the question of the exact text, but the point is this. A discussion arose on a previous occasion whether the machines that existed in schools, though they form, I suppose, part of formations organised on a military basis, were or were not included. We said at that time we could not have anything to do with the machines in schools. Since then I have consulted my Government and I understand now its position is: Yes, certainly, if they are really part of the combatant air force, but not if they are merely old machines for sending recruits out to see whether they know how to fly and that kind of thing — not in any sense fighting aeroplanes. Then of course it would be absurd to include those; they must be combatant aeroplanes. What exact form of words ought to be adopted, I think, perhaps we can leave to the Bureau, who will no doubt consult air experts on the subject.

Count Clauzel (France). — The term “fighting machines” does not exist in French air force terminology. We say simply “military machines”, whatever their age. It is impossible to distinguish, according to their age, aircraft in the schools which is used for the training of young pilots. The only expression to use is “military machines”.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — We are getting on to very tiny points now, and I do not think we shall get very much nearer by a discussion across the table of such very technical matters as this. It is quite evident that no one would wish to include in the fighting force of a country a machine which no one but a lunatic would send to take part in a combat. There may be a difference in the organisation of the schools in France from that which exists in England. I understand there are a certain number of machines in the schools in England which are really not only of no value for fighting purposes but which no one but a lunatic would ever use for fighting purposes. It is desired to make it quite clear that only those which really are capable of being used for fighting purposes should be included. I should have thought that that is a very technical question. On the principle of it I should not have thought there could be any dispute. It does not affect, I suppose, more than a very small number of machines altogether. I suggest if we leave it to the Bureau, who will no doubt consult with air experts on this matter, they will probably be able to arrive at a satisfactory formula which will satisfy everyone.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I quite agree with Lord Cecil that there is no necessity to continue the discussion of a purely technical point. I imagine Lord Cecil was mainly referring to training machines with a very low engine power and which are only used in the schools.

The President. — Point 4 is adopted as set out in the right-hand column and the Bureau will be entrusted with the drafting.

82. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 5 (continuation).

General De Marinis (Italy). — I think that, as the French delegation has accepted, with regard to point 1, the principle of considering the air force as a whole eliminates the distribution between home and colonial forces as stated in Point 5.

The President. — If everyone agrees, the drafting of Point 5 will be left to the Bureau.

M. De Brouckère (Belgium). — I confess I am not quite clear where we have got to. If I understand aright, we adopted Point 1 with the reservation of the German delegation and after explanations exchanged between the French and Italian delegations. This Point 1 said, “The High Contracting Parties agree to limit the number of men on service . . . to the effectives fixed in Tables I, II, III, etc. . . . They undertake that their distribution shall conform to that laid down in the said tables”.

Now as to Point 5, we must know what tables to maintain. These tables were intended not only to mark the distinction between home air forces and overseas air forces but
to distinguish also between air forces attached to the armies and those attached to forces organised on a military basis. I cannot help thinking that this all requires to be somewhat revised and overhauled, since the texts that we are in the course of adopting do not quite agree.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — Agreement was reached on Point 1 after the French delegate had abandoned the distinction between home air forces and overseas air forces, thus accepting the proposal put forward by Mr. Gibson, M. Sato and myself. On that basis, we reached an agreement in which Lord Cecil also concurred. It goes without saying that Point 1 must be modified as follows : the expressions “home forces”, “overseas forces and their reinforcements”, “formations organised on a military basis and stationed in the overseas territories” are deleted, since these distinctions are no longer required.

Nevertheless, we must not accept the text without it having been read to the Commission, since that would risk reopening the whole discussion later. It would therefore be well to settle it here, only leaving to the Bureau to make the text clearer by changing a few words.

Count CLAUZEL (France). — Is there any objection to keeping the tables of distribution? The French delegation conceded the point with regard to limitation, but that does not prevent us from retaining the tables, which would be very useful from the point of view of publicity.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — We are now in exactly the same position in which we found ourselves this morning in regard to naval limitation. We agreed to make no distinction between the home fleet and the colonial fleet, and we therefore did away with the tables. As regards air forces, we are now agreed that there shall be no distinction between the home air force and the colonial air force; here, too, we must therefore do away with the tables.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — It has been suggested by members of the Commission that the drafting should be referred to the Bureau. Personally, as a member of the Bureau, I should be willing to undertake this work on condition that we are first told what we have to draft and that we should know exactly what it is that the Commission wants.

Several opinions have been expressed. Some wish to abolish limitation by categories and also publicity by categories; at any rate, they would like to abolish all distinction between home forces and colonial forces. In their case the drafting would present no difficulties. Instead of three tables, only two would be required, one for the army and the other for forces organised on a military basis.

Other members of the Commission — Count Clauzel and M. Paul-Boncour, I believe, are among them — would like to abolish categories for purposes of limitation but to maintain them for publicity.

The simplest solution therefore would be to keep the tables, whereby the High Contracting Parties undertake that the distribution of their material shall conform to the tables. In that way the tables would serve no other purpose than that of publicity.

In both cases, therefore, I think the drafting will be easy, but we must know which of these two opinions finds acceptance by the Commission.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I am not going to attempt to go into detail, but I should have thought a drafting of this character would be satisfactory: “The High Contracting Parties agree to limit the number of men on service”. With regard to land forces, you would keep the tables exactly as they are. With regard to the sea forces, you would have merely one table, because there is to be no distinction at all, and you know that there is no such thing as a volunteer fleet. With regard to air forces, you would have the two tables indicated by M. de Brouckère just now, i.e., the total and the voluntary formation. With regard to publicity, I did not quite understand M. Paul-Boncour to make a definite proposal about publicity. He is here now, so he will be able to explain exactly what he did mean. What he thought was that possibly when we came to the Second Reading we should be able to devise some system of publicity which would meet his view; but, in my view, for the purpose of publicity you do not want tables stated in the Convention but an annual return made by the High Contracting Parties in exactly the same way as they make other annual returns for purposes of publicity. Therefore, it would not come into these tables, it would come into a different system altogether, namely, the annual returns of publicity — similar, in fact, to what are published in the Armaments Yearbook of the League.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — I entirely agree with what Lord Cecil has just said. That is why I withdrew my reservations to Point 5. I had understood that we were pronouncing upon the tables proposed for land effectives and that we should now have one table for naval forces and two tables for the air forces, one for the military effectives, the other for forces organised on a military basis.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — That is a question to be settled on Second Reading. As soon as we know what we can do in regard to land effectives, we shall be able to say what can be done as regards the other effectives.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — Lord Cecil and I agree with regard to these tables. Is M. Paul-Boncour raising objections?
M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I am raising no objections, but I wish to reserve my decision until the Second Reading. I want to know what decision will be taken concerning land effectives before I give my opinion as regards air effectives.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — Surely the thing is quite clear now. We are agreed, as I understand it, and I entirely follow M. Paul-Boncour’s view. We are agreed that for the First Reading we must put something into our text; we are to put something on the lines that I ventured to indicate just now. That is the First Reading text. When we come to the Second Reading text M. Paul-Boncour very justly says: “I must reserve my full rights to deal with the whole situation when I see what we finally decide in the case of land effectives.” I think that is quite legitimate and right, and I cannot conceive what difficulty remains. The only thing I was going to add was that I understood M. Paul-Boncour sketched the possibility, in addition to these tables, of a system of publicity, and I should be very glad to see his definite proposal on that point, as I think it is probably a very useful proposal. That would come not in here at all but in the general publicity proposals. He said this morning that he was not prepared to make a definite proposal, but he made that suggestion for our consideration.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — I agree; but when I referred to publicity this morning I was dealing not with the distinction between home effectives and colonial effectives, but with the distinction between officers and other ranks.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — Then are we quite agreed as to what is going to be done about Point 5? I am not quite sure what we are going to do about it. I do not know whether the suggestion is that we shall suppress the whole of the first four tables. M. Paul-Boncour was not here when the suggestion was made and I should rather like to know what he thinks.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — We should eliminate those which relate to the distinction between overseas forces and home forces and keep the distinction between armed forces proper and forces organised on a military basis.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — The only thing is I should like to make it quite clear that, so far as the British Government is concerned, when they come to make their application for overseas aeroplanes and home aeroplanes they will certainly desire to make them quite separate, because they are entirely separate purposes really; they have nothing to do with one another. Therefore, though I do not insist on separate tables here, I do want to make it quite clear that what M. Paul-Boncour has called the justification for the application we shall make for overseas aeroplanes and home aeroplanes is made quite separately with regard to the home aeroplanes and the overseas aeroplanes.

The PRESIDENT. — The text will be submitted to the Commission when it reassembles.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I suggest the following wording:

“Article 1. The High Contracting Parties agree to limit the number of men on service with their forces to the effectives fixed in Tables I (armed forces) and II (forces organised on a military basis) annexed to the present Treaty. They undertake that their distribution shall conform to that laid down in the said tables.”

