

**The Politics Of Disarmament, 1919 - 39 :  
A Study Of The World Disarmament  
Conference**

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award  
of the Degree of  
**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**SUBHAKANTA BEHERA**

**CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL POLITICS,  
ORGANISATION AND DISARMAMENT  
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI-110067  
1987**

# HARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
for International Politics,  
nization and Disarmament


Gram : JAYENU

Telephone : 652282  
652114

New Mehrauli Road,  
NEW DELHI-110067.

October 5, 1987

## CERTIFICATE

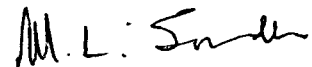


Certified that the dissertation entitled THE POLITICS OF DISARMAMENT, 1919-39: A STUDY OF THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE submitted by Subhakanta Behera is for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy of this University. This dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other University and is his own work.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.



Professor M. ZUBERI  
Supervisor



Professor M.L. SONDHI  
Chairman

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Human being dreams about a world without warfare and bloodshed, even though States have to defend themselves against external threats. The contemporary arms race threatens to turn our 'Good Earth' into a 'Waste Land'. This threat has to be ~~registered~~<sup>resisted</sup> if human civilization is to survive. Disarmament is a form of resistance that the world community is trying. My present work deals with the first World Disarmament Conference that took place in the interwar period.

I am extremely grateful to my Supervisor, Professor M. Zuberi, who encouraged me to take up this topic. His erudition and scholarship inspired me constantly to work for the completion of this dissertation.

I owe a lot to my parents who have always backed me in my intellectual endeavours including the present work. My 'Jyotsna Bhatija' needs special mention for her neat hand writing with which she prepared my second draft for the typing.

I would like to express my gratitude to Maheswar Panigrahi, Sanjeeb Kumar Behera, Partha Sarathi Mishra, and Akshaya Kumar Rout who helped me in finishing my dissertation work.

Last but not least Shiv Sharma deserves special thanks for his neat typing.

New Delhi  
October 5, 1987

*Subhakanta Behera*  
SUBHAKANTA BEHERA

## CONTENTS

	INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter I	SECURITY AND DISARMAMENT: THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE OF 1919	5
Chapter II	PRELUDE TO THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE	33
Chapter III	THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE, 1932-34	65
Chapter IV	FAILURE OF THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE	107
Chapter V	CONCLUSION	123
	APPENDICES	130
	SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	183

## INTRODUCTION

Redefining the past is not a mere academic exercise but a healthy way of invoking the past for understanding the present. We can come to proper terms with the present only when the past is analysed in right context with objectivity. E.H. Carr has described history as an unending dialogue between the present and the past.

The first World Disarmament Conference (1932-34) is now a historical event. But in the international relations of the interwar period, it had played a very crucial role. It was the culmination of the League's endeavours for disarmament, and the first systematic effort by the world community to do away with the means of war. The activities, sessions, achievements and failures of the Conference were important for the contemporary world because the sole aim of the Conference was to avoid another world war. But the Conference failed in achieving its objective. Yet, the Conference is important because it, for the first time, institutionalized the problem of arms race and disarmament, and inaugurated the systematic efforts for disarmament by a world body drawing the attention of the world community to disarmament. So it is exciting to study the World Disarmament Conference in detail and its inside story so as to know why this grand Conference failed. Secondly, it is rewarding in the present context to study different forces of the world politics of

that time because they were vital in shaping the final result of the Conference. It is rewarding because now also disarmament talks are going on, and taking a clue from the first Disarmament Conference, all prevailing forces of the world politics can be rightly tapped so as to reach agreement on disarmament.

In this study, attempt has been made to analyse the Disarmament Conference against the broad framework of the international relations after the first World War. Moreover, though the first World Disarmament Conference has been dealt by the experts on international relations, it has not been discussed in its proper context.

The first two chapters of the dissertation deal with the events and circumstances that ultimately led to a World Disarmament Conference. The League of Nations had the pious desire to bring about a general disarmament. But all its early efforts for disarmament failed due to the incompatible French demand for security and the German claim to equality in status. Finally, when the Locarno Pact was signed, the international situation became conducive for the establishment of a Preparatory Commission for the World Disarmament Conference. The two arch-enemies of the post-First World War Europe, France and Germany being in the same grouping, facilitated the League's work for disarmament.

But as discussed in the second and third chapters, the Preparatory Commission and then the World Disarmament Conference soon became platforms for polemics. All proposals met with counter-proposals, and the French and the Germans took uncompromising stands all along. So no agreement could be reached. The Conference met a very sad demise without any achievement to record.

In the fourth chapter, an attempt has been made to answer the question as to why this Conference failed. The whole exercise was bound to be reduced to power-conflict, the origin of which can be traced back to the Paris Peace Settlement (1919)'. Two distinct groups of States emerged from this Settlement such as the status quoists and the revisionists. Power-conflict between these two groups got full expression in the conflict between France and Germany, the chief protagonists of status quo and revisionism respectively.

In the fourth and fifth chapters, the antagonism between France and Germany has been highlighted. As our discussion shows, this conflict was primarily a conflict over security issues. A modern nation-state is powerful only when it is secured against any foreign invasion. National interests are always conflicting because different nations pursue different measures and methods for their own security.

It ultimately boils down to power-conflict over security issue which is the main national interest of any modern nation state. The fourth chapter tries to answer the failure of the Disarmament Conference.

Our entire study revolves round two variables, security and disarmament. Both were interlinked. Disarmament, as we will see, was impossible without security. Had there been adequate security for France as well as Germany, a disarmament agreement would have been signed. Ultimately, though a scheme was evolved to guarantee security of France, the way the French wanted to pursue it, was not acceptable to Germany because by deferring her attainment of equality of status, this scheme would have endangered her security in the face of other hostile nations with heavy armaments. So a generally acceptable security plan should have been first devised as a prelude to disarmament talks. The League of Nations did not adopt this approach, but tried to proceed to disarmament directly which ended in failure.

The concluding chapter emphasizes the fact that security and disarmament are inter-linked. This is a conclusion which is relevant even today.



## Chapter I

### SECURITY AND DISARMAMENT: THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE OF 1919

A war ends in a treaty on a truce; but the restoration of peace is a different proposition. It depends on how much the parties involved are satisfied with a post-war settlement. But it is natural that in a post-war settlement, the defeated party is always dissatisfied. This was the real state of affairs in the inter-war period. The First World War had changed the entire international scenario, destroying the old mighty empires, and destabilizing the world economy and society. So the main task of the Paris Peace Conference was to systematize the emerging international order. The first step in this regard was the settlement with the defeated Powers. The Allies and victorious Powers, i.e., Great Britain, the United States of America, France, Italy and Japan, were unanimous that Germany was responsible for the war, and that it must pay for its guilt. This revengeful and antagonistic attitude of the victorious Powers dictated the terms of the treaty not only with Germany but also with Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary and Turkey who happened to be the allies of Germany. These treaties, collectively known as Paris Peace Treaties, virtually determined the course and content of international relations in the interwar period.

Of all the treaties, the Treaty of Versailles made with Germany, was the most important as it was made with the main

villain of international peace. Germany had to surrender her territorial possessions to the Allies in all directions, north, south, east and west. The territorial clauses of the Versailles Treaty involved the loss by Germany in Europe of more than 25,000 square miles of territory and nearly 7 million inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> Apart from this, the African colonies of Germany were taken away and turned into mandated territories under the League of Nations. The Treaty also made the Germans 'accept the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.' Because of this responsibility, Germany had to pay reparations as 'compensation for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allied and Associated Powers and their property.' The most important thing about the Treaty of Versailles is that it imposed permanent restrictions on Germany's military strength. Its main features were:

Germany to abolish conscription, reduce her army to 100,000 men with no heavy artillery, tanks or general staff. No air force.

The navy to be limited to six small battleships, six cruisers and smaller craft. No submarines.

---

1 E.H. Carr, International Relations between two World Wars (New York, 1967), p.9.

The Rhineland to be a non-fortified zone and to be occupied by the Allies (West of the Rhine) for fifteen years. Union with Austria forbidden.<sup>2</sup>

The Paris Peace had anticipated reduction of national armaments. This is well in evidence in the text of the Covenant of the League and the Treaty of Versailles. In the preamble to part V of the Treaty, it was clearly stipulated that in order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations, Germany undertook strictly to observe the military, naval and air clauses which followed. Thus, by rendering Germany crippled militarily, the Paris Peace makers had the pious desire to disarm all the nations.

Besides the Treaty of Versailles, the Allied and Associated Powers also concluded treaties with Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, the defeated allies of Germany.

With Austria was signed the Treaty of St. Germain. It registered the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and confined Austria to a small land as its territories were taken away to create new states of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

The peace-makers of 1919 fashioned the Treaty of Trianon with Hungary on the model of the Treaty of Versailles. Hungary

---

2 Stephen King-Hall, Our Times 1900-1960 (London, 1961), p.87.

was dismembered. New states of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia gained at the cost of the Hungarian territories. Some six hundred thousand men and women of Magyar race, some four and a half million of former subjects of the Hungarian crown, passed under alien domination.<sup>3</sup> The terms and provisions of the Treaty were so harsh and unequal that the Hungarians regarded the Treaty as the chief source of their sufferings and hardships since 1920.

The Treaty of Neuilly with Bulgaria confirmed its losses in the Second Balkan War (1913), and rendered it fully disarmed and economically crippled.

The Treaty of Sevres signed with Turkey was the last of the series of peace treaties concluded by the Allied Powers with Germany's allies. According to the treaty provisions, Turkey had to confirm all losses of territory back to the Balkan War. It had to surrender some territories to Greece and Italy. In addition to some other minor provisions, the Treaty of Sevres also put military and financial restrictions on Turkey. It is interesting to note that the Treaty virtually made Turkey dependent politically, economically and in every financial respect on the three great Powers of Western Europe, Great Britain, France and Italy.

---

3 H.A.L. Fisher, A History of Europe (Glasgow, 1976), vol.2, p.1268.

The Paris Peace Treaties as a whole, and the Treaty of Versailles in particular, were vindictive and harsh. "When the terms of the draft treaty were made known to the Germans, they were regarded as staggering in their severity and impossible of fulfilment. The whole scheme seemed designed to keep the country in perpetual subjection."<sup>4</sup> Hence, there was a general belief that the Treaty of Versailles was a 'diktat' -- a dictated peace. It was imposed on the defeated Germany, rather than negotiated by a process of give and take between the victors and defeated Powers. E.H. Carr observes, "Nearly every treaty which brings a war to an end is, in one sense, a dictated peace, for a defeated Power seldom accepts willingly the consequences of its defeat. But in the Treaty of Versailles the element of dictation was more apparent than in any previous treaty of modern times."<sup>5</sup>

The four other defeated Powers were no less dissatisfied with the treaty provisions imposed upon them. The critics viewed the whole Paris Peace settlement as punitive in nature. The author of 'Peace-Making 1919' Harold Nicolson, writes: "We arrived, determined that a Peace of justice and wisdom should be negotiated; We left it, conscious that the treaties

---

4 Ibid., p.1265.

5 Carr, n.1, p.4.

imposed upon our enemies were neither just nor wise."<sup>6</sup>

At the Paris Peace Conference, France was totally obsessed with her security from yet another German invasion. So she insisted and worked for complete subjection of Germany.

It is therefore natural that a sedulous propaganda put out by the vanquished Powers, and by Germany in particular, has led even responsible writers on international affairs constantly to condemn the settlement as a whole, and the Treaty of Versailles in particular, as a vindictive and fraudulent departure from the principles on the faith of which Germany had laid down her arms.<sup>7</sup> No doubt, there is some truth in this assessment of the Treaty of Versailles.

The Germans had surrendered on an understanding of President Wilson's Fourteen Points. But they were eventually forced to accept a dictated peace treaty which bore no relation to the lofty principles of the Fourteen Points.

As it is already pointed out, the Paris Peace Treaties soon became the fulcrum around which the international relations started moving. On the basis of these treaties, European states were divided into two blocs -- those which supported the status quo and those which were considered as revisionist powers. France was the chief protagonist of status quo as it

---

6 Harold Nicolson, "Peace-making 1919 -- A Critique", in Ivo J. Lederer, ed., The Versailles Settlement (Boston, n.d.), p.20.

7 G.M. Gathorne-Hardy, A Short History of International Affairs, 1920-1939 (London, 1968), p.17.

involved her security interests. The defeated Powers, particularly Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria, were wholly revisionists. The treaties had been imposed on them. They had no intention of accepting the terms and conditions as they were losers territorially, financially, and militarily. So their motive was to look for even the slightest opportunity to revise the treaties.

Thus, the period following the Paris Peace saw a new international order based on antagonism and incompatibility of status quo and revisionism. The relation between nation and nation came to be characterized by suspicion, revenge and opportunism. In this context, the problem of security became more complex. The status-quo Powers, and France in particular, were apprehensive of a resurgent Germany. No doubt, the Paris Peace was in large part, shaped by the desire to provide security against Germany. Even the German disarmament aimed at security and nothing else, despite the rider that it was instituted to make possible the disarmament of others. According to A.J.F. Taylor:

The problem of security became more acute because the peace of Versailles lacked moral validity from the start. It had to be enforced; it did not, as it were, enforce itself. No German accepted the treaty as a fair settlement between equals without victors or vanquished. All Germans meant to shake off at any rate some part of the peace treaty as

soon as it was convenient to do so. So Germany remained a source of potent threat. (8)

To counter this threat and as an instrument of peace, the League of Nations had been created. The last one of Wilson's Fourteen Points anticipated the League. It said: "A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike".<sup>9</sup> The League, at its inception, was expected to take care of the security of Europe. By that time, everybody had realized the magnitude of destruction and sufferings that a war could bring about. So war must be avoided, and this could be achieved only when war was renounced as an instrument of policy.

The new international order that emerged after the Paris Peace was to be free of war. "What was confidently expected, or at least not openly questioned, was the inauguration of a new era, in which nations and races, under governments of their own choosing, would unselfishly and automatically cooperate in the suppression of the first signs of an appeal

---

8 A.J.P. Taylor, The Origins of the Second World War (Middlesex, 1981), p.52.

9 C.K. Webster, The League of Nations in Theory and Practice (London, 1933), p.33.



to force."<sup>10</sup> So it was obvious that disarmament would preoccupy the mind of the Paris Peace makers. Disarmament was given so much emphasis because by that time scholars, historians, statesmen and even common men had recognized the piling up of armaments and the competition to which it led, as one of the chief causes of the First World War. During the war, there was a great deal of academic discussion of limitation of armaments. Even President Wilson adopted it as one of the Fourteen Points which read: "Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety."<sup>11</sup>

Thus, disarmament became the general concern of all those who were involved in the making of the peace settlement. It would destroy the instrument of war, hence a warless world be realized. This was the main motive behind the German disarmament clause. But the general expectation, as stated in the preamble to the part V of the Treaty of Versailles that the German disarmament would initiate a general limitation of the armaments of all nations, was beguiled. The real object of the German disarmament was to render Germany (and her allies) completely defenceless for the future on the assumption that the victors of the war retained the use of modern weapons. The naval clauses of the Treaty were based on a British draft,

---

10 Gathorne-Hardy, n.7, pp.60-61.

11 Webster, n.9, p.183.

the military and air provisions on a French draft. Each Allied Power had simply considered how they could remove as completely as possible any possible danger from their terrific foe, whom they had taken four years to overthrow inspite of a great superiority of men and resources. There was thus, no thought in the minds of those who prepared the drastic clauses of the Peace Treaties, of laying the foundation of a complete and scientific system of reduction and limitation of armaments which could be applied to all nations.<sup>12</sup> That is why, after some years, Hitler could charge the Allies of not showing any signs of carrying out their implied promise to disarm themselves. Therefore, said Hitler, the disarmament clauses of the Treaty were null and void.

The new international order was unstable. France, the chief spokesman of the status quo, started a neurotic search for security against Germany. Since 1870, and still more since 1914, France had been morbidly conscious of her weakness in the face of Germany. She had turned the tables on the victor of 1871. What could be contrived to prevent Germany one day turning the tables on the victor of 1918?<sup>13</sup>

---

12 Ibid., p.182.

13 Carr, n.1, p.26.

So from the very beginning, France insisted on sufficient guarantees against a future German attack. The League provisions were insufficient to give such a guarantee to France. In the Covenant of the League, there was no provision for creation of an international army nor even for the use of national contingents by the League. Again, the sanctions that the League provided for were not effective enough to deter the attacking nation. Due to all these reasons, France could not rely on the League for her security. Her feeling of insecurity increased when the United States failed to join the League.

"The French conception of security meant in practice that any increase in German military strength would be matched by an increase in French power."<sup>14</sup> France, however, was already close to having exhausted its own military potentials while Germany had not even begun to tap its resources, population and industrial potential, to mention only its two most spectacular and portentous military assets in view of its relations with France.<sup>15</sup> Under such circumstances when the League as a supra-national body was ineffective in guaranteeing security, France had to make her own arrangements. Her frantic bid for getting assurances against Germany was

---

14 Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (Calcutta, 1973), p.392.

15 Ibid.

well in evidence in her demand for a 'physical guarantee' -- the possession in perpetuity of the Rhine and its bridges across which any invader of France from the east must pass. But France had to compromise with this demand as the other Powers in the Paris Peace Conference resisted it. Then, she followed two separate and parallel methods: a system of treaty guarantees and a system of alliances. The first one failed as Great Britain did not give guarantee of security, but the second one succeeded as France could build up a system of alliances. She first forged an alliance with Belgium (1920) in the west, then with Poland (1921) in the east, and finally with the Little Entente States of Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia.

It is important to note here that not only France but also Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania were worried about their security problems. Poland was afraid of Lithuania; the Little Entente State feared Hungary as a threat to their existence; and Yugoslavia in particular was afraid of Italy.

Thus, there was an atmosphere of insecurity and hostility throughout Europe. So it is natural that disarmament should be linked with security problems. No nation was ready to disarm itself when its security was not guaranteed. As already mentioned, the League machinery was impotent for that

guarantee. Under Article 10 of the Covenant, member States of the League were required to undertake the responsibility of preserving the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all members. But this Article had been accepted with reluctance by Great Britain. Similarly, Articles 16 and 17 that had provided for sanctions or penalties against any State which resorted to war in disregard of its obligations were, in practice, ineffective as they required a unanimous vote of the members. Thus, from the very beginning, it was clear that the League could not provide necessary security to the European nations.

The League, however, undertook the task of disarmament which was a concomitant of security. This self-imposed task was the result of deep-rooted realization and conviction. It was not just the ordinary people, but also the statesmen who believed that if there had not been an arms race between the great Powers, there would never have been a world war. Armaments were seen as an unmitigated evil.<sup>16</sup> So not only the makers of the Paris Peace and of the League but also the ordinary people aspired for general and, if possible, total disarmament. This pious aspiration was expressed in Article 8 of the League Covenant which stated: "The members of the

---

16 George Scott, The Rise and Fall of the League of Nations (London, 1973), p.186.

League recognize that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations."<sup>17</sup> The same Article also provided that taking into account the geographical situation and circumstances of each State, the League Council was to formulate plans for arms reduction for the consideration and action of the Governments. A special clause was also inserted regarding the evils of the private manufacture of arms. Finally, another clause of the same Article asked the member States of the League to interchange full and frank information about their armaments and military industries.

The first step of the League for disarmament was the creation of a Permanent Advisory Commission. Article 9 of the Covenant provided that: "A Permanent Commission shall be constituted to advise the Council on the execution of the provisions of Articles 1 and 8 and on military, naval and air questions generally."<sup>18</sup> Accordingly, the Commission was set up in May 1920, consisting of military, naval and air experts. There were three technical sub-commissions namely, Military Commission, Naval Commission, and Air Commission.

---

17 See Appendix A.

18 Ibid.

The League Council asked the Permanent Advisory Commission to draft regulations on the military, naval and air forces of the member States and to request the States which had signed the Arms Traffic Convention of the Treaty of St. Germain to furnish information on their export of arms, and to submit proposals for the formulation of a Central International Office for the exchange of information as provided in the Convention.

The Permanent Advisory Commission survived till 1939. At its first meeting in August 1920, the Commission discussed among other things, the problem of asphyxiating gases, composition of the military, naval and air forces of the States which would be seeking admission to the League, and traffic in arms and munitions. The Commission had agreed that: (i) the employment of gases would be a fundamentally cruel weapon; (ii) it would be useless to seek to restrict the use of gases in wartime by prohibiting or limiting their manufacture in peacetime; (iii) the prohibition of laboratory experiment would be impracticable; (iv) the military, naval and air conditions of the member States of the League were unsettled; and (v) with regard to traffic in arms and munitions, a Central International Office as proposed by the Council would be of no use until the St. Germain Convention for the control of traffic in arms came into force. The Commission also undertook to consider practical methods which might be

employed for rapidly obtaining, when the Council should so decide, all information with regard to armaments, and also the principles on which the future plans for the reduction of armaments might be based.

The Commission adopted a purely negative attitude to all negotiations on limitation and reduction of armaments. It was hardly likely that members of the Commission would take the initiative for the reduction of their own forces, and they were more conscious than civilians of the great difficulties to be overcome.<sup>19</sup> However, one notable achievement of the Commission was the publication of the 'Armaments Yearbook' containing the military expenditure and military establishment of the member States of the League.

The failure of the Permanent Advisory Commission to achieve something tangible in the reduction of armaments prompted the League Assembly to set up another Commission which would really work for reduction of armaments. This Commission, called the Temporary Mixed Commission, was set up in 1921. It had some civilians as its members besides military experts, and all its members were selected by the League Council. It consisted of 6 persons of recognized competence in political, social and economic matters; 6 members of the Permanent Advisory Commission for naval,

---

19 Webster, n.9, p.185.



military and air questions; 4 members of the Provisional Economic and Financial Committee; and 6 members of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office -- 3 employers' representatives and 3 workers' representatives. It had three sub-commissions: (i) for the study of traffic in arms and manufacture of war materials; (ii) for the right of investigation and mutual control; and (iii) for statistical inquiry.

