is that we should reach the last stage of our work, that is to say the Conference, as soon as possible, so that we may really know where we stand. I have, however, one statement to make.

Lord Cecil will allow me to say that the one argument which we did not expect to hear during this discussion was that our proposal had nothing to do with trained reserves, because we have stated over and over again that we take our stand on our former declarations and negotiations. I would remind you that, in Sub-Commission A, it was stated that the reduction of the period of service, and of the annual contingent, was an extremely effective method of reducing trained reserves. That was why we made this proposal. I am glad that M. Massigli acted similarly and said frankly that he could not agree to any mention of trained reserves. I could understand Lord Cecil's observations if trained reserves had been mentioned in Article A, but that is not the case.

The conscription system has grown to such an extent on the continent of Europe that to-day the people of every country, from the cradle to the grave, are brought up to be soldiers; and yet it is now proposed to draw up a disarmament convention which is not going to take that state of affairs into consideration. The situation would be impossible for countries which do not have the conscription system, and therefore the result of the exclusion of trained reserves would be that the convention would not be worth the ink with which it was signed.

VOTE ON THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF THE GERMAN AMENDMENT.

The President. — I think the discussion is now closed, and that we can proceed to vote on the first paragraph of the German proposal. I should first like to say that I think we can congratulate ourselves on the spirit displayed during this discussion. I should also like to thank you for the frankness with which you have spoken. Plain speaking is always a good thing, and enables us to see where we stand. We will now vote on this paragraph, which refers solely to land armaments.

M. Sato (Japan). — I can vote in favour of the first paragraph of the German amendment if the words "annual contingent" are omitted. I should like to know whether this is to be the case or not.

Lord Cecil (British Empire). — If you do that, you will shut out the Polish amendment and my own. I do not mind how it is done, but let us vote now on the question of the annual contingent being inserted in the amendment, and then we can vote on the Polish amendment and can make whatever amendments we like.

M. Massigli (France). — I agree with Lord Cecil that we should first vote on the first two lines of the German amendment.

The President. — We will vote on the first paragraph of the German amendment, including the words "annual contingent". The vote will be taken by a show of hands.

Six delegations voted for this first paragraph.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I should like to know which delegations voted in favour of this paragraph.

The President. — The delegations of Norway, Sweden, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, China, the Netherlands and Germany.

I will now ask those delegations which are against this first paragraph to signify the same.

Twelve delegations voted against this first paragraph.

The first paragraph of the German amendment was rejected by twelve votes against to six for, with some abstentions.

The President. — We will now take the second paragraph.

Lord Cecil (British Empire). — It is impossible to vote the second paragraph without the first; they hang together. We had better now take the Polish amendment.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — In view of the result of the vote, I have no longer any interest in this question, and you can vote on the rest of my amendment as you please.

DISCUSSION ON THE POLISH AND BRITISH AMENDMENTS.

The President. — I propose that we discuss the amendment submitted by the Polish delegation.

General Kasprzycki (Poland). — I should like to explain shortly the amendment to Article I proposed by my delegation.

The Polish delegation still considers it necessary to limit the period of service, as it is convinced that this question is an important factor in the problem of disarmament. The discussion on the first reading brought out the object of this limitation, and showed that it was desirable not only from the point of view of the economic and social requirements of each country, but also from an international standpoint.
The object of the limitation is to reduce the period of service to an extent compatible with the requirements of national defence and also in order to arrive at the number of effectives allowed under the Convention, taking into account the necessity for training the contingents called up to enable them to defend their country. A conscript army with a very long period of service constitutes a danger to other countries, because in strength and character it resembles a professional army, while at the same time its enormous size may represent a threat to international peace.

We need only look at the *Armaments Year-Book* to see the considerable differences in periods of service which still exist in the various conscript armies. Moreover, even in the same country, the period may differ in the various arms and in the various categories of contingents. In view of these differences, the text of Article I drawn up at first reading does not furnish a satisfactory solution of the problem. It provides that each country shall itself fix the maximum period of service. The country will do so on the basis of the longest period of service in any category, so as to meet all its requirements. Thus, the different periods referred to and which vary from one year to more than five years, with all the resultant disadvantages, would be sanctioned by the Convention. The Polish delegation's proposal aims at establishing a uniform maximum limit which no contracting party would be able to exceed. This maximum limit of the period of service would include in an aggregate figure the whole of the time spent with the colours and in training in the reserve. This maximum, which would be common to all States, should be laid down by the Disarmament Conference. It should be regarded as a figure corresponding to the normal requirements of the vast majority of conscript armies. In certain cases it might result in an appreciable reduction in the period of service with the active army, which is such an important factor in armaments.

The British delegation has submitted an amendment which appears to have the same object as our own. Both amendments aim at counteracting the tendency—referred to by the German representative—noticeable in certain countries, to make all citizens liable to military service almost from the cradle to the grave.

**The President.** — The difference between the Polish and British proposals is so slight that I think we could discuss them together.

**Lord Cecil** (British Empire). — I should be pleased to accept the first paragraph of the Polish amendment in place of my own, and I will treat it as the only amendment before the Commission at the present moment. This is by far the more important of the two questions we have discussed this morning, and I was astonished to hear Count Bernstorff say he did not regard it as such.

As to whether or not we should limit the annual contingent, I believe that the principle of any policy of limitation or reduction of armaments, so far as effectives are concerned, must lie in the limitation of service. We must arrive at a state of things which exists in Switzerland, where the military service, though regarded as a duty by all the male citizens, is constituted for purposes of defence, and the army is not to be used for aggression. If we could have that system prevailing throughout the world we should destroy the fear of aggression which now exists, and in turn we should arrive at a system of disarmament. That is the vital thing so far as effectives are concerned, but unless we can arrive at some system of limiting material as well, I do not think we shall have done anything towards disarmament. It is well known that there is a considerable section of the military experts in the world, not least in Germany, which believes that the future military organisation of every country will depend, not on enormous armies, but on small armies very highly equipped and very highly trained. That is the view held by an important section of military opinion throughout the world, and particularly in Count Bernstorff's country. Count Bernstorff will know that they have published dissertations which have attracted a good deal of attention. The whole question of effectives seems to turn on the question of limiting the period of service.

The difference between the Polish proposal and the proposal adopted at the first reading, is that the Polish proposal proposes to fix a uniform standard for the duration of military service among the parties to the Convention, and that is the idea the British delegation had in mind in putting forward its amendment. It is evident that if we can obtain a universal agreement to reduce the period of service, in the first instance, to one year's service, we shall have made a great stride towards reduction, so far as military effectives are concerned. It depends what figure we are going to put before the Disarmament Conference. The ideal thing is to aim at a universal standard. If we can only reach a universal standard by putting in a high figure, it will be for the Disarmament Conference to consider whether it is desirable to aim at a universal standard or to return to the idea of each country fixing a standard for itself. It will depend on whether we can arrive at a substantial reduction in the average period of service throughout the world. In putting forward this idea it is only with the view of obtaining a figure of that character. If that figure does not turn out to be practicable, I should imagine that the British delegation attending the Disarmament Conference will hold itself quite free to propose another system which would be more satisfactory; but, at the moment, I think the right thing is to have a universal standard for all countries, because it is simpler and more effective. Therefore, I think we should accept the first clause of the Polish amendment.

With regard to the other parts of the British amendment, perhaps you will allow me to dispose of them after we have dispensed with this first proposition.
The President. — Would General Kasprzycki agree to replace the word “months” in his proposal by the word “days”, in order to avoid fractional periods?

General Kasprzycki (Poland). — I think it is more practical to calculate the period in months, but I will agree to a calculation in days if the President wishes.

The President. — We will accordingly replace the word “months” by “days”.

M. Antoniade (Roumania). — The Roumanian delegation supports the Polish proposal. It considers that this proposal would afford a satisfactory solution of the problem raised in Article I of the Convention. The Roumanian delegation is of opinion that, in the case of countries having the conscription system, the total period of service of the annual contingent has no direct relation to the problem of the limitation and reduction of armaments and is not so important as effectives, material, and budgetary expenditure.

All countries with the conscription system desire that their annual contingents should complete their necessary military training and preparation in as short a period as possible.

But, as has been pointed out many times, this period depends on a number of factors which vary not only as between different countries but even in one and the same country, according to the degree of education of the population, the existence or absence of pre-regimental training, the size of the cadres, the organisation of training in the various arms and services, the special requirements of the colonies, etc.

In these circumstances it is only natural that the period of service should vary in different countries and even in the same country, according to the arms, services or colonies.

Even if we accept the proposed solution, which appears to us to be the best one, of a common maximum limit for all countries having the conscription system, there is another important factor which should be borne in mind: the period of service in conscript armies should not be so long as in professional armies; otherwise, in view of the large number of effectives which they would have, the nature of these armies would be changed and they would have great powers of aggression. That cannot be allowed. Moreover, this point was strongly emphasised by our Polish colleague.

Consequently, while supporting the proposal to fix a reasonable maximum period of military service, our delegation agrees with the Polish suggestion that, in conscript armies, the duration of service should not exceed a period fixed by the Disarmament Conference.

M. Fierlinger (Czechoslovakia). — The principle laid down in Article I of the draft Convention is a very simple one, but, notwithstanding its simplicity, it provides, as we have already stated on several occasions, for the limitation of effectives and also, indirectly, for the limitation of the period of service. This principle has been attacked precisely because it is so simple. It has been alleged that it does not take into account all the factors which make up the military value of an army. Nevertheless, if we study it carefully we shall see that it has many advantages. By its elasticity, it offers the Commission a way out of the difficulty of dealing with the two systems, the professional army and the conscript army.

Under the former system, the fighting value of the army is very great; under the second, this value is less, but, apart from that, it provides trained reserves of relatively high fighting value. The countries which have adopted the latter system have done so largely because they desired to create trained reserves for defensive purposes, and also for budgetary reasons. That is why our country has a conscript army.

The difficulty of framing a rule for fixing the period of service in each country has already been shown. If limitation be introduced into this article, which is at present extremely simple, a contradictory conception will be introduced. A large number of technical factors and the varying durations of service in the different armies will have to be taken into account. Moreover, in all countries with a conscript army, there is a tendency to reduce the period of service for political reasons. This is a grave problem of internal politics. All that the man in the street wants to know is that he or his sons will serve only fourteen months and that this period will be reduced still further in future.

If we attempt in the Convention to fix the period of service in each country without taking all future possibilities into account, we shall be introducing considerable complications. It would be very unwise to fix the period of service in each country in an international convention.

The Polish and British delegations have submitted a different solution in a proposal which amounts to a compromise, and which has the great merit of providing a uniform solution which should meet the requirements of all countries.

Naturally, this system has a certain rigidity, but the principle is a fair one, since the same rule applies to all. That is why I regard it as a compromise.

I wonder if this proposal might be supplemented by a system of publicity in regard to the period of service in each army and in each arm. If this combination were possible it would take into account all the factors which I have mentioned.
M. Westman (Sweden). — The Swedish delegation, in accordance with the attitude it has always maintained, voted just now for a measure tending to limit trained reserves.

As this question of trained reserves has been rejected once again, we are anxious to arrive at a solution on the basis established. I am therefore prepared to accept the first paragraph of the Polish proposal submitted to this meeting, chiefly for the reasons stated by Lord Cecil. I think that, if this proposal be adopted, it would afford the future Disarmament Conference an excellent means of reducing the attacking power of the different armies. The attainment of that result must obviously depend on the manner in which the Conference makes use of the means thus placed in its hands. In the hope that, on the basis of this article, the future Conference will be able to bring about an effective limitation of the period of service, I am in favour of the adoption of the first paragraph of the Polish proposal.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I see no serious disadvantages in accepting the Polish proposal. In this respect, I am in a favourable position, because Italy is, I think, the country that has reduced the period of service more than any other. In theory, the period of service is eighteen months, but, in practice, a large part of our contingent serves only twelve months, and a fair part only six months. I believe that the average period of service in our country is actually about nine months, the annual contingent being divided into three parts.

For this reason, I should have no difficulty in supporting the Polish delegation's proposal, although, in principle, I do not see the advantage of accepting this hard and fast rule instead of the more elastic provisions of Article I.

I would repeat that this matter does not affect my country, but, from a general standpoint, I am of opinion that we should remember that the period of service depends on various factors, which are not identical in all countries. It depends on social considerations, the state of education and even on the physical condition of certain parts of the population, the budgetary situation and the number of conscripts. These factors vary in each country. Therefore, I do not see what would be the advantage of a hard and fast rule. Would it not be better to allow each country to take account of its particular situation?

Moreover, at the Conference, the question of the period of service, if left open, may facilitate negotiations between States. If you fix a hard and fast rule for all countries you will deprive them of the possibility of making mutual concessions in this matter.

Finally, you will emphasise still further the distinction between conscript and professional armies; while the period of service is to be the same in all conscript armies, professional armies would be allowed to maintain different periods of service.

For these reasons — although, I repeat, my country is not directly concerned in this question — I think it best to adhere to the more elastic provision in the text of Article I of our draft.

M. Litvinoff (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). — I have listened with attention to what speakers in favour of the Polish proposal have said, but I still fail to see what bearing all this has upon the question of disarmament. I hope the President will excuse me for making use of this term, in spite of his warning in his inaugural speech that disarmament ought not to be mentioned in this Commission. The Commission has not yet, however, changed its name — that of Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference.

The tendency of many countries lately, and especially of the military ones, has been to reduce the term of active service, by no means out of consideration for disarmament, but for the sake of economy and technical convenience and the improvement of the armies — and perhaps for the purpose of increasing the number of their effectives. As I have mentioned before, in my opinion, the shorter the term of service, the greater may be the number of men passed through active service. By adopting the Polish proposal I think we would not further the cause of disarmament or reduction, nor even of the limitation of armaments. By itself, it might be a quite harmless proposal, if the Commission had adopted some measures of real effective reduction of armaments, but I am very much afraid — judging by what has transpired from to-day's speeches — that we are hardly entitled to expect any real decisions with regard to the reduction of armaments in this Commission.

If the draft Convention should consist only of such innocent and ineffective proposals as the Polish one, it might give a false idea of the work of the Commission, and whatever we do here I think we ought to see that the public at large should understand what has been done. There should be no illusions, no camouflage, and people should see all the shortcomings of the Commission, and it seems to me that such proposals as the Polish one may just throw a veil over the shortcomings. It is for that reason that I think this proposal of the Polish delegation may be rather harmful than harmless.

M. Cobían (Spain). — I feel a certain doubt in my mind after hearing the remarks of the head of the Italian delegation.

I am not opposed to the limitation of the period of service, but I am afraid that, if we adopt the formula under discussion, this will not help us to reach our goal.

If we are to have a uniform maximum period of service for all conscript armies, we must either make this maximum very high or else give up the attempt to reconcile this reduction of the period of service with the maximum military effectives assigned to the various countries.
The figure for military effective must be based on the requirements of defence, national security and international obligations.

Suppose, for instance, that a country is allowed to maintain a force of 100,000 men for its requirements of national defence, and that another country is also allowed, for the same reason, the same maximum of 100,000. Both countries may have compulsory military service, that is to say, conscription, but the populations of each may be very different. One of the countries which has been assigned 100,000 men as a maximum may have an annual conscriptive force of 1,000,000 men, whereas the other country, also allotted a maximum of 100,000 men, may have an annual conscriptive force of only 200,000.

If we fix a period of service to allow for all these differences, the figure will be so high that no result will be obtained. If, on the other hand, we reduce the period, difficulties will arise for the country allowed 100,000 men and having only 200,000 conscripts. That country could not have 100,000 men and accept the limitation of the length of service fixed by us.

I would therefore ask the Commission to consider these figures very carefully—unless I have made a mistake in my calculations—before adopting the formula proposed.

Colonel Ali Khan Riazi (Persia). — Our delegation shares the misgivings expressed by the honourable delegate for Spain. We accordingly propose to add at the end of the first paragraph of the Polish proposal the following words: "... due account being taken of the total limited amount of armaments fixed for each country and the exigencies of the training of recruits".

Unless we adopt some such provision the danger will remain and we shall not be progressing towards general disarmament.

The President. — To enable this text to be circulated, I would ask the honourable delegate for Persia to submit it in writing.

M. Massigli (France). — The French delegation co-operated in the drafting of the text drawn up at first reading which it is now proposed to amend. Although the hour is late, I should like, if you will allow me, to explain as briefly as possible the reasons why I can accept the first paragraph of the Polish amendment, which is the same as the first paragraph of the British amendment.

If you consult the Armaments Year-Book of the League of Nations you will see that the period of service in conscript armies varies considerably. In certain armies it is less than one year, while in other countries, unless I am mistaken, it may extend to four or five years. Moreover, in one and the same army, the period of service may vary according to the arm.

For this reason, and in the form in which it is drafted, the sole value of the article under discussion is that it places on record the de facto situation in the various armies and gives the contracting parties the assurance that the characteristics of an army will not be modified during the time the Convention remains in force.

It seems to me that two rather different ideas have been expressed in the very interesting discussion which has just taken place. First, our Polish colleague stated that a common maximum should be fixed in order to indicate to some extent the point at which a conscript army ceases to merit this name and becomes a professional army, thus enjoying the advantages of both systems—highly-trained reserves and a strong, well-trained army.

A somewhat different idea was expressed by Lord Cecil, who advocated a common rule applicable to the various conscript armies.

The text before you may appear to cover both these ideas, which differ appreciably from each other. I think, however, that if we face the facts we shall see the position more clearly.

In the first place, the object was to lay down the maximum period of service not to be exceeded in a conscript army for the men of the contingent. That is the essential thing. Is it possible to go further and to standardise this period? That seems to me to be far more difficult, and even dangerous.

As General de Marinis and other speakers pointed out, the conscription system differs in the various armies. Methods, social environment, education and also fitness for military service differ. In these circumstances it is impossible to fix a uniform period of service.

There is yet another reason. If the Conference attempted to fix limits which do not take sufficient account of de facto situations and thus violently disturb the military systems of a large number of countries by requiring them to adopt a shorter period of service than that at present in force, many Governments would hesitate to commit themselves to such an experiment, and this would add to the difficulties of the Conference.

It is quite certain that you cannot ask the various armies to adopt a uniform system. Moreover, in some respects I think that when you go more closely into the various systems you will find that the difference is not always so great as was believed. I represent a country which is often reputed to be militarist, whereas the country whose hospitality we now enjoy, as Lord Cecil has reminded us, is not regarded as a militarist country. Yet, in accordance with the principles laid down in the article under discussion, you reckon the number of days service of a Swiss citizen and a French citizen you would find that the French citizen remains with the colours barely
three or four months longer than the Swiss citizen. This applies to privates. In the case of corporals, the length of service is the same in Switzerland as in France.

Consequently, there are various factors, including traditional customs, to be borne in mind.

