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This became most marked in the Assembly, which was held under the heavy cloud of the world economic crisis of 1930. The discussions on "the United States of Europe" project of M. Briand, the conclusions of the Economic Conference of 30 States at Geneva in March 1930, and the resolutions of the Warsaw Conference later in the year, had brought out sharply a conflict between the European agricultural countries and the over-seas countries. In the second Committee of the Assembly, a bloc for concerted action was made by Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India, who in effect sought to record a joint protest against the European preference proposals of the Warsaw Conference as conflicting with the principle of economic equality with among members of the League and with the application of the most favored nation clause. The discussions were warm. European countries insisted that ~~con~~^{cer}ted economic action was essential and that this required the cooperation of all, including the over-seas countries. The latter dissociated themselves from the conclusions of the Conference of 1930 and indicated a policy of abstention from the further negotiations contemplated, moreover, they insisted that whatever arrangements the European countries might make among themselves they should not be concluded under the auspices of the League. It is evident that the Dominions will have to consider seriously the question whether a policy of abstention and protest in economic matters is that which most effectively protests their interests.

(Note: In the case of Australia, the assumption of office by a Labour Government may mark a change of attitude. In the Assembly at Geneva in September 1930, the Minister who led the Australian delegation declared: "Australia tells the world as a gesture of peace that she is not prepared for war". That this was not merely a "gesture" but a policy was confirmed by the fact that the Government had "run its pin through the schedule of military expenditure with unprecedented firmness", and "reversed the policy which has subsisted in Australia for a quarter of a century of compelling the young to learn the acts of war". "Military" here includes the naval expenditure of the Commonwealth. On the other hand the Australian Ministry is reported to have shown itself at the Imperial Conference as much concerned as New Zealand lest the British Government should abandon the Singapore base.

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THE DOMINIONS OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

These members of the League are in a situation which presents a number of distinctive features: -

*Group of nations
not within
British Empire
Personal view
of situation in
League*
1. They are members of a group of nations which includes also the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and India. This group unlike others which have established themselves in the practice of the League is (a) bound by constitutional ties (b) recognized as such in the foundations of the League itself.

2. ~~These~~ ^{the} Dominions as well as Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and the Union of South Africa - are in the special relation to the League which comes from their holding Mandates over colonial territories of Germany.

3. All of them except the Irish Free State are non-European countries, and are thus geographically separated from the intimate relations, friendly or unfriendly, of the European countries.

4. They are also widely separated from each other, and the geographical situation of each has its own peculiar political relations.

5. Individually considered they are "small countries", as distinguished from "Great Powers".

6. Excepting the Irish Free State, they are "new countries"; and all of them, though in varying degrees, have certain common interests in the nature of their protection and external trade.

7. Three of the Dominions - Canada, South Africa, and the Irish Free State - have internal population problems. In all the Dominions, the present constitution of its people or its population policy, creates some interest in other countries.

particularly Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. It is difficult to detach Ministers for the time necessary, and expense dictates some recourse to persons who are in Europe on other business, public or private. New Zealand has rarely sent more than one delegate, and South Africa has rarely sent a Minister. Australia has been able in several occasions to send a Minister in her delegation and once included the Leader of the Opposition. The Irish Free State always sends a delegation in which leading Ministers predominate and Canada nearly always has Ministers in her delegation. South Africa, during General Smuts's Government included Lord Robert Cecil and Professor Gilbert Murray in her delegation for a reason announced by General Smuts - that they represented the great aims for which the League stood, and that these were far more important than any special interest of South Africa.

The candidature of Canada and of the Irish Free State for elective seats on the Council was not a group claim as such claims are understood in the League, though the appearance of a British Dominion as a candidate in immediate succession to Canada, naturally excited apprehensions of another "group seat" in the Council, of which there are already too many. In neither case was there a collective decision to claim the seat for the group, followed by a decision as to which among them should be put forward for it. In each case, the Dominion concerned put forward its own candidature on independent grounds and irrespective of its adoption by Great Britain or other Dominions, the Irish Free State in 1930 was careful on an announcement publicly made to dissociate itself from any group claim. Nevertheless, the fear that the election of one Dominion in immediate succession to another might be cited as a precedent was so strong among members of the League that the success of the Free State was a surprise.