TH-2426  
 The League had also created a Disarmament Section within its Secretariat. Moreover, the respective Secretariats of the Permanent Commission and the Temporary Mixed Commission were amalgamated into one department. Prior to it, the Temporary Mixed Commission agreed that international traffic in arms rather than private manufacture of arms was the proper point at which to attack the problem.<sup>20</sup> In 1923, the League Council asked the Mixed Commission and the Economic Committee of the League for a joint inquiry into the question of a draft convention for the control of private manufacture, with a view to summoning an international conference in order to deal with it. The Mixed Commission also undertook the task of the exchange of information in regard to existing armaments. In July 1921,

20 Arnold J. Toynbee, Survey of International Affairs, 1924 (Oxford, 1925), p.19.

DISS  
 327.174  
 B3951 Po



TH2426

it appointed a sub-committee to organize an inquiry into the existing facts not only those of a statistical but also of a general and political order, and on the basis of this sub-committee's work, a programme was drawn up, and approved in September 1921 by the Second Assembly.<sup>21</sup>

In 1922, the British diplomat Lord Esher proposed a scheme of the Temporary Mixed Commission for the reduction of armaments. His main contention was that the problem of the arms race could be solved if national forces could be determined by the proportion of national needs. Lord Esher suggested an allocation to each European Power of a fixed number of units of 303,000 men in a defined ratio. But most of the members of the League did not accept Esher's proposal. They argued that there was no measuring yardstick to determine the national needs.

Lord Esher's plan was admittedly based on the precedent applied to naval disarmament at the Washington Conference of 1921-22, but the circumstances which enabled agreement to be reached on that occasion had little resemblance to those in which the European land forces had to be attempted.<sup>22</sup> In

---

21 Ibid.

22 Gathorne-Hardy, n.7, p.63.

Diss

V, 1, 19, (3T) N395-N19

M7

the case of the Washington Conference, national security and disarmament were brilliantly equated. Agreement was reached with prior consideration of possible danger-points and of the security of the parties involved. In the Washington Conference, the requirements of security were dealt with by the conclusion of a Four-Power Treaty and by the Nine-Power Treaty. But in the case of the League's efforts, and particularly in Esher's scheme, the problem of security was not taken into consideration.

Fortunately, it was gradually recognized by the League that disarmament and security were inseparable. Any proposal for disarmament on arms reduction must be accompanied by guarantees of security to the concerned countries. With this conviction, in 1922 Lord Robert Cecil submitted four proposals to the Temporary Mixed Commission.

His points were that no scheme for the reduction of armaments could be successful unless it were general; that, in the present state of the world the majority of Governments could not carry out a reduction of armaments unless they received satisfactory guarantees for the safety of their respective countries; that such guarantees should be general in character; and finally that there could be no question of providing such guarantees except in consideration of a definite understanding to reduce armaments. (23)

Lord Cecil's proposals were accepted by the League Assembly with certain modifications as Assembly Resolution 14.

Then the Assembly requested the Council to examine these proposals in consultation with the Mixed Commission. On the basis of the Assembly Resolution, two drafts were submitted to the Temporary Mixed Commission by Robert Cecil and Colonel Requin respectively; and after long and arduous negotiations, these were successfully coordinated in a single text. This text was laid by the Mixed Commission before the Assembly during its Fourth Session in September 1923, and transmitted by the Assembly to the Council with certain modifications and with the recommendation that it should be communicated to all Governments for their observations.<sup>24</sup> This text came to be known as the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance.

Stigmatizing aggressive war as an international crime, the draft Treaty made collective security as the basis of disarmament. It provided for the joint and several obligation to the signatories of the Treaty to assist the invaded State, but the latter must have conformed to the provisions of the Treaty regarding the reduction or limitation of armaments. Article 11 of the Treaty mentioned these provisions:

The parties were to inform the Council of the League of the reduction or limitation of

---

24 Ibid., p.22.

armaments which they considered proportionate to the security furnished by the general Treaty or by the defensive agreements complementary to the general Treaty; to cooperate in the preparation of any general plan for the reduction of armaments proposed by the Council; and to undertake to carry it out within two years (without making any subsequent increase except with the Council's consent) after it had been submitted to them by the Council and had received their approval. (25)

The other important provisions of the draft Treaty were that the Council would determine the aggressor, prescribe economic sanctions to be imposed on it, determine the forces which each nation furnishing assistance would place at the Council's disposal, and prepare a plan for financial and military help to the invaded signatory State. But there was a rider that military action must be confined to the States situated in the very continent in which such operations took place.

When the draft Treaty was submitted to the Governments for their consideration, the Soviet Union, Norway and Sweden did not concede to the principle of inter-relationship between the reduction of armaments and creation of an international organization for the prevention of war. So they rejected the Treaty. Some other countries, particularly the Allies of France in Eastern Europe, refused to accept the draft Treaty

on the ground that the guarantees provided in the Treaty were not sufficient enough to justify any reduction of armaments. "Finland further stated that signatories would not know how much assistance they could count on when estimating to what extent they could reduce armaments and that it was not clear how mutual assistance was to be organized."<sup>26</sup> Doubts were also raised in some quarters as to whether the provisions of the draft Treaty were in accord with the principles of the League Covenant. Another objection was against the provision of the Treaty that provided for voluntary, complementary regional alliances. This provision, if carried out, would have supplemented the main Treaty and increased its effectiveness by the formation of strong alliance systems particularly in regions where the danger of aggression might be acute.<sup>27</sup> But as it was feared that this provision might revive the pre-war system of hostile alliances, thirteen Governments refused to comply with such a provision regarding regional agreements.

The most decisive objection to the draft Treaty came from the United Kingdom and her Dominions. The British Government was not ready to extend her international commitments by accepting the draft Treaty. Moreover, the provision

---

26 Willard N.Hogan, International Conflict and Collective Security (Kentucky, 1955), p.46.

27 *Ibid.*, p.47.

of the Treaty for military action on continental lines would cut across the structure of the British Commonwealth. Arnold J. Toynbee observes:

The very fact that the British sea-power, and the territories of the British Commonwealth which sea-power linked together, extended into every region of the world, not only made the obligations inherent in the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance more extensive, though possibly less intensive, in the case of the British Commonwealth than in that of any other Member of the League, or group of members, but threatened to raise in a new and an acute form the difficult problem of the constitutional relations of the several members of the Commonwealth with one another. (28)

Other nations, like Germany, Italy and Japan, opposed the draft Treaty on various grounds. But it got full approval of France because it established a relationship between disarmament and security. Had this draft Treaty been finally operative, some amount of stability and order could have been brought to fluid, instable world situation. Unfortunately, the British rejection counted a lot because Britain was not only one of the greatest Powers of the world but also a great champion of the League cause. So ultimately the Treaty was rejected.

The League's quest for disarmament and security did not stop with the rejection of the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance.

---

28 Toynbee, n.20, p.27.

It was soon followed by a scheme for an alternative method in which security and disarmament would follow from a diminution of the dangers of war arising from compulsory arbitration of all disputes. The new scheme was based upon the formula: 'arbitration, security and disarmament.'

This scheme arose out of a debate in the Fifth Assembly in 1924. The British and French Prime Ministers, Ramsay MacDonald and M. Herriot respectively, contributed in the debate, to the evolution of this scheme known as Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, more commonly referred to as Geneva Protocol. It was actually drafted by M. Politis and M. Benes of Greece and Czechoslovakia respectively on the basis of a joint resolution proposed by MacDonald and Herriot. It was then unanimously adopted by the League (in 1924) which recommended all States to accept it.

The Protocol made the system of arbitration as its backbone. Arbitration was to breed security by closing the so-called gap of the League Covenant. The gap was that the League left the door open for war as a means of settling dispute "not only in cases when the Council, voting without the parties, failed to pronounce a unanimous judgement on a dispute, but also in cases where the subject of dispute was ruled to be a matter within the domestic jurisdiction of one of the parties."<sup>29</sup> In order to close this gap, the Protocol

---

29 Carr, n.1, p.90.



provided that all signatories to it would have to submit their disputes of legal character to the Permanent Court of International Justice whose decision was binding. If the dispute was within the domestic jurisdiction of one of the parties, the League had still the right to consider the case under Article 11 of the Covenant. The Protocol also provided an 'adequate and automatic' test of 'aggression' on the principle of arbitration. Aggression came to mean resort to war in violation of the procedures of peaceful settlement laid down in the Covenant and the Geneva Protocol.<sup>30</sup> This test did no more necessitate the unanimity of the League Council on the question of aggression. After the aggressor was designated, the Council would call upon the signatories to apply sanctions against the aggressor. Finally, the Protocol proposed for a Disarmament Conference on 15 June 1925.

The Protocol was a great victory for France. It strengthened the status quo of 1919 settlement by providing for the compulsory arbitration. And France was the greatest champion of the status quo. But Great Britain rejected the Geneva Protocol. She was not ready to accept the system of compulsory arbitration. Moreover, the British Government did not want to be entangled in new responsibilities by adopting the Protocol. Fresh classes of disputes were to

---

30 Hogan, n.26, p.53.

be decided by the League; fresh possibilities of defying its decisions were thereby created; fresh occasions for the application of coercive measures followed as a matter of course.<sup>31</sup> Another British objection to the Protocol was that the emphasis laid upon sanctions and elaboration of military procedure, as laid down in the Protocol, would make the League more as a preserver of peace by organizing war than as a promoter of friendly cooperation and harmony. The British Dominions too opposed the Protocol partly due to fear of interference with their domestic sovereignty in such matters as immigration, and partly due to apprehension of being involved in the application of sanctions. The Dominions did not like any European entanglement. So the rejection of the Protocol was inevitable. F.P. Walters enumerates four reasons for the British rejection of the Protocol: the opposition of the Commonwealth Members, fear of trouble with the States, a reluctance to underpin the territorial settlement of Eastern Europe, and the deep-seated dislike of the Foreign Office for compulsory arbitration.<sup>32</sup> As Great Britain and her Dominions firmly rejected the Protocol, it was abandoned like the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance.

---

31 Ibid., p.54.

32 F.P. Walters, A History of the League of Nations (London, 1952), vol.1, p.284.

Toynbee has made comparison between the draft Treaty and Geneva Protocol in the following lines:

In general, it may be said that while the draft Treaty concentrated attention and effort upon the second phase in an international dispute, the Protocol transferred the emphasis to the first phase. The draft Treaty was primarily concerned to secure a state which had reduced its armaments, the certainty of receiving precise, immediate, and effective military assistance in the event of its being attacked by another party. The Protocol was primarily concerned to provide exhaustively for the compulsory settlement of all international disputes, so that no loophole should be left for the waging of a 'private' war between States which would not be stigmatized and penalized as an act of aggression. (33)

In 1924, another effort of the League for the reduction of armaments met with failure. The Naval Sub-Commission of the Permanent Advisory Commission, met in Rome in February 1924 to consider the application of the principles reached in the Five-Power Treaty for the limitation of naval armaments in the Washington Conference. The lesser naval Powers in Rome were unwilling to reduce the tonnage of their capital ships in the proportion which had been agreed upon by the principal naval Powers at Washington. Moreover, the Powers that attended the Rome Conference were more concerned with the auxiliary crafts and especially with the submarines than with the capital ships to which the discussion in Rome was confined. Finally,

---

33 Toynbee, n.20, p.49.

the Rome Conference could not succeed because the discussion was limited to technical questions ignoring political ones. As political questions were not discussed, any concrete condition or term under which any scheme for the reduction of armaments would be carried out, could not be defined.<sup>34</sup>

Some other efforts of the League for the control of armaments also failed due to the reluctance of the member States to accept the resolutions presented. These were the convention on international trade in arms, munitions and implements of war, and the protocol forbidding chemical and bacteriological warfare. These two did not take anywhere as sufficient number of States did not ratify them.

No doubt, the League, since its inception, put all its efforts on bringing about a concensus on the reduction of armaments. As long as the question of security had not been tackled, France opposed all the efforts of the League. When security was made the *sine qua non* for the reduction, she cooperated with the League in its efforts. But the tragedy is that Great Britain and her Dominions then opposed the League's efforts because of their reluctance to undertake new obligations to ensure security. The problem of arms race and armament culture remained unsolved.

---

34 Ibid., p.78.

Chapter II  
PRELUDE TO THE WORLD DISARMAMENT  
CONFERENCE

Disarmament or arms reduction was not an isolated phenomenon in the inter-war period. It was intertwined with security which in its term, was the chief foreign policy objective of each European nation. All wanted to twist disarmament in accordance with their security needs without having genuine and sincere interest in it. This was the politics of disarmament. During that period, disarmament did not mean what the term actually connotes; it meant a process with security as its necessary concomitant.

After the failure of the Geneva protocol which was based on the principle of 'arbitration, security and disarmament', it became evident that universal acceptance of collective security was impossible. So regional arrangements were to be made as guarantees against dangers in particular regions. Up to 1925 the development of international organization through the League of Nations proceeded on the hypothesis that any war or threat of war was of concern to all members. During 1925-26, the viewpoint was adopted that some wars and threats were of more immediate concern than others, especially with respect to the members which would have to carry the chief burden of applying sanctions.<sup>1</sup>

---

1 Willard N. Hogan, International Conflict and Collective Security (Kentucky, 1955), p.59.

The same mood was expressed by the British Prime Minister Chamberlain when he announced in the League Council (1925) that security and disarmament could best be achieved by promoting special arrangements between those States whose relations with one another were most important for the preservation of peace.

But this sort of regional arrangement was opposed on the ground that it might encourage counter-alliances, thereby creating two hostile groups. The opposition was met only when both parties to a possible dispute could be combined in the same group, by a system of mutual guarantees against aggression and agreements for the peaceful solution of their differences.<sup>2</sup> The Locarno Pact, bringing together both France and Germany in the same group, became the first such regional agreement.

If Locarno marked the zenith of the Franco-German rapprochement in the post-World War period, the beginning of this process was the solution of the reparation problem. This knotty problem was solved, at least for the time being, by the Dawes Plan in 1924.

---

2 G.M. Gathorne-Hardy, A Short History of International Affairs, 1919-1939 (London, 1950), p.73.

The Dawes Plan had been prepared by the Dawes Committee headed by the American General Charles Dawes. Basing the whole scheme on the slogan "Business not politics", the Plan provided for a new currency, the Reichsmark, for the stability of the German economy. It was to be controlled by a Bank of Issue independent of the German Government. Thereafter, when a stable currency was established, the Plan provided, Germany would pay to the Allies amounts rising in five years from 1,000 million gold marks to 2,500 million marks. The security for these payments was made to the bonds of the German railways, the bonds of German industrial enterprises, and to the revenue receipts from the customs and the taxes on alcohol, sugar and tobacco. For the success of the Plan, the Dawes committee provided for the abandonment of the Ruhr occupation and for a foreign loan of 800 million gold marks to Germany.

The Dawes Plan met with spectacular success. The provisions of the Plan were implemented without delay. The proposed loan was sanctioned to Germany; a wave of prosperity swept over and Germany now started paying the Dawes annuities; and the foreign troops were withdrawn from Ruhr. Together with the reparation another vexed problem, i.e., inter-allied debts, was also solved as the United States promised to act as a creditor to the European countries.

The necessary corollary of this success in the economic front was a sense of prosperity and general well-being throughout Europe. It started a process of rapprochement between the Allies and Germany and improved understanding between Great Britain and France.

The conclusion of the Locarno pact thus became easier. By 1925, it was clear that France and her allies would not cooperate in any disarmament effort unless they were given definite guarantee of security against a revived Germany. At that time both the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Geneva Protocol had failed due to non-ratification. So, another machinery for security purposes was to be made. Of course, the failure of the Geneva Protocol made the Locarno agreements necessary and possible. "It is because without that initiative and preparation, and without that failure the Locarno treaties would not have been negotiated and signed except perhaps, after a long interval of debate."<sup>3</sup>

The genesis of the Locarno Pact can be traced back to a German proposal to France in 1922. It proposed a mutual pledge with the Powers interested in the Rhine, not to resort to war against each other for a generation. The United States was to be the 'trustee' of the agreement.

---

3 H.R.G. Greaves, The League Committees and the World Order (London, 1931), p.214.



But this proposal was rejected by France. The offer was repeated twice in 1924, but it was spurned everytime.

In 1925, when the European situation slightly improved due to the success of the Dawes Plan, France became receptive to any proposal guaranteeing her security. At this opportune moment, German Prime Minister Stresemann repeated the same proposal with some modifications. He proposed a four-sided pact of mutual security by which Britain, France, Italy and Germany would guarantee the Franco-German frontier.<sup>4</sup> This time, of course, Great Britain was ready to guarantee the Franco-German frontier. It would be in conformity with the traditional policy of the British and restricted to meeting a direct threat to the British strategic interests. After receiving the German proposal, France and Great Britain started talks in order to reach at a mutually agreeable reply to it. The French stand on the German proposal was made clear in a draft proposal. It had the following main points: Germany must enter the League of Nations with the same obligations and rights as others had; revision of the peace treaties could not be considered; Belgium must be included in the Rhineland Pact which must not affect existing provisions for the occupation of the Rhineland; arbitration

---

4 George Scott, The Rise and Fall of the League of Nations (London, 1973), p.113.

treaties should apply to any disputes whatever and should leave room for coercive action only in case of failure to observe the agreements to be concluded; it was necessary to have similar agreements with the eastern neighbours of Germany and all agreements were to be coordinated in a general convention to be placed under the auspices of the League of Nations. The British did not accept all conditions made by the French. It became clear in the British memorandum that any new obligation which she had to undertake must be specific and limited to the existing territorial arrangement on the Western frontier of Germany. The crux of the difference between the French and British governments was the question of whether the guarantees of security would be restricted to western Europe only or extended to the eastern Europe as well.<sup>5</sup> But at last both agreed that the parties to the proposed Rhineland Pact would have the option of becoming themselves the guarantors of arbitration treaties between Germany and her eastern neighbours. On other points of differences also, both made compromises. Thus, a joint Anglo-French stand on the German proposal was evolved.

When Germany came to know the terms and conditions of the Anglo-French proposal, she raised three major issues.

---

5 Hogan, n.1, p.62.

The first was the German anxiety not to preclude questions of revising the peace treaties; the second issue was the German apprehension about a possible unilateral determination to apply coercive measures for an alleged violation of one of the treaties or agreements; and the third was regarding the conditions of admission of Germany to the League of Nations.<sup>6</sup> Regarding the third issue, Germany demanded equality of status with other great Powers as a necessary condition for her entry into the League. She also opposed the linkage of the proposed Rhineland Pact with a settlement of her eastern frontiers with Czechoslovakia and Poland. Though the French reactions to these German claims and views were negative, negotiations favourably proceeded, and finally a conference was called at Locarno in Switzerland from 5 to 16 October 1925. Representatives of the German, Belgian, British, French, Italian, Polish and Czechoslovak governments laboured hard to hammer out agreements. The German terms and conditions were effectively dealt with.

Finally, the representatives at Locarno drafted and initialled a series of agreements in addition to a final protocol. Collectively known as the Locarno Pact, these agreements and treaties intended "to provide for the

---

6 Ibid., pp.63-64.

peaceful settlement of disputes of every nature which may eventually arise between them and to give these Powers supplementary guarantees within the framework of the covenant and the treaties in force."<sup>7</sup> The Locarno Pact comprised, besides the final protocol:

- i) A treaty of mutual guarantee of the Franco-German and Belgo-German frontiers between Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy.
- ii) Arbitration conventions between Germany and Belgium and between Germany and France.
- iii) Arbitration treaties between Germany and Poland and Germany and Czechoslovakia.
- iv) A Franco-Polish and Franco-Czechoslovak treaty for mutual assistance in case of aggression by Germany.<sup>8</sup>

In the treaty of mutual guarantee, known as the Rhinland Pact, the contracting parties collectively and severally guaranteed the inviolability of Germany's existing frontiers and the observance of the provisions of the Treaty of

---

7 Secretariat of the League of Nations, Ten Years of World Cooperation (Geneva, 1930), p.77.

8 Gathorne-Hardy, n.2, p.75.

Versailles regarding the demilitarized zone. The parties to the arbitration convention agreed for the settlement by peaceful methods of all disputes and the arbitration authority was given to the Council of the League and the Permanent Court of International Justice. The arbitration treaties were almost identical with the conventions except some phrases taken from the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance. Finally, the parties to the Franco-Polish and Franco-Czechoslovak treaties agreed to come to each other's assistance when any of them was attacked by Germany.

A collective note was also sent to Germany on the interpretation of Article 16<sup>9</sup> in response to the previous German claim for a special status in regard to this Article. It was also decided that the Locarno Treaties would be signed in London on 1 December 1925.

The Locarno Pact combined arbitration, conciliation, non-aggression and guarantees the features already contained in the League Covenant and the Protocol. "Every line of the Pact was based upon the Protocol or the Covenant. Every provision for its application depended in the last resort on

---

9 For this Article, see Appendix A.

action by the Council. What had been planned at Locarno could be fulfilled nowhere else than at Geneva."<sup>10</sup> Thus, though the Locarno Pact was made outside the League, it was placed within the framework of the League as the French had insisted all along. This was welcomed everywhere. "The Locarno compact is declared to have 'security and protection' as its objective, and is described as providing supplementary guarantees within the framework of the League of Nations. This is a good description; for the framework might be withdrawn altogether and the compact would still stand firm."<sup>11</sup>

The Locarno Pact brought about a temporary halt to the French quest for security. France got guarantee of her Rhineland boundary backed up by Great Britain and Italy. Moreover, she and her enemy entered the same group with mutual guarantees. It really removed the French apprehension about Germany. More important was the effect of the British guarantee. The British, of course, joined the Locarno Pact in their own defence interests. They undertook to guarantee the western frontier of Germany because it was vital for them strategically and military.

Economically, the Locarno Pact was supposed to bring

---

10 F.P. Walters, A History of the League of Nations (London, 1952), vol.1, p.291.

11 George W. Pepper, "Security, Real and Illusory: A Comment on the Locarno Compact", Current History (New York), vol.23, December 1925, p.313.

the unification of the Locarno Powers because by that time France and Germany had already realized how they were mutually dependent for iron ores and coal. The Locarno agreement, if carried to its logical conclusion, would result in breaking down the barriers of trade and prejudice until there was evolved a free-trade union of Europe, binding the nations of Europe into one economic unit that would cultivate the prosperity of their peoples, and make a new war an unthinkable crime.<sup>12</sup>

But, in a sense, the Locarno Pact also did harm to both the Versailles Treaty and the League Covenant. The provision and conditions worked out at Locarno encouraged the idea that the Versailles Treaty did not have binding force, if not confirmed by other agreements of voluntary nature. It also seemed to release States not directly involved in frontier disputes from the obligation to take military action in defence of these frontiers.<sup>13</sup> Some years after, all States of Europe actually started to act according to these ideas, thus killing the Versailles Treaty and the Covenant.