It may be argued that in fixing a common maximum you will encourage many countries to lengthen the period of military service. I do not agree. This risk can be obviated by means of publicity.

I should like to make another observation. The whole of this discussion has been confined to conscript armies. Nevertheless, some provision should be made for professional armies. I admit that it is extremely difficult to fix a lower limit for the period of service in professional armies, but countries possessing such armies could at any rate furnish information as to the length of the engagements.

I now come to my last point, which is not without importance.

When the article was adopted at the first reading, it was understood by several delegations to refer solely to the limitation of land armaments. At that time, the French delegation made a formal reservation to the effect that it was also necessary to limit the period of service of naval and air forces. I would stress the fact this refers solely to conscript armies. Why should it be impossible to fix a limit for the period of compulsory service in the naval or air forces of conscript countries? I do not think there is any valid objection to this: in any case, I have not heard any convincing argument against it. Everyone realises the importance of the air arm and the difficulty of training airmen. It is only natural that we should want some reassurance on this point. I desire to emphasise the fact that we shall not be able to settle this question of the period of service unless we find some means of extending limitation to conscript navies and air forces.

M. Bourquin (Belgium). — I have already stated the attitude of the Belgian delegation towards the principle of the limitation of the period of service. We attach great importance to this and I should not like it to be thought here or elsewhere that the insertion of this principle in our Convention is useless. However, I feel confident that public opinion will not make this mistake because the public has a great deal of common sense and realises that, as regards the problem of the organisation of conscript armies, the question of the period of service must be regarded as fundamental. We hold strongly to this principle. The proposals submitted by the Polish and British delegations do not affect this principle. The only difference between those amendments and the proposal which we made ourselves may be said to be a difference in the method of application. As regards methods of application, my delegation is always very conciliatory because what it regards as essential is the principle. I know that methods of application are important, and are even very important in practical life, but here we are merely making a first attempt to lay down legal principles and rules of law in a domain which has hitherto been left to the discretion of States. This is a heavy task and it is obvious that, at the moment, we cannot do more than sketch out the plan. However, I am anxious that this rough plan should not be left as it is, but that it should gradually become more definite and more complete. In this connection, I think it is essential to insert certain principles. They are the seeds from which the work will grow. I must admit that the arguments submitted in support of the Polish amendment, both by the Polish delegation, other delegates and finally by M. Massigli, are very weighty. We suggested that there should be a maximum figure for each State. That proposal has been supported by the representative of the Italian delegation and M. Cobian. However, it might lead to certain complications. Moreover, the idea of a common maximum has the advantage of greater simplicity. I call to mind the advice so often given us by Lord Cecil, who has had very great experience and can speak with authority. Lord Cecil has told us over and over again that we should endeavour to avoid complications and should make our formulae as simple as possible.

I think that is very wise counsel and it is because the Polish and British proposals are extremely simple and also because they leave intact what I regard as essential—namely, the principle—that, if these proposals commend themselves to the Commission I, for one, would be prepared to agree to them.

M. Litvinoff (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). — Can the President give some idea of what questions will come up on Monday so that we can prepare for them?

The President. — We shall naturally deal with Chapter II. — Material: Land Armaments.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.
FOURTH MEETING.

Held on Monday, November 10th, 1930, at 10 a.m.

President: M. LOUDON (Netherlands).


The President. — I should first like to extend a welcome to His Excellency Dr. Tewfik Rüstü Bey, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Turkish Republic, who arrived on Saturday.

We will now continue the discussion on Article I, and, in particular, the Polish amendment providing for a uniform period of service corresponding to the normal requirements of the majority of States.

Five or six delegations have already expressed themselves in favour of this amendment.

AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY THE PERSIAN DELEGATION.

The President. — The Persian delegation, in order to allay the misgivings expressed by M. Cobían, proposes that the first paragraph of the Polish amendment should be drawn up as follows:

"For all the High Contracting Parties having the conscription system, the maximum total period of service which the annual contingent may be compelled to serve, shall be fixed at . . . days, due account being taken of the uniform standard for all armaments fixed for each country."

Before calling on the first speaker on the list, I will ask M. Massigli to address the Commission, as he desires to make a correction in the Minutes of the previous meeting.

M. Massigli (France). — I said on Saturday that I could accept the first paragraph of the Polish proposal, and I explained the reasons. In the Minutes I am made to say the exact opposite. I should like to repeat, therefore, that, subject to the observations which I submitted, I can agree to the first paragraph of the Polish proposal.


M. Sato (Japan). — In the first place, before discussing Article I, I should like to make a brief statement regarding Article E.

My delegation made a slight reservation concerning Article E, with regard to air forces. I have now received further instructions from my Government, and am in a position to withdraw this reservation.

We are therefore prepared to accept the present text of Article E, not only in respect of land forces, but also in regard to naval and air forces.

The President. — M. Sato's statement gives us great satisfaction. It is understood, therefore, that Article E is adopted in the form in which it was submitted to us.

15. Discussion on Chapter I: Effectives. — Article I (continuation): Discussion on the Polish and British Amendment (continuation).

M. Sato (Japan). — We have to consider the Polish amendment to Article I. If this had been a question of secondary importance, I should have done my utmost to fall in with the views of the Polish delegation and to accept its amendment; unfortunately, however, my delegation attaches very great importance to the fixing of the period of service in the army, and, with all the good will in the world, I am obliged to say that we find it very difficult to accept the Polish amendment.

I should first like to say a few words about what happened when we discussed this question for the first time.

The French delegation had made a suggestion which it was difficult for me to accept. I proposed to limit the period of service in such a way that each State would be left full liberty to limit its own period of service. My delegation proposed to say: "The total period of service which the annual contingent is compelled to fulfil shall not exceed what is laid down by each State."¹

This wording was not very satisfactory to Lord Cecil, although he shared my views. Lord Cecil said:²

² "I am not quite happy about the exact form of words suggested by the honourable representative of Japan. I quite agree with his object, but I do not quite like saying that
anything in a treaty shall be fixed by any particular party to the treaty. The thing that
fixes it must be the agreement between all the parties to the treaty. I suggested to him,
and I am glad to say he agrees, that, instead of saying ‘fixé par chaque Partie’, you should
say: ‘accepté par les Hautes Parties contractantes’, if M. Paul-Boncour has no objection
to such a phrase.”

I accepted this new wording proposed by Lord Cecil, which is embodied in the text adopted
at first reading.

In that text we agreed to say that all countries should be free to fix the period of service
according to their special circumstances. We attach the utmost importance to this.

The importance of this principle was emphasised by several speakers during the first reading,
and again two days ago by several members of this Commission, including General de Marinis
and M. Cobian. I entirely agree with them.

We now have the Polish amendment, which proposes a uniform standard for all countries.
I fail to see the use of fixing a uniform standard applicable to all countries. Conditions and customs
are not the same in every country. Is it possible to apply one and the same rule to every country,
when their conditions vary so greatly? I do not think so. The attempt would be useless.

If a uniform standard be accepted, as proposed by the Polish delegation, this standard will
either be fixed very high, so as to apply to everyone, or very low, in which case it would be difficult
for certain countries to accept it.

If the standard be high, the result will be unsatisfactory. As you are aware, in nearly every
country there is at the present time a tendency to reduce the period of service.

Efforts in this direction have also been made in my country, and the period of military service
has already been reduced from three to two years.

If a maximum of four years, for instance, be established, this will prejudice the efforts which
have already been made in certain countries. Those countries will say that they have done their
utmost to reduce the period of service under the influence of the social movement and that it is
possibly unnecessary for them to continue their efforts, in view of the maximum fixed at Geneva.
I fear that the good intentions of certain countries would thus be weakened, and that would be
very regrettable.

On the other hand, if, in order to encourage the tendency to reduce the period, the standard
is too low, the result will be just as unsatisfactory.

In my country, for instance, we are doing our utmost to reduce the period of military
service, but this depends on certain conditions, and we cannot bring about this
reduction in a day. There are many things to be considered before it is possible to
arrive at an appreciable reduction. If the Convention required us to reduce this period
all at once, we should be faced with enormous difficulties, and therefore could not accept the
Convention. Consequently, whether the standard is too high or too low, difficulties are bound to
arise in the case of certain countries.

I therefore find it very difficult indeed to agree to the fixing of a uniform standard.

I have so far spoken only of countries in which conscription is in force, but is it possible
to apply the Polish proposal by analogy to countries having professional armies? Can we impose
a uniform standard on them? I am not well acquainted with the usual length of engagements
in those countries, but I am certain that it varies considerably.

I do not think there would be any use in fixing a maximum period for engagements, and full
liberty should be left to countries in this respect.

The same applies to countries where conscription exists. As regards the question of the period
of service, the position of my country may possibly be somewhat different from that of other
nations.

In order to explain the difficulties with which we are faced, I should like to give you some
additional information. I have told you that, on our own initiative, we have already reduced the
period of military service. We did so having regard to social tendencies and for budgetary, financial
and other reasons; nevertheless there is a certain limit beyond which we cannot go.

We have to consider the best method of forming an efficient army. There are mountaineers,
for instance, who do not even know how to put on boots; there are fishermen who are very brave
and accustomed to facing storms and danger at sea, but who are quite unaccustomed to sleeping
on iron bedsteads. How can you turn these men into good soldiers or sailors in a very short time?
If you do not turn out well-trained soldiers, what is the use of spending so much money on military
training? It takes a certain time to produce an efficient soldier, and this time varies according
to the country. A period applicable to a European country cannot apply to my country.

It must be possible for us to take into consideration all the existing circumstances, customs
and aptitudes, and we wish to be free to fix the methods of engagements and the period of service.
That is why, notwithstanding my good will, I find it difficult to accept the Polish amendment in its
present form. I should greatly prefer the adoption of the text drawn up at first reading.
If, when the vote is taken, I am in a minority, I will give way to the opinion of the majority of the Commission; but, in that case, I will ask it to examine the question more closely. We are at present discussing the matter in the abstract; we do not know—and, moreover, this point is left blank in the Polish amendment—what the maximum would be. If the text drawn up at first reading be rejected by the Commission, I should like to know what its views are as regards the number of days to be inserted.

If that point be discussed, perhaps—I would emphasise the word "perhaps"—certain apprehensions felt by some delegations may be removed. But that possibility cannot be considered until later, and, if my arguments have not convinced my colleagues, I should like to know what is to be the result of our discussion and what is to become of the text drawn up at first reading.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands).—I entirely agree with M. Sato. If only one figure be inserted in the article, it will either be too low for those countries which need a longer period of service or too high for others. In the face of this alternative, there is no doubt that the highest figure will be chosen. That will take us very far from the standard of Switzerland, for instance, which has 150 days for service in the infantry, and we shall doubtless approach the period of four or five years which the delegate of France mentioned as being in force in certain countries.

On the other hand, if different figures are allowed for each country, it will be possible for each to contribute to the limitation and reduction of armaments by adopting a fairly low figure. Switzerland, the Scandinavian countries and the country which I represent could insert a figure which, for the infantry, would not exceed five, six or seven months, since those countries have for the infantry a period of service of 150 to 200 days, including training periods. If the amendment be accepted, the result will be that these figures will not appear in the Convention.

I should like to remind you of the discussion which took place in regard to this article at the first reading. I suggested myself that it would be preferable to say "the figures" instead of "the figure", so as to enable countries in which the period of service varies in the different arms to insert more than one figure. This suggestion encountered a certain amount of opposition. At the meeting on April 1st, 1927, M. de Brouckère stated at the close of the discussion:

"At any rate, we are all agreed that we want at least one figure. Let us then begin by registering our agreement on this point and attack the difficulty by stages. Are there any great drawbacks in a country's only giving one figure? No; because that country cannot secretly bring its effectives up to the maximum strength under cover of this figure, since it has to indicate the number of days' duty.

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

"Once this principle is clearly established there is no objection to our adopting the singular ('figure')."

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

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

"The text as above was adopted."

The extract from the Minutes I have just read to you shows that the present wording of the article allows more than one figure to be mentioned, and the general tendency to reduce the period of service to be strengthened by the indication, not only of the highest, but also of the lowest figure.

For these reasons I hope that the Commission will not adopt the Polish amendment, although, if it should do so, the Netherlands delegation will not feel compelled to oppose the adoption of the article.

M. Colban (Norway).—I am prepared to vote for the first paragraph of the whole text unanimously agreed on by the Commission in 1927, but that does not exclude me from also voting in favour of the first paragraph of the Polish-British amendment. Indeed, during the discussion, it seems as if the members of the Commission have considered these two texts as incompatible. I cannot agree that that is the case. To my mind, it is very important to maintain the rule of 1927—that all the States shall indicate in the Convention what is the maximum duration of military service. I have no objection to adding to this, if the Conference can see its way to do it, a general phrase covering all armies based upon obligatory service.

We are probably nearing the point when you can take the vote, and I respectfully submit that you should begin by putting to the vote the first paragraph of the text of Article I, which was adopted unanimously in the spring of 1927, and only afterwards proceed to the vote on the Polish-British proposal.

Dr. Markovitch (Yugoslavia).—I should like to summarise the views of the various delegations on this question. Everybody is agreed that the period of military service should

be limited and that it only remains for us to decide upon the method by which this is to be done. We should also bear in mind—and this is also a very important point—that the period of service has not been adopted as the basis of our general scheme for the limitation and reduction of armaments. In adopting Article A, we decided to retain as the essential principle and general basis of the measures of limitation and reduction, the limitation and reduction of effectives. As the Belgian delegate pointed out two days ago, this decision indirectly implies a certain limitation of the period of service. In short, we have to find some means of establishing a correlation between the general principle of the limitation of effectives and the unanimous desire to limit, in some way or another, the period of service.

Two systems have been proposed.

The first, which was adopted at the second reading, appears to be more in conformity with the essential principle for the limitation of armaments laid down in Article A—namely, the limitation of effectives. When all countries have accepted an aggregate figure for their land, naval and air effectives, it will be necessary to specify for each country the maximum period of military service and the maximum period of service for their different categories of arms. This will give us an accurate picture of the army of each country.

The second system, proposed by the British and Polish delegations, relates to principles of a more general character. I am inclined to prefer this system, which seems to me to be more in accordance with the general desire. There is something very attractive about the idea of limiting the period of military service in all countries by means of a general rule.

After hearing the observations of the Italian and Spanish delegates and the speech of M. Sato, who foresees further difficulties if we adopt the Polish delegation’s proposal, I think we ought to reflect very carefully before voting. Although, in view of the adoption of Article A, this question is not really of primary importance, it is of great importance in the eyes of public opinion, which is less acquainted with military questions. In these circumstances, it has occurred to me that it might be possible to adopt two alternative texts and to leave the final decision to the General Disarmament Conference. I do not think that there is any objection of principle to such a solution; but, if the Commission considers that it is bound to take a decision, I should like to make another suggestion—namely, that we should consider the discussion closed after we have heard all those who desire to speak, and that the vote should be postponed until next week, so as to give us time to reflect and, if necessary, to consult our Governments. This would not really be an adjournment, as there would be no further discussion but only a vote. I frankly confess that, personally, I hesitate very much between the two solutions.

Lord Cecil (British Empire).—I think we have had an extraordinarily important debate on this subject. Let me say just one word. I cannot agree with M. Litvinoff that this is a matter of no importance. I think the whole of military history shows that the higher the standard of training that is given to troops, the more serviceable they are for purposes of aggression. What we want is to train all armies for defence and not for aggression, and it seems to me that it is desirable to limit the period of service. But I must say I have been very much impressed by the arguments of M. Cobían, General de Marinis, M. Sato, and others. I think they have made a very strong case against an attempt to fix an absolutely rigid level. As far as the British delegation is concerned, there is no great desire to see a fixed level unless it can be a low level. If it be fixed at quite an absurd figure—ten years, for instance—it would have no value at all. The only purpose of our proposal was to try to keep the general standard of the armies of the world down to a defensive standard, and, if that is found to be impracticable—impracticable if you are to fix a figure which shall be acceptable to all countries—then I admit the matter must be reconsidered very carefully.

I was a great deal struck by the suggestion of the Norwegian delegate: Why not have both systems embodied in the amendment? Why not have the text which we agreed to on the first reading and add to it a limit beyond which no armies should go? It could be done with the greatest ease as a matter of drafting by adding at the end of the first paragraph: “and shall in no case exceed . . . months”. It would be a figure accepted by each party and should in no case exceed so many months. I feel very much attracted by that solution, or something of the kind; indeed, before I heard the Norwegian proposal, I had myself arrived at the conclusion that I could only vote for the Polish and British amendment, with a clear conscience, if I added an intimation that, unless at the Disarmament Conference it was found possible to fix a low limit, the British delegation would feel perfectly free to go back to the proposal of the first reading, or some analogous proposal. I do think we could accept the Polish solution and put into our report a statement that many delegates were of opinion that this would only be satisfactory if it were found possible to have a low limit; if not, they would be prepared to adhere to the original proposal. But, as at present advised, I think the Norwegian proposal really meets both cases, and, if we could agree on that, perhaps it would be the best.

I quite realise the difficulty felt by the delegate of Yugoslavia, who naturally feels he would like to have a little time for consideration; but I rather hope we shall get to some conclusion, if possible, and we could renew the consideration of the point later on if any delegations desired
The proposal would then read:

"In each contracting State having the conscription system, the total period of service which the annual contingent is compelled to serve shall not exceed the figure accepted by each of the High Contracting Parties, and shall in no case exceed . . . months."

That would give a double standard should it be found possible to get a reasonable universal standard; and, if that were not possible, we should have the standard originally mentioned in the first reading text.

M. Bourquin (Belgium). — I quite agree with Mr. Markovitch’s suggestion, all the more so because, in principle, it is in accordance with a proposal which I have just communicated to the President.

It is obvious that we are all agreed as to the principle of limiting the period of service, but when we come to apply this principle we find that there are two methods—the uniform standard and the individual standard.

I said on Saturday that the Belgian delegation would agree to the uniform standard advocated by the Polish delegation and supported by the British delegation, provided it was accepted by the Commission. It is becoming more and more evident that there will be no unanimity in its favour. Personally, I am very undecided and share the doubts expressed by Lord Cecil. We are confronted with a common difficulty—the impossibility of gauging accurately and completely the value of the two technical systems before us without going into figures and facts. We shall not be able to choose a system which has the greatest advantages and the fewest drawbacks until we have before us the demands of the various Governments and know the details and characteristics of their military organisations and the figures which they propose. These facts and figures will have to be dealt with by the Disarmament Conference. In this Commission we are confined to a theoretical appreciation of the situation. I therefore propose, in accordance with Dr Markovitch’s suggestion, that we should give the Conference an alternative, and tell it that we are all agreed as to the principle but that there are two ways in which it can be applied. We are not able to judge between them because certain factors were outside the scope of the Commission.

