

I nominated myself to serve on both committees, but as New Zealand had only one delegate, and it would not be possible for me to be at meetings of both if held at the same time, I thought it advisable to nominate my Private Secretary, Mr. Knowles, as a substitute.

On the 13th March the Assembly paid a well-deserved tribute to the memory of M. Leon Bourgeois, who died last year at an advanced age. He had devoted a considerable part of his lifetime to the cause of peace, and as the principal representative of France had taken a prominent part in the early work of both Council and Assembly.

#### COMMITTEE No. 1.

##### APPLICATION OF GERMANY FOR ADMISSION.

Even prior to the historic meeting at Locarno it was known that Germany was willing to apply for admission to the League of Nations on certain conditions being fulfilled. One condition was the inclusion of Germany on the Council of the League with a permanent seat. I understand that she had communicated with all the Powers represented on the Council, and had received from all but one an assurance that her request would not only be considered, but be granted. The exception was Brazil, the Government of which replied in very conciliatory terms, but added that it was a matter for the League itself to determine.

A week or two before the Special Assembly met the position was changed by a proposal that, concurrent with the admission of Germany to the League, Poland should be given a seat on the Council—if possible, a permanent one—and it was then made known that both Spain and Brazil (and later China) had aspirations to permanent seats.

Even before the Assembly met on the 8th March Powers who had been represented at Locarno and others represented on the Council of the League had begun conversations in the hope of bridging the gulf. Germany claimed that her application for admission to the League, which had been made on condition that she should be given a permanent seat on the Council, was the only matter, apart from a few questions of internal administration, which the Special Assembly had been called together to decide, and that to suggest a further alteration in the constitution of the Council, which was evidently desired by some Powers, was not a matter which should be dealt with until Germany was admitted to the League. Effort after effort was made to bring the opposing parties a little nearer, and suggestion after suggestion was put forward, only to be declined. At length, however, a proposal was made which met with the concurrence of all but one member of the Council. It was that Germany should be admitted to a permanent seat on the Council, and that Sweden and Czechoslovakia, both holders of non-permanent seats, should resign, both having offered to do so, and that other Powers should be chosen by the Assembly to fill those seats. It was intended that one of the new Powers was to be Poland, and the other one of the Scandinavian countries. Had this proposal been carried into effect the question of the alteration of the constitution of the Council, other than the admission of Germany to a permanent seat, would have been postponed pending the report of a Commission which might be set up to deal with it. Unfortunately, however, Brazil stood in the way, and unanimity in the Council was necessary even although a majority vote was sufficient in the Assembly. Brazil's representative had received instructions from his Government which made it impossible for him to compromise, and at 10 o'clock on the night of the 16th March the Powers which had been represented at Locarno issued to the Press a statement to the effect that agreement had been reached by them, and that it would be a matter of grave concern if, after all, the admission of Germany to the League during the session of the Special Assembly could not be effected.

On Wednesday, 17th March, the Assembly met at 10 o'clock in the morning, and Sir Austen Chamberlain, the Rapporteur of the First Committee, which had unanimously recommended the acceptance of Germany's application for admission (see Document A. 9), said that he would defer making his statement until the representative of Brazil had spoken. The Brazilian delegate then made a statement representing the views of his Government, the main point of which was that the question of the admission of Germany was one for the League itself to determine. Sir Austen Chamberlain, after expressing profound regret that the purpose for which the Special Assembly had been convened could not be achieved, and paying tribute to the generosity of the delegates of Sweden and Czechoslovakia for the offer to resign, moved that the Assembly should be adjourned. After speeches had been delivered by several other delegates, including the delegate of Japan, who proposed that the constitution of the Council should be referred to a Commission, the Assembly passed the following resolution and adjourned:—

“The Assembly regrets that the difficulties encountered have prevented the attainment of the purpose for which it was convened, and expresses the hope that between now and the ordinary September session of 1926 these difficulties may be surmounted so as to make it possible for Germany to enter the League of Nations on that occasion.”

The proposal to set up a committee to deal with the constitution of the Council was subsequently considered by the Council, and it was decided that the committee should consist of representatives of the members of the Council and of the Argentine Republic, China, Germany, Poland, and Switzerland.

Thus ended a period, approaching a fortnight, of anxiety and fruitless effort to achieve the object for which the Special Assembly had been called. In my opinion the attitude that Germany took up was reasonable. The League had been called together for the purpose of admitting her, but when an accommodation was arranged which was agreeable to the principal parties it was a