



Australian Government



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League of Nations. Eleventh Assembly. Mr. Scullins address and notes.

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Eleventh Assembly

Mr Scullin's address  
and  
Notes

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*Quin to Press at Geneva on  
29<sup>th</sup> September, 1930*

Interviewed at the Hôtel de la Paix on his arrival at Geneva, the Right Honourable J.H. Scullin, M.P., the Prime Minister of Australia, said:

I am very glad to be visiting Geneva and especially during the meetings of the League Assembly, although unfortunately I shall be unable to remain to take any part in the work of the Assembly. However, I am pleased to be here even for a day at the present juncture because it is admitted that one of the most valuable features of the annual Assemblies of the League is the personal contact of the leaders of the Governments of the fifty-four countries, great and small, that compose the League. This is of inestimable value for a better understanding among the various nations. Leaders of social, industrial and economic thought are also of course well represented at these annual gatherings.

In the early years of the League, it was, I am afraid, regarded more or less as an unrealisable dream, as something Utopian. But when one reviews the progress of the League during its first decade, which was passed last year, and the type of men who are now more than ever attending the League Assemblies and supporting the League in their respective countries, there is, I think, good ground for looking towards the future with confidence. The League has now passed its infancy stage and is gaining strength with each successive year.

There is no doubt that, taking into consideration the many international difficulties which have confronted the world and as well as international differences arising from the rearrangement of Europe after the war, the League has so far been very successful. There are still many matters requiring the best efforts of the League for their satisfactory solution.

So far as Australia is concerned, we, together with other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, have recently accepted the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. Australia had previously in 1921 adhered to the Court together with nearly all the other members of the League. The objections of the United States of America to adhesion to the Court appear to have been met satisfactorily in the recent arrangement that was adopted by the other



signatories, and subsequently signed on behalf of the United States of America. If, as is expected, the United States join the Court, another great advance will have been made in the sphere of the peaceful settlement of international differences.

Australia has recently taken steps to accede to the International Convention which was drawn up under the auspices of the League in 1925 for the supervision of the international trade in arms. The present Commonwealth Government have also acceded to the Geneva Gas Protocol which prohibits the use in war of chemical and bacteriological methods of warfare.

I will not discuss the various economic activities of the League further than to point out that these concern for the most part the countries of Europe. The recent tariff truce conference which drew up the commercial convention encroached very far on domestic policy, and the framers of this convention cannot surely expect countries such as Australia to adopt a policy which would be prejudicial to their industrial development. We have entered the field of industrial development late and must reserve the right to pursue the means we consider most effective for the development of our secondary industries, and so provide for the remunerative employment of our people with at the same time the requisite diversity of occupation. No country can afford to keep all its eggs in one basket, and thus Australia cannot rely merely on primary production with its more or less seasonal employment.

The attitude of Australia in relation to the International Labour Office and the conventions adopted at the Conference is frequently a matter of criticism. There are many people who are not aware of the difficulties of a federal state with regard to the ratification of conventions and the special provision concerning this matter that the framers of the Peace Treaty found it necessary to make. Article 405 provides, amongst other things, that in the case of a Federal state the power of which to enter into conventions on labour matters is subject to limitations, it shall be in the discretion of that Government to treat a draft Convention to which limitations apply as a recommendation, which, of course, does not require formal ratification.



Of the twenty-eight conventions adopted by the Conference to date only three come wholly within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth and two of these deal with maritime matters. The other maritime conventions include coastal shipping and it has been laid down by the High Court that the Commonwealth has no power to fix the labour conditions of intrastate coastal shipping. Although the subject matters of ~~the~~ most of the other conventions come within the jurisdiction of the States they also affect the Commonwealth as regards its territories. The Commonwealth Government has informed the States however that it is prepared to ratify such conventions as are covered by legislation in the States, but it must be in respect of all the States and not only some of them before the Commonwealth can proceed with ratification.

The Commonwealth Government has recently considered the position in relation to the conventions on maritime subjects to see what minor amendments may be necessary to bring the Navigation Act into line with the provisions of these conventions. At a suitable opportunity we shall <sup>introduce an</sup> ~~be~~ amending ~~the~~ Bill so that we shall be able to ratify these conventions.

We naturally view very favourably the endeavours of the International Labour Office to improve the working conditions throughout the world. This improvement is urgently necessary and if realised will of course assist Australia to maintain her present standard of living. The Peace Treaty itself recognises that universal peace can be established only if based on social justice, and I believe that considerable success has already been achieved by the International Labour Organisation in this direction.



EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

Dear Sherrill

Attached are some  
suggestions for the W.A.  
League of Nations Union speech,  
which may be of use.

Har

31 JUL 1950

I shall now take up  
the notes for the League  
Assembly



EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

These notes are for (1) a general address, and may be divided into (2) Disarmament, and (3) Intellectual Co-operation - moral disarmament. The addenda are for use according to circumstances and also show the 5 or 6 big line questions before the

Assembly

Hal

6/18/30



Revised Hal

FOR GENEVA.

I esteem it a great privilege to be present at this Assembly ~~of the League of Nations~~ and to be able to re-affirm the faith of the Government and people of Australia in its aims and achievements, <sup>of the League of Nations.</sup> We in Australia have watched with the deepest interest the gradual growth of the League from infancy to its present state of adolescence through which it is steadily progressing to full maturity. Its growth has been sound and healthy. It does not to my mind appear to have gone too far or too fast, but rather, <sup>to</sup> have pressed steadfastly forward on its great course for the maintenance of peace not only between its members, but throughout the whole world. And what object could be nobler? We in our time have tasted of the bitter fruits of war, and even now, nearly twelve years after ~~the~~ <sup>of the last ~~great~~ holocaust</sup> conclusion, we are straining every sinew under the heavy burden of debt and economic depression. One really shudders to think what would have been the present state of the world but for the grand conception that led to the nations of the world leaguings themselves together for the maintenance of peace and for international co-operation. It ranks undoubtedly, after christianity, as the greatest thing in the history of civilisation and my one hope is that it will prosper as it



deserves. The League, with its sister organisations the Permanent Court of International Justice and the International Labour Office, offers <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ perfect system for the maintenance of peace between the nations of the world and it rests now with us and future generations to support it wholeheartedly and take full advantage of the blessings it ~~embodies~~ <sup>embodies</sup>. Its progress to date has been very satisfactory, and my fervent hope is that it will continue to gain strength with the years in its humanitarian objects.

To those who criticise the League for not having made more progress than it so far has made I would suggest that it is well to bear in mind that a fleet is only as fast as its slowest ship, and that it is necessary to improve such ship before increasing the speed and general effectiveness of the fleet.

There are many who think that while the League has been extraordinarily successful in some directions, it is not making sufficient progress in its greatest object - disarmament. While we all hope for speedy and tangible results in this all-important branch of the League's activities, we must render due credit to the League for the success it has so far achieved in the direction of the establishment of international security and the peaceful settlement of international



disputes, thus creating the necessary atmosphere and clearing the way for a general reduction of armaments. However, I feel that the League should soon be in a position to proceed with the proposed Disarmament Conference, and that we should all be prepared to make considerable sacrifices, if such they are still considered to be, to bring about a more rapid and appreciable progress in the reduction of armaments, so that the faith of the people in the work of the League may not be allowed to waver. While realising the immense difficulties, both technical and political, I do think that we should be able now to look forward to some greater measure of progress in connection with the reduction of armaments. The success of the Locarno Conference, the universal adoption of the Treaty for the Renunciation of War, the recent wide acceptance of the Optional Clause, have all been very promising signs, and combined with the <sup>material</sup> results achieved by the Washington and London Naval Conferences, seem to indicate that the time has now arrived when the League should be able to convene the great Disarmament Conference with every prospect of a successful issue.

The armaments of the world are even today immense, and the cost is too great a load for the people to bear, burdened as they are with excessive taxation for the redemption of war



debt, and the payment of interest and pensions. The present world-wide economic depression with its dread spectre of unemployment stalking in our midst is to a large extent due to the inability of the people all over the world to afford their full requirements of food, clothing and shelter. If civilisation is not to stand still we should be able to take fuller advantage of the opportunity of accepting the means now available for the settlement of international differences by law instead of war and thereby be able to renounce by deeds as well as by words the former means of settling such disputes. Moreover, we should proceed along this path as far as possible before the horrors and <sup>economic</sup> disorganisation of the last war become dimmed in living memory. If we cannot soon make some tangible progress in the reduction of armaments I fear we shall run the risk of weakening the confidence of the people in the League. We are all earnestly hoping, I feel sure, that the Disarmament Conference will prove the coping stone in the League edifice of peace. Therefore, even with a full realisation of the difficulties involved, I earnestly proffer a plea that we should hasten action with a view to achieving some substantial diminution of this burden and at the same time remove the potential danger resulting from armaments. These armaments cannot now be regarded as necessary in the light of the success



already achieved by the League in international co-operation. We must think in terms of peace if we would have peace and better still, act on such thoughts. I do think it is time that we were able to make some definite progress in carrying out our obligations under Article 8 of the Covenant.

See separate notes on -

General Act.

Financial Assistance to States Victims of Aggression.

Model Treaty to Strengthen Means for Preventing War.

Amendment of Articles 12, 13 and 15 of the Covenant to bring it into harmony with the Kellogg Pact.

Economic Activities of the League.

I feel that I must say a few words as to the work of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation in the propagation of a knowledge of what the League stands for and in the development of greater co-operation among those concerned in educational work. These activities are immensely helpful <sup>in</sup> ~~to~~ increasing and strengthening the public opinion throughout the world in support of the League and against war. Not only must the Governments co-operate, but the people themselves need to be solidly behind ~~them~~ and the movement for disarmament and the peaceful settlement of international disputes. The times when rulers and later Governments decided on peace or war very often merely out of caprice or self-aggrandisement



*where there is reason to hope*

are now ~~happily~~ past, and no Government would today dare to go to war without the consent of the people. Therefore, anything that may be done to spread a knowledge of the League and its peaceful work must tend to remove war further and further from the minds of people as a means for the settlement of international disputes. In Australia education comes within the jurisdiction of the States, and I have been very gratified with the efforts of the educational authorities to make better known among school children and the rising generation the aims and work of the League. Nevertheless I am hoping that efforts will not flag and that still more will be done in Australia and also in other countries in this great and undeniably fruitful field. Moral disarmament must ~~precede~~ *go hand in hand with* physical disarmament.



GENERAL ACT. League data, Item 8. The General Act provides in separate chapters for conciliation, judicial settlement and arbitration of international disputes. Opportunity may be suitable for statement of Commonwealth Government's general approval of the General Act and intention to submit to Parliament. But information has just been received by cable from the Secretary of State from which it appears that South Africa and New Zealand are doubtful about the advisability of an announcement being made at the Assembly of intention to accept the General Act, and think that it would be preferable to leave it for discussion at the Imperial Conference. The British Government replied to New Zealand that it is only proposed to declare at the Assembly ~~the~~ general willingness to accede to the General Act, subject to Parliamentary approval, and that they hoped that agreement might be reached at Geneva on the detailed conditions which should be attached to accession, but, if not, they agreed that it would be very desirable to discuss these at the Imperial Conference. Mr. Brennan, however, will have the latest information in this connection.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO STATES VICTIMS OF AGGRESSION. See Item 6, League data. The Defence Department had no observations to offer. The Treasury recommended that the Australian Delegation



at the Assembly should support the adoption of the Convention and if it were adopted should sign the Convention subject to the conditions (1) that the Convention would not come into force until the proposed League General Disarmament Convention, in accordance with Article 8 of the Covenant, has been brought into operation, and that (2) the liability of ~~the~~<sup>a</sup> guarantor State is definitely and strictly limited to the share assigned to it in the draft Convention. This matter might, by the date of the Prime Minister's arrival at Geneva, be ripe for some announcement of the views of the Commonwealth on the subject.