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Canada and the Irish Free State maintain touch with/League through a permanent representative resident at Geneva. At the Assembly, he forms part of the delegation, and exceptionally the permanent representative of Canada filled her seat on the Council. Ordinarily however Canada was represented on the Council by a Minister, Senator Dandurand.

2. The position of the Dominions as Mandatories is dealt with in another note. Here it is enough to call attention to a few specific points. All disputes between the Mandatory Power and another member of the League regarding the interpretation or application of the Mandate are expressly made cognizable by the Permanent Court of International Justice. It was to be expected that a new system like that of the Mandate would not work without some friction between the Mandates Commission and the Mandatory as to their respective spheres and authority. All the Dominions concerned, as well as Great Britain, regarded the exhaustive questionnaire of the Commission as more than a desire for such information as would enable the Commission to perform its functions of advising the Council regarding the observance of the mandates; it appeared to them to threaten the assumption

of control and direction in the administration of the Territory. On the other hand, the reference by South Africa in official documents to her "sovereignty" over South West Africa, and unwise observations that "C" mandates were practically annexations, aroused the Mandates Commission to inquiries and comments as to the meaning attached to such statements, which brought both parties to the brink of abstract discussions on "sovereignty". There was never any real question of South Africa challenging the authority of the League; but she deemed in the Exercise of her mandate, as she had decided in the form of the Constitution and in the handling of her own native affairs, that the only possible authority in dealing with native tribes was a single undivided authority, and that the appearance of anything short of this gravely increased the difficulties of administration. New Zealand protested against the publication of the Mandate Commissions Reports before they had been considered by the Council: such publications in effect gave the Commission power in its own name to criticize and admonish a function properly belonging to the Council alone. The British representative, Lord Robert Cecil, on the other hand, considered that the advantage of the Commission's procedure outweighed the disadvantage.

3 & 4. The geographical situation of the Dominions has several important consequences. Being outside Europe but within a League which in political matters is mainly concerned with European affairs, they feel a certain detachment from the League corresponding with their ~~task-of~~ lack of immediate concern with the political relations of European countries. This expresses itself in their attitude to the major obligations of the League and particularly to sanctions. Canada in North America, Australia New Zealand and South Africa in the South Seas, can see no security in the coercive provisions of the Covenant which they could invoke in case of danger immediately threatening them. And as mutuality appears the essence of an international obligation, they are averse from being bound to give assistance which will be costly and may embarrass them in other relations, as for instance, Canada in relation to the United States. This consideration reinforces the traditional reluctance, evinced in the relations of the British Commonwealth itself, to undertake precise and covenanted obligations. It also helps to consolidate the British Empire view of the League against the French and Continental view. ("In Europe.....the Covenant is held to be a solemn contract to go to war in certain contingencies which it is argued as a matter of serious business ought to be more precisely defined. In Britain and the Dominions on the other hand it is regarded as little more than an expression of goodwill and of a general intention to settle disputes amicably, but involving no obligation to fight in another's quarrel", Jebb The Empire in Eclipse, 300)

The most marked manifestation of these tendencies in Dominion action was the definite move by Canada in the first three sessions

of the Assembly against Article X of the Covenant, which had been so great a stumbling block to the United States. Unable to carry the Assembly in favour of the repeal of the Article, wherein she was opposed by Great Britain as well as France, she obtained in 1923 an all but unanimous interpretation requiring the Council, if it recommended military action against an aggressor under Article X, to take account of the geographical situation and special conditions of each state. The same resolution alternated Article X by making each Member the judge of its obligation under the Article, merely qualified by an undertaking of members to take a recommendation of the Council into consideration "with a desire to execute their engagements in good faith". This initiative of Canada belongs to the main outlines of League history. In itself, it weakened covenanted security; but it was compensated for by the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance, approved in the Assembly. When however first the Draft Treaty and then in 1924 the Geneva Protocol fell through as the result of the attitude of the members of the British Commonwealth, the European situation was disturbed and even menacing.

