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LEAGUE OF NATIONS

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES

REPORT BY THE COMMITTEE SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SUMMARY.

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In virtue of the Assembly's decision of September 28th, 1935, based on the report of its Sixth Committee,¹ the Committee on Assistance to Refugees met at Geneva on November 28th.

In accordance with the decision taken by the Council of the League of Nations, the Committee was composed as follows:

- M. Michael HANSSON (Norway), former President of the Mixed Court of Appeal of Egypt, Norwegian Member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague, Member of the Roumano-Hungarian Mixed Arbitral Tribunal;
- His Excellency M. G. DE MICHELIS, Senator, Italian Ambassador, former Commissioner-General of Emigration;
- His Excellency M. Štefan OSUSKÝ, Czechoslovak Minister at Paris, Chairman of the Supervisory Commission of the League of Nations;
- M. P. ROLAND-MARCEL, Councillor of State, former Prefect of Bas-Rhin (France);
- The Rt. Hon. Sir Horace RUMBOLD, Bart., P.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., former Ambassador.

¹ Report adopted by the Assembly.

- (1) The Sixth Committee has examined the question of international assistance to refugees referred to the Assembly by the Norwegian Government.
- (2) It noted, first, that the Assembly has contemplated arrangements for the winding-up of the Nansen International Office within a specified time-limit and according to definite budgetary rules.
- (3) It considers that the League of Nations has already done useful work in the matter of assistance to refugees, but realises the great complexity of the refugee problem, which has political, legal, humanitarian, administrative and financial aspects, and which requires further examination within the limits of the existing decisions of the Assembly.
- (4) It considers that, subject to any future decisions, this examination should be limited, for political and financial reasons, to the categories of refugees already under the Nansen Office and the High Commissariat in London.
- (5) The Sixth Committee also considers that no new additional expenditure should be incurred without explicit permission from the Assembly.
- (6) Having regard to the foregoing considerations, the Sixth Committee proposes that the Assembly should ask the Council to appoint a small committee of competent persons to report to it on the above-mentioned question. The committee should collect all useful evidence, particularly that of the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees. Once in possession of this report, the Council will be able to take any measures that it may think desirable, even before the meeting of the ordinary Assembly in 1936, to which, however, the question will have to be submitted.
- (7) In order to enable the above-mentioned committee to be set up, the Assembly leaves it to the Council to appropriate a sum of 5,500 Swiss francs from the budgetary allocation of the current financial year.

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The Committee elected as its Chairman M. Štefan Osuský and as its Rapporteur M. Pierre ROLAND-MARCEL. It sat until December 7th, 1935.

INTRODUCTION.

I. PREPARATORY WORK OF THE COMMITTEE.

The Secretariat placed the following documents at the disposal of the members of the Committee:

(a) Documents concerning the organisation and working of the official bodies appointed to deal with refugees—namely, the Inter-Governmental Commission, the Governing Body of the Nansen Office for Refugees and the High Commission for Refugees coming from Germany (Annex 1).

(b) Documentary material obtained from the Governments who were consulted either because they were represented on the official bodies or because some of them were particularly interested in the question (Belgium, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Roumania, Sweden, Switzerland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, Uruguay, Yugoslavia). It should be added that the following Governments sent a reply but declared that they did not wish to be heard by the Committee: Belgium, United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America.

(c) Documentary material obtained from relief organisations which deal with (1) refugees in general, (2) more particularly the categories of refugees assisted by the Nansen Office, and (3) more particularly with Jewish refugees coming from Germany (Annex 2).

II. THE COMMITTEE'S METHOD OF WORK.

After acquainting themselves with all these documents, the members of the Committee decided to hear immediately, on the one hand, the representatives of the international bodies of an official character and, on the other hand, those of the associations and groups which maintain relations with those bodies.

These representatives were invited to comment on the memoranda which they had drawn up and to reply to any questions which might be put to them in order that all the points judged important by the Committee should be fully gone into.

