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Date *Jan. 28*

Sujet

Subject

*Weekly Meetings of Secretary-General and Directors.**Minutes of 18th Meeting Jan. 28.**Subjects discussed:—**Agenda for the Second Council Meeting and the procedure to be adopted.**International Labour Office Council of Ambassadors.*

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M I N U T E S

of a Meeting held in the Secretary-General's
room on Wednesday, January 28th, 1920.

Present:- The Secretary-General.
Commendatore Anzilotti.
Dr. Nitobe.
Sir Herbert Ames.
Mr. Mair.
Capt. Gilchrist.

The Secretary-General said that he thought that on the whole the Paris Council meeting had been a success, and that it was held in a favourable atmosphere, certainly as far as the French government was concerned. The one valid criticism which he had heard was that the only question discussed was the appointment of the Saar Valley Delimitation Commission. This of course had all been arranged in advance, and no other course was possible in the circumstances. It was clear, however, that the next meeting must do real business.

It had been left to Monsieur Bourgeois, in consultation with the Secretary-General, to decide on the agenda for the next Council meeting. Seven subjects which needed early consideration had already been chosen, and an eighth might also be placed on the list. This last was with regard to Swiss neutrality and Swiss membership on the League of Nations. This question had been discussed by the Supreme Council, and that body had at first asked for a report on the question from the Council of the League of Nations. The Secretary-General had protested because such action by the Supreme Council placed the Council of the League of Nations in an impossible position. It was then apparently decided by the Supreme Council to refer the question to the Council of the League of Nations for action. Since then the Council of Ambassadors in Paris had, it seemed, given further consideration to this question, and the real situation was not/

was not clear. It was apparent, however, that Ambassadors, acting in the name of their own governments, could not bind other countries. Even a decision by the Council of the League of Nations would probably bind only governments which had members on the Council. Everyone appeared willing to meet reasonable Swiss views. The problem involved two questions:

- (1) If Switzerland becomes a member, will she be able to maintain her neutrality as recognised in 1815?
- (2) Will there be a right of passage for the troops of the League across Switzerland if she joins the League?

Dr. Van Hamel had suggested an ingenious solution, i.e., that there should be no right of passage except with the consent of Switzerland. The Secretary-General believed that this ought to satisfy all parties.

The Secretary-General said that the second meeting will probably be held on February 11. According to present plans, the first half-hour would be an open session. The Chairman would be chosen and the agenda announced. The Chairman would then say that in view of the fact that it was impossible to discuss names and personal matters in public, the Council found it necessary to go into secret session, but that no agreements made at any secret meeting would be valid until confirmed in public. The Secretary-General hoped that this plan of procedure would be followed, and he understood that Monsieur Bourgeois had agreed in general to this programme.

Monsieur Bourgeois had advocated the "rapporteur" system for bringing up questions in the Council meeting, i.e., each Council member would bring up a separate question in accordance with ^a pre-arranged schedule. This plan seemed quite ingenious. It would interest all the members of the Council and would relieve the Chairman considerably.

Sir Herbert Ames asked what policy should be followed with reference to the attendance of Directors at Council meetings.

The Secretary-General said that he hoped they would be present, although he thought that only those members of the Secretariat directly interested in the questions under consideration should occupy places at the Secretariat table.

The Secretary-General/

The Secretary-General reported that the Japanese Ambassador had seen him to-day and that he expected to be able to transmit Japan's financial contribution to the Secretariat in a very short time.

The Secretary-General announced that Monsieur Thomas had been unanimously elected Permanent Director of the International Labour Office. He said that there was a plan under consideration for the appointment of two Vice-Presidents for the Governing Body of the Labour Organization. Under this scheme the three categories, governments, employers and employees, would each be represented either by a President or a Vice-President, and the Presidency would be held in turn by each of these three groups.

Mr. Mair asked how soon advance information with regard to the second Council meeting should be given to the press.

The Secretary-General said that the invitations had not yet been sent out, but that they were going shortly, and that first announcements to the press could probably be made by the end of the week.

Mr. Mair announced that the proofs for the first number of the Official Journal would probably be ready to-day.

Captain Gilchrist said that the draft Labour Conventions and Recommendations, and formal notices about the closing of the Washington Labour Conference were almost ready to go out to the States concerned.

The Secretary-General suggested that Monsieur Waelbroeck might draw up a notice about this to be inserted in the Official Journal.

Sir Herbert Ames asked to what extent the Council of Ambassadors replaced the old Supreme Council in Paris.

The Secretary-General said that the new Council of Ambassadors was supposed to sit for questions arising in connection with the execution of the Treaty only. He noticed, however, that questions quite outside this field had already been referred to that body.

Sunderland House,
Curzon Street.
L O M D C N, W.I.
29th January, 1920.

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