MODEL TREATY TO STRENGTHEN MEANS FOR PREVENTING WAR. League data, Item 7. Certain alternative texts will come before the League Committee for discussion. The Australian Delegation has been instructed to support the British representations in an endeavour to secure amendment of the draft Treaty in certain directions. This may provide a subject for mention by the Prime Minister.

ARTICLES 12, 13 AND 15 OF THE COVENANT. League data, Item 9. Under Articles 12 and 15 of the Covenant as it now stands nations may resort to war in certain circumstances without making any breach of their obligations under the Covenant. The British Government at the last Assembly proposed certain amendments to the Covenant for the purpose of bringing it into line with the



provisions of the Treaty for the Renunciation of War. The British proposals were considered by a Committee of Experts whose report will be considered by the Assembly. Australia might very suitably, in a general address before the Assembly, welcome the attempt to bring the Covenant into harmony with the Treaty for the Renunciation of War. Anything that bans war is deserving of support and in view of the progress the League has of recent years made in the direction of conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement of international disputes, there does not appear any reason why the "gap" in the Covenant should not be closed.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF THE LEAGUE. League data, Items 19/20+21.

A more satisfactory attitude is to regard most of the economic proposals of the League as more closely concerning the countries of Europe, so that there is no need publicly to criticise such activities. In fact this may have already been a little overdone at past Assemblies. Whatever convention the League may adopt members are always at liberty to disregard ~~them~~ or adopt ~~them~~ as the case may be.

X DOMINION SEAT ON COUNCIL. League data<sup>a</sup>, Item 10. The Commonwealth has definitely promised to support the candidature of the Irish Free State, and the latter seems determined to



stand not in succession to Canada as a Dominion, but as an independent member of the League. Mr. Brennan will have further information on this subject.



Duplicate

Pleasure to address the Western Australian Branch of the League of Nations Union.

Am convinced that the most substantial support the League can receive is that of the people themselves. It is they who through their representatives in Parliament mould the policy of Governments. The position where rulers and later Governments laid down the policy with regard to war and peace has gradually changed through the centuries until to-day no Government would dare to go to war against the will of the people. Therefore it is absolutely essential that the people of the various nations should be enlightened as to the work ~~and objects~~ of the League, the main object of which is the maintenance of the peace of the world. It is in this all important direction that your Union and similar organisations throughout the world are doing such excellent work.

Formerly the people heard of little but the "glory of war", but to-day such an advance in civilisation has been made by the establishment of the League of Nations that we may now without any hesitation or shame inculcate such a humanitarian principle as the "glory of peace", the greatest glory of all on earth.



Attempts have been made in the past to establish various sorts of leagues and arrangements for maintaining peace, the more outstanding being the Holy Alliance and the Hague Conferences, but, as you all know, such attempts were not attended with any great or lasting success.

Then came the last, and I trust it will be the last great war, with all its horrors, suffering and economic disorganisation, the aftermath of which is now bearing so heavily on every country, victor and vanquished.

Nevertheless, if the League of Nations can continue to gain momentum in its good work, such losses will not have been in vain.

In the early years of the League it was, I am afraid, regarded more or less as an unrealisable dream - as something Utopian. But when one reviews the progress of the League during its first decade, which was passed last year, and the type of men who are now more than ever attending the League Assemblies and supporting the League in their respective countries, one has good grounds for looking towards the future with less trepidation than our ancestors were able to do. The League has now passed its infancy stage and is gaining strength with each successive year.



One of the most beneficial features of the annual Assemblies of the League is admittedly the personal contact of the leaders of the Governments of the fifty-~~five~~<sup>four</sup> countries, great and small, that compose the League. This is of inestimable value for a better understanding among the various nations. This, of course, was quite impossible before the war. The leaders of thought throughout the world - social, industrial and economic - are also well represented at these annual meetings.

War is barbarity - peace is civilisation. And the main object of the League is the maintenance of peace. There is no doubt that, taking into consideration the many international difficulties which confronted the world and the settlement of long outstanding international differences existing before and <sup>those</sup> arising from the rearrangement of Europe after the war, the League has so far been very successful. There are still many difficult matters requiring the best efforts of the League for their satisfactory solution.

You already are aware of many such disputes which have been settled by the intervention of the League, while in others the League system of publicity, delay and



mediation are tending to the peaceful settlement of some other international differences. We hear critics hurl at the League its failure so far to bring about disarmament. They apparently lose sight of the centuries that have gone before and which had done little more than intensify the need for armaments. There is no doubt that the League has been most helpful in creating an atmosphere of security and peace favourable to the progress that has been made by the Washington and London Naval Conferences. The success of the League in the adoption of ~~its~~ measures for the peaceful settlement of international disputes ~~by conciliation and arbitration~~ must naturally create a greater sense of security among the nations and while not yet having led to any actual great reduction of armaments, has certainly turned the tide. Nations are now actually thinking in the terms of reduction of armaments, which is somewhat different from the pre-war attitude when we were all participating in the race for armaments and groaning under an ever-increasing burden of unproductive taxation in order to be prepared against attack.

No one can deny that a great change has taken place in this direction and, the tide now having



turned, we may hope that the world will be borne towards a return to prosperity, when the immense treasure that was formerly poured into unproductive armaments may be turned into channels for the alleviation of our economic and other difficulties.

Australia, together with the other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations has just accepted the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. Under this we, and the other signatories, recognise between each other as compulsory ipso facto and without special agreement the jurisdiction of the Court in certain very important and comprehensive classes of international disputes.

Australia had previously, in 1921, adhered to the Court together with nearly all the other members of the League. And now the objections of the United States of America to adhesion to the Court appear to have been satisfactorily met in the recent arrangement that was adopted by the other signatories, and subsequently signed on behalf of the U.S.A., so that this great country may be expected very soon to join the Court. When this happens



another great advance will have been made in the sphere of the settlement of international differences by rules of law instead of war.

Australia has recently taken steps to accede to the International Convention which was drawn up under the auspices of the League in 1925 for the supervision of the international trade in arms. Such accession, however, has been made subject, like the British ratification, to ratification by the principal arms producing countries. The present Government have also acceded to the Geneva Gas Protocol which prohibits the use in war of chemical and bacteriological methods of warfare.

We are heartily behind the League in all its endeavours in the direction of the peaceful settlement of international disputes, which will bring about a state of security that will be favourable to the economic development of the world, and particularly of our own wide spaces, leading to greater material prosperity for all. Even so it will require some decades of such security to enable the world to make good the ravages and disorganisation caused by the late war.



There is no need to mention specifically the several measures which have been adopted by the League or are now under consideration for ~~mediation~~, the <sup>arbitration</sup> conciliation, and the <sup>judicial</sup> settlement of international disputes.

We are all hoping that the League will soon have progressed sufficiently with its preparatory work for the proposed international conference on disarmament to be able to fix the date for such conference. But here again, while ardently desirous of something very tangible in the way of the reduction of armaments, we must all recognise the necessity <sup>there has been</sup> for hastening slowly, and for the way for such conference being suitably prepared. <sup>The league cannot risk failure in this direction</sup>

I will not touch upon the various economic activities of the League further than to point out that these concern more the countries of Europe. The recent tariff trade conference which drew up the commercial convention encroached very far on domestic policy, and the framers of such convention cannot surely expect new countries, such as Australia, to adopt a policy which would be prejudicial to their industrial development. We have entered the field of industrial development late



and must reserve the right to pursue the means we consider most effective for the development of our secondary industries and so provide for the remunerative employment of our people with, at the same time, the requisite diversity of occupation. No country can afford to keep all its eggs in one basket, and so Australia cannot rely merely on primary production with its more or less seasonal employment.

The attitude of Australia is frequently criticised in relation to the International Labour Office and the conventions adopted at the Conference. There are many people who are not aware of the difficulties of a federal state in connexion with the ratification of conventions and the special provision it was found necessary by the framers of the Peace Treaty to make in this regard. Article 405 inter alia provides that in the case of a federal State, the power of which to enter into conventions on labour matters is subject to limitations, it shall be in the discretion of that Government to treat a draft Convention to which such limitations apply as a recommendation, which, of course, does not require formal ratification. Of the twenty-eight conventions adopted by the Conference to date only three come wholly within the jurisdiction of



the Commonwealth, and two of these deal with maritime matters. The other maritime conventions include coastal shipping and, as you are doubtless aware, it has been laid down by the High Court that the Commonwealth has no power to fix the <sup>labour</sup> conditions of <sup>interstate</sup> coastal shipping. Although the subject matters of most of the other conventions come within the jurisdiction of the States they also touch the Commonwealth as regards its territories. The Commonwealth has informed the States, however, that it is prepared to ratify such conventions as are covered by legislation in the States, but it must be in respect of all the States and not some of them only before the Commonwealth can proceed ~~with~~ ratification.

The Commonwealth Government has recently considered the position in relation to the conventions on maritime subjects to see what minor amendments may be necessary to bring the Navigation Act into line with the provisions of these conventions, and at a suitable opportunity we propose to introduce an amending Bill so that we shall be able to <sup>ratify these Conventions</sup> ~~proceed with ratification~~.

We cannot but view very favourably the endeavours of such an organisation as the International



Labour Office to improve the working conditions throughout the world, which <sup>improvement</sup> is so urgently necessary and which indirectly will assist Australia in maintaining her present standard of living. The Peace Treaty itself recognises that universal peace can be established only if based upon social justice, and I believe that considerable success has already been achieved by this organisation.



the most important to date on that subject, in that the principle of the limitation of the manufacture of dangerous drugs to the quantities required for medical and scientific purposes, as provided in the Opium Convention of 1925, to which the Commonwealth is a party, has at last been definitely recognized. The Opium Advisory Committee is to prepare plans for such a limitation. These will be submitted to a conference of representatives of the governments of the principal drug manufacturing and consuming countries. Consideration is also being given to further means for the suppression of the illicit traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs.

I may mention that Peru, Poland, and Yugo-Slavia were elected as non-permanent members of the Council for a period of three years in place of the three retiring countries so that the constitution of the Council now is—permanent members: Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, and Japan; and the non-permanent members, who are elected for three-year terms: Canada, Cuba, Finland, Persia, Peru, Poland, Spain, Venezuela, and Yugo-Slavia.

All the matters I have mentioned and many others are dealt with in detail in the Report of the Australian Delegation, which I commend to honorable members for careful perusal.

Debate (on motion by Mr. LATHAM), adjourned.

### PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

- Australian Customs Tariff—Memorandum by the British Board of Trade on recent increases in Customs Duties.
- Navigation Act—Regulations amended—Statutory Rules 1930, Nos. 16, 17, 18.
- Seat of Government Acceptance Act and Seat of Government (Administration) Act—Ordinance of 1930—No. 1—Mining.

### LAND TAX ASSESSMENT BILL.

*In committee* (Consideration resumed from 19th March, *vide* page 248):

Clause 2—

Section 3 of the Principal Act is amended—

(a) by omitting the definition of "Unimproved value" and inserting in its stead the following definitions:—

"Unimproved value", in relation to unimproved land, means the capital sum which the fee-simple of the land might be expected to realize if

offered for sale on such reasonable terms and conditions as a bona fide seller would require.

"Unimproved value", in relation to improved land, means the capital sum which the fee-simple of the land might be expected to realize if offered for sale on such reasonable terms and conditions as a bona fide seller would require, assuming that, at the time as at which the value is required to be ascertained for the purposes of this Act, the improvements thereon did not exist:

Provided that the unimproved value shall in no case be less than the sum that would be obtained by deducting the value of improvements from the improved value at the time as at which the value is required to be ascertained for the purposes of this Act."; and

(b) by omitting the definition of "Value of improvements" and inserting in its stead the following definition:—

"Value of improvements", in relation to land, means the added value which the improvements give to the land at the time as at which the value is required to be ascertained for the purposes of this Act irrespective of the cost of the improvements:

"Provided that the added value shall in no case exceed the amount that would reasonably be involved in effecting, at the time as at which the value is required to be ascertained for the purposes of this Act, improvements of a nature and efficiency equivalent to that of the improvements on the land at that time:

"Provided further that in ascertaining the value of improvements no amount shall be included in such value in respect of any work done or expenditure incurred for the purpose of preventing land, or any improvements thereon, from deteriorating, or of maintaining land which has been improved, at its improved value, whether by means of destroying animal pests or vegetable growths, or of preventing such pests or growths from establishing themselves, or by any other means, but, in respect of fences and other structural improvements, effected for any of those purposes, which are on the land at the time as at which the value is required to be ascertained for the purposes of this Act, an amount shall, subject to the preceding proviso, be included."

