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The League of Nations and Industrial Peace

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15, GROSVENOR CRESCENT, S.W. 1.

October, 1920.

THE present state of Europe is absolutely disastrous to British trade.

The present race between wages and prices in England is the direct result of the existing chaos on the Continent, and the only remedy for the chaos on the Continent is united international co-operation. If that fail, existing conditions will lead inevitably to bankruptcy and anarchy, not only in Continental States, but *here in Great Britain*.

International co-operation is only possible through such an organization as the League of Nations.

The League of Nations cannot work unless it has behind it the enthusiastic support of public opinion. That public opinion arises automatically as soon as the people know the facts. The task of the League of Nations Union is to tell British people the facts, and show them what the League is doing and can do. Similar societies are doing the same work in other countries.

The League of Nations Union for Great Britain cannot work without money. That money must be provided by British people.

These propositions admit of very simple demonstration:—

The basis of Great Britain's foreign trade is her exportable surplus of coal and manufactured goods. Simply stated, British trade mainly consists in the exchange of British coal and manufactured goods for food and raw materials. The greater the abundance of produce abroad, the more can we obtain in exchange for our exports. The less the exportable surplus of foreign countries, the less we obtain. Remove the exportable surplus and the situation would be exactly as if this country were blockaded. Millions of our population would be faced with starvation.

We are now actually in a state of semi-blockade. All the European countries with whom we traded before the war are less able than formerly to supply us—for they have less exportable surplus, and the bulk of them are in no condition to trade at all. Some are lapsing into "Peasant States" which, conceivably,

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may have almost no exportable surplus for years to come.

This situation, the direct outcome of war, is disastrous to British trade.

The race of wages after soaring prices is due to it.
For the less the exportable surplus possessed by foreign nations, the less can those nations give in exchange for our produce. Our produce, therefore, loses value in proportion to the lessening of this exportable surplus from abroad. Prices, therefore, rise here. The more prices rise, the less the working man gets for his wages and the more wages he demands. *The more, therefore, the Continent is plunged into economic disorder, the less is produced abroad, and the less can we obtain for that which we can afford to pay.*

The remedy for this is to restore peace on the Continent of Europe, and re-establish international credit. This done, you revive Continental industry and increase the trade of this country, reduce prices and improve the standard of living. There is no greater error than to imagine that the elimination of foreign trade is beneficial to our trade. Exactly the opposite is the case.

Credits can only be granted to countries in a state of peace. Otherwise the risk is too great for the credit to be made available on any except prohibitive rates of interest. Peace can only be maintained if the Great Powers of the world resolutely and unitedly set their faces against war. This necessitates a Union against War—an international society for the preservation of peace.

Such an association exists in the League of Nations. But the visible League—the Council, the Assembly, and the Secretariat—is only machinery for making easier international co-operation throughout the world. The true League—the driving force of the League machine—is something in the hearts of men; a law-abiding, co-operative spirit amongst the peoples; a world-determination to make the League fruitful.

This law-abiding and co-operative spirit can be

fostered in the public mind. It has been done in the past. People have gradually learned to respect the law of the land, and to co-operate more or less automatically in matters such as hygiene, public order, sanitation, the rule of the road, and the like.

It is true, as some critics say, that behind the law stand the forces of the Crown. But behind the forces of the Crown stands the goodwill of the population; and it is upon this final sanction that it is sought to base the League. If the League is firmly based upon the collective will of the world, the necessary instruments for enforcing its decisions will never be lacking.

It is the task of the British League of Nations Union to develop a collective will for our League in the people of Great Britain, and to foster in them a spirit favourable to the development of international justice and international co-operation. This is not only in the interests of the highest morality; it is also in the practical interest of the country's prosperity as a whole. Other similar institutions are seeking to perform the same task in some of the remaining countries of the world, and their efforts are being co-ordinated by a Central Bureau, so that the development of the necessary collective will may proceed simultaneously throughout the world.

The support of the British League of Nations Union is the affair of the British people. The purpose of this paper is to show how it is to the material advantage of all English people, but especially those whose fortunes depend upon the cohesion and stability of society, to support the work of the Union.

The League of Nations stands for solidity against insolvency, for evolution against revolution, for order against disintegration and terror.

The League of Nations Union exists to develop that collective will-for-the-League without which it will inevitably fail and come to nothing.

Is it not the duty of all good citizens to join the Union and support its work?

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The League of Nations :

Its Machinery and Achievements.