In spite of the long term adverse consequences of the

---

12 Norman H. Davis, "The Locarno Facts: Their Meaning to Europe and America", Current History, vol.23, December 1925, p.317.

13 E.H. Carr, International Relations between two World Wars (New York, 1967), p.97.

Locarno Pact, its immediate chief merit was that it brought about a sense of security and well-being in Europe. This sense increased with the entry of Germany into the League in September 1926. A peaceful era dawned on Europe where victors and vanquished now became equal collaborators. British Prime Minister Chamberlain remarked that the Locarno Pact was 'the real dividing line between the years of war and the years of peace.' He also talked about the 'spirit of Locarno' through which peace was to be established in Europe. As it was expressed in the final protocol of the Locarno Pact, by strengthening peace and security in Europe, would facilitate the implementation of the disarmament provisions in Article 8 of the League Covenant. The Locarno Pact "was only a beginning -- a first step towards an ultimate ideal when far wider regions, if not all the world, should have bound themselves similarly never to make war; when disarmament should have become universal and arbitration and conciliation alone should govern the relations of the nations with one another."<sup>14</sup>

Animated by the "spirit of Locarno", the League Council restarted its attempt for disarmament. The German entry into the League now made general disarmament a pressing need,

---

14 C.A. Macartney and others, Survey of International Affairs 1925 (London, 1926), vol.2, p.55.



and the obligation of the Covenant was there for fulfilment.<sup>15</sup> The Sixth Assembly that met in 1925 revealed two currents of opinion regarding the League's definite commitment for a general disarmament -- one that it would be preferable to await the results of the negotiation which led to the Locarno Pact, before the League Council committed itself too definitely to preparatory studies for the reduction and limitation of armaments; the other that, while deferring until the most suitable moment for the summoning of an international conference on disarmament, it was essential that the preliminary work should be done without delay.<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, the Assembly adopted a resolution inviting the Council to engage in preparatory studies so that a world conference might be called. The League Council set up a Preparatory Commission in December 1925 for the World Disarmament Conference. Prior to it, the Council had reformed the whole disarmament organization of the League. The authority of the Temporary Mixed Commission was taken away and entrusted to a new committee of the Council. It had ten members, and it was assisted by the Mixed Commission under a new name, the Coordination Committee. The latter now consisted of six members appointed by the Permanent Advisory Commission, the

---

15 Hogan, n.1, p.72.

16 Secretariat of the League of Nations, n.7, p.80.

Chairman and one member of each of the Economic, Financial and Transit Committees, and four members nominated by the Governing Body. When the Preparatory Commission came into being the Coordination Committee was substituted by a new Mixed Committee. Its duty was to act in an advisory capacity to the Preparatory Commission.

All the advisory committees of the Preparatory Commission were organized as follows: "(i) the Mixed Committee, having two members from the Economic, Financial and Transit Committees, two from the employers and two from the labour representatives on the Governing Body; (ii) a Special Sub-Committee A for military questions; (iii) a special sub-Committee B for economic questions; (iv) a Committee on Arbitration and Security which was to consider the measures capable to give all states the guarantees of arbitration and security necessary to enable them to fix the level of their armaments at the lowest possible figures in an international disarmament agreement."<sup>17</sup> The last Committee was an addition in 1927.

The Preparatory Commission consisted of representatives of all the States which were the members of the League Council. It also included six other states namely Bulgaria, Finland,

---

17 Greaves, n.3, pp.212-13.

Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, Poland and Romania because they were specially interested in disarmament. Later on, Germany became a member even before she entered the League. Other important members of the Preparatory Commission were the United States and Soviet Russia, both of them not yet members of the League. Thus, the Commission included both members and non-members of the League.

Though originally planned to hold the first session of the Preparatory Commission from 15 February 1926 at Geneva, it was postponed till May due to Russo-Swiss tension.<sup>18</sup> It was hoped that by May 1926, the Russo-Swiss differences would have been resolved. The postponement was further prompted by the expectation that, by May, the special Assembly would have completed its task of admitting Germany to membership of the League.<sup>19</sup> But as it turned out, neither of the Commission's object was achieved.<sup>20</sup>

So the first session of the Preparatory Commission opened without the Soviet representation. "It convened by resolution

---

18 As the Soviet delegate to the Lausanne Conference was murdered, the Soviet Union refused to attend a meeting on the Swiss soil.

19 Gathorne-Hardy, n.2, pp.176-77.

20 The Russo-Swiss negotiations for a settlement broke down in February 1926. Again, the special Assembly of March 1926 failed to admit Germany to the League with a permanent membership in the Council. So the Russian representation in the Commission and German entry to the League remained unsolved.

of the Council dated March 8, 1926, met at Geneva from 18-26 May 1926. It elected as Chairman H.E. Jonkheer J. Loudon and as Vice-Chairman, M. Cobian and M. Buero, delegates of Spain and Uruguay respectively."<sup>21</sup> The immediate task of the Commission was to consider and examine a list of questions submitted to it by the Council. These questions were on various aspects of armaments and disarmament, which contained mostly Anglo-French ideas. The French, with their characteristic emphasis on security, emphasized security-related topics. One such topic was the 'war potential' in all its aspects. It referred to industries, railways, raw materials, geographical situation and so on of a country. There is no doubt that a country with great industrial resources, raw materials etc. is potentially more capable of resort to war than one which does not possess them. So, owing to the French influence the question included not only the problems dealing with actual armed forces and armaments but also those linked with adjusting the war potentials of a country like industries and railways. Sub-Committee A examined all the questions and tried to answer them. But the military experts of each country, represented on the Committee, took different positions according to their respective national interests. "It would have been impossible

---

21 League of Nations, Official Journal (Geneva), July 1926, p.997.

to expect a body of men with vested interests in their country's armed services, and always conscious of the need to refer back on policy questions, to achieve unanimity, and all the reports' conclusions were hedged about by qualifications or positively contested by counter arguments."<sup>22</sup>

The report that finally came out in November 1926 showed wide range of differences on different aspects of armament like land armaments, naval armaments, air armaments, interdependence of armaments, budgetary limitation of expenditure, and supervision. On land armaments, one view, expressed by the American, British, Dutch, Finish, German, Spanish and Swedish delegation, was that reduction should be applied to all national forces available on mobilisation and trained reserves. The other view presented by the French, Argentine, Belgium, Czechoslovak, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Romanian, and Yugoslav delegations was that peace-time armaments or 'war potential' should be limited. On naval armaments, though the Sub-Committee recognized that only war-ships should be limited, there appeared two conflicting opinions -- one group favoured limitation of total tonnage, while the other advocated limitation by categories. On air armaments differences arose as to whether limitation should cover civil aviation or not.

---

22 Scott, n.4, pp.190-91.

Some delegations considered that all armaments were interdependent and limitation must be general; but others stood for separate conventions for separate armament. As for budgetary limitation of expenditure, some delegations favoured it while others did not accept it. A Committee of experts on budgetary question then drew up a uniform model statement showing the lines on which governments could submit their annual military budgets, so as to be sure that the returns of all Governments represented the same items of expenditure.<sup>23</sup> Regarding supervision of the execution of the proposed disarmament convention, it was unanimously decided to continue and improve the League Secretariat's publication, the 'Military Yearbook' for exchange of information.

In the context of these serious differences of opinion on different aspects of armaments, hopes for an early Disarmament Conference vanished. However, Sub-Committee B, had been considering, with the help of other sub-committees, such problems as model budgets, so that amounts spent by different countries could be compared and the chemical industry could be controlled.<sup>24</sup>

In December 1926, the Council, in response to a resolution

---

23 Secretariat of the League of Nations, n.7, p.100.

24 C.K. Webster, The League of Nations in Theory and Practice (London, 1933), p.191.

of the Seventh Assembly, instructed the Preparatory Commission to prepare for a Disarmament Conference in the near future. When the Preparatory Commission met again in March 1927, two alternative draft conventions were submitted, one by the British and another by the French. Both the drafts had no figures, but presented a broad framework designed to show what should be limited and how. The substance of the British draft was an agreement that the contracting parties would limit their armaments, air, land, and water, to a figure to be determined later, and not to increase them except in case of war, rebellion, or emergency. The basic idea of the French draft was the interdependence of three categories of armaments, air, land and water. The British and French drafts differed on the following lines:

On the question of military men, the French proposed to limit only men on service. But the British wanted to limit all trained personnel; on the question of military materials, the French wanted to limit military materials by the indirect means of limiting budgetary expenditure on it and the British deemed any limitation of military material impracticable; on the question of naval material, the French wanted only a limitation of the total tonnage of navies, but the British wanted separate limitation of each category of ship; on the question of budgets, the French wanted a limitation of

expenditure, but the British wanted the budgetary stipulations of any kind.<sup>25</sup>

In spite of these differences in proposals, the Preparatory Commission tried to amalgamate the drafts. Unanimity was reached on some matters though with reservations by delegations, but on many other points, only alternatives were recorded. This stage formed the first reading of the proposed draft Convention that was to be submitted to the Disarmament Conference. Thereafter, the Preparatory Commission was adjourned for six months hoping divergencies to be smoothed by diplomatic initiatives outside the League. Intimating the work of its third session (March-April 1927), the Commission submitted a report to the League Council in June 1927. It read:

The Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Commission examined, in the course of its third session, the reports submitted to it by technical Sub-Commissions with regard to the questionnaire it had been instructed to study. The Commission was of the opinion that these preliminary investigations were such as to permit it to undertake forthwith the study of a draft Convention. Its task was facilitated by the fact that preliminary drafts had been submitted to it by the British and French delegations. (26)

---

25 Carr, n.13, pp.178-79.

26 League of Nations, Official Journal, July 1927, p.860.



In order to reach an agreement on naval arrangements, the United States took diplomatic initiative by convening a naval conference at Geneva in June 1926. Though all the Naval Powers of the Washington Conference (1921) had been invited, France and Italy declined the invitation. So only the United States, Great Britain and Japan attended the conference. The purpose of the Conference was to apply the remaining categories of ships in precisely the same ratio as had been agreed upon at the Washington Conference with reference to large battleships. But the Conference broke down due to incompatibility between the British proposal, of 'absolute standard of requirement' and the American doctrine of 'mathematical parity and fixed ratios'. The participating Powers in the Conference discussed their naval needs in view of their national interests, unconsciously repeating in its most extreme form the French demand for security before disarmament to which they had listened with impatience and distrust in the Preparatory Commission.<sup>27</sup> In this case the conference was bound to fail without agreement. It cast a gloom over the Preparatory Commission that again met in November 1927.

At this session of the Commission, the Soviet Union took part for the first time. Maxim Litvinov, the chief

---

27 Walters, n. 10, pp.367-68.

Soviet delegate, first criticized the work of the Commission and the League, and proposed a scheme for absolute and universal disarmament within a period of four years. He also said that "he had full powers to sign an agreement along these lines and called upon the capitalist imperialist nations to show there and then whether all their past talk about disarmament had been sincere or mere rhetoric."<sup>28</sup> The examination of this Soviet proposal was deferred for the next session of the Commission in March 1928 at which the Soviet proposal was put in the form of a draft Convention. It was discussed and debated. The Commission found it unacceptable. The Soviet draft was impracticable because without creating any machinery for security, no nation would disarm itself or reduce its armaments. Moreover, it was condemned as a mere pretence. If the Russians truly wanted disarmament, they were first asked to make their contribution to international confidence. Some suggested that Russia should join the League first. To the same session of the Preparatory Commission, Litvinov submitted another scheme for the gradual reduction of armaments. But it was also rejected on the following grounds:

---

28 Scott, n.4, p.196.

"It took no account of the connection established by the Covenant between security and disarmament, it was founded on principles which had been rejected by the League organs sometime before it would necessitate a change of methods and it encroached upon the prerogatives of the future Disarmament Conference."<sup>29</sup>

The Commission continued to work for the preparation of a draft-Convention, the foundation of which was laid down in its third session. But there was no perceptible progress in this direction during the year 1928.

The basic problem of France and her allies, more particularly of the status quo Powers, was that they tried to link any question on disarmament or reduction with security. The virtual breakdown of the Preparatory Commission on the British and French drafts in 1927 marked the end of an attempt to find a solution for the problem of disarmaments in isolation from the problems of arbitration and security. So there was a proposal to go back to the Geneva Protocol of 1924 which would give sufficient guarantees of security to justify disarmament. But Great Britain was not ready to withdraw her opposition to the Protocol. However, it was widely felt that "it was useless to expect States to disarm

---

29 Secretariat of the League of Nations, n.7, p.106.

until they deemed themselves secure, and that it was therefore useless to discuss disarmament without exploring simultaneously all possible means of guaranteeing security."<sup>30</sup> So parallel to the Preparatory Commission's works, endeavours were made to work out some system of guarantee of security.

One result was the Briand-Kellogg Pact, popularly known as the Pact of Paris,<sup>31</sup> signed in August 1928. It was a Franco-American initiative, but there were fifteen original signatories to this Pact. Simply outlawing war, Article I of the Pact declared:

The High Contracting parties solemnly declare, in the names of their respective peoples, that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another.<sup>32</sup>

This was a voluntary renunciation of war. About sixty-five countries ratified the Pact with a pledge to renounce war as an instrument of national policy. It was a type of moral

---

30 Arnold J. Toynbee, Survey of International Affairs, 1928 (London, 1929), p.49.

31 For the origin, negotiation and conclusion of the Pact, see David Hunter Miller, The Peace Pact of Paris, Denys P. Myers, Origin and Conclusion of the Paris Pact, and Alfred Zimmern, The League of Nations and the Rule of Law.

32 Documents on International Affairs, 1931 (London, 1932), p.1.

declaration -- a new ethical attitude to war, but it contained no sanctions against an aggression. However, by outlawing war and by associating the United States in an international obligation for the collective organization of peace, the Pact of Paris did much to increase the feeling of security in Europe.

An important result of the League's endeavours was the General Act for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes that was adopted by the Ninth Assembly in September 1928. At the instance of the Eighth Assembly (1927), at its meeting on 30 November 1927, the Preparatory Commission had constituted a Committee on Arbitration and Security to consider measures for giving all States the guarantees necessary to enable them to fix the level of their armaments at the lowest possible figure.<sup>33</sup> The Committee was to promote, generalize and coordinate arbitration agreements. Its programme was divided into three parts: (i) arbitration and conciliation; (ii) security agreements; (iii) study of Articles of the Covenant. Its early task was the preparation of a series of model treaties and conventions for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Ninth Assembly adopted these treaties and conventions into the General Act for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. It had four chapters. The first

---

33 League of Nations, Official Journal, May 1928, p.610.

chapter provided exclusively for conciliation procedures; the second chapter in addition to conciliation provided for compulsory arbitration of legal disputes by the Permanent Court of International Justice or by an arbitral tribunal; the third extended judicial settlement and arbitration to all disputes without distinction; and the final chapter dealing with general provisions, allowed adherence to the Act to be either complete or partial.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the General Act provided for three sets of treaties. It intended to reduce the likelihood of war by the provision of alternative procedures and by promises of self-restraint in the use of forces. Though the signatories to the General Act were not many in number by 1939, it was no doubt a step forward in creating an environment of general security.

The work of the Preparatory Commission was, therefore, expected to be easier; but in reality it could not proceed on its given task of preparing for the World Disarmament Conference because the Commission could not produce a draft Convention to be placed before the Conference. The differences of opinion that had hindered a consensus for a draft could not be removed by diplomatic initiatives.

---

34 For reports and discussions on the General Act and accompanying draft agreements, see League of Nations, Official Journal, May 1928, pp.610-706.

The first such diplomatic initiative was an Anglo-French private arrangement in 1928 so as to reach an agreement on the treatment of land and sea forces. "The gist of this was that in consideration of the withdrawal of the British opposition to the French standpoint in regard to trained reserves, France was prepared to accept a naval limitation by categories..."<sup>35</sup> But this arrangement was not accepted by other Powers, especially Germany and the United States.

The vexed question of naval armaments which was a major source of contention in the Preparatory Commission was solved in the London Naval Conference of 1930. Compromises were arranged and an agreement was reached on the limitation of naval armaments in all categories. Following the British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald's visit to the United States in 1929, the Naval Conference in London was convened to which France, Italy and Japan were invited besides the Anglo-American participation. There were some obstacles in the Conference that prevented agreements. These were: the French rejection of the Anglo-American proposal for the extension to non-capital ships of the Washington ratios; Italian claim to parity with France; and Japan's dissatisfaction with the

---

35 Gathorne-Hardy, n.2, p.185.

inequality imposed by the Washington Treaties and her claim to parity with Great Britain and the United States in all categories. But substantial agreement upon certain important points was reached. Finally, a treaty was signed in April 1930. A notable achievement of the London Conference was an agreement on the method to be applied for the limitation of naval armaments. This was found in the so-called 'project transactional', that is "it provided for the basis of limitation to be total or 'global' tonnage, not tonnage by categories, but each Power was to make known the amount of tonnage that it proposed to allocate to each category and there was to be freedom, within certain limits and on certain conditions to transfer tonnage from one category to another."<sup>36</sup> Other areas of agreement were regulation of submarine warfare; extension of the Washington Treaties for another five years; a limit on the tonnage and gun calibre of submarine and a regulation on capital ships. Besides these common areas of agreement, there were some other areas in which Italy and France could not reach agreement. The fleets, therefore, could not be stabilized. Yet, the London Conference marked a great advance. It encouraged the Preparatory Commission to tackle the problem of land and air armaments.

---

36 Ibid., p.192.



The convening of a World Disarmament Conference had already been too late. The world public opinion pressed for it. From 1928, there was a popular campaign in favour of disarmament in every continent. "The Preparatory Commission found awaiting in an immense sheaf of resolutions forwarded by bodies representing the Churches organized labour, women's movements and peace movements all over the world both international and national."<sup>37</sup> All emphasized the deep and growing sense of danger caused by the continued failure of the Commission, and demanded that there should be no further delay. In the face of such pressing world public opinion, the Commission could no more delay. Again, in its session of April 1929, there was clear sign of readiness on the part of France, Great Britain, the United States, and Italy to compromise on methods and types of limitation. This was due to improved mutual understanding and guarantees of security. So, the Commission was to finish its work soon for a world conference.

When the Preparatory Commission met in November 1930, it succeeded in concluding its labours by the adoption of the draft Disarmament Convention, the work on which had started in

---

37 Walters, n.10, p.373.

March 1927. This paved the way for convening a World Disarmament Conference. But it must be pointed out that when the Preparatory Commission met in 1930, there was a changed situation in the world and it really undermined the whole basis of the Commission's work. Herr Stressman was dead; the Nazi Party was predominant in Germany which was no longer ready to acquiesce in the Versailles settlement, while other countries refused to disarm. On the economic front, the post-war economic balance was shattered by the Great Depression. Finally, the growth of totalitarianism in Germany, Italy and Japan changed the political scene, threatening world peace.

The Preparatory Commission had produced a draft Convention<sup>38</sup> to be placed before the World Conference. On the whole, it was no more than a method, the actual figures being left to the Conference to decide. There remained disagreement on many points. So the Convention was passed not by unanimous vote, but by a majority. "The USSR and Germany found themselves forced to vote against it, the first because the Convention did not go far enough to meet the expressed Soviet desires and the second because no provision was included for the termination of Germany's inequality of status in the matter of disarmament imposed upon her by the Treaty of Versailles."<sup>39</sup> The Swedish

---

38 For the entire text, see Appendix B.

39 Documents, n.32, p.17.

and American delegates also expressed their disappointment over the Convention. Nevertheless, the convention, in providing for a method of limitation of all forces for the world, marked a definite step in the direction of disarmament.

The Convention had five chapters. The first chapter dealt with effectives, the second with materials, the third was on annual budget expenditures, the fourth on chemical warfare, and the fifth chapter contained miscellaneous provisions. The Convention inserted the provisions of the London Naval Conference in laying down the limitations for naval armaments. With regard to land and air armaments, the Convention left blanks to be filled up by the Conference. An innovative feature of the Convention was that it introduced budgetary limitations to be applied to the total expenditure on land, sea and air forces. It also provided for the establishment of a Permanent Disarmament Commission with the general duty of supervising the implementation of the Convention and investigating any case in which one country might complain that another was not keeping within the prescribed limits.

The draft Convention was, by no means, a general agreement. Moreover, it had some obvious limits. It did not contain the actual figures which the armed forces were not to exceed; it provided no limitation of trained reserves; with regard to land armaments, it limited the cost of acquiring war

materials in the future, but left existing stocks untouched; and as for air armaments, it limited the number and horsepower of first-line planes but not those in reserves.<sup>40</sup>

The German protest against the Convention mostly stemmed from Article 53.<sup>41</sup> It provided that the Convention would not affect the obligations by which signatory States were already bound. The French and their allies interpreted it to refer to the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles. This was an attempt to keep Germany a permanent disadvantage while allowing France and others to remain heavily armed. The German delegate Bernstoff was immediately recalled by the Nazi Government.

Except for France and her allies, almost all nations were dissatisfied with the Convention. Yet, it was finalised and adopted at the end of the Preparatory Commission's session in order to be placed before the World Disarmament Conference the date for which was fixed for 2 February 1932.

---

40 Walters, n.10, p.441.

41 See Appendix B.

### Chapter III

#### THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE, 1932-34

By 1932, when the first World Disarmament Conference was held, the preliminary preparation for it had been finished with the adoption of the Draft Convention in 1930. At that time, there had already started a world-wide campaign for disarmament. In Great Britain, a disarmament movement was inaugurated by Mr Henderson, President-Elect of the World Disarmament Conference. Thereafter, churches and religious institutions carried out the movement. Another phase of the movement was represented by the British signatures -- numbering over two million -- which were affixed to an international declaration in support of disarmament put forward, in the first place, by the Women's International League.<sup>1</sup> This declaration which was intended to be presented before the Disarmament Conference, was circulated in forty different countries. In the United States, peace-lovers pressed President Hoover to use all his influence to make the Conference a success; they also arranged meetings on disarmament. In Italy, Mussolini himself declared the necessity of disarmament in the contemporary world. How the public opinion was surcharged with a sincere desire for disarmament became apparent when the Disarmament Conference began with a reading session of petitions, messages and manifestations sent by different organized bodies of the world.

---

1     Arnold J. Toynbee, Survey of the International Affairs, 1931 (London, 1932), p.290.

The disarmament movement got a boost when the people actually came to realize economic evils of armaments. The Great Economic Depression was an eye-opener. As the Governments reduced expenditures on all fronts except on defence establishments to cope with this economic crisis, the enormous costs of defence and armaments came under attack. "It began to seem senseless to divert an ever-increasing proportion of a nation's ever-decreasing supply of resources to the unproductive purposes of military preparedness while business failed, banks closed their doors and the unemployment lines lengthened."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, all sensible individuals and nations desired for an agreed general disarmament so that the world economic order could be streamlined.