With regard to Point 5, we should show separately Table 1, “Maximum number of aeroplanes and dirigibles in service with the armed forces”, and Table 2, “Maximum number of aeroplanes and dirigibles in service with the forces organised on a military basis”.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — It may have been an oversight, but I do not believe that the last sentence in the text as it stands belongs there. It says: “They undertake that their distribution shall conform to that laid down in the said tables”. Would that any longer apply once we suppress the distinction between overseas forces and home forces?

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I should like to point out to Mr. Gibson that there will still be two tables, one for the armed forces and the other for the forces organised on a military basis. As there will no longer be any distinction between home forces and overseas forces, there will, of course, be no undertaking with regard to the proportion of home forces to overseas forces.

M. de Brouckère’s proposal was accepted.

83. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Points 6 and 7 (continuation).

The PRESIDENT. — I would remind you that this point was adopted as in the right-hand column with certain reservations.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — With reference to the third paragraph of Point 6, there is some question in my mind as to the advisability of accepting for the purposes of the Convention the provisions laid down in the paragraph that “engine power shall be measured according to the rules established by the International Air Navigation Commission”. The method to be adopted for determining horse-power is highly important, since total horse-power would be largely affected by the accuracy with which the horse-power of each type is calculated. Technical methods are in a fluid state and change very rapidly, and in our opinion it would be a mistake to adopt a method at the present time which may not be the most acceptable at the time when the Final Conference meets. The methods of
fixing the horse-power of an aeroplane motor are very involved. If any member of the Commission doubts this I shall be prepared to read them this large and bulky document which I have, which makes the brain reel. I think the Commission can satisfy itself on that point and also, by the same token, can satisfy itself that it would be desirable that the method for determining horse-power be decided when the Final Conference meets.

General De Marinis (Italy). — The tables now having been reduced to two, there is no further reason to maintain our reservation, which I therefore beg to withdraw.

General Dumitresco (Roumania). — The Roumanian delegation maintains its reservations regarding paragraph 1 of Point 6, because we wish to accept total engine power as the only method of limitation. That will allow us to distribute our aircraft for purposes of defence in the way that best suits our interests. Such a request is natural for countries with only a small air force and which desire to meet an air attack with fighting squadrons. At the same time we reserve our right to revert to this question on the Second Reading.

M. Sato (Japan). — I made a reservation on the number of machines, and I am not at present in a position to withdraw it; it will therefore stand until we come to the Second Reading.

The President. — The Commission accepts Mr. Gibson's proposal with reference to paragraph 2, namely, that "engine power shall be measured according to rules to be laid down by the Conference."

The Commission also accepts Point 7.

84. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Point 8 (continuation) and the Roumanian Proposal.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — Do the words "in the light of . . . . civil aviation" stand?

The President. — I propose to hold over the discussion on this question.

M. Paul-Boncour (France). — A point of great importance arises here, particularly for certain delegations. When we come to examine Article 25 of the French draft, which deals with general questions, how shall we be able to introduce civil aviation? It does not seem to me quite logical. You will argue that we do not know what Article 25 is going to be or how the machinery which it provides will be made to operate. I fear, however, that it may be difficult when dealing with that article to introduce a matter specifically referring to aviation. Nevertheless, apart from the procedure which may subsequently be fixed, it seems to me a matter of some importance to know whether air limitations are to be dependent upon the development of civil aviation. I do not press the point. I merely mention a certain difficulty which faces us; we shall be compelled to pass from a purely general discussion to a special consideration peculiar to aviation.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I would remind M. Paul-Boncour that the difficulty was that we could not very well discuss the first paragraph of Article II without discussing the second paragraph, and we could not very well discuss the second paragraph until we came to the question of control. That was how we arrived at the postponement. I see no objection to discussing the principle of what we ought to do about civil aviation now. I rather agree with M. Paul-Boncour that it is a separate matter from the question of how we are going to enforce the provisions when we have agreed upon them. Under Article II as printed in the French draft, the second paragraph is really a control paragraph; the first paragraph is the principle. I should see no objection to discussing this first paragraph with the proposal put forward by the Roumanian delegation. I suggest we might take these two together and see whether we can arrive at some general idea as to what we ought to do about civil aviation. I think it is a separate matter altogether.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I am quite prepared to accept any proposal as to the methods of discussing this question. I only rose to speak because I was afraid that this paragraph on aviation might be regarded as adopted, although the German delegation is unable to accept the words "in the light of the present development of civil aviation".

The President. — There is no question of its being regarded as adopted. I propose that the Commission shall proceed to examine this point together with the Roumanian proposal below.

"In order to ensure publicity in the matter of civil aviation, each of the High Contracting Parties shall prepare an annual statement showing the total number of aeroplanes and dirigibles manufactured in its territory or imported, together with their horse-power and the total volume of the dirigibles designed for civil aviation.

"With a view to the exchange of the necessary information, the measures to be provided in Article 10 (second paragraph) of the French Preliminary Draft, shall be taken."

General Dumitresco (Roumania). — The Roumanian delegation seeks by its proposal to obtain publicity for civil aviation. We regard this proposal as necessary and indispensable
for the reason that civil aviation has an undeniable military value. At the very least the Contracting Powers should be in a position to know the situation with regard to civil aviation in other countries and thus be able to gauge what air force they require for their own security. I am sure that my proposal will be well received by the Commission, but I will take this opportunity of drawing its attention to the great importance which is given to the question of air limitation by the military value of civil aviation. The power of a country to carry on aerial warfare is determined by two factors — military aviation proper and civil aviation.

The importance of civil aviation as a factor in a country’s war potential is indisputable, since it can be effectively employed for purposes of war within a very short period — a few hours, or a few days. It is capable of considerable and rapid development. The British and French drafts for the limitation of armaments only contemplate the limitation of military aviation in service, and it seems that agreement is about to be reached on these two drafts. Neither, however, contemplates limitations or reductions of civil aviation, for the very good reasons that civil aviation is an important modern means of communication, of service to mankind, and constitutes a great factor in progress which no one desires to hamper.

The undoubted military importance of civil aviation and the impossibility of arresting or hindering its development in my opinion render ineffective any limitation of air armaments and, indeed, the whole of the Convention for the limitation of armaments. I will give my reasons.

Let us suppose that the Commission agrees upon a single draft Convention for limitation and that, as regards air armaments, it is decided to limit military and naval air forces in service. In accordance with the general provisions of the Convention, the Contracting States will supply statements of the material and personnel required by their military air forces and naval forces for purposes of security during the term of the Convention. In order, however, to calculate their requirements in respect of air armaments, the Governments will have to take account of the total air power of their neighbours — that is to say, of military and civil aviation in those countries.

Civil aviation will continue to increase in importance at different rates in the different countries; therefore, it will be necessary for States which have only a small civil aviation to make up for this shortcoming as far as possible by correspondingly developing their military air forces. At the same time these countries will have to take measures to secure the defence of their territory against air attacks — anti-aircraft guns, machine-guns, etc.

With the putting into force of such a Convention for the limitation of armaments, we shall have succeeded in stabilising and reducing the war power of military and naval armaments, but the power of carrying on war in the air due to the development of civil aviation will be continually increasing. In the great war, aviation proved to be an offensive weapon of the greatest importance. By day the air force keeps watch on troops at rest, or troops on the march or in the line, and subjects them to artillery fire of all calibres. By night it drops its bombs upon them and both day and night hangs menacingly above their heads.

There is every reason to suppose that the part played by aircraft will grow more important as its reconnaissance and fighting capacity increases. With regard to fighting it will be more and more able to attack not only combatant forces, but back areas and the whole country. Landing difficulties will be overcome and means will be found to transport personnel. The possible use of gas by the air forces of the aggressor State renders this weapon still more terrible. We may therefore assert that any limitation which leaves untouched the power of carrying on war in the air is not and cannot be effective.

How are we to solve this difficulty? How can we contemplate the development of civil aviation without anxiety and without the fear that it may come to serve as the most terrible of all instruments of aggression?

In our opinion there is only one remedy, and that is the organisation of military assistance in the air by the High Contracting Parties in order to forestall and prevent any aggression. This question of assistance is a very difficult one, but we considered it necessary to raise the point.

M. SATO (Japan). — Sub-Commission A unanimously recognised the military value of civil aviation. I do not wish to revert to this point, but I would draw the attention of my colleagues to the following considerations:

(1) Even the delegations which in Sub-Commission A recommended methods of limiting air armaments without taking into account civil aviation recognised that these methods were not complete.

(2) Sub-Commission A was also unanimous in enumerating a list of disadvantages attendant on any method of limiting air armaments which did not take civil aviation into account.