We would not submit a majority formula and a minority formula, but would agree to present the alternatives. We have to think, not only of our own work, but also of the work of the Disarmament Conference. We must endeavour to smooth out the difficulties for the Conference. If we adopted a single formula, that of the uniform standard, the draft would be submitted to the Governments invited to send representatives to the Disarmament Conference. Those Governments would study the factors necessary for the application of the formula in question. If the Conference decided that this formula was impracticable or difficult to carry out, it would have to revert to the other formula and begin the preparatory work all over again. It seems to me that this would complicate the work of the Conference and would waste time. If, on the other hand, we tell the Governments that there are two alternatives, the delegations to the Conference would be prepared to deal with either alternative.

Lord Cecil’s suggestion, which I think is in accordance with M. Colban’s proposal, is that, instead of an alternative, we should have a combination of the two systems. M. Colban and Lord Cecil propose to take the original text, which provides for an individual standard, and to add that there will also be a uniform standard. I am afraid that, if we adopt the two formulae, this will combine the disadvantages of both. If the uniform standard be adopted, a very high level will probably be fixed. If the suggestion made by Lord Cecil and M. Colban be adopted, the various delegations will specify the individual standard which they require.

If you propose to have a uniform standard in addition to these individual standards, you will have to fix a very high level in order to meet the views of all countries. This is the drawback to which M. Rutgers drew attention.

Countries such as Belgium, for instance, which have a very short period of military service, will thus be presented with a Convention providing for a maximum period of three or four years. If in such countries the period of service is from eight to ten months, certain parties—I am looking at the matter from the point of view of domestic politics, which are an essential factor in international politics—will on these grounds urge an increase in the period of service. That would certainly run counter to Lord Cecil’s intentions. I should therefore have some difficulty in accepting the combination of the two formulae and should prefer an alternative.

I now come to a question of procedure. I do not think it is really necessary for me to submit my suggestion in the form of a new amendment. When I first saw the British amendment the other day I had some doubt as to its scope, and ventured to ask Lord Cecil whether the words “in each contracting State” did not imply that there would be a separate standard for each country. Lord Cecil replied that a uniform standard was intended. On the other hand, the Polish amendment reads: “for all the High Contracting Parties . . .” We must not leave any room for doubt as to our intentions. I think we could quite well adopt the text of the British amendment and explain the reasons for our decision in the report. The text is sufficiently elastic to cover the alternatives. These would be stated and we should say why it was impossible for us to choose between them.
M. Litvinoff (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). — I should not like to leave on the minds of the delegates the impression that the Soviet delegation is opposed to the British and Polish amendments in themselves. That is not the case. If a direct proposal had been made to the Soviet Government to reduce the term of service independently of what was happening here, we certainly should have responded to it willingly, the more so because more than half of the Soviet army consists of territorials. That is a system, very much like the Swiss militia, with a term of service in the first year of three months, and one month in subsequent years; so we have no grounds for opposing the amendment. If I speak against it, it is because I am afraid it may be the only achievement of this Commission in the way of disarmament.

If the Commission would revert to the question of the limitation of trained reserves and war material, or if the future Conference would adopt such limitation, I would vote for reducing the term of service; but, as I am not sure of any such measures being adopted by the Commission or the Conference, I wish to abstain from voting. I only want to make quite clear the attitude of the Soviet delegation.

M. Fierlinger (Czechoslovakia). — I agree to a very large extent with my friend Mr. Markovitch, but I question the desirability of having two alternative texts. Would that not be a rather dangerous path for the Commission to take at this stage? It is our duty, as far as possible, to draw up a single text. Later on we shall be faced with more difficult questions, and may then be obliged to draw up two alternative texts.

If we do not, as far as possible, draw up a single text, we shall complicate the task of the Disarmament Conference enormously. As you know, that task will be a very heavy one. We have already touched on a controversial point. The scope of this controversy may be greatly enlarged at the Disarmament Conference. For that reason I should prefer the adoption of a single text, if this is at all possible.

It is our task to prepare a method; the figures will be filled in by the Disarmament Conference. The object of the Polish amendment is to establish a standard determined by a figure "x". This figure will be inserted by the Conference, but it will in any case have before it a definite system. It will be easier for the Conference to discuss this single figure rather than two alternative figures. In the latter case, it would be obliged to discuss both these texts in addition to fixing the figure "x".

As I told you on Saturday, I have no enthusiasm for the Polish amendment, which I regard as a compromise.

At the time, the Czechoslovak delegation recommended the adoption of Article I in its present form, and accordingly accepts a more drastic limitation than that provided for in the Polish amendment. We are prepared to accept a more stringent obligation than that resulting from the Polish amendment.

I have therefore no hesitation in accepting the Polish and British proposal, in conjunction with the Norwegian proposal.

I am in favour of the system laid down in Article I, and I do not think there is any objection to the addition proposed. I merely desire to maintain my reservations in regard to this higher level, which would produce a certain feeling of uneasiness, especially in countries which are endeavouring to reduce the period of service as far as possible.

The reduction of the period of service depends on the good will of the Ministry of Finance, because, the more closely the army resembles the professional type the greater its cost. That is why we are in favour of a conscript army. Apart from this, I am quite prepared to accept the Norwegian proposal.

I think it should be possible to conclude this discussion fairly quickly. We could, of course, allow the delegations a few days to think the matter over; but, after the text of Article I is adopted, the question will be very simple and we could quite well accept the Polish and British proposal.

There is another way out of this difficulty. I referred to it on Saturday. This is the method of publicity. If the system recommended by Lord Cecil and M. Colban does not secure the unanimous support of the Commission or of the majority, we might return to this idea of publicity, which I would then explain more fully. It is not a question of merely nominal publicity. This publicity would almost have the value of a treaty obligation.

For the moment, I merely desired to draw your attention to the fact that there is another way out. I think it would be best to take a vote at once on the Norwegian proposal regarding Article I, in conjunction with the first paragraph of the British proposal or with the Polish proposal, which, as I understand them, are identical.

Munir Bey (Turkey). — The Turkish delegation has decided not to vote in favour of the Polish and British amendment for establishing a compulsory uniform standard.

This attitude is not dictated by any desire to avoid a limitation of the period of military service, since in our country, although this period is legally a year and a half, it is much shorter in practice. We consider, however, that the result of fixing a uniform standard would be to increase the period of military service, because, in order to secure unanimity among the contracting Powers it would be necessary to adopt a relatively high maximum. For these reasons the amendment latterly moved...
by the Norwegian delegation and supported by the British delegation is preferable to the Polish amendment. Nevertheless, the Turkish delegation considers that, even in this case, the desired result would not be obtained, because the maximum adopted would necessarily be higher than the period in force in most of the contracting States. As it would be possible for each Power to adopt the figure fixed, there might be a tendency to work up to that maximum.

For this reason the Turkish delegation prefers the text adopted at the first reading.

M. Westman (Sweden). — Before the vote is taken, I should like to have an explanation in regard to the British and Norwegian proposal. Unless I am mistaken, Article I, as adopted at the first reading, provides for the acceptance by each country of figures with a view to limitation, and not for a measure of publicity. For instance, in the case of country A, three months' service is accepted, and, in the case of country B, six months', etc., and these figures must be observed during the term of the Convention. It is now proposed to add an aggregate figure and to say that no country may exceed the limit, say, of fifteen months.

What is the use of fixing an aggregate limit, since the figures accepted are three months or six months respectively? I fail to see the purpose of this aggregate figure.

General de Marinis (Italy). — After following with close attention the discussion in which we have been engaged, I think it is clear that a certain number of delegates are concerned in regard to the special circumstances of each country which might justify differences in the legal period of service. This principle forms the basis of the text adopted at first reading. On the other hand, other delegates are concerned with the danger that might arise if the legal period fixed were too long. With a view to limiting this legal period, it has been proposed that the period of service in all countries should be standardised: that is the Polish proposal.

The two tendencies, therefore, are to allow freedom to all countries to adopt the legal period of service which suits them best and, on the other hand, to ensure that this period shall not be too long.

The addition proposed by Lord Cecil to the text adopted at first reading meets both these points of view, and I accordingly support the British delegate's proposal.

M. Colban (Norway). — As General de Marinis has already replied to the Swedish delegate's observations, I only desire to speak briefly. I think it would be a good thing to have in the first Convention a maximum limit fixed, even if a number of States, or most States, probably will not ask to go up to that maximum. It is hardly to be expected that, in our first Disarmament Convention, the figure we arrive at will be all that we hope for; but we must not forget that this is our first Convention, and that in the future—perhaps in the near future—we may have a more advantageous figure, and, let us hope, that we shall also see progress made in other directions. That is why I think I should rather insist that we should not only vote for the adoption of the first paragraph of the text of Article I, which was adopted unanimously in the spring of 1927—and which, to my mind, is the great essential thing—but that we should also adopt the idea of the Polish-British proposal.

I quite accept the draft proposed by Lord Cecil.

Dr. Riddell (Canada). — It is already on record that the Canadian delegation is in favour of the limitation of the duration of service. I have listened with a great deal of attention to the presentation of the two systems which have been advocated and to the difficulties attendant on fixing a limit, and I heartily agree with what General de Marinis and the honourable representative of Norway have said. I think that there is a great gain in having the two figures—a tremendous gain—and in my opinion we would be most unwise if we were to separate one from the other.

M. Colban has made it clear that, after all, this is a first Disarmament Convention that we are drawing up, and, as it is a first Disarmament Convention, probably the figures will not be all that we might hope they will be in ten, or twenty, or thirty years; but it seems to me that to have a definite agreed figure beyond which no country can go is a great gain.

As I have already pointed out, we are trying to prepare a text which will permit the nations to agree to limit the period of instruction of their trained reserves to such an extent as to make their use for aggression exceedingly difficult, if not impossible; and public opinion in the coming years will, I think, see to it that gradually there shall be laid down a period of training which will determine whether a given country is sincere or whether it is not. If they can fix such a figure as that, and I believe they can, disarmament will have made great progress. When such a figure has obtained general acceptance, a particular country which stands out and says, “We must have a longer period”, will be acknowledging either inefficiency or motives distinct from those which animate us here. If it be permitted to look into the future, I think we shall see that the figure—after the first ten years—that is fixed for the number of days’ service, will be reduced progressively until it will be sufficiently short to prevent the use of trained reserves for offensive warfare.

I listened on Saturday to the arguments in favour of maintaining trained reserves. Some of us here abstained from voting. Why did we do so? Because we felt that it was impossible to obtain general agreement on a Convention wherein trained reserves would be limited. As we have made this concession, it seems to me that the countries retaining the conscription system
should be willing to limit the period of training for their conscripts. If we are going to reduce our armaments, it will have to be done on a basis of compromise. The Canadian delegation will therefore support the proposal of the Polish and British delegates, because we believe that this is a fundamental point and that we shall be doing something which, although it may not make support the proposal of the Polish and British delegates, because we believe that this armaments, it will have to be done on a basis of compromise. The Canadian delegation will therefore should be willing to limit the period of training for their conscripts. If we are going to reduce our

The first thing will be to fix the maximum land, naval and air effectives of each State, as provided for in Article A. Consequently, there will be a definite basis for fixing the common maximum period of service in Article I, and no contradiction can ever arise between these two articles of the Convention. No country can ever be put in a position of not being able to attain the maximum effectives allowed it under Article A. Therefore, the period of service calculated in this way does not represent a minimum but a theoretical maximum, justified by existing circumstances and the legitimate requirements of defence and security.

As regards the interpretation of the Polish amendment to paragraph I of Article I, I would refer to the explanations which I gave you at last Saturday's meeting. There can be no doubt as to the method by which the uniform standard for the period of service will be fixed: the Conference will do it and will have to take into consideration all the normal requirements of national defence.

As regards the interpretation of the Polish amendment to paragraph I of Article I, I would refer to the explanations which I gave you at last Saturday’s meeting. There can be no doubt as to the method by which the uniform standard for the period of service will be fixed: the Conference will do it and will have to take into consideration all the normal requirements of national defence.

The first stage of fixing a figure will not seem obvious. It is not possible to act in any other way for all the excellent technical reasons mentioned by the Italian and Spanish delegates. In appearance, the first stage of fixing a figure will not seem sensational, but this limitation will nevertheless be of the greatest importance for the cause of peace.

I do not think that M. Colban’s suggestion and the Anglo-Polish amendment are incompatible, and I would also refer to the suggestion made by the Czechoslovak representative, supported by the French delegate, to supplement the text by provisions concerning publicity. I would willingly agree to any proposal to that effect. The original text of the Polish amendment is satisfactory; but, if a provision in regard to publicity were added, this would be an improvement.

At the same time, I am prepared to accept the suggestion made by the Belgian and Czechoslovak delegates, to submit the two alternatives to the Conference.

After dealing with the observations of those speakers who were in favour of our amendment, I now turn to the objections of principle.

I must confess that I was rather surprised to hear it said that the limitation and reduction of the period of service in conscript armies would have no practical result and would be superfluous. There is no doubt that, in the majority of countries possessing the conscription system, certain periods of service have been established as a result of experience and normal development. These periods correspond strictly to the countries’ requirements from the point of view of adequate training for defence and national security. In the majority of countries they are not very different, and do not usually exceed two or three years at the outside, according to the arm, including periods of training.

What, then, are we to conclude when we suddenly come across armies in which the period of active service alone greatly exceeds the limit mentioned above? This period is sufficient to permit of due regard for all the various circumstances rightly referred to by General de Marinis and M. Sato—degree of education, general culture, economic situation, industrial development, etc. I fully appreciate M. Sato’s anxiety, which is, I think, justified, but I do not see that there would be any difficulty in dealing with it.

That is why I propose a uniform standard, taking into account the general requirements of conscript armies and designed to prevent them from becoming professional armies.

Any service in excess of the requirements of normal training—each additional month or year spent with the active army—makes a further impression on a man’s mind and adds to his value and to that of the unit. The men become professional soldiers. The characteristics and spirit of the conscript army change; it is converted into a professional army, all the more formidable because of its great size. The potential of aggression if I may say so, is immediately heightened by any period of service in excess of that which is strictly necessary.

On the other hand, a soldier whose service in the active army is confined to a relatively short period can only receive a limited training: the necessary minimum of musketry practice, a little field training, a knowledge of the regulations for discipline and internal economy, a certain amount of elementary technical instruction in each arm, etc. If we bear in mind the time which he spends in garrison service, physical training and general instruction, we shall see that it is impossible
for him to acquire more thorough or more extensive military knowledge. The opposite is the case when the period of service extends to the longest period in force to-day. A man serving for such a considerable period can acquire a great deal of practical and theoretical knowledge of his special subject. He will also have time to receive more thorough training in field service, field operations, liaison work and command. He will be ready for promotion at any moment to the rank of non-commissioned officer, and in quality he will be equivalent to the non-commissioned officers of conscript armies with a short period of service. His value is no longer to be compared with that of a private soldier in an army with a short period of service. A long period of training therefore affords a means of creating large camouflaged cadres which can be utilised in the case of emergency for the formation of new units, to an extent which is impossible for countries with a short period of service.

Lastly, I should like to draw the Commission’s attention to the advantages afforded by the possibility of specialisation in armies with a long period of service, more particularly in view of the importance of mechanisation and the increased use of motive-power by the assaulting armies, which will be a characteristic of future wars. I will not go more fully into this question at the moment, although I would emphasise its importance from the military point of view.

I do not think there is any further need to stress the fact—which is quite obvious—that an excessively long period of service is an important factor in the military strength of a country, and it is very difficult to speak of a reduction and limitation of armaments if at the same time the excessively long period of service which still exists in certain countries is to be maintained.

Before concluding, I should, however, like to draw the attention of those who are opposed to the reduction and limitation of the period of service to certain other considerations. The reduction of the period, even in the exceptional cases in which, according to our formula, it will be applied, should not make it necessary for any country to enter upon an entirely new path.

The tendency to reduce the period of service is apparent almost everywhere and may be regarded as a factor of social progress. All that would be necessary, therefore, would be to accelerate in exceptional cases—that is, in countries which have lagged behind for some reason—a movement which already exists in them all.

I now come to another point. There is an interconnection between the periods of service in the various countries, and the period in force in one country affects the period in neighbouring countries. Let us take the case of a country which, owing to an excessively long period of active service—say four or five years—becomes in peace-time a nation of soldiers or a nation with a large professional army. What will be the effect of this state of affairs on neighbouring countries? It is obvious that their attempts to restrict the period of service will be greatly hampered and may even prove impossible.

There is yet another question, that of moral pacification—a factor of primary importance in the problem of disarmament. It is essential that every effort should be made to bring about this pacification. I would draw your attention to the fact that the maintenance of an excessively long period of service in certain countries—from four to five years’ service in the active army—alarms public opinion in every country owing to the threat to peace which it involves.

Another argument advanced against the reduction of excessive periods of service is that this reduction might bring about an increase in the number of effectives called up.

I doubt whether this would be the case in the majority of countries. I have already referred to the tendency to reduce the period of service which is apparent in all countries on the Continent. In those countries the reduction of the period of service has not brought about an increase in the number of effectives, for the simple reason that the whole of the annual contingent had already been called up.

I admit that in certain special cases, although these are very few, this increase might occur. As the result of the adoption of our maximum limit, a Power might be obliged to reduce its period of service and at the same time have available a part of the contingent which had not yet been called up. A country in this situation might perhaps be tempted to make good the loss in the number of average daily effectives by increasing the proportion of the contingent liable for service. In such a case it would be possible for the country in question to set off the reduction in the period of service by an increase in another element. The omission of the principle of limitation of the period of service would not, however, prevent this contingency.

In short, a long period of service enables more thorough and extensive general and technical training to be given to the men. They can be made more efficient and more perfectly adapted to the part which they will be called upon to play in time of war. A specific and deep impression is made on their esprit de corps. The soldier acquires the status of a non-commissioned officer ready to take command at any moment. In this way it is possible for a country to obtain an almost unlimited number of trained non-commissioned officers for cadres. This system places at the disposal of the country which adopts it the large number of specialists necessary to handle the new implements of war efficiently and such men will be essential for the future armies of assault—the armies of aggression making surprise attacks.

It seems to me that these facts are only too obvious. Neither experts nor the man in the street will understand a speaker who maintains that a reduction of excessive periods of compulsory service in conscript armies is not in the interest of disarmament and peace.
M. Politis (Greece).—This discussion being about to close, I think it is time to explain the attitude my delegation proposes to take up.

We have before us a text adopted at the first reading, and—it is well to remember—adopted unanimously. In the course of this long second reading discussion we have endeavoured to make an improvement in the text adopted. We have had in view the principle of limiting the period of service. That principle is already embodied in Article I, of the first reading text, with provision for individual application of the principle. The improvement, to which it is now proposed to have recourse, takes the form of a general provision for what has just been called a uniform standard for all the contracting parties.

