

attempted by the different organizations of the League, and the relative importance of these functions to the essential purposes contemplated by the Covenant and by the Labour Sections respectively of the Treaties. It is clearly impossible to secure due co-ordination between the minor functions of the League unless they are also brought into their due proportion to the objects for which the League was primarily created. This proportion must be reflected in the financial provisions; it can be determined only by the Assembly, and until it is so determined there can be no continuous or stable financial policy for the League."

The Secretary-General, in his statement to the Fourth Committee, maintained that most of the increase on the Budget of the Secretariat was due to additional work which the Assembly itself had imposed on his organization, but he indicated one or two directions in which he thought money might be saved, provided the Assembly took the initiative.

The discussion was opened by the representative of Great Britain. After making a plea for economy and a reference to stabilization, he introduced a motion to refer the Budget back to the Supervisory Commission, requesting that Commission—(1) to re-examine the Budget with a view to finding economies, taking into account the suggestions made by the members of the Fourth Committee in the debate on this resolution; (2) to schedule such economies as it can thus suggest, in order of the importance of the services, up to a total of 1,000,000 francs, in order that the Fourth Committee, in the light of the technical work thus carried out by the Supervisory Commission, may consider all the questions of policy involved and, after consultation, if necessary, with other committees, recommend to the Assembly what economies ought to be effected.

From the speeches which followed it was apparent that all members of the committee were united in their desire for economy, although, having in view the remarks of the Supervisory Commission quoted above, there was doubt whether the method proposed by the British delegate could be usefully employed. Certainly such a method did not appeal to those members of the Supervisory Commission who were representing their countries on the Fourth Committee, since it implied not only cutting down still further items which had already been severely pruned, but making suggestions for the suppression of items, and thereby entering into the realm of policy, which was the prerogative of the Assembly itself.

On the subject of the stabilization of the Budget all members of the Committee were not in agreement. One speaker described it as a chimera, and asked what would be the effect of "stabilization" on a growing child, to which he likened the League. Ultimately the motion referred to above was withdrawn in favour of one based on suggestions made in the course of the discussion. This motion, which was passed unanimously, reads as follows:—

"The Fourth Committee, having examined the draft Budget for 1929 and noted the rapid increase in the credits demanded, which at present represents about 9 per cent. as compared with the 1928 Budget, draws the special attention of the other Assembly committees to this position at the moment when they are about to consider the work contemplated for the League, and asks them to bear in mind the necessity for a reasonable limitation of the expenditure of the League.

"Similarly, the Fourth Committee requests the other committees to revise the programme of Conferences for which provision is made for 1929, and to limit them to those which cannot be postponed till 1930, and, more generally, to examine especially the budgets of the Economic Organization and the Transit Organization, of the opium and humanitarian activities and of codification of international law, and to make proposals for restricting expenditure, and to suggest any other direction in which economy can be effected, taking account particularly of the effect that the new tasks may have on the increase of the permanent staff."

At the next meeting questions relating to the method of making appointments in the Secretariat were raised by one of the delegates. The debate which followed was of considerable interest. It would be easy to overrate its value, but, on the other hand, it was not a mere letting-off of steam. It was a wise proceeding to have it reported at some length in the *Journal* (No. 11, of the 14th September), and to this I would refer you.

The burden of one delegate's speech was that the high international spirit which guided and was reflected in the work of the members of the original Secretariat had not been maintained under succeeding appointments, and he endeavoured to support this charge by stating that, of the present holders of the higher posts, seven were diplomats who, in the nature of things, might be expected to have a national bias. He even went so far as to say that these appointments had been influenced by Governments. He complained that tried members of the Secretariat had not been promoted when vacancies had arisen in the higher grades, and he mentioned, by way of illustration, that one post had been filled successively by men of the same nationality. These charges were dealt with in detail by the Secretary-General, whose remarks helped to allay in great measure the uneasiness which had been aroused. The Fourth Committee, however, felt that there was necessity to strengthen the hands of the Secretary-General, and ultimately it passed the following resolutions:—

"The Assembly—whereas the Staff Regulations were drawn up shortly after the organization of the Secretariat, and it would be advisable for the League to avail itself of the experience acquired since 1922—considering that, although the regulations have, on the whole, proved satisfactory, certain modifications would appear desirable to remedy certain disadvantages to which attention had been drawn, instructs the competent officials of the autonomous organizations, after examining the present situation and the improvements which might be made, to consider what steps—in particular amendments to the Staff Regulations—could be taken to ensure in the future, as in the past, the best possible administrative results, and to submit the results of this inquiry to the Supervisory Commission, in order that a report on the question may be communicated to the Assembly at its next ordinary session.