Article II of the French proposal was drafted for the very purpose of remedying to some extent these defects, and that is why we attribute importance to the provisions of that article and strongly recommend its adoption. I would therefore urge my colleagues to consider carefully whether they cannot agree to the text of the French draft.
Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I listened to the speech of the Roumanian delegate with great interest, and I am sure so did all his colleagues. If I might venture upon any criticism of it, it would be that it did not seem to have any bearing on the Roumanian amendment, which I thought he was about to support. His contention really is, “We cannot do anything to limit aircraft, and therefore we must take an entirely different step, which is to organise mutual assistance against aircraft attack”. It may or may not be a good suggestion, but it is not one, if I may venture to express the opinion, which is open to us to consider in this Convention, which is a disarmament Convention. I am the more sorry because I was anxious to know exactly what was the case which the Roumanian Government desired to make on behalf of their amendment. Personally, I am disposed to regard it favourably, but I should have liked to have heard what the case was in its favour.

With regard to the French text, I see no objection to it as it stands. The only difficulty, of course, is what is to be the consequence of the principle there laid down. However, we have agreed not to consider the question of consequence till we get to the control provisions, and I should have thought that it would have been worth the while of the Commission to consider whether we might not adopt the French text first and then, as a sequel to it, the Roumanian amendment with one trifling verbal alteration. In that way we should at any rate have got some way towards laying down the kind of attitude we desire to adopt with regard to civil aviation.

I can only say in conclusion that, though I ventured to make a slight criticism of the Roumanian delegate’s speech, it does not mean to say that I at all disagree with it in substance. On the contrary, I agree most fully with him that the possibility of attack from the air is perhaps the most terrible of all the possibilities which a new war may make a reality.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I entirely agree with Lord Cecil and I therefore accept the principle laid down in Article II of the French proposal, it being understood that the second part of this Article will be discussed when we come to the question of supervision. I am also quite prepared to consider the Roumanian proposal.

The President. — It is understood that we are now discussing Point 8, which is the first paragraph of Article II of the French draft.

M. Perez (Argentine). — I asked my Government for fresh instructions on this question of the French proposal, and the reply is quite definite, I cannot assent to any proposal which establishes a connection between military and civil aviation, for very important geographical and economic reasons.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — Everything depends upon what is meant by the words “in the light of” (“en considération”). You can “consider” many things in this world, particularly in regard to the limitation of armaments. Motor vehicles and railways are analogous with civil aviation, since they too are used as soon as war breaks out.

In principle, as we have stated during previous discussions, we share the view of the Argentine delegation, but if “in the light of” only has the meaning given to it before the discussion on war potential, we have no objection to accepting this formula provisionally.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I should just like to ask one question. What are we going to do with Point 8? Obviously it is not adopted, since the Argentine delegate has formally opposed it. Are we to accept it, however, on the First Reading subject to reservations, or does any delegation desire that it should be placed in one column opposite a blank space in the other? We must be clear as to what we want to do.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I do not know whether my Argentine colleague would mind if I ventured to make an appeal to him to allow this to be put in the First Reading, reserving his full opposition to the whole thing for the Second Reading, because we want to have some text to present. There are several points on which I have not been able quite to agree with the general feeling of the Commission, but I have been content myself, on those points where the general feeling of the Commission was fairly obvious, to allow them to be stated on First Reading, so that the matter may be fully considered between this and the Second Reading, and so that my Government may have an opportunity of considering the whole Convention with these particular proposals in it. That does not in any way mean that I withdraw the views which I have expressed on behalf of my Government. It merely means that it seems to me that this is the kind of proposition which we may lay before the Commission on Second Reading as a part of the general scheme which we think might possibly be adopted.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — I accept the present text with a similar reservation.

M. Perez (Argentine). — I, too, accept Lord Cecil’s proposal. I will do all I can to find a basis for agreement and will ask my Government for further instructions.

The text of point 8 was adopted with the reservations of the Argentine and German delegations.
General DUMITRESCO (Roumania). — I must remove a misunderstanding which seems to have arisen. I supported the amendment by the Roumanian delegation at the beginning of my speech, but everything I added dealt with the importance of civil aviation and was directly intended to emphasise that importance and the necessity of at least accepting publicity for this aviation, in order that States may be able to acquaint themselves with the development of civil aviation in other countries.

The Commission rose at 7.20 p.m.

THIRTIETH PUBLIC MEETING.

Held at Geneva on Wednesday, April 13th, 1927, at 10 a.m.

President: M. LOUDON (Netherlands).

85. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Roumanian Proposal (continuation).

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — If nobody else wants to say anything, I should like to say that there is one very trifling amendment which my Government desire to make. I am sure it makes no difference to the sense, and I am not sure that it is actually necessary, but it may make it a little clearer. I propose that we insert before the word “aeroplanes” the word “civil”, so that it will then read “the total number of civil aeroplanes”. It is evident that that is what is meant.

Count BERNSTORFF (Germany). — The Roumanian proposal, if I have rightly understood it, starts off with the same idea as that of the French delegation. Both these countries consider that each civilian pilot and every civilian aeroplane represents reserve in man-power and in material for military aviation in war time.

This idea is to some extent justified, as was recognised by Sub-Commission A (see page 111 of its report), with this difference, however, that the United States of America and Germany (also in this report), ascribe to these reserves a comparatively small value, whereas that value is regarded as very considerable by other delegations.

There may be differences of opinion with regard to the estimation of the military value of civil aviation, but it cannot be questioned that this value could only exist if civil aviation can be based on military aviation. Where there is no military aviation the military value of civil aviation is reduced to practically nil. That is the case of Germany. The most radical means of obviating the alleged great danger which civil aviation offers for the security of neighbouring countries would consequently be the abolition of military aviation. I do not think that could ever be obtained. At the same time, we cannot really attach any definite military value to civil aviation until such time as we have dealt with the essentially military factors, such as trained reserves and material in reserve.

The Roumanian proposal demands the annual publication of the figures for all aeroplanes and dirigibles built or imported during the course of the year; but do you really think, gentlemen, that such a method is calculated to increase the security of a country? It seems to me that such a method would damage economic interests and that such methods would consequently jeopardise the free development of civil aviation, and that would also entail considerable danger to the economic life of the country in general. Publicity with regard to civil aviation is the beginning, but where are we to stop? I cannot say. But if we examine the French proposal more closely we might say that it constitutes the beginning of a competition in armaments based upon the development of civil aviation.

For these reasons and for reasons which I have explained before, I must reserve the final position of the German delegation with regard to the Roumanian proposal until such time as we have obtained complete information regarding the military value which civil aviation really possesses and until such time as, in conformity with the German proposals, the essentially military factors such as trained reserves and material in reserve have been covered.

We must remember that we are dealing with a proposal which has been put forward by M. de Brouckère, a proposal which has been accepted by the German delegation, and the aim of which is to deprive civil aviation of its military value.

General DUMITRESCO (Roumania). — I should like to thank Lord Cecil for having accepted the Roumanian proposal and I am prepared to support the British amendment that the word “civil” should be added before the words “aeroplanes and dirigibles”.

As for Count Bernstorff's point, I must say that I should not have thought that publicity with regard to civilian aviation would in any way hamper its normal development and that still less would it damage its economic interests. I have always listened with the utmost attention and the liveliest interest to the opinions expressed by the German delegation, both in the Sub-Commission and in our Commission itself, but I should like to say that I myself, and the majority of the members of our Commission, hold that civil aviation is always of great importance.
Therefore, the least that we can do is to accept this publicity in view of the fact that it is important for the contracting parties to be acquainted with the development of civil aviation in adjoining countries in order that they may organise their own air forces accordingly.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — I only want to say one sentence, and that is that, in accepting this amendment, I do not, of course, accept the doctrine that we ought to limit or restrict civil aviation. That is not the purpose at all. It does appear to me that the more publicity you have in these matters the better.

M. Sato (Japan). — The Japanese delegation has no objection to accepting the Roumanian proposal in principle. We would like, however, to ask for certain explanations in order that we may understand it better. In its proposal, the Roumanian delegation suggests that, in order to ensure publicity in the matter of civil aviation, a statement should be prepared by each of the High Contracting Parties showing the total number of aeroplanes and dirigibles manufactured in its territories or imported. Is it or is it not desired that particulars regarding the aeroplanes and dirigibles at the present time should be published?

General Dumitresco (Roumania). — I would like to explain to the honourable delegate of Japan what the idea of the Roumanian delegation was when we proposed this publicity. The aim in view was to afford information to all contracting countries with regard to the development of civil aviation and its position at the time the Convention was concluded, and to make it possible for such development to be followed up.

You would therefore have to begin with an exchange of the fullest possible information provided by each contracting country in respect of civil aircraft, whether constructed in the country or imported into the country, which belongs to nationals of the country.

This would show the basic position existing at the moment when the Convention was concluded. Such information should be as complete as possible. It should show the number of aircraft and even their characteristics. This was how the Roumanian delegation understood publication with a view to the possibility of forming a conclusion with regard to the exact position of civil aviation in the contracting States at the time at which the Convention was signed. Such information should be supplemented yearly.

M. Sato (Japan). — I should like to thank General Dumitresco for his explanations and to say that I quite agree with him.