The Treaty of Mutual Assistance was designed to give precision to the obligation to apply naval and military sanctions. The objection of over-seas countries to assuming further obligations in what was essentially a European danger, was anticipated, and provided for by clauses which measured obligations by geographical situation. This appeared to offer a modus for the members of the British Empire; in the events contemplated, the active obligations would fall on Great Britain ~~accept~~ alone, without a formal separation from the Dominions in the vital matter of war. The Dominions might with Great Britain accept the obligations of the Treaty with the provision that those obligations were limited in the case of each to its own Continent. But as Canada pointed out, war cannot be undertaken on the principle of limited liability; none could be indifferent to further risks of participation in war undertaken by any part of the Empire. Moreover, the definition of war obligations by Continents appeared to Australia, and probably to New Zealand to weaken rather than to strengthen their security - it offered them nothing in the way of League security, and its suggestions weakened their Empire security. In the Geneva Protocol of 1924, the cutting across the system of the British Commonwealth through a formal definition of obligations by Continents, gave place to a modified provision, whereby each signatory was bound to co-operate loyally and effectively..... in the degree to which its geographical position and peculiar situation as regards armaments allows. The fundamental objections however remained. All the Dominions were disinclined to undertake new commitments; the most distant Dominions at any rate had more confidence in Empire securities than in League securities, and while willing to go far in preserving that unity in action and policy which Empire security depends, were of opinion that that security was best served by Great Britain restricting rather than enlarging her commitments to Europe. When in 1925, the Locarno Pact recurred to the plan of the Anglo-American-French agreement

of 1919, whereby Great Britain alone and without the Dominions undertook additional security obligations in Europe, General Smuts (no longer in power in South Africa) expressed grave apprehensions about this separation of Empire policy. On the other hand, the fear of increasing commitments was expressed in the Assembly of 1927 by Australia and New Zealand, and in the course of the Naval Conference of 1930, the "sanction" provisions of the Covenant came under consideration. The Australian delegate, in pursuance of instructions of his Government, declined to consider any interpretation designed to give precision to the obligations of members.

The Geographical situation enters in a minor way into various relations of the distant Dominions with the League. Its relation to the composition of the delegations from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa has been referred to; and the difficulty of being represented by someone in close contact with their Governments, must be a factor in the candidature of any one of them for an elective seat in the Council. It affects the possibilities of their co-operation in the League through the various commissions that are constantly at work. In the case of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa as well as that of the Central and South America members of the League, distance imposes much delay in the handling of all matters at Geneva which depend on correspondence between the Secretariat and the Governments, and allows insufficient time for consideration by the Governments. The fact that the Annual Report of the Secretary General only reaches the Australian Government after the departure of the delegation for the Assembly, so that there is no opportunity for the Government to discuss it with their representatives is another inconvenience; it considerably restricts the activity of the delegations in the Assembly.

5. The League of Nations is characterised by its recognition of the right both in form and in substance of the smaller countries to share in the common councils. The consciousness of this, and its importance, are manifested from time to time by demonstrations in various activities of the Assembly, which are interpreted as reminders that affairs are no longer directed by the concert of the Great Powers.

To the British Dominions, the League has a special significance, for it has not merely admitted them to the common councils of the nations, but is their main 'root of title' to an international personality separate from Great Britain in their relations with foreign countries, and in its exercise affords opportunities for asserting equality with Great Britain in the group relations of the British Commonwealth itself: in the constitutional as well as the international sphere, it has significances for them as small countries.

As early as the Peace Conference, the Dominions recognised that certain of their interests were so far similar to those of small states in general, as to associate them in common action for

their assertion. Probably all of them have at one time or another in the Assembly or its committees, been influenced or decided in their policy upon some matter under consideration by the 'small Power' bias. But it does not seem reasonable to attribute the election of Canada or the Irish Free State to the Council to any widespread notion of their special qualification to represent small states. All the Dominions, in view of their relation with Great Britain and with each other, form part of a system which still has enough of unity, for them to share the Great Power standpoint, and in the case of Australia and New Zealand, the test of 'Powers with general interests' or 'Powers with special interests' would put them in the former rather than in the latter class.

Small countries have certain special advantages and disadvantages in League relations, and these the Dominions share. An advantage lies in the information and experience, so much beyond anything that their own resources could provide, that the League now makes available for all the world. This is peculiarly true of economics - to take a field in which League activities are looked askance at by most of the Dominions - and health, where it is warmly appreciated and has been heartily supported. A distinct disadvantage lies in the inadequate equipment of many small countries, to investigate the matters in which the League desires their opinion and co-operation. This is especially marked in the Dominions, for they have not been under the necessity of taking international relations seriously, and their provision, both on its political and administrative side, is, speaking generally, still very slight.