**Mr. THEODORE** (Dalley—Treasurer) [3.44].—Since last night I have consulted with the law advisors of the Crown regarding the objections to this clause urged by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday, and as a result I am more than



ever convinced that the clause in its present form does no more than the Government intend it to do, namely, make effective the law as it was administered prior to the judgment of the High Court in the McGeoch case last year. It is desired, also, to restate the law that had been approved by Parliament, and to carry out the intentions of Parliament when the bill in relation to the taxation of leaseholds was passed in 1914. It is desired also to continue the practice of the department which has received the endorsement of Parliament and of special royal commissions appointed for the express purpose of inquiring into the incidence of land taxation, methods of valuation and other such matters which form the subject matter of this amending bill.

I made inquiries as to the advice sought by the department in settling the terms of these clauses. As I mentioned in my second-reading speech, the counsel who appeared for the Crown before the High Court recently in the McGeoch case and the Northampton Pastoral Company's case, both senior and junior, were consulted as to what amendment should be made to restore the *status quo*. I have a document before me now which embodies their advice. This document was submitted by Messrs. Jordan and Pitt, barristers of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. They prepared a lengthy review of the law, and made recommendations as to what is necessary to restore the old practice. Consultations took place between the representatives of the Crown Law Department of the Commonwealth and these barristers, and also between them and the representatives of the Commissioner of Taxation. The document submitted by counsel is dated the 3rd. March, 1930, and contains the following passage:—

Broadly speaking, two alternatives seem available:—

1. To amend the act so as to restore the methods in vogue prior to Toohy's case, incidentally introducing any necessary improvements on those methods.

2. To adopt the course suggested by the judgment of Isaacs J. in McGeoch's case, viz., to define improvements as things actually on the land, such as buildings, fences and dams, and as excluding any ameliorations of the land itself (whether resulting from the removal of trees and scrub, from levelling operations, or from

Mr. Theodore.

sweetening of the soil), which, however beneficial in themselves, leave the land merely so much land.

The former of these two courses has the advantage that it restores the applicability of familiar methods. The somewhat extraordinary results of the McGeoch decision can be avoided. There is, however, in some cases, a practical difficulty in determining what was the actual virgin state of the country, and as years go on this will, in the case of the old settled districts, become increasingly difficult. It is already hard enough to determine in the case of land which was cleared 60 or 70 years ago, whether half of it or only a quarter of it had to be cleared of a particular class of scrub. If, as is stated in McGeoch's case, the policy of the legislature is to tax the unearned increment in value (e.g., that resulting from public roads or railways, &c.) and not to tax the earned increment resulting from improvements which have been effected to the land, it needs to be observed that the principle which has been adopted of determining the value of improvements on the basis of their cost as at the relevant 30th June does, in effect, give a large unearned increment in the case of old settled districts, because of increased cost of labour, &c., an allowance of £1,000 being made for an improvement which may have cost only £500. The difficulty, however, is that unless the benefit of this particular unearned increment is allowed, areas which were identical in their virgin state and have received identical improvements would have different unimproved values if one area was improved when costs were cheap and the other when they were dear.

It proceeds to comment upon the alternative suggested by Mr. Justice Isaacs, but as that alternative has not been adopted I shall not go into the matter. The document continues—

In the draft bill upon which we have been asked to advise, the principle that has been adopted has been that of restoring the *status quo*. We have, therefore, confined ourselves to that solution.

Then follow the specific recommendations on which the bill has been based. The recommendations have not been embodied in the precise form in which they were made, because, after the draft bill was prepared, there were further consultations, and modifications and amendments were made. I have here the final draft made by counsel, and I had better read it lest it may be thought that we are departing from the recommendations of men who had gone specially into the matter. One or two alterations of words have been made, but nothing which alters the sense of the recommendations as a whole. In one case, for instance, the



We may contemplate with satisfaction the first ten years of the activities of the League—for they have been years of steady endeavour, development and achievement. What was once regarded as a Utopian dream is now an accomplished fact. No one can now deny the practicability of the great ideal of a League of Nations, and bearing in mind the state of the world at the time of its establishment, the progress along the path of international peace and co-operation has, indeed, been encouraging. Membership of the League has steadily grown until it now stands at 54 countries, which, with one exception, the Argentine, were all represented at the last assembly. The only important countries that are not members of the League are the United States of America, Soviet Russia, Turkey and Brazil. But all of these except Brazil, are co-operating with the League in connexion with disarmament and have representatives on the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, and Brazil is a party to the Permanent Court of International Justice. The League of Nations is now established on solid foundations and is gaining strength with the years. There is every prospect of the universal substitution of the arbitrament of reason for that of force, and the settlement of international disputes within the forum of the League of Nations instead of on the battlefield. The League organization, including as it does the International Labour Office and the Permanent Court of International Justice, offers every facility for such a consummation, which is so devoutly to be wished.

The Tenth Assembly, although not presenting such a spectacular agenda as some of its predecessors, actually proved one of the most fruitful and promising of the annual meetings of the League to date. A considerable extension of the recognition of the principle of the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice in respect of justiciable disputes was made as a result of the lead given by Great Britain in accepting the optional clause of the statute of the court, and no fewer than fifteen countries, including Australia, signed this clause during the course of the assembly. This brings the total number of countries that have accepted the optional clause to

33, including four of the great powers—Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. These figures do not include those countries which had signed the optional clause prior to the last assembly, but had not proceeded with the ratification of their signature. Some of these, however, may now take action in that direction. The classes of disputes regarded as justiciable under the optional clause, that is to say, suitable for decision by a court applying rules of law, are disputes concerning the interpretation of treaties, questions of international law, and breaches of international obligations and the reparation to be made therefor. I shall deal with this matter in greater detail on a motion for the ratification of the declaration of the Australian representative in connexion with the acceptance by Australia of the optional clause.

Now, as regards the Permanent Court of International Justice, which under its statute is competent to hear and determine disputes of an international character which the parties agree voluntarily to submit to the court, or in relation to matters laid down in treaties and conventions, the question of the revision of the statute of the court in directions which experience had shown to be necessary came before the Assembly. Connected with this matter is the question of the conditions under which the United States is prepared to accept the jurisdiction of the court. The Assembly unanimously adopted protocols covering both these matters which have since been accepted and signed by the United States Government, and are now awaiting ratification by the Senate of that country. Fifty-five countries have now signed the Statute of the Permanent Court, including the most important countries in the world. I shall deal with this matter more fully when submitting the motion in connexion with the ratification of the signature of the Commonwealth representative to the protocols in question. I may mention that the Commonwealth adhered to the statute of the Court in 1921.

Another very important matter before the Assembly was the proposal of the British Government for a re-examination of the Covenant of the League, with a view to closing the so-called "gap"



therein, under which the right of nations to resort to war in certain circumstances is recognized. The object is to bring the Covenant into line with the provisions of the Treaty for the Renunciation of War, which renounces war as an instrument of national policy and provides for recourse to pacific means only for the settlement of international disputes. Under article 12 of the Covenant as it stands, members of the League agree not to resort to war "until three months after the award by the arbitrators or the judicial decision or the report by the Council" in respect of a dispute; and under article 15, in the event of the Council failing to reach a unanimous report, irrespective of the disputants who may be represented on the Council at the time, the members of the League "reserve to themselves the right to take such action as they shall consider necessary for the maintenance of right and justice". This matter has been referred to a special committee for investigation, and the report of the committee will be submitted to members of the League in due course, in order that such action may be taken as may be deemed appropriate during the next Assembly.

In connexion with the question of disarmament—the most important question to-day facing the world—a special Commission of the League has been endeavouring since 1926 to arrive at a basis for an international conference for the reduction and limitation of armaments. Even without a close knowledge of the technical details of this immensely complex matter, one can easily imagine the difficulties which have to be overcome before sufficient agreement is reached on the terms of the draft convention which the Preparatory Committee has been considering for submission to such a conference as a basis for discussion. The London Naval Conference is a link in the work of general disarmament, and it is sincerely to be hoped that it will be able to arrive at some agreement that will clear the way so far as the reduction of naval armaments is concerned. As regards disarmament generally, the Assembly urged that the completion of the work of the Preparatory Commission be hastened so that the proposed international conference for the reduction and limitation of armaments—land, sea and air—may be convened as early as possible.

*Mr. Scullin.*

While one might have hoped for greater progress in this matter of disarmament, it must be admitted that considerable progress is being made in the direction of agreement between the nations along the lines of the peaceful settlement of international disputes, which is regarded by most countries as an essential pre-requisite of action towards disarmament. Such progress is to be found in the Locarno treaties, the Treaty for the Renunciation of War, the general acceptance of the jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the various model treaties which have recently been drawn up by the League, and the draft treaties that are even now under consideration. Two of the latter which may be mentioned are the proposed convention for the guaranteeing of financial assistance to States that may be victims of aggression, and the model treaty for strengthening the means for preventing war. Progress towards international security by the general acceptance of such methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes between nations means progress along the road towards disarmament, with relief from the terrific burden of expenditure weighing so heavily on the world to-day as the cost of what is called "defence." If we would have peace we should think and talk in terms of peace.

Some of the more important decisions of the recent Assembly were in the economic sphere. I may mention one in particular. A proposal was adopted with a view to the holding of a conference for the purpose of arranging a tariff truce for two or three years. This proposal met with such support that it was subsequently decided to hold the conference. The conference met in February, and 26 countries were represented at it. The Commonwealth Government, however, with a policy of protection approved by the people, could not see its way to enter into any obligations of such a nature and consequently decided not to participate in the conference.

Satisfactory work appears to have been done during the year by the technical and social organizations of the league. The discussion which took place at the Assembly on the drug traffic was perhaps



## STRENGTHS OF INFANTRY BATTALIONS—continued.

Battalions.	Prior to Suspension of Compulsory Military Training.				On 1st March, 1930.			
	Officers.	N.C.O.'s	Bandsmen and Stretcher Bearers.	Other Ranks (Excluding Bandsmen and Stretcher Bearers.)	Officers.	N.C.O.'s	Bandsmen and Stretcher Bearers.	Other Ranks (Excluding Bandsmen and Stretcher Bearers.)
4TH MILITARY DISTRICT (SOUTH AUSTRALIA).								
10th-50th ..	28	86	22	415	26	46	17	32
27th ..	30	97	22	567	35	50	15	88
43rd ..	29	90	22	522	29	50	12	28
48th ..	28	94	22	451	29	45	22	45
5TH MILITARY DISTRICT (WESTERN AUSTRALIA).								
11th-16th ..	23	58	20	347	25	42	13	108
28th ..	20	59	22	352	20	52	8	90
44th ..	21	68	20	384	23	44	16	89
6TH MILITARY DISTRICT (TASMANIA).								
12th ..	13	39	17	180	16	20	22	84
40th ..	15	40	18	123	16	26	18	30

## SHIPPING AND MAIL SUBSIDIES.

## PAYMENTS TO BURNS, PHILP AND COMPANY.

Mr. SCULLIN.—On the 12th March the honorable member for Melbourne (Dr. Maloney) asked the following questions, *upon notice*—

1. What is the total sum paid to date to Burns, Philp and Company for subsidies in connexion with the following:—

- (a) The New Guinea and Solomon Island groups?
- (b) The New Hebrides groups?
- (c) Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands?
- (d) Any other service?