You have seen the difficulties which arise when it is proposed to apply a uniform standard to the period of military service. As has been pointed out more than once in the course of the discussion, we shall run the risk, if we wish to retain this idea of a uniform standard, of making it too high. This danger is not eliminated by the combined method proposed by M. Colban and accepted by Lord Cecil. If you begin to take into account the requirements of each State by laying down that in any case the maximum period of service is not to exceed so many days, that maximum will be fixed at a figure which will cover all the individual statements of requirements previously indicated. In the end, therefore, this combined system arrives at the same actual result as the fixing of a uniform standard. The uniform standard may be put fairly high; and for my part am afraid that the countries which are at present tending—and that to an increasing extent—to go still further in the direction of limitation, may find the fixing of such a figure awkward, both from the psychological standpoint and from the standpoint of internal politics—that is to say, when they find an international convention, of the importance of that on which we are at work, fixing a limit higher than the limit which they have already accepted in principle. It will be difficult for the Governments of such countries to ask the national legislatures to go lower than the limit already accepted.

I take my own country as an example. The law at present in force in Greece fixes military service at eighteen months; but in practice the period is never more than fourteen months. There is now a question of fixing it by legislation at twelve months, with an effective service in practice of not more than ten months. I must very frankly say that, if an international convention of this importance were to fix the uniform standard, even at a moderate figure—I am not thinking of ten or five or three years—but of two years or eighteen months—I believe it would be impossible for the Government of my country to ask the national legislature to accept the proposal for reduction which is at present contemplated.

Though I am attracted by the idea of a limitation of military service by means of a convention and in a generalised form, I think, for the reasons I have given and remembering that "le mieux est l'ennemi du bien", that the most prudent course is to adhere to the first reading text. That leaves us free, should there be a sudden movement of international solidarity in the Conference in the direction we all desire, to recognise the possibility of fixing a uniform standard at a low figure and accepting it. But in the meanwhile I think it is best to accept individual limitation, as suggested in the text adopted at the first reading. That is the wiser course and, for my part, I propose to hold to it.

M. Massigli (France).—At the point which this discussion has reached it is necessary for us to see clearly where we stand.

M. Politis has just stated the position of the problem very clearly, but there is an essential point, to which I ventured to draw attention at the close of my remarks of the day before yesterday, which has not been mentioned this morning.

The question I asked the day before yesterday is this: Are we really in agreement on the principle of limiting the annual contingent of a country as a whole, whether serving in the army, navy or air force? That is an essential, a fundamental, point.

Starting from the idea that the Convention ought to have a certain elasticity in order to allow for the requirements of the navies and air forces—and on the understanding also that the only limitation proposed is the limitation of the legal period of service, without any question of preventing certain navies or certain air forces from having recourse to voluntary enlistment under the conditions set forth in Article H—we thought that the Polish-British formula, introducing the idea of a uniform standard at a fairly high figure, might facilitate agreement.

But I still do not know how we stand in this matter; and, before deciding whether I shall give my preference to the text adopted at the first reading or adhere to my acceptance of the Polish amendment, I want to have light thrown on this fundamental point.

The President.—I think M. Massigli is perfectly right. We have hitherto disregarded the observations appearing in the margin opposite Article I (first reading text):

"This Article has not been discussed in connection with naval and air effectives."

"The delegation of France declares that the clauses of this article must apply in the same conditions to land, naval and air effectives."

I would ask you to be good enough to state whether this article is to apply under the same conditions to land, naval and air forces. M. Sato also referred to this point on Saturday.

Lord Cecil (British Empire).—The only satisfactory way of giving an answer to M. Massigli would be to put some words into the amendment making it quite clear what was the solution desired by the Commission. For my part, it does not seem to me to make any difference whether you take the old system or the new system. You have to settle whether you take the Polish amendment or the old drafting, and to decide whether it is to apply to all three

—50—
branches of the armed forces or only to land forces. It should, however, be quite easy to insert the total period of service which the total annual contingent is compelled to serve, whether by land, sea or air, and to put in some words which would make it quite clear. We can vote on that, and M. Massigli can form his own judgment as to the action he ought to take in consequence of that decision.

The President. — The words "whether by land, sea or air" will have to be inserted. M. Massigli points out to me that what we have to do is first to establish the principle, and that we can settle the wording later.

M. Sato (Japan). — In principle I accept the French proposal of applying the same rule for the period of service to all three categories of armed forces, provided always that the first reading text is adopted, and each State is accordingly left complete freedom to fix the period of service.

I am dubious, however, as to the application of this rule. Its application will be easy in a country where the period of service is one and the same in all three categories of the armed forces; but where there are differences in the periods of service, that is no longer the case. In my country the longest period of service in the army is two years in the cavalry and artillery; but in the navy the longest period of service is three years.

If the figure of three years be put in in the place left blank in the text, a difficulty will arise for the army—viz. that to which M. Politis drew attention, and which I had in mind when I spoke on the Polish amendment this morning.

I think it will be necessary to specify a fixed period of service for each of the three categories of the armed forces, for the army, navy, and air force. Perhaps someone will let me know whether my idea is right or not. Generally speaking, and in principle, I accept the French proposal.

The President. — Before calling upon the next speaker, I suggest that, if we say "the figures" instead of "the figure", that will cover every supposition.

General de Marinis (Italy). — The Italian delegation is prepared to accept the extension of this provision to the annual contingents of the three categories of the armed forces, by land, sea and air; but it is obvious that, in this case, it will be necessary to say "the figures", because there will be different periods of service in the army, navy, and air force.

M. Fierlinger (Czechoslovakia). — General Kasprzycki himself admits that his proposal involves a certain logical corollary. If we accept it as it stands, a country with a certain population will be able to have effectives of several million men with the colours throughout the year. This would be inconsistent with our conception of disarmament. M. Politis has wisely pointed out that what is essential for us is Article I. Without Article I we cannot make any substantial progress.

As regards the Norwegian proposal, I think we should first vote on Article I and see what majority it gets. I think M. Colban is in agreement with me on this point. It is understood that Article I will be put to the vote with the slight amendment which the French delegation considers necessary. We might then have a further discussion, or vote on the Polish-British proposal.

M. Massigli (France). — I should like to know whether, once the vote has been taken under the conditions indicated, it will be open to us to give explanations with regard to our vote on the addition of the amendment proposed by M. Colban and Lord Cecil—with regard to the introduction of a second maximum establishing a uniform standard—to the first paragraph of Article I.

The President. — According to strict procedure, we ought to vote on the proposed amendments first; but I think M. Fierlinger's proposal is very sound.

M. Fierlinger (Czechoslovakia). — General Kasprzycki himself admits that his proposal involves a certain logical corollary. If we accept it as it stands, a country with a certain population will be able to have effectives of several million men with the colours throughout the year. This would be inconsistent with our conception of disarmament. M. Politis has wisely pointed out that what is essential for us is Article I. Without Article I we cannot make any substantial progress.

Dr. Markovitch (Yugoslavia). — I withdraw my proposal for recommending the two systems as alternatives to the Disarmament Conference, in view of the argument as to the rules of procedure and in view of the fact that we have to establish a single text.

I do not, however, withdraw anything of my arguments, which the representative of Belgium has been good enough to support.

It is suggested that we should first vote on system No. 1, and then add system No. 2. I confess frankly that I have tried in vain to reconcile these two systems and I am astonished to find the Commission is prepared to be unanimous on the point. I should like to counter that unanimity with an argument of a general nature, a legal argument. I do not understand how it is possible to compel a country, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia for example, which accepts eighteen months as the maximum period of compulsory service, to adhere to that period under paragraph 1, when in paragraph 2 the maximum limit is being fixed at two years. As I see the position, paragraph 2 cancels the obligations of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in respect of the maximum of eighteen months. I should be very grateful to those who are in favour of this system if they would explain to me what will be the position of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in this case.

M. Fierlinger (Czechoslovakia). — I think there is a misunderstanding. M. Colban's proposal was to vote on Article I and on the principle advanced by the Polish and British delegations. We have found that paragraph 1 of the British proposal should be interpreted as being identical with the Polish proposal. The British proposal appears to involve a contra-
so that there may be no misunderstanding so far as I personally am concerned. The point which he did just now. I am anxious to explain what I am prepared to do myself, so that there may be no misunderstanding so far as I personally am concerned.

As I understand it, our first decision will be: Do we accept the text as printed here, or do we suppress that text and substitute something else for it? On that question I shall vote for the text as it is printed here with the addition proposed by M. Massigli. Then comes the question whether we should make the addition proposed by M. Colban and myself. I shall be glad to hear the discussion with regard to that. M. Massigli, I understand, wishes to express his views on that subject. I reserve my decision as to how I shall vote on that point; but I cannot agree with the Czechoslovak delegate in thinking that there is any contradiction between the two. You may say there are a number of standards for a number of individual cases, and those will be laid down; but, in addition to that, we wish to lay down one complete standard which will embrace them all.

Take the case of Czechoslovakia, where the period of service is eighteen months. That country will be bound, having inserted eighteen months as the period it accepts, to eighteen months; and, in addition to that, there will be a covering figure of, say, two years, possibly applying to the whole world, the object of that being to set up a standard—which we hope will be gradually reduced until the whole world comes down to one year or even less. In any case, that will be the highest period that anyone in any future revision of the Disarmament Treaty can possibly ask for. Two years will be the extreme maximum that we contemplate as possible. That is the theory. I am not going to argue it now, because I quite agree with M. Massigli that it is better to take one decision at a time. The first decision is whether we accept the principle of the first paragraph of Article I as proposed, or whether we wish to establish an entirely different principle.

The President. — I was about to propose to vote first on the first paragraph of Article I, as approved at the first reading, with the slight amendment, and then on the Anglo-Norwegian amendment.

M. Litvinoff (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). — My preoccupation at the moment is not so much to shorten the term of service as to shorten the term of discussion on this point, which threatens to be endless. I should be happy if I could contribute to any clarification of the situation. It seems to me there is no contradiction in the two proposals. Limitation of service can only be expressed by fixing some maximum term of service, and if we adopt that it does not matter whether individual countries fix individual terms of service or not. Any country would be free to lower the term of service, but that will be done by way of publicity. That is how the position appears to me and perhaps this explanation will satisfy the delegate for Yugoslavia.

Dr. Markovitch (Yugoslavia). — I could accept M. Litvinoff’s interpretation; only I cannot see whether with such a system we shall really contrive to shorten the period of military service. We are shortening the length of the discussion, I admit; but the point is, as I have stated clearly enough, what is the legal effect of an additional obligation not to exceed a fixed number of days or months or years, when one has already assumed an obligation not to exceed eighteen months?

According to M. Litvinoff’s explanation, the position of my country will be as follows. It will come to the Conference with the wish to accept a maximum of eighteen months. At the same time a general maximum of two years will be fixed. At that point, military circles in Yugoslavia will certainly say: As the two years’ maximum has been fixed, why accept eighteen months? Perhaps we shall want two years, and Yugoslavia will be satisfied with this general maximum.

M. Massigli (France). — You have proposed to substitute “the figures accepted” for “the figure accepted” in Article I.

I would point out a difficulty in the way, which might be considered by the experts. The point is highly technical, and I must refer to those who are more qualified than myself to express an opinion. I can only say what the point is.

Once there are three different figures for the three forms of armaments, while at the same time there are three figures of average daily effectives, the various countries will find themselves compelled to enter one and the same figure in all three columns, even if the period of service is not in fact the same in all three categories. Otherwise, great difficulty will be met whenever it is desired to transfer personnel from one category to the other.

Lord Cecil (British Empire) — I do not see why we should consider the technical difficulty at all now. Do you not think we had better vote? I was going to answer Dr. Markovitch; but, if he will allow me, I will do so after the division, when we come to consider whether the Norwegian proposal should be added.

M. Sato (Japan). — M. Massigli’s last remark does not appear to me to be quite satisfactory for my country. I have already had occasion to point out that, if the biggest figure
is given for the period of service in a country for the three categories of armaments, that will lead
to difficulties. I quoted the case of my own country, in which the period of active service is two
years in the case of the army and three years in the case of the navy. If we take the figure " three
years " only and apply it to all the categories, the soldiers will say—that is what was in M. Politis' mind, as it is in mine— " Why make the period of military service any lower ? " I should
like to strengthen the tendency in the direction of cutting down the period of military service; but
to give three years as the period of service in the Japanese army will not only not strengthen
the tendency to reduction, but will rather strengthen the tendency to an increase.

For this reason I cannot agree with the French proposal. It might be possible to consider
leaving each country a free hand in this matter. France might perhaps give a single figure for all
categories, while other countries (like my own) would give three different figures, or two different
figures, for the three categories. Perhaps that is a possible way out of the difficulty.

The President. — I think the wording, on which we are about to vote, covers all the cases
you have in mind.

M. Sato (Japan). — M. Massigli does not accept it.

M. Massigli (France). — I did not say I did not accept it. I said that, if three figures are
to be inserted, a number of States will be compelled to put the same figure in all three columns.

VOTE ON REVISED WORDING FOR ARTICLE I, PARAGRAPH 1.

The President. — I put the following wording to the vote:

" In each contracting State having the conscription system, the total period of service
which the annual contingent is compelled to serve—whether by land, sea or air— shall not
exceed the figures accepted by each of the High Contracting Parties. ">

This was adopted unanimously, the German and Soviet delegates abstaining.

VOTE ON ARTICLE I, PARAGRAPH 2

The President. — I now put to the vote the Anglo-Norwegian proposal to add to the
wording we have just accepted the following: " and shall in no case exceed .... months."

M. Colban (Norway). — It should not be called the Anglo-Norwegian proposal, but the
Anglo-Polish proposal. Do not give me an honour which really does not belong to me. On the
other hand, I am prepared to vote in favour of that proposal.

General de Marinis (Italy).— The Italian delegation is prepared to accept the extension
of this provision to the annual contingents of the three categories of armed forces. But it is
clear that, in this case, we ought to give the three figures, because the period of service will not be
the same in the land, sea and air forces.

M. Massigli (France). — I should like to say in a few words why I think it unnecessary
to add the proposal which has been called the Anglo-Norwegian proposal—I do not
know whether it should still be so described—to the text we have voted. M. Politis has given
excellent reasons for not doing so; but I should like the Commission fully to realise how the
text we have just voted will operate.

What will happen at the time of the Conference? The Governments will put forward their
demands for effectives. In fixing the numbers they will start, not with the idea of what the contin-
gents are to be, but with the idea of what their minimum requirements are. Further, the Convention
will be in force over a more or less lengthy period, in which there may, and indeed certainly will,
be very important variations in the strength of the annual contingents in the case of a number
of countries, because this period will reflect—from a distance of twenty years—a tragic moment
in the history of the world and of Europe.

When they come to put in the figures for duration of service, to which they bind themselves
under Article I, the Governments will take this situation into account. As elements for determining
their attitude, they will have the average daily effectives considered necessary, the possibilities
in regard to recruiting regular soldiers, and, thirdly and lastly, the annual contingent. It is in
accordance with these three elements—plus the necessary margin—that they will state the maximum
period of service which they undertake not to exceed.

Discussion will perhaps follow on this matter; but in the end there will either be no convention
or an agreement will be reached stabilising the figures X, Y or Z which have been given.

The members of the Conference will represent a large number of countries. They will be led,
in the light of the explanations given, to consider different figures for the different States; and we
know already that, both for the reasons which I have given and for reasons of a social and political
character to which reference has been made in the course of this discussion, the same figure will
not be put down by everyone. Of the forty or fifty figures which will be put down, there will be
one which is higher than all the rest; and automatically it will be this figure which will be the one no one is to exceed.

It has been said: "What does it matter? The following Conference will take account of what possibilities there may be of lowering this theoretical maximum." I reply that progress will be much more apparent if, when there are reductions in the periods of service accepted by the different countries, it is the maximum figure which the various States—other than the one which is higher than all the rest—will be this figure which will be the one no one is to exceed.

Actually, therefore, the maximum figure either means nothing at all—that is, it will be a theoretical figure higher than all those which represent the formal obligations assumed by the various States—or else it will simply be the highest figure in the Convention. For this reason I consider it undesirable to vote on the Anglo-Norwegian amendment.

Lord Cecil (British Empire).—While appreciating what M. Massigli has said, I certainly hold out for the adoption of the amendment which I understand M. Colban desires. I agree that the importance of this is not very great. My conception of the way it would work is this; you would have the fifty different countries each demanding its period of service, and it would turn out that the majority of them was content with two or three years, or perhaps one year's service, but that two or three countries would hold out for a longer period, and when you come to fix the universal figure you will have a great weapon to use. You could say to the latter countries: "Do you wish to hold out for these extremely high figures and thus prevent us from fixing the universal figure at a lower rate?" I think it would be a means of pressure on the reactionary countries. I see that it might lead to difficulties in each country, in that the general figure had been fixed higher than they demanded. I believe the pressure we shall be able to bring to bear on each country will have the effect of reducing the figure rather than of raising it.

In answer to the delegate of Yugoslavia, who raised the question of a juridical difficulty, I would say that I do not think such a difficulty exists. As an illustration I might mention that we have in England a speed-limit for motor-cars, which is twenty miles an hour for every part of the country, and, in addition, for certain parts of the country there is a lower speed-limit of ten or twelve miles an hour. In the same way the overriding figure of service will apply to all countries. There is no contradiction in fixing two maxima; but if you try do it the other way you will land yourselves in a contradiction. My impression is that some overriding figure would be of use, and, when it comes to the vote, I shall vote for it, although I do not attach very much importance to the question.

General Kasprzyck (Poland).—I am obliged to M. Colban, and I have only one thing to add to what the British delegate has said. What we have to keep in view is, first, the freedom of every country to fix its own maximum, and, secondly, the fixing of a common limit, to which the more reluctant countries (if there are still any such at the time of the Disarmament Conference) will be compelled to come down.

The President.—I now propose to you to vote on the proposal, which is as follows: "and shall in no case exceed .... months".

The proposal was adopted by seven votes to six, with some abstentions.

M. Sato (Japan).—I wish to state that I abstained from voting.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.

FIFTH MEETING.

Held on Tuesday, November 11th, 1930, at 10 a.m.

President: M. Loudon (Netherlands).

16. Discussion on Chapter I: Effectives.—Article I (continuation).

The President.—We will continue with Article I.

M. Cobian (Spain).—The conclusion to be drawn from the highly interesting discussion of yesterday is, in my opinion, that the maximum, this second uniform standard which was passed at the close of the meeting, cannot have any effects, even indirect, on the figures of the tables referred to in Article A. If that is the view of the Commission, I shall not press for any addition to this article. I think it will be enough if it is stated in the report that this was the view of the Commission.

The President.—I should like to reassure M. Cobian at once. All that he has just said will, of course, be mentioned, not only in the Minutes, but also in the report.
The President. — You have had the text of the British delegation's amendment. It proposes to add to the original text the following words: "... and each of such numbers of days shall be specified".