M. Perez (Argentina). — The Argentine delegation desires to state that it will gladly support the Roumanian proposal.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — If I understand the explanations of General Dumitresco correctly, this proposal is intended to provide for publicity as to civil aviation and not to disclose the productive power of the aeronautical industry of any given nation. In this case it seems to me that to make his meaning clear it might be desirable to change the wording in such a way as to provide for the publication of the number and horsepower of aeroplanes and dirigibles in service or registered or licensed in the territories under the jurisdiction of each of the High Contracting Parties. I am afraid that as the text now stands it does not bring that out very clearly, and from a literal reading appears more to be something in the nature of an enquiry into the aeronautical industry of a country, and, of course, that would have no proper place in a Disarmament Convention. The text which I propose reads as follows:

"In order to ensure publicity in the matter of civil aviation, each of the High Contracting Parties shall prepare an annual statement showing the total number of civil aeroplanes and dirigibles registered or licensed in the territories under the jurisdiction of each of the High Contracting Parties."

M. Hennings (Sweden). — The Swedish delegation would have no objection to accepting the Roumanian proposal and therefore agrees in principle with the underlying idea of that proposal.

There is one point, however, which I should like to mention. If, as I hope, we accept the Roumanian proposal, without at the same time increasing the provisions adopted at First Reading concerning military aviation it is difficult to avoid having the impression that the Commission is attaching greater importance to civil aviation than to military.

When we spoke of military aviation, Mr. Gibson suggested that the limitation should be extended to all material in reserve. It was found that this proposal met with certain difficulties. I suggested that we should at least extend the limitation to military aeroplanes in reserve. This proposal was not accepted on our First Reading. Therefore, in the text that we have adopted, limitation of military aviation should only apply to aviation normally forming part of the establishment of units. All military aircraft in reserve are exempt from limitation and publicity, whereas in the case of civil aviation there is no question of limitation, but provisions are to be introduced into the Convention contemplating yearly publicity in respect of all the stocks of civil aeroplanes in the various countries. There would therefore be a more extensive publicity in respect of civil than of military aviation.

I would once more like to say that I have no objection to the Roumanian proposal, but that I desire to raise this point in order to show that it seems preferable that on the Second Reading we should once more take account of the provisions dealing directly with military aviation.
Count Bernstorff (Germany).—If I rightly understand the text of the Roumanian proposal as amended by Mr. Gibson, it would seem to me that we only ask for publicity where it already exists as a result of the licensing and other regulations enforced by Governments.

I think that we might accept this proposal, but nevertheless I should have to ask for fresh instructions and therefore I reserve my right to take this point up again on the Second Reading.

I would like to add that I am wholly in agreement with what the delegate for Sweden has just said.

M. de Broutkere (Belgium).—The Belgian delegation is in agreement with the Roumanian proposal, which it thinks admirable and is also prepared to support the amendment proposed by the delegation of the United States, which will perhaps make the Roumanian proposal clearer. I would only like to reserve my right to reconsider on Second Reading the exact wording used. At first sight, I think that the words "registered" or "licensed" are quite in accordance with the idea it is desired to express. But there may be rather difficult legal points or special conditions existing in certain countries involved. It would therefore be better that the legal experts be consulted.

This is all that I have to say on this text, but, before sitting down, I would merely like to add that I share the views of M. Hennings. I am one of those who hold that we have not limited military aviation to any great extent and that we are now going much further.

I think that it was possible further to limit very large categories of military aircraft. Was it possible to go as far as the limitation of all existing stocks? Personally, I would be prepared to follow M. Hennings as far in this matter as you are prepared to follow me in control and limitation of everything that can be controlled.

If, as the result of the Roumanian proposal, another proposal were made to the effect that a list of military aircraft or a list of military aircraft in commission should be published in the same way that we propose to publish particulars of civil aircraft in service, that motion would receive the support of my delegation.

M. Hennings has perhaps painted rather too black a picture of the position. We have not really been as inconsistent as he said. We have not limited civil aircraft and have not even decided that a total list of civil aircraft should be published, but we have at least tried to treat them in the same manner as military aircraft and we have just said that we were only dealing with aircraft in service. As for those in stock in the works, they will not come under this census any more than military machines in reserve.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands).—The delegation of the Netherlands will support the Roumanian proposal as at present worded. This proposal deals with civil aircraft in service and does not touch such aircraft as may be in reserve in industrial establishments, the number of which would necessarily be small. We also agree with the remarks of the Swedish delegation. If we take account of the idea underlying the Roumanian proposal, that is to say, the obtaining of all necessary information from the various nations for the purposes of estimating the extension of future military power in aviation of the various countries, I agree with the delegate of Sweden that on the Second Reading we should consider the possibility of doing something further in respect of military aircraft in reserve and in stock. From the military point of view, such aircraft is certainly of more importance than civil aircraft even if in service.

General de Marinis (Italy).—The Italian delegation agrees with the Roumanian delegation’s proposal as amended by the delegation of the United States. It associates itself with the reservations made by M. de Broutkere. Those reservations have nothing to do with the main question. They merely concern the actual wording of certain expressions. The word “registered” should be more carefully considered for we do not really know what it would lead to if maintained.

I therefore support the Roumanian proposal on condition that the text be reconsidered by legal experts.

Colonel Requin (France).—The proposal of the Roumanian delegation follows logically from the French preliminary draft, and it forms a very useful additional to that draft.

As for the amendment proposed by the delegate of the United States, the French delegation accepts it as explained by M. de Broutkere. We are not really making a reservation. We only desire that the text should be reconsidered on the Second Reading and that we should decide on the exact meaning of the word “registered”. From the French point of view, it would be sufficient to say “licensed”, for an aeroplane must be licensed before it can be in service. The term “registered” might be understood otherwise. Furthermore, at what moment will the aeroplane be registered and on what register will it be shown? We can hardly imagine that aeroplanes could be registered before being manufactured.

With this simple reservation in respect of a question of wording, the French delegation accepts the Roumanian proposal as amended by the delegation of the United States.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America).—I think the point raised by Colonel Requin is one to be settled by our hard-working Drafting Committee. I agree with him that, in so far as the French text is concerned, the whole situation is covered by the words he used.

General Dumitresco (Roumania).—I should like to thank all my colleagues who have accepted the principle of the Roumanian proposal. I am glad to say that I can accept Mr. Gibson’s amendment. We never intended to demand enquiries in factories or an
examination of the position of the aeronautical industry, for we hold that the question of private or State manufacture should be dealt with by the Committee to which this question has been referred.

I am quite ready to agree that a Drafting Committee should reconsider the wording of our proposal, the object of which is to provide for the exchange of complete information concerning civil aircraft in service.

As regards the connection between our proposal and other questions such as material in stock, reserves, etc., to which reference has been made by various speakers, I do not think that any such direct connection exists. We might speak of this on the Second Reading when a general agreement has been arrived at with regard to the limitation of land, air and naval armaments.

I would ask the President to take note of the statements which have been made with regard to the Roumanian proposal.

M. RUTGERS (Netherlands). — There is one more question which might be settled on the Second Reading. Should the returns sent in include aircraft registered during a year or the aircraft registered at a given date? This is not clear from the text as amended. If it is intended to show aircraft registered at a given date, we shall have to decide upon that date.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — I do not want to discuss the details of this proposal, because I quite agree that the drafting must be left over to the Second Reading; but, with respect to the last observation, surely it is clear that if this is to be of any use it must be an annual return. It is no use making a return once for all.

M. RUTGERS (Netherlands). — That does not cover the question. Will it be an annual return stating the existing machines at a certain date, or an annual return stating the licences which have been granted during the year?

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — I understand that the proposal of the American delegation was that it was to be an annual return of the licences existing, and I should have thought that that was the only thing that could be of any use. It is no good knowing how many licences have been granted unless you know how many machines already exist.

The President. — I think we are now agreed. Obviously, as General Dumitresco requested, note will be taken of all the statements that have been made.

86. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Air Armaments. Reservations made by the British and French Delegations.

Colonel RÉQUIN (France). — Before we pass to the next point, I think it desirable, for the sake of clearness in our subsequent discussions, to remind the Commission of a statement made by M. Paul-Boncour, namely, that all the provisions laid down in Chapter 1 of the French preliminary draft (Articles 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6) in respect of limitation of land effectives, are intended by the French delegation to apply also to naval and air effectives. The same applies (Article 6 of the French preliminary draft) to the regulations in respect of the period of service. I feel it necessary at this stage of our discussion to refer to the statement made by M. Paul-Boncour in order that no misunderstanding may arise when we resume our discussions later.

The French delegation, after accepting all these proposed limitations at the First Reading, naturally reserves its final approval until such time as the full text is before it, and it can ascertain that the conditions laid down by M. Paul-Boncour have really been fulfilled.

Viscount CECIL (British Empire). — I am sure that the Commission will have listened with great interest to the declaration of the desires and intentions of the French Government. Without entering into any controversial matter, I will only say that we accept no general principles of that kind. Each case must, in my judgment, be determined on its own merits when we come to discuss it.