6. The characteristic of the Dominions as "new countries" has been their situation as producers and exporters of foodstuffs and raw materials to industrial countries and a social policy which has aimed at building up a certain kind of society. That policy has been directed to vigilance regarding immigration and, in greater or less degree, the building of secondary industries by protective tariffs. Immigration and tariffs were the particular matters through which colonial self-government developed within the British Empire as against the system of a uniform or Imperial or controlled regime. Therefore any developments in the League which appeared to suggest that such matters belonged not to the domestic but to the international sphere touched the Dominions at a most sensitive point. When countries speak of the need for the League respecting their "sovereignty" they have in mind less any abstract conception than some specific matter which their situation or their history has made vital to them. The repeated warnings from the Dominions against an undue extension of League activities as a menace to the League itself have had mainly in view their own social and economic autonomy: any appearance of "interference" there was a menace to their security, and affected their whole attitude to the League.

The resistance of the Dominions, led by Canada, in the first Assembly, to the post war projects for the rationing of

assurances that the claim did not extend to immigration. The Australian delegation was concerned at the prospect that Japan would re-open the matter in the First Assembly, and was proportionately relieved when the Japanese delegate announced that in the interests of international good-will, he did not intend to proceed with his motion. In Australia Mr. Hughes declared that the White Australia policy could not be maintained solely by arguments based on the domestic character of immigration or by the authority of the League, it had to be realised as a policy capable of provoking international complications. The League could not become a reliable insurance until the world had grown so familiar with the new method that the spirit of war could not be revived. Meantime Australia could not afford to take risks; she must be prepared to fight to the death for her policy if it were assailed. Comparisons with the United States are old-standing resources of political rhetoric in Australia, and Mr. Hughes' impetuosity led him as it had led others before him to an Australian adaptation of the Monroe Doctrine: he asserted that Australia would not allow anything relating to her sphere in the Pacific to be regarded as a proper subject for submission to the League of Nations. Mr. Hughes forgot that Australia was in the Pacific very closely related to the League as mandatory for German New Guinea, and joint mandatory with Great Britain and New Zealand for Nauru.

As "Immigration" is regarded by the Dominions as essentially a matter of domestic policy, peculiar importance is attached, above all in Australia to Article 15, par. 8 of the Covenant under which in any matter of dispute before it, the Council if it finds that the question is one which by international law falls within the domestic jurisdiction of a party, abstains from making any recommendation. The implications from this however are dubious. It has been a common assumption in Australia that it removes such matters from the sphere of the League, while at the same time assuring them a certain protection. The protection if any must come from Article X and the obligations there imposed and undertaken against external aggression. The interpretation of the obligation imposed by the Article deprives it of much of its legal value; the difficulty of determining what is aggression is a further reason against reliance on the Article. A third reason lies in the attitude of the Dominions themselves towards Article X: a disposition to ~~attribute~~ the obligations imposed to come to the assistance of states attacked goes ill with reliance on the Article for protection, and in fact, the Dominions do not seriously rely on it. The assumption that a decision in favour of domestic jurisdiction under Article XIV par. 8 removes the whole matter from the cognizance of the League overlooks Article XI. Of this, Japan reminded all those concerned when in the Geneva Protocol of 1924 she obtained an amendment which explicitly recognised the recourse to Article XI. The recognition of the League's right to consider matters of domestic jurisdiction with a view to conciliation, though it carried with it no power to

to impose a decision, and though it added nothing to the powers already in the Covenant, excited alarm in the Dominions, and in Australia and New Zealand aroused strong public opinion against the Protocol.

7. Three of the Dominions - Canada, South Africa, and the Irish Free State - have population conditions apart from immigration which suggest analogies to the minorities problem in Europe. In both Canada and South Africa the country is divided between two European peoples, of whom one finds its origin in and affinity with Great Britain, while the French Canadians and Dutch in South Africa, look towards France and the Netherlands respectively. In recent years, the position of the Indians in South Africa, has raised a further question, often acute, between two British dominions, both members of the League. The Irish Free State also has the problem of nationalities of very divergent types, with a history of centuries of conflict; as in Canada, the differences are associated with differences of religion. The fact that the three nationalities in Ireland - the English, Scottish and Irish - have been great colonising peoples, connects Irish affairs not merely with Great Britain, but with the countries of immigration, notably Australia and the United States: it is a claim of the Irish Free State, distinguishing her from other Dominions, that she is a "mother country".