Finally, the Disarmament Conference was facilitated by an Armaments Truce, originally proposed by Italy in the League Assembly of 1931. According to the Truce:

The Assembly requests the Governments invited to the Disarmament Conference to prepare for this event by means of an armaments truce and accordingly, requests the Council to urge the Governments convened to the said Conference to give proof of their earnest desire for the successful issue of the efforts to ensure and organize peace and, without prejudging the decisions of the Conference or the programmes

---

2 William R. Keylor, The Twentieth Century World (New York, 1984), p.144.

or proposals submitted to it by each Government to refrain from any measure involving an increase in their armaments. (3)

By 1 January 1932, the Armament Truce had been accepted by fifty-four nations including the United States and the Soviet Union. The Secretary-General of the League announced that the Truce had been accepted for one year as from 1 November 1931 by the Governments invited to the Conference.

Amidst such a favourable international situation, the World Disarmament Conference<sup>4</sup> as scheduled before, opened at Geneva on 2 February 1932. Its sessions continued till May 1937. It had two distinct phases, the first phase covering the entire 1932, and the second phase spanning the rest of the Conference period till May 1934.

## I

The World Disarmament Conference was attended by the delegations of fifty-nine nations though invitations had been sent to sixty-four nations. It was a very comprehensive gathering with many statesmen and experts. In the words of F.P. Walters, "By the eminence of the principal delegates;

---

3 League of Nations, Official Journal (Geneva), January 1932, p.134.

4 For a first-hand account of the Conference, see, A.C. Temperley, The Whispering Gallery of Europe (London, 1938).

by the numbers and qualifications of their expert advisers; by the importance for the whole world of the work they had assembled to perform; by the public interest, as shown by the crowds of journalists who reported its proceedings; it was at least the greatest since the Peace Conference of Paris."<sup>5</sup>

The President of the Conference was Arthur Henderson, who had been the Foreign Minister of the United Kingdom.

Though the whole world had eagerly waited for the Conference with high hopes that a universal multilateral disarmament convention would be signed, the Conference had a very ominous beginning. Three critical and dangerous developments cast their shadow over the Conference -- the Far-Eastern conflict resulting in the Japanese invasion of Manchuria; the steady rise of aggressive nationalism in Germany in the garb of Nazism; and the financial catastrophe that had fallen over Europe due to the Great Depression.

However, the immediate task of the Conference was to set up a machinery for its smooth functioning. First, it appointed itself as the General Commission for working purposes. Then, it set up five commissions to discuss the details of the proposals made. These commissions were to grapple separately

---

5 F.P. Walters, A History of the League of Nations (London, 1952), vol.2, p.501.



with the questions relating to Land, Naval, Air armaments, Defence Expenditures and Political Issues. Later on two special committees were appointed, one on Moral Disarmament and the other on Bacteriological and Chemical Warfare. The whole machinery was kept under the direct supervision of a Bureau of fifteen, consisting of representatives of all the Great Powers.

For the first few days, the Disarmament Conference held plenary sessions in which all principal delegates took part. At first, the Draft Disarmament Convention, the product of five years work by the Preparatory Commission, was the basis of deliberations, but it was soon abandoned as new proposals came in.

The first country to submit a proposal to the Disarmament Conference was France. Its objective was the organization of a system of security which would remove from the French mind the fear-psychosis of invasion. So security would precede disarmament. This was consistent with her professed policy<sup>6</sup> spelt out repeatedly after the Paris Peace. The chief French delegate Andre' Tardieu, presented the proposal, "for placing civil

---

6 France's official attitude towards the Disarmament Conference was stated at length in a memorandum issued on 20 July 1931. It reiterated the French claim for 'security first'. In the League Assembly of September 1931, M. Briand also expressed the same view.

aviation and bombing aircraft, and also certain material of land and naval forces, at the disposal of the League of Nations; for the creation of a preventive and repressive international force; for the political conditions upon which such measures depend; and lastly, for new rules providing for the protection of civil population."<sup>7</sup> The salient features of the French proposal were: internationalization of civil aviation under a regime to be organized by the League; Limitation of bombing aircraft; creation of an international police force under the League to prevent war and to aid the victim of aggression; and framing of rules for the protection of civil population. The proposal also asked for strengthening the general system of security by compulsory arbitration, identification of aggressor, an efficient organization of sanctions, and by their extension to cover breaches of the Disarmament convention as well as of the Covenant. The whole French plan put more emphasis on security than disarmament -- a harking back to France's old plans and demands.

But it met with immediate opposition. No nation was ready to endorse the reorganization of the League Covenant system with additional commitments, as the French plan suggested.

---

7 IX Disarmament, 1932, IX.25 (League of Nations Publication), p.23.

The United States and Great Britain in particular were opposed to any idea of supra-national police force. Then, Germany strongly opposed the French plan because it said nothing how to change the conditions imposed on her by the Versailles Treaty. The general feeling in the Conference was that the French plan was a manoeuvre to perpetuate her own armaments while denying the same to Germany and other revisionist Powers. So this plan could not advance further.

The British and American delegates did not lag behind in submitting their proposals to the plenary session of the Conference. Their proposals made a seminal contribution to the evolution of the concept of 'qualitative and quantitative disarmament'. The British delegate, Sir John Simon, drew a distinction between the two methods of limiting armaments, known as qualitative and quantitative. The first was the exclusion of certain defined weapons or methods from use in warfare by international agreement; and the second was the method of fixing maximum limits beyond which the nations would not go. The British proposal emphasized qualitative disarmament, i.e., total prohibition or cutting-down of offensive weapons. It stated that "special attention should be directed to such prohibitions or limitations as will weaken the attack and so remove temptation for aggression, and to methods of warfare which are specially liable to cause

injury to non-combatants."<sup>8</sup> The American delegate, Gibson, also dwelt on qualitative disarmament, and suggested a new criterion for limiting the number of men under arms by allowing to each nation a fixed and absolute contingent for internal order and defence.

In the plenary session, the Russian delegate Litvinov criticized the French plan, and repeated the Russian plan for the abolition of all armaments. But it got lukewarm support.

Germany, with her claim for equality, presented a new plan for the reduction of armaments. She had rejected the Draft Convention of 1930, as mentioned in the previous chapter. But the Germans had promised at the Disarmament Conference that they would cooperate with other countries in reaching the right way to disarmament. It is in that spirit that the German delegate presented a long and detailed scheme. Germany and the three other defeated Powers had implemented the disarmament provisions, according to the Paris Peace whereas others were yet to begin the process. The German plan laid down a principle for disarmament: "There can be only one system of disarmament in future which must be equally applicable to all countries; such a system would produce an equitable and effective solution of the problem of disarmament if armament figures to be incorporated in it for all countries were fixed

---

8 Documents on International Affairs, 1932  
(London, 1933), p.159.

at the possible level."<sup>9</sup> On the basis of this principle, the plan provided a detailed scheme as to reduction of land forces, naval forces, and air forces. As to land forces, it provided for voluntary recruitment of personnel, forbade to maintain and use different size-guns in outside and inside fortresses and field-works, and prohibited tanks of every kind. Regarding naval forces, the plan provided that the maximum tonnage of the various types of vessels would be reduced simultaneously with a proportional reduction of tonnage; that submarines would be abolished, and that naval personnel were to be recruited only by voluntary enlistment. As to airforces, the German plan prohibited air force of everykind as well as military aviation. There were also some general provisions in the plan that included among other things, complete prohibition of chemical arms, check on traffic in arms, and full and frank exchange of information as to armaments.

The German claim for equality came to be the insurmountable obstacle to progress of the Disarmament Conference. Of course, it was natural for a nation already disarmed that its concern would be less with the extent to which other nations reduced their forces than with the disparity between their position and its own.<sup>10</sup>

---

9 IX.Disarmament, 1932, n.7, p.30.

10 G.M. Gathorne-Hardy, A Short History of International Affairs 1920-1939 (London, 1968), pp.348-49.

Italy accepted the German claim for equality, but rejected the French demand for fresh guarantees of security before disarmament. She proposed a plan for total abolition of all types of the most destructive armaments, whether on land, or sea or in the air. It went a long way towards meeting the Russian proposal.

Other notable proposals to the plenary session of the Disarmament Conference were those of Poland, Turkey and Spain. The Polish proposal for 'moral disarmament'<sup>11</sup> was taken up for study by a special committee of the Conference. The Turkish and Spanish proposals raised the question of trade in and manufacture of arms, and this was also taken up for study by a special committee.

During the plenary session of the Conference that continued till 24 February 1932, altogether nineteen proposals were submitted for discussion. Making an assessment of these proposals, Toynbee writes that these were guilty of intending to serve the special and vested interests of their authors than to provide a basis for common agreement.<sup>12</sup>

Though all these proposals differed widely, there was a

---

11 It referred to reforms in national legislation, broadcasting, cinema, theatre etc.

12 Arnold J. Toynbee, Survey of International Affairs, 1932 (London, 1933), p.208.

common ground that all armaments fell into two main groups, offensive and defensive. In the proposals of France, Great Britain etc., this distinction was very much prominent. About thirty countries announced their acceptance of the concept of the abolition of offensive weapons. Thus, qualitative disarmament gained credence in the Conference which broke for an Easter recess after February 24. But it took some more days for the Conference to proceed definitely on the line of qualitative disarmament.

After the plenary session was over, the Disarmament Conference requested the General Commission to proceed to a preliminary study of all the proposals, and then to coordinate them with the Draft Convention of 1930. Accordingly, the Commission prepared a coordinating table which was published on 8 March 1932. Some questions were also framed which were referred to the General and Political Commissions. The General Commission immediately requested the technical commissions to consider these questions. But nothing substantial came out of these attempts.

When the Disarmament Conference reassembled in April 1932, the American delegate presented fresh proposals for qualitative disarmament. France opposed it and demanded 'security first' before any consideration of disarmament or reduction of arms.

But the Conference at last approved the principle of qualitative disarmament, i.e., the selection of certain classes on descriptions of weapons the possession or use of which should be absolutely prohibited by a convention. Then the problem was to identify these classes of weapons which mostly led to offensive warfare. The General Commission entrusted this task of defining the offensive weapons as distinct from defensive weapons, to the Land, Naval and Air Commissions. They were asked to identify these weapons whose character was the most specifically offensive or most effacious against national defence or most threatening to civilians.

But all the three Commissions failed in their work. In each Commission, the military experts could not reach a concensus as to offensive weapons. They were vigilant that their own countries suffered no reduction in military strength. So they tried to prove weapons offensive or defensive in the light of their national interests. They considered as defensive the categories of armaments that were suited to their own country's needs, and as offensive those that did not. In the Naval Commission, for example, the British and American experts argued to prove battleships and air-craft carriers as defensive, but submarines as offensive. To France, submarines were defensive and not injurious to civilians. Many lesser naval Powers treated battleships and air-craft carriers as offensive.



In the Air Commission, conflict was acute over the nature of fighting aeroplanes. The Land Commission was virtually divided into three factions over tanks. One faction, comprising Germany, Italy, the Soviet Union and the Scandinavian countries, considered all types of tanks as offensive weapons; Britain and her Dominions maintained that only heavier tanks were offensive; and France and Japan considered those tanks as offensive which were capable of hitting modern fortifications of medium strength.

Due to these conflicting opinions, the three Commissions could not produce unanimous reports. This result was intimated to the General Commission in June 1932. The special Committee on the Bacteriological and Chemical Warfare, however, gave an unanimous report. It recommended that the qualitative method of disarmament should be "applied to the use of all natural or synthetic noxious substances; to appliances, devices or projectiles specially constructed for the use of such noxious bodies; to all methods for the projection, discharge or dissemination in any manner of pathogenic microbes or of infected substances; to projectiles specifically intended to cause fires and; to appliances designed to attack persons by fire, such as flame-projectors."<sup>13</sup> The work of other committees like National Defence Expenditure Commission, Moral Disarmament

---

13 Toynbee, n.12, p.231.

Committee and Committee on Effectives was not encouraging during this time. However, they also submitted their reports to the General Commission in the second week of June.

The cause of the failure of the three service Commissions to reach any agreement was that they contained military experts. Agreement on such complex issues required the presence of political representatives who were conspicuous by their absence.<sup>14</sup> In the words of F.P. Walters:

By the mid-June 1932, the Disarmament Conference was totally bogged in a morass of technical obstacles and complications which were all the more paralysing in that they were for the most part not really technically at all, but forward to block the concrete suggestions for reduction of existing armaments. (15)

On 22 June 1932, President Hoover presented totally a new set of proposals to a specially summoned session of the General Commission. This plan intended to approach the disarmament problem on the basis of five principles. These were:

- i) " The Briand-Kellogg Pact to which we are all signatories can only mean that the nations of the world have agreed that they will use their arms solely for defence.
- ii) The reduction should be carried out not only by broad general cuts in armaments, but by increasing the comparative power of defence through decreases in the power of the attack.

---

14 C.K. Webster, The League of Nations in Theory and Practice (London, 1933), p.200.

15 Walters, n.5, p.508.

- iii) The armaments of the world have grown up in mutual relation to each other; and, speaking generally, such relativity should be preserved in making reductions.
- iv) The reductions must be real and positive. They must effect economic relief.
- v) There are three problems to deal with land forces, air forces, and naval forces. They are all inter-connected. No part of the proposals which I make can be dissociated one from the other."<sup>16</sup>

Based on these principles, Hoover proposed reduction of the armaments of the world by one-third. But this reduction would be applicable to the forces, over and above the force needed for internal police duties. Hoover, thus divided national forces into 'police component' and 'defensive component', and applied the formula of one-third cut to the latter. His plan also envisaged the abolition of all tanks, all chemical warfare, mobile large-calibre guns and bombing plans.

The Hoover proposal reflected the American attitude in the matter of naval disarmament, that is to say, it worked out a simple mathematical proportion which paid very little attention to obstacles of a practical nature.<sup>17</sup> During that time, the

---

16 Documents, n.8, p.169.

17 Gathorne-Hardy, n.10, p.348.

existing ratios of forces between different countries represented varying capacity for aggression, as in some cases, the forces had already constituted minimum defence component, while in others they were too large.<sup>18</sup> So it was irrational and unscientific to reduce all by the same percentage.

The Hoover proposal, as the American delegate Gibson remarked, was clear, self-contained and comprehensive. It was in accordance with the trend of debates at Geneva for it incorporated features like prohibition of air bombardment and other types of weapons that had been suggested by several delegates to the Disarmament Conference. In accordance with this proposal, the United States was ready to destroy a large number of tanks, heavy guns, and bombers that she possessed in her armoury.

Italy and Russia accepted the American plan without any qualification. France objected to it as it did not mention anything about security. To the French objection, the American reply was that the adoption of the plan would in itself provide a sufficient guarantee of French security by maintaining existing relative strength. Germany accepted the plan as it seemed to fulfil her demand for equality, but she also wanted some modifications. Japan opposed the plan in toto. But the

---

18 Ibid.

British opposition was the most vocal. Though there was much support in some sections of the British opinion, the Government gave a cool reception to it. The American plan meant that the British Empire had to do most of the sacrificing, at least in cruisers. The British Government published a declaration on 7 July 1932 suggesting some new proposals for naval and air disarmament.

Due to these conflicts of interests, the Hoover proposal could not make advance in the Conference. Now the mood at the Conference was one of frustration and intense irritation at the delay in reaching any agreement. The American, British and French delegates proposed that the Disarmament Conference should adopt a resolution summing up the progress made so far.

Accordingly, a resolution<sup>19</sup> was prepared and submitted to the Conference on 20 July. It was divided into five parts, the first of which was the preamble. The rest four were named respectively: 'Conclusions of the First Phase of the Conference;', 'Preparation of the Second Phase of the Conference', 'General Provisions', and 'Armaments Truce'. The resolution expressed firm determination of the Conference to achieve substantial reduction on the basis of Article 8 of the League Covenant and as a sequel to the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Then it decided:

---

19 For the text, see, Documents on International Affairs, 1932, pp.178-83.

- i) That a substantial reduction of armaments shall be effected to be applied by a general convention alike to land, naval and air armaments.
- ii) That a primary objective shall be to reduce the means of attack.<sup>20</sup>

The resolution also noted agreements reached on various aspects of air and land-disarmament. Finally, it requested the Bureau to continue its work of examining various problems during the adjournment so as to facilitate the next session of the Conference.

The resolution was passed by forty-one votes; eight countries (including Italy) abstained, and two (Germany and Russia) voted against it.<sup>21</sup> Those voting for it were not satisfied because of absence of any achievement to record. They regarded the resolution as a failure of the Conference's efforts for disarmament.

Germany's refusal to vote for the resolution was the outcome of her insistence for recognition of her claim to equality. Germany had, all along, insisted that the other

---

20 Documents, n.8, pp.178-79.

21 E.H. Carr, International Relations between the Two World Wars, 1919-1939 (New York, 1967), p.186.

Powers must either reduce their arms to the Versailles level or recognize her right to re-arm. When the resolution was put forth in the Conference, the German delegate Nadolny not only voted against it but also announced that his country would not participate in the further work of the Conference until the principle of equality of rights had been definitely recognized. Germany's claim for equality had been more vociferous with the installation of Papen's Government. Italy supported the German claim and the Italian delegate Balbo abstained from voting on the resolution. Henceforward, Italy's policy became more and more harmonized with that of Germany. It now became a matter of serious concern for France which feared concerted action between Germany and Italy.

After adoption of the resolution, the Disarmament Conference broke for a recess. On 16 September, the German Government made the official notification of its withdrawal from the Conference. It was followed by a British note to Germany which strongly criticized Germany's claim to equality and challenged the legal correctness of Germany's interpretation of the disarmament provisions of the Versailles Treaty. But Germany remained unyielding. So when the Disarmament Conference re-assembled in October, Germany's seat lay vacant. But the Conference referred to the Bureau the questions raised by the July resolution. Due to the absence of the German

delegate, the Bureau soon found itself faced with a deadlock which prevented all progress.

In this hopeless situation, the only noteworthy feature was a new French proposal for security. It was presented by France in view of the rising German menace. It also intended to make some concessions to the German demand for equality. Regarding the organization of security, this proposal divided the States of the world into three concentric circles. The outermost circle would comprise all the Powers represented at the Conference. These Powers would be called upon to establish in an effective manner the following principles:

- a) Any war undertaken in breach of the Paris Pact is a matter of interest to all the Powers and shall be regarded as a breach of the obligations assumed towards each of them;
- b) In the event of a breach or threat of a breach of the Paris Pact, the said Powers shall concert together as promptly as possible with a view to appealing to public opinion and agreeing upon the steps to be taken;
- c) In application of the Pact of Paris outlawing war, any breach of that Pact shall involve the prohibition of direct or indirect economic or financial relations with the aggressor country. The Powers shall undertake to



adopt the necessary measures to make that prohibition immediately effective;

- d) The said Powers shall declare their determination not to recognize any defacto situation brought about in consequence of the violation of an international undertaking.<sup>22</sup>

The second circle would consist of the members of the League. They were to give full effect to the obligations imposed upon them under the Covenant<sup>23</sup> and the treaties they had signed in conformity with the Covenant.

The innermost circle would comprise of the European States for whom a special organization would be arranged involving political and military arrangements. Based on equality of defensive status, the proposal aimed at (a) reducing the offensive character of the national forces in accordance with the principle laid down in the American proposal of 22 June 1932, and (b) specializing certain things with a view to the most urgent operations involved in the common action provided in the Covenant of the League. For attaining these two aims, the French plan proposed the reduction of defensive forces of the European States to a uniform general type; the stationing of a

---

22 Documents, n.8, p.220.

23 See Appendix A.

small number of specialized units at the disposal of the League for joint action; and the total war materials of the contracting Powers to be internationally supervised and organized.

The French plan treated the German claim to equality as a political problem. It envisaged "an equitable solution of this problem in the interests of general peace, by the progressive equalization of the military status of the various countries and by an equal participation in the burdens and advantages of the organization of common action, all question of re-armament being ruled out."<sup>24</sup>

The French plan was an exercise in futility. Germany did not accept it as a basis on which it would return to the Disarmament Conference, but other Powers appreciated it. The United States supported it because it contained certain elements of the Hoover plan and because it did not seem to be incompatible with the principle of an all-round cut of one-third which Herbert Hoover had suggested.<sup>25</sup> Great Britain favoured the French plan because it did not ask her to take new obligations.

But the French plan could not make any advance. The German issue dominated everything else. It became apparent

---

24 Documents, n.8, p.219.

25 Toynbee, n.12, p.281.

that unless a satisfactory solution to the German problem was found out, the Disarmament Conference could not progress. So Great Britain and France started diplomatic negotiations with Germany to bring her back to the Conference table. The British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald himself went to Geneva and the French premier too. They joined in talks with Neurath, the German Foreign Minister, Baron Aloiri, Mussolini's representative, and Norman Davis, head of the American delegation.<sup>26</sup> The result was the Five-Power Agreement, signed on 11 December 1932. It made a unique compromise between the German claim to equality and the French search for security. Germany was provided 'equality of rights in a system which would provide security for all nations.' This meant that the disarmament clauses of the Paris Peace Treaties would be replaced by a future convention in which Germany would possess equality of rights with other nations. The Five-Power Agreement also provided that the four European Powers (Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy) would not resort to war to settle their differences.

On these terms, Germany returned to the Disarmament Conference. It was really a moral victory for Germany because France recognized her equality of status in armaments, and this

---

26 George Scott, The Rise and Fall of the League of Nations (London, 1973), p.271.

victory would contribute to the restoration of her international prestige.<sup>27</sup> But the Agreement was effective only for a short-time. It solved the immediate problem of Germany's return to the Conference. But in practice, the promise of equality within a system of common security was meaningless because if the French got security, there would be no equality of status, and if they did not get security, there would be no equality.<sup>28</sup>

However, the return of Germany was hailed throughout the world. The General Commission of the Conference took a very satisfactory note of the Five Power Agreement. Then the Disarmament Conference was adjourned until 31 January 1933. During the last months of 1932, the work of various technical commissions did not make much progress. But the Commission on Defence Expenditure had made some progress in its work. It could collect reports of almost twenty countries regarding their defence expenditure.