2. What were the annual subsidies paid to this company for the last financial year for the same services?

I am now in a position to furnish the following reply:—

1. (a) Subsidies are paid to Messrs. Burns, Philp and Company for shipping services to the Pacific Islands, including New Guinea, Papua, Solomon Islands, New Hebrides, Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Island. The total amount of subsidies paid up to 31st December 1929, for these services is £802,733; (b) A contract is also let to the company for a service to North Australia. The total amount paid to date for this service is £46,760.

2. A new contract has been arranged with the company for five years, as from 1st April, 1929, for the provision of the services mentioned in (a) above, in connexion with which a subsidy at the rate of £55,000 per annum is being paid. This is the amount payable under the contract last previously in force.

The annual subsidy payable in respect of the service mentioned in (b) above is £5,500. This is the amount payable under the contract last previously in force.

## CUSTOMS TARIFF.

## BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTION.

Mr. SCULLIN.—On the 13th March the honorable member for Richmond (Mr. R. Green) asked me whether I would make available a copy of the representations received through the British Government in regard to increases in the customs tariff.

I now lay on the table a copy of a memorandum prepared by the British Board of Trade on the subject.

## LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

## REPORT OF AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION TO TENTH ASSEMBLY.

Mr. SCULLIN (Yarra—Prime Minister) [3.32].—I lay on the table the report of the Australian Delegation to the Tenth Assembly of the League of Nations, dated 2nd September to 26th September, 1929, and move—

That the paper be printed.

The tenth session of the Assembly of the League of Nations, which was held at Geneva last September, marked the first decade of the existence of the League.

held at Geneva from



The answers to the honorable member's questions are contained in the following statements:—

## STRENGTHS OF INFANTRY BATTALIONS.

Battalion.	Prior to Suspension of Compulsory Military Training.				On 1st March, 1930.			
	Officers.	N.C.O.'s	Bandsmen and Stretcher Bearers.	Other Ranks (Excluding Bandsmen and Stretcher Bearers)	Officers.	N.C.O.'s	Bandsmen and Stretcher Bearers.	Other Ranks (Excluding Bandsmen and Stretcher Bearers.)
1ST MILITARY DISTRICT (QUEENSLAND).								
9th .. ..	16	39	14	247	20	41	14	49
15th .. ..	18	40	22	161	18	30	..	38
25th .. ..	17	46	16	262	20	34	16	64
26th .. ..	15	38	20	186	16	29	17	55
31st .. ..	30	62	13	493	28	26	3	112
42nd .. ..	26	58	22	431	28	59	20	87
47th .. ..	23	66	9	335	20	48	8	83
49th .. ..	17	52	22	226	17	44	14	77
2ND MILITARY DISTRICT (NEW SOUTH WALES).								
1st .. ..	25	75	22	364	23	64	22	116
2nd-41st ..	16	44	16	114	21	14	..	146
3rd .. ..	19	69	15	468	19	40	22	136
4th .. ..	28	86	4	525	29	60	12	92
13th .. ..	22	95	22	553	32	63	15	104
17th .. ..	29	98	15	614	27	41	21	125
18th .. ..	22	73	22	435	24	51	21	143
19th .. ..	24	63	22	477	23	52	14	98
20th-54th ..	19	54	14	393	20	34	9	98
30th .. ..	21	70	8	408	22	26	8	179
34th .. ..	36	87	22	568	35	66	17	222
35th-33rd ..	17	58	22	285	17	33	22	179
36th .. ..	20	72	17	427	21	58	18	132
45th .. ..	23	26	22	579	25	43	22	131
51st .. ..	24	67	19	358	23	35	16	119
53rd .. ..	23	96	22	534	26	52	9	131
55th .. ..	20	78	10	338	20	30	22	118
56th .. ..	15	52	19	587	20	50	22	96
Sydney University Regiment ..	31	90	10	481	28	48	9	55
3RD MILITARY DISTRICT (VICTORIA).								
5th .. ..	18	64	11	351	22	29	2	84
6th .. ..	15	61	22	338	22	49	22	124
8th .. ..	14	58	21	253	20	35	22	138
14th .. ..	25	69	18	363	25	61	19	111
22nd .. ..	22	66	22	315	23	33	7	43
23rd-21st ..	17	61	16	288	21	35	18	83
24th .. ..	24	72	22	338	25	52	22	108
29th .. ..	21	58	19	287	19	22	16	84
32nd .. ..	18	64	22	302	22	46	22	125
37th .. ..	24	70	22	218	24	55	15	82
38th-7th ..	21	71	22	334	22	25	3	75
39th .. ..	20	71	22	317	24	69	22	69
46th .. ..	23	71	22	345	26	44	22	106
52nd .. ..	22	69	22	268	22	38	13	75
57th .. ..	21	70	22	351	19	52	15	71
58th .. ..	21	67	22	338	20	33	10	100
59th .. ..	21	71	22	400	21	42	6	67
60th .. ..	21	65	22	251	20	31	16	51
Melbourne University Rifles ..	24	75	7	268	23	31	1	47



continue à se montrer particulièrement active dans la répression du trafic du ganja et, au cours de cette année, elle n'a pas intenté moins de 383 poursuites. Dans la majorité des cas, les personnes arrêtées se trouvaient en possession d'une petite quantité de ganja ou d'une cigarette contenant du ganja.

4. Il n'a pas été intenté de poursuites pour détention de cocaïne.

5. La police continue à faire tout ce qui est en son pouvoir pour appliquer la loi en ce qui concerne l'opium, le bang, le ganja, etc. Les autorités de police des différentes provinces se prêtent une mutuelle collaboration et échangent des renseignements. Elles se tiennent en contact avec le service de l'Accise de Ceylan et avec la police de l'Inde méridionale. Ce système de coopération a contribué dans une grande mesure à mettre obstacle aux efforts des importateurs illicites et à déjouer leurs plans. L'augmentation considérable du nombre des poursuites intentées pendant l'année indique que la police a exercé une vigilance de plus en plus stricte et a pris des mesures énergiques.

6. Dans la province de l'Ouest, la contrebande s'effectue entre Négombo et Jaffna en passant par Anuradhapura et Puttalam par le moyen d'automobiles, et aussi au moyen de goélettes venant de l'Inde méridionale. De Négombo, l'opium est distribué à Minuwangoda, Dunagaha et dans d'autres localités. Les automobiles sont surveillées et souvent arrêtées en vue de perquisition. Les goélettes sont également



Senator McLachlan  
at 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly, 1929.

Mr. McLACHLAN (Australia) said that his country was determined to do all in her power to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security. The surest way to ensure peace and to achieve disarmament was to give nations a reasonable promise of security and to offer them some substitute for war. Arbitration was the most suitable method for settling disputes of a juridical nature, while in regard to other forms of disputes some kind of conciliation procedure should be established.

The work of the Committee on Arbitration and Security in preparing model treaties served as a stimulant to States and showed how such treaties could contribute towards strengthening the guarantees of security by increasing co-operation between States. Australia was convinced of the value of arbitration treaties but preferred bilateral to general treaties.

All States Members of the League had bound themselves to submit to the authority of the League except in regard to matters of domestic jurisdiction. There were several matters of general interest, however, in which international co-operation was desirable, but in regard to which a decision of the League was not binding on its Members. In such a field, too great an activity on the part of the League was to be deprecated. He referred especially to economic questions.

In 1927, the World Economic Conference had given a new impetus to the economic work of the League, and Australia, in common with other Members, had been forced to study the activities of the Financial and Economic Organisation. These activities could be grouped under three heads: European reconstruction, commercial policy and intelligence work.

As regarded the first, Australia realised the worldwide significance of the work of the Financial Organisation in reconstructing certain countries of Europe.

As far as commercial policy was concerned, a sharp line divided the activities of the League into two distinct parts—on the one hand, its efforts towards improving the facilities for international trade, and, on the other, its attack on the very complex problem of Customs tariffs.

The individual development of countries with the consequent promulgation of regulations and ordinances affecting their commercial relations had led to the hampering of trade. The Economic Organisation of the League had gathered a great deal of information on this subject and was taking appropriate action in regard to such questions as the divergencies of national laws on bills of exchange, anomalous Customs formalities, differences in the drawing-up of tariff nomenclature and differences in the methods whereby arbitration could be used in commercial disputes. Such questions constituted a legitimate and safe field for international action.



It was, however, a long step from activities designed to improve the machinery of trade to those which, by dealing with Customs tariffs, struck at the heart of the national policies of the various Members. It was dangerous and hazardous for the League to concern itself actively with the question of Customs tariffs, for they were regarded by the constituent nations to be so much a part of their national policy that it was inconceivable for the League to make any direct representation on the subject of the height or nature of tariffs.

The only possibility therefore before the League was to encourage the holding of international conferences on the height and incidence of tariffs, or on the effect of tariffs on given commodities or groups of commodities. There were, however, dangers inherent in such conferences. In any given commodity some States were interested as producers, others as consumers, others as traders or carriers, and an international conference definitely called to consider the effect of tariffs on certain commodities might easily cause irritation rather than promote amity. He was therefore unfeignedly glad to notice the cautious manner in which the Economic Organisation had approached the tariff problem. The time had not yet arrived when the League could safely enter this field. It must carefully safeguard its prestige and be particularly careful not to embark on an economic adventure which might prove, not only a stumbling-block, but even a cause of offence.

The third group of the League's economic activities, which consisted of collecting better information and promoting clearer knowledge of the progress of commerce, industry and agriculture, met with the vigorous approval of Australia. Australia considered that a really effective intelligence service on economic affairs was of great importance. A nation such as Australia, engaged on the vast problem of developing its resources, found itself in need of reliable data in order to gauge its progress by comparison with conditions in other countries. In providing memoranda covering a wide range of subjects, such as currency, banking and international trade, the League had made very valuable information available. If this were to be continued, the leaders of commerce, industry and agriculture in all countries would be able to assess their progress and discover how best they could contribute to the material welfare of the world. Every effort should be made to collect and disseminate such information, so that each State might be in a position to understand the results of its tariff policy. The League, however, should be very cautious in approaching the problem of securing a general reduction of tariffs lest it antagonise some States and therefore weaken its own power to achieve international peace and security.



Mr Ramsay MacDonald  
at 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly, 1929

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE.

Mr. James Ramsay MACDONALD (British Empire) said that many changes had taken place since he had addressed the Assembly five years ago, and nearly all those changes had been to the advancement of peace and the authority of the League. He alluded, in particular, to the fact that Germany, absent in 1924, was present in 1929.

In 1924, Great Britain had brought before the League a protocol which had been based on the idea that, if security could be established, the nations of the world would willingly advance towards peace. The problem of the League of Nations was a problem of security, and the acceptance of settled conditions of peace would alone enable the nations to solve the disarmament problem.

Since 1924 the Peace Pact had been signed in Paris, and that pact had been a starting-point for further work. One of the most substantial contributions to that work was the settlement which had just been reached at the Hague Conference. Disagreements concerning the distribution of annuities had at moments blinded the negotiators to the real issues, but he had never believed that the Conference could possibly fail. The

frank discussions at The Hague and the settlement achieved must necessarily strengthen good international relations. He would, in this connection, pay a tribute to M. Jaspar, the Prime Minister of Belgium, who had presided over the Conference.

He hoped that the agreements and treaties arising from the Conference would be signed within a few weeks. In any event, within the next week, five years before it had been thought possible, the first battalions of the forces occupying the Rhineland would be facing homewards never to return.

The British Government desired that the Peace Pact signed in Paris should be translated into constitutions and institutions which would work for the peace of Europe. The nations of the world desired to close the military chapters in history, and the League must set itself to solve the problem of disarmament.

The reduction of existing standards of armaments measured the progress achieved in the establishment of peace and made further progress possible. One of the greatest risks of war was that certain nations were still too heavily armed, and the British Government would do everything in its power to hasten the preparations for the disarmament conference. It would urge the Commissions which were dealing with disarmament to face their task, not with the possibility of war in mind, but on the assumption that the risk of war now breaking out was far less than the hope of peace being permanently observed. He would ask the military experts to remember that there was just as much security in a political agreement as in a battalion of soldiers.

