

Since the last public meeting of the Council its activity has not for one moment relaxed. The members have had many discussions with a view to finding a satisfactory solution of the dispute before us. I myself, in my capacity as President, have had frequent interviews and conversations with the Chinese and Japanese representatives. We have all, in a spirit of complete goodwill, sought the best means of rapidly putting an end to the regrettable situation with which we are now confronted.

So far as the attitude of mind of the two parties is concerned, the situation (I am glad to say) shows no change for the worse. It is now certain that the dispute is, and will remain to the end, circumscribed within its present limits. We cannot for a single moment admit the possibility of the present conflict leading to general hostilities.

This is important, but it is not enough. It is absolutely necessary finally to arrive at a settlement.

Under the conditions which I have indicated, we have tried to find the terms of a draft resolution which would allow of the parties coming to an agreement with the Council and putting an end to these protracted discussions, which have gone on far too long for many people, and for us also. It is true that, in the present instance, the Council of the League is faced with an altogether exceptional case which, arising as it does in connection with a very peculiar situation, is extremely difficult of solution for the reason that the conflict is a long way off, that the representatives of the parties to the dispute receive their instructions from distant Governments, and that the instructions may take time to arrive.

As I said at a previous meeting, the parties most concerned must assist the Council by the display of somewhat prolonged patience. Their patience has already been tried not a little. Of our own I will not speak: we are Members of the Council, and as such our patience should be inexhaustible. But for all that, we must wish to make an end of this matter, which has already lasted so long. Accordingly, we have endeavoured in a number of interviews to find a text which would embody the goodwill of both parties.

On the one hand, we have the Japanese Government protesting that it has no desire to encroach on the territorial integrity of China. It is prepared to evacuate the territories into which it has introduced its troops. It is only anxious as to the security of its nationals and their property. As soon as guarantees are received in this respect, it asserts its readiness to withdraw the troops. That is the Japanese contention. I believe I do not misrepresent it.

On the other hand, the Chinese representative says: "We quite understand that guarantees should be required for persons and property, and we are prepared to give these guarantees. We have studied and will continue to study the best means of doing so, and we place ourselves entirely at the Council's disposal for the purpose. We are even anxious to take advantage of its benevolent authority to facilitate matters."

That is how the position stands. I have said and I repeat that I cannot believe, with this attitude on either side, that we can fail to arrive at a satisfactory result, but a formula has to be found; and, in public life, the search for formulas often gives rise to some of the most formidable obstacles with which statesmen have to contend. We have not been discouraged. We have searched and, in the end, we have drawn up unanimously—apart from the two colleagues who are parties to the case—the text of a resolution which will now be read. I repeat that it has not yet been accepted by the parties concerned. It was submitted to them to-day at (I must admit) a somewhat late hour. They have considered it and will no doubt desire to let us have their observations and reflections thereon. It is not an immutable draft. It is open to improvement and will, I hope, be improved as the result of our discussion of the text.

In other circumstances in the past, the Council has discussed draft resolutions and, as a result of efforts of goodwill on both sides, has succeeded in agreeing on a wording which has been adopted unanimously. I trust that will be the case now.

The resolution is as follows: ¹

1931年10月24日に投票に付された決議案

"The Council,

"In pursuance of the resolution passed on September 30th;

"Noting that in addition to the invocation by the Government of China, of Article 11 of the Covenant, Article 2 of the Pact of Paris has also been invoked by a number of Governments;

"(1) Recalls the undertakings given to the Council by the Governments of China and Japan in that resolution, and in particular the statement of the Japanese representative that the Japanese Government would continue as rapidly as possible the withdrawal of its troops into the railway zone in proportion as the safety of the lives and property of Japanese nationals is effectively assured, and the statement of the Chinese representative that his Government will assume the responsibility for the safety of the lives and property of Japanese nationals outside that zone—a pledge which implies the effective protection of Japanese subjects residing in Manchuria;

"(2) Recalls further that both Governments have given the assurance that they would refrain from any measures which might aggravate the existing situation, and are therefore bound not to resort to any aggressive policy or action and to take measures to suppress hostile agitation;

¹ Document C.746.1931.VII.