(C. deo) I. S. in
Confederation / Empire
Nationality

In Canada and South Africa, the original connection of a main part of the population with France and the Netherlands respectively has led to their Governments making use of the "new status of the Dominions" to establish legations at Paris and the Hague. But it has had no other significance in their relations with those countries; in neither case are there marked cultural or commercial relations, nor is there any emigration movement today from the "mother countries" to the Dominions concerned. The French-Canadians and Dutch South Africans are perhaps of all others the Dominion peoples who feel the least concern in international affairs except in their determination to keep out of all entanglements. The conflicts of nationalities, such as they are, within the Dominions are within the cadre of their constitutions, which to some extent have made provisions on the subject; and each of these nationalities is numerous enough to exert political power which ensures its weight in general affairs limits its grievances to minor matters. Maintained within these limits, there is no tendency to regard these matters as anything but matters of internal and domestic concern. In the case of the Irish Free State or of South Africa, there is always the possibility that the conflict might become more acute and affect graver matters; in such a case the question whether it was a purely domestic matter would itself become a major question.

Just as Canada sees in her relations with the United States - the unarmed frontiers, the absence of any sense of insecurity, and the agreements for settling disputes - a

model for international relations, of which her representatives at Geneva never tire of reminding European countries, so in the situation of her British and French inhabitants, she sees an example of reasonableness which she urges them to follow in their internal relations. The contrast of the position of different nationalities under one Government in Canada and in Europe has had another effect. In the Assembly of 1927, at which Canada was elected to the Council, her representative (M. Dandurand) devoted a substantial part of his brief address to the problem of minorities, as a matter of great importance for the restoration of peace in Europe. In the Council, the most important action taken by Canada was in formally raising in 1929 the procedure to be observed on minority petitions, and, in conjunction with Germany, initiating the most important debate that has taken place in the League on minorities. M. Dandurand criticized the existing procedure as inadequate in the information and opportunity afforded for investigation, unduly secretive, and giving no assurance to minorities that their complaints were receiving serious attention. The result was a revision of the Council's procedure which M. Dandurand was satisfied, effected a great improvement.

The principle that disputes, whatever their nature, among members of the British Commonwealth, are matters outside the scope of the League - a principle not wholly accepted by all the Dominions, as already seen, would be excluded from the cognizance of the League such a matter as the disputes between India and the Union of South Africa regarding the status of Indian's in the Union. Nevertheless, in the Imperial Conference of 1923, the Indian representative hinted that circumstances might arise in which the matter would become one of international concern. In fact, the Indian delegation at Geneva has been a critical observer of the administration of the mandates with a vigilant eye on South Africa. In the second Assembly, Mr. Sastri commented adversely on the provision in the "C" mandates enabling the mandatory to apply its own laws to the territory; it would facilitate the introduction of invidious distinctions between white and coloured people in South West Africa. In 1922, an Indian delegate protested against General Smuts's assimilation of the status of mandated to that of annexed territories; and the retort of the South African delegate that he was surprised at the solicitude of his Indian colleague seeing that there were no Indians in South West Africa, served to illustrate to members of the League the friction between India and the Union. India too has shown a disposition to support the Mandates Commission against Dominion criticism; her delegation dissented from the New Zealand strictures in 1922 upon the Commission's procedure.

In the Union of South Africa, and in the territories it administers - apart from the mandatory territory of South West Africa - the whole social and economic life is bound up in the 'native question'. There is a well-known tendency to regard the status of native races and their treatment as of something more

than national concern, as importing a common obligation of civilisation which gives it a certain international character. Projects for bringing all treatment of subject races within the scope of the League, by some methods analogous to those used for Mandates or Minorities, have been suggested. Some remarks in an Assembly Committee by Mr. Buxton, a British delegate, are regarded as giving encouragement to such plans. It may be surmised that South Africa would be wholly opposed.