

to me—and I think my colleagues will agree—to be very practical, and I venture to suggest that the Secretary-General's memorandum should receive the approval of the Council and be forwarded to the Assembly in order that the Assembly itself may ratify the proposals, which will thus have been brought to the notice of all Governments."

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

2487. Date of the European Conference on the Transport of Newspapers and Periodicals.

M. ZALESKI said that the Council had decided at its last session to convene an international Conference on the transport of newspapers.¹ The question of the date of this Conference, and also the question of its chairmanship, had been held over for a later session of the Council.

M. Zaleski proposed that the Conference should meet on November 25th, 1929, and suggested that Lord Burnham, who had presided over the Conference of Press Experts with such skill and authority should be appointed president of the Conference.

The Council agreed to both proposals.

2488. Nomination of a Portuguese Expert to serve on the Expert Committee for the Co-ordination of Sleeping-Sickness Investigations: Proposal submitted by the President of the Health Committee.

M. QUIÑONES DE LEÓN read the following report: ²

" My colleagues have noted the letter of the Chairman of the Health Committee (Annex 1163), asking that a Portuguese expert be attached to the Committee for co-ordinating sleeping-sickness investigations.

" It is with the greatest pleasure that I ask my colleagues to comply with this request, which I have no doubt will meet with their unanimous assent. "

M. TITULESCO warmly supported the report of the Spanish representative. Portugal was a country that had shown great devotion to the League, and M. Titulesco was pleased that an opportunity was being afforded for this loyal friend to render eminent service, at any rate in the sphere of technical work. He trusted that, in the future, Portugal would play the increasingly important part which its standing in the League warranted.

The PRESIDENT said that M. Titulesco had interpreted the unanimous view of the Council.

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

(The Council went into public session.)

2489. Free City of Danzig High Commissioner's Right of Veto on Treaties applying to the Free City (Article 6 of the Danzig-Polish Treaty of November 9th, 1920).

Count Gravina, High Commissioner of the League at Danzig, and Dr. Sahm, President of the Danzig Senate, came to the Council table.

M. VILLEGAS read the following report and draft resolution. ³

" The High Commissioner has asked the Council to examine certain proposals drawn up by him with regard to the procedure to be followed in the use by the High Commissioner of the right of veto on treaties applying to the Free City of Danzig. The High Commissioner observes that it has been realised that the practice followed up to the present and the terms of the Council's previous resolutions on this matter might give rise to misunderstandings and that the need for establishing clearer rules of procedure has made itself felt.

" At the request of the Danzig Senate, the High Commissioner has thoroughly examined the question. He has drawn up a very clear and complete report on the subject in the memorandum which he has submitted to us (Annex 1164). He points out that it was at first customary for any communication from the High Commissioner with regard to the conclusion of treaties affecting Danzig or Danzig's accession to international treaties to be automatically submitted to the Council in order that the latter might consider whether there was occasion to make use of the right of veto provided for by Article 6 of the Treaty of Paris.

" From 1924 onwards, however, these questions ceased to be submitted to the Council. Since that time the Secretary-General has, on several occasions, communicated to the Council documents concerning Danzig's participation in international treaties. In each case the High Commissioner stated that in his opinion there was no occasion to make use of the right of veto and, no Members of the Council having asked that the question should be considered, it was regarded as understood that, once the time-limits had expired, the Council would not exercise the right of veto. It is this procedure that the High Commissioner would like the Council to sanction by a

¹ See *Official Journal*, July 1929, page 986.
Document C.422.1929.III.

³ Document C.407.1929.I.

formal resolution so as to obviate the difficulties which might arise later on, owing to the absence of fixed regulations.

" I have examined with the greatest care all the details of the High Commissioner's proposals, which are based on the experience gained during recent years. Both parties have declared that they are in agreement with the High Commissioner and I am happy also to be able to support these proposals and to recommend them to the Council for adoption. I propose, therefore, the adoption of the following resolution.