" (3) Recalls the Japanese statement that Japan has no territorial designs in Manchuria, and notes that this statement is in accordance with the terms of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and of the Nine-Power Treaty, the signatories of which are pledged ' to respect the sovereignty, the independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China ' ;

" (4) Being convinced that the fulfilment of these assurances and undertakings is essential for the restoration of normal relations between the two parties;

" (a) Calls upon the Japanese Government to begin immediately and to proceed progressively with the withdrawal of its troops into the railway zone, so that the total withdrawal may be effected before the date fixed for the next meeting of the Council;

" (b) Calls upon the Chinese Government, in execution of its general pledge to assume the responsibility for the safety of the lives and property of all Japanese subjects resident in Manchuria, to make such arrangements for taking over the territory thus evacuated as will ensure the safety of the lives and property of Japanese subjects there, and requests the Chinese Government to associate with the Chinese authorities designated for the above purpose representatives of other Powers in order that such representatives may follow the execution of the arrangements;

" (5) Recommends that the Chinese and Japanese Governments should immediately appoint representatives to arrange the details of the execution of all points relating to the evacuation and the taking over of the evacuated territory so that they may proceed smoothly and without delay;

" (6) Recommends the Chinese and Japanese Governments, as soon as the evacuation is completed, to begin direct negotiations on questions outstanding between them, and in particular those arising out of recent incidents as well as those relating to existing difficulties due to the railway situation in Manchuria. For this purpose, the Council suggests that the two parties should set up a conciliation committee, or some such permanent machinery;

" (7) Decides to adjourn till November 16th, at which date it will again examine the situation, but authorises its President to convoke a meeting at any earlier date should it in his opinion be desirable. "

M. SZE. — The resolution before us raises weighty and far-reaching issues, no less than the outcome of the Council's deliberations on this matter since September 22nd. It does not, indeed, purport to be a final solution; for I note that the text before us provides for a period of roughly three weeks during which evacuation must be completed, and makes it clear that the Council is only adjourned and will meet again in any case on November 16th, or earlier if the President so desires.

I will not conceal from the Council that this resolution at the first glance appears to fall far short of what the Chinese Government considers the situation demands and what it is entitled to ask. But it does, such as it is, represent the fruits of the Council's labours during more than a month to safeguard peace and secure justice. It must therefore be treated with the care, deliberation and close attention which its importance merits. I first saw this text at 12.30 this afternoon, and have barely had the time to telegraph it to my Government, with an urgent request for its comments as soon as possible. Therefore, I feel myself obliged to appeal to the indulgence of the Council to grant me a short delay in order that I may obtain instructions from my Government. I do this with the greater confidence in that you have already twice, Mr. President, with the willing consent of us all, extended this privilege to my colleague, the representative of Japan, and in that this represents the climax of the second stage in the League's attempt to grapple with what admittedly is the most serious problem that has come before it since its foundation.

M. YOSHIZAWA. — The Council suspended its meetings for several days, which may have seemed very long and a waste of time. Nevertheless that is not the case. At Geneva, under M. Briand's wise guidance, conversations have been taking place at which views were exchanged and facts ascertained, and where gradually solutions of the present problem took shape. For my part, I have forwarded all the proposals made here to my Government for consideration, and have put before it all the views which the accomplishment of my mission has dictated.

You are all aware of the vital importance of the question of Manchuria to Japanese public opinion. I have attempted to put before you the main points of the problem, and I do not doubt that you will have realised not only its complexity but the profound differences which exist between the conditions prevailing in these distant lands and those with which you have frequently to deal in this part of the world.

I would first assure you of one thing: the Japanese Government has in no way modified its intentions with regard to Manchuria, which I have already announced to you. Japan has no

SIXTEENTH MEETING (PUBLIC).