I should like also to make a reserve on the question of the distribution of aeroplanes, the question of those tables which we discussed yesterday. I do not wish to say anything beyond that question of whether we should finally accept the theory that aeroplanes are all to be treated as one absolutely, or whether they will have to be entered in different categories, is one on which we must reserve our final attitude for the Second Reading. For the moment I do not want to reopen the question. I rather think that the French Government would desire to make a similar reservation on that point.

General DE MARINIS (Italy). — I think that this declaration again raises the whole question we discussed yesterday. I made certain reservations in respect of these tables. I am not sure whether the issue is going to be raised again. In any case, I should like to be sure as to this point and I think we shall be clearer with regard to this matter when we have the text, before us.

Colonel RÉQUIN (France). — I quite agree with General de Marinis. There is no question of now reopening any discussion with regard to the question of the tables.

I also agree with Lord Cecil that this matter should be gone over again on the Second Reading. This indeed was one of the points on which M. Paul-Boncour laid particular stress yesterday, reserving his right to give special reconsideration to this matter when he had the whole draft before him, since the distinction between aircraft had seemed to him to be quite different from the problem of the similar distinction made in respect of naval forces.
As regards the declaration which I made just now, may I point out to Lord Cecil that this is not a general question (it has a general bearing if you like, but it touches Articles 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of Chapter I of the French preliminary draft). As M. Paul-Boncour made this statement, or if you prefer it, this reservation, before entering into discussion on these various points, it seemed to me to be only right that I should remind you of it at the close of the discussion so that everyone should be in full agreement.

87. Examination of M. de Brouckère's Proposals relative to Civil Aviation (continuation).

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — If I am not indiscreet in saying so, I have mentioned to M. de Brouckère that there are one or two small points which I have been asked by my Government to make quite clear. The first is on the first proposal. Out of a sort of loyalty, my Government want it to be made quite clear that they do not regard it as altering the arrangement at present existing in their Air Ministry. They did not want it to be said later that they were doing something which was not authorised.

The President. — We will now proceed to examine M. de Brouckère's proposals one by one.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — Having already spoken in favour of the liberty of civil aviation, I should particularly like to say that I warmly and sincerely support M. de Brouckère's proposals.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I thank Count Bernstorff for his valuable support, but I must say that just now he paid my proposals an undeserved compliment. He stated that they would result in eliminating all military danger that might arise from civil aviation, and added that this was the object which I wanted to attain. His praise was too generous. If such had been my object I should be anything but modest. In submitting the proposals, I made a point of saying that it did not appear possible to eliminate all military danger from civil aviation, but that we might endeavour to reduce it. This was my object and I hope that we may attain it.

As regards Lord Cecil's remarks, I would remind you that, when the first draft was drawn up by the civilian experts at Brussels, it was specially agreed that they would endeavour to find a text which should not result in compelling either Great Britain or Italy, which at present have a single Air Ministry, to change their administrative organisation. At the First Reading, or at any rate when we examined the text for the first time, Lord Cecil proposed a minor amendment, and I agreed. It must be understood that the intention of the original authors of this text, and also my intention, was that the proposal should not be of such a nature as to compel the British Government to change its present programme with regard to this sphere of administration.

General de Marinis (Italy). — For the moment I have no objection to put forward on principle, but, as I have asked my Government for instructions and have not yet received them, I am compelled to make a reservation until such time as these instructions have reached me.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — With regard to the third proposal, I am now authorised by my Government, which I was not at the time the matter was first discussed, to accept it. But with regard to the second phrase, my Government, I think, desire me to make it quite clear that this does not exclude the temporary loan of personnel and machines in order to prevent a breakdown, as recently occurred in the case of a long-distance flight. Perhaps we might insert the words "and temporary" after the word "provisional", if M. de Brouckère does not see any objection. I should not press it if he did.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — I willingly agree to Lord Cecil's amendment, more especially as I think that it will make the meaning more plain.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — On the fifth proposal I am asked to make this declaration, that it must not be thought that we are committing ourselves to the complete internationalisation of air services. I do not think it is capable of that construction, but my Government desire me to make it quite clear that they reserve their liberty of action in this respect.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium). — This proposal is the only one in which rather a vague formula has been inserted. As far as possible, we have endeavoured in general to avoid this, but the authors of the draft considered that it was a question of a recommendation, and of the general lines of the work, rather than of a precise undertaking in a specific form. A Government will undertake international obligations only in so far as it may consider it feasible, due regard being paid to the possibilities of its aviation.

M. de Brouckère's proposals were agreed to, subject to the reservation by the Italian delegation.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the examination of Document 68, relating to chemical warfare. The authors of this proposal have said that there would be no objection to the question being discussed after the last item on our programme. I therefore suggest that we should now deal with the organisation and application of the Convention.
The President. — We will now begin the second part of our discussion, namely, the organisation and application of the Convention. Mr. Gibson will address the Commission.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — In approaching this part of the Convention, I should like to make a rather full statement as to the position of my Government. The French and British draft Conventions which we have been examining for the past fortnight have unquestionably constituted a noteworthy contribution to the solution of the disarmament problem. Whereas in last year's stage of the work of the Preparatory Commission and its Sub-Commissions we were necessarily engaged in the discussion of technical questions, these drafts now embody not only the attitude of the various Governments taken on technical questions, but also the political views of the various Governments as to the most practical methods of solution of the actual problem of the limitation and reduction of armaments.

During the course of our present deliberations many delegations have again found occasion to reaffirm their technical views on points under discussion. Nevertheless, we are becoming more and more engaged in consideration of the still more difficult and involved political problems which the preparation of a final draft Convention necessarily presents. The American delegation has not felt that it could usefully submit an additional draft Convention, but it has welcomed the presentation of the drafts now before us, which are of the greatest value in that they indicate how far certain Governments are disposed to go, and, further, the methods which they feel can best solve the questions at issue. In a general way, the drafts before us indicate certain schools of thought which have been developed in the course of lengthy discussions as to the most acceptable methods of limiting and reducing armaments. It might best serve the avowed purpose of these drafts and facilitate the work of the Conference if I offered at this time certain frank comments on a type of provision common to both of them. I refer most particularly to those provisions in both drafts which envisage utilising the machinery and authority of the League of Nations in carrying out the provisions of a final treaty.

During the general discussion it was clearly the obvious conviction of many delegations that the solution of the armaments problem can best be found through utilising in full measure the machinery and authority of the League of Nations. My Government, however, is deeply and genuinely sensible of the friendliness and good will which was shown throughout the general discussion in an effort to deal in a practical manner with the problem created by the fact that the United States is not a Member of the League of Nations. As was brought out in the discussion, this fact constitutes a difficult problem. I am confident, however, that if it cannot be solved it will be through no lack of careful study and good will. There are other Governments which are not Members of the League, but the American Government is the only one of them which is represented here. The fact that my Government is not a Member imposes certain very definite limitations as to the undertakings which it is in a position to give in connection with a convention of this sort. In the course of the discussions in the Preparatory Commission and its Sub-Commissions, it has repeatedly been made clear that any Convention, in order to be acceptable to my Government, must take full account of the fact that it cannot accept the jurisdiction of the League, and, further, that it is not in a position to subscribe to international agreements based on supervision and control.

It will be recalled that in the discussions above referred to the delegation of the United States, as well as those of the British Empire, Chile, Italy, Japan and Sweden, set forth their views that any form of supervision or control of armaments by an international body would be extremely complicated and impracticable. They also affirmed their conviction that such measures would be more calculated to foment ill-will and suspicion between States than to create the spirit of international confidence which should be one of the most important results of any agreement for the reduction and limitation of armaments, and that the execution of any Convention must depend upon the good faith of nations scrupulously to carry out the provisions of a final treaty.

I will not take up the time of this Commission in reviewing the detailed objection of these delegations to any such form of supervision or control, but I think I should be wanting in frankness if I did not make it clear that my non-membership in the League is not the only reason for our unwillingness to accept measures of this character. We are opposed to them primarily because we believe them unsound and unworkable. We cannot divorce ourselves of the idea that the only practical way to disarm is actually to disarm, and that the most effective sort of treaty is one which specifies the disarmament provisions upon which Governments are able to agree and leaves to their good faith the enforcement of these provisions. In this connection I desire to remind the Commission that there is a disarmament treaty which has now been in effect for four years and which, dependent for its enforcement solely upon international good faith, has been observed by all the High Contracting Parties in the most faithful and scrupulous manner.
I trust it will be understood that I am not attempting to open up again the whole question here involved. I believe it, however, my duty to state fully and frankly the opinion of my Government as to the best method of enforcement of international Conventions irrespective of the consideration that it is not a member of the League of Nations. Nevertheless, this non-membership is a fact which bears upon the framing of any Convention in which my Government is to take part, and I feel it advisable at the present moment once more to call attention to this fact.

