

necessary to enforce the sanctions provided for under Article 16 in cases where no such necessity would have existed under the original Covenant. He contended, however, that by accepting the amendments States would not really be accepting any liability beyond that to which they were already committed by the acceptance of the Kellogg Pact, and so they would really lose nothing. Although there was general agreement with the principle that it was necessary to bring the terms of the Covenant into conformity with the situation created by the Kellogg Pact, there was considerable hesitancy expressed by several States as to the advisability of dealing with the matter immediately. Time was required for careful study and examination before rushing into so important a matter as amending the charter of the League.

The Dutch delegate reminded the committee of the difficulties which had been experienced in the past in obtaining sufficient ratifications to bring into operation amendments to the Covenant. He feared that a deplorable position might be created if the present proposals were adopted by the Assembly and it then fell out that a sufficient number of States had refused to make them effective because they considered sufficient study had not been given to the subject.

On the motion of the British delegate himself, a sub-committee was accordingly set up to consider whether it would be possible to ask the Assembly to approve the proposals at this present session, and, if not, to make recommendations as to the procedure to be adopted.

As you will see from Document A. 73, adopted by the Assembly on the 24th September, it was eventually decided to instruct the Secretary-General to communicate to all States the text of the amendments proposed by the British Government, together with any further papers which may be necessary, and to request the Council to appoint a committee of eleven persons, to sit early in 1930, to frame a report after taking into account the replies received from Governments. The report of this committee will then be submitted to Governments in order that they may instruct their delegates to the 1930 Assembly, and thus enable the matter to be then finally dealt with.

INQUIRY INTO THE BEST METHODS FOR ACCELERATION OF RATIFICATION OF CONVENTIONS.

This is a subject of very great importance, and also one of very great difficulty. It cannot be denied that it is a serious source of weakness, that so many conventions passed by the Assembly fail to become operative owing to the lack of a sufficient number of ratifications. At the present time, out of forty-five conventions adopted by the Assembly, only twenty-three have actually come into force, and many even of these latter have not been fully ratified. Of the twenty-two which still remain a dead-letter, many have been ratified by so few States that there is no probability of their becoming operative. In introducing a proposal that a committee should be set up to study the question as to the reason for non-ratification, and as to whether any steps to increase the number of ratifications are feasible, the Danish delegate drew attention particularly to the fact that many States signed conventions but then took no steps whatever to ratify them, a course of action more deplorable than if they had failed to sign in the first instance.

The Norwegian delegate undoubtedly put his finger on one frequent cause of non-ratification when he regretted that delegates had not the moral courage to state plainly with regard to some of the proposals placed before successive Assemblies that they did not consider them of practical value, and that it was quite doubtful if their Governments would ratify. The tendency undoubtedly exists to allow motions to be adopted and conventions framed more for fear of hurting the feelings of the proposer by rejecting them than because of any real belief in their necessity. Yet, apart from conventions of this nature, there are undoubtedly many conventions of real importance which are still inoperative, probably not because of any real objection to them on the part of States, but because, through pressure of parliamentary business or other reasons, the matter of ratification has been lost sight of, or, at any rate, more or less indefinitely postponed.

One suggestion made with regard to this subject was that a time-limit should be imposed in connection with each convention, whereby the convention would lapse if the number of ratifications necessary to make it operative were not received within such time-limit. In such an event a further Conference on the subject could be convened, by which a fresh convention more likely to secure general support could be drawn up, thus preventing the existence of an unratified convention from blocking all progress on the subject.

It was eventually decided (Document A. 76) to recommend to the Council the setting-up of a committee of seven members to investigate the reasons for the delays which exist, and the means whereby the number of signatures, ratifications, and accessions to conventions could be increased.

The Secretariat was also requested to prepare yearly a table showing more clearly than is done in the Annex to Document A. 6 (a) the position with regard to signatures and ratifications of all conventions. This should prove decidedly useful for ready reference.

REVISION OF TERMS OF TREATIES WHICH HAVE BECOME INAPPLICABLE.

The resolution on this question, moved by the Chinese delegation (Document A. 47), raised a very delicate point. The mover spoke with the most studied moderation, and claimed that all that was asked for was that study should be made of the rights given to States under Article 19 with regard to revision of treaties and of the method of application of the article.

In the debate on the subject it was recognized by the various speakers that the right to claim revision undoubtedly exists under Article 19; but it was contended by the British delegate that the provision, while an obviously necessary one, was clearly one which must be regarded as of the category of "long period" development of the League.

The Belgian delegate contended that the question had been discussed by the Assembly in 1921, and that the setting-up of a special committee to study the question was, therefore, unnecessary,