Accordingly, the Committee heard in turn the representatives of (a) the Inter-Governmental Commission for Refugees (M. Antoniadé (Roumania), M. de Reffye (France), M. François (Belgium), M. Rubinstein (expert) and Mr. Johnson (Secretary-General of the Nansen Office)); (b) the Governing Body of the Nansen Office (M. Antoniadé, M. de Reffye, Mr. McKenzie, M. Rubinstein and Mr. Johnson); and (c) the High Commission for Refugees coming from Germany (Mr. McDonald, High Commissioner).

In this way, accurate information was obtained on the working of these bodies, the execution of the programmes which had been assigned to them, and their relations with Governments and charitable associations and with the refugees themselves. These representatives, too, were authorised to make any recommendations which their experience might suggest to them.

Special reference should also be made to the great courtesy shown by the representatives of these three bodies and to the clear and accurate nature of the information they supplied.

The Committee also heard, in the order arranged in advance, the representatives of a considerable number (a) of private organisations engaged in work for the assistance of refugees and (b) of associations of the refugees themselves who, generally speaking, were conspicuous for their moderation and the readiness with which they laid before the Committee all the details that the latter considered necessary for its information (see list of these associations in Annex 2).

III. PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

Having taken four days to perform this initial part of its task, the Committee proceeded to an exchange of views on the points which appeared to be of equal interest to all the persons heard, and on the necessity of drawing a methodical distinction in its subsequent work between the different categories of refugees, and particularly between those dealt with by the Nansen Office and exiles from Germany.

The Committee then unanimously adopted the following observations:

(a) When, in 1928, the League of Nations carried out a general revision of its work concerning refugees, an important task had already been accomplished which is greatly to

(Communiqué au Conseil et
aux Membres de la Société.)

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ERRATUM

Genève, le 25 janvier 1936.

SOCIÉTÉ DES NATIONS

COMITÉ POUR L'ASSISTANCE INTERNATIONALE AUX REFUGIÉS

Rapport du Comité soumis au Conseil de la Société des Nations

À la page 6, première ligne du quatrième alinéa du chapitre intitulé:

"4. Aspect administratif," au lieu de

".... le Comité devrait rechercher" lire

".... le Comité devait rechercher"

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES

Report by the Committee submitted to the Council of the League of Nations

On page 6, first line of fourth paragraph of the chapter entitled:

"4. Administrative aspect", read

".... the Committee endeavoured" instead of

".... the Committee should endeavour"

its credit from the humanitarian point of view. The name of Dr. Nansen will ever be associated with this great work.

(b) Later, two events of exceptional gravity supervened—namely, the world economic depression and the appearance of new waves of emigration, which both complicated and extended the sphere of action of the international organisations, the Governments concerned and the charitable associations. In this way, difficult and complex new problems arose.

IV. PRESENT SCOPE OF THE REFUGEE PROBLEM.

The Committee felt that the greatest caution was advisable in regard to the figures compiled by the official bodies of an international character, the Governments and the representatives of the refugees.

A. Refugees dealt with by the Nansen Office (approximate figures):

(a) Russian	700,000–800,000
(b) Armenian	240,000
(c) Assyrian and Assyro-Chaldean	7,000
(d) Turkish	150
(e) Saar	3,000–4,000

B. Refugees coming from Germany 80,000–100,000

The above figures being accepted with every reservation, the Committee wishes to point out that (a) they may be taken as a basis in principle when dealing with the legal part of the problem to be solved, (b) they do not give a true idea of what the refugee problem still means from the point of view of commitments in respect of relief, the finding of employment, etc. The Committee regrets that on this point it has not been able to obtain sufficiently exact data.

The events referred to above explain why:

(1) The *League of Nations* was obliged to set up the High Commission in London two years ago, and subsequently to appoint this Committee to submit to the Council, and afterwards to the Assembly, proposals for a settlement of the serious questions at issue;

(2) The majority of *Governments*, which have applied the right of asylum in a liberal spirit, have found that their obligations in the matter of assistance, already complicated by unemployment, were further increased by the influx of the refugees, and that there was an inextricable network of countless general and individual cases in connection with the admission of refugees, public safety and police regulations, identification, housing, temporary or extended residence, the elementary right to subsistence (*i.e.*, either to relief or to employment), provision for the sick, children, the infirm and the old, conveyance to other countries, and even refusals of admission and deportations;

(3) The *private associations* had to cope with a flood of applications, complaints, moving appeals and extreme cases of poverty without any commensurate increase in their resources and with no adequate co-ordination of their charitable and political activities, notwithstanding the great generosity that they displayed.