The first year of the World Disarmament Conference, thus, ended without any substantial achievement. Agreement was reached only on prohibition of chemical and bacteriological warfare. Vast areas of disarmament remained to be settled. A fresh

---

27 Toynbee, n.12, p.290.

28 A.J.P. Taylor, The Origins of the Second World War (Middlesex, 1981), p.96.

approach to the problem of disarmament was required. Henderson, the President of the Conference, hoped that when it would reassemble the 'period of waiting' would be over and the 'period of definite decision' would start.

## II

The Disarmament Conference re-assembled in January 1933. But the Five Power Agreement of December 1932 itself was not a stable one. It was differently interpreted by France and Germany in accordance with their national interests. The French interpreted the phrase 'equality of rights in a system which would provide security for all nations' to mean that the establishment of a satisfactory system of security would precede any system of equalizing the armaments of France and Germany; Germany, on the other hand, tried to direct all her efforts towards the attainment of equality in armaments at the earliest possible moment.<sup>29</sup> Due to these conflicting interpretations, the bridging of the Franco-German gulf was temporary. Moreover, the advent of Hitler to power in January 1933 accentuated the difference between these two countries.

This difference was manifested when the Bureau met in the last week of January 1933 to decide the course of action of

---

29 Arnold J. Toynbee, Survey of the International Affairs 1933 (London, 1934), p.225.

the General Commission. During a discussion of the report on supervision and functions of the Permanent Disarmament Commission, the French and German points of view clashed without any possibility of compromise.

The General Commission met on 2 February 1933. For the first few days, it was preoccupied with the French plan for security which has been discussed in foregoing pages. The German and Italian delegates criticized the plan on the ground that it did not make adequate provision for immediate and effective reduction of armaments. As the discussion proceeded, it became apparent that the plan had no chance of general acceptance. Although it was not really withdrawn, it was tacitly shelved.

Before the General Commission re-assembled, there was a general feeling that the Conference should avoid inconclusive discussions, and concentrate upon questions on which agreement seemed to be within reach. With this objective in mind, the British Government drafted a proposal which was submitted to the Bureau. It contained directions for the Bureau "to agree on a programme of work which would enable the Conference to embody in a Convention the proposals made by various delegations since the opening of the Conference."<sup>30</sup> These directions were: to discuss for a solemn affirmation by all the European States

---

30 IX. Disarmament, 1933 IX.I (League of Nations Publication), p.1.

not to resort to force; to initiate study by continental European States for reaching political arrangements for mutual cooperation; to apply the principles that the new Disarmament Convention would replace the disarmament Chapters of the Paris Peace Treaties and that the newly expressed limitations would last for the same period, and be subject to some methods of revision for all the Powers; and to embody in the Disarmament Convention first an undertaking by the signatory States for a new Convention before the expiry of the old one, and, secondly, provisions for qualitative equality in war materials together with reduction of the armies of the Continental European States to an uniform general type of organization.<sup>31</sup> The Bureau adopted the British draft proposal, and referred to the Political Commission the questions of an affirmation against resort to war and of European mutual cooperation. Other questions were postponed.

Throughout the first weeks of the re-assembly of the Disarmament Conference, there was still a wide gulf between France and Germany. In the discussion of the General Commission on questions of principles relating to effectives, France and Germany opposed each other's resolution. However, the Special Effective Committee carried on its work. On 14 March, this Committee recommended to the General Commission that in countries where pre-military or para-military instruction existed, it

---

31 Ibid.

should be regulated and supervised in such a way that account could be taken of it in computing effectives, and that Governments which did not feel competent to take the needed measures to that end should be required to prohibit pre-military and para-military instruction altogether.<sup>32</sup> France and Germany clashed in the Air Commission over the issue of internationalization of civil aviation. While France favoured internationalization, Germany stood for the abolition of military and naval aircraft and prohibition of air bombardment, but considered that regulation and control of civil aviation would be sufficient. Nothing could be settled, and the issue was referred to a sub-committee.

In February and March, the Political Commission of the Conference carried on discussion first on the British proposal of the solemn affirmation by the European States, and second on the French proposal for a European pact of mutual assistance. On the former, the Commission accepted a declaration which stated that the question of giving universal effect to the proposed obligation would be left open for the time being, and that resort to force would be prohibited on the same term as resort to war was prohibited in the Kellogg Pact.<sup>33</sup> On the

---

32 Toynbee, n.29, p.241.

33 Ibid., pp.244-45.



French proposal, after much debate and discussion, it was decided to appoint a sub-committee on security that would first examine the question of aggression<sup>34</sup> and then consider the French proposal for a European pact.

In spite of these labourious discussions in different commissions and committees, the Disarmament Conference did not show any sign of reaching a general Convention. Many countries abstained from voting on any important issue regarding reduction of armaments because they were not ready to commit themselves to anything in the then prevailing state of international tension. The situation in the Far East had already deteriorated due to the Japanese aggression on Manchuria. In the last week of February, Japan also notified her intention of resigning from the League, though her representative continued to take part in the Disarmament Conference. But the most serious concern for Europe at that time was the emergence of Hitler who had become the Chancellor of the German Reich on 30 January 1933. The aggressive nationalism of Germany coupled with the intention of a massive programme of unilateral re-armament cast its shadow over the Disarmament Conference. France now became more vociferous in her demand for security through a European pact of mutual assistance and through the standardization of European forces. The Conference reached a stage of deadlock.

---

34 The question of aggression had been raised in the Russian and Belgian proposals.

But the Conference soon got a new lease of life when the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald laid before it a new plan for disarmament. Submitting his plan on 16 March 1933, MacDonald said: "The British plan would satisfy nobody; it was not a shop-window affair or a message from Mars, but a business document covering the whole field of disarmament... It aimed at preventing an adjournment at this moment which would be the most heart-breaking confession of failure that the Conference could indulge in."<sup>35</sup> This plan, popularly known as the 'MacDonald plan'<sup>36</sup> had the advantage of suggesting for the first time actual figures of effectives and aeroplanes, together with limitation of mobile guns by calibre and of tanks by weight. The plan had five parts. Part I relating to security, was based on the Kellogg Pact and provided for a conference in the event of a breach or threatened breach of this Pact. Part II dealt with the reduction of effectives in accordance with a table which proposed numbers for each State as a basis for further discussion. It also dealt with materials on a qualitative basis. Part III with the title 'Exchange of Information' was to be drafted later on when other provisions of the plan were implemented. Part IV banned chemical, incendiary and bacteriological warfare. Part V related to the composition, function

---

35 Documents on International Affairs 1933 (London, 1934), p.139.

36 For the full text, see, Documents on International Affairs 1933, pp.151-94.

and supervision of the Permanent Disarmament Conference. A noteworthy feature of the plan was that it provided for a transitional period of five years from a period of armament to a period of disarmament. The provisions of the plan were applicable only to this transitional stage.

"The presentation of the British Draft Convention was, in my judgement, the psychological moment for saving the Conference,"<sup>37</sup> said A.C. Temperley. It was really so because it tried to satisfy France, Germany and the United States by giving some concessions to each of them. But when debate started over the British Draft, there was marked difference of opinions among the delegates of different countries. Its omissions and contents were criticized and some modifications were suggested. But Italy gave its unqualified approval to the plan. France emphasized the relation between security and disarmament, and insisted that there must be no German re-armament. Germany, on the other hand, emphasized on her claim to equality which was tacitly provided in the plan. Though the views of France and Germany were irreconcilable, the General Commission finally accepted the MacDonald plan as the basis of future discussion. Thereafter, the Conference adjourned for the Easter holidays.

---

37 A.C. Temperley, The Whispering Gallery of Europe (London, 1938), p.243.

When it reassembled on 25 April, the General Commission was confronted with a number of amendments to the MacDonald plan. But the most intransigent one was the German package of amendments to Part II of the plan. It proposed to include trained reserves among effectives, to limit the number of overseas forces stationed near the home, and to refer the question of the standardization of continental military forces to the Permanent Disarmament Conference. The underlying tone of these proposals was to secure for Germany equality of rights in armaments and to guarantee the security of the Reich. But France opposed the German proposals on the ground that they destroyed the very basis of the plan. The British delegate also disagreed with the German proposals. So no progress could be made in the work of the General Commission. The situation was complicated on 11 May 1933 by the publication in the German press of an article by Freiherr Von Neurath, which made a tacit declaration of Germany's intention to re-arm. The immediate reaction was an Anglo-French threat to Germany of imposing the sanctions of the Treaty of Versailles. On 13 May, the German Vice-Chancellor Papen reacted to the Anglo-French threat by making a speech in which he eulogized war and exhorted German mothers to be prolific in order that their sons might perish in adequate numbers on the battlefield.<sup>38</sup>

---

38 Gathorne-Hardy, n.10, p.352.

Thus, when the prospect for any general agreement seemed dark, on 16 May, President Roosevelt sent a message to all the nations taking part in the Disarmament Conference and the ensuing World Economic Conference, requesting them not to let these conferences fail. Otherwise, the results would be disastrous to peace and stability, both political and economic. Roosevelt also put forward his disarmament formula. Its chief ingredients were that the conference must abolish all offensive weapons; and that every nation would accept the draft Convention proposed by MacDonald, sign a treaty of non-aggression and pledge itself not to send armed forces across frontiers into the territory of another country.<sup>39</sup> On 17 May, Hitler announced the official policy of Germany. This announcement was reassuringly statesmanlike and unexpectedly conciliatory. Hitler declared that Germany had no intention of using force in support of her claims; that the German Government accepted the MacDonald plan; and that the defence forces of Germany would not be abolished unless at least qualitative equality was conceded to her. He also struck a warning note that Germany would not allow itself to be reduced to perpetual degradation.

This speech produced relaxation of tension in Europe, and cleared the air to a marked degree. The German obstructive

---

39 Scott, n.26, pp.278-79.

attitude now being abandoned, the first reading of the MacDonald plan could be made. A favourable impression was created by a further policy declaration<sup>40</sup> by the United States which was made in the General Commission by the American delegate Norman Davis. It was a highly important landmark from the point of view of disarmament as well as of security. In regard to disarmament, the United States showed its readiness to take the German Government at their words and to accept the solution of the problem of equality in armaments; in regard to security, the United States was also ready to consult with other States in case of a threat to peace.

Thereafter, the General Commission made a detailed study of the MacDonald plan. In the meantime, the Security Committee that had been appointed by the Political Commission, finished its work of defining aggression and fixing measures to be taken against an aggressor. It was discussed in the General Commission in relation to the MacDonald plan. When the MacDonald plan was discussed in detail, there was revealed fundamental difference of opinions on every important issue. Throughout the discussion, the French delegates submitted amendments so as to secure guarantee of security. The important issues of difference that came out during the discussion of the plan were Japan's

---

40 For detailed discussion, see the Survey of International Affairs 1933, pp.273-76.

reservation on naval limitation, the Russia's interest in a new regional security system based on a specific definition of aggression, and the French emphasis on provisions dealing with inspection and investigation. However, finally, on 7 June 1933, the MacDonalld plan was accepted by the General Commission as the basis of the future Convention. On the following day, the Commission adjourned. Before its adjournment on 8 June, the Commission discussed two reports submitted by the Committee for the Regulation of the Trade in, and Private and State Manufacture of Arms and Implements of War, and the National Defence Expenditure Commission.

During this period, a Four-Power Pact<sup>41</sup> was signed between Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy. Its original sponsor, Mussolini, had the idea of giving some real concession to Germany and of some territorial revision of the Peace Treaties so as to keep the peace of Europe. Had this Pact been implemented, it would have relaxed tension between France and Italy, and between France and Germany.<sup>42</sup> But it could not be implemented as Germany withdrew from the League in October.

---

41 The Pact, signed on 8 June 1933, had four articles which provided that the four Signatory Powers would maintain the peace of Europe; that there should be revision of Peace Treaties within the framework of the League; that Germany would be permitted to obtain equality of rights if the Disarmament Conference failed; and that the four Powers would act together in political, economic and colonial affairs.

42 Temperley, n.37, p.245.

During the adjournment of the Disarmament Conference, its President Henderson went on a 'disarmament pilgrimage' to the principal European capitals. His mission was to reconcile divergent points of view. Private negotiations were also carried on to settle disputes over the various points in the MacDonald plan. But Henderson was unable to get anything done.

As the months passed, the European situation became more and more critical. The emergence of Nazi regime in Germany increased tension in the world. Its pressure on Austria mounted, and there were reports of re-armament of Germany. France became reluctant to reduce her armaments until the system of control and supervision of the execution of any Disarmament Convention had been tested. It meant that in the prevailing situation, France wanted first a probation period of some years' duration in which the system of supervision and control would be tested before the actual disarmament took place.<sup>43</sup> The French point of view was accepted by Great Britain, Italy and the United States. All these Powers agreed to extend the whole period of the Disarmament Convention to eight years. This would be divided into two parts: during the first period, which would last for four years, there would be a system of international supervision over armaments and the prohibition

---

43 Toynbee, n.29, p.294.



on any increase in German armaments would remain in force; the disarmament provisions of the Convention would be put into effect, during the next phase on the basis of complete equality. This was a marked departure from the MacDonald plan which had suggested five years as transition period and asked immediate disarmament after the adoption of the plan. So it was obvious that Germany would not accept the new plan which would again postpone for four years her attainment of equality of status in armaments. When the new proposal was laid before Germany, she did not oppose the stages of the Disarmament Convention, but claimed the right to possess samples on prototypes of any weapons which were retained by other Powers during the first period. But the French and the British were unwilling to accept this German amendment.

The Bureau of the Conference met on 14 October 1933 and the proposal was presented for consideration. On that very day, Germany announced her withdrawal from the Disarmament Conference, and later served notice of her intention to resign from the League. But at the same time, she reiterated the desire of her government to guarantee the peace of Europe and agree any actual disarmament of the world. In a broadcast speech, Hitler repeated the offer.

After the withdrawal of Germany from the Disarmament Conference, all hopes for any real measure of reduction or limitation faded away. The Bureau recommended to the General

Commission first to adjourn till December 1933, and then again recommended adjournment for a time in order to allow 'parallel and supplementary' efforts through diplomatic channels so as to reach an agreement. Understandably, most countries regarded the Disarmament Conference without Germany as empty of meaning; and all the major powers withdrew their ministers, leaving only officials to represent them.<sup>44</sup>

During this recess, some diplomatic efforts were made to reach an acceptable formula for disarmament. In December 1933, Hitler stated the terms on which Germany would resume the disarmament negotiations. These included a conscript army of 300,000 admission of all sorts of weapons, freedom of civil aviation from supervision, and the immediate return of the Saar territory.<sup>45</sup> France rejected these terms outright. But Great Britain and Italy evolved new proposals, conceding to a large part of the German claim to re-armament. They also provided for consultations in order to meet the French demand for security. But France rejected these new proposals. Now, in order to save the situation, the British Prime Minister Anthony visited Paris, Berlin and Rome. Modifying the original terms, Hitler made an offer to Eden to accept any limit for the

---

44 Scott, n.26, p.289.

45 Gathorne-Hardy, n.10, p.354.

German army which would be equally acceptable for the French, Italian and Polish armies. But the French Government opposed it as 'legalization of German re-armament.' Some days after, the French were not ready even to accept any guarantee of security because the German budget for 1934-35 showed an increase of 90 per cent over the military estimates for the previous financial year. Thus, failed all negotiations for a compromise on the disarmament issue.

There were suggestions for winding up the Disarmament Conference. But there emerged also two other views on the future of the Conference. One view supported the adjournment till political situation improved, but the other view was in favour of notifying to the League Council the inability of the Conference to reach agreement and asking it to appoint a small committee of Great Powers for a settlement. Small States like Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Spain and Switzerland naturally did not support the latter view. In May 1934, a suggestion came from the Russian delegate Maxim Litvinov that the General Commission should concentrate its work on the question of organization of security. This proposal was supported by the French.

When the General Commission of the Conference met on 29 May 1934, for the last time, there was a division of States into 'Security first' group led by Russia and France, and the

Anglo-American 'Disarmament first' group. The former wanted that the Conference should concentrate efforts on organization of security, but the latter group sponsored the idea of adjournment of the Conference and of resumption of disarmament talks in favourable conditions. The two other suggestions, i.e., winding up the Conference altogether and appointment of a small committee for disarmament, did not get any support.

The President of the Conference, Arthur Henderson, himself was convinced that security was the outstanding problem of the time, but he did not approve the plan of the 'Security first' group. He gave his own action plan which recommended that the Russian proposal for pacts of mutual assistance should be referred to the Governments; that one of the existing committees should deal with guarantees of execution; and that the President of the Conference should make himself responsible for further political preparations for the resumption of the Disarmament Conference.<sup>46</sup> The French delegates suggested some modifications. The amended plan<sup>47</sup> was approved by the Bureau and adopted by the General Commission on 8 June. The plan retained the Russian proposal for pacts, renovated the Air Commission and the Committee on the Manufacture of and Trade in

---

46 Arnold J. Toynbee, Survey of International Affairs 1935 (London, 1936), vol.1, p.40.

47 For the full text, see Documents on International Affairs 1934 (London, 1935), pp.171-73.

Arms, and gave the task of dealing security questions to two special committees. The modified plan was thus a compromise between 'Security first' and 'disarmament first' groups.

Thereafter, the Conference was adjourned, it never met again. But the Committees, appointed according to the new plan, continued their work. The Security Committee adopted a report laying down certain general principles which would govern the conclusion of regional security pacts. The Committee on the Manufacture of and Trade in Arms, after much deliberations recognized unanimously national responsibility for national control, and reached an agreement on equal treatment of State and private manufacture. The old National Defence Budget Commission had already submitted to the Conference a draft Convention on the international supervision of national defence expenditures by means of publicity. But the reappointed Air Commission was still-born; it did not meet at all. However, the work of these committees and commissions was meaningless in the absence of a universal disarmament Convention.

By 1935, the Disarmament Conference was almost non-existent. The European situation had already been tense. Totalitarianism was in ascendancy, threatening the very existence of democracy all over the world. So any talk of reduction or limitation of arms was just a 'cry in wilderness'.

Yet, the Disarmament Conference remained in suspended animation throughout the rest of the inter-war period because no Power was willing to be responsible for signing its death-certificate.

Reflecting on the collapse of the Disarmament Conference, Toynbee has very aptly said:

The Committees and Sub-Committees, the experts and the rapporteurs had toiled in vain; their voluminous reports, the texts which they had drafted and re-drafted had merely been filed away 'for future reference'; and in the absence of agreements for the organization of security and for the reduction or limitation of arms and munitions, a new armaments race had already begun. (48)

## Chapter IV

### FAILURE OF THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

"To avoid war should be the highest ambition of statesmanship", wrote Frederick Gentz to King Frederick William III of Prussia in 1779, and Neville Chamberlain said on a historic occasion that war is a fearful thing, and one must be very clear while embarking upon it that great issues are really at stake.<sup>1</sup> War is thus dreaded; it must be prevented. The immediate but childlike answer to the prevention of war is abolition of the means of war, i.e., arms and ammunitions. This answer is based on the assumption that man tends to fight because he has weapons. But this assumption is too simple. When examined at a deeper level, it is disproved. Armaments or arms races are not the cause of war, but only the means of fighting. They reflect rather than create the ambitions, antagonisms and fears which underlie the phenomenon of war. Disarmament or arms reduction always involves some technical problems like the distinction between defensive and offensive weapons, standards of allocation, and ratios of armaments to be left with different countries. But in the final analysis, these problems are rooted in political conflicts.

It goes without saying that the function of national power is to uphold or to challenge the existing pattern of

---

1 John W. Wheeler-Bennett, Munich: Prologue to Tragedy (London, 1978), p.3.

relationships, or to influence the establishment of a new one at a time when the world stands between the dissolution of the past and the definition of the future.<sup>2</sup> So relations among nations are characterized by incompatible ambitions, antagonisms and mutual fear. From this, it follows that when disarmament or arms reduction is proposed, it is immediately confronted with the political difficulty of incompatible claims and ambitions that some nations are eager to improve what they consider to be their dangerously inferior position, and others are determined to consolidate their superior status. As Inis Claude puts it: "The urge to avoid the worsening of the national power position is the universal passion of participants in disarmament conferences, far more significant than any enthusiasm for disarmament itself; responsible statesmen may be prepared to consider the forswearing of national ambitions, but never to entertain the idea of reducing the relative strength of the nation."<sup>3</sup> This gives rise to technical problems about which mention has already been made. When the political problems of adjusting and accommodating every nation's claims and counter-claims to the existing power-structure are solved, technical problems will disappear. Then, disarmament will become a possibility.

---

2 Inis L. Claude, Jr., Swords into Plowshares (London, 1970), p.268.

3 Ibid., p.269.



But the World Disarmament Conference did not approach the problem of disarmament in this direction. It did not try to solve the political problems of the nations concerned. So it was doomed to failure from the very beginning. The right direction would have been to solve the political problems of Europe as a prelude to the task of disarmament. As it was not accomplished, the ambitions, antagonisms and fears of the participant nations prevented any agreement at the Disarmament Conference.

Arthur Henderson's 'Preliminary Report on the work of the Disarmament Conference' clearly showed how at the outset of the Conference there was a demand to settle political issues first. According to the Report:

At the Council meeting of January 1931, several members particularly France, Italy and the United Kingdom expressed the opinion that, in order to ensure the success of the Conference, a considerable amount of political preparation was necessary and that active negotiations between the Governments on the principal political problems were essential. (4)

But nothing was done to obtain at least some measure of agreement upon the political issues between the principally interested Powers. So it was natural that when the Disarmament Conference began, these political issues prevented any

---

4 The Monthly Summary of the League of Nations (Geneva), vol.15, November 1935, p.309.

agreement on disarmament. Rather, mutual animosity, fear, and suspicion became more manifest in the Conference.

One fundamental political issue which was the legacy of the Paris Peace Settlement, was the division of European states into two blocs. The Paris Peace treaties had been imposed on the defeated Powers rendering them crippled territorially, financially and militarily. So the revisionists, particularly Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria tried to revise or destroy the Peace Settlement. Thus, ever since the Paris Peace, there came into existence a new international order based on antagonism and incompatibility of status quo and revisionism. This division was a very potent factor in keeping the participant nations divided in the Disarmament Conference. When any scheme for disarmament was proposed, it was twisted by both the sides according to their own interests. So no agreement could be made.

