

I do not want to say very much about. I only wanted to raise the question, for, while Australia has nothing to conceal and is desirous of giving the fullest information as to their administration of the mandated territory, I do think it is a matter for serious discussion as to whether something could not be done to try and prevent questionnaires being sent out which deal with matters that fall quite outside the mandate and sphere of the Mandates Commission or the League of Nations.

Propaganda.

The other thing we have got to bear in mind is that there is a great deal of propaganda in regard to these mandated territories, and very considerable efforts are being made to try and show that the mandatory power is not carrying out its obligations in a proper spirit. With regard to Australia, for example, almost every year, just at a convenient and proper time prior to the meeting of the Mandates Commission in Geneva, a newspaper propaganda will be started in some not very reputable organ of the Press, and each year the same sort of charges are made of maltreatment of the Natives. We have sent commissions of inquiry out and we have examined the position closely, and there has not been the slightest foundation for the charges that have been made. I am glad to say that in the present year it did not happen, and it may be it is going to cease.

Policy pursued in New Guinea.

I do not think I need delay the sitting very long to say anything about the manner in which the Australian Government administers its mandated territory, because voluminous reports are sent in every year to the Mandates Commission. The fullest information is given there, and, while I recognize that, we being part of the British Empire and one of the mandatory powers, a general knowledge would be desired by the Governments of the other parts of the Empire, I do not think that you want me at the present time to go at great length into the policy we are pursuing. I think I can summarize it quite shortly by saying that we are carrying out all the obligations which were imposed upon us under the mandate itself; and even if those obligations were not imposed by the mandate they would obviously be part of the Government's policy in administering the territory. The six obligations placed upon us are the prohibition of the slave trade and forced labour; the prohibition of the supply of spirits and intoxicating beverages to the Natives; the control of the traffic in arms and ammunition; the ensuring of liberty of conscience; the non-establishment of military or naval bases or fortifications; and the prohibition of the military training of Natives except for purposes of internal police and land defence. In addition to these general lines of policy, the particular lines which the Commonwealth Government is following, and which have been added to the obligation placed upon us under the mandate, are the medical care and treatment of the Natives; the preservation of Native laws and customs so far as they are not repugnant to our sense of morality; the cultivation of a better understanding of Native habits of life and Native thought; the protection of the Native labourer in his contractual relationship; the inauguration of a system of Native agriculture for the cultivation of foodstuffs and economic crops under trained instructors and inspectors; the inauguration of a system of technical and general education of the Natives; the participation of the Natives to an increasing extent in the administration of the territory; in furtherance of the foregoing, the requirement that appointees to the service shall undergo special training and instruction; and the economic development of the territory.

Public Health.

Those are the particular lines of the policy we are pursuing. The only one I want to say two or three words about is the medical care and treatment of the Natives. That is the particular point the Government is concentrating upon, because we regard it as being the fundamental thing which we should do as the mandatory power and the authority responsible for the Native peoples in the territory. We have established a laboratory in New Guinea. We are also carrying out a great deal of research into Native diseases, and we have got a system for the training of Natives in sanitation and general care of the health; but I think the main thing we have done is to invite all the Governments which have an interest in the Pacific, and responsibilities there, to a conference that is taking place in Melbourne next month to consider the whole question of the health of the Native races of the Pacific, and whether anything can be done to prevent what looks almost inevitable under present conditions—that is, that a great number of these Natives will eventually disappear. I would like to have said a great deal more about the question of health, because I think it is one which must concern us all very much. The specific problem of the health of the Native is a very, very important one, but I will not add anything to the few words I have said.

Development of Administrative Service.

The other great problem in the administration of a mandated territory is the question of getting the right persons for the administration. In Great Britain, with your long colonial experience, and the fact that you have had control of Native races, you have gradually built up the Civil Service and you have got men who are trained for that particular work, but when a new country takes over the control and responsibility of a Native population it presents a tremendous problem to them, and we are only beginning to get over it. We have had to start a system of training men for this particular service, getting them quite young and putting them through a regular course of tropical hygiene, and trying to fit them and qualify them for the particular work they have got to do. We are now moving towards a point where I think we will have a satisfactory administration, but if in future the different Governments of the Empire are going to have to assume responsibilities with regard to Native races I think it would be a very good thing that we should all learn the lesson, which I am sure must have