

Italy, of assessing their relative merits, and then of converting them into definite obligations, based on some reasonable estimate of enemy capacity to pay. Estimates of war damage attributable to Italian action were submitted by fifteen States, though many of them either refrained from basing any formal reparation claim upon these estimates, or lodged a claim for an amount considerably smaller than the estimated value of the damage done. The United Kingdom, for example, estimated its own war costs for which Italy had been responsible at \$14,083 million (at 1938 prices), but expressly renounced any reparation claim, submitting its statement merely as a historical record, designed, as it was said, to enable other claims to be seen in proper perspective. Several of the smaller claims also were not pressed, and Egypt withdrew its claim in terms of a bilateral agreement with Italy announced while the Conference was still sitting. At the other extreme, Yugoslavia, while estimating her war damages at \$11,330 million, presented a formal claim for \$1,300 million. The Greek estimate of damage was \$7,030 million, but it was not stated how much of this Greece expected to recover by way of reparations. The Albanian claim amounted to \$1,161 million, and the Ethiopian, which was described as incomplete, to \$905 million.

These estimates were presented in very different forms and covered the widest variety of items. Nearly one-third of the Greek estimate was on account of "under-production, suspension of foreign trade, and loss of potential financial income" during the war, an item which also figured in the Yugoslav and Albanian estimates, and Ethiopia claimed £100 per head on account of 760,300 persons who had been killed or had died during the Italian occupation. Many of the figures were necessarily the roughest of rough estimates, and it was not unfair to interpret them as serving mainly the purpose of bargaining counters. A sub-committee was entrusted with the task of presenting the estimates in comparable form, but it was strictly debarred from undertaking anything but routine statistical work, and even within these limits the report of the sub-committee expressly disclaimed any responsibility for the comparability of the figures which had been assembled.

Except in the most general way, little attention indeed was subsequently paid to these detailed estimates of war damages. By its nature the determination of reparation liabilities is not a matter of exact science. Everybody paid at least lip-service to the principle that reparation burdens should not be placed upon any ex-enemy State so heavy as to cripple its economy, but at the same time there was a persistent insistence upon the justice of the fullest possible compensation for the victims of aggression. Objective criteria for the reconciliation of these contradictory objectives were, however, never forthcoming, and probably do not exist. Inflated estimates of the costs of war and enemy occupation are so easy, and the temptation so strong for reparation claimants to exaggerate the economic strength, real or potential, of their van-