The British Government was working for definite results, but realised that its special contribution must be in the field of naval armaments, and that the best preliminary to a successful international settlement in that field was an understanding between Great Britain and the United States. The conversations that had been taking place between the two Powers were intended to produce a preliminary agreement which might contribute to a general solution of the problem. The problem of armaments was not a problem between the United States and Great Britain, but the two countries desired to reach an agreement which might serve as a useful preliminary to the calling of a five-Power naval Conference. The other Powers would be entirely free at that Conference to submit their proposals, and Great Britain would be equally free to negotiate with the other Powers as though no conversations with the United States had taken place. The conversations were not yet concluded. On all but three out of twenty points of agreement, however, a settlement had been reached, and he hoped that, possibly before he left the Assembly, and very probably before the end of the Assembly, an announcement might be made to the effect that a complete agreement upon all points had been achieved.



There were certain clauses in the Covenant which might no longer be relevant or necessary in the light of the Peace Pact, and he would in particular suggest that clauses 12 and 15 of the Covenant might be brought into relation with certain events which had happened since the Covenant had been drafted.

The foundation of peace was arbitration, and the British Government had, during its short term of office, been carefully considering this question. He was able to announce that his Government had decided to sign the Optional Clause and a form of declaration would be submitted during the present Assembly. The British Government had consulted the Governments of the Dominions, which were also Members of the League, and he believed that each of these Governments would instruct its representative to sign the Clause during the present Assembly. He hoped that other nations would be able to follow this example.

The British Government had offered an agreement to Egypt, which would enable her to apply for membership of the League. He regarded that agreement as an important step towards world peace. Ancient civilisations, hitherto weak in material powers, were adopting Western ideas and asking to be recognised. By delaying to perform the act of recognition, forces might be accumulated in the political and social life of these civilisations, with the result that the Powers of Europe might find themselves presented, not with requests, but with

an ultimatum. Peace should be secured, not as a result of war or as the result of a challenge, but as the result of negotiation and common agreement.

The same idea applied to minorities in the large countries. There must necessarily be minorities in composite States, and the majorities should show their wisdom by making the minorities within their political borders comfortable in themselves and proud of their political allegiance.

A similar line of thought might be pursued in regard to mandates. The nations with mandates had accepted an international responsibility and had to justify themselves.

The Assembly, in this connection, would expect him to give an assurance about the situation in Palestine. The British Government offered to the victims of the recent events in Palestine their sympathy and support. Those events had not been due to any racial conflict, but to an outburst of political crime which must be deplored equally both by Moslems and Jews. No civilised Government could yield to outbursts of criminality and murder, and he would appeal to the leaders both of the Jews and of the Moslems not to allow the false impression to be spread abroad that the present issue was racial in any sense. The first duty of the British Government was to master the position. That had been already done. The second duty was to enquire into all the circumstances in order that a remedy might be found and a recurrence of such events rendered impossible.

He felt that the League of Nations should do something more than it had yet done to solve economic problems as between the States, and he hoped that M. Briand would further elaborate a statement which he had already made on this subject. The present Assembly would have to face the problems of tariffs. Under tariffs there existed poverty, low wages, unemployment, and class conflicts, while the resulting economic differences between the nations greatly augmented political differences as soon as they began to appear. The British Government would heartily co-operate in any attempt to secure economic agreements that made for economic freedom.

Peace had its risks as well as war. A nation, however, that took the risk of pioneering peace was likely to get peace, whereas the nation which took the risk of leading in military preparations was absolutely certain to get war. The greatest test of political enlightenment to-day was a willingness to reduce armaments, to substitute conciliation for menace and to acknowledge reason to be the great power in the world. The British Government was prepared to abide by these convictions.



Major Marr  
at 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly, 1929

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE (*continuation of the general discussion*).

Mr. MARR (Australia) said that Australians, who lived in a country further from Geneva than any other, were essentially a peace-loving people to whom war and its effects were, however, an ever-present reality owing to the huge war debt and the obligations to incapacitated soldiers. It was therefore in the vital interest of Australia that peace should be maintained throughout the world and instruments created to make it increasingly difficult if not impossible for war to break out.

The Australian delegation supported the view of M. Hymans that it was on the education of the young that the peace of the world must largely depend. Recently, a great body of young men numbering more than 50,000 from all the nations of the world had met to commemorate the coming-of-age of the Boy Scout Movement. That was, in the view of Mr. Marr, one of several methods whereby young men might be encouraged to respect and honour each other and help forward the human race.

The political difficulties of Europe were very different from

the problems facing new countries, but the maintenance of conditions of well-being and social independence, characteristics of a new land, demanded, not only the avoidance of war, but confidence in the preservation of peace. The possibility of future wars distorted every international question, and it was obvious that most of the internal problems of States could be simplified or banished if they could be assured that resort to war could be made an ever-more-remote possibility. Australia was prepared to give the League her utmost support in its efforts to abolish war. Owing to the efforts of the League, despite the disappointments and setbacks of peace, the peoples of the world were now realising that co-operation between nations was the first duty of statesmanship.

In connection with M. Briand's observations regarding the teaching of children, Mr. Marr would recall the words of a former British representative who had said: "A generation is growing up which will regard war, not as a great and glorious adventure, but as a national disaster".

Mr. Marr had hoped to associate himself with the representatives of Great Britain, Canada and India, who had stated that their Governments intended to sign the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice at the present session. Owing, however, to the fall of the present Australian Government within the last twenty-four hours, it would not be in accordance with constitutional practice for Mr. Marr to make any definite announcement on a subject of high policy.

A proposal had been made for an international convention whereby States would agree for a term of years not to increase their tariffs. While the Australian delegation understood the desire of European countries to facilitate the flow of international trade in Europe, it could not forget that the League was not merely a collection of European States. There were twenty-seven States not European, representing the greater part of the population of the world. The aggregate value of their overseas trade was about half of the total world trade. Younger nations overseas were engaged in the development of their countries and had therefore to utilise the powers of the State either through tariffs or by other means in order to shelter their young industries from the severity of competition from the older industrialised nations. The Assembly must therefore recognise that there might be a number of non-European States which, owing to the present stage of their development, would be unable to adhere to such a convention. They were not wanting in enthusiasm for the League, but, just because their economic interests were so different from those of Europe, it was necessary for the League to proceed with caution in regard to a comprehensive policy applied to tariffs.



He would warmly recommend the observations of Mr. Graham regarding the Economic Intelligence Service. Australia had the greatest interest in this scheme, for she felt a particular need for the close study of the economic position of her industries. The Government had recently established a bureau of economic research and any information which the Economic Organisation could supply to that bureau would be invaluable. The Australian delegation intended to move a resolution in regard to this Intelligence Service in the Second Committee.

While there were a number of women accredited as delegates to the Assembly, Mr. Marr did not consider that women had yet received that representation to which they were entitled. The good work done by women's organisations, especially in regard to maternity, public health and kindred problems, was of the utmost importance. He hoped that this would be borne in mind to a greater extent in future by those responsible for appointing delegates to international conferences dealing with such problems.



Lord Cushendun  
at 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly, 1929.

Lord CUSHENDUN (British Empire) said that, during the present Assembly, no topic had aroused greater interest than that of international disarmament. He sympathised with the disappointment expressed by the German Chancellor on the slowness of the progress which had been made, as did all the members of the Preparatory Commission. He did not think, however, that the German Chancellor had fully appreciated the difficulties with which the Preparatory Commission had to contend. The German Chancellor had said that the most urgent task of the Assembly was to adopt resolutions which would transform its hopes into realities. No resolution of the Assembly, or any other body, could have that effect. The resolutions of the Assembly could do no more than assert its desire for the completion of the work of disarmament. This was not a question of resolutions, but of work on practical details.

Under Article 8, the precise level to which the armaments of a nation might be reduced was left to the individual judgment of each State. It was impossible to apply any precise criterion of measurement, or to find a common denominator relating to one another the reduction effected by one State with the reduction effected by another in order to arrive at the common action required by Article 8. In other words, it was impossible to express in terms of military value the respective power of troops, ships and aircraft.

There were difficulties of another kind. Each State had special interests and conditions, and differed in constitutional development and geographical position. It was therefore inevitable that, at the outset, wide divergencies of views between the different States should become apparent, and it was only by the exercise of a conciliatory spirit that these views could be brought into accord.

A compromise reached between two States with conflicting views might prove unacceptable to other States, and it would then become necessary to adjust and modify that compromise, or possibly to start afresh towards the common action desired by all.

It was true that the completion of the work had been delayed by disagreement on one or two important points, but it should be remembered that a very considerable measure of agreement had already been achieved. Moreover, a large measure of actual disarmament had already taken place, and that was a most important factor in the situation. If the personnel of the British Navy as it stood in January of the present year were compared with the personnel of the British Navy in July 1914, a reduction would be observed amounting to no less than 43,703 out of a total of 102,000 men. 239 British warships had

been scrapped and the warship tonnage had been reduced to 847,118 tons. The reductions compared with the tonnage existing at the conclusion of peace were much more considerable. 1,538 warships had been scrapped and tonnage had been reduced by 2,139,516 tons. Since the war the number of dockyard workers had been reduced by more than 10,000 men, and two arsenals had been closed.

He did not pretend that the reduction in the Army and Air Services fully satisfied the obligations of Great Britain under Article 8 of the Covenant, but it went a long way in that direction.

There was another aspect of disarmament. New conditions had been introduced by the adoption of new weapons, such as aircraft and lethal gases. These articles were not merely used for war, but for peaceful commerce and trade, and Governments were naturally anxious not to discourage their production. This fact introduced a further complication into the problem of disarmament.

It was the sincere desire of the British Government to carry out the obligation imposed by Article 8 and to find a ground for the common action which Article 8 enjoined. The British Government had arrived at a compromise in regard to naval disarmament, to which M. Briand had referred on the previous day. Such an accord between two among a number of partners could only be provisional, and might have to be revised in accordance with the views of others. If such a revision should prove impossible, it would be necessary to begin again. He was confident that agreement could be reached if only less distrust were shown by the States concerned, and if critics were less ready to ascribe ulterior motives to the negotiating Powers. He believed that the Peace Pact signed in Paris would assist in removing such suspicions and stimulate the process of international disarmament.



Sir Austen Chamberlain  
at 8<sup>th</sup> Assembly, 1927

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I.

A.

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL  
AND OF THE SECRETARIAT.

Continuation of the Discussion.

SIR AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (British Empire)

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: It requires some courage to come to the tribune after the magnificent speech to which we had the pleasure of listening this morning, and, for my part, I should have been well content to close the general debate in respect of those great questions of world-wide interest with which it has been chiefly concerned, upon the speech of the Foreign Minister of Germany and the reply of the Foreign Minister of France. But my silence might be misinterpreted, and besides, I desire to join my tribute to that paid by M. Briand to the statesmanship, large-mindedness and the courage, of the Foreign Secretary of the Reich who once again has shown himself a champion of appeasement and peace, and to name with him the Foreign Minister of France himself, who, with the same courage, the same foresight, and sagacity ~~xx~~ has once again in our presence taken the hand that was stretched out to him and registered a vow of peace between their two great nations.

Ladies and Gentlemen, did I hear whispers of anxiety earlier in our sittings? Did voices suggest that the League was losing its



authority, that instead of making progress we were moving backward, and that peace is less secure today than it was a little time ago? Those speeches to which I have alluded are the answer to those recreant fears. The strength of the League, the strength of the resolve of us all, to use the League in the great work of international peace, has had no set-back, has been subject to no reaction, and our debates of yesterday and today confirm and strengthen the resolve which we have more than once registered before.