The Paris Peace had imposed unilateral disarmament on Germany. She had accepted it on the condition that her disarmament would be the prelude to a general disarmament. But this did not occur. Rather almost every nation increased its expenditure on armaments in the post-War years. Great Britain spent \$ 535 million on armaments in 1930 whereas in the year before the War she had spent only \$ 375 million; France spent \$ 455 million in 1930 against \$ 349 million in 1913; and the

United States expenditure soared upto \$ 728 million from a meagre \$ 245 million.<sup>5</sup> According to another estimate, the world expenditure on armaments increased from about two and a half billion dollars to over four billion dollars in 1930.<sup>6</sup> This was contrary to the implied commitments in the Treaty of Versailles.

The German claim to equality of status in armaments was logical and realistic. She waited for fourteen years (1919-33) for other Powers to reduce their armaments. But when they did not do it, she withdrew herself from the Disarmament Conference and the League, and pursued her own course of action.

The German claim for equality, if granted, would have posed a serious threat to the Peace Settlement. So the status quo Powers vehemently opposed the German claim, and France took lead in this opposition. Germany's claim for equality was linked with France's security. Since the conclusion of the Paris Peace, France was afraid of a revived Germany. Though France was the victor of the Great War, she suffered more physical damage, human and material, than any other country, excepting Russia. Population losses had been such that there

---

5 J. Hamlden Jackson, The Post-War World: A Short Political History (London, 1935), p.485.

6 Allen W. Dulles, "Progress Towards Disarmament", Foreign Affairs (New York), vol.11, October 1932, p.55.

were now three Germans for every two Frenchmen; French industry had been devastated; one in every five Frenchmen had been mobilized during the war, 1.4 million killed and another three quarters of a million permanently invalidated, and the French economy was totally dislocated.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, though Germany was defeated in the War, her industrial resources and manpower were more than that of France. Added to it, Germany did not lag behind in restoring her military strength. The disarmament provisions of the Treaty of Versailles were a blessing in disguise because the German General Staff, departing from the old methods of warfare, turned its ingenuity to new methods, which had not been prohibited by the Treaty.<sup>8</sup> General E. Requin showed how, since 1920, Germany had aimed at the execution of a definite programme: to create and preserve the essential foundations of a powerful military machine modelled after that of pre-war days.<sup>9</sup> In order to prove that by 1932, Germany had already reached a maximum status, he gave the examples of the army's modernized armaments and equipments that were considerably in excess of the authorized amounts, and of the trained

---

7 J.A.S. Grenville, A World History of the 20th Century (Glasgow, 1986), vol.1, p.266.

8 Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (Calcutta, 1973), p.403.

9 General E. Requin, "The Armaments and Military Power of Germany", Foreign Affairs, vol.11, January 1933, p.234.

reserves which totalled about 800,000 youngmen with one million trained ex-combatants, aged less than 32 years.<sup>10</sup>

Thus even in defeat Germany had the potentials of a strong military Power. It was, therefore, natural for France to be apprehensive of threat from a revived Germany. So throughout the inter-war period, she demanded security first. Security must be the prelude to any substantial amount of disarmament. France's obsession with security arose out of the past history of her enmity with Germany. Since the French occupation of Prussia in 1806, Franco-German nations had been dialectical. Germany became the victor in the conflict of 1870-71 and took revenge on France; then in 1919 France became the victor and dictated the terms of treaty to Germany. If this dialectical process continued, the French feared, the Germans might one day turn the tables against them.

Therefore, just after the conclusion of the Paris Peace, France started her search for security. As discussed in the first chapter, she adopted different methods to obtain security against a possible German attack. Great Britain and the United States were not sympathetic to the French. They were not ready to accept obligations to save France. Rather, France and

---

10 Ibid., p.243.

Great Britain were divided over the question of security. While the former wanted security first, the latter maintained that armaments made nations feel insecure. An impasse was thereby created, and it became the cause of the failure of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Geneva Protocol.<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, the League of Nations had failed to provide an effective security system. Articles 10, 16 and 17 of the Covenant<sup>12</sup> referred to collective security. But what these Articles provided for was insufficient to deter an attacking nation. There was also no provision in the Covenant for the creation of an international army nor even for the use of national contingents by the League organs. Due to these 'gaps' in the Covenant, France could not rely on the League for her security. Her feeling of insecurity on the League for her security. Her feeling of insecurity increased when the United States failed to join the League. The ineffectiveness of the League machinery was proved when Japan and Italy invaded Manchuria and Ethiopia respectively.

In the Disarmament Conference, it was certain that no country was ready to disarm until adequate collective security

---

11 See Chapter I for details.

12 See Appendix A.

arrangements existed. That is why the two French proposals that were submitted to the Conference, very aptly linked security with disarmament. The French demand for security and the German claim to equality clashed with each other. Their incompatibility prevented any agreement on disarmament.

The French demand for security and her attitude to the Conference have been criticized. In 1933, Wilhelm Groener wrote that in consideration of the military alliances of France, of the impossibility of the German attack on France either through Belgium or Poland, and of superiority of armed forces and war industry, France had actually no reason to complain against her security.<sup>13</sup> When the Disarmament Conference began, France was not too concerned about it other than a theoretical problem because her enemy, Germany, was already disarmed. In the Conference, the French defined disarmament as a formula to find out how German disarmament could be maintained at the least sacrifice of French armaments.<sup>14</sup>

As it has already been seen, Germany withdrew herself from the Conference when France tried to introduce into the Disarmament Convention a probation period of some years duration during which a system of supervision and control would be tested before actual disarmament took place. But Germany,

13 General Wilhelm Groener, "Germany Military Power since Versailles", Foreign Affairs, vol.11, April 1933, pp.434-46.

14 Frederick H. Hartman, The Relations of Nations (New York, 1971), p.276.

long impatient with her inferior position in armaments, was not ready to wait for some years more to attain the equality of status in armaments. So she withdrew herself from the Conference, and her withdrawal was the death-blow to the Conference.

The conflicting aims and objectives of France and Germany arose out of their unsettled political issue which was the Versailles settlement. Had this fundamental political issue been solved prior to the Disarmament Conference, there would not have arisen the questions of French security and of German equality in armaments. That is why Allen W. Dulles wrote that if the problems which confronted the European countries were to be worked out by agreement, Europe needed a second Peace Conference in which the disarmament question would be only one of the major problems to be solved.<sup>15</sup> This Peace Conference would solve the political problem between France and Germany, and facilitate an agreement on disarmament.

Moreover, the economic crisis of the 1930s created tension throughout the world. The Great Depression brought about the collapse of the world economic order. It added to the already existing political tensions. The World Monetary and Economic Conference, that met in London in June 1933, failed

---

15 Allen W. Dulles, "Germany and the Crisis in Disarmament", Foreign Affairs, vol.12, January 1934, p.269.



to solve the economic problems because of the short-sighted, parochial policy of the United States. The Conference had been called to devise a multilateral solution to the chronic instability of the world's currencies caused by the collapse of the gold standard. But before the Conference got underway, the United States abandoned the gold standard, being alarmed by the collapse of domestic commodity prices and subject to intense political pressure from the farm bloc.<sup>16</sup> The economic crisis, with its attendant evils of unemployment and industrial stagnation further complicated the task of reducing international tensions, thereby making progress in disarmament an impossibility. As this turned out, massive rearmament became one of the remedies adopted by countries to deal with the economic crisis. It generated demand for manufactured products, raw materials and labour. As a result, industrial activities resumed, and the role of unemployment was reduced. It is perhaps the most tragic irony of modern history that the preparation for war on a large scale became the most effective remedy for the economic problems of underconsumption and unemployment.<sup>17</sup> Rearmament and army expansion after 1936 virtually eliminated unemployment in Germany. It also generated phenomenal economic growth, making Germany economically self-sufficient. In Great Britain and the

---

16 William R. Keylor, The Twentieth Century World (New York, 1984), p.139.

17 *Ibid.*, p.142.

United States, the rearmament programme alone cured unemployment. Thus, it could be said that the failure of the Disarmament Conference was providential for the economic recovery of the world.

Behind the failure of the Disarmament Conference, some of the arms firms of France, Great Britain and the United States, the German steel industry and the metal magnets of Britain, were indirectly involved. They were agreed that productivity and profits in the midst of depression would be restored by an arms race. They would be at serious loss if any agreement on disarmament was reached at the Disarmament Conference. A special sub-committee, appointed by the Temporary Mixed Commission, reported that armament firms fomented war scares, attempted to influence their Governments, disseminated false reports, sought to influence public opinion by getting control of newspapers, formed international trusts which increased the price of armaments, and intensified international competition.<sup>18</sup>

The final blow to the Disarmament Conference came with the rise of totalitarianism in Europe. Nazi Germany under Hitler, in particular, openly challenged the League system. Germany not only withdrew herself from the Disarmament Conference and the League, but also repudiated the Treaty of

---

18 Kathleer Gibberd, The League in Our Time (Oxford, 1933), pp.84-85.

Versailles by announcing conscription. It killed any hope for future disarmament talks. By repudiating the Treaty of Versailles, Germany destroyed the post-War settlement, and posed a serious threat to the status quo Powers who, in turn, started massive military programme to counter that threat.

Fascist Italy had already fallen in line with Germany. In the Disarmament Conference, she was a supporter of the German claim for equality. Italy proved the ineffectiveness of the League machinery by her invasion on and victory over Ethiopia. This showed the hollowness of the League, and the Powers redoubled their military preparedness to face any foreign invasion. Before the Italian aggression on Ethiopia, the Japanese attack on Manchuria had already shown the weaknesses of the security system established by the League. Now it became evident that the members of the League were not prepared to resist an act of aggression committed by a powerful and well-armed State like Italy and Japan.<sup>19</sup>

From this discussion, it becomes obvious that security was a predominant factor for any amount of agreement on disarmament. Had there been security, both political and economic, the World Disarmament Conference would have been a success.

---

19 E.H. Carr, International Relations between the Two World Wars, 1919-1939 (New York, 1967), p.172.

The year 1932, when the Disarmament Conference began, was not congenial for holding such a conference. Perhaps, 1924 would have been the best time for the Conference because in that year the Franco-German rapprochement had been a reality due to the Locarno Pact, and the knotty reparation problem had been solved by the Dawes Plan at least for the time being. A feeling of security and confidence was prevalent in France, Germany and other countries, creating a congenial atmosphere for a disarmament agreement. But the opportunity was lost, and when the Preparatory Commission was appointed, it worked at a snail's pace with procrastination and leisureliness.

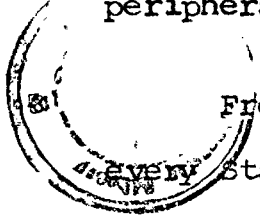
Then, when the Disarmament Conference met in February 1932, time was already running out. Various developments, as discussed above, made the Conference a still-born baby. According to A.C. Temperley, the Conference was doomed to failure from the very beginning, and it would have been almost a miracle if it had succeeded.<sup>20</sup>

The Disarmament Conference itself cannot be acquitted of a fair share of the blame for its own failure. It made a big mistake by inviting some sixty States. The number was quite unmanageable, and the small States wasted a good deal of time, increased friction and added to the intrigues,

---

20 A.C. Temperley, The Whispering Gallery of Europe (London, 1938), p.275.

without being of any real assistance to the essence of the problem.<sup>21</sup> The real problem was the disarmament of the Great Powers. It was of no importance what the small Powers' views on disarmament were or whether they themselves disarmed. If the Great Powers reached an agreement, they would have easily dictated it on the small Powers. So, it was unnecessary to invite so many small Powers whose voice was really too peripheral to the main problem.



From the foregoing discussion, it becomes evident that every State was guided by its own national interests, which were very often incompatible with each other. When individual States' national interests were opposed to each other, it became essentially a power conflict, hence a political problem. Even the British refusal to accept any extra commitment to guarantee the security of Europe or the American reluctance to be involved in the European affair was, in the final analysis, a political problem. Both these Powers acted according to their national interests, but France and her allies wanted just the opposite from them.

The World Disarmament Conference failed to achieve its objective due to a multiplicity of factors, some of which

---

21 Ibid.

were fundamental and others were functional. The former includes all those that were essentially power-conflicts (like status quo versus revisionism, Franco-German rivalry, economic crisis and ineffective security system), and the latter includes procedural mistakes (number of the participants, details of the proposals and procrastination of the Conference) of the Disarmament Conference.

## Chapter V

### CONCLUSION

The World Disarmament Conference was the first systematic effort by the world community to reduce the armouries of States. The moving spirit behind this effort was the pious desire to avoid another world war by way of dismantling all arms and ammunitions. But the Conference was almost like a still-born child because from the very beginning international developments cast a shadow over it.

The study undertaken here, has first tried to locate the first World Disarmament Conference against the backdrop of the post-First World War scene. Power conflict over security issues is inherent in the contemporary international system of sovereign states.

Security is the first and foremost interest of a State. Every State has different security perceptions according to which it pursues its foreign policy. This is well revealed in our study. The question of security predominated the entire proceedings of the Disarmament Conference; and it became the ultimate decisive factor in the outcome of the Conference. The French search for security was the most vociferous. As discussed in the first chapter, the French were afraid of a revived Germany, their arch-enemy. So, their prime concern was national security which they could not risk for disarmament.

Similarly, Germany was also worried about her security. She had been disarmed by the Treaty of Versailles on the condition that her disarmament would be the forerunner of a general disarmament. But this condition was not fulfilled; so Germany felt insecure in the face of growing armaments of other countries. That is why she demanded equality in status in respect of military potentials.

But the Franco-German demands were incompatible, and this incompatibility killed all suggestions and proposals for disarmament. Had there been any provision for meeting the French demand for security, it would not have satisfied the German demand and vice-versa.

From our study, it becomes obvious that disarmament could not be separated from the question of security. Both were organically related. France could have conceded to any disarmament proposal if her security was adequately guaranteed. Right after the Paris peace conference, she started her search for security. But, no power was ready to undertake additional commitments for her security. Even before the Conference, France had fully supported the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1922 because it had made an equation between disarmament and security. For the same reason, France supported the Geneva Protocol of 1924. But these two schemes could not be put into operation due to opposition from



Great Britain. The British were not ready to extend their international commitments nor to be entangled in new responsibilities.

The year 1932 was not favourable for holding the World Disarmament Conference. Rather, the opportunity was in the year 1925 after the conclusion of the Locarno Pact. As discussed in the second chapter, the Locarno Pact successfully brought a rapprochement between France and Germany. Containing provisions for arbitration, conciliation, non-aggression and guarantees, the Pact got the approval of both France and Germany. The French apprehensions about Germany were temporarily removed. The immediate result of the Pact was the entry of Germany into the League and the establishment of a Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference. Thereafter, this Commission took a long time to produce an agreed document on disarmament, but by that time, the Locarno spirit had already died. During the work of the Preparatory Commission, it became obvious that disarmament could not be considered in isolation; it had to be linked with security. The tragedy is that though everybody realized it, a satisfactory means of guaranteeing security could not be evolved.

France insisted more on security than on disarmament. In her first proposal she suggested a system of security in which an international police force was to be created; in the second

proposal also, France gave priority to security and proposed to divide the States of the world into three concentric circles for effective security measures. Both the French proposals met with German opposition. Similarly, France, opposed the Hoover plan because it did not deal in a satisfactory manner with the problem of security. Another notable proposal was the MacDonald Plan. France emphasized provisions dealing with inspection and investigation while Germany attached utmost importance to her equality of status which had been tacitly provided in the Mac Donald plan. In spite of these differences in approach, this plan was adopted by the General Commission of the Disarmament Commission as the basis of a future convention.

Something concrete might have come out of the deliberations over the MacDonald plan. After the Nazi takeover in Germany, however, France was so afraid of German militarism that she wanted a system of control and supervision before any Disarmament Convention was put in practice. But Germany was not ready to undergo a probation period because it would postpone her attainment of equality with other Powers in respect of armaments. On this ground Germany ultimately left the World Disarmament Conference and then the League of Nations.

Failure of the World Disarmament Conference was inevitable because it approached armaments and arms race purely in military

terms. Had the Disarmament Conference first dealt with the basic great Powers antagonisms, a general agreement on disarmament would have been possible. As discussed in the fourth chapter, the conflict between France and Germany was essentially a power-conflict, the immediate origin of which can be traced back to the Paris Peace Settlement. This conflict should have been amicably settled first, then the Disarmament Conference should have begun its assigned task of finding out a consensus on disarmament. Of course, there were some other factors like the Great Depression, the evil design of the arms firms of France, Great Britain and the United States, and the Nazi takeover in Germany which contributed to the failure of the Disarmament Conference.

Sometimes, the World Disarmament Conference is compared with the Washington Naval Conference of 1921-22. Whereas the former failed, the latter was a success. The Washington Conference brought limitation in naval armaments of five leading naval Powers of the time -- the United States, Britain, Japan, France and Italy. These States accepted a ratio of 5:5:3:1:67:1:67 for capital ships, i.e., armored vessels between 10,000 and 35,000 tons. The success of the Washington Conference was due to the fact that there was no outstanding political conflict between the concerned Powers. Great Britain and the United States had no political conflicts with each

other and, moreover, they had an identical interest in avoiding an arms race with Japan. Even Great Britain solved its political and military problems with the United States by dissolving her old alliance with Japan and conceding parity with the United States in case of capital battleships. The World Disarmament Conference took place in the midst of serious conflict between the status quo and revisionist Powers. There was mutual suspicion and apprehension. In an atmosphere of insecurity, no State was ready to reduce its arms.

The World Disarmament Conference took place fifty-five years ago. Though it failed in its objective, it was not worthless nor fruitless. Without solving the deep-rooted problems of the concerned countries, the Conference directly undertook the task of disarming the nation. This Conference was global in dimension and for the first time it represented a systematic attempt by a world body to tackle the problem of disarmament.

The World Disarmament Conference has an important lesson to teach the present-day world when everybody is worried about the ongoing nuclear arms race. The Conference failed primarily because it adopted a wrong approach to the problem of disarmament. The present ongoing negotiations for the reduction of armaments must not repeat the same mistake. These negotiations should

focus not only on the paramount threat of thermonuclear arsenal but also on the underlying sources of tension and conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States and the two rival alliance systems. The Soviet-American arms race is more a matter of power-conflict than of military competition. The elimination of areas of acute tensions and a certain amount of understanding of each other's security interests are necessary. No amount of agreement on arms reduction is possible as long as a concerned party feels insecure in a given world order. Sovereign states have different and often mutually conflicting security interests. But for the success of disarmament, a 'common security' plan\* -- a plan for security to all -- could have been discovered. Of course, it would have required first a solution of outstanding political problems between different nations. Not only in the interwar period but also in the present world, security and disarmament must be juxtaposed. But as security perception varies from nation and nation, a 'common security' plan seems to be the only alternative.

---

Recently, the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security under the Presidentship of Late Olof Palme has suggested a 'common security' plan which can avoid the deadly arms race and resolve the unsettled issues of strategic and theatre nuclear weapons, conventional armaments and regional security.

For details, see, Common Security: A Program for Disarmament (London, 1982).

---

APPENDIX - A

THE COVENANT OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

---

Preamble

THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES,

In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security

by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war,  
by the prescription of open, just and honourable relations between nations,

by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and

by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another,

Agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations.

Article 1

1. The original Members of the League of Nations shall be those of the Signatories which are named in the Annex to this Covenant and also such of those other States named in the Annex as shall accede without reservation to this Covenant. Such accession shall be effected by a Declaration deposited with the Secretariat within two months of the coming into

force of the Covenant. Notice thereof shall be sent to all other Members of the League.

2. Any fully self-governing State, Dominion or Colony not named in the Annex may become a Member of the League if its admission is agreed to by two-thirds of the Assembly, provided that it shall give effective guarantees of its sincere intention to observe its international obligations, and shall accept such regulations as may be prescribed by the League in regard to its military, naval and air forces and armaments.

3. Any Member of the League may, after two years' notice of its intention so to do, withdraw from the League, provided that all its international obligations and all its obligations under this Covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal.

#### Article 2

The action of the League under this Covenant shall be effected through the instrumentality of an Assembly and of a Council, with a permanent Secretariat.

#### Article 3

1. The Assembly shall consist of Representatives of the Members of the League.

2. The Assembly shall meet at stated intervals and from time to time as occasion may require at the Seat of the League or at such other place as may be decided upon.

3. The Assembly may deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world.

4. At meetings of the Assembly, each Member of the League shall have one vote, and may have not more than three Representatives.

#### Article 4

1. The Council shall consist of Representatives of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, together with Representatives of four other Members of the League. These four Members of the League shall be selected by the Assembly from time to time in its discretion. Until the appointment of the Representatives of the four Members of the League first selected by the Assembly, Representatives of Belgium, Brazil, Spain and Greece shall be members of the Council.

2. With the approval of the majority of the Assembly, the Council may name additional Members of the League whose Representatives shall always be members of the Council; the Council with like approval may increase the number of Members of the League to be selected by the Assembly for representation on the Council.

The Assembly shall fix by a two-thirds majority the rules dealing with the election of the non-permanent members of the Council, and particularly such regulations as relate to their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility.

3. The Council shall meet from time to time as occasion



may require, and at least once a year, at the Seat of the League, or at such other place as may be decided upon.

4. The Council may deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world.

5. Any Member of the League not represented on the Council shall be invited to send a Representative to sit as a member at any meeting of the Council during the consideration of matters specially affecting the interests of that Member of the League.

6. At meetings of the Council, each Member of the League represented on the Council shall have one vote, and may have not more than one Representative.

#### Article 5

1. Except where otherwise expressly provided in this Covenant or by the terms of the present Treaty, decisions at any meeting of the Assembly or of the Council shall require the agreement of all the Members of the League represented at the meeting.

2. All matters of procedure at meetings of the Assembly or of the Council, including the appointment of Committees to investigate particular matters, shall be regulated by the Assembly or by the Council and may be decided by a majority of the Members of the League represented at the meeting.

3. The first meeting of the Assembly and the first meeting of the Council shall be summoned by the President of the United States of America.

## Article 6

1. The permanent Secretariat shall be established at the Seat of the League. The Secretariat shall comprise a Secretary-General and such secretaries and staff as may be required.

2. The first Secretary-General shall be the person named in the Annex; thereafter the Secretary-General shall be appointed by the Council with the approval of the majority of the Assembly.

3. The secretaries and staff of the Secretariat shall be appointed by the Secretary-General with the approval of the Council.

4. The Secretary-General shall act in that capacity at all meetings of the Assembly and of the Council.

5. The expenses of the League shall be borne by the Members of the League in the proportion decided by the Assembly.

## Article 7

1. The Seat of the League is established at Geneva.

2. The Council may at any time decide that the Seat of the League shall be established elsewhere.

3. All positions under or in connexion with the League, including the Secretariat, shall be open equally to men and women.