Thus the situation as depicted in the documents and oral evidence submitted to it appeared to the Committee to be extremely serious, if only on account of its complexity. It was therefore necessary to give close consideration to the question in the various aspects which the Assembly had been careful to enumerate—*viz.*, its political, legal, humanitarian, administrative and financial aspects.

PART I. — VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM.

I. THE POLITICAL ASPECT.

The Committee found that, in the view of the authors of the memoranda and all the persons who gave evidence, no solution of the problem would be satisfactory unless it were based on the principle of close co-operation between all States, whether Members of the League or not. Any other view would, it was felt, represent a retrogression from the moral and humanitarian ideal and, indeed, would be the negation of civilisation.

It was held that the countries of the world might be divided into those which, being geographically situated next to the countries whence the exiles came, were under obligations in connection with the right of asylum and necessary transit; those which, being sparsely populated and in a relatively early stage of development, could more easily provide facilities for the settlement

of a certain number of exiles in their territories; those which, while less likely to receive refugees direct, had sufficient resources to help to relieve their misfortunes, and, lastly, those whose internal political upheavals had, for one reason or another, led to the departure of all those refugees and which could not regard with indifference the difficulties encountered by other members of the international community—quite apart from the question of voluntary exiles.

This political aspect of the matter has been fully realised by the League. The Committee accordingly thought it necessary to record these statements, which were unanimous.

2. THE LEGAL ASPECT.

Similar desires are finding forcible expression among the public throughout the world, and among refugees of every class.

There are too many exiles, and even foreigners long absent from their countries, who are deprived of their nationality by decisions of the Governments of the countries of which they once were nationals. Hence there is an imperative need of legal protection, though the nature of this might vary in detail in different countries. It seems essential, however, that such identity papers and passports should be issued as may secure to every exile a certain minimum of "personality", stability, freedom of movement and freedom to return, if desired, to the point whence he came.

A distinction must be drawn between refugees of the categories coming under the Nansen Office and refugees coming from Germany.

In the case of the former, the following series of arrangements and agreements have been concluded:

(1) Arrangement of July 5th, 1922, with regard to the issue of certificates of identity to Russian refugees (51 accessions);

(2) Arrangement of May 31st, 1924, relating to the issue of identity certificates to Armenian refugees (35 accessions);

(3) Arrangement of May 12th, 1926, relating to the issue of identity certificates to Russian and Armenian refugees, supplementing and amending the previous arrangements (23 accessions);

(4) Arrangement of June 30th, 1928, concerning the legal status of Russian and Armenian refugees (14 accessions);

(5) Arrangement of June 30th, 1928, concerning the extension to other categories of refugees (Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish) of certain measures taken to assist Russian and Armenian refugees (13 accessions);

(6) Agreement of June 30th, 1928, concerning the functions of the representatives of the League of Nations High Commissioner for Russian and Armenian refugees (2 accessions);

(7) Franco-Belgian Agreement of June 30th, 1928;

(8) Convention of October 28th, 1933, relating to the international status of refugees (3 ratifications and 3 signatures);

(9) Arrangement of May 24th, 1935, concerning the issue of a certificate of identity for refugees coming from the Saar (17 accessions).

Turning to the 1933 Convention mentioned above, it will be found that it has been the subject of a large number of statements, negotiations and comments. Moreover, its adoption was recommended by the Assembly as one of the essential stages in the winding-up of the Nansen Office. The Committee accordingly devoted particular attention to this Convention. A special report dealing with the matter and with certain particular aspects of the legal question has been drawn up personally by M. Michael Hansson and is included as an annex to the present report.

As regards the refugees coming from Germany, no inter-governmental arrangement has as yet been concluded, and the High Commissioner in London has not succeeded in his attempts to secure the adoption of measures answering to the real needs of these exiles. It should be added that the fact that most of them still possess national passports is of no importance, in view of the precarious nature of the documents in their possession and the fact that, as a rule, it is impossible for them to get their passports extended.¹

Practical measures, based on the experience acquired, are therefore urgently called for.

