

Section.

GENERAL.

REGISTRY.

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Date *Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>*Sujet *Weekly Meeting of Secretary General*

Subject

*and Directors.*  
*Minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting - Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>*

Subjects discussed:—

*France and International Secretariat.**Brussels Conference.**Disarmament. &c. &c.*

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Minutes of a Meeting held in the Secretary-General's Room,  
on Wednesday, 3rd December 1919, at 3.30 p.m.

Present:

The Secretary-General;  
Sir Herbert Ames;  
Mr. Colban;  
Dr. van Hamel;  
Mr. Mair;  
Captain Walters.

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1. The Secretary-General said that Monsieur Mantoux, who arrived from Paris yesterday, and who he had hoped would have been able to attend this afternoon's meeting, had seen Monsieur Berthelot just before he left, and the latter still thought that the deposit of ratifications might take place about December 15, as the Germans would probably give way without much further trouble. This, however, was only Monsieur Berthelot's private opinion, and the Secretary-General did not fully agree with it.

He understood that there was some feeling in French official circles that the International Secretariat did not need to be on anything like the scale now planned, or to consist of men of any eminence. Their idea was that international cooperation should be effected through continual meetings of responsible statesmen, and that a Secretariat was required only to note down decisions arrived at at those meetings. He did not think that this idea need be taken very seriously, but perhaps some counter-propaganda might be useful. Those who thought on these lines entirely failed to realise the vast number of subjects which the Covenant and the Treaty placed under the direction of the League. It might perhaps be worth while now privately to point out the number and variety of these:-disarmament, health, arms traffic, labour, mandates, etc., etc.

2. Brussels Conference. The results of this were not yet known. He feared that the discussions might be carried on in too great an atmosphere of idealism.

Mr. Mair said that Monsieur Comert was at Brussels, and on his return/



return would draw up and circulate an account of the meeting.

3. Dr. van Hamel said that in Holland, on his recent visit, he had found the Dutch amazed at the action of the United States, but not, he thought, likely to change their intention of joining. German propaganda in Holland seemed if anything to be in favour of Holland's joining, and the Dutch Socialists, unlike the Swiss Socialists, were pro-League. There was still a strong stream of anti-Ally propaganda in Holland, from German sources.

The Dutch were thinking very much of disarmament, and he feared that it would be a great disillusionment if the League did not handle this question at an early date.

A somewhat lengthy discussion followed on the general subject of disarmament, in which it was urged that, though the present moment might be inopportune, it might be of advantage to appoint a small section of the Secretariat to make a preliminary study of the questions involved.

The Secretary-General thought that without doing this it would be quite possible to have a scheme prepared for submission to the Council, if the Council should ask for it, and promised to have such a scheme outlined for further consideration.

4. Sir Herbert Ames said that, now that so many South American States had indicated their intention to join, he thought perhaps some use might be made of this fact in the American press.

The Secretary-General remarked that the attention of Messrs. Fosdick and Sweetser had already been drawn to this fact; and, though they had no doubt made use of it, it has he feared had little if any effect. Nevertheless he agreed that it might be useful for the Information Section to bring it to the notice of some of the American press men in London.

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Sunderland House,  
Curzon Street,  
London, W. 1.

4th December, 1919.



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