4. Representatives of the Members of the League and officials of the League when engaged on the business of the League shall enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunities.

5. The buildings and other property occupied by the

League or its officials or by Representatives attending its meetings shall be inviolable.

#### Article 8

1. The Members of the League recognize that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations.

2. The Council, taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances of each State, shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration and action of the several Governments.

3. Such plans shall be subject to reconsideration and revision at least every ten years.

4. After these plans shall have been adopted by the several Governments, the limits of armaments therein fixed shall not be exceeded without the concurrence of the Council.

5. The Members of the League agree that the manufacture by private enterprise of munitions and implements of war is open to grave objections. The Council shall advise how the evil effects attendant upon such manufacture can be prevented, due regard being had to the necessities of those Members of the League which are not able to manufacture the munitions and implements of war necessary for their safety.

6. The Members of the League undertake to interchange full and frank information as to the scale of their armaments, their military, naval and air programmes and the condition of

such of their industries as are adaptable to war-like purposes.

#### Article 9

A permanent Commission shall be constituted to advise the Council on the execution of the provisions of Articles 1 and 8 on military, naval and air questions generally.

#### Article 10

The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

#### Article 11

1. Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise, the Secretary-General shall on the request of any Member of the League forthwith summon a meeting of the Council.

2. It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly

or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends.

#### Article 12

1. The Members of the League agree that if there should arise between them any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, they will submit the matter either to arbitration or judicial settlement or to inquiry by the Council, and they agree in no case to resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators or the judicial decision or the report by the Council.

2. In any case under this Article the award of the arbitrators or the judicial decision shall be made within a reasonable time, and the report of the Council shall be made within six months after the submission of the dispute.

#### Article 13

1. The Members of the League agree that whenever any dispute shall arise between them which they recognize to be suitable for submission to arbitration or judicial settlement, and which cannot be satisfactorily settled by diplomacy, they will submit the whole subject-matter to arbitration or judicial settlement.

2. Disputes as to the interpretation of a treaty, as to any question of international law, as to the existence of any

fact which if established would constitute a breach of any international obligation, or as to the extent and nature of the reparation to be made for any such breach, are declared to be among those which are generally suitable for submission to arbitration or judicial settlement.

3. For the consideration of any such dispute, the court to which the case is referred shall be the Permanent Court of International Justice, established in accordance with Article 14, or any tribunal agreed on by the parties to the dispute or stipulated in any convention existing between them.

4. The Members of the League agree that they will carry out in full good faith any award or decision that may be rendered, and that they will not resort to war against a Member of the League which complies therewith. In the event of any failure to carry out such an award or decision, the Council shall propose what steps should be taken to give effect thereto.

#### Article 14

The Council shall formulate and submit to the Members of the League for adoption plans for the establishment of a Permanent Court of International Justice. The Court shall be competent to hear and determine any dispute of an international character which the parties thereto submit to it. The Court may also give an advisory opinion upon any dispute or question

referred to it by the Council or by the Assembly.

#### Article 15

1. If there should arise between Members of the League any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, which is not submitted to arbitration or judicial settlement in accordance with Article 13, the Members of the League agree that they will submit the matter to the Council. Any party to the dispute may effect such submission by giving notice of the existence of the dispute to the Secretary-General, who will make all necessary arrangements for a full investigation and consideration thereof.

2. For this purpose the parties to the dispute will communicate to the Secretary-General, as promptly as possible, statements of their case with all the relevant facts and papers, and the Council may forthwith direct the publication thereof.

3. The Council shall endeavour to effect a settlement of the dispute, and if such efforts are successful, a statement shall be made public giving such facts and explanations regarding the dispute and the terms of settlement thereof as the Council may deem appropriate.

4. If the dispute is not thus settled, the Council either unanimously or by a majority vote shall make and publish a report containing a statement of the facts of the dispute and the recommendations which are deemed just and proper in regard thereto.

5. Any Member of the League represented on the Council may make public a statement of the facts of the dispute and of its conclusions regarding the same.

6. If a report by the Council is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League agree that they will not go to war with any party to the dispute which complies with the recommendations of the report.

7. If the Council fails to reach a report which is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof, other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, 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.

8. If the dispute between the parties is claimed by one of them, and is found by the Council, to arise out of a matter which by international law is solely within the domestic jurisdiction of that party, the Council shall so report, and shall make no recommendation as to its settlement.

9. The Council may in any case under this Article refer the dispute to the Assembly. The dispute shall be so referred at the request of either party to the dispute, provided that such request be made within fourteen days after the submission of the dispute to the Council.



10. In any case referred to the Assembly, all the provisions of this Article and of Article 12 relating to the action and powers of the Council shall apply to the action and powers of the Assembly, provided that a report made by the Assembly, if concurred in by the Representatives of those Members of the League represented on the Council and of a majority of the other Members of the League, exclusive in each case of the Representatives of the parties to the dispute, shall have the same force as a report by the Council concurred in by all members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute.

#### Article 16

1. Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of covenants under Articles 12, 13 or 15, it shall ipso facto be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the covenant-breaking state, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not.

2. It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League shall

severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the covenants of the League.

3. The Members of the League agree, further, that they will mutually support one another in the financial and economic measures which are taken under this Article, in order to minimize the loss and inconvenience resulting from the above measures, and that they will mutually support one another in resisting any special measures aimed at one of their number by the covenant-breaking State, and that they will take the necessary steps to afford passage through their territory to the forces of any of the Members of the League which are co-operating to protect the covenants of the League.

4. Any Member of the League which has violated any covenant of the League may be declared to be no longer a Member of the League by a vote of the Council concurred in by the Representatives of all the other Members of the League represented thereon.

#### Article 17

1. In the event of a dispute between a Member of the League and a State which is not a member of the League, or between States not members of the League, the state or States not members of the League shall be invited to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, upon such conditions as the Council may deem just. If such invitation is accepted, the provisions of Articles 12 to 16 inclusive shall be applied with such

modifications as may be deemed necessary by the Council.

2. Upon such invitation being given the Council shall immediately institute an inquiry into the circumstances of the dispute and recommend such action as may seem best and most effectual in the circumstances.

3. If a State so invited shall refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, and shall resort to war against a Member of the League, the provisions of Article 16 shall be applicable as against the State taking such action.

4. If both parties to the dispute when so invited refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, the Council may take such measures and make such recommendations as will prevent hostilities and will result in the settlement of the dispute.

#### Article 18

Every treaty or international engagement entered into hereafter by any Member of the League shall be forthwith registered with the Secretariat and shall as soon as possible be published by it. No such treaty or international engagement shall be binding until so registered.

#### Article 19

The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions

whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world.

#### Article 20

1. The Members of the League severally agree that this Covenant is accepted as abrogating all obligations or understandings inter se which are inconsistent with the terms thereof, and solemnly undertake that they will not hereafter enter into any engagements inconsistent with the terms thereof.

2. In case any Member of the League shall, before becoming a Member of the League, have undertaken any obligations inconsistent with the terms of this Covenant, it shall be the duty of such Member to take immediate steps to procure its release from such obligations.

#### Article 21

Nothing in this Covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements, such as treaties of arbitration or regional understandings like the Monroe doctrine, for securing the maintenance of peace.

#### Article 22

1. To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of

such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.

2. The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League.

3. The character of the mandate must differ according to the stage of the development of the people, the geographical situation of the territory, its economic conditions and other similar circumstances.

4. Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such times as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory.

5. Other peoples, especially those of Central Africa, are at such a stage that the Mandatory must be responsible for the administration of the territory under conditions which will guarantee freedom of conscience and religion, subject only to the maintenance of public order and morals, the prohibition of abuses such as the slave trade, the arms traffic and the liquor traffic, and the prevention of the

establishment of fortifications or military and naval bases and of military training of the natives for other than police purposes and the defence of territory, and will also secure equal opportunities for the trade and commerce of other Members of the League.

6. There are territories, such as South West Africa and certain of the South Pacific Islands, which, owing to the sparseness of their population, or their small size, or their remoteness from the centres of civilization, or their geographical contiguity to the territory of the Mandatory, and other circumstances, can be best administered under the laws of the Mandatory as integral portions of its territory, subject to the safeguards above mentioned in the interests of the indigenous population.

7. In every case of mandate, the Mandatory shall render to the Council an annual report in reference to the territory committed to its charge.

8. The degree of authority, control, or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory shall, if not previously agreed upon by the Members of the League, be explicitly defined in each case by the Council.

9. A permanent Commission shall be constituted to receive and examine the annual reports of the Mandatories and to advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates.

## Article 23

Subject to and in accordance with the provisions of international conventions existing or hereafter to be agreed upon, the Members of the League:

- (a) will endeavour to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions of labour for men, women, and children, both in their own countries and in all countries to which their commercial and industrial relations extend, and for that purpose will establish and maintain the necessary international organizations;
- (b) undertake to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control;
- (c) will entrust the League with the general supervision over the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic in women and children and the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs;
- (d) will entrust the League with the general supervision of the trade in arms and ammunition with the countries in which the control of this traffic is necessary in the common interest;
- (e) will make provision to secure and maintain freedom of communications and of transit and equitable treatment for the commerce of all Members of the League. In this connexion, the special necessities of the regions devastated during the war of 1914-1918 shall be borne in mind;

(f) will endeavour to take steps in matters of international concern for the prevention and control of disease.

#### Article 24

1. There shall be placed under the direction of the League all international bureaux already established by general treaties if the parties to such treaties consent. All such international bureaux and all commissions for the regulation of matters of international interest hereafter constituted shall be placed under the direction of the League.

2. In all matters of international interest which are regulated by general conventions but which are not placed under the control of international bureaux or commissions, the Secretariat of the League shall, subject to the consent of the Council and if desired by the parties, collect and distribute all relevant information and shall render any other assistance which may be necessary or desirable.

3. The Council may include as part of the expenses of the Secretariat the expenses of any bureau or commission which is placed under the direction of the League.

#### Article 25

The Members of the League agree to encourage and promote the establishment and co-operation of duly authorized voluntary national Red Cross organizations having as purposes the



improvement of health, the prevention of disease and the mitigation of suffering throughout the world.

#### Article 26

1. Amendments of this Covenant will take effect when ratified by the Members of the League whose Representatives compose the Council and by a majority of the Members of the League whose Representatives compose the Assembly.

2. No such amendment shall bind any Member of the League which signifies its dissent therefrom, but in that case it shall cease to be a Member of the League.

The original text of the Covenant was approved by the Peace Conference on April 28th, 1919. The text given here as an appendix is as amended in later years by the League Assembly. But the amendments were few. The second paragraph of clause 2 of Article 4 was added in 1921, as was clause 5 of Article 6, although neither came into force immediately because of delays in their formal ratification by individual countries. The only other amendments followed the setting-up, in 1921, of the Permanent Court of International Justice, as required in Article 14. The amendments to Articles 12, 13 and 15 - simply provide for the possibility of submitting disputes to the Court and refer to its powers to make judicial decisions and settlements.

-- x --

Source: George Scott, The Rise and Fall of the League of Nations, pp. 407-18.

## Appendix B

Text of Draft Convention, December 1930

### Article 1

The High Contracting Parties agree to limit and, so far as possible, reduce their respective armaments as provided in the present Convention.

#### PART I PERSONNEL

##### Chapter A. Effectives

### Article 2

The average daily effectives in the land, sea, and air armed forces and formations organized on a military basis of each of the High Contracting Parties shall not exceed, in each of the categories of effectives defined in the tables annexed to this chapter, the figure laid down for such party in the corresponding column of the said tables.

### Article 3

The average daily effectives are reckoned by dividing the total number of days' duty performed in each year by the number of days in such year.

Article 4

By formations organized on a military basis shall be understood police forces of all kinds, gendarmerie, customs officials, forest guards, which, whatever their legal purpose, are, in time of peace, by reason of their staff of officers, establishment, training, armament, equipment, capable of being employed for military purposes without measures of mobilization, as well as any other organization complying with the above condition.

By mobilization, within the meaning of the present article, shall be understood all the measures for the purpose of providing the whole or part of the various corps, services and units with the personnel and material required to pass from a peace-time footing to a war-time footing.

The Tables annexed to Chapter A of Part I are:

1. Average daily effectives not to be exceeded in Land Armed Forces.

Table I. Maximum Land Armed Forces in Home Country

Table II. (optional) Maximum Land Armed Forces Overseas

Table III. Maximum of Total Land Armed Forces

Table IV. Maximum Formations organized on a Military Basis stationed in Home Country

Table V. Maximum formations organized a Military Basis  
stationed Overseas

These five Tables each contain the following categories:

- a) Total Effectives (including (b) and (c)
- b) Officers
- c) Other Effectives who have completed at least x  
months of service.

x (This figure to be determined by the duration of the  
longest period of service which is in force in the conscript  
land army of any High Contracting Party at the time of the  
signature of the Convention.)

2. Average daily effectives not to be exceeded in Sea  
Armed Forces.

Table VI. Maximum Sea Armed Forces

Table VII. Maximum Sea Formations organized on a Military Basis  
In these two Tables:

Total Effectives (officers, petty officers, and men) are  
given in one column.

3. Average daily effectives not to be exceeded in the Air  
Armed Forces

Table VIII. (optional) Maximum Air Armed Forces stationed in  
Home Country.

Table IX. (optional) Maximum Air Armed Forces stationed Overseas.

Table X. Maximum of the Total Air Armed Forces

These three Tables each contain the following categories:

a) Total effectives (including column (b))

b) Effectives who have completed at least z months of service (Officers, N.C.O.'s and Men).

z (This figure to be determined by the duration of the longest period of service which is in force in the conscript air army of any High Contracting Party at the time of the signature of the Convention.)

Chapter B. Period of service

Article 5

The provisions of this chapter apply only to effectives recruited by conscription.

Article 6

For each of the High Contracting Parties concerned, the maximum total periods service to which the effectives recruited by conscription are liable in the land, sea or air armed forces or formations organized on a military basis respectively, shall not exceed the figures laid down for such party in the table annexed to this chapter.

Article 7

For each man, the total period of service is the total number of days comprised in the different periods of service which he is liable under the national law to perform.

Article 8

As an exception, each of the High Contracting Parties concerned may exceed the limits which he has accepted by the table annexed to this chapter in so far as, owing to a falling-off in the number of births, such an increase may be necessary to enable the maximum total number of effectives fixed in his case by the tables annexed to Chapter A of this part to be attained.

It is understood that any High Contracting Party which avails itself of this option will immediately notify the measures taken and the reasons justifying them to the other High Contracting Parties and to the Permanent Disarmament Commission referred to in Part VI of the present Convention.

Article 9

In any case, the total period of service shall not exceed...months.

Table annexed to Chapter B of Part I  
Maximum total period of service to which the effectives recruited by conscription are liable in the armed forces or formations organized on a military basis of each High Contracting Party, with separate columns for Land, Sea and Air.

## PART II MATERIAL

## Chapter A. Land Armaments

Article 10

(Provisional text subject to the drafting of the Annex.)

The annual expenditure of each High Contracting Party on the upkeep, purchase and manufacture of war material for land.

Armaments shall be limited to the figures laid down for such Party, and in accordance with the conditions prescribed in the Annex...to this Article.

## Chapter B. Naval Armaments

Article 11

Throughout the duration of the present Convention, the global tonnage of the vessels of war of each of the High Contracting Parties, other than the vessels exempt from limitation under Annex I to this Chapter and the special vessels enumerated in Annex II, shall not exceed the figure laid down for such Party in Table I annexed to this Chapter.

Article 12

Table II annexed to this Chapter shows, by tonnage per category, the way in which each High Contracting Party intends to distribute during the period of application of the present Convention the global tonnage which is limited in the case of such Party to the figure laid down in Table I.

Article 13

Within the limits of the global tonnage fixed for such Party in Table I, and failing any stricter conditions resulting from special conventions to which it is or may become a party, each of the High Contracting Parties may modify the distribution shown for it in Table II, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The tonnages by category shown for each High Contracting Party in Table II shall in no case be the object of increase beyond the figures shown for it in Table III annexed to this Chapter.
- 2) Before the laying-down of the ship or ships for the construction of which the transferred tonnage has been assigned, due notice must be given to all the other High Contracting Parties and the Secretary-General and the Permanent Disarmament Commission, of the amount of tonnage transferred, the length of such notice being that laid down for each of the High Contracting Parties in Table III.

Article 14

No capital ship shall exceed 35,000 tons (35,560 metric tons) standard displacement or carry a gun exceeding 16 inches (406 mm.) in calibre.



Article 15

No aircraft carrier shall exceed 27,000 tons (27,432 metric tons) standard displacement or carry a gun with a calibre in excess of 8 inches (203 mm.).

No aircraft carrier of 10,000 tons (10,160 metric tons) or less standard displacement shall carry a gun exceeding 6.1 inches (155 mm.) in calibre.

If the armament carried includes guns exceeding 6.1 inches (155 mm.) in calibre, the total number of guns carried, except anti-aircraft guns and guns not exceeding 5.1 inches (130 mm.), shall not exceed ten. If, alternatively, the armament contains no guns exceeding 6.1 inches (155 mm.) in calibre, the number of guns is not limited. In either case, the number of anti-aircraft guns and of guns not exceeding 5.1 inches (130 mm.) in calibre, is not limited.

Article 16

No submarine shall exceed 2,000 tons (2,032 metric tons) standard displacement or carry a gun exceeding 5.1 inches (130 mm.) in calibre.

Article 17

No vessel of war exceeding the limitations as to displacement or armament prescribed by the present Convention

shall be acquired by, or constructed by, for or within the jurisdiction of any of the High Contracting Parties.

Article 18

In regard to the replacement of the vessels of war limited by the present Convention, the High Contracting Parties will comply with the rules set out in Annex IV to this Chapter.

Article 19

No preparation shall be made in merchant ships in time of peace for the installation of warlike armaments for the purpose of converting such ships into vessels of war, other than the necessary stiffening of decks for the mounting of guns not exceeding 6.1 inches (155 mm.) in calibre.

Article 20

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

Article 21

Each of the High Contracting Parties undertakes not to dispose, by gift, sale, or any mode of transfer, of any vessel of war in such a manner that such vessel may become

a vessel of war in the navy of any foreign Power.

Article 22

Any vessels of war which have to be disposed of as being surplus to the tonnage figures allowed by the present Convention shall be disposed of in accordance with the rules set out in Annex V to this chapter.

Article 23

Existing ships of various types, which, prior to April 1, 1930, have been used as stationary training establishments or hulks, may be retained in a non-seagoing condition.

Article 24

(Provisional text, subject to the drafting of the Annex.)

The annual expenditure of each High Contracting Party on the upkeep, purchase and manufacture of war material for naval armaments shall be limited to the figures laid down for such Party, and in accordance with the conditions prescribed, in Annex...

Note: The two following articles appear in Part III of the London Naval Treaty, and are quoted as examples of supplementary restrictions which certain High Contracting Parties may be prepared to accept.

## Article...

'Not more than 25 per cent of the allowed total tonnage in the cruiser category may be fitted with a landing on platform or deck for aircraft'.

## Article...

'In the destroyer category, not more than 16 per cent of the allowed total tonnage shall be employed in vessels of over 1,500 tons (1,524 metric tons) standard displacement'.

## Tables annexed to Chapter B of Part II

Table I. The Total Global Tonnage not to be exceeded by each High Contracting Party.

Table II. The Distribution of Tonnage between five categories of war vessels.

i.e. (a) Capital ships (with a subsection for States which do not possess any capital ship of a standard displacement exceeding 8,000 tons); (b) Aircraft carriers; (c) Cruisers (i) with guns exceeding 6.1 in., (ii) with guns of 6.1 in. or less; (d) Destroyers (these two categories classified as (c.d.) light surface vessels); (e) Submarines.

Table III. Rules for Transfer.

The figures to be entered in this table will be calculated on the following principles:

1. Account must be taken of the special circumstances of each Power, and of the classes of ships involved in the transfer.
2. Powers whose total tonnage does not exceed 100,000 tons will have full freedom of transfer as regards surface ships.
3. As regards the other Powers, the amount of the transfer should vary in inverse to the amount of the total (global) tonnage of each of them.

(Annexes contain definitions and lists of exempt vessels; definitions of capital ships, aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers (and light surface vessels), and standard displacement; rules for replacement; rules for disposal either by scrapping or conversion. These definitions and rules are the same as those adopted at the London Naval Conference.)

#### Chapter C. Air Armaments

##### Article 25

The number and total horse-power of the aeroplanes, capable of use in war, in commission and in immediate reserve in the land, sea and air armed forces of each of the High Contracting Parties shall not exceed the figures laid down for such Party in the corresponding columns of Table I annexed to this Chapter.

The number and total horse-power of the aeroplanes, capable of use in war, in commission and in immediate reserve in the land, sea and air formations organized on a military basis of each of the High Contracting Parties shall not exceed the figures laid down for such Party in the corresponding columns of Table II annexed to this Chapter.

Article 26

The number, total horse-power, and total volume of dirigibles, capable of use in war, in commission in the land, sea and air armed forces of each of the High Contracting Parties shall not exceed the figures laid down for such Party in the corresponding columns of Table III annexed to this Chapter.

The number, total horse-power and total volume of dirigibles capable of use in war, in commission in the land, sea and air formations organized on a military basis of each of the High Contracting Parties shall not exceed the figures laid down for such Party in the corresponding columns of Table IV annexed to this Chapter.

Article 27

Horse-power shall be measured according to the following rules... The volume of dirigibles shall be expressed in cubic metres.

Article 28

1. The High Contracting Parties shall refrain from prescribing the embodiment of military features in the construction of civil aviation material, so that this material may be constructed for purely civil purposes, more

particularly with a view to providing the greatest possible measure of security and the most economic return. No preparations shall be made in civil aircraft in time of peace for the installation of warlike armaments for the purpose of converting such aircraft into military aircraft.

2. The High Contracting Parties undertake not to require civil aviation enterprises to employ personnel specially trained for military purposes. They undertake to authorize only as a provisional and temporary measure the seconding of personnel to, and the employment of military aviation material in, civil aviation undertakings. Any such personnel or military material which may thus be employed in civil aviation of whatever nature shall be included in the limitation applicable to the High Contracting Party concerned in virtue of Part I, or Articles 25 and 26, of the present Convention, as the case may be.

3. The High Contracting Parties undertake not to subsidize, directly or indirectly, air lines principally established for military purposes instead of being established for economic, administrative or social purposes.