Moreover, certain of the statements made have brought out the urgent necessity of ensuring that the Government of the State from which the refugees have emigrated should authorise, without obstacles or conditions, the transmission of identity and other documents with a view to facilitating the heavy task devolving on the countries in which they have taken refuge.

¹ In this connection, it should be noted that the complexity of the problem is increased by the fact that various States no longer regard as such certain of their nationals who left their territory at a more or less distant date.

3. THE HUMANITARIAN ASPECT.

Innumerable cases of hardship were reported to the Committee. Some are inherent in the peculiar situation of the refugees, while others are mainly due to the economic depression.

The means of relieving all this moral suffering, material privation and physical degradation necessarily vary considerably both in number and in efficacy.

Lastly, the very nature of the sufferings of the different categories of exiles varies according to the country from which they come, their origin, their intellectual and social upbringing, their age and state of health. Many of their number are old, sick or infirm. Cases of the most terrible degradation were reported. The impossibility, in the case of so many men, women and young people, of adaptation to the conditions of a new existence seems to have led in too many cases to suicide.

This state of chaos is a menace to the future of two generations, and, at the same time, raises a painful, if not a dangerous, problem of a moral and material nature in States which have accorded the right of asylum to a large number of refugees.

The Committee certainly found that a considerable amount of work had already been done in the humanitarian field, either by international organisations, by certain Governments, or by a large number of private associations. Nevertheless, there are a number of different tasks of great importance still to be accomplished as regards the distribution, placing, re-adaptation and partial assistance of refugees.

(a) *Distribution and Placing of Refugees.*

As was only natural, the refugees first flocked to neighbouring countries or to countries which have adopted a liberal policy in the matter of the right of asylum, and it is to these countries that they are still moving.

Their concentration in these countries gives rise to thorny questions as regards their distribution—*i.e.*, the placing of the refugees either in the country of asylum or their emigration to other countries which are more or less prepared to receive them.

The work of placing and arranging for the emigration of the refugees under the protection of the Nansen Office, which has already been carried out, has been of the greatest value and, after examining the initial figures, the Committee found that the number of refugees who have still to be placed or transferred has declined considerably.

The various reports submitted and the opinions heard show that, in this connection, valuable services can be rendered by an international organisation which, thanks to its many and varied sources of information and to the close contact it maintains with different countries through its correspondents, is able to encourage emigration in the best interests of all concerned and is in a more favourable position in this respect than any Government acting alone.

Consequently, the persons consulted were anxious that the international organisations should pay special attention to this part of the work on behalf of refugees. None of them, moreover, has failed to realise the difficulties which have to be overcome in view both of the cuts in the budget of the League of Nations and of the effects of the world depression even on private generosity.

As regards the refugees coming from Germany, there is a unanimous desire that the action of the international official organisations should be directed to at least identical ends, more particularly since special possibilities are open to those of Jewish origin in the matter of settlement either in Palestine or elsewhere, thanks to the Jewish settlement organisations.

For this reason, the following suggestions were laid before the Committee:

(1) More specific agreements with the Governments in whose territories larger numbers of refugees might be received as settlers;

(2) Training of refugees for the exercise of new callings;

(3) Agreements to enable refugees to obtain the transference of a substantial part of their property from their country of origin to their country of settlement; this would ensure them a better reception and make it easier for them to begin a new life.

(b) *Assistance.*

In this connection also, a distinction should be drawn between the assistance available for those categories of refugees which are cared for by the Nansen Office and refugees coming from Germany.

(1) In the case of the former, the Nansen Office affords direct assistance, either through its central services or through its representatives in the various countries, thanks more particularly to the funds accruing from the Nansen stamp. Furthermore, it co-ordinates to some extent the activities of various associations (those, that is to say, with general humanitarian aims and those expressly formed for the relief of refugees) whose achievements would be even greater if additional efforts were made to co-ordinate their work.