" The High Commissioner's proposals on the procedure to be followed with regard to the second paragraph of Article 6 of the Paris Treaty have been laid before the Council. The Council approves these proposals and adopts the following rules, which shall replace the previous Council resolutions on the subject:

" *Procedure to be followed with regard to the Second Paragraph of Article 6 of the Danzig-Polish Treaty of November 9th, 1920*

" 1. An official communication must be made to the High Commissioner of the League of Nations at Danzig, in virtue of Article 6, paragraph 2, of the Paris Treaty, when the negotiations or preparations with a view to the conclusion of treaties to which the Free City of Danzig is a contracting party have reached the stage at which the text of the treaty has been drawn up and has been signed by Poland on behalf of the Free City. In the case of accession to an already existing treaty the text of which is therefore known, the communication shall be made when the Senate has taken the decision to accede to this treaty, and when Poland has declared that she will take the necessary steps to this end. The High Commissioner shall be similarly informed whenever Poland, after previous consultation with the Free City as provided for in Article 6, paragraph 1, of the Treaty of November 9th, 1920, has signed a treaty or decided to accede to a treaty applying to the Free City to which Danzig is not a contracting party.

" 2. This official communication (to which the text of the treaty in question must be annexed) may be made either by Danzig or by Poland.

" 3. The High Commissioner shall notify the Secretary-General without delay, communicating to him the text of the treaty in question and informing him whether in his opinion the treaty is inconsistent with the provisions of the Treaty of November 9th, 1920, or with the status of the Free City.

" 4. The Secretary-General shall forward this communication from the High Commissioner to the Members of the Council.

" (a) If the High Commissioner has expressed the opinion that the treaty is not inconsistent with the provisions of the Paris Treaty or with the status of the Free City, and if no Member of the Council, within three weeks after the Secretary-General's communication, asks for the question to be placed on the Council's agenda, it shall be regarded as understood that the veto shall not be exercised and that the treaty may be put into force as regards Danzig.

" (b) If the High Commissioner expresses the opinion that the treaty is inconsistent with the provisions of the Paris Treaty or with the status of the Free City and asks that the Council should examine the question, or if a Member of the Council, in the conditions mentioned under (a), asks that the question be placed on the Council's agenda, the Secretary-General shall have the question placed on the agenda of the Council's next session. Pending the Council's decision, the treaty may not be put into force in so far as it applies to the Free City of Danzig. "

The draft resolution was adopted.

M. VILLEGAS said that, as this was the last occasion on which he would discharge the duties of Rapporteur on questions concerning the Free City of Danzig, he wished to express his satisfaction that he had yet another opportunity, as in the previous year, of reporting to the Council on a question concerning which complete agreement had been reached between the two parties concerned.

He had had an opportunity of realising the complexity of the various questions connected with the Free City and he knew the many divergencies of opinion to which these questions had given rise in the past. He was glad to note this new state of affairs, which indicated the determination of both parties to come to an understanding. He expressed the hope that this spirit of understanding would be increasingly strengthened in future.

Further, he congratulated the High Commissioner, who had succeeded in obtaining in advance the agreement of the two parties in the first matter which he had had to submit to the Council. This happy beginning was of good omen for his future activity at Danzig.

In laying down his duties as Rapporteur, M. Villegas wished to offer his warmest thanks to Dr. Sahm, President of the Senate of the Free City and to M. Strasburger, and to express his keen appreciation of the worthy and loyal manner in which they had handled the questions with which he had had to deal. He wished also to express his high appreciation of and warm thanks for the efficient and loyal assistance which had always been given him by the Secretariat, the Administrative Commissions Section, and, in particular, M. Rosting.

Dr. SAHM, President of the Danzig Senate, on behalf of his Government, offered his warm thanks to the Rapporteur, M. Villegas, for the trouble he had always taken and the interest he had invariably displayed in the discussions, before the Council, of questions concerning the Free City.

