

contribution to be calculated not on the basis assessed by the League, but on Australia's own assessment, taking into account the amount which it was considered Australia should justly pay.

The general debate came to a close. In the course of it motions had been put forward by the Portuguese and Norwegian delegates. The Portuguese motion provided for reference to the Supervisory Commission of the French proposal, whilst the Norwegian motion was conceived in the following terms:—

“ Considering the proposal of the French Government for a reduction of the contributions of member States for the year 1936 by 10 per cent. ;

“ Considering that substantial economies have been made in the draft budget for 1936 ;

“ Considering that these economies together with the proposed restitution of a proportion of the surplus for the year 1934 have ensured that, despite the withdrawal of two member States from the League, the contributions of member States for the year 1936 will be no greater than for 1935 ;

“ Considering further that the draft budget for 1936 has been examined by the Supervisory Commission and recommended for acceptance by that body :

“ The Assembly resolves—

“ (1) That the various organizations of the League of Nations, in consultation with the Supervisory Commission, shall frame their budget for the year 1937 with due regard to the request of the French Government and to the essential needs of these organizations ;

“ (2) That these organizations shall be instructed to limit such activities the limitation of which will not be detrimental to the future of the League of Nations.’ ”

This motion was not put to the vote, and ultimately the Committee decided, with the consent of the French delegate, to refer the budget, together with the French proposal, to the Supervisory Commission. In due course the Supervisory Commission reported. A hasty glance at its report gave some ground for satisfaction, for it was seen that a reduction of 1,950,000 francs was proposed. But a closer examination failed to maintain first impressions, since provision was made for no considerable saving which had not already appeared likely to materialize. For instance, every year provision is made in the estimates for conferences to be held if circumstances permit. In recent years much money thus provided has not been spent. The Supervisory Commission proposed a reduction in respect of such conferences. Some savings were effected on the budget of the Permanent Court of International Justice (on a guarantee being given to the Registrar that deficiencies would be met) ; by postponement of part of an addition to the International Labour Office building ; by a modification of the budget of this organization, including a reduction of new posts ; and by an additional refund to States, to be taken from the surplus.

Salaries were not touched. Few delegates expected they would be after the experience of former years when tackling this question. An opportunity of raising one aspect of the question was, however, seized by your representative when Chapter 3 of the budget (Salaries and General Services) was under discussion. If you will refer to paragraph 17, page 4, of the report of the Supervisory Commission (Document A. 5), you will observe that the Secretary-General had put forward a request for an increase of the salary of members of section who had been promoted to the rank of Counsellor. The increase was refused by the Supervisory Commission and the request withdrawn, only to be replaced by another for a personal grant of 2,600 francs to each Counsellor—in effect an increase in salary given in an irregular way. This was agreed to by the Supervisory Commission (presumably by majority vote, or in the absence of one member), and the estimates contained a provision for 10,400 francs—not a large amount, but one involving a principle which it was worth examining in the light of day. There were whispers that grants were looked upon as compensation to men who performed work for which superior officers were receiving the pay. A principle was at stake, however ; the salary attached to the post was adequate or it was not. What was the opinion of those competent to speak ? A question framed in this sense was put by your representative. The Secretary-General, in the course of his explanation, stated that the four Counsellors to whom he proposed to make this allowance did work which was far outside the scope of the normal activities of members of section. It was not on account of their title, therefore, but mainly in consideration of the quality and quantity of the duties they were called upon to discharge that it was proposed to make them a special allowance. But the matter was not allowed to rest there. The Secretary-General was followed by Mr. Hambro (a member of the Supervisory Commission), who made it clear that he was opposed to personal grants, and by M. Rappard, the Swiss delegate, who proposed the annulment of the grant. There was a debate of some animation. At length the proposal for a reduction was put to the vote. I quote from the *draft* minutes : “ A preliminary vote was taken by a show of hands, but as it was impossible to arrive at a definite interpretation of the result the Chairman took a roll call. The result of the voting was as follows :—

Votes in favour of the Swiss delegate's proposal (deletion of the special allowance to Counsellors)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
Votes against the proposal of the Swiss delegate	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Abstentions	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6

The annual allowance was consequently maintained. I might comment on the circumstances attending the taking of the vote on this issue, but I will refrain.