

America, was insistent that a way must be found to overcome these difficulties and to achieve a really substantial measure of disarmament. He could not understand what objection there could be to Viscount Cecil's proposals. Whilst strongly urging the necessity for reconsideration by the Preparatory Commission, he declared himself entirely optimistic as to the results desired being eventually achieved. Progress made in the ten years since the First Assembly rendered it impossible for any one who followed the work of the League to be other than an optimist.

On the third day of the debate the Chinese and Portuguese delegates also strongly supported Viscount Cecil's motion. In a very outspoken speech, the Chinese delegate said the so-called "agreements" regarding disarmament reached by the Preparatory Commission were really nothing more than a whitewashing of failure to reach any result of any importance, and it was absurd to maintain that such decisions could not be subject to revision. Unless they were revised, there seemed no chance of a Disarmament Conference achieving any real results.

The Greek representative, M. Politis, thought that Viscount Cecil's desires had to a considerable extent been achieved, as the discussions in the committee and the support given to his proposals could not fail to be taken into account by the Preparatory Commission. He proposed a motion which he thought would prove a satisfactory compromise between the opposing points of view. This proposal, which was subsequently adopted (Document A. 83), provided, amongst other things, that the minutes of the committee and of the Assembly concerning the matter should be communicated to the Preparatory Commission for any necessary action. This would also give an opportunity to those supporting Viscount Cecil's views to restate them before the Preparatory Commission. The motion also emphasized the necessity for the Commission to terminate its labours at an early date.

In reply, Lord Cecil pointed out that the objections to his resolution had been not so much as to its substance but rather as to the advisability of procedure. He thought the debate had elicited definitely that regarding points (a), (b), and (d) of his resolution, the door was still open for further consideration by the Preparatory Commission, and he quoted from the minutes of that Commission paragraphs which he thought indicated that it was still not impossible for the Commission further to consider point (c), regarding limitation of war material, which he again emphasized was much the most important of all the points raised. While there was a strong temptation to press the matter to a vote, and while he thought it quite possible, in that event, that a majority for his resolution would be obtained, he had decided to accept the compromise suggested by M. Politis, as he thought nothing was to be gained by a decision which, in any case, would only be adopted against the views of a large minority, and which might only tend to embitter relations. At the same time, he pointed out that, while agreement was essential, it was "fatally easy to agree to do nothing," and that a triumph of diplomacy might quite possibly do nothing for the cause of disarmament. Unless limitation of material was provided for in a Disarmament Treaty, such Treaty would be little better than a sham.

The French delegate recommended approving the resolution of M. Politis, which he thought was a true picture of the position, and particularly as it allowed of all that had been said in the committee being taken into account by the Preparatory Commission.

Count Bernstorff (Germany) said that, while he would have greatly preferred Lord Cecil's resolution, he would accept that of M. Politis, as most of what Lord Cecil had desired to achieve had already been obtained, as the points would all be considered by the Preparatory Commission. Stress had been laid upon the necessity for mutual concessions. "I cannot remember," he said, "a single case in which a concession has been made in favour of disarmament. A most glaring case of this is the decision at the last session to exclude altogether the question of limitation of material. The signature to a treaty which does not effect substantial disarmament will be contrary both to the Covenant and to the Treaties of Peace."

And so the debate on disarmament, quite the most important of all the committee discussions this year, concluded. The debate, I feel sure, will assist the Preparatory Commission to hasten its labours to attain some tangible result.

#### COMMUNICATIONS OF LEAGUE IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY : FACILITIES TO BE GRANTED TO AIRCRAFT.

Particulars regarding this matter will be found in the general report and supplementary report on the work of the League since the last Assembly (Document A. 6 and A. 6 (a)), and in Document A. 82, the report presented to the Assembly by the Third Committee and adopted by it. The object of the proposal is to ensure that independent means of communication shall be available for the League in times of emergency, for such purposes as the carriage of League mails or staff, and the transport of members of the League Council or Assembly to and from Geneva. This, of course, involves the passage of aircraft over the territory of various countries, and makes it necessary that agreement should be come to exactly defining the facilities to be granted to aircraft employed in such ways on League business. The question of the legal status of such aircraft was among those considered by the International Commission for Air Navigation which met in 1919, and is to meet again shortly. It so happened that a private individual, claiming to represent the International League of Aviators, laid before the Commission mentioned a proposal for the creation of a League air fleet, which would enable the League not merely to maintain independent communications, but to enforce sanctions against any country committing an act of aggression. This, coupled with the fact that it is proposed to construct a League aerodrome near Geneva, has unfortunately led to the object of the present proposals being entirely misrepresented in some quarters, which have issued alarmist reports regarding the alleged intention of creating a large air fleet. As will be seen from Document A. 82, no such intention exists.

Other matters dealt with by the Third Committee were the supervision of the private manufacture and publicity of the manufacture of arms and ammunition and of implements of war, and the model treaty to strengthen means of preventing war. Both these subjects were referred to in my report last year. As will be seen from the reports concerning them, adopted by the Assembly (Documents A. 87 and A. 84), little or no progress regarding either of them has been made during the present year, nor does there appear to be much prospect of material progress being made in the near future.