Held at Geneva on Saturday, October 24th, 1931, at 5 p.m.

Present: All the representatives of the Members of the Council, and the Secretary-General. The British Empire was represented by Viscount CECIL OF CHELWOOD and Italy by M. SCIALOJA. The United States of America was represented (Minute 2951) by Mr. Prentiss GILBERT.

2955. **Appeal from the Chinese Government under Article 11 of the Covenant** (continuation).

The PRESIDENT. — Since this morning's meeting further conversations have taken place in the hope that we might be able to devise a solution of this difficulty in accordance with our unanimous desire. At one moment, I had some hope that the parties had been brought sufficiently close together for that to be possible. In that case, I should have had the pleasure of submitting to the Council a draft resolution which would certainly have been accepted unanimously. Unfortunately I am unable to do so, and I deeply regret it. It must not be inferred, however, that, during our conversations, we have found that the situation has become worse. Far from it. A new desire has been apparent on the part of the Japanese delegation to join us in the view which we have adopted. The Japanese representative is, however, far away from his country, and is not entitled to interpret his instructions otherwise than he has done and, for reasons of conscience, he has felt he could not go as far as we had contemplated.

We are therefore left with the two texts before us which have been under discussion. Following the ordinary practice, I shall first submit the counter-proposal of the Japanese delegation to the Council for consideration.

M. YOSHIZAWA. — The Japanese delegation has joined the Council in its efforts to try to find a satisfactory solution for the serious question before it. Unfortunately, it has to note that there is still a difference of view as between the opinion of the Council set forth in the resolution and the opinion of the Japanese Government.

I desire to repeat one or two statements I have already made on several occasions. This matter was brought before the Council with the object of averting the threat of war. The Japanese Government has no intention of waging war on China, and it even considers that, at the present moment, there is no longer any threat of war.

I would repeat once more that Japan has no territorial designs in Manchuria, and that the Japanese Government is determined to bring its troops back into the railway zone as soon as it is satisfied that the safety of its nationals and the protection of their property are effectively safeguarded. It felt it necessary, in order that these conditions might be fulfilled, that a more peaceful frame of mind should prevail, and as a means to that end it proposed a preliminary agreement with China. Once again it expresses its readiness to enter into negotiations with China for that purpose at any time.

I desire to tell the Council how much I have appreciated the earnest and patient efforts it has made in examining this question, efforts which will be for me an unforgettable memory.

The problems raised in the Council are problems affecting the very life of Japan. Such a situation cannot be judged merely from the standpoint of ideas. It would also be a grave mistake to judge it solely from the standpoint of facts. My Government, as regards the position it has taken up, has desired to have regard both to ideas and to facts. While not wishing to depart for a single moment from the spirit or the letter of its undertakings, the Japanese Government must assume its responsibilities to its nationals.

The draft resolution submitted to us does not, in its opinion, lay down the conditions which it regards as essential for effectively safeguarding the lives and property of its nationals. It is for that reason that, to my great regret, I cannot accept the draft resolution submitted by the President.

The PRESIDENT. — It now remains for us to take a decision on the counter-proposal submitted by the Japanese representative. I put it to the vote.

The counter-proposal submitted by the Japanese representative was rejected by thirteen votes to one, the Japanese representative voting in favour.

The PRESIDENT. — We will now take a vote by roll-call on the draft resolution which my colleagues have asked me to lay before the Council.

There voted for: British Empire, China, France, Germany, Guatemala, Irish Free State, Italy, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Spain, and Yugoslavia.

There voted against: Japan.

The PRESIDENT. — The draft resolution is therefore adopted unanimously, except for one vote—that of our colleague, the Japanese representative, who had indeed clearly intimated to us beforehand that he could not agree.