A number of my colleagues have referred in very friendly terms to their anxiety to draw up a text which can be accepted by my Government. M. Paul-Boncour in his admirable presentation of the French draft described the efforts he has made to reconcile his belief in the efficacy of the League authority with his desire to bring America into the final treaty. We are deeply sensible of his friendly spirit. In examining Lord Cecil’s draft it is obvious that he has been animated by the same spirit. My Government on its part is most anxious to find some solution of the problem which will enable it to accept a draft Convention which commends itself to the other members of this Commission as effective and desirable.

I realise that there is a broad difference in the possible types of Conventions which might be drawn up. On the one hand, there is the type of Convention which some delegations here might be ready to accept, in which they would utilise in a very extended form the authority and supervision of the League. At the other extreme is the form of Convention which would be acceptable to my Government, namely, a general international Convention binding as between the contracting parties and depending for its fulfilment solely upon international good faith and respect for treaties without recourse to any international agency for its enforcement.

I have already set forth, and I trust with adequate clarity, the reasons why my Government is opposed to any measures of international supervision and remains firmly of the opinion that any attempt to control, direct, investigate or inquire within the territory of a High Contracting Party will inevitably tend to foster mistrust and suspicion and take us further away than ever from our common goal. I am therefore constrained once more to affirm the belief of my Government that a Convention of the kind which we are now attempting to frame should confine itself to provisions of disarmament pure and simple, leaving its enforcement to the good faith of each Government. Nevertheless, I fully recognise the fact that all the other members of this Commission are at the same time Members of the League. If they are able to reach agreement among themselves on measures for utilisation of League machinery and believe that they will be efficacious we would not stand in the way of their adopting such measures as they may deem desirable, no matter how impractical or unworkable they may appear to us. If, therefore, all the other Governments here represented desire the machinery of an international body to deal with the enforcement of the treaty, and insist upon it for themselves, and if any way can be found to accomplish what they desire for themselves and at the same time to eliminate the feature of international machinery so far as the United States is concerned, my Government is ready to co-operate with them in a sincere endeavour to solve that problem.

M. PAUL-BONCOUR (France). — We are going to deal with the serious question of the application of the Convention and of the control resulting therefrom, under peculiar conditions, because we do not even know whether there will be a Convention, or what it may contain. This is a profession of faith; but we already made this profession of faith at the outset, when we began our discussions on the subject in a European and world atmosphere which, to say the least of it, was hardly favourable to the solution of the problems before us. Let us go on with this act of faith. The Council of the League of Nations has given us a clearly defined task; it consists in replying to a questionnaire and drawing up a programme. As we wished to accomplish this task as conscientiously as possible, we gave this programme the more definite shape of a draft Convention which might serve as a basis for a Conference.

Even in the uncertainty that now prevails, in the absence of agreement on points contained in the Convention — points without which the Convention itself is impossible — we shall have accomplished a task which, when public opinion is able to regard our difficulties more calmly, will be seen to be extremely valuable. I am not sure that the actual solution of the disarmament problem has made any appreciable progress, but I am convinced that, as regards the comprehension of the general problem, a great step forward has been taken. It has passed from what I might call the mystic stage to the stage of realisation and practical examination of the question. Public opinion is now fully aware of the possibilities of drawing up an international Convention for the limitation and reduction of armaments. The difficulties brought to light in the course of our work have shown public opinion, which was not sufficiently aware of the circumstances, the precise and definite points which an international Convention of this kind must contain, and without which it would not constitute an international Convention.

We have contributed, more than ever before, to indicating the general and definite lines which might serve as a framework for a possible Convention. The fundamental and essential points on which agreement has not been reached show that there are political circumstances in various European and other States which render it as yet impossible for us, situated as we are at present, to find a solution.
It remains for statesmen and Governments to arrange for a different and better state of things which will make success more certain.

We have to carry out the programme laid before us by the Council, and even in the present state of things and however unsatisfactory it may appear, we have decided to go to the end of our first reading; we have decided to give as complete replies as we are able to the questions asked. It is quite certain that a portion of the programme allotted to us would not be carried out if we wished to go to the end of the first reading without dealing with the question: "If a Convention is drawn up, how is it to be applied?"

After hearing the United States delegate speak, we are faced with a position which we may regret — which we do very much regret — but which we cannot ignore, as his statement reflects actual facts. The United States delegation will remember that, although the French delegation, when preparing its draft, was convinced that the Convention would be absolutely useless unless some means of enforcement and supervision were instituted in one form or another, it also foresaw the particularly delicate situation in which the American Republic would be placed when, although not a Member of the League, it honoured us by taking part in our work. The French delegation endeavoured in its draft, as I have already said, to find a formula which would entrust the application of the Convention to an organisation emanating from the High Contracting Parties, but which would not, properly speaking, be a League organisation. As I have told you, Sir, this was the justification and object of the French delegation's draft, which took the shape of the document you now have before you, and I should like to repeat this publicly and in the most friendly spirit.

I recognise, moreover, that, even though we tried in this way, we have not been able to succeed completely in eliminating the League of Nations from the operation of the Convention, for a simple and obvious reason. There is no doubt that the Permanent Commission proposed by the French draft emanates from the High Contracting Parties. Consequently, there is no difficulty so far, unless other considerations, of which they must be the sole judges, should prevent the United States from agreeing to the formation and jurisdiction of this Commission. But what it amounts to is this: when this Commission has done its work and coordinated and verified any particulars which may be necessary, we should inevitably see Article 8 come into play, because this is the legal and moral basis of the Convention we are engaged upon. The Permanent Commission, which may very well be considered — and as I said before was considered in the French draft — as independent of the League, and as a sovereign body emanating solely and directly from the High Contracting Parties signing the Convention, will necessarily reach the vital, critical and tragic stage of the application of the Convention. When a nation has reason to believe that it should approach the Council and ask for an increase in the limited armaments left to it by the Convention, it is obvious that the Council of the League must then take a decision under Article 8, and this is explained in a short but all-important passage in the French delegation's draft.

It seems to us to be impossible — and everybody present will understand this — to eliminate Article 8 from the working of the Convention which we are drawing up. It is the point of departure, the basis and the very justification of the Convention.

Again, the United States delegate has told us, speaking with the authority and in the name of his Government, that even apart from this consideration (the relations of a State non-Member of the League to the League) there were weighty reasons — of which every State must judge for itself — which made him dismiss the possibility of international supervision.

That being so, gentlemen, what have we to do?

I hope you will not ask me to give a final opinion at the moment. The problem is a very important one, and it must be carefully weighed.

There are two alternatives. We may simply place on record the declaration by the United States delegate, and consequently give up the idea of arranging for the application of the Convention and of that control without which (I will be quite frank about it) any Convention must be inoperative or even dangerous for certain States, so much so that I am not sure that these States could accept it. Or we may take advantage of the fact that Mr. Gibson appreciates our position — for which we are grateful to him — and profit by the declaration that he made just now, to the effect that, although the United States is not a Member of the League, he understood that States Members of the League, which are discussing the present Convention, are bound by definite rules, which it is now a question of putting into practice, and that even if by some formula, the possibility and precise terms of which I cannot even yet imagine, these States Members of the League found some means of agreeing on a plan to apply this control, derived from the principles of the Covenant signed by them; the American Republic, far from suspecting any unfriendly designs against it, would understand that the situation can never be exactly the same for States which are Members of the League and those which are not.

I would add that, even before the United States delegate made his statement, this situation had been a matter of considerable concern to me. I ask him to state his position frankly. When he perceives the clear distinction I make between the situations of various countries he will appreciate the earnest desire of which I have often spoken to him, and which is shared by all here, a desire which only considerations of what is right and proper prevent us from stating more explicitly.
Article 8 is both the point of departure and the point of arrival in the working of the Convention. This is the crucial and fatal point, as I said just now. Sooner or later, a situation must arise in which Article 8 will have to be applied, apart altogether from Article 11 (let us distinguish between these two, it is not only a question of numbering), or the other articles of the Covenant which come into operation in case of war or a threat of war, but simply because the drawing up of an international Convention on armaments will have created a new and important situation. States will have agreed that an international Convention should regulate arrangements which up to the present have been jealously guarded for decision under their own sovereign rights. At the outset they would undoubtedly be free to make these arrangements themselves; but, once the latter have been agreed to and co-ordinated in a Convention, States will no longer be free and will be subject to international regulations.

The only reason which could induce States, after having signed a Convention to agree to submit to a decision of this nature at such a grave juncture, would be that, as parties to a dispute, they would be certain to receive help when attacked. You will readily understand that I am referring to the absolute and immediate necessity under which we shall find ourselves, if we consider the political circumstances which may enable an International Disarmament Convention to be prepared, either of framing more detailed provisions in connection with the working of the articles of the Covenant or of continuing the series of regional security agreements which began at Locarno, and which it seems to me have since then not been so frequent.

You will understand, Sir, that after careful consideration we feel that, if this decision is to be respected and if this jurisdiction is to be acknowledged, the nations discussing the question must have signed a covenant of security which compels them, if this State be attacked, to give it all possible assistance in every shape and form — economic, financial, military, air and naval.

