

NEW ZEALAND 1935.

FOR A PACT OF SECURITY INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES AND PROPOSALS PROTOCOL FOR THE PACIFIC SETTLEMENT OF

WHITE PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS DEALING WITH (a) CORRECTION OF THE GENEVA PROTOCOL; (b) PROPOSALS FOR A PACT OF SECURITY.
SPONSORED BY HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT AND THE NOMINATION ON THE SUBJECT

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER (HON. J. G. COATES).

In 1923 the League of Nations constituted a Committee to draft and propose a Treaty of Mutual Assistance, and to invite the various members of the League to agree to that Treaty. The object and aim of that Treaty was to ensure and define in many respects the obligations of the various nations signatories to the Government of the League, and to create what are technically called sanctions—namely, various penalties upon nations transgressing the peace provisions of the Treaty and providing for the imposition of such penalties practically by armed force of the other nations. The object of the principal nations referred to in the Treaty, I should among the Governments rejecting was His Majesty's Government, which the Hon. Mr. Macdonald was Prime Minister. The proposed Treaty of 1923 is now in force.

In 1924 Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. Lloyd George, then Prime Minister, introduced the Assembly at Geneva, and proposed an alternative scheme of assistance and sanctions to be put under the direction of the Council of the League of Nations. Those schemes were made on the 24th and 25th September, 1924. The Assembly of the League on the 26th September passed resolutions directing consideration of those schemes by two Committees, which Committees met, and three weeks after, on the 1st October, presented the draft Protocol, which the Assembly adopted for the consideration of the nations.

The White Paper on the subject of the Protocol contains the comments on the Protocol by the various nations, including New Zealand. Each nation objected to the terms and effect of the proposals, and the Committee of Imperial Defence was equally emphatic in condemning it. The Government and the League's Government agreed that some form of compulsory arbitration between nations should be established, but each objected to a scheme which extended widely the obligations of the nations to the League of Nations and practically committed upon the Council of the League power to bring the nations into war. In the Protocol could not take effect without the consent of the principal nations, the project was failed.

Then the German Government came upon the scene with a suggestion that the principal nations should agree to what is called a Pact of Security. Friendly negotiations have since taken place between France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, and England, and there is room for hope that such negotiations may lead to a definite result, namely, the establishment of a general determination of international questions. It seems undesirable to express an opinion upon these actually pending negotiations. The New Zealand Government is satisfied that such negotiations can best be conducted by His Majesty's Government without interference, subject to the arrangements which is given consistently to the Dominions by offering comment upon the several separate proposals.