We have not been able to achieve unanimity on this draft resolution. Once again, I desire to express my keen regret that this should be so. But it cannot be said that our efforts have been without result in this serious, intricate, delicate and exceptional dispute. I particularly wish public opinion to realise the exceptional character of this dispute which, owing to the fact that the parties are so far distant from us here, the difficulty of communications and the impossibility of securing a rapid solution, has compelled the Council for its part to adopt an exceptional procedure and to allow exceptional limits of time which must not under any circumstances be regarded as precedents. Our efforts, I repeat, have not been without result.

We have come very near to our goal. That goal has, in fact, been attained in that we, being bound under the Covenant to prevent a conflict from being aggravated and degenerating into war, have been able to circumscribe it, acting in conjunction with the parties to the case. It is serious enough that the conflict should remain, even within its present limits; but the fact that it no longer amounts to a threat of war is, I think, a result for which the Council is entitled to take credit.

I am bound to say how greatly we have appreciated the valuable assistance which has throughout been afforded us in this delicate matter by the Government of the United States of America. From the very outset, it associated itself with our efforts and told us that it did so. From the outset it exchanged communications with us and, when we requested it to do so, it even gave us its co-operation within the limits which it assigned to itself and with a special object in view—that is to say, it based its action on the Pact of Paris, of which it was the initiator and the application of which it is entitled to supervise. I should like to ask the representative of the United States to convey to his Government our warm and sincere thanks, and to tell him that, in our opinion, the assistance which has thus been given us has undoubtedly produced a moral effect which, together with our own efforts, has contributed greatly to circumscribing the conflict.

What, then, is the present position? We shall adjourn until November 16th. The draft resolution which has been adopted after a very long discussion is now on the Council table. It is in the hands of our colleague, the Japanese representative, and of his Government. Moreover, our colleague has just made certain declarations which we have all noted with real satisfaction.

At this solemn moment, realising the whole weight of his responsibilities and appealing to his conscience, the Japanese representative felt called upon to affirm once more on behalf of his Government that, in this affair, the Japanese Government is not seeking in any way to achieve aggrandisement at the expense of a neighbouring country; that it has no secret intention to encroach in any way upon the territorial integrity of a country which, like Japan, is a Member of the League. He has been able to assure us that his Government will take every care to keep the conflict within limits, so that it may not lead to a new catastrophe.

These declarations, coming from a country like Japan, are of importance. Moreover, since the sole anxiety of the Japanese Government is to ensure the necessary safeguards for Japanese nationals and their property, I still venture to hope that, between now and November 16th, the evacuation, already begun, will be continued, the Japanese Government thereby proving by its acts that it is straining every effort to end the conflict. At the next meeting, the Japanese representative may be able to come to us and say: "The dispute no longer exists. All the hopes and desires expressed by my colleagues have now been fulfilled." I trust I shall have the great pleasure of placing such a statement upon record.

We have now come to the end of this journey, which has been rather long and has taken us over unaccustomed ground. We have not always worked upon the geometrical principle that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points; we have been obliged by considerations of procedure to wander rather far from our goal. But now we behold that goal very clearly.

Between now and the date of the next meeting of the Council I hope the President will receive good news to convey to you. Perhaps the best news of all would be that there is no absolute need for a further meeting. But even so, I may be selfish enough to convene you here again in order to tell you the good news in person. You will forgive me for that, if you think of my reasons.

There is no need for me to add that the resolution of September 30th, to the effect that the parties shall furnish the Council with frequent information regarding the course of events, and that all Members of the Council may also send in information, is maintained. That procedure will continue; in other words, the co-operation which has existed up to the present session will continue as before.

M. SCIALOJA. — I feel sure I am voicing the feelings of all my colleagues when I tender to you, Mr. President, the expression of our gratitude for your wise, able and experienced guidance of our work. You have brought us to a point which, if it cannot be regarded as our harbour, is so near that we may hope ultimately to reach it. No one could have so ably steered our ship, I will not say through the storms, but through the obscurity which has at times impeded our course.

M. Briand knows that I have long been an admirer of his. I cannot say I have admired all that he has done, because on occasion I have had to vote against him. But I have always