Lord Cecil (British Empire). — I need not detain the Commission for more than a moment. The object of this amendment is perfectly obvious. It is simply to give additional information. I do not think that there is anything more to be said about it, and I beg to move that a vote be taken on it.

M. Massigli (France). — Lord Cecil's proposal is no doubt a proposal for publicity. If it were intended for any purpose of limitation, that would hamper the Governments by preventing them, during the validity of the Convention, from varying the periods of reserve or active service inside the limits of the total period of service. It appears to me necessary to state that this is a publicity proposal. Each of these numbers should be shown in the annual statements for which provision is made in Article IA.

When we come to consider the question of publicity, I shall ask for a corresponding provision for publicity in the case of professional armies.

Lord Cecil (British Empire). — I agree.

M. Sato (Japan). — I also agree with M. Massigli.

Dr. Markovitch (Yugoslavia). — I also agree with the French delegation.

The amendment by the British delegation, with the addition proposed by M. Massigli, was adopted unanimously.

Lord Cecil (British Empire). — The drafting will be settled later, no doubt.

The President. — Yes. M. Massigli has handed in the wording he proposes. It is in the following terms:

"... service during the periods of instruction which he undergoes; and each of such number of days shall be specified in the annual statements provided for in Article IA."

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — I agree with Lord Cecil's suggestion to postpone the final drafting of the text until later. If we adopt the Article as proposed now, we shall be referring to Article IA. But I do not think it is our intention to define a point of this kind in Article IA. It will therefore be necessary to give another reference.

The President. — M. Rutgers' observation appears to me well-founded. It will be preferable to follow Lord Cecil's proposal and postpone the drafting till later.

Agreed.

17. Request by the Swedish Delegate in regard to the drawing up of the Tables provided for in Article A and other Articles.

M. Westman (Sweden). — Before we finish with Article 1, I would ask the Bureau to be good enough to draw up the various tables for which Article A and other articles provide. It will be very interesting to see whether the provisions of Article H are sufficient, or whether it is necessary to add anything to it in order to be able to proceed with the tables.

The President. — I may remind M. Westman that the discussion on Article H is not yet finished.

18. Limitation of Material — Land Armaments — Procedure. Discussion on Resolution adopted by the Preparatory Commission on May 4th, 1929 (Sixth Session (First Part)).

The President. — As the Commission will remember, this question was considered at length on the second reading. On May 4th, 1929, the great majority of the Commission passed the following resolution on the limitation of land armaments:

"The Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference,
Having rejected the systems of direct limitation of material in service and in stock;
Having noted that the system of indirect limitation (limitation of the expenditure on material) did not meet with general assent:
"Decides that the limitation and reduction of material must be sought by means of publicity of expenditure, which will be dealt with in examining Article DA* of the text adopted at the first reading."

1 Note by the Secretariat. — See page 36.
2 Note by the Secretariat. — See document C.195.M.74.1929.IX—Minutes of the Sixth Session (First Part), page 179.
In accordance with this resolution, and the procedure adopted by the Commission on Thursday last, there is no occasion, I imagine, to consider this question for the moment. We shall deal with it in another aspect when we come to consider the chapter on the exchange of information.

**General de Marinis** (Italy). — In spite of the vote of which you have just reminded us, Mr. President, I do not think you can mean to ask the Commission to leave the question of material without further discussion. Our task is not accomplished. I should regard it as a serious omission if we were to consider the discussion on the question of land material as concluded. If the Commission takes the view that this question is really settled, I am of course prepared to bow to the Commission’s decision; but eighteen months have passed since our last meeting, and much has happened in the interval which may have modified the attitude of some of us.

I await the decision of the Commission on this point before speaking.

**Lord Cecil** (British Empire). — I was going to make a very similar request to the Commission. As far as the British Government is concerned, we have put before the Commission the proposals which we desire to make, and which we believe on the whole will prove the best solution. They really amount to a budgetary limitation, not only of land, but of all material—of budgetary expenditure generally on armaments. I hope I shall have an opportunity of dealing with that.

There was a little phrase that you dropped, Mr. President, which a little alarmed me, because you said it was only a question of the exchange of information. Unquestionably, in the original schemes that we put forward and discussed when I had the honour of sitting on this Commission last—now three years ago—we certainly contemplated, not only the exchange of information, but the limitation of expenditure, and I thought that, in the passage which you read from the Minutes of the sixth session (first part) at its meeting on May 4th, 1929, there was a very distinctive statement by you, Sir—or whoever was the President on that occasion—that the whole of that question was reserved and could be raised again. I have been relying on that in order to raise it.

In regard to the question of how far we can deal with specific limitation, that must be held over until the third reading. That is a matter which was dealt with in the second reading and it can be reviewed when we come to the third reading.

The President. — I quite appreciate Lord Cecil’s point, but I am obliged as President to follow the formal decision of the Commission, which I have just referred to.

**Lord Cecil** (British Empire). — I do not understand that that was made part of the second reading of the draft Convention, because that part of the draft Convention was never before the Commission at the second reading. The Commission was considering this part entirely, and they decided that the question of budgetary limitation was never before the Commission then. I repeat, very respectfully—I am sorry I have not got the document here—that there was a perfectly distinct statement that the whole of this question was reserved. Such a statement was made more than once, because there was some doubt about it, and it was on that footing that the Commission passed on to other matters. I submit, therefore, that I should be perfectly in order in raising this question when we come to the question of budgetary limitation.

The President. — That is agreed.

**Count Bernstorff** (Germany). — A number of suggestions are before the Commission. If I understand rightly, General de Marinis has proposed to take up again the question of direct limitation of land armaments. I warmly support that suggestion.

I venture to recall what I have repeated more than once—namely, that, in my view, the reduction of armaments, at which we are aiming, is altogether impossible without the direct limitation of land armaments.

I am entirely unable to understand why what is possible in the case of naval armaments should not be possible in the case of land armaments. I shall be very glad to take part in the discussion, if this question is taken up again.

**The Hon. Hugh Gibson** (United States of America). — I do not know if I quite agree with Lord Cecil as to whether or not budgetary limitation has been dealt with. We were under the impression that it had been dealt with on the basis of our resolution—the Franco-American resolution—but, as a practical matter, I do not think that is either here or there. We have now fortunately a very free method of procedure and if the Commission desires to reopen the discussion on this point, we should certainly welcome it. I should like to agree with General de Marinis’ statement. We have acquiesced in the lifting of this subject bodily to a later stage of our discussions on the assumption, not that this whole chapter was suppressed, but merely that it would be discussed in a more appropriate place. We have felt all the time that, despite the difficulty we have found for the time being in reconciling all the alternative methods, we should certainly make some further effort to find some acceptable method of dealing with material for the land forces. The President’s suggestion was based on the same thought—that our resolution was not sufficiently substantial or precise to afford a suitable basis for a general discussion at this time.
M. Litvinoff (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). — I would remind the Commission that, in my first speech, I moved the re-examination of the question of the limitation of armaments as one of the three cardinal points of the draft Convention. It is true that it has been ruled that the Commission may re-examine certain points during the third reading only. I, for my part, would prefer to have the discussion now, because the decision which we may take on land armaments will affect our discussions and decisions on a number of other points of the draft Convention. Supposing we do decide to put a certain limitation on land armaments, the question of publicity would still come up, but in quite a different light. Any such decision would also greatly affect the question of limitation of budgetary expenditure. I think the only efficacious way to limit armaments is the direct way and not budgetary limitation, which, in my view, is not sufficient. The decision on this point will determine the whole attitude of my delegation to the rest of the draft Convention. I would therefore ask the Commission to agree to discussion being taken up on this point now, without further delay.

General de Marinis (Italy). — I should like to know, after the statements which have been made, whether the discussion can now begin on this question.

The President. — It was my intention to open the discussion on this point, but at a more opportune moment. We have now before us a proposal by General de Marinis, supported by M. Litvinoff, for the discussion to take place now.

Dr. Markovitch (Yugoslavia). — I do not wish to raise any objection of procedure to the suggestions which have just been put forward. It is of quite secondary importance, in my view, whether we discuss now or at a later meeting the questions which we debated at great length and in a very conciliatory atmosphere last session. At the same time, on behalf of the Yugoslav delegation, and in the interest of our proceedings, I venture to say that, the question of the limitation of material having been settled last session, we should now direct all our efforts to giving practical effect to the principle of the limitation of effectives. If the Commission loses itself in the search for supplementary measures, it will weaken a decision which, if really put into practice, will lead to disarmament.

I venture to repeat what I said last session. It must not be forgotten that this programme of disarmament, on which we are at work, is not made up of subtle technicalities, but is governed by certain political conditions and certain international situations, and is subject to the existence of a peaceful atmosphere; for this reason I believe our efforts should be directed, in the sense of the decisions of the last Assembly, towards the drafting of a Convention which all countries can accept, and I think this draft should endeavour to give effect to the essential principles which we have already adopted.

When discussing this question I reminded the Commission that the limitation of effectives implies at the same time the limitation of material.

The President. — That is going rather too much into the substance of the question.

Dr. Markovitch (Yugoslavia). — I will say no more. I only wish to say that the limitation of effectives implies the limitation of material. Having made that point, I will add that I am not opposed to discussion. I think procedure should be very wide and elastic: but I do not see the use of discussing again questions we have already settled.

M. Bourquin (Belgium). — I will not touch on the substance of the discussion. I will confine myself strictly to the question of procedure.

We took a decision on this question of procedure at our first meeting and, failing proof to the contrary, we ought to conform to that decision. What was our decision?

It was this, that questions settled on the second reading in 1929 should not, in principle, be reopened, unless in the case of exceptional circumstances and, in such case, they should be taken at the end of the discussion.

We decided on two things: First, not to reopen questions already settled, and secondly, if they are to be reopened, to reopen them at the end of the discussion. Questions which have not been settled on the second reading we take as they come.

I will re-read the text of the decision of 1929 in regard to the limitation of material. It is that which the President read just now: but I venture to recall its wording. It makes an extremely clear distinction between direct limitation and indirect budgetary limitation.

As regards direct limitation, the question was settled on the second reading in 1929: there can be no dispute as to that. I will read:

"The Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference,
"Having rejected the systems of direct limitation of material in service and in stock . . ."

There can be nothing clearer than that: the question has been settled. But the question of indirect budgetary limitation has not been settled; the wording of the text is altogether different. It says:

"Having noted that the system of indirect limitation (limitation of the expenditure on material) did not meet with general assent.
“Decides that the limitation and reduction of material must be sought by means of publicity of expenditure . . . .”

That means, as I understand it, that it was agreed to say that publicity was necessary: but it was not agreed to reject indirect limitation—i.e., limitation of budgetary expenditure. It was merely stated that there was no unanimity on the principle of indirect limitation. I think I am therefore giving a sound interpretation of the 1929 decision when I say that the principle of indirect budgetary limitation still remains open, and that the only question we should consider as settled, short of exceptional circumstances, is the question of direct limitation.

That, I take it, is how the question stands.

M. Politis (Greece). — I venture to speak, because of the reference to the discussion of 1929, over which I had the honour to preside.

M. Bourquin’s recollection of what happened is accurate in almost every respect; but I am afraid the Minutes do not reproduce the psychological aspect of the proceedings at that moment. With your permission I will summarise the position.

First, a great majority of the Commission was agreed to reject the system of direct limitation of material.

Secondly, the attempt was made to arrive at limitation by the indirect budgetary method, and there was a strong current of opinion in the Commission in favour of acceptance of this system. But there was also strong opposition, and on this second point the Commission took no decision.

When it was suggested that it might be possible to arrive at indirect limitation by what I may perhaps call another indirect method—that is to say, by publicity of credits—the Commission confined itself to introducing finally in the resolution, to which M. Bourquin has just referred, an expression of opinion that the limitation of material should be sought by means of the system of publicity of credits which means that, in 1929, the Commission was of opinion that there was no majority either for direct limitation or for indirect limitation in limiting the credits which each country entered in its budget for military material, but that there was a method even more indirect (if possible)—namely, the method of publicity of credits, which would allow public opinion to exercise pressure on the States not to continue indefinitely increasing their expenditure on war material.

That is the situation. But the problem is so serious—and so largely dependent on the solution reached on this point—that we should not be held up by considerations of procedure. We should put out of our minds our decision as to what we should, in principle, do at the beginning of this session. We should recur to that rule, which is a fundamental rule of every assembly—namely, that we are at any moment the master of our own agenda.

I think the Commission would be well advised if it would now ignore all it has done up to the present, whether in respect of substance or of procedure, and decide to discuss the substance of this question now.

M. Bourquin (Belgium). — M. Politis has recalled the psychological atmosphere of the discussion in 1929, in which I had no part. I have read the decision taken at the close of the discussion then, and I find that it makes a very clear distinction between direct and indirect limitation.

If I have drawn attention to this point of procedure, it was by no means with the intention of stifling discussion. I will never do that.

The President. — I have no doubt of that, M. Bourquin.

M. Massigli (France). — I think M. Politis, in what he has just said, has given an accurate summary of the situation. If the Commission wishes to reopen the whole discussion, it can do so. I will even say it should so do. There have been certain fluctuations in the position, and certain changes of opinion may have taken shape. The discussion must be reopened. The only question is: When? I think, with all respect to Lord Cecil, that there would be great advantage in following the order suggested by our President. Last year we found that, when the question of indirect limitation was broached, there were signs of opposition. We were told: “Let us see first what results may be expected from publicity!” No doubt publicity is an inadequate minimum in many respects—I have said so myself—but I think that, if we begin by considering what we can do in this field, we shall have new arguments with which to convince the adversaries of the other systems of direct or indirect limitation, as and when the system of publicity is shown to be insufficient.

We should begin then by taking a decision on the question of publicity, which is the extreme minimum. That being done, when we come to the third reading we can take up the question again as a whole.

If, however, the Commission decides otherwise, I shall of course bow to its decision.

Observation of One Minute’s Silence in Memory of all those killed in the Great War.

The President. — It is now eleven o’clock and it is November rIth. In memory of all those who fell in the great war, I request you to rise and remain silent for one minute.

(The members of the Commission rose and remained silent for one minute.)

Lord Cecil (British Empire). — I quite agree with the conclusion at which M. Politis has arrived, and that is that we had better take the discussion immediately; but these questions of procedure are never very important, and I would agree whichever course is taken. But I want to be clear on this point, that these methods of limitation are not mutually exclusive. All of us would be in favour of publicity, because it already exists and we add nothing new by it. If the Commission is in favour of budgetary limitation, that does not exclude specific limitation; you may have all three systems. The only thing I am anxious about is that we should not have two or three discussions on this question, but that we should dispose of it in one discussion, and I do not mind whether it arises out of direct or indirect or budgetary limitation, but let us have a discussion which will settle quite definitely what principles we should have in this Convention. Seeing that this is a matter which excites a great deal of interest out of doors, and in order that we should not appear to be evading the question, I am in favour of beginning the discussion immediately.

M. Fierlinger (Czecho Slovakia). — I should like to state the arguments in favour of very strict limitation of our discussion.

We have left our President discretionary powers to re-open the discussion on particular points. In this special case, a new fact has been mentioned. I consider Mr. Gibson's statement to be a new fact, allowing us to return to the point to which we had reached at the time when there was a very strong majority in process of formation on the very important question of the indirect limitation of material. The publicity proposal is really a step backwards.

I feel we should always endeavour to find ways of going forward—not backward; and, if Mr. Gibson's statement allows us to take a step forward, I think we should return to this question in such a form as will allow of a majority being formed in the Commission. If we were to desire once again to take a backward step, I think that would be a very grave mistake, since we should thus run the risk of a recrudescence of the barren discussions which have lasted for so many years.

I think, therefore, the discussion should be resumed within very strict limits. We should only go back to the point at which there is a prospect of obtaining the support of a very large majority of the Commission.

When should we resume the discussion? According to the British proposal it should be when we discuss Chapter V. The Czecho-Slovak delegation will bow to the decision of the majority.

M. Sato (Japan). — I share entirely M. Massigli's standpoint. I attach great importance to his statement, for the French delegation, and in particular M. Massigli's predecessor, M. Paul-Boncour, were the first to raise the proposal for indirect limitation of material. In spite of that, M. Massigli has told us that he is disposed to follow the procedure which we adopted at the beginning of our session. I agree with him entirely. Important as the question of the limitation of material is, I see no reason to make an exception to the procedure we have followed up to the present. Professor Bourquin has given us his interpretation of last year's decision, and he is certainly better qualified than I am to interpret texts. Nevertheless, I do not entirely agree with his opinion in this matter. He makes a distinction between the word "rejected" in the first part of the resolution and the phrase "did not meet with general assent" in the second part. He said that the word "rejected" shows that direct limitation was entirely dropped, whereas indirect limitation, in the second paragraph, was merely held over. I think, on the contrary, that the expression in the second paragraph means the same thing, and that it is only a different way of expressing the same thought, the same meaning. What concerns us primarily is the decision. The first two paragraphs are preamble, which cannot reverse the sense of the decision itself; and the decision says that we should look to publicity of expenditure for a solution of the question of indirect reduction of material.

We defer to this decision, which was taken last year by a large majority. We see no reason at the present time for diverging from it. I was very embarrassed therefore when I heard M. Politis' explanations a moment ago. I assisted in the adoption of the procedure at the beginning of this session of the Commission, and I am very anxious to maintain the same procedure until the end of the session. If, as M. Politis has suggested, the Bureau itself proposes some deviation from the procedure already adopted, I am very much afraid we shall not know where we stand.

I propose therefore, with M. Massigli, that we follow the same procedure, and, at a suitable moment—by which I mean, the third reading—we shall all be ready, including my own delegation, to begin the discussion of the substance of the question.

But, even with this procedure, I should like to urge the Commission to reflect. The question of direct limitation of material having been rejected, as M. Bourquin reminded us a moment ago, we shall achieve nothing if we now raise it again, except the addition of another fifty pages or so to the Minutes. That is really not worth while, and, for this reason, I wish to urge the Commission not to enter now upon this question of the limitation of material, because that will inevitably raise the question of direct limitation, which I want to avoid at all costs. When we come later to another chapter, we shall be able to confine ourselves to the discussion of the indirect limitation.
of material. I accordingly suggest that the Commission should follow the procedure we have adopted up to the present.

PROPOSAL BY THE BRITISH DELEGATION.

Lord Cecil (British Empire). — I was going to ask the Commission to come to a decision now. It is a question of procedure and we must decide it one way or the other. I take it there is no doubt about M. Politis’ principle that the Commission is always the master of its own procedure, whatever resolutions it may have arrived at, and the first question, it seems to me, is whether we shall embark on the discussion of this question of material now or at some future time. I propose, in order to test the feeling of the Commission, to move “that the question of the limitation of material be considered forthwith”. If somebody wishes to propose a modification of that, they can move for some other word than “forthwith” — namely, after the discussion of other subjects.