For my part, I welcome the motion of the honourable Delegate of Poland. I welcome it not because it says anything new, but because once again it invites us all to join with those two great statesmen in the solemn resolution to pursue the ways of peace and to eschew the path of war.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I fear to continue on this line lest I should expose myself to the criticism which the First Delegate of Norway addressed to us in the early days of the debate. He said that we were too much given to exchanging compliments among ourselves. At any rate, I may congratulate him on not having fallen into that error. He found fault with the Council; he did not spare the Assembly, whose under-hand ways he held up to condemnation. He even thought it necessary to criticise the composition of other Delegations, and to regret the presence of so many *diplomats* delegates in this Assembly.



Ladies and Gentlemen, I cannot, I fear express my agreement with that criticism. The League owes too much to the diplomats who have sat and who still sit among us for me to wish their number less than it is, and if I mention to you, not the names of any here present, (for that would be invidious) but the names of two, recently our colleagues who have now left us, alas, and for different reasons - if I mention Viscount Ishii and M. Quinones de Leon, those two names speak for all that the diplomatic members of the Council and the Assembly have been able to contribute to our work, and may I add that, if they bring into our discussions something of the suavity, something of the consideration of the point of view of others which they practice in diplomacy, I think that our debates will lose nothing either in their force or virility.



A more serious criticism was offered by the First Delegate of Norway. It is one to which M. Briand has already replied, but it is one to which I am sensible, for if the fear or suspicion expressed by him were widely shared I think it would do grave injury to the League. I refer to the suggestion that in the meetings of some of the representatives of Great Powers there is some attempt to withdraw from the Council or the Assembly the decisions which properly belong to them and to them alone, and to substitute a kind of inner Cabal for the Council of the League itself. Ladies and gentlemen, why, may I ask in passing, are the representatives of the Great Powers and they alone to meet with this criticism? Are no other meetings held in Geneva except those in which Dr. Stresemann, M. Briand, M. Scialoja, M. Vandervelde and I take part? I have heard the rumours of the lobbies; I have read in the Journal that all other Members of the League may meet as they please and when they please, and it is thought natural and proper that they should do so. Why then to us alone is it to be refused to meet in friendly converse and to try to improve our mutual relations?

If you think that in those Conferences we have been occupied in the main in discussing the work of the Council, you are mistaken. We have many affairs of our own with which it is our hope that we may never have to trouble the Council, because we can settle them among



ourselves, and if on any rare occasion among the subjects which we have had to discuss has been one which concerned the agenda of the Council I venture to say that the work which we have done, the conversations which we have held, instead of impeding have facilitated the work which it still remains for the Council to do. And I would remind you that whatever we may decide among ourselves, nothing that we can do could, nothing that we can do should limit in any way the freedom of every other member of the Council to bring what subject he likes before that body, to press whatever solution he likes upon that body; nothing that we may say or do, unless it commends itself to the whole body of the Council, can have any effect except among ourselves.

Ladies and gentlemen, I say so much upon this subject because, in the first place, for myself and for the country which I represent I desire the goodwill and the confidence of this great gathering, and because, in the second place, anything which tends to sow distrust or dissent between the Council and the Assembly must be destructive of the influence of both and injurious to the vigour and the usefulness of the League.



Ladies and Gentlemen, the debate in that part to which I refer - for the Economic Conference and its great achievement has been already dealt with by another member of our Delegation - is related to the twin questions of security and disarmament. It would be idle to pretend that the failure of the recent Three Power Conference on Naval Disarmament has not caused a certain disquiet and anxiety lest their failure to reach agreement should be the prelude only to a larger failure in the Preparatory Commission of the League. No one can regret more than my country, and my country does, the failure to reach agreement in the Three Power Conference. But even from failure we may draw hope; even from failure we may in time win success; even in failure we may find encouragement, as in this case, that Three great Powers should have met to discuss so vital a question that they should have found themselves sustaining opposite and irreconcilable theses that they should have carried on discussions under the eye of the public, not always ~~el-~~ helped by the press and that when after all they were unable to agree their cordial relations of amity and respect should remain unimpaired and their confidence in the peaceful intentions of each other have received no check. But, Ladies and Gentlemen, <sup>is</sup> not the failure of that Conference perhaps a lesson for us all? I took part in one great Conference - and to have done so I, like my friend M. Briand, shall always regard as the honour of my career - I took part in one great Conference which had been preceded by nine months of anxious, careful preparation and yet we who took part in it know what difficulties we had to overcome before the Treaties of Locarno were signed, which helped - and I thank him



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for the words - which helped, as Dr. Stresemann said,  
To make Germany a member of our League. May it not be  
that the failure to agree in the Three Power Conference  
came from a lack of preparation, from the failure to secure  
a sufficient basis of agreement before the Conference met,  
to render its discussions futile, and may we not draw from  
it the resolution to be patient, to work surely even if  
we work slowly, and that it is not always by hurrying  
that the greatest or even the quickest results are achieved.



My country yields to none other in its desire to see a real and a large restriction of armaments. I am reminded of a sentence which M. Clemenceau wrote in the album which was presented by France to Great Britain the other day: "S'aimer, ce n'est pas se le dire, c'est se le prouver". Gentlemen, our interest in disarmament, our effort for disarmament lies not only in words or speeches, it lies in the facts. We have proved it by our deeds. The British army was reduced immediately peace was secured to less than its pre-war level, to a strength which is only sufficient to discharge the great responsibilities which we carry on our shoulders in so many parts of the world. Our navy cannot be compared with the navy which we maintained, I do not say during the war, but before the war. Year by year, the Budget for the armed forces of our country has grown less. Ladies and gentlemen, I beg you to ask yourselves; Which of you, carrying our load of responsibility for the peace of so many and such scattered countries, in such varied conditions, would have done more? Is there any country, I would even ask, that would have done as much? Our interest is shown by the risks that we have taken and are taking, by the reductions which we have already made. Far be it from me to say that there is no further contribution that we can make to the cause of disarmament and peace. Only two days ago I had the honour, before the Council, to declare the acceptance by my Government in principle, and provided that others will do their share, and that our joint effort produces a real limitation of armaments, of the

Finnish proposal to constitute a fund or guarantee for giving financial assistance to a State which is the subject



of aggression. We are urged to do more. I confess that I had hoped, when I made that statement, that some of those who were urging us on would at least have done the same as we, and that I should have heard from at any rate one voice on the Council the immediate resolution of his Government to join in our efforts.

I turn from disarmament. I speak for a moment of arbitration. Ladies and gentlemen, again I would beg you to bear in mind the special conditions of the British Empire. Ours is not a unitary system of government, such as prevails in your countries. We are a great community of free and equal nations, each autonomous, united in the oldest league of peace in the World. It is not easy for an empire so constituted always to accept the obligations that can be readily undertaken by a State homogeneous, compact, and speaking by the voice of but a single government.



It is not easy and it would not be right to accept obligations unless we not only have the intention but ~~we~~ know that we have the power to fulfil them. Ladies and Gentlemen, you think us some times backward. There is an undercurrent of suggestion that because we cannot participate in all the plans that are framed we are stopping the progress of the League and are an obstacle in its way. I beg you to think of what we have done. I do not know whether we have signed more treaties of arbitration than Italy or any other country or not. I think we have arbitrated more grave problems than any other country in the world. Only the other day the Council of the League was occupied for no small time with a decision as to what was to be the frontier of Iraq. We ~~were~~ had accepted the Council of the League not as conciliator but as judge. We had bound ourselves in advance to accept and to obey the decision of the Council whatever it might be, for us or against us. It was rendered in our favour. What use did we make of it? Did we use it to say: "Those are our rights; the Council of the League of Nations has awarded them to us; about them there can be no negotiation"? No, Ladies and Gentlemen. That very award given in our favour we used to open negotiations with Turkey and to make concessions to her that had not been required by the Council, and in that way to make acceptable to her an award which, rigidly enforced, she might have found it difficult to regard with anything but dislike.

Then, as to security. Ah, here I approach difficult ground. I speak to an audience the great part of which finds the famous Protocol exactly suitable to their conditions and cannot understand why anyone else should be unable to accept



what is so advantageous to them. But have we done nothing for security? In the first place, we have accepted all the obligations of the Covenant which are common to us all; and I beg you, I implore you with all the earnestness in my power not to cast doubt on the extent or the sacredness of the obligations which all of us have signed. Have a little more confidence in what we have done; have a little more confidence in yourselves. I think you scarcely realise how far the work of consolidating peace has already gone. I say that we have taken all the obligations of the Covenant. We have done more.

We were party to the negotiations at Locarno. Thus we helped, I hope I may say to bring into existence that system of treaties which, whether on the west or on the east, are recognised to-day and yesterday as the safeguard and the guarantee of the maintenance of peace. To the treaties which protect the frontiers of the west we gave our guarantee. Yes, Ladies and Gentlemen, and we gave it knowing the responsibilities which we undertook. If I touch for a moment on history it is not, I beg you to believe, to awake old controversies or to suggest blame. We once long years ago signed a treaty of guarantee of the integrity of Belgium. That integrity was attacked and from the moment it was attacked our people were united to uphold our word and fulfil our pledge. The flower of our youth flocked to the colours <sup>as</sup> ~~of~~ volunteers and not of our youth only in England, but from every Dominion, from India, from every Colony, from every scattered British community throughout the world the youth and hope of the young generation came to honour the word of Great Britain pledged to Belgium for her integrity and safety.



MULTICOPY

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You know what it cost us - a million of our dead. The hope of our land lie buried in the fields of France and of Flanders, in Gallipoli, in Palestine and Iraq, or deep under the waters of the ocean. We know what it was is to give a guarantee and we know what it is to keep a guarantee. We know the cost that we have paid. We know the cost that we might be called upon (God forbid that it should be so) to pay again.

-12-

You know what it cost us - a million of our dead. The hope of our land lie buried in the fields of France and of Flanders, in Gallipoli, in Palestine and Iraq, or deep under the waters of the ocean. We know what it was is to give a guarantee and we know what it is to keep a guarantee. We know the cost that we have paid. We know the cost that we might be called upon (God forbid that it should be so) to pay again.

MULTICOPY



Knowing all this, for the sake of peace, to help to bring three nations together, to give them the security which makes their mutual agreements possible, we have pledged our word once more to do, in the case of aggression on those Western frontiers, for Germany, for France, for Belgium, as the case may be, what we had pledged our word to do before and were called upon to keep it.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you ask us to do more - you ask us to do more. Could not some of you do as much before pressing us to go further? Is there no other troubled frontier which those so anxious for this international action could take under their protection, to which they could give their guarantee, as we have pledged ours on the Western Frontiers of Europe, and by so doing bring together two other nations at present regarding each other with mutual suspicion and fear?

Ladies and Gentlemen, you say it is not enough. You invite us to take for every country and for every frontier the guarantee which we have taken for one by the Treaty of Locarno. If you ask us that, you ask us the impossible. Our strength, great as it may be, is not equal to the task with which you would charge us. If I held out to you the hope that we can undertake such extensive obligations I should deceive you. If we were to undertake in the present state of the world and at this time such extensive obligations we could not keep them. Ladies and Gentlemen, you do not know what you ask us. You are asking nothing less than the disruption of the British Empire. I yield to no one



in my devotion to this great League of Nations, but not even for this League of Nations will I destroy that smaller but older league of which my own country was the birthplace and of which it remains the centre.

Ah, Ladies and Gentlemen, think of ~~what~~ what is involved. I would beg the First Delegate of the Netherlands to give ear to my appeal. Think of what is involved in the invitation to take up again the principles of the Protocol without re-opening its discussion. He (the First Delegate of the Netherlands) will permit me to say that there is a certain contradiction of ideas in his resolution, for it is obviously impossible to take up the principles of the Protocol and not to re-open the discussions to which the principles give rise. Keep all your hopes for the revival of the Protocol! Keep all your hopes that its principles may in time prevail to the full and universally! Keep such hopes by all means, and work to that end. But what useful purpose could we serve, what evil consequences might we not incur, if we re-open those troubled debates before there has been from any quarter any indication of a change of mind?