M. ZALESKI associated himself very warmly with the remarks of the representative of the Free City and in his turn expressed his deep gratitude to his friend and colleague M. Villegas for the perfect equity and justice which he had always shown in his work on matters concerning the Free City of Danzig.

The PRESIDENT was sure that the whole Council shared the sentiments expressed by the Polish representative, and, on behalf of the Council, he thanked M. Villegas for the assistance he had invariably given it.

Count Gravina and Dr. Sahm withdrew.

2490. Question of a Reduction in the Annual Number of Sessions of the Council.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL submitted a memorandum (Annex 1165) in accordance with a decision taken by the Council of December 10th, 1928.¹

The Secretary-General added that the Members of the Council would see from his memorandum that it might be possible, if the Council decided to reduce the number of sessions, to do so without changing the Financial Regulations. If, however, the Council decided to make no change in the annual number of sessions, the questions raised in his memorandum obviously lost their importance. The point for the Council to decide, therefore, was the main question whether or not it desired to reduce the number of sessions from five to four.

Dr. STRESEMANN thought that, as he had already said when this question had last been discussed, it would be in conformity with the Council's dignity for the annual number of sessions to be reduced from five to four.

The Council had considered the possibility of drawing up rules whereby there would be only four obligatory sessions, and one optional session if necessary. He was aware that that proposal might encounter the objection that it would entail a diminution in the prestige of the League and of the Council. Dr. Stresemann did not share that view, for, if it were right, the Council's prestige would then be at its height if it sat permanently.

True, the Council had sometimes discussed certain very important questions, but it was none the less correct to say that sometimes the members had had to make long journeys to attend debates of only relative importance. He did not fail to recognise the importance of the opportunity for contact which the meetings of the Council offered the members; he was far from under-estimating that importance. He was inclined to think, however, that, in view of the duties fulfilled by members of the Council in their respective countries, and of the work which they had to do elsewhere, it would be very desirable for the Council to reduce the annual number of its sessions. Furthermore, it was always possible—and the Covenant made provision therefor—to convene, if need be, an extraordinary session of the Council.

M. TITULESCO asked what would be the dates of the sessions if their number were reduced to four.

The PRESIDENT replied that the December session would be replaced by a session in January, and the March and June sessions by one in May, the two other sessions being held in September.

Mr. HENDERSON said that he would have preferred to hear the views of the senior representatives on the Council, but, as none of them appeared to be anxious to speak, he would venture to express his opinion. If he had to judge the question before the Council from his own experience, he would be obliged to give very strong support to the proposal put forward by Dr. Stresemann. When the present session of the Council was concluded and he returned to his Department, he would have been absent from London for as long as seven or eight weeks. There was, further, a prospect of another meeting in October at The Hague, and, if things continued in this way, he would be practically a half-timer at the Foreign Office. His revolutionary instincts, therefore, moved him to support the proposal made by Dr. Stresemann. He thought, at any rate, that the Council should give that proposal a trial and, if it were found that four sessions a year were not adequate, he would be prepared to reverse his opinion and to support a proposal for a return to the old method.

M. TITULESCO said that, if it took so little to satisfy the revolutionary instincts of the representative of Great Britain and, more especially, if it would be possible to reverse the Council's decision, he would be glad, before giving his own opinion, to hear the views of those of his colleagues who had greater experience than himself of this question.

M. PROCOPE wished to put a question to the Secretary-General. In his memorandum, the Secretary-General had said "the annual budget of the League is placed on the agenda of the Council at each June session" and it was added that "there would be serious administrative difficulties in the way of preparing the budget in time to be considered by the Council at a session held in May"

M. Procope asked whether it would not be possible to prepare the budget in time, for instance, for a session to be held quite at the end of May. If the annual number of sessions of the Council were reduced to four, it would no longer be possible to retain the first Monday in the month as the opening date, since the representatives would be unable to come to Geneva on the first Monday in January owing to the Christmas holidays.

¹ See *Official Journal*, January 1929, page 10.