I also wish to move, and to this I attach great importance: “That in the discussion the three methods of publicity, budgetary, and direct limitation be in the first instance considered together”. I am afraid I cannot agree with M. Sato’s suggestion that we can put aside any one of these methods. I am not going to argue the question of procedure. I am quite confident that to do that would expose this Commission to the strongest animadversion outside—and personally I should feel inclined to join in that animadversion—because this is really a vital part of disarmament. I have come to the conclusion in the last eighteen months that, unless you can limit material in some way, the proceedings of this Commission, and the proceedings of the Disarmament Conference, are really not worth while going on with at all. How you are going to do it is another matter, but the limitation is the vital, essential thing. That is the view my Government takes. Therefore I could not agree to any system by which we were going to put aside any part of that discussion. I think it is essential that the discussion should take place once and for all. I do not really mind whether we begin it to-day, or next week, or the week after; but let us fix now the time either now or, if that be not thought desirable, then at some fixed date—namely, after we have been through the rest of the draft Convention.

I do not care which way you settle it, and, to test the feeling of the Commission, I will move first that the question of the limitation of material be considered forthwith. If anyone desires to move an amendment to that, I personally shall not be violently opposed to it.

The President. — As M. Politis and Lord Cecil have said, the Commission is always master of its own procedure. In my capacity as President I shall uphold the procedure adopted until such time as it is replaced by another. Lord Cecil’s proposal appears to me the simpler. I should like to put it to the vote at once, as it will clear up the situation. But there are three speakers who have applied to speak on the question.

M. Litvinoff (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). — I support fully the proposal of Lord Cecil. I only wish to be clear that, when he is moving that the discussion should take place forthwith, he means by that a re-examination of the decision adopted at the second reading.

Lord Cecil (British Empire). — My idea was that we should discuss the whole thing, the matter being so important—even the decisions we came to on the second reading. I do not want two discussions; I want the whole discussion to take place once and for all.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — After what Lord Cecil has said, I support his motion.

M. Fierlinger (Czechoslovakia). — The explanation which has just been given us completely alters the substance of the proposal; and we should reflect before we proceed to vote. I do not think Lord Cecil is altogether logical, because he himself proposed to discuss these points when we came to consider Chapter III or Chapter V. There are three forms of procedure accordingly before us—immediate discussion, discussion under Chapter III and discussion under Chapter V. I admit the importance of M. Sato’s arguments. In our discussions we should always adopt a half way solution; and, in this case, the half way solution is to take the discussion under Chapter III. By adopting this procedure we shall avoid much barren debate. I make these explanations in order to explain why I shall abstain from voting.

The President. — I put Lord Cecil’s proposal to the vote. If it be rejected, we shall have to decide whether the question is to be discussed under Chapter III or under Chapter V.

The British delegation’s proposal was adopted by fourteen votes for to six against.

Observations and Reservations.

The delegation of the United States of America makes a general reservation on the failure to include provisions for the limitation of material both in the hands of forces serving with the colours and reserve material of land and air forces.

The delegations of Italy and Japan make a general reservation as regards limitation of material proposed in Article TA (German draft).

Article TA.

(German Draft.)

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

(French Draft.)

In each of the Contracting States, the total expenditure on the upkeep, purchase and manufacture of war material in the strict sense of the term, for the duration of the present Convention shall be limited for the land, naval and air armaments to the respective sums fixed in Columns X, Y and Z of Tables... (Home forces and formations of the home country organised on a military basis) and ... (Overseas forces and their reinforcements and overseas formations organised on a military basis) annexed to the present Convention.

The said sums shall be divided by the number of years for which the present Convention is to remain in force, and, in each of the Contracting States, the annual expenditure on the upkeep, purchase and manufacture of war material in the strict sense of the term shall not exceed the figure laid down for each year; nevertheless, sums not expended during one year may be carried forward to the following year and added to the sums fixed for that year.

1 The tables referred to correspond to the model statements provided for in the report of the budgetary experts. Their definitive form depends on the final conclusions of these experts.

General de Marinis (Italy). — We are faced by one of the most important and most serious questions that have been raised in the course of our proceedings. It is sufficient to recall all the discussions which have taken place on the limitation of war material. From the outset of our discussion of this question, two apparently irreconcilable views have been in conflict. Everyone has admitted that war material is an essential element of military preparation; but, while some have maintained that a convention on the reduction of armaments would be inconceivable without a reduction of material in service and in stock, others have argued that an attempt at any such reduction would meet with insuperable difficulties. During the first five sessions of our Commission, these two views remained as they were at the outset, without any agreement being possible. It was only at our last meeting, eighteen months ago, that the advocates of reduction of material, in a spirit of very great conciliation, agreed to modify their attitude in the matter, while stating that they were still convinced that there would be a serious gap in the Convention if it did not deal with the reduction of material.

1 Note by the Secretariat. — This text is given for convenience of reference. The discussion following deals only with the principle and the methods of the limitation of land material.
In response to this concession, the delegations which had always been opposed to any reduction of war material stated their willingness to agree to indirect reduction of material by limiting the expenditure appropriated for its purchase and upkeep. My own delegation was one of these.

On May 2nd, 1929, at the eighteenth meeting of our last session I said (see page 164 of Series VIII of the Documents of the Preparatory Commission, document C.195.M.74.929) that, while recognising that the method of reduction of expenditure was not perfect, the Italian delegation was "prepared to accept a method of indirect limitation based on expenditure and applying to all material, whether in stock or in service".

I still, of course, maintain that attitude. It only remains to discuss the manner in which this budgetary limitation can be arranged, and the standards to be applied in fixing figures. I do not think the difficulties in this connection will be very great. It seems to me obvious that we shall have first to fix the maximum limit of armaments in the case of every State, and then to decide, on the basis of the limits fixed, the amount of the expenditure which each country will be entitled to incur on armaments.

In spite, however, of the efforts we have made, we are sorry to see that the general agreement which had been hoped for has not been reached. But it seems to me that in a question of such importance we ought not to abandon the search for any means which can lead to such agreement.

At the same time, it must be recognised that there has been a change since we last met. There can be no doubt that in recent years there have been considerable increases in military expenditure, nor can it be questioned that a great part of such expenditure has been devoted to increasing war material. I do not think I shall be wrong when I say that the situation, far from having improved, has become worse, so far as the equal distribution of armaments is concerned, which I have always regarded as our first aim and, in any case, the necessary pre-requisite of disarmament. It follows that, if we really wish to achieve any positive result in the progressive reduction of armaments, as we have always said we do, we ought seriously to consider this grave question of the existence of stocks of war material. It is a question to which it is impossible to close our eyes. It disturbs public opinion, and it should engage our attention. It would be inadmissible, it would be unacceptable—at any rate, for my delegation—to sign agreements ignoring the vast differences in existing armaments, allowing them to continue, and—what is more—legalising them by the fact of allowing them to continue.

I remember the strong appeal which Count Bernstorff made to us when we last discussed this problem. He urged us in the disarming of land forces not to exclude essential elements, which it is impossible to omit in any convention that really aims at something more than an illusory solution.

I do not know whether the Commission, after its previous vote, is now prepared to take up this question again, nor whether the German delegation intends to submit a new proposal for direct limitation of material. But for my own part, I should be prepared, for the reasons I have given, to consider such a proposal. I think, as Lord Cecil said a moment ago, that the two methods of direct and indirect limitation do not conflict with one another; the one does not exclude the other. On the contrary, I should say that they may well supplement one another.

In accepting, under present circumstances, the idea of direct limitation, I do not want to overlook the objections which have previously been raised on this subject. It has been urged that such limitation is inconceivable without supervision.

I do not know whether it is altogether justifiable to put the question in such uncompromising terms. An undertaking by a State has after all some value, even if its fulfilment is left entirely to the goodwill and loyalty of the State.

The British representative has just submitted a proposal for the creation of a Permanent Disarmament Commission, with the task of watching over the execution of the Disarmament Convention. It appears to me that this proposal, if it be adopted, should be sufficient to remove the objections to which I have referred.

In any case, I think we should not despair of arriving at an agreement on some system which will give all the States that sign the Disarmament Convention sufficient guarantees as to its application, and will make possible an effective and, at the same time, equitable reduction of armaments.

Lord Cecil (British Empire). — I understand that we are engaged at the moment on a general discussion of the question of the limitation of material, and I do not propose to elaborate the case at any length.

It is admittedly necessary in the naval and in the air forces. We have provided for it, and it seems extravagant to suppose that it is unnecessary in the case of the army. Indeed, the whole tendency of modern thought, so far as I am aware of it, is to make it more necessary than it ever was before to have some limitation, direct or indirect—I will come to that later—of material. I venture to refer to the writings of General von Seeckt, which I was perusing the other day. His conception is that future armies will consist of a comparatively small number of men very completely equipped, and it will necessarily have to be a small number, because the degree of equipment he contemplates will be beyond the means of any nation, except for a relatively small army. I do not know how far that opinion is shared in Germany or in France, but I gather it is
prettily generally shared. I remember at the beginning of these discussions a proposal was put forward that general disarmament should be confined, at any rate so far as land forces were concerned, to numbers, and there was a protest from the French delegation pointing out that merely to limit numbers was quite insufficient. That was eight years ago. I agree that three quarters, or some such figure, of the strength of an army depends on its equipment and not on its personnel. I think that is obvious to anyone who has studied the history of the late war. The mechanical means was the important thing, and it has been enormously increased by subsequent investigations and efforts—the misdirected ingenuity of human beings—to discover fresh means of slaughtering their fellow creatures. Therefore, I do not think anyone would maintain that merely to limit numbers will be an efficient way of limiting the strength of an army. It may be said that, if you limit numbers, you would directly limit material, because material depends on numbers; but that is really not the case. As an illustration I will deal with the question of tanks. They do not depend on the number of men in an army. If you had an army consisting almost entirely of tanks, the number of men would be reduced, because the number of men you can lodge in a tank is restricted, and many people believe that a single tank is more than a match for scores of men. However, I do not propose to argue that point at greater length.

I assume that, if we are serious as to what we intend to do, we have to face some method of limiting material as well as numbers, and the only question which seems to me difficult is what method of limitation of material we should adopt. Three methods are suggested—the first being limitation by publicity. That limitation is in operation at this moment. It is not clearly in operation, but it is not beyond the power of the expert. In fact, in every country it is pretty well known what is being spent upon the armies, navies and air forces of the world, and, roughly speaking, what is their strength; and we have here, so far as strength is concerned, an Armaments Year-Book, which sets that out with a very fair degree of accuracy. Therefore, you may improve the method of publicity; but I would point out that mere publicity is only an indirect moral method of limitation, and, unless you have some engagement, undertaken by the various countries, that they will not go beyond a certain strength in material, in some form or other, the moral effect of publishing what is being done is not very great. They would be only doing what they were entitled to do by the treaty. Therefore, whilst I am in favour of publication as the basis of further steps towards limitation, I do not regard it as sufficient, or as a serious improvement on the state of things at present existing. Unless you lay down some standard for the strength of the material, the mere publication of how much there is will not produce any effect in limiting its amount.

I will take first the question of direct limitation. Undoubtedly, direct limitation is, in principle, the most effective and the most obvious system. You draw up a list of the armaments somebody is to have. He agrees to that, and you have the thing absolutely fixed; but when you come to look into it closely I am afraid that direct limitation by itself would prove to be a very unsatisfactory method of limitation. The difficulties are enormous, and they are all practical and detailed difficulties. Take the question of tanks. I use that illustration because, in a way, this is a kind of technical development of modern arms. Say that you limit a particular army to ten thousand tanks—it does not matter what number you take, a thousand or ten thousand. How are you going to define a tank? They are of very different strengths and very different sorts. I know of no definition of a tank which would not include any kind of armoured car. I do not know that you could make any difference between certain types of these things. How are you going to have an enumeration which will fix the strength of an army in tanks? I doubt very much whether it could be done, whether the establishment of a limitation of that kind would be effective. It could do no good, and it might be doing harm, for you are exposing the world and any country in it to an immense amount of suspicion.

Let me mention another thing. I hope Count Bernstorff will not think I am using this instance in any sense that is hostile to his country; there is no hostile criticism, and what Germany is doing is perfectly legitimate. I take the case of the new German cruisers, one of which has been completed and another of which is being built. They are of ten thousand tons, and everybody admits that they are immensely stronger than any other ordinary ten-thousand-ton cruiser. Nobody complains about this; I am sure Count Bernstorff will believe I am not complaining, for Germany is carrying out the agreement that she was not to have vessels of more than ten thousand tons. But the fact is that Germany's new cruisers are immensely stronger than any other cruiser on the seas. This shows how difficult it is by enumeration to arrive at any real limitation. I take that as an instance. Supposing that system is to be generally imitated in other countries, you will have, in the case of cruisers of ten thousand tons, an almost unlimited competition to see who can build the most effective ten-thousand-ton cruiser. Though you will have the same numbers of cruisers on the seas, you will not in any way have stopped competition on the seas. That is an extreme instance, I agree, and no doubt you can add something which will make it difficult for that system to be adopted generally. It was thought when the agreement was made that a ten-thousand-ton cruiser
was the right standard to set up, but recent events have shown that it is difficult to find a limit by enumeration which will be a limit.

Obviously, the same thing can happen in a number of cases. Tanks are another instance. Then we have guns. You may have any amount of improvement in your guns. You will keep the same number of guns, but one gun would be so infinitely inferior that it becomes quite a different thing. That is one objection to the system of direct limitation. I doubt its being, by itself, really an effective system of limitation.

The other difficulty is the one already alluded to by my friend General de Marinis—the difficulty of knowing with any degree of certainty what is happening in any particular country. I quite agree with him that you cannot make a treaty on the theory that it is going to be broken, because, if you do that, it is foolish to make the treaty at all. You must do it on the theory that it is going to be observed, just as you make a contract with a man on the theory that he will carry out his undertaking. But, at the same time, you have got to have some degree of confidence established that the thing is going to be carried out and is being carried out. There must be some degree of guarantee. I know I am now embarking on a thesis which is generally put forward by my friends of the French delegation, and I think, if they will allow me to say so, they sometimes drive it too hard, and believe that, by a system of guarantees, you can reach absolute certainty—which you cannot. But some degree of belief that a treaty is notoriously being carried out is desirable in a matter of this kind, where such very deep feelings are aroused. I take the German table in Article TA. I see carbines, rifles, machine-guns, automatic rifles, and so on. How are you going to be satisfied that there is such a number of carbines, for instance, without an inspection in all the nations forming part of the League of Nations? I take machine-guns, which are rather bigger and more easily detected; but a machine-gun may be made in parts, the parts can be put separately aside, and they could be put together when required. Your limitation by enumeration is not such as to spread confidence among the nations, I think.

For both of these reasons I am not myself prepared to accept direct limitation as the best method of settling this question. If I can be satisfied that in certain of the arms, the bigger arms for instance, some method of direct limitation can be devised which is reasonably satisfactory, I would not oppose it; but I am quite sure that, unless it is combined with the some other limitation, it is an unsatisfactory system.

The other system is the budgetary limitation. Budgetary limitation is a rough-and-ready system. You do not affect to bind each country in every detail of its armament. You abandon that. But you say, with respect to the army, the navy and the air force, there shall be a global system beyond which, in each of these respects, you shall not go; you have for each of these arms a global sum of expenditure on armaments. That is to say, with respect to each arm there will be two limits—first, a total limit of expenditure, including personnel and everything else, and, secondly, the limit of expenditure on weapons. Those two figures would be accepted. I had better complete the explanation of what is proposed. It is not proposed that these figures, whenever adopted, will form an element for comparison between two countries. It is recognised that the cost of living, the cost of labour, and so on, is different in the different countries that it would be quite impossible to have a system of budgetary limitation which would make possible a comparison between country A and country B. What it would make possible is an element for comparison between what country A was doing in 1931 and what country A was doing in 1932, and, therefore, you would know whether country A was increasing its expenditure generally. You would know, since you would also have a limit on the numbers of men, that, if there were any considerable increase, it must be an increase in material or an increase in the pay of the men. You would know, roughly speaking, if you had an increase, that there was a considerable increase in military preparation, and particularly if there were an increase in the material. I believe that would be an effective check.

It is quite true that it would not check the details of the thing; but I believe that, broadly speaking, each country makes the best use it can of the money available for its armament. If you can get them to limit that amount of money, you are going to have a real limit, which would be of value in checking any growth of armaments in that country. It is possible, of course, that one country may decide to economise greatly in one particular kind of weapon and expend on another kind; but I believe everyone who has looked into the subject will agree with me that, broadly speaking, that is not what happens in one country. All the countries move together. They find a particular kind of armament is the better one, and, making certain allowances for the idiosyncrasy of each country, if there is an increase of expenditure on armaments in two countries it is probably an increase in the same direction in each. Therefore, I believe that, as a practical business move, the limiting of expenditure is going to be the most effective way in which you can limit the growth of material.

I know it is said by the critics: "But, you know, a country might conceal its expenditure". Well, it may conceal a little, but in these days it is not so easy to conceal. There may be countries
where it can be done, but I know it would be quite impossible in my country and, I believe, in most of the countries I see represented round this table, if not all of them. You cannot do it nowadays. It is not only because of Parliaments, where Parliaments exist, but because of the pressure of the taxpayer, who is always enquiring what is happening to his money; and it is very unlikely, unless you conceive of a country deliberately setting itself to deceive the world and break the treaty altogether, that any such camouflage of expenditure could take place. In a great majority of cases I do not believe it is possible.

The United States of America is among those countries which feel there are certain practical difficulties about the system of budgetary limitation; the United States has said this on a previous occasion. I quite recognise and quite understand the difficulties they feel; but, at the same time, I hope they will be able to find some way out of the difficulty if we can adopt some general agreement of this kind. I am sure we can rely on the United States Government and its representatives here to do their utmost to fall in with any scheme which is really intended to limit armaments.

I am afraid I have kept the Commission much longer than I intended to do; but I think it was well, as I was speaking, to say how my Government looks at these questions. It is for these reasons that I recommend the Commission to adopt publicity to the utmost extent, and budgetary limitation on top of publicity, for the two fit together very closely; and, as far as direct limitation is concerned, I wait to be convinced that it is an effective system.

May I add this one word? We have had some little examination by experts as to the practicability of budgetary limitation. Their report was no doubt mainly in regard to publicity; but it applies also to budgetary limitation, and they are satisfied that such a system could be established without any technical impossibilities, although, of course, it would require very careful consideration and endeavour.

The Hon. Hugh Gibson (United States of America). — In common with this entire body, I have listened to the important speech of General de Marinis with the respect we all feel for his utterances. In addition, his remarks have been particularly gratifying to me, in that he has given a valued support to the thesis we have always maintained.

It will be remembered, as General de Marinis has recalled, that, in withdrawing our reservation on budgetary limitation, I made it clear that our convictions were in no wise modified—that we still felt that direct limitation of material was the only one which would work. The withdrawal of our reservation was based on our unwillingness to let it constitute an obstacle to general agreement. In other words, we deferred to the views of the majority in order that they might endeavour to reach agreement.