All the old controversies, all the old differences of opinion, are still expressed. There is no possibility of agreement until on the one side or on the other -- or perhaps on both -- there has been some approximation of the views of the parties.

Observe, ladies and gentlemen, the Covenant is not enough. If you add the Protocol to the Covenant, will you all be satisfied? I listened, as we all did, within immense interest to the speech of M. Politis. I am not very fond of logic in politics, as I have once before said at this tribune; but I am grateful to M. Politis for the ruthless logic with which he pursued the argument of the Protocol. The Covenant is insufficient; the Protocol is insufficient. There are gaps in the building now; there would still be a gap in the Protocol. Above all, nothing is finished, nothing is accomplished, until you have multiplied sanctions. Ah, ladies and gentlemen, we talk about organising the work of peace: does it not sometimes occur to you that the organisation of peace singularly resembles the old preparation for war?

I am a little afraid of the use of metaphors like filling up the gaps and blocking the cracks and fissures in the building. There are openings in every building. There are openings which give us power to breathe; there are passages which give us power to move. It is just those openings which make the difference between a habitation and a tomb. Beware how you so draw tight the bonds,



how you so pile obligation on obligation and sanction on sanction that at last you find you are not living nations but dead States.

Who has more authority to speak about the Protocol than Mr. Politis? Who contributed more to its formation? Yet he came to this tribune to tell us that our work will never be complete until we have made of this association, of this League, not what it is now -- an assembly of sovereign States meeting in Council -- but a Super-State giving orders to us all, not only for the conduct of our external affairs but as to how we must behave and what we must do within our own boundaries and among our own people. Ladies and gentlemen, that way danger lies. It is not so that I see -- and above all not now that I see -- the future of the League. The League does not depend only on the parchments which we have signed. The League does not depend only on the sanctions which we may enforce. The League -- the judgment of the League -- is the judgment of the highest tribunal to which here on earth any nation can appeal to justify its action, and of whose approval any nation will have infinite need in the moment of trial and trouble.



Do not underrate the authority which the League has already acquired. I have been among you only three years, but since I held my present office, I have made it my business, <sup>because</sup> / I have felt it to be my duty, to attend every meeting of your Council and each meeting of your Assembly. I have done so because my government bases its whole policy upon this League; because no country, however powerful, even to-day can disregard your moral judgment, or can be deaf to the advantage of being able to come here before you, or to your Council, to plead its cause, to receive your approval, and to justify itself before the world. We have accomplished much; we shall accomplish more. That which is not possible to-day may, as the peaceful atmosphere spreads, be attainable to-morrow. The work may be accomplished in two ways and from both ends. The growing reconciliation between ancient enemies or former enemies makes the risk less and makes whatever guarantees you want easier to give. Is there not as much to be done on the path which Germany and France have chosen of a direct reconciliation as by any amendment of Covenant, or addition of Protocol, or heaping up of sanctions? I give more for such speeches as those - not merely speeches but great acts of peace, solemn declarations of the determination to pursue a peaceful course and to eliminate war and all its horror from their future relations - I give more to their willing assent, their mutual assent, to those great principles than I give to all the sanctions. We could apply to either, if he broke the pledge which he has taken.

Ah, ladies and gentlemen, perhaps we view the future of the League a little differently. Our faith in it is the



same; our purpose is the same; the way in which we would reach our purpose varies with our circumstances, our temperaments, and our responsibilities. I look to no hasty and dramatic way; I look to no series of sensational steps to make the League what in time we all hope that it is to be. I think of the words of the psalmist when he speaks of the grass of the fields, "It grows green and cometh up in the morning; in the evening it is cut down, dried up and withered." Wherever you look in the organic world, it is not these organisms which come most quickly to maturity which reach the greatest strength or last the longest. I think of the League rather as an acorn <sup>that</sup> some man of good will and imagination planted less than ten years ago, which we know not how is now a sturdy sapling, though at no particular moment could we mark its growth. I think of it as ever-growing and expanding until it becomes a mighty oak under which all the nations of the world shall find their secure and constant shelter.



U  
Sir George Pearce

at 8<sup>th</sup> Assembly, 1927

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W.

~~is secure unless the League of Nations consolidates  
its international life, unless we all realise that  
we are here in one family. We are all members of  
one family that have the same desire. We are  
working in the open before all the world for the  
great cause of peace through arbitration.~~

Sir George Foster SMITH (Australia):

Mr. President, Ladies and gentlemen: I ask  
for your consideration in view of the fact that the  
few remarks that I shall have to offer follow after  
that magnificent oration that we have listened to  
with so much interest from that distinguished  
statesman, Mr. Briand.



My apology must be that this League comes to its decisions after listening to the representatives of all nations, and that all have something to contribute to the sum of its progress. Australia is, from the point of view of population, one of the small States represented in this Assembly. It is a country that is far removed in time and space from Europe and its distractions, but nevertheless we are keenly and sympathetically interested in all proposals that will make for disarmament and peace. We have a large country that is as yet only partially developed, and therefore desire that we shall be able to devote our energies to the great task of the development of our country. We, as one of the participants in the Great War, realise only too well what a terrible scourge war is, and the thousands of our countrymen whose bodies lie buried in the war cemeteries of Europe constitute for us an obligation that we shall assist to the uttermost all efforts to make such awful calamities impossible in the future. We believe that it is the great mission and the solemn duty of the League of Nations to accomplish this. The task of deciding upon the means by which this great end may be attained is a difficult one, and needs the service and the good will of all civilised nations. It is imperative, however, that every proposal shall be fully considered, but it is also essential that the League, in its . . . anxiety, should not be stampeded into hasty decisions, and also that the League should remember that the nations of the world are looking to it for guidance and leadership. It is necessary, if the League is to



succeed in its great task, that it shall command the respect and the confidence of the Nations. Nothing will do more to impair that confidence and lessen that respect than vacillation in the pursuit by the League of its enquiries into the means to peace, or the exhibition of a desire to bow to passing phases of public opinion, or to cater to the demand for the sensational and the dramatic.

To those who are impatient with the progress which has been made by the League on this its most important work, I ask that they shall contemplate this Assembly to-day. Who could have believed that within ten years of the close of the greatest war in history, we should see the representatives of nearly all the great nations who were the antagonists in that great struggle, meeting here, as I believe, honestly and sincerely striving to find the way to disarmament and peace? This, in itself, is a miracle of accomplishment, and should hearten and inspire every friend of peace. The League, at a previous Assembly, has already given long and serious study to one method of attaining peace which has been proposed. I refer to the scheme known as the Geneva Protocol. The Protocol which was drafted has not been able to command the necessary support to enable <sup>it</sup> to be adopted as the means to the desired end. The League has then proceeded to explore another field, that of disarmament by agreement. The Preparatory Commission which it has set up has made certain progress, but it has not yet completed its labours, and therefore we have



no definite proposals submitted by it to this Meeting of the Assembly for adoption. It is now proposed, in a motion submitted by the Senior Delegate for the Netherlands Government, that the League should commence a re-examination and study of the principles of the Protocol. I ask the Assembly to consider what will be the effect, if this course is adopted, on the minds of the peoples of the earth. Will it not constitute a declaration that we have abandoned the investigation of the plan of disarmament by agreement, and are reverting to the position of 1924? Will it not exhibit uncertainty and lack of confidence by the League in itself, and can we be surprised if the result is to communicate that feeling to the nations? It may be that the Protocol was a counsel of perfection, but there are some of us who have serious doubt and misgiving on that.

*J. L. Cold*  
MULTICOPY



We in Australia, fortunately for ourselves, are not called upon too frequently to deal with international diplomacy and, probably, are not skilled in that art; but I believe that human nature is much the same in all nations and that by a study of the application of certain principles in human affairs within one's own nation one is able to appreciate something of the effect of the application of those same principles to relations between the nations. I wish to apply that method of reasoning to the question of compulsory arbitration which is one of the main principles of the Protocol. We in Australia are probably unique in that we have applied the principle of compulsory arbitration to industrial affairs. We have done this by legislation covering the industrial field and the relations between employer and employed. We have established courts of arbitration and empowered them to promulgate awards and have clothed them with power to secure the compulsory enforcement of those awards. In the discussion of these measures we adopted the very arguments and reasons that I have heard urged on behalf of the adoption of the Protocol.

I draw attention to the term "compulsory arbitration". Does it not contemplate illwill and dispute? Does it not contemplate force? If that is so, are we proposing to substitute one form of force for another? I am not prepared to say that our industrial arbitration systems have failed, but none can claim that they have been an unqualified success. What have been some of the results of <sup>this</sup> system?

Because compulsory arbitration presumes a dispute, the system has encouraged the organisation of employers and employed into



~~separate armies~~ which tend to regard each other with hostility and suspicion. It has led to the propagation of what we call paper disputes; that is, artificial disputes, generated by one or other of the parties, inspired with the hope of gaining something by an award and consoled by the fact that even if the reference fails the party creating the dispute is in no worse position. Because of these results opinion in Australia is turning from the compulsory principle in the direction of conciliation and conference.

One of the conditions precedent to compulsory arbitration is that there shall be a dispute upon which to arbitrate. The main aim of the League, as I take it, should not be to settle disputes but to try to prevent disputes arising and, if they do arise, to encourage measures which will prevent differences from growing into disputes which will cause the intervention of the League or of the Court of Arbitration at The Hague. Moreover, it seems to me that the League should encourage the settlement of differences arising between the nations by friendly negotiation and without recourse to the League. It seemed to us that the Protocol had adopted and extended this dangerous phase of our industrial arbitration laws to which I have referred. The operation of this part of those laws has had, as I have said, a tendency to drive employers and employed into <sup>opposing</sup> and hostile camps. This is not the spirit which will help the cause of international peace and it is, therefore, not the road which the League should tread in its march towards its ideals.

I would also like to invite delegates to ask themselves whether the nations they represent will be prepared in every contingency and on every question to submit themselves and their



cause to compulsory arbitration. If we are candid we must acknowledge that every nation knows that there are some questions that it cannot so submit. Let us pursue the study of disarmament by agreement with a sincere desire to succeed, and success will come. Let us continue the exploration of the means by which this can be accomplished, energetically and earnestly.



Mr. President, I wish to refer briefly to the work of the Economic Conference and to associate my country with the appreciative remarks of previous speakers as to the spirit that animated the deliberations of that Conference. We welcome anything that may result from that Conference that will, as has been said by previous speakers, lead the nations to peace. I beg to remind the Assembly that the country I represent is in a somewhat different position in the economic sphere from most of the countries represented here. Many of those countries have had centuries in which to develop and extend their primary and secondary industries and in which to build up those accumulations of capital which are so necessary for the development of the industries of a country. We are a young country as to which for the greater part of it we have had less than a century in which to develop. We cannot reconcile it with our national view of growth that we should be satisfied with being merely "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the older and economically more advanced countries. We learned in the great war how essential it is that we should be able in certain essentials of economic life to supply ourselves with those essentials of national life and security. Freedom of trade and freedom of immigration must be conditioned by something approaching to equality of standards of living and economic status. We therefore, whilst welcoming the resolutions of the Conference and promising that they shall receive that earnest consideration that is their due, must reserve to ourselves that power to safeguard our national and economic life that is recognised in the Covenant of the League as the right of all nations.



Finally, Mr. President, I would say that it is well, in the pursuit of an ideal, to "hitch your wagon to a star" but whilst we are making our way to that celestial aim we must remember that our vehicle must first demonstrate its capacity to withstand the bumps and ruts of this terrestrial sphere. Therefore, let our aim be high but let our methods be practical.



THE PRESIDENT:

Translation: The Assembly will now adjourn and meet again at half-past four this afternoon.

If there are any members of the General Committee of the Assembly present, I have to inform them that the General Committee will meet at three o'clock this afternoon at the Secretariat.

The Assembly rose at 12.35 p.m.

*[Faint signature]*  
MULTICOPY



SPEECH BY MR. BRUCE AT SECOND ASSEMBLY OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS 1921.