Even if, acted by the spirit of loyalty you have displayed, you had not raised this objection yourself, we must inevitably have encountered it at some time or another in our discussion of the drafts. Consequently, gentlemen, as far as I am concerned, and although I very much regret it and am fully aware of the new difficulty we have to face — it is indeed an extremely serious matter — namely, that one day, one, and another day, another of the various nations signatory to the Convention but not Members of the League may find themselves outside the scope of the application of the Convention. I must admit that for the moment I do not see any possibility of acting otherwise. If we have to face this difficulty, I might even say this mutilation or division into two parts of the proposed Convention, I should prefer, and I shall be quite frank about it, that nations Members of the League which have signed a definite Covenant and undertaken specific engagements should endeavour to find an effective control, an effective means of applying the Convention, rather than that they should be led, in their anxiety to frame arrangements to cover countries differently situated, to adopt a text for this part of the Convention which might then become inoperative for all concerned.

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). — I am rising to speak rather late in the day, because I wish to deal with a point of order.

We listened with great attention, and great emotion, to the speeches by Mr. Gibson and M. Paul-Boncour. Surely nobody would suggest that these speeches raised any difficulties. On the contrary, by their lofty tone and the light they threw on the problem, they have perhaps shown us the means of dealing with our difficulties. Lastly, they were so clear that they showed us that this difficulty really existed. This is no new situation. All those who had considered the matter felt this difficulty, which has now been fully revealed, and it is no surprise to us. It will not discourage us, because we knew that we should find it on the way. We must now make the effort necessary to solve it. Perhaps this will be a lengthy business, namely, to solve the difficulty itself, but we must certainly bring to a satisfactory conclusion the limited task which the Council has imposed upon us — to prepare a draft Convention, establish a programme and make it sufficiently clear to enable us to conduct a final enquiry into these problems under the most favourable conditions. This is in itself a difficult task. I do not say it is impossible. On the contrary, I am firmly convinced — and my conviction grows as difficulties accumulate — that if we try hard we shall succeed, but it will require careful consideration. When listening to Mr. Gibson, and to M. Paul-Boncour’s reply — I do not say that I saw any solution to the problem, that would be too ambitious a statement — it seemed to me that I caught a glimpse of the solution of a preliminary difficulty on a
question of procedure. In order to solve a problem you must first of all consider its different elements in a definite order, and when this order has been established you are on the way to a final solution. I should like us all to think over the question of the order in which we can take the problems remaining to be solved. There is one way that I can point out: I do not wish to state it definitely at the moment, because I ought to say that the question deserves serious consideration. I should like my colleagues to do the same as I have done, so that presently we can have a discussion on this question of procedure. I therefore propose that we should meet this afternoon, and hear those speakers who are still on the list to speak in the general debate, so that we should see what questions remain to be dealt with, what difficulties we have to face and what objections may be raised. We can then start a discussion on procedure so as to decide on the order in which the questions will be taken. Having settled that, we can deal with the substance of the matter in a spirit of optimism which I feel sure will be justified.

The PRESIDENT. — We are doubtless all agreed, after hearing M. de Brouckère, that the best thing to be done is to adjourn the meeting and to meet this afternoon at 4 o'clock. The Commission rose at 12.55 p.m.

THIRTY-FIRST PUBLIC MEETING.

_Held at Geneva, on Wednesday, April 13th, 1927, at 4 p.m._

President: M. LOUDON (Netherlands).

89. Examination of the Synoptic Analysis. Organisation and Application of the Convention. General Discussion (continuation).

Viscount Cecil (British Empire). — We heard this morning two very interesting speeches. There was one from my friend M. Paul-Boncour, which was delivered with his accustomed skill and eloquence, and there were just one or two observations I wanted to make about what he said before I come to the speech of Mr. Gibson. He began his observations by saying that, after all, we were engaged in an act of faith, and I think I know exactly what he meant. There are senses in which that expression might be used with which I should not agree. If he meant, as I have no doubt he did, that we would still torn by wars and commotions and unrest we were none the less proceeding in our effort at peace-making, and beginning a new chapter in that effort by trying to establish a system for the reduction and limitation of armaments — if he meant that in doing that we were undertaking a task which has never yet been successfully accomplished in the history of the word, that is true enough; but if he had meant, as I am sure he did not mean, that there was very little hope of our success, then I should entirely disagree with that proposition.

I see it is said in some quarters that because we have not yet reached an agreement on the principles of reduction of naval armaments, therefore it may be alleged that the whole of our efforts are useless and doomed to failure; that seems to me a fantastic extravagance and exaggeration. Even as far as we have gone, I regard the results that we have obtained as in the highest degree remarkable. After all, there is really no doubt now, I think, that when we separate we shall have succeeded in establishing, on far the greater proportion of the points which we were considering, at any rate a First Reading draft of a Convention for the reduction and limitation of armaments throughout the whole world. That is a tremendous achievement, and I believe that we shall, without doubt, having gone so far in our task, be able to overcome the few remaining difficulties that lie ahead of us, and that before we conclude the Second Reading we shall, in my judgment, undoubtedly have established a definite draft Convention for the consideration of the final Conference on Disarmament, which will make it effective by establishing the figures for each of the countries.

That is the way in which I personally regard our task, and it is, if I may venture to say so, in that spirit that we may fairly approach this next problem, the problem of supervision and control.

It was to that point that Mr. Gibson — and the same remark applies to M. Paul-Boncour also — devoted the greater part of his observations. I think we are all of us exceedingly grateful to the Government of the United States for having sent a representative to this Commission. We recognise that the position was a delicate and a difficult one. The United States is not a member of the League of Nations, and has no present intention of joining the League of Nations, and it might well have been possible for a Government in that position, on receiving an invitation to attend a Commission of the League, or a Commission appointed by the League to deal with disarmament, to say that they could not take part in anything which had its origin in a body of which they were not a member. But the Government of the United States took a different view. It took the view that the enormous interest of humanity in the cause of disarmament was such that they were bound to be present and to give what assistance they could to the solution of that problem, and I believe we all recognise that the Commission has been greatly benefited by the presence of Mr. Gibson here, and by the assistance he has been able to give to us in arriving at a solution of the various problems which have come before us; and I should be wanting in candour to the Commission if I did not add that in the recent message of President Coolidge, when he was calling together the
Conference for considering one aspect of the general problem with which we are dealing here. I recognise that he took the utmost pains to explain and to make clear that in summoning that Conference he was acting not only in no spirit of hostility to the League or to its enquiry, but rather with a view of helping it in dealing with one, at any rate, of its most troublesome problems.

I. To-day, again, in the speech which Mr. Gibson delivered, we all gladly recognised the obvious anxiety that he and his Government felt to co-operate in every possible way, consistently with the obvious fact that his country, even in this particular part of our difficulties, which evidently must present to him and which, as he did not conceal from us, did present to him, splendidly and acute difficulties.