Since that time, however, there seems to have been some evolution of thought on this subject. Some delegations have expressed their readiness to consider or reconsider measures for direct limitation.

Needless to say, I should welcome any trend of thought toward the method we believe in as honest and effective.

While I am sorely tempted to enter into some of the arguments put forward by Lord Cecil as to the advantages of budgetary limitation and the disadvantages of direct limitation, I feel I should confine myself at this time to a bare statement of our position. However, I should like to say, in reply to his appeal to us to find some way of completing agreement, that my purpose in rising is to suggest an expedient to this end.

There is one further point in his remarks upon which I should like to touch. He spoke of the great difficulty of reaching worldwide agreement if the United States of America remains outside. I only wish to underline the fact that the American Government is not the only one which does not share general agreement as to budgetary limitation.

On this question of budgetary limitation I have already, on several occasions, set forth in detail the views of my Government. I do not propose to do so to-day and shall merely, for the sake of record, refer to the declaration made by the American delegation in Sub-Committee A; to a statement which I made on April 6th, 1927, during the third session; and to a further statement which I made on May 3rd, 1929, during the sixth session. We have already stated our reasons very fully. It is now the time for us to set before you what we are able, as a practical measure, to accept; and what we are not. My colleague Mr. Wilson and I have just returned from a visit to the United States, where we re-examined this entire question with our Government in the hope that we might find some way of completing agreement. We found that we could not honestly alter our attitude, and that for practical reasons already set forth—and into which I need not enter now—a Convention which provided for budgetary limitation as applied to the United States was unlikely to come into force so far as the United States is concerned. This statement can hardly come as a surprise. It has been our consistent attitude during the last four years—and the reasons that have been made very clear—and while it has been generally understood that we were unwilling and unable to accept for ourselves any form of budgetary limitation, I have found fairly prevalent in Geneva the impression that we would oppose the inclusion in the Convention, for others who believe in it, of such a form of limitation. Quite the contrary. We have no wish to restrain other nations from adopting any form of limitation which they see fit. It is only in so far as it concerns ourselves that I must declare a non possumus. The American delegation has always urged direct limitation of material, and would still gladly learn that this method was generally acceptable. We
have likewise urged, and have long since put into practice, complete publicity as to material for the use of our armed forces. If, having these facts in mind, and having rejected our proposals for direct limitation, the other members of the Commission can agree to a draft for budgetary limitation applicable to themselves, we should feel that, although the method precluded us from joining them in these provisions, the aim is one in which we heartily concur. I can readily recognise that, if a considerable number of other Powers join in accepting a budgetary method of limitation, they may consider it inequitable to bind themselves to this method and leave other Powers exempt from any other form of limitation. As a practical matter, however, I believe that an examination of our situation will show that we have already an effective method of limitation. Our military effectiveness will be definitely limited, and full publicity given to the expenditure for their pay and maintenance. Our naval material and personnel will be definitely limited by treaty. There remains only the question of material for the land and air forces. As regards this, we have expressed our readiness to accept what we consider the strictest method of limitation—namely, direct limitation with full publicity as to expenditure, weights and numbers. If it gives satisfaction to those States which might be reluctant to see us exempted from any limitation, we are willing, provided that some practical budgetary method is generally agreed upon which is sufficiently detailed and precise to constitute a real method of limitation, to apply to ourselves a direct limitation of material along the lines which we have consistently urged for general adoption here. We honestly believe that this is the most effective method of limitation that has yet been suggested; and, with all deference to the views of others, we still feel that this affords a more scientific knowledge of military forces and material than can be obtained through budgetary limitation. In other words, we feel that it is easier to conceal the application of a dollar than it is the existence of a rifle.

The President. — I have the feeling that the Commission has been taken somewhat by surprise by the vote on Lord Cecil's proposal, which has led to the discussion of this subject. Under the circumstances, it will perhaps be preferable to postpone the rest of the discussion till to-morrow. I will, however, call on Count Bernstorff.

Count Bernstorff (Germany). — For myself, apart from what the President has just said, I had intended to say that I do not propose to enter into the substance of this great issue to-day. I merely wish to refer to certain points which have been made in the course of to-day's discussions.

The first point to which I wish to turn is Lord Cecil's friendly allusion to the German vessel Ersatz Preussen. In document C.P.D.230, distributed to us this morning, which contains the proposal submitted to the Preparatory Commission as a basis of discussion by the delegations of the United States of America, Great Britain, Canada, France, the Irish Free State, Italy and Japan, I find on page 11 the following passage:

"For the purposes of the present Treaty the following expressions are to be understood in the sense defined in this Part:

(a) Capital ships: A capital ship, except in the case of the existing ships specified in Annex II, is defined as a vessel of war, not an aircraft-carrier whose displacement exceeds 10,000 tons (10,160 metric tons) standard displacement, or which carries a gun with a calibre exceeding 8 inches (203 mm.).

The Ersatz Preussen is armed with guns of 280 mm. (11 inches). It therefore does not rank as a cruiser, but is a capital ship. The point is of extreme importance, since this vessel is very much cheaper than the 35,000-ton capital ships of other Powers.

But I must add that, if it is considered so satisfactory to have recourse to budgetary limitation in the case of land forces, I do not see why it is not equally applicable in the case of naval armaments.

General de Marinis raised another point. He asked whether we intended to make proposals for direct limitation. I have not raised the German proposal again up to the present, and I do not know whether I shall do so. It seems to me better to see whether or not we accept the principle of direct limitation. If the Commission rejects the principle of direct limitation, I shall not see any necessity to make detailed proposals in that sense.

For my own part, I still maintain the same standpoint. Direct limitation is a conditio sine qua non of any acceptable convention. Apart from the technical reasons to which Mr. Gibson has alluded, there is in my eyes a purely political reason. The system of the Peace Treaty, which was imposed on us by force, makes provision for the direct limitation of armaments. The position is the same in the case of effectives: the Peace Treaty compelled us to abolish compulsory military service. It accordingly appears to us perfectly logical—and from this standpoint I shall never recede—that the system adopted for us should also be adopted by others, else we should have some system which everyone can accept.

The Commission rose at 12.50 p.m.

1 Note by the Secretariat. — See Annex 2.
SIXTH MEETING.

Held on Wednesday, November 12th, 1930, at 10 a.m.

President: M. LOUDON (Netherlands).

22. Discussion on Chapter II. — Material: Section I — Land Armaments (continuation).

The President. — It is understood that, in order to save time, the general discussion will cover not only Article TA but also points relating to the question of land armaments coming under Chapter III (Limitation of Budgetary Expenditure) and Chapter V, Section II (Exchange of Information).

M. Sato (Japan). — As we are going to discuss all the methods of limiting material, whether direct or indirect, by budgetary means or publicity, I will begin by dealing with the direct method, in regard to which the views of my Government are already known and have not changed during the last four years. This problem has been discussed very thoroughly during past years, and for that reason I wished to avoid opening a further lengthy discussion. However, in order to justify our point of view I shall be obliged to re-examine the question, maintaining all the arguments already advanced and putting forward some fresh ones.

The direct limitation of material is certainly the most radical method. My Government fully recognises the value of this principle. Our reluctance to adopt it is due to the difficulty of applying this principle. My delegation is of opinion that it is impossible to force all countries directly to limit land material to a certain level. Two days ago, when the principle of fixing the period of service was discussed, many arguments were put forward showing the impossibility of adopting a reasonable standard period applicable to all countries where the system of conscription is in force. These arguments apply no less forcibly to the principle of the direct limitation of material. It is even more difficult to limit material than to fix a standard period of service, because, in the former case, international political considerations play a very important part. The great diversity of political conditions in the various countries necessarily involves diversity in land armaments. In order to establish a basis for the direct limitation of material we should have to fix a standard or proportion between land effectives and material, applicable to all countries, or, at all events, to countries having an efficiently organised army.

There would have to be a standard ratio between the number of men and the quantity of material. Once this standard had been fixed, it would be necessary to find coefficients by which to multiply the quantity of material in any given army. Only then would it be possible, in a given country and for a given number of soldiers, to calculate the quantity of material necessary for their equipment.

After having calculated the war material in this manner for all countries it would be possible to see the exact proportion by which it could be reduced. It is, however, impossible to effect an equitable reduction or limitation of this material until the standard quantity for any country has been accurately determined. Unfortunately, in present circumstances, the search for any such standard would be futile. In the first place, international political conditions play a preponderant part. These conditions are very unstable and make a purely mathematical calculation impossible in practice. Moreover, the geographical situation of the different countries varies from a strategical point of view and does not afford the same degree of security to every country. If we also take into consideration various other factors, such as population, the wealth of a country, natural resources, the length of the frontiers to be defended, etc., we shall realise that the calculation of this standard is quite impracticable and that it is thus impossible to fix for each country the individual coefficient necessary to determine its standard armaments.

In addition to these rather theoretical considerations there are difficulties of another kind. For instance, how are you going to compare professional and conscript armies? There is no doubt that a professional army, equal in numbers and equipment to a conscript army, possesses a much higher fighting value. Consequently, it would be unfair to allow the same proportion of equipment to a professional army as to a conscript army. The proportion should be smaller in the case of the professional army. But is it possible to secure the acceptance of this discrimination in the present state of the world? I do not think so.

All these considerations appear to lead to a negative conclusion as regards the principle of the direct limitation of material. Unless we can establish a standard proportion between land effectives and material, applicable to all countries and between professional and conscript armies, direct limitation becomes impossible.

From the military standpoint there is also the question of the distribution among the various arms of the number of effectives allowed to each country. This is a problem of internal organisation.
which should be left to the country concerned to settle according to its own requirements. For instance, the proportion between the cavalry, artillery and infantry may differ widely in different countries. Examples are easy to find. In European countries with well-developed communication, artillery, and heavy artillery in particular, is of the first importance, whereas, in countries whose communications are less developed, infantry and mountain and light artillery are of greater value than the other arms. For this reason, the distribution of effectives among the various arms should be left entirely to the country concerned. Moreover, the internal organisation of an army may be modified as the result of external or internal conditions. A limitation of armaments based on existing conditions might not be in accordance with future requirements and would make any change in military organisation very difficult; it would thus amount to the restriction of a country's freedom.

The eternal problem of supervision also arises in this connection. Several speakers touched on this point yesterday. I would not repeat the arguments which I have already advanced on many occasions, if I were not convinced that it is impossible in the present state of world politics to bring about the direct limitation of material without well-organised and efficient supervision. It may be objected that a genuine reduction of naval armaments was effected at Washington and London without supervision, and that there is no reason why this should not also apply to land armaments. In theory this appears to be a logical argument, but in practice, having regard to the diversity of land armaments, which are much easier to conceal than naval armaments, it is doubtful whether reduction without supervision is possible in the former case. It may also be argued that we must not begin by suspecting the good faith of the contracting States. I admit the justice of this argument, but in the present state of world civilisation and of the international moral code, is it likely that a statesman responsible for the security and national defence of his country would trust absolutely in the text of the Disarmament Convention and that he would be prepared to reduce or limit war material in his own country, without being certain that other countries, with which his country maintained very close political relations, were acting in the same way? What is possible for a limited number of naval Powers is not always possible in regard to the land armaments of a large number of countries—say fifty.

As regards the second method for the limitation of material, budgetary limitation, I could also advance a large number of arguments against this. Speaking generally, the arguments submitted at the third session of our Commission by several speakers, disputing the value of the limitation of naval expenditure in general, apply to a large extent to the budgetary limitation of land material. I might quote, for instance, the opinion expressed so forcibly by the honourable delegate for the United States of America, who said that, in view of differences in rates of pay, in production costs, in maintenance charges, in costs of labour and material, and also to varying standards of living and to variations in rates of exchange and to lack of uniformity in the preparation of budgets, any attempt to apply this method of limitation would, in his opinion, be unfair.

I would also draw your attention to the fluctuations in the purchasing power of money and in the rate of exchange, which would make it very difficult to fix a system of budgetary limitation extending over a period of five or ten years.

Consequently, if material is to be limited by budgetary methods, exhaustive preliminary investigations by budgetary experts will first have to be made before it is possible to conclude a practical agreement for the application of this method.

I should also like to draw your attention to the fact that, as Lord Cecil rightly remarked yesterday, data concerning budgetary expenditure cannot form an equitable basis of comparison between the budgets of the various countries. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that public opinion will certainly compare the budgets of the different countries, and this might give rise to very erroneous impressions. That is a psychological danger which cannot be overlooked.

These, then, are the arguments which I would use against both the systems proposed. It is for these reasons that the Japanese delegation has all along been of opinion that, in regard to land armaments, we should be content with limiting effectives and should not seek to introduce the limitation of material, whether direct or indirect, owing to the very complicated problems to which this gives rise. However, in a spirit of conciliation and after comparing these two systems of limitation, direct and indirect, I stated at the last session that I was prepared to accept in principle the limitation of material by budgetary methods, which, in my opinion, would have fewer disadvantages and would be easier to carry out. I hoped that this would facilitate agreement, which is highly desirable. After a very lengthy discussion at the Commission's last session, during which sixteen speakers delivered twenty-six speeches, we finally reached a compromise acceptance by the great majority. This agreement really the result of close and lengthy discussion and was adopted as the only means of ensuring the success of our work. Yesterday it was decided to reopen the whole question. The honourable delegate for the United States of America explained to us again the point of view of his Government, which finds it impossible to accept the method of budgetary limitation. This very important statement should receive full consideration. As I have already stated, I am still prepared to accept the method of budgetary limitation; but I would say frankly that I cannot take the responsibility of recommending, for the approval of my Government and of public opinion in my country, a draft convention which would not apply equally to all countries. In these circumstances, there seem to me to be only
two solutions: either that we should adopt the principle of budgetary limitation and that countries unable to apply it should accept direct limitation, or, if that solution be impossible, that we should revert to the solution already adopted at the last session—namely, indirect limitation by means of publicity. After these observations, I shall be very glad to hear the views of other delegations. In any case, my delegation is prepared to co-operate whole-heartedly in finding a solution acceptable to everyone and thus to ensure the success, not only of the Commission's work, but also of the future Conference.

M. Antoniade (Roumania).—After the very sound reasons given us by M. Sato, I have very little to add. I entirely agree with every word he has spoken.

I should like to say that my delegation has not changed its views in regard to the problem of the limitation of the material of land armaments. It considers that only indirect limitation is possible. The direct method has the advantage of simplicity, but simplicity is not a guarantee of equity or efficiency. I am afraid this method is so simple that it overlooks essential points and is even very dangerous. All that can be said on this matter has already been said, but I should like to remind you that, notwithstanding its simplicity, this method lacks precision.

As M. Massigli pointed out at our last session, it is particularly difficult to distinguish between material in service and material in stock. You cannot draw any hard-and-fast line between these two categories. How are you to tell where material in stock begins and where material in service ends?

This method is also unfair. If the limitation extends, not only to material in service, but also to material in stock for mobilisation, you are disregarding the war potential, and that would be unfair to countries which have a low potential, especially from an industrial standpoint. This would place them at a disadvantage as compared with great industrial Powers.

Moreover, these methods would be dangerous because, in the case of war or a threat of war, countries harbouring aggressive designs could easily increase their war material and, as they would know, by reason of publicity, the details of mobilisation of the other country, they could acquire material in excess of the limits laid down in the Convention. This danger is particularly great in the case of States not highly developed industrially.

The greatest obstacle of all is the question of supervision. Direct limitation would be impossible without some effective organisation for supervision.

In the first place an objection of principle has been raised to supervision. Judging by the speeches I have heard, few countries are prepared to accept an inquisitorial inspection in their own territory in regard to land armaments. If this is the position and if, in the opinion of the majority of Governments, supervision of this kind would involve a curtailment of their own sovereignty, you cannot blame them. We have been told, and I heard it repeated at yesterday's meeting, that, in order to banish this fear of an infringement of sovereignty, the only thing is to trust to the good faith and loyalty of the contracting States.

In private law, as in international law, good faith must naturally be presumed. Let us suppose that every State acts in good faith when making its declarations: is that sufficient to make the system an equitable one? I am afraid not, because, even supposing that each State acts in good faith, another psychological factor—namely, suspicion—will intervene as soon as there is the slightest threat of conflict.

There is no means of preventing suspicion; whenever there is the slightest friction between two countries, they will always accuse each other; one will say that the other has placed an order for machine-guns, that it has converted a civil industry into a military industry, or that it has armed certain of its vessels.

We thus have to consider whether direct supervision is possible and if it would be accepted by every country; even in this latter case, however, as has been said so many times, it is doubtful whether it would be effective, because the technical difficulties are such that supervision could only be illusory at the present time.

For this reason, my delegation prefers the method advocated by the French delegation—that is to say, the limitation of budgetary expenditure.

This is not an ideal system. You have heard the criticisms against it, but it seems to me to be more elastic and capable of adjustment wherever necessary. The budgetary declarations of each country cannot be regarded in an abstract manner; account must necessarily be taken of all the economic circumstances of a country and of a considerable number of other factors also; the figures cannot be compared with those of other countries, but, after the adjustments proposed by each country have been made, this system might be fairly effective. If unanimity cannot be secured in favour of it, my delegation would be prepared, as it stated in regard to the previous question, to accept any other indirect method, such as publicity, which was recommended by the American delegation, provided it would ensure effective limitation, according to the possibilities of the moment.

M. Fierlinger (Czechoslovakia).—I should first like to apologise to Lord Cecil for having opposed the immediate discussion of his proposal yesterday, although I knew that, supported by his authority, it would at once be accepted by a great majority of the Commission. However, I hope he understood that my sole object was to explain to the Commission the basis on which I think the discussion should proceed.
After what I said yesterday, I need not detain you very long to-day, and will endeavour to be as brief as possible, because you already know my opinion on the matter.

I did not fully realise yesterday the change in the views of certain delegations, and was obliged to read through the Minutes sent us regularly each morning, with a promptness which does credit to the Secretariat, in order to ascertain the extent of this change.

It seems to me that we have reached a stage of the discussion at which technical questions are of little or no importance, because each delegation, in addition to certain technical preoccupations, has political reasons which take precedence over the rest. In these circumstances, it is extremely difficult to judge the true value of any given system of disarmament.

For instance, if I am asked to accept the system of direct limitation and I know that I shall have no means of exercising any supervision, I shall naturally feel some doubt as to the efficacy and utility of such a system.

In saying this, I leave out of account the question whether it is possible to gauge the value of any given armament merely by counting the number of rifles, and machine and other guns.

I frankly admit that indirect limitation by means of budgets, which we still advocate, raises certain doubts in my mind. Nevertheless, I think that the constitution of most European countries guarantees publicity. In my country, for example, the Government is unable to spend a single crown more than the amount authorised in the budget. Here I would refer to M. Sato's argument, and would add that the calculation of Government expenditure could quite well be based on the gold standard and, when these sums were converted into national currency, they could not vary very greatly in the course of a year.