THE League of Nations is an association of (at present) fifty-one States, bound together by a Covenant to which all of them have subscribed. The League of Nations came into being officially with the ratification of the Treaty of Versailles on January 10th, 1920. Nineteen States became Members of the League on the same day by the fact of the Treaty becoming effective; nine other States joined the League by subsequent ratification; thirteen States which had been neutral during the war accepted the invitation to join the League contained in the Annex to the Covenant; China became a Member when the Treaty of Peace with Austria became effective; Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Finland, and Luxembourg were admitted to membership of the League by the Assembly during its first Session in November-December, 1920. Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania were admitted during the second Assembly in September-October, 1921.

THE MACHINERY OF THE LEAGUE.

The following are the existing organs of the League:

1. **THE ASSEMBLY**, composed of not more than three Delegates from each Member State of the League, these three Delegates having a single vote. This is a deliberative body. Its special functions include the admission of new Members to the League of Nations, the power to recommend the reconsideration of obsolete treaties, selection of small powers for representation on the Council. In conjunction with the Council it may amend the Covenant. Its approval is necessary if the Council desires to increase the size of the Council. It is competent to have disputes referred to it by the Council at the request of either party; and, generally speaking, it may, like the Council, deal with any matter affecting the peace of the world.

The first Session of the Assembly began at Geneva on November 15th, 1920, and concluded on December 18th. During the Session 31 plenary meetings were held. The early stages of the work were dealt with in Committees, of which there were six. Each of these Committees held a number of meetings, and then reported its conclusions to the General Assembly for modification (where necessary) and adoption.

(The proceedings of the first Assembly are the subject of a short book compiled by the League of Nations Union.)

The second Assembly sat from September 5th to October 5th, 1921.

The Committees were as follows:—

- I. Legal and Constitutional (amendments to the Covenant, &c.).
- II. Technical Organisations (Finance and Economics, Transit, Health).
- III. Limitation of Armaments and Economic Blockade.
- IV. Internal Organisation and Finance of the League.
- V. Humanitarian Questions (Typhus, Epidemics, Repatriation of Prisoners, Suppression of Illicit Traffics, &c.).
- VI. Political Questions. (Admission of New States, &c.)

(An account of the work of the second Assembly can be obtained from the League of Nations Union.)

2. THE COUNCIL is an executive body composed of Delegates of four Great Powers (Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan) who are Permanent Members, and four smaller Powers, Belgium, Brazil, China and Spain, elected by the Assembly, who are temporary Members. The United States were named in the Covenant as one of the Permanent Members of the Council, but they have not ratified the Treaty and so are not yet Members of the League. The Council has already met fifteen times. Like the Assembly it may deal with any matter affecting the peace of the world; and it has sole competence in certain matters:—

3. THE SECRETARIAT. This is an international body of experts, under the control of the Secretary-General, Sir Eric Drummond, and three Under-Secretaries-General. These four officers serve for seven years. The work of the Secretariat is grouped under the sections of Information, Law, Administrative Commissions, Health, Politics, Finance and Economics—these various sections being

respectively under a Frenchman, a Dutchman, a Norwegian, an Englishwoman, a Frenchman and a Canadian. The engagements of the officials of the Secretariat other than the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretaries-General, are entered into for twenty-one years as a general rule, with an age limit of fifty-five.

4. PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE. On October 15th, during the second Assembly, the Court was established by the election of the following eleven Judges and four Deputy-Judges, chosen by a joint method of voting by the Assembly and the Council.

M. ALTAMIRA	...	(Spain)
M. ANZILOTTI	...	(Italy)
M. BARBOZA	...	(Brazil)
M. DE BUSTAMANTE	..	(Cuba)
LORD FINLAY	...	(Great Britain)
M. HUBER	...	(Switzerland)
M. LODER	...	(Netherlands)
M. MOORE	...	(U.S.A.)
M. NYHOLM	...	(Denmark)
M. ODA	...	(Japan)
M. WEISS	...	(France)

Deputy-Judges.

M. BEICHMANN	...	(Norway)
M. NEGULESCO	...	(Roumania)
M. WANG	...	(China)
M. YOVANOVITCH	...	(Yugo-Slavia)

The jurisdiction of the Court, except in special cases provided for by Treaty or otherwise, is not compulsory, but it is open to States, voluntarily to accept, by a declaration *inter se* and on condition of reciprocity, compulsory jurisdiction in certain categories of disputes. Several States have already done this.

5. THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION composed of:—

- a. *The General Conference of Labour*, composed of delegates of all members.
- b. *The Governing Body*, composed of representatives of the nations of chief industrial importance.
- c. *The International Labour Office* which is, a permanent Secretariat.

Germany, although not yet a Member of the League, is a member of the General Conference of Labour and of the Governing Body.

The *General Conference* met first in Washington in November, 1919. It adopted six draft conventions on the eight-hour day, unemployment, special conditions of labour for women and children, lead-poisoning, &c. In June, 1920, the *General Conference* met in Genoa to apply these conventions to seamen. The third meeting (at Geneva, November, 1921) adopted conventions on white lead restrictions, agricultural conditions, and the establishment of a weekly rest-day. These three meetings have been followed by the ratification of a number of the conventions by the nations concerned. The International Labour Organisation will shortly call a world-conference on unemployment.

6. THE PERMANENT MILITARY, NAVAL AND AIR COMMISSION, a body of experts to advise the League on questions of the limitation of armaments, and on military, naval and aerial questions generally.

7. THE TEMPORARY MIXED COMMISSION FOR THE REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS. On February 25th, 1921, the Council constituted this Commission, composed of persons of recognised competence in political, social, and economic matters, among whom there were some members of the Permanent Armaments Commission and of the Labour Office, to submit proposals for reduction to the Council.

8. THE PROVISIONAL HEALTH ORGANISATION, which deals with matters concerning the improvement and protection of public health throughout the world. It consists of a Health Committee, the Secretariat of which is to be appointed by the Secretary-General of the League, to be responsible to him, and to be controlled by a medical Director.

9. THE TRANSIT COMMISSION, which provides for, and guarantees the maintenance of, communication and transit and equitable treatment for the commerce of all Members of the League as laid down in Article 23 of the Covenant. The first General Conference on transit met at Barcelona March, 1921.

10. THE PERMANENT MANDATES COMMISSION. A body of experts to examine the annual reports of the Mandatory States and to advise the Council on Mandates generally.

11. THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL COMMISSION. A body of experts to assist the Council in the consideration of technical matters, to continue the study of the recommendations of the International Financial Conference at Brussels with a view to their application and to carry on the organisation of the International Credits Scheme, having regard to the needs of the various countries, to continue their work for the financial reconstruction of

Austria, and also to study, in co-operation with the Transit Organisation, the meaning and scope of the provision relating to equitable treatment of commerce as contained in Article 23.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LEAGUE.

DUTIES IMPOSED ON THE LEAGUE BY THE TREATIES OF PEACE.

It has established the Free City of Danzig under the protection of the League.

It has governed the Saar Basin since February, 1921, by means of an International Governing Commission.

It has adjudicated on the question of Eupen and Malmedy, giving the provinces to Belgium.

POLITICAL QUESTIONS.

REGISTRATION OF TREATIES.

About 200 Treaties have already been registered with the League.

a. Negotiations are still in progress between Poland and Lithuania over the possession of Vilna, under the chairmanship of M. Hymans.

b. *Peaceful Settlement of Aaland Islands Dispute between Finland and Sweden.*

Council intervened and gave award that the islands should remain under Finnish sovereignty, but should have new guarantees for religious, linguistic, and educational freedom. Sweden accepted this decision, which was against its wishes, and proved its loyalty of spirit by electing Mr. Branting, who had accepted the award on behalf of Sweden, as the Prime Minister in October, 1921.

c. *Upper Silesia.*

The Supreme Council, unable to decide on the division of Upper Silesia between Germany and Poland, invited the League Council to attack the problem in August, 1921, on the lines laid down by the Treaty of Versailles.

On October 14th the League Council reported its decision to the Supreme Council, and the award will shortly be put into execution. France, Great Britain, Germany and Poland have accepted the award.

PROTECTION OF MINORITIES.

All the Treaties of Peace include protection of Minorities clauses. The obligation on countries thus constituted are placed by the Treaties under the guarantee of the League of Nations.

"With a view to assisting the Members of the Council in the exercise of these rights and duties . . . it is desirable that the President and two Members, appointed by him in each case, should proceed to consider any petition or communication addressed to the League of Nations with regard to an infraction, or danger of infraction, of the clauses of the Treaties for the Protection of Minorities. This inquiry would be held as soon as the petition or communication in question had been brought to the notice of the Members of the Council."

Any legal differences arising out of these clauses shall be submitted to the Permanent Court of International Justice if required.