I certainly heard what he said with the greatest sympathy and with a very large measure of agreement. He pointed out that he had two difficulties. He said that he had a difficulty because his Government thought that the best method of carrying out such an enterprise as that on which we are engaged would be to rely on the good faith of the parties to any disarmament agreement, and that the United States Government doubted whether any form of control or supervision would really add to the effectiveness of this agreement. That is the good faith of the parties to the agreement. Nothing can take the place of that good faith. If it is absent, none of your provisions will succeed. If it is present, then your control provisions will be either unnecessary or very little required. But there is one aspect of the matter which seems to me different, and which, I think, is worthy of consideration. It may be true that if a country and another country are absolutely ready to make the international agreement, no ingenious devices will force them to do so; but there is another case and in that case opinion a much more common case. There is the case where one country is suspected, and wrongly suspected, of not carrying out its engagements in a matter of this kind. There is the case when all sorts of stories are flying about as to secret armaments, as to preparations for war, and all that kind of thing, which all of us who have lived as many years as I have must recollect as one of the most fruitful causes of international unrest; and there is a very strong case, it seems to me, for the innocent country to establish its innocence. I do not speak for others, but from my own point of view that seems to me the most desirable part of these so-called control or supervisory clauses, and, as far as the British Government is concerned, they have had that very much in their view. In the plan that they have suggested to the Commission they have been guided, as we in England are apt to be guided, by precedent, and they have looked to see what was the kind of way in which the Covenant itself dealt with this problem. They found that there was an article with which we are very familiar, Article II, which was exactly of the kind I describe—an article designed partly, no doubt, to give security against wrong-doing, but also to be, in order to allay suspicion and doubts, to give some official method of investigating a rumour or accusation of the kind. I consider that was the broad principle and I do not propose now to go more into its detail. I have the strongest evidence that there must be something in the charge that was made against them. We felt that was practically essential and practically also unobjectionable, because we did not propose the Council, or rather not the Council, but another body, a body consisting practically of the Council with the United States Power, then you must get the assent of the accused Power to the holding of that enquiry there. Power, then you must get the assent of the accused Power to the holding of that enquiry there. We felt that was practically essential and practically also unobjectionable, because we did not think it at all probable or even possible that a country, being accused of a breach of its own contract and of threatening the peace of the world by so breaking it, would ever in fact refuse to accept an impartial enquiry into the fact, and that if they did they would be furnished with the strongest evidence that there must be something in the charge that was made against them. That was the broad principle and I do not propose now to go more into its detail. I have said that, in order to make this possible for the United States to accept, we suggested, not the Council, but another body, a body consisting practically of the Council with the United States added, and we, of course, contemplated as an essential part of the machinery of such an arrangement that it would have to rely for the collection of its facts and figures upon the disarmament branch of the Secretariat of the League of Nations, possibly strengthened for the purpose, but at any rate working with the efficiency which we know it has already displayed in collecting material for the Armaments Year book and other tasks of that kind. That was our suggestion, and should if necessary suggest an enquiry into it or take whatever other measure they thought would be best to arrive at the truth about the charge. It is quite true that we felt we could not go further than Article II, even in that respect, and therefore we put in a special provision that, if the enquiry is suggested to take place in the country of the accused Power, then you must get the assent of the accused Power to the holding of that enquiry there.
regard to the difficulties which are felt in the matter, and I am quite sure that my Government would find it very difficult to go any further than some such proposition. But what are we to do, since the United States Government, with great frankness and candour, inform us that, both because they do not believe in any control and because they feel it impossible for them to be closely mixed up with the machinery of the League, they are unable to accept it? Well, to meet that difficulty M. Paul-Boncour made a very interesting suggestion. He said, taking up a phrase, I think, of Mr. Gibson's — though it is not, of course, a satisfactory solution in every respect — why not propose arriving at a division of our Convention or, at any rate, at some arrangement by which these control clauses or clause shall not be binding on certain of our members, those members, at any rate, such as the United States, which is in this particular difficulty? That seems to me an extremely interesting suggestion. I am disposed, and I say so quite frankly, to regard it with a great deal of favour, but evidently it would be improper for me to express a final opinion upon it at this moment. It is a matter of much too great importance for me to decide on my own responsibility and authority. We must wait for a definite proposal in writing to carry out M. Paul-Boncour's idea and then I should certainly have to consult my Government and ascertain what view they take about it. All I can say is that I believe that some such solution as that would form a way out of the difficulty and, so far as I can see, it would be more free from objection than any other solution that I can see at this moment. To my mind the thing that really matters in this effort that we are making is to carry with us not only the formal assent but the real assent and approval of those who are engaged in the attempt to find a solution and investigations of those who are interested in the question of disarmament. The Finnish delegation cannot but approve the division of competence, under the terms of the French draft, as between the Permanent Commission and the Council, whose functions under the Covenant would remain intact.

The Finnish delegation notes with satisfaction that the competence of the Council is still intact; this would appear essential unless we renounce the principle of supervision, uniformity and equality as between the States subject to supervision. It would hardly be possible, in this connection, to establish a difference between Members and non-Members of the League without placing the latter in an exceptional position. There may be cases when an illogical connection, to establish a difference between Members and non-Members of the League for in paragraph 1, which is made to it by one or more of the States parties to the dispute, the Council having authority to conduct enquiries and investigations. According to the French Draft, the Commission would be responsible for centralising all the information supplied. As regards enquiries, they are also provided for by Article 8 of the Covenant — more particularly paragraph 4 — since it is obvious that the Council could not press a decision concerning an increase of armaments in a State, without previous enquiry.

The task of watching over security would be shared, as it were, between the Permanent Commission and the Council, whose functions under the Covenant would remain intact. The Commission is only authorised to proceed to an enquiry when the national security of a State is menaced by reason of a transgression of the Convention for the limitation of armaments. The Council alone may, in its capacity as the supreme guardian of security, authorise one of the Contracting Parties to exceed the limits agreed upon. Here it may be well to recall a practically identical provision of the 1924 Protocol. According to Article 7, paragraph 2, which is based explicitly on Article 11 of the Covenant, it shall be the duty of the Council to take into consideration any complaint as to infraction of the undertakings provided for in paragraph 1, which is made to it by one or more of the States parties to the dispute, the Council having authority to conduct enquiries and investigations. According to the French draft, any contracting party might apply to the Permanent Commission for revision of the limitations, but such an appeal must be made in case of urgency if it considers it necessary, without previous enquiry or report.

The Finnish delegation notes with satisfaction that the competence of the Council is still intact; this would appear essential unless we renounce the principle of supervision, uniformity, and equality as between the States subject to supervision. It would hardly be possible, in this connection, to establish a difference between Members and non-Members of the League without placing the latter in an exceptional position. There may be cases when an illogical system such as this would not present serious drawbacks. We all hope that the United States of America will accede to the future Convention. We are all prepared to discuss the conditions...
required to make this possible; but, on the other hand, if we consider a regional unit—for example, the whole of Europe—from the point of view of security, it seems hardly admissible that one State, having adhered to the future Convention and profiting by the limitations placed on its neighbours or its rivals, should itself be exempt from supervision by at least one of the bodies responsible for watching over the application of the Treaty. I quite see the difficulty which would arise from the fact that, according to the Covenant, only Members of the League may be invited to sit on the Council for the purposes of a question which particularly concerns them, the only case in which a non-Member may sit on the Council being the quite exceptional case provided for in Article 17, which does not permit of wider interpretation. I do not wish, therefore, at the moment, to give an opinion as to whether we could surmount these difficulties by some arrangement or by co-operation between the Permanent Commission and the Council. The only true equivalent of such a concession in favour of signatory States non-Members of the League would be to strengthen the guarantees of security not only within the orbit of the League but also vis-à-vis non-Member States.

Experience acquired up to the present time, more particularly as regards effective application of Article 17 of the Covenant, is not such as to raise our hopes unduly. I am prepared, however, in principle, to admit that an exception to the rule of supervision be made up for to some extent by strengthening guarantees of security.

The French draft, as I have just shown, has touched on an important aspect of security. We are endeavouring to limit armaments in order to reduce the risk of war, and, in order to do away with the menace of war, an exceptional and temporary increase of armaments may be allowed. These considerations recall Article 11 of the Covenant, in which the Council is called upon to take any action that may be deemed wise effectually to safeguard the peace of nations. Article 11, in its turn, must be considered in conjunction with other provisions of the Covenant relating to security.

The idea of security recalls inevitably that of aggression. One of the essential results of reducing and even limiting armaments must be to diminish the risk of aggression. International supervision is based on the important principle that the body of States adhering to the future Convention shall not remain inactive and powerless when confronted with a critical situation caused by aggression or the danger of aggressor. If every effort towards disarmament is designed to prevent war, we must go still further and carry this principle to a logical conclusion by establishing rules whereby it would be possible to designate the State which has abused its armaments— that is, to designate the aggressor, and by permitting the victim, as Lord Cecil has so eloquently said, to establish its innocence. These rules should form an essential part of the guarantees of security which should keep pace with every scheme for disarmament.

The Finnish delegation therefore is in favour of establishing supervision on the lines laid down in the French draft. While recognising the great value of this system as a means of guaranteeing international security, we must at the same time point out that it is essential not to regard considering the limitation of armaments as complete, until the guarantees of security which many States require are actually established — guarantees which, in their turn, will still further facilitate the limitation and reduction of armaments. The Finnish delegation does not consider that the time has yet come to make definite proposals in the matter; it has simply mentioned this important point in our programme and reserves the right to revert to the question at a later date.

General de Marinis (Italy).—Mr. President and gentlemen—I only wish to say a few words in order to confirm my Government’s views on the important question now under discussion. I purposely say “confirm,” for our views have already been repeatedly expressed and you are all well acquainted with them.

The problem of supervision has two sides, one technical, the other political, and the latter is by far the more important of the two. The first was exhaustively dealt with in Sub-Commission A’s report (pages 161 to 171).

There is no need for me to repeat here all the technical arguments put forward by the different delegations (including my own) who regard supervision as ineffectual. I should like to remind you, however, that, in the early days of the League, in September 1921, the Permanent Advisory Commission was invited by the Council to study the question of the expediency of supervision in regard to the statements made by States Members of the League concerning undertakings entered into under Article 8 of the Covenant. The Commission declared unanimously that either supervision would be exercised independently of the Power concerned, which would appear to involve an infringement of sovereign rights, or the said Power would itself select the procedure and the moment, so that the investigations, as thus limited by it, would be just as liable to suspicion as the information which it had supplied.

The Italian delegation does not think that anything fresh has occurred since 1921 to justify a more favourable opinion as to the technical efficacy of a system of supervision.

As regards the political aspect of the problem, my Government considers that the proper application of Article 8 of the Covenant demands the creation of an atmosphere of calm and mutual confidence between all the States and that the institution of a permanent body of investigation is undoubtedly not calculated to promote or to maintain such an atmosphere.

Hence the Italian delegation cannot support any form of supervision. It is convinced that to abandon this idea, which it regards as futile and even in certain cases dangerous,