

body has referred those reports to the Sixth Committee, and the Sixth Committee has declined to express any opinion of its own, or to recommend the Assembly to form any opinion, upon the merits of any questions which have arisen upon the reports of the Commission, or the sufficiency of the replies of the mandatory Powers. The effect of that process is to substitute for the contractual obligation (of the mandatory Power to the Council and the Assembly) a duty of the Mandatory to administer and legislate in such fashion as meets the approval and sanction of the Permanent Mandates Commission. A further objection to the procedure of the Mandates Commission, raised by Sir James Allen in the Assembly, is that under its rules it holds a public meeting, referred to above, at which the mandatory Powers are requested to be present through their representatives, and where the Commission questions these representatives on the subject of legislation and administration. It is obvious that the process places the mandatory Powers in an undignified position, and is both unsatisfactory and dangerous. (See Documents Nos. A. 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, and 72.)

In the course of the debate one of the Indian delegates referred at some length to imported labour, and raised the moral issue which was involved by disproportion in the sexes. Sir James Allen, in reply, gave a brief account of the conditions rendering contract labour necessary, and of the difficulties of securing married labourers whose wives were willing to accompany their husbands. He said he was sure he was voicing the general opinion of the Assembly in stating that it was not desirable to allow Chinese women to enter Samoa unless they were proved to be the wives of the labourers. He also referred to the method of the presentation of petitions by the inhabitants of mandated territories, and stressed the danger of allowing direct communication to the Permanent Mandates Commission of petitions from inhabitants who had perhaps been the dupes of agitators without the Administrator having had the opportunity of commenting on them.

*Minorities.*—The proposals of Professor Murray for the protection of minorities was exhaustively dealt with by the Sixth Committee, and although not completely adopted were accepted as the basis for the discussion. As the result of the committee's recommendations and report a draft resolution was accepted by the Assembly on the 21st September, to the effect that, while in cases of grave infraction of the Minorities Treaties it is necessary that the Council should retain its full power of direct action, the Assembly recognizes that in ordinary circumstances the League can best promote good relations between the various signatory Governments and persons belonging to racial, religious, or linguistic minorities placed under their sovereignty by benevolent and informal communications with those Governments.

With the view to giving effect to this resolution various recommendations were then agreed upon by the Assembly, such as the appeal without unnecessary delay to the Permanent Court of International Justice in certain cases. Moreover, the Assembly, while recognizing the primary right of minorities to be protected by the League from oppression, emphasizes the duty incumbent upon them to co-operate with the nations to which they belong, and expresses the hope that the States which are not bound by any legal obligations to the League with respect to minorities will nevertheless observe in the treatment of their own minorities as high a standard as if they were so bound (Document A. 83).

*Near East.*—The resolution on the Near East situation proposed by the Sixth Committee for adoption by the Assembly (Document No. A. 131) was the outcome of a feeling that at its annual Assembly the League, which is a body existing largely for the purpose of preventing war, could not well ignore the serious aspect of the Turco-Greek conflict. While disclaiming any wish of appearing to interfere with negotiations already under way, the Sixth Committee, after a considerable debate, agreed upon the following resolution which was passed by the Assembly at its meeting on the 27th September:—

“The Assembly, animated by a sincere desire to see peace re-established in the Near East and to support any action which may be taken to achieve that object, learns with satisfaction that it is proposed to hold a special conference to consider the present situation with a view to finding a solution. The Assembly trusts that the Council, without interfering in any way with the proposed negotiations, will adopt such measures as it may deem timely and warranted by the stage reached in the negotiations in order to give effect to the unanimous wish of the Assembly for an early restoration of peace.”

Other matters dealt with by the First and Sixth Committees were the Polish-Lithuanian dispute (Document A. 85), which had been referred to a Committee of Inquiry; the question of indemnities of technical assessors for the Permanent Court of International Justice (Document A. 108); the admission by unanimous vote of the Assembly of Hungary to the League (Document A. 68); Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland's motion on the recrudescence of slavery (Document A. 82).

As on previous occasions, there were occasional meetings of the members of the various delegations composing the British Empire, and these meetings were of very considerable help in enabling the delegates to understand the drift of the policies of the component parts of the Empire, and to discuss points of difference.

The members of the New Zealand Delegation held meetings whenever they became necessary in order to agree upon the line of policy to be adopted at the meetings of the committees and of the Assembly.

We have, &c.,

J. ALLEN.

F. H. D. BELL.

A. STEEL-MAITLAND.

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington, New Zealand.