

Empire will be prepared to support any particular line of action, not merely to support Great Britain, but because the League is being flouted, because the League is being attacked, and they stand by the League. These young nations will have an added motive and an added reason for coming forward and supporting the international action of Great Britain.

World's Need for League.

But it is to our interest, not only from the point of view of the British Empire, but far more still from a broad human point of view, to support the League as strongly as we can. What do we see to-day? We see a whole world lapsing into decay. Europe has been so smashed by the war that nothing seems possible to make her rally again. The break-up which began at the end of the war is continuing. We do not know what Europe will be like in ten or twenty years' time. We only see that forces are at work, far deeper and of a more fundamental character than we ever thought possible. We thought it would be possible to stabilize the position at the peace and to have a settlement of Europe which might be abiding. We have seen now that hope has been in vain. Nothing now is abiding. The unsettlement of Europe continues, the break-up continues. And in those circumstances, if there is any practical force that will work in keeping the nations together in peace and protect us against an era of complete reaction and brigandage such as seems now to be setting in, if there is any such practical institution, let us exploit it to the full. We are no doubt in for a very bad time. I think this present generation will probably see human institutions put to as severe a test as they have ever been. And when we have an institution like this which, whatever the attitude of the great Powers, is undoubtedly appealing strongly to the smaller Powers, practically to all of them, I think we should marshal our forces behind it, knowing that this will be a stabilizing agency and that it will help to keep us together and keep humanity afloat through the dark seas through which we are voyaging now. Perhaps I speak too strongly, but that is my feeling. So far from the League being a sort of revolutionary agency, as many have thought—something that will destroy the British Empire, something that will work unknown mischiefs in the world—I look on it as a great conservative stabilizing force working on the side of the British Empire and the ideals for which we stand. Not only from the large human motives which have impelled us, but also from the point of view of the British Empire, we have every reason to support this movement to the fullest of our power and ability, and I hope we shall continue to do that; and I trust that the next crisis, which may not be far off, will see the League emerge with greater credit and more strongly than it has come out of this last crisis.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, IRISH FREE STATE.

Acceptance by Irish Free State of Principles of League.

Professor John MacNeill: I may say that the Irish Free State has arrived at nothing nearer to a definition of foreign policy than is expressed in its adhesion to the League of Nations, and I was very much gratified to hear on all sides to-day, from Lord Robert Cecil and from the representatives of other States who have spoken, the view expressed that the foreign policy in which we, as a group of nations, ought to be interested—I shall not say, to which we ought to be committed, but in which we ought to be interested—should be in harmony with the principles underlying the League of Nations. I sincerely trust that will always be so. If it is so there will never be any difficulty in our following a common course together and following it effectively. Speaking as the junior among you and representing a junior State among you, I have no hesitation in saying that, if a test of those principles arose and if the League of Nations, through its properly accredited organs, required a certain duty to be done, a certain amount of pressure, in whatever form desired, to be applied, I am perfectly certain that the nation for which I sit here would not be behindhand in doing that duty. I should like to emphasize the point of view that I have expressed, because, as an observer in Geneva, I did my best to estimate the feeling that was abroad, especially among the smaller nations, and I should say undoubtedly it was a feeling of dissatisfaction rather than a feeling of want of confidence—a feeling of desire that the objects of the League should be made effective, which is I think the next thing to the operative will that they should be made effective. On this question in general I did my best to express the view of the Irish delegation in a statement that I made at the meeting of the Assembly on the 28th September, and I shall not take up the time of this Conference in repeating that view now.

Appreciation of Lord Robert Cecil's Work for League.

I should like to join with those who have spoken already in offering a testimony, a stronger testimony than my own personal testimony, when I say that, so far as I know, and I have heard of nothing to the contrary, it was the unanimous feeling of the representatives of the nations at Geneva that Lord Robert Cecil had done as much as could be done to maintain the prestige and the effectiveness of the League of Nations.

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

Appreciation of League.

Mr. Warren: I will not trespass upon the Conference except to express what I feel as a result of this discussion. Youth as a rule does not command respect, and is sometimes subjected to correction, either moral or physical, which, as I know from personal experience, is sometimes quite unjustifiable. The League is a young one, and I think it has borne the strain very successfully. The fact that it has borne that strain shows that although it is young still it is a hardy and strong growth, and I feel confident that when it goes forward and becomes the power which undoubtedly it will become, it will not be subjected to such strains as have been put on it recently. By that I mean that the nations will see what the League can really do, and will rather apply to it for aid than attempt to thwart it.