The second Assembly urged that the Chief Allied and Associated Powers, in revising the Treaty of Sevres, should make provision for a national home for Armenians.

ALBANIA.

On November 7th, 1921, the British Government requested the Council of the League to meet instantly, and take action—possibly involving the application of Article 16 (Economic boycott)—on the Serbian invasion of Albania. Directly the Council met, Serbia undertook to withdraw all her troops. All parties have agreed to abide by the decision on Albania's frontiers given by the Conference of Ambassadors, and a League Commission has been sent to the spot to supervise the peaceful execution of the award.

ECONOMIC BLOCKADE COMMISSION.

Presented Report to Assembly embodying resolutions which will have the effect of putting into an efficient and serviceable condition the economic weapon of the League, and of removing some of the apprehensions which had been aroused by the former rather indefinite wording of the Article in question.

WORK PERFORMED BY AUXILIARY ORGANISATIONS.

MANDATES COMMISSION.

Mandates Allocated by the Council of the Principal Allied Powers.

Class "A" (formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire) Mesopotamia and Palestine to Great Britain; Syria to France.

Class "B" (former territories of German Empire) Portions of East Africa, Togoland, and Cameroons allotted to France, Great Britain and Belgium.

Class "C" former German Possessions in the Pacific South of the Equator, with exception of Nauru and Samoa, to Australia; North of Equator to Japan; Samoa to New Zealand; Nauru to British Empire; S.W. Africa to Union of South Africa.

"A" Mandates cannot be approved till peace is signed with Turkey, but the Mandatories are administering the countries according to the draft mandates in accordance with the spirit of Article 22.

"B" Mandates, pending agreement by U.S.A. to their allocation are being administered according to draft mandates, and all "B" Mandatories are reporting to the Mandates Commission.

"C" Mandates are in force.

REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS.

After studying the Report of the Temporary Mixed Commission in Committee 3 of the Assembly, Lord Robert Cecil presented a report and resolution to the Assembly; they were adopted.

The most important were as follows:—

That the Temporary Mixed Commission should present practical proposals for the reduction of armaments in form of a draft Treaty, or other equally definite plan, before the next Assembly.

That an International Conference should be held on Private Manufacture of Arms.

That it is desirable that propaganda in favour of the reduction of armaments, as contemplated in the Covenant, shall be carried out with earnestness and conviction in all nations.

FINANCE AND ECONOMICS.

The most important work in this field was the holding of the International Financial Conference at Brussels in September, 1920, when financial experts of 35 countries met to discuss remedies for the serious economic conditions prevailing.

Amongst many other valuable recommendations, the most important scheme evolved by the Conference was the Ter Meulen Scheme for International Credits, whereby impoverished countries are enabled to borrow on the security of their assets from richer countries, through the agency of the League of Nations.

The scheme is ready to be applied to Austria, and is only awaiting the agreement of the United States of

America to join the rest of the Allies in suspending their financial claims.

TRANSIT AND COMMUNICATIONS.

A Conference met last year at Paris, and sent out recommendations concerning the facilitating of passport and visa regulations.

In March, 1921, a Conference of forty-four States was held in Barcelona on conventions and recommendations concerning international waterways, ports, railways, and transport in general, which several Governments have already ratified.

HEALTH ORGANISATION.

The League has established a provisional Health Organisation. The Epidemics Commission is to form one section of the Health Organisation. It has been working in Eastern Europe, with the help of the Polish Government, to stamp out typhus. Fifty fifty-bedded hospitals have been established, and the scourge of typhus has been greatly reduced.

HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES.

A Conference was held in June, 1921, to study measures for the suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children. A Final Act was produced, which Committee V. of the second Assembly, with slight modifications, presented to the Assembly in the form of a convention, and which was adopted. Between twenty and thirty States have so far signed the protocol of this Convention, and in these States this traffic will be practically impossible.

TRAFFIC IN OPIUM.

An Advisory Commission on this subject was set up in February, 1921, and in May adopted a questionnaire to be sent out to all countries, inquiring into the conditions regarding opium and dangerous drugs there. The Committee will meet again early in 1922, when the replies have been received.

REPATRIATION OF PRISONERS OF WAR.

Dr. Nansen—for the League—has now repatriated 325,000 from Russia to Central Europe, and *vice versa*.

DEPORTATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

The second Assembly passed resolutions that a mixed board should be formed to deal with the reclamation of women and children deported into Turkey and Asia Minor.