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Mr. President, I think that, after our experiences of the last few days, we must all be convinced that the decision arrived at by the Assembly to consider the Report on the Work of the Council in a plenary meeting rather than to refer it to a committee, was, if I may respectfully say so, a wise one. It has given the opportunity for a discussion on matters of general interest to the League. We have heard, during the past few days, brilliant speeches, which should help us in our future work.

In speaking with regard to this question, Lord Robert Cecil suggested that, in the future, on this item of our agenda, we shall have coming before us all the great statesmen and thinkers, of all the nations of the world, to give to us the expression of their opinions on matters of vital interest to mankind as a whole. I trust that that will be so; but I hardly think that at the present moment that is what we require. In the early days of the infancy of the League, it seems to me there are two things that we must have. We want assistance and the fullest criticism of all our actions. But that criticism must be constructive, and not destructive, and in all speeches that are made now, it seems to me, we have all of us a duty to do two things. One is to re-affirm the faith we all have in the great objects of the League, to substitute the law of international justice for the hideous arbitrament of war; and the other is to consider and, if necessary, criticise the actions of the Council of the League, and indicate, as far as in us lies, where we consider we have fallen short, during the year that has gone, of our great objective, and indicate where in the future we can strengthen ourselves in our great purpose.

To my mind, at this stage of the League, these are the two things that we must ever have present in our minds - to declare our faith, and to assist in the future moulding of our policy.

I come from one of the youngest nations of the world, and one that is situated no less than twelve thousand miles from Europe. On behalf of that young nation, I re-affirm our belief in the great objects of the League, and our determination to do everything in our power to assist it in its great work. But we are far from Europe, and far from all the troubles and difficulties with which you are faced to-day. It has been suggested that perhaps Australia is indifferent, that she cares not for all the trouble, and for all the suffering, to which you are being subjected at this moment. But I would remind you that that is hardly so. There is nothing that occurs to you that does not directly reflect upon us. The recent war has shown that clearly and fully to the whole world. We were no party to the differences which were taking place in Europe; but we came willingly and freely, and I venture to say, for a young nation, played a great part, and a part that was of considerable assistance to the Allies.

I may, perhaps, remind you of what Australia did, in order to show you how European troubles can affect this far-away Dominion. We recruited by voluntary enlistment, and without conscription or any compulsion, an army of over four hundred thousand men from our small population of five millions. In addition to that, we have expended our treasure, with the result that to-day we are faced with a burden of debt for our small population of five million people, which is equal to the debt that was borne by our mother country, England, at the time when



this great war broke upon the world, notwithstanding that she has a population of forty-five millions.

This must bring home to all members of the Assembly the fact that Australia to-day has been bled white by her efforts on behalf of civilisation, and, I venture to say, that we have as great and as real an interest in the creation of a world-wide peace as any nation on earth.

But while we have played what, I suggest, was a not un gallant part in the war, I want to point out that we did it not in any sense because we are a military nation or a lover of war. In this Assembly, where are met together to-day nations that were recently bitter and determined enemies, it does not lie upon me to suggest whose cause was right in the recent war; but I would say that Australia played her part in this war for what she believed to be right. She believed that she was fighting for justice and right in the world; she believed that she was fighting to ensure the future peace of the world, and to ensure to every nation, however small, that in the future it would have the opportunity to work out its own destiny, in its own way, without interference from any of its great neighbours. That was our ideal, and that is what we hope to see the League of Nations accomplish.

Australia is not a military nation, she is not a nation that has, or ever has had, great armaments, or a people prone to war. She has ever believed in the great principle of arbitration as against the hideous settlement of strife. In her disputes between employers and employed, which I venture to suggest, in our domestic politics take the place of disputes between great nations in international politics, she has, for many years, had laws of arbitration by which all these disputes have to be settled. In Australia to-day a strike of employees, or a lockout of workmen, is an offence punishable by imprisonment. All questions have to be referred to courts, which have been established for the consideration of these matters, and whose objective is to insist on fair and just dealings between different classes. I venture to say that that is what the League of Nations aims to do in the great affairs of the world, and in all disputes between great nations. Australia, taking that view, and looking at all questions of strife with absolute abhorrence, I unhesitatingly say that Australia stands for the great principles that this League represents, and will do all in her power to assist it in the accomplishment of its great objective.

I would now like to turn to the other duty, which I suggest lies before us all, that is, to consider our actions during the past year. I have read with very great interest a report which has been issued upon the activities of the Council, and I agree with those who have already spoken, that it shows a work of which the League might well be proud. But I would offer this criticism - that it appears to me to show that almost too much has been attempted during the past year. We are at present in our infancy, and it seems to me we must walk slowly and discreetly. The great objective of the League of Nations, as I understand it, is to render war between the nations of the earth more difficult; the subsidiary objective is to endeavour to improve the general conditions of mankind throughout the world.

With regard to the primary objective of rendering war more difficult, it seems to me that little has been done. Towards giving effect to our subsidiary objective we seem to be making considerable progress, and we are even now contemplating extending our work. My criticism is that it



would be better to concentrate more on our primary objective, and wait for a time when we can, with advantage, take up with enthusiasm the subsidiary matters that we have to deal with.

The greatest question with regard to our primary objective is, of course, the question of disarmament. I realise that the difficulties of this question are of very great magnitude. They have been put, and put admirably, if I may say so, in the speech which Mr. Balfour addressed to the Assembly the other day. I realise these difficulties, but at the same time venture to suggest that we must not allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the difficulties we are faced with. To-day, the whole world desires peace, and the great difficulty about bringing about disarmament is that some of the nations who desire peace as much as we do are without our portals.

That the nations desire peace is, I think, very clearly demonstrated by the conference which has been called by the United States of America, to be held in November, of certain Powers primarily interested in the Pacific. That conference shows clearly that in the great nation of the United States a feeling for peace exists of the same character as our own. That conference was referred to yesterday by M. Leon Bourgeois, and, if I may respectfully say so, I was struck with the statesmanlike character of his remarks. He wished to that conference the greatest possible success and, as representing one of the small nations, whose interests lie primarily in the Pacific, I would like to add my word also of hope, and, possibly an expectation, that something may be achieved. And, because of the knowledge that we all have, that all nations desire that some permanent basis of peace may be arrived at, I certainly feel that we should not allow the difficulties we are faced with to daunt us, but that the League of Nations, with its great objective, should try and give to the world to-day the lead they are all asking for - ay, and crying for.

There is one other factor with regard to this question of disarmament which appears to me must have great weight. That is the question of the economic condition of the world. The Brussels Conference has told us that the nations of the world cannot continue expenditure on the present basis, that the burden is too great for them conceivably to bear. There is another factor which, I think, strengthens the hands of the League of Nations, and should make it possible for something to be done. This matter, however, has been referred to a Committee of this Assembly, and it is obviously not a question that should be discussed in detail here. The only point I desire to mention with regard to it is that I think we must have great courage, and not allow the obvious and terrible difficulties we are faced with prevent us making a great attempt to achieve something.

The other point which I wish to press, if I may, on your attention is the question, which I have already touched upon, of our objective. It appears possibly to outside critics of a nation coming from far away that we are rather scattering our efforts in too many directions before we have achieved definite and actual results on particular objects we have concentrated upon, and certainly, for the nation I represent, I should like to say that that is one thing which gives us the greatest misgivings with regard to the future success of the League. We feel, and we are afraid, that if too much is attempted, this machinery will become overloaded and over-burdened, and, instead of great results following, the whole scheme will fall to the ground, overweighted by its own enthusiasm and its own desire to achieve much.



There is also another side which has to be taken into consideration to-day, and that is the question of the expense of this multiplication of our efforts. To all nations, to-day, expense is a great and serious question, and to any nation whose enthusiasm for the League is inclined to wane the question of great and increasing expense is going to weigh very heavily in their decisions with regard to support and assistance, and with regard to nations outside the League it will have a similar effect. I would certainly like, on behalf of my Government, to urge very strongly that this question should be kept ever in the foreground, and that we should try to reduce the expenses to the lowest, until we have great and definite results to show to the world as the outcome of our work. When these things come about, we will have no difficulty in getting all the money that may be needed for these grand objects we have at heart. This question has been referred to a committee, and is being considered now, and I certainly hope, when we receive the report of the committee, we shall find that we are not getting an ever-greater and an increasing multiplicity of objects, with a greater and ever-increasing expense to face.

With regard to the League itself, there are one or two things I should like to say. The first is, that there is a great criticism of the League that it has achieved nothing. In answer to that I think one can point, in the first place, to the International Court of Justice, which is now, to all intents and purposes, an accomplished fact, and had the League done nothing else, this is an accomplishment which I think would have justified its having been brought into being. But I would remind those critics who say we have done nothing, of the difficulties the League is faced with. For centuries back war has been the only method of settling differences between nations, and, though it has crossed the minds of statesmen throughout the ages that endeavours to create some machinery which would do away with the hideous necessity was desirable, nothing has been accomplished. Now, we have created this instrument, and I think it is unjust to criticise it, and say it has done nothing, because it has not, in two short years, brought about results which have defied the efforts of mankind throughout the whole civilised world.

One other point with regard to the League is the question that it has no power to enforce its decisions. That I agree at the moment is so, but whether in the future nations are not going to be prepared to extend to the League the physical support contemplated in Article 16 remains to be seen. But whether that be so or not, it appears to me that the League, under Article 16, has other, and very great, powers, - I refer to the powers of blockading recalcitrant Members, and the powers of cutting off commercial, financial, and industrial communications. Those powers to-day, I believe, represent a very great force, but there are people who say that they would not have any great weight. Whether that be so or not at the moment, I am perfectly certain that in the future they are going to be a force that no nation can stand against. Under our complicated and closely inter-locked civilisation, the relations between all nations are so close in the economic sphere to-day that the cutting off of those relations would have a great effect, but they are going to be much greater in the future. To-day we are witnessing a period of great depression, and with the depreciation of exchanges between nations, until those exchanges are regulated, we can never establish the economic stability of the world. Probably it is a difficult task to perform, but it will have to be solved, and, I venture to say, when it is solved we will find those relations I have referred to are even closer than they are to-day, with the result that it will be impossible for any nation even to contemplate the possibility of the whole of their economic and financial relations being cut off with all the other Powers of



the world.

One other word (and I must apologise for detaining you so long) is this, that even if by physical power, or economic pressure, nations cannot be brought to keep their plighted troth, there is one other power, and that is the great force of publicity. I have told you that in Australia we have a law by which striking workmen and locking-out employers can be put in jail, but you cannot always put that law into force. In a great industrial dispute it is impossible to put into prison thousands and tens of thousands of men; it is a physical impossibility, but you arrive at your result by another method. The laws, as they stand, with all your arbitration arrangements, give great publicity to every dispute, and the result is you get an informed and true public opinion, and that public opinion is aiming to ensure that justice and right dealing is observed, so that it will be, I believe, in the affairs of nations, when all other methods have failed, the great power and force of publicity, and public opinion, which will make the nations observe the great principle of fair dealing and justice.

The only other point I would like to refer to is this. If I may, I would like to support the point made by Mr. Balfour, which seems to me to put the whole position of the League of Nations in a nutshell. "If you destroy it," Mr. Balfour said, "what will you put in its place?" If it is not in existence, to what tribunal will you refer all these great questions which have been dealt with by the League of Nations during the past two years? The answer must be, I think, that there is no tribunal, and, if the League of Nations goes, the hope of mankind goes also, and the cause of international peace will be set back almost for centuries.

In conclusion, I desire once more to re-affirm the faith of one of the younger nations in this great instrument for the benefit of human destinies. I am convinced that, if we will throw behind us all questions of self-interest and self-seeking, if we will go on determined that justice and righteousness shall prevail, then this League of Nations will become a great instrument for the moulding of human destinies, an instrument which all men in past ages have dreamed of, but which it has been left to this generation of ours to create.