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CONFERENCE FOR THE REDUCTION AND LIMITATION OF ARMAMENTS

ARMAMENTS YEAR-BOOK

SPECIAL EDITION

General and Statistical Information in regard to Land, Naval and Air Armaments.

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PREFACE

The Council of the League of Nations, at its meeting on May 22nd, 1931, decided that a special edition of the *Armaments Year-Book* should be published by the Secretary-General. This accounts for the present volume.

The Council had previously, on May 20th, 1931, adopted a report on the preparatory work for the General Disarmament Conference in which it is said that "the Secretariat, having obtained authorisation from the Rapporteur, has taken the necessary steps with a view to the preparation of a special edition of the *Armaments Year-Book* for the use of delegates to the General Disarmament Conference. This edition will follow the rules adopted for the ordinary edition — that is to say, it will be based on the official documents communicated by the different Governments. In this particular case, the chief source employed will be the replies of Governments to the Secretary-General's circular letter on the position of their armaments".

The special edition of the *Armaments Year-Book* will replace the ordinary edition which would normally appear in May 1932. It was not thought desirable to publish in the same year, and at a few months' interval, two editions of the *Armaments Year-Book*, especially as the decisions of the Disarmament Conference may render certain changes in that publication necessary. The next ordinary edition (ninth year) of the *Armaments Year-Book* will therefore appear in 1933.

The present edition differs from preceding editions in two ways:

(1) Previous editions were founded on official documents (*armament year-books*, statistical annuals, official military bulletins, laws and decrees, budgets, etc.) to be found in the library of the Secretariat. For this new edition, information sent by Governments to the Secretary-General in reply to his Circular Letters (C.L.23.1931.IX and C.L.124.1931.IX) concerning information on the position of their armaments has also been used.

(2) The regular editions of the *Armaments Year-Book* contain very detailed monographs on armaments; in the great majority of cases the technical aspects of the organisation and composition of the armies of different countries are entered into.

As the present edition is specially for the use of the Conference, it was thought well to produce a more handy volume containing only
essential information on the organisation and composition of the various armies. Each monograph gives a general picture of the military system of a particular country and enables the reader to get a general idea of the main features in the organisation and composition of the army of that country. Those desiring fuller information can refer to the last edition of the Armaments Year-Book issued in May 1931 (document C.I.M.I.I.1931.IX).

The present edition contains monographs on sixty-two countries, Members or non-members of the League of Nations. In the great majority of cases, these monographs give information on the principal characteristics of the armed forces of the country in question (standing army, militia, home forces, colonial forces, etc.), military command and administration, recruiting and period of service, organisation and composition of armed forces, effectives of the army, air force and navy, naval material and expenditure on national defence. Where the military air force is an autonomous arm, a special chapter is devoted to it.

Owing to the difference in military systems and the transitional state of the law on armaments in certain countries, it has not been possible to follow a uniform plan in all the monographs. The information given is more or less detailed according as the military systems described are more or less complicated and as the documents at the disposal of the Secretariat are more or less numerous.

As far as possible, the replies of Governments to the Circular Letters above mentioned (23.1931.IX and 124.1931.IX) have been used. Whenever these could not be obtained, other official and public sources were drawn on. But only information which had reached the Secretariat and had been published before December 1st, 1931, could be taken into account. These replies have not been published in extenso; only essential information has been included. Whenever the reply of a Government has been made use of, the reader is referred to the original document published by the Secretariat of the League of Nations. For the purpose of uniformity, the statistical tables given in the Governments' replies have as far as possible been adapted to the size of the present publication.

The information contained in the communications from Governments related in most cases to the following points: effectives of armed forces (land army, military air forces and navy); air material (number and total horse-power of aeroplanes and airships); naval material (number of units and tonnage); expenditure on national defence.

As regards the effectives of armed forces, the present edition of the Armaments Year-Book contains, not only information taken from communications by Governments, but also a recapitulation table of effectives for certain years taken from previous editions of the Armaments Year-Book. The reader's attention is drawn to the fact that it is impossible to compare effectives based on information contained in the various communications from Governments and those appearing in the recapitulation table. The latter are generally budgetary or authorised effectives, whereas the former are average daily effectives calculated on a system
laid down in the draft Convention of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission, and, in certain cases, legal effectives.

Information as to naval material in the present edition is also taken partly from communications by Governments (number and tonnage in 1931) and partly from information for 1913, 1919, 1929 and 1930 already published in previous editions of the Armaments Year-Book. Here also a comparison between data taken from these two different sources must be avoided. Information drawn from previous editions of the Armaments Year-Book only relates to vessels completed at the dates in question, whereas that taken from the replies of Governments includes also vessels under construction or authorised; moreover, in the first case, tonnage is generally given in so-called "normal" tons, whereas in the second case it is expressed in "standard" or "Washington" tons. 1

Finally, as regards expenditure on national defence, it should be observed that the information given consists of two tables followed by explanatory notes for those countries the Governments of which have sent replies to Circular Letters 23 and 124, 1931, and of a single table for other countries. One of the tables has been prepared on the basis of the above replies and deals with one year only; the other table contains a recapitulation of defence expenditure for the past five or six years as already published in previous editions of the Armaments Year-Book. In view of the fact that the figures in the two tables are, in most instances, based on different methods of calculation, they cannot be compared. In utilising the Governments' replies, account has been taken, more or less, of the instructions and recommendations contained in the Report by the Committee of Experts on Budgetary Questions of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference (gross figures, inclusion of extra-budgetary expenditure, of special funds, of expenditure of local authorities, of expenditure on formations organised on a military basis, etc.), while the recapitulation tables have been prepared in accordance with the method explained in the introduction to previous editions of the Armaments Year-Book — that is, generally speaking, without attempting "to recast defence budgets according to a standard system in order to make them comparable".

Two annexes will be found in the end of the present volume: one contains information as to various agreements, treaties, conventions, etc., between different countries for the limitation of their armaments

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1 Standard Displacement or Washington Displacement. — According to the definition in the Washington Naval Treaties (Chapter II, Part IV), standard displacement is "the displacement of the ship complete, fully manned, engined and equipped ready for sea, including all armament and ammunition, equipment, outfit, provisions and fresh water for crew, miscellaneous stores and implements of every description that are intended to be carried in war, but without fuel or reserve feed water on board".

Normal Displacement (normal armament). — Normal displacement is standard displacement, plus only a fraction of the weight of fuel and (in large vessels) the whole or (in small vessels) only a fraction of the weight of the reserve feed water.
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(demilitarised zones, limitation of naval forces, reduction of effectives, etc.); the second contains recapitulation tables and graphs giving information as to world military expenditure, world naval tonnage for 1913 and certain post-war years, the principal characteristics of armed forces (standing army, militia, compulsory or voluntary service, etc.).

The monographs are arranged in alphabetical order. The information previously given under the heading "British Empire" is now, in accordance with the practice generally adopted in League publications, reproduced under the headings: "Australia", "Canada", "India", "Irish Free State", "New Zealand", "United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland" (and all parts of the British Empire which are not separate members of the League of Nations), "Union of South Africa".