(2) In the case of refugees coming from Germany, relief work, the cost of which is borne more particularly by the numerous Jewish associations, is, of course, especially active. It would therefore appear that the principal aims of the official organisation should be to promote the highest possible degree of co-ordination.

There remain the special requirements of refugees of the "intellectual" classes, who have to face the overcrowding of the professions together with the difficulties of obtaining recognition for their degrees and diplomas and of adapting themselves to new occupations. In this matter, the obstacles are so great that only slight results have been obtained.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECT.

This question has both a national and an international side.

The majority of the States affected by the immigration of refugees into their territories have done their duty in a humanitarian spirit which is deserving of all praise. Their administrative methods, however, have necessarily been very different on account of their varying laws, interests and possibilities—a circumstance which has led to regrettable divergencies. In this matter, no doubt, the work of the Nansen Office and that of the High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany have provided remedies the efficacy of which it would be unfair to deny. Nevertheless, very comprehensible measures of self-defence are beginning to be taken in certain countries, with the result that there is an increasing number of appeals to international solidarity within the framework of Geneva.

From the point of view with which the Committee is in the main concerned, the position is as follows: Under resolutions adopted in 1931 and 1932, the League Assembly decided that the Nansen Office was to be wound up not later than December 31st, 1938. Furthermore, the High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany has resigned as from the end of this year and his organisation will be wound up during January 1936.

In these circumstances, the Committee should endeavour to ascertain from the numerous private organisations dealing with (a) the so-called Nansen Office refugees and (b) refugees coming from Germany their opinion regarding the work done by the Nansen Office and the latter's liquidation, and, secondly, regarding the consequences of the abolition of the High Commission in London in the near future as well as the value of what it has accomplished.

A great many of the persons whose opinion was taken emphasised the need for maintaining the Nansen Office, though certain others criticised its operation.

The representatives of the groups concerned were also virtually unanimous in the view that though perhaps the High Commission in London had not entirely fulfilled expectations, this was to be explained by the fact that it was not placed under the authority of the League of Nations and was obliged to act, as it were, outside it.

The High Commissioner himself said that the experience of the past two years showed that his own efforts and the recommendations addressed by the Governing Body to the Governments of the countries in which refugees are living lacked the necessary authority. It was thus impossible for him to obtain fair legal treatment for those exiles.

In addition, a considerable number of delegates of organisations asked that, for legal as well as all other purposes, a central organisation should be set up. The latter would deal both with Nansen Office refugees and with refugees coming from Germany; it should either form an integral part of the League or keep in the closest possible touch with the League, and have at its head a strong personality who would inspire general confidence.

According to some of the opinions given, the refugee problem was complicated by two factors: (1) the gradual winding-up of the Nansen Office, which was said to be reducing its efficiency and giving rise to a sense of uncertainty among the refugees with whom it is concerned; (2) the forthcoming winding-up of the High Commission in London.

The Committee is anxious, however, to preserve complete impartiality in regard to the statements made to it, and therefore feels bound to add that some of the persons who gave evidence did not recommend that the two organisations should be amalgamated or even that they should continue to exist in co-ordination; on the contrary, they laid stress upon the difference between the problems to be dealt with by the Nansen Office and those raised by the influx of refugees coming from Germany. The chief subject of their concern is that, by January 1936, the refugees from Germany will be deprived of all international protection, and that it is therefore urgently necessary to find a substitute for the London High Commission, whereas the Nansen Office has still to continue its work within a field clearly defined by the Assembly and must make gradual preparations for its own dissolution.

5. FINANCIAL ASPECT.

Being anxious to adhere strictly to the Assembly's decision that no fresh expenditure shall be incurred without its formal authorisation, the Committee rejected all financial proposals that might involve the granting of supplementary credits, and accordingly made an inventory of the resources at present available. These are as follows:

A. *Nansen Office*:

1. League contributions (decreasing).

2. Regular contributions from certain Governments for such purposes as the maintenance of delegations of the Office in their countries (Bulgaria; previously also Austria, Germany, Poland and Syria)—total, 1925-1935: 373,922 Swiss francs.