4. The High Contracting Parties undertake to encourage as far as possible the conclusion of economic agreements between civil aviation undertakings in the different

countries and to confer together to this end.

The following Tables are annexed to Part II, Chapter C:

Table I. Aeroplanes of the Land, Sea and Air Armed Forces.

Table II. Aeroplanes of the Land, Sea and Air Formations organized on a Military Basis.

Table III. Dirigibles of the Land, Sea and Air Forces.

Table IV. Dirigibles of the Land, Sea and Air Formations organized on a Military Basis.

These four Tables each contain the following categories:

- a) Total Aeroplanes/Dirigibles of the Armed Forces.
- b) (optional) Aeroplanes/Dirigibles stationed in the Home Country.
- c) (optional) Aeroplanes/Dirigibles stationed Overseas.
- d) (optional) (only in Tables I and III) Aeroplanes/Dirigibles in aircraft carriers. (Columns indicating number and total horse-power-and volume for dirigibles).

### PART III. BUDGETARY EXPENDITURE

#### Article 29

(Provisional text subject to the drafting of the Annex.)

The total annual expenditure of each of the High Contracting Parties on his land, sea and air forces and formations organized on a military basis shall be limited



to the figure laid down for such Party and in accordance with the conditions prescribed in the Annex...

#### PART IV. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

##### Article 30

For each category of effectives defined in the model tables annexed to this Article, the exchange of information each year shall apply to the average daily number of effectives reached during the preceding year in the land, sea and air armed forces and formations organized on a military basis of each of the High Contracting Parties.

For this purpose, each of the High Contracting Parties will forward to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, within...months after the end of each year, the necessary information to enable the said tables to be drawn up in the case of such Party. Each Party shall attach to this statement an explanatory note showing the elements on which the figures supplied are based, and stating, in particular, for each sort of effectives (recruits, militiamen, reservists, territorials, &c.), the number of these effectives and the number of days' service they have performed.

The said tables shall be drawn up and published with the explanatory note referred to above by the Secretary-General not later than ... in each year.

The annexed Tables are as follows:

Table I. Land Armed Forces in Home Country.

Table II. Land Armed Forces Overseas.

Table III. Total Land Armed Forces.

Table IV. Land Formations organized on a Military Basis.

Table V. Land Formations organized on a Military  
Basis--Overseas.

These five Tables contain the following categories:

- a) Total Effectives (including those specified separately in each column).
- b) Officers.
- c) Other Effectives who have completed at least x months of service.
- d) Soldiers whose period of service has exceeded the legal period of service but is less than x months. (Information to be supplied only for effectives recruited by conscription.)
- e) (optional) Recruits not trained as defined in national legislation.

Table VII. Sea formations organized on a Military Basis.

These two Tables contain the following categories:

- a) Total Effectives (including those specified separately in each column).
- b) Officers.
- c) Other Effectives who have completed at least y months of service.
- d) (optional) Recruits not trained as defined in national legislation.

Table VIII. Air Armed Forces in Home Country.

Table IX. Air Armed Forces Overseas.

Table X. Total Air Armed Forces.

Table XI. Air Formations on a Military Basis--Home Country.

Table XII. Air Formations on a Military Basis--Overseas.

These five Tables contain the following categories:

- a) Total Effectives (including those specified separately in each column).
- b) Effectives who have completed at least z months of service. (Officers, N.C.O.'s and Men.)
- c) (optional) Recruits not trained as defined in national legislation.

#### Article 31

If any youths have compulsorily received, during any year, preparatory military training within the jurisdiction of any High Contracting Party, such Party shall communicate to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, within x months after the end of each year, the number of youths who have received such instruction.

The above information shall be published by the Secretary-General not later than...in each year.

Article 32

The High Contracting Parties concerned shall forward to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations at the end of each year the following information as to the provisions of their law relating to the effectives recruited by conscription in their land, sea and air forces and informations organized on a military basis respectively:

- 1) The total number of days comprised in the first period of service;
- 2) The total duration in days of the ensuing periods.

The above information shall be published by the Secretary-General not later than...in each year.

Article 33

Each of the High Contracting Parties shall, within... months from the end of each budgetary year, communicate to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations a statement, drawn up in accordance with a standard model, showing by categories of materials the total actual expenditure in the course of said year on the upkeep, purchase and manufacture of war materials of the land and sea armed forces and formations organized on a military basis of such Party.

The information contained in this statement shall be published by the Secretary-General not later than...in each year.

Article 34

Within one month after the date of laying down and the date of completion respectively of each vessel of war, other than the vessels exempt from limitation under Annex I to Chapter B of Part II, laid down or completed by or for them or within their jurisdiction after the coming into force of the present Convention, the High Contracting Parties shall communicate to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations the information detailed below:

a) The date of laying down the keel and the following particulars:

Classification of the vessel and for whom built (if not for the High Contracting Party); Standard displacement in tons and metric tons;

Principal dimensions--namely, length of water-line, extreme beam at or below water-line;

Mean draught at standard displacement;

Calibre of the largest gun.

b) The date of completion, together with the foregoing particulars relating to the vessel at that date.

The above information shall be immediately communicated by the Secretary-General to all the High Contracting Parties and shall be published by the Secretary-General not later than...in each year.

Article 35

Each of the High Contracting Parties shall communicate to the Secretariat of the League of Nations the name and the tonnage of any vessel constructed in accordance with Article 19 (Chapter II). With regard to existing vessels of this type, this communication shall be made within two months after ratification of the present Convention. With regard to vessels to be constructed, the communication shall be made on the date of completion.

Article 36

For each of the categories of aircraft defined in the model tables annexed to this Article, the exchange of information shall apply to the maximum figures attained in each year in respect of the number and total horse-power, and for dirigibles the total volume, by the aircraft referred to in Articles 25 and 26 of the present Convention.

For this purpose each of the High Contracting Parties will forward to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations within...months after the end of each year the necessary information to enable the said to be drawn up in the case of such Party.

The tables referred to in the preceding paragraph shall be drawn up and published by the Secretary-General not later than...in each year.

Annexed to this Article are the following Tables:

Table I. Aeroplanes of the Land, Sea and Air Armed Forces.

Table II. Aeroplanes of the Land, Sea and Air Formations  
organized on a Military Basis.

Table III. Dirigibles of the Land, Sea and Air Forces.

Table IV. Dirigibles of the Land, Sea and Air Formations  
organized on a Military Basis.

These four Tables contain the following categories, each category containing columns for number and total horse-power, also total volume for dirigibles:

- a) Total Aeroplanes of the Armed Forces.
- b) (optional) Aeroplanes stationed in the Home Country.
- c) (optional) Aeroplanes stationed Overseas.
- d) (optional) Aeroplanes in Aircraft Carriers (only in Tables I and IV).

#### Article 37

In order to ensure publicity as regards civil aviation, each of the High Contracting Parties shall indicate within x months after the end of each year to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations the number and total horse-power of civil aeroplanes and dirigibles registered within the jurisdiction of such Party. Each Party shall also indicate the amounts expended on civil aviation by the Government and by local authorities.

The above information shall be published by the Secretary-General not later than...in each year.

Article 38

Each of the High Contracting Parties shall communicate to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations within...months of the end of each budgetary year a statement drawn up in accordance with the standard model annexed to this Article showing the total amounts actually expended in the course of the said year on the land, sea and air armaments of such Party.

The information supplied in this statement shall be published by the Secretary-General not later than...in each year.

PART V. CHEMICAL ARMS

Article 39

The High Contracting Parties undertake, subject to reciprocity, to abstain from the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or similar gases, and of all analogous liquids, substances or processes.

They undertake unreservedly to abstain from the use of all bacteriological methods of warfare.



## PART VI. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

## Chapter A. Permanent Disarmament Commission

Article 40

There shall be set up at the seat of the League of Nations a Permanent Disarmament Commission with the duty of following the execution of the present Convention. It shall consist of x (figure to be fixed by the Conference) members appointed respectively by the Governments of...(list to be drawn up by the Conference).

Members of the Commission shall not represent their Governments. They shall be appointed for x years, but shall be re-eligible. During their term of office, they may be replaced only on death or in the case of voluntary resignation or serious and permanent illness.

They may be assisted by technical experts.

Article 41

The Commission shall meet for the first time, on being summoned by the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, within three months from the entry into force of the present Convention, to elect a provisional President and Vice-President and to draw up its Rules of Procedure.

Thereafter it shall meet annually in ordinary session on the date fixed in its Rules of Procedure.

It may also, if summoned by its President, meet in extraordinary session in the cases provided for in the present Convention and whenever an application to that effect is made by a High Contracting Party.

#### Article 42

The Commission shall have full power to lay down its own Rules of Procedure on the basis of the provisions of the present Convention.

#### Article 43

The Commission may only transact business if at least two-thirds of its members are present.

#### Article 44

Any High Contracting Party not having a member of its nationality on the Commission shall be entitled to send a member appointed for the purpose to sit at any meetings of the Commission during which a question specially affecting the interests of that Party is considered.

#### Article 45

Each member of the Commission shall have only one vote. All decisions of the Commission shall be taken by a majority of the votes of the members present at the meeting.

In the cases provided for in Articles 50 and 52 the votes of members appointed by the Parties concerned in the discussion shall not be counted in determining the majority.

A minority report may be drawn up.

#### Article 46

Each member of the Commission shall be entitled on his own responsibility to have any person heard or consulted who is in a position to throw any light on the question which is being examined by the Commission.

#### Article 47

Each member of the Commission shall be entitled to require that, in any report by the Commission, account shall be taken of the opinions or suggestions put forward by him, if necessary in the form of a separate report.

#### Article 48

All reports by the Commission shall, under conditions specified in each case in the present Convention, or in the Rules of Procedure of the Commission, be communicated to all the High Contracting Parties and to the Council of the League of Nations, and shall be published.

#### Article 49

The Permanent Disarmament Commission shall receive all the information supplied by the High Contracting Parties

to the Secretary-General of the League in pursuance of their international obligations in this regard.

Each year, the Commission shall make at least one report on the information submitted to it and on any other information that may reach it from a responsible source and that it may consider worth attention, showing the situation as regards the fulfilment of the present Convention.

This report shall be communicated forthwith to all the High Contracting Parties and to the Council of the League and shall be published on the date fixed in Rules of Procedure of the Commission.

#### Chapter B. Derogations

##### Article 50

If, during the term of the present Convention, a change of circumstances constitutes, in the opinion of any High Contracting Party, a menace to its national security, such High Contracting Party may suspend temporarily, in so far as concerns itself, any provision or provisions of the present Convention, other than those expressly designed to apply in the event of war, provided:

- a) That such Contracting Party shall immediately notify the other Contracting Parties and at the same time the Permanent Disarmament Commission, through the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, of such temporary suspension, and of the extent thereof.

- b) That simultaneously with the said notification, the Contracting Party shall communicate to the other Contracting Parties, and at the same time, to the Permanent Commission through the Secretary-General, a full explanation of the change of circumstances referred to above.

Thereupon the other High Contracting Parties shall promptly advise as to the situation thus presented.

When the reasons for such temporary suspension have ceased to exist, the said High Contracting Party shall reduce its armaments to the level agreed upon in the Convention, and shall make immediate notification to the other Contracting Parties.

#### Chapter C. Procedure Regarding Complaints

##### Article 51

The High Contracting Parties recognize that any violation of the provisions of the present Convention is a matter of concern to all the Parties.

##### Article 52

If, during the term of the present Convention, a High Contracting Party is of opinion that another Party to the Convention is maintaining armaments in excess of the figures agreed upon or is in any way violating

or endeavouring to violate the provisions of the present Convention, such Party may lay the matter, through the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, before the Permanent Disarmament Commission.

The Commission, after hearing a representative of the High Contracting Party whose action is questioned, should such Party so desire, and the representative of any other Party which may be specially concerned in the matter and which asks to be heard, shall, as soon as possible, present a report thereon to the High Contracting Parties and to the Council of the League. The report and any proceedings thereon shall be published as soon as possible.

The High Contracting Parties shall promptly advise as to the conclusions of the report.

If the High Contracting Parties directly concerned are Members of the League of Nations, the Council shall exercise the rights devolving upon it in such circumstances in virtue of the Covenant with a view to ensuring the observance of the present Convention and to safeguarding the peace of nations.

#### Chapter D. Final Provisions

##### Article 53

The present Convention shall not affect the provisions of previous treaties under which certain of

the High Contracting Parties have agreed to limit their land, sea or air armaments, and have thus fixed in relation to one another their respective rights and obligations in this connexion.

The following High Contracting Parties...signatory to the said Treaties declare that the limits fixed for their armaments under the present Convention are accepted by them in relation to the obligations referred to in the preceding paragraph, the maintenance of such provisions being for them an essential condition for the observance of the present Convention.

#### Article 54

If a dispute arises between two or more of the High Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the provisions of the present Convention, and cannot be settled either directly between the parties or by some other method of friendly settlement, the parties will, at the request of any one of them, submit such dispute to the decision of the Permanent Court of International Justice or to an arbitral tribunal chosen by them.

#### Article 55

The present Convention shall be ratified by the High Contracting Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional methods. The instruments of ratification

shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the League of Nations.

The present Convention shall come into force, for each Party whose instrument of ratification has been deposited, as soon as the instruments of ratification have been deposited by... (list to be drawn up by the Conference).

(Should the present Convention not have come into force in accordance with the preceding paragraph by...the High Contracting Parties shall be invited by the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to meet and consider the possibility of putting it into force. They undertake to participate in this consultation, which shall take place before...)

#### Article 56

Each of the High Contracting Parties will take the necessary measures for carrying the provisions of the present Convention into effect as soon as it has come into force for such Party.

#### Article 57

Subject to the provisions of Articles 58 and 59, the present Convention shall remain in force for...years. It shall remain in force after the expiration of that period except in so far as it may be amended, superseded



or denounced under the conditions specified in the following articles.

Article 58

Before the end of the period of  $x$  years provided for in the preceding article, and not less than  $y$  years after its entry into force, the present Convention shall be re-examined by the High Contracting Parties meeting in Conference. The date of this meeting shall be fixed by the Council of the League of Nations, after taking cognisance of the opinion of the Permanent Disarmament Commission and of the intentions of the High Contracting Parties non-members of the League of Nations.

The above-mentioned Conference may, if necessary, revise the present Convention and establish fresh provisions in substitution therefor, fixing their period of duration and laying down general rules regarding their examination and subsequent revision, if the latter is required.

Article 59

Before the end of the period of  $y$  years provided for in the preceding article, but not less than  $z$  years after the entry into force of the present Convention, the procedure for examination and revision laid down

in that article may also be carried out at the request of a High Contracting Party, with the concurrence of the Permanent Disarmament Commission, if the conditions under which the engagements stipulated in the Convention were contracted have undergone, as the result of technical transformations or special circumstances, changes justifying a fresh examination and, if necessary, the revision of such engagements.

Article 60

In the course of a conference held in the circumstances provided for in the two preceding articles, any High Contracting Party shall be entitled to notify its intention to denounce the present Convention.

Such denunciation shall take effect two years after its date, but in no case before the expiration of the period of x years mentioned in Article 57.

## SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

### PRIMARY SOURCES

#### League of Nations Publications

IX, Disarmament, 1932, IX.25

IX, Disarmament, 1933, IX.1.

League of Nations, Official Journal (Geneva), June 1926-December 1934.

Ten Years of World Cooperation (Secretariat of the League of Nations, 1930).

The Monthly Summary of the League of Nations, vol.15, November 1935.

#### Documents

League of Nations Document A.16, 1925 IX.

\_\_\_\_\_, C.165, M.50, 1928 IX.

Wheeler-Bennett, John W., ed., Documents on International Affairs, 1931-34.

#### Memoirs

Lansing, Robert, The Peace Negotiations: A Personal Narrative (Cambridge, USA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1921).

Temperley, A.C., The Whispering Gallery of Europe (London: Collins Publisher, 1938).

### SECONDARY SOURCES

#### Books

Ball, M. Margaret, International Relations (New York: The Ronald Press, 1956).

Birdsall, Paul, Versailles Twenty Years After (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1962).

Brailsford, H.N., After the Peace (London: Leonard Parsons, 1920).

- Bruun, Geoffrey, and Mamatery, Victor S., The World in the Twentieth Century (Boston: DC Heath and Company, 1967) .
- Calvocoressi, Peter, and Wint, Guy, Total War: Causes and Courses of the Second World War (London: The Penguin Press, 1972) .
- Carr, E.H., International Relations between Two World Wars (New York: Macmillan, St.Martin's Press, 1967) .
- \_\_\_\_\_, Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations (London: Macmillan, 1961) .
- Cecil, Viscount, The Way of Peace: Essays and Addresses (London: Philip Allan and Co Ltd., 1928) .
- Churchill, Winston Spencer, The Second World War vol.I: The Gathering Storm (London: Cassell and Company Ltd., 1967) .
- Claude Jr., Inis L., Swords into Plowshares: The Problem and Progress of International Organization (London: University of London Press Ltd., 1970) .
- Eddy, Sherwood, The Challenge of Europe (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1933) .
- Ferrell, Robert H., Peace in Their Time: The Origins of the Kellogg-Briand Pact (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952) .
- Fisher, H.A.L., A History of Europe (Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1976), vol.2 .
- Fleming, D.F., The Origins and Legacies of the World War I (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1968) .
- Gathorne-Hardy, G.M., A Short History of International Affairs 1920-1939 (London: Oxford University Press, 1968) .
- Gibberd, Kathleen, The League of Our Time (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1933) .
- Greaves, H.R.G., The League Committees and the World Order (London: Oxford University Press, 1931) .
- Grenville, J.A.S., A World History of the 20th Century (Glasgow: Fontana Press, 1986), vol.1 .

- Hartman, Frederick H., The Relations of Nations (New York: MacMillan Company, 1971).
- Henig, Ruth B., ed., The League of Nations (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1973).
- Hogan, Willard N., International Conflict and Collective Security (Kentucky: Kentucky Press, 1955).
- Ichihashi, Yamato, The Washington Conference and After: A Historical Survey (California: Stanford University Press, 1928).
- Jackson, J. Hampden, The Post-War World: A Short Political History (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1935).
- Jones, Robert, and Sherman, S.S., The League of Nations: From Idea to Reality (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons Ltd., 1929).
- Kellor, F., Security Against War (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), vol.2,
- Keylor, William R., The Twentieth Century World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).
- Keynes, John Maynard, Economic Consequences of the Peace (London: Macmillan, 1920).
- King-Hall, Stephen, Our Times, 1900-1960 (London: Faber and Faber, 1961).
- Langsam, Walter Consuelo, World Since 1919 (New York: Macmillan, 1960).
- Lederer, Ivo J., ed., The Versailles Settlement: Was it Foredoomed to Failure? (Boston: DC Heath and Company n.d.).
- Macartney, C.A., and others, Survey of International Affairs 1925 (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), vol.2.
- Morgenthau, Hans J., Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (Calcutta: Scientific Book Agency, Indian Reprint, 1973).
- Murray, Gilbert, From the League to UN (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1948).

- Myers, Denys P., World Disarmament: Its Problems and Prospects (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1932).
- Noel-Baker, Philip, The Arms Race (London: Stevens and Sons Ltd., 1958).
- Ropp, Theodore, War in the Modern World (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 1960).
- Schmidt, Richard, and Grabownky, Adolf, The Problem of Disarmament (Berlin: Carl Heymanns Verlag, 1933).
- Schuman, F.L., International Politics: The Western State System and the World Community (Tokyo: Kogakusha Company Ltd., 1958)
- \_\_\_\_\_, Europe on the Eve (London: Robert-Hale Ltd., 1939).
- Scott, George, The Rise and Fall of the League of Nations (London: Hutchinson and Co Ltd., 1973).
- Sloutsky, N.M., The World Armament Race, 1919-1939 (Geneva: Geneva Research Centre, 1941).
- Taylor, A.J.P., The Origins of the Second World War (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1981).
- Temperley, H.W.V., ed., A History of the Peace Conference of Paris (London: Henry Frowde and Hodder and Stoughton), vols. 1-4.
- Toynbee, Arnold J., Survey of International Affairs (London: Oxford University Press), volumes for 1924-35.
- \_\_\_\_\_, The World After the Peace Conference (London: Oxford University Press, 1925).
- Vigilants, Why the League Has Failed (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1938).
- Walters, F.P., A History of the League of Nations (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), vols. 1-2.
- Webster, C.K., The League of Nations: In Theory and Practice (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1933).
- Wheeler-Bennett, John W., Munich: Prologue to Tragedy (London: Macmillan and Co Ltd., 1948).
- Wheeler-Bennett, John W., and Langermann, F.E., Information on the Problem of Security, 1917-1926 (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1927).

- Williams, Sir John Fisher, Some Aspects of the Covenant of the League of Nations (London: Oxford University Press, 1934).
- Wilson, Florence, The Origins of the League Covenant: Documentary History of its Drafting (London: Leonard and Virginia Woolf, 1928).
- Wiskerman, Elizabeth, Europe of the Dictators 1919-45 (Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1976).
- Zilliacus, K. Mirror of the Past: A History of the Secret Diplomacy (New York: Current Books, Inc., 1946).
- Zimmern, Alfred, The League of Nations and the Rule of Law, 1918-1935 (London: Macmillan and Co.Ltd., 1945).

#### Articles

- Davis, Norman H. "The Locarno Facts: Their Meaning to Europe and America", Current History (New York), vol.23, December 1925, pp.316-20.
- Dulles, Allen W., "Progress Towards Disarmament", Foreign Affairs (New York), vol.11, October 1932, pp.54-65.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Germany and the Crisis in Disarmament", Foreign Affairs, vol.12, January 1934, pp.260-70.
- Groener, General Wilhelm, "Germany Military Power since Versailles", Foreign Affairs, vol.11, April 1933, pp.434-46.
- Jessup, Philip C., "If War Should Come", Current History, vol.41, January 1935, pp.393-98.
- Nevins, Allan, "Disturbers of the Peace", Current History, vol.41, January 1935, pp.451-55.
- Pepper, George W., "Security, Real and Illusion: A Comment on the Locarno Compact", Current History, vol.23, December 1925, pp.312-15.
- Requin, General E., "The Armaments and Military Power of Germany", Foreign Affairs, vol.11, January 1933, pp.230-44.

Rogers, Lindsay, "The Struggle for Disarmament", Current History, vol.35, February 1932, pp.629-37.

Swain, Joseph Ward, "Woodrow Wilson's Fight for Peace", Current History, vol.35, March 1932, pp.805-12.