Mr. Gibson spoke with great frankness and sincerity yesterday, and I think we all understand and appreciate his point of view. His proposal to get round a difficulty which is peculiar to the United States of America can be discussed, and there might be a friendly exchange of views between Mr. Gibson and my colleagues who are more competent to deal with this question than I am myself. In substance, however, this problem does not affect my country.

I should like to add, however, that Mr. Gibson spoke as the citizen of another hemisphere. He forgot all the difficulties which still exist in Europe as the outcome of the great war, and he would certainly hesitate to accept the logical consequences of his proposal when we come to discuss the miscellaneous provisions under Chapter V. We wish to avoid complications and to treat the question as simply as possible, with a view to removing immediately the chief obstacles from our path and, in particular, those with which we are now dealing. Our sole object in adopting this attitude is to facilitate the Commission's work.

Whenever we come to a difficult stage, as at present, I cannot help wondering whether it is really necessary to repeat all the arguments which we have already put forward in previous years. I should like to ask all those who doubt the wisdom of our policy to ask themselves whether it is not sometimes better to have a mediocre solution than no solution at all. The Latin proverb "Bis dat, qui cito dat" might be applied to our case; promptitude is a good thing. If we succeed in drawing up a practical convention we shall facilitate the work of the future conference considerably and shall also hasten the moment of its convocation. The rapid settlement of this question of disarmament will make it possible for us to settle other very important problems which are closely connected with it, and thus bring into operation the various parts of the same machine by reconciling the two desiderata which have always been put forward here: security and disarmament.

All my colleagues who have been present at the meetings of the Committee on Arbitration and Security are fully acquainted with my views on this matter. As M. Colban said the other day, the Convention which we are going to sign will not be the last. It may not be an ideal convention, but it will be capable of improvement; as soon as the European situation has improved, it will be possible for us to draw up a better one. It is only in this expectation that I regard our work as important. My country sincerely desires to make this question of disarmament an active and living ideal, which should progress daily.

I have stated frankly the very simple political reasons by which my attitude is governed in the present case.

M. Litvinoff (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). — When I moved, at the first sitting of the present half-session, the re-examination of the question of land armaments, I pointed out, at the same time, the possibility of some modification by delegations of certain States of their former attitude on this question. I am glad to be able to state that this possibility has already been realised, as the declarations of Lord Cecil and General de Marinis testify. This cannot but be regarded as a certain victory for public opinion, which clearly realises the impossibility of solving the problem of disarmament without a reduction of war materials. A considerable number of delegations, by agreeing to a re-examination of this question, showed that they recognised the enormous importance of the question of the reduction of war materials as a factor of the general problem of the reduction of armaments. The opening of the discussion is not, however, in itself a solution of the problem, and the expectations of public opinion will not be justified unless the discussion leads to a radical change of the decision adopted in this regard in the first half of the present session. May I therefore express the hope that the speakers who were so eloquently advocating yesterday the reduction of war materials will adhere to the end to the opinions expressed by them and vote accordingly, whether or not unanimity be attained.
We might with advantage remember that at last year’s sittings of the present session there appeared to be no open opponents of the reduction of armaments. Controversy then was waged chiefly around the question as to whether reduction should be carried out directly, or indirectly by means of the limitation of budgetary expenditure. And the delegates being unable to convince each other, the Commission found no better way out than to renounce all reduction of armaments whatsoever.

It must be frankly admitted that the decision formerly taken, and now being examined by us, amounted to the virtual renunciation of any reduction of war materials, since, as I pointed out last year and as Lord Cecil confirmed yesterday, publicity is no guarantee of the reduction or even limitation of armaments. The reference back of any question to the clause of publicity has become a tradition for our Commission whenever a positive and clear decision cannot be attained. Only a few days ago we had occasion to notice this, when discussing the question of drawing up tables of naval effectives, the opponents of such tables gracefully proposing to substitute for a positive decision a reference back to publicity. Publicity seems to have become a kind of “consolation prize”.

At all events I am glad to note that Lord Cecil, too, admits the impossibility of limiting war materials by means of publicity only, and that the speakers preceding me merely carried the argument to the point of discussing which method is preferable: the direct method of reducing armed forces according to definite tables, or the indirect method of curtailing budgetary expenditure. Undoubtedly each of these methods has its advantages and disadvantages, although, if I had to choose between them, I would have no hesitation in giving preference to the direct method. To avoid repeating my own arguments of last year and the arguments brought forward by General de Marinis and Lord Cecil, I will merely supplement them by pointing out that industrially weaker countries, whose interests ought to be specially protected by the Disarmament Conference, would be in a less advantageous position than others in the case of budgetary limitations. It cannot be denied that smaller countries, having no war industries, and being dependent for war materials on other States, would only be able to acquire, for the same money, means of defence which would be, both in quantity and quality, inferior to those of the bigger industrial countries. As it is, owing to the lack in weaker countries of their own industry, they are unable themselves to carry out new experiments and to profit by the results of such experiments as adequately as other countries, even given an equal reduction of budgets. This disadvantage could to a certain extent, although not fully, be removed by a straightforward enumeration of materials of war subject to reduction in all countries, and this is why the Soviet delegation proposes detailed tables of war materials.

For the Soviet delegation, however, the question is not one of choosing between these two methods of reducing war materials, for we take up our stand firmly for the simultaneous acceptance of both methods, and here again I am in agreement with Lord Cecil, that neither method excludes the other. It is precisely because neither of these methods can fully satisfy us and because neither of them admits of adequate control that we ought to adopt them both, so that the advantages of one may compensate for the defects of the other. The Soviet delegation goes farther, maintaining that the fullest control would be obtained by the acceptance of yet another, a third, method—namely, the reduction of trained reserves—but I will abstain from dwelling upon this third method at present. I will merely add that even if armed forces, including reserves, were to be numerically reduced, it would be impossible to avoid reducing war materials and war budgets. How much greater must be the need for the reduction of these two categories, should the Commission insist upon leaving reserves untouched?

To avoid, however, any confusion of the questions now confronting us, I would propose for the present that we concentrate upon the question of the reduction of war materials, as proposed at the first reading of the draft Convention. In this connection, I would remind the Commission that it has before it two proposals—the German and the Soviet—only differing from each other by the more or less detailed nature of the tables contained therein. If my memory does not deceive me, the German delegation at the time agreed to accept the more detailed tables in the Soviet draft. Lord Cecil’s objection to the direct method of reduction, on the ground of the impossibility of limiting armaments, were to be numerically reduced, it would be impossible to avoid reducing war materials and war budgets. How much greater must be the need for the reduction of these two categories, should the Commission insist upon leaving reserves untouched?

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I am well aware that yet another consideration will be brought against our arguments, and one which has unfortunately always acted as a brake upon the activities of the Preparatory
Commission—namely, references to determined objections on the part of this or that delegation to this or that measure of reduction. This consideration has too frequently forced the Commission to follow the line of least resistance and to agree on negative results. If the Commission goes on striving as before for the attainment of unanimity on all points and at all costs, and if unanimity is to be understood as nothing but agreement between a few great Powers, independent of the attitude of the other States, all its activities will, as before, be deemed to sterility.

It must be remembered that the Commission is not deciding anything or imposing any obligations. It is merely preparing material for the coming Disarmament Conference. It seems to me that the work of the Conference will be greatly facilitated and stimulated if it be confronted with a draft Convention containing effective measures for the reduction of armaments, even if some Powers maintain reservations with regard to certain questions. In any case, there can be no question of unanimous acceptance of the draft Convention, as the many declarations already made in this Commission plainly show. What does it matter, then, if some reservations come from States opposing this or that measure for the reduction of armaments? Thus isolated, with their reservations, such States might, under pressure of public opinion, change their attitude by the time the Conference is convened and then unanimity might be reached, not on minimum, but on maximum measures of disarmament. The Preparatory Commission will be performing but poor service to the cause of disarmament and the cause of peace if, instead of this, it aims at screening the Governments making reservations and at protecting them from the criticism of public opinion.

I am speaking here with complete frankness, without any attempt at diplomacy, thinking of nothing but the interests of disarmament, for the Soviet delegation cannot, at this critical moment, speak otherwise with regard to this question which is of such exceeding import for humanity.

I will end by once more expressing the hope that the delegations which have heretofore spoken for the reduction of war materials will persevere to the end and not give in to any compromise at the expense of real disarmament or of the reduction of armaments, and that we shall arrive at a clear and positive decision on this, one of the most serious of the questions before the Commission.

Dr. Riddell (Canada). — I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, and the Commission for re-opening the debate on this fundamental question. The discussion has been not only enlightening but most encouraging and, I feel confident, will prove of great value in reaching a decision. The Canadian Government has always maintained that an essential element in disarmament is the limitation of land war material. It is difficult indeed to conceive of a Convention which would give satisfaction to the peoples of the world, unless it contains provisions for the limitation of implements of war. It is true that, at the last session of the Preparatory Commission, it was decided that the limitation and reduction of material would be sought by means of publicity because, a few days ago, the Commission confirmed its decision to eliminate trained reserves from the Convention.

Shall we adopt direct or budgetary limitation? The Canadian Government considers that there is something to be said in favour of each of these methods, but that, of the two, direct limitation would probably be simpler and more satisfactory. Limitation by budgetary expenditure is open to the criticism that complicated conversion tables and indices will have to be prepared in order to adapt the Convention figures to the varying production costs in different countries. Public opinion is not likely to understand or appreciate a system so involved.

The Canadian delegation therefore leans towards the acceptance of direct limitation, as being the clearer and the more practical method. On the other hand, should a majority of the Commission decide that direct limitation is undesirable, and that budgetary limitation is preferable, the Canadian delegation, desirous of adopting a method more effective than mere publicity, will support budgetary limitation.

Possibly a solution will eventually be found in a combination of both direct and indirect methods of limitation.

M. Westman (Sweden). — I am also very glad that the Commission has decided to re-open the discussion on the question of land material. That decision was all the more necessary because, a few days ago, the Commission confirmed its decision to eliminate trained reserves from the Convention.

A convention which did not deal satisfactorily either with the question of trained reserves or with that of the material of land armaments would be so incomplete that it would be doubtful whether there would be much object in bringing it into force.

The statement made yesterday by General de Marinis is a further proof of the necessity of reverting to the important question of material. His remarks have introduced a new factor into the discussion, and it was of special interest to those of us who have all along been in favour of the direct method of limitation to hear General de Marinis’ authoritative exposition of its merits. General de Marinis laid special stress on the principal defect of the budgetary method—namely, that it disregards the existing stocks of war material and, we might add, stocks which Governments may procure before the entry into force of a Disarmament Convention. I should
like to say that it was this anomaly of the indirect method which led the Swedish delegation to prefer the direct method of limitation, because there is no doubt that the existence of large stocks of war material in certain countries at the time of the entry into force of the Disarmament Convention would disturb the equilibrium from the outset, and this state of affairs would produce its effects for a long time to come.

The strong criticisms which have been made of the direct method have led the Swedish delegation to re-examine this question. Unless I am mistaken, the point which has been most criticised is the difficulty of supervising the application of a Convention which granted to each country a specified quantity of each of the various kinds of war material. I quite admit that this is the weak point of the system of direct limitation.

These criticisms are, to a large extent, justified. No one can deny that, in the case of war material, serious complications might arise in regard to the exercise of effective supervision.

It is hard for me to believe—and I should like to lay special stress on this point—that it would be more difficult to control the larger items, such as tanks, guns, machine-guns, etc., than certain other armaments. Take, for instance, the supervision of personnel, which will eventually be necessary, in virtue of the decision we have just taken in regard to the limitation of personnel by means of the system of "men days".

One speaker, who is no longer a member of the Commission, summarising the arguments against the direct method, said that, as regards the rationed strength, the number of mess-tins which were daily filled with soup could be counted and easily checked, because the figures could be obtained from the budget, if that valuable form of limitation, the limitation of expenditure, were adopted.

But is it really sufficient to count the number of mess-tins to make sure that military training is not being given, in any particular country, to men in excess of the number of men days fixed by international agreement, or for a longer period than that stipulated? I am afraid that a supervisory commission which was content to count the number of mess-tins would be making its task too easy. Has not experience shown conclusively how difficult it is to ascertain the extent of military training given to the young men of a country? It would not be difficult, before the arrival of a supervisory commission, to remove any surplus recruits from the barracks and to put them into civilian clothes. If the Commission wished to do its work properly it would be well advised not only to count the mess-tins in the barracks, but also the dishes in private houses and the clothes in the cupboards. Do you really think that it would be an easy matter to check the figures in the budgets to which reference has been made? Do you think that a Government which wished to obtain the money necessary for feeding, during a certain period, even in barracks, contingents in excess of the limits laid down in international agreements would find it difficult to do so secretly?

The point which I wish to bring out is this: In my opinion, supervision of the application of the provisions of a disarmament treaty will be very difficult to organise, even in the extreme case of the establishment of a supervisory commission with the right to make investigations on the spot in the various countries if so requested. I do not think, therefore, that it is right for us to attach more importance to supervision in the case of material than we did in the case of the limitation of personnel. As Lord Cecil has truly said, the basis of any disarmament convention must necessarily be the recognition of loyalty and good faith on the part of the contracting States, and of their intentions to fulfil their international obligations. When we adopted the rule in regard to personnel—a certain number of men and days—we obviously assumed this minimum of loyalty. I do not see why this loyalty should be regarded as non-existent in the case of war material.

Judging by the discussion which has taken place, the opposition of certain delegations to the adoption of the direct system has become weaker, while the opinion of other delegations has not changed. In these circumstances—I will leave out of account for the moment the problem raised by the statement of the United States delegation and its consequences—I am inclined to think that the suggestion made yesterday by General de Marinis is deserving of serious consideration. General de Marinis suggested that the two methods, direct limitation and budgetary limitation, should be combined. Personally, I am quite prepared to examine the possibility of obtaining a result by this means. I should even be prepared to go farther with a view to a compromise, so that nothing may be neglected which might facilitate agreement on this vital point.

A suggestion made in 1927 in this Commission might be taken as a starting-point. Would it not be possible—while accepting the budgetary method—also to limit directly at any rate certain categories of arms, those which are easiest to supervise and are also the most important from the point of view of their attacking power—namely, tanks and big guns?

I would ask my colleagues to be good enough to give this suggestion their careful consideration. I would recall the fact that, as regards the other important question which we discussed a few days ago, the Commission, ignoring the opinion of a large number of delegations, decided to leave out of account one of the most important military factors—namely, trained reserves. Is it going to proceed in the same way in regard to the important problem now before us—that of material—
and to require of those who are in favour of the direct method submission pure and simple? Is no account to be taken of the opinions of a large part of the Commission?

If our proposals for a compromise are not taken into consideration and if there appears to be no possibility of an agreement, I do not see what would be the use of sacrificing our opinions for the sake of an agreement which cannot be secured.

M. Rutgers (Netherlands). — The question before us is not really one of the method of limitation but of the object of that limitation. This point was clearly brought out by General de Marinis in his speech at the outset of our discussion. Are we going to deal with the war material which States have in their possession, or do we merely propose to limit the material which they acquire in the future?

In order to show the difference between these two objects, let us suppose that, in regard to the limitation of naval material, it is suggested that existing fleets should be disregarded, and limitation confined to the number of vessels built after the conclusion of the Treaty. There would not be the slightest chance of any Government's accepting such a system.

As regards land armaments, it is proposed that existing armaments should be ignored and that future expenditure should alone be limited.

Lord Cecil has referred to the "mechanisation" of armies. There is a great difference between what has been done by different countries in this respect. In some, as the manoeuvres have shown, this mechanisation has been practically completed, while others, for financial or other reasons, are very far behind. Is it reasonable simply to compare and limit the future expenditure of these two groups of countries, leaving out of account the differences which exist to-day?

M. Sato has raised an objection, on which he has laid great stress, in regard to the limitation of existing material, and he pointed out how difficult it would be to assign the right scale to each country for the purpose of arriving at a certain degree of disarmament. I agree that it would be very difficult to establish figures, but I do not think that this matter should be dealt with from a theoretical standpoint or that arithmetical calculations will be required. The Conference will have to deal with a political question, with which we are not concerned, and with which Japan has already had some experience in the matter.

In addition to the question of the limitation of existing armaments or of future armaments alone, there is the question of method; for the limitation of existing material the direct method is necessary, whereas, for the limitation of armaments acquired after the conclusion of the Convention, the indirect method—that is to say, the method of budgetary limitation—is preferable.

The Netherlands delegation considers that this latter method is open to very grave objections. The purpose of this method is not to limit the actual armaments, but only the budgetary "symptoms" of those armaments, and I think I am right in saying that all speakers have agreed that direct limitation of the actual material is the most logical and thorough method.

The difficulty of supervision has been pointed out. This difficulty is constantly met with, and in this respect I approve the suggestions made by the honourable delegate for Sweden, to the effect that if, owing to the difficulty of supervision, the obstacles in the way of the limitation of material in general appear to be insurmountable, we might examine, for instance, the question of the limitation of tanks and big guns, which are less difficult to supervise.

As regards budgetary limitation, M. Sato, Dr. Riddell and others have already raised numerous objections. Moreover, in the event of budgetary limitation, what figures are we going to insert in the tables? Are they to be fixed on a gold basis or in the currency of each country?

This is a serious question and shows the difficulties that would arise in the case of a monetary crisis in one or more countries. As regards expenditure on material, the Netherlands delegation is of opinion that the method of publicity is preferable to that of budgetary limitation. The latter consists in the insertion of a figure in a table; according to the duration of the Convention, the significance of this figure may vary from year to year, whereas the publication of expenditure makes it possible to follow the policy of a country during the period of the Convention, by taking into account the circumstances which affect the figures and, in particular, monetary circumstances.

I will not go further into the question of publicity; we will return to this matter later. I should merely like to point out that it is possible not only to have publicity in regard to annual expenditure but also—and we have a proposal before us on the matter—to have annual publicity in regard to existing armaments.

We will return to this question of publicity later. In the meantime, I should like to inform you of a conclusion at which I have arrived in regard to limitation.

After studying the questions of the limitation of material in service and in stock, and of budgetary limitation, we have reached the conclusion that the former method is preferable. I agree with M. Sato and other speakers on this point.

Mr. Gibson's suggestion that both these methods should be inserted as alternatives in the Convention, and that Governments should express their opinions on them at the Disarmament Conference, should be given careful consideration. If this suggestion be formulated in a proposal, the Netherlands delegation will examine it with the utmost sympathy, in the desire to arrive at a solution satisfactory to all the members of the Conference.

M. Colban (Norway). — As this is the first time my Government has been represented on your Commission, I think it my duty to explain as briefly as possible the attitude of my delegation to the various questions submitted for general discussion this morning.