3. Extraordinary contributions from Governments:

	Swiss francs
(a) The <i>United Kingdom</i> Government (1922): £150,000, less £40,000 returned by the High Commissioner (for the settlement of Denikin refugees) (£110,000)	2,761,000
(b) The <i>German, Polish and Czechoslovak</i> Governments—payments to Working Capital Fund (1928-1929)	151,430
(c) The <i>French and Syrian</i> Governments—payments for the settlement of Armenian refugees in Syria (1927-1930) (6,000,000 French francs) . .	1,200,000
(d) Contributions from various Governments for refugees in Constantinople (1921-1926)	
	£
The <i>United Kingdom</i> Government (1922)	20,000
Other Governments	15,000
Total	£ 35,000

878,500

(e) Sundry contributions for relief work in Asia Minor:

The <i>United Kingdom</i> Government (£19,208)	482,121																		
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(f) Contribution by the <i>Indian</i> Government for the evacuation of refugees to Brazil (1935) (£2,580)	38,958
Total	5,994,130

French Government: Advance of 9,000,000 French francs for refugees from the Saar.

4. Funds derived from the operation of the Nansen stamp system,¹ income for 1934 132,027 francs.

Income for the first nine months of 1935: 285,261.05 francs.

5. Issue of special stamps surcharged, in particular in Norway.

6. Expenditure by States out of their own budgets in connection with the indirect charges arising out of the grant of the right of asylum. (In order to give an idea of what this charge may involve for Governments, reference may be made to the calculations made in 1926, which showed extraordinary charges devolving on ten Governments as a result of the presence of refugees in their territory to a total amount of 20,000,000 gold francs.)

7. Funds of private organisations: Income and expenditure for 1934 (see Annex 3).

Note. — In the course of the oral evidence given, a suggestion was made to the Committee that, if the time-limits fixed for the winding-up of the Nansen Office are adhered to strictly, it may be advisable, in compensation for the comparatively short duration of the action proposed, to arrange for a slight addition to the funds available, in order to increase the efficacy of the proposed action, in view of the difficulties caused by the prolongation of the depression.

B. *High Commission for Refugees coming from Germany.*

1. Receipts consisting of gifts from private individuals or organisations.

2. An extraordinary contribution from the Swedish Government of £500 in 1935.

The budget estimates for 1935 were: Receipts and expenditure, 215,000 Swiss francs.²

Note. — Certain facts noted have convinced the Committee that the substitution of a new body for the High Commission for Refugees coming from Germany would certainly bring in

¹ In the countries which have adopted the system, the Nansen stamp of a value of 5 gold francs (or less in the case of indigent persons) is affixed to the passport or residence permit of the refugee. It represents a fee charged for the benefit of the Revolving Fund for the Establishment and Settlement of Refugees.

² These provisions refer only to the administrative budget of the High Commission. According to information supplied by the High Commissioner, a sum of nearly £2,000,000 has been collected and distributed on behalf of refugees coming from Germany since April 1933. The greater part of this sum was furnished by Jewish organisations.

fresh funds from very numerous private associations, particularly during the period of administrative transition, which will in all probability continue until September 1936.

PART II. — CONCLUSIONS.

After examining the general mass of information collected, the Committee thinks it desirable to draw attention to the following points:

1. The refugee problem has a national and an international aspect, and will continue to arise in this twofold aspect as long as the causes which have created it remain. The international aspect of the problem will, however, be the more pronounced the more acute the problem is.

The solidarity existing between members of the international community requires them:

- (a) To assist those States that are most heavily burdened on this account;
- (b) To help to ensure the gradual re-absorption of refugees;
- (c) To prevent the problem from taking a more acute form.¹

Consequently, it is the recognised mission of the League of Nations to assist the States concerned when they find themselves in difficulties owing to a fresh influx of refugees into their territory. Such an influx may occur on the top of some former wave of immigrant exiles who arrived some time previously and have settled down but have not yet been assimilated or provided with employment.

This part of the League's activities should of course become lighter as increasing efficacy of method—in other words, of League action—enables the States concerned more readily to overcome their special difficulties and to share the burden more equitably with the other countries.

This evolution will necessitate, on the one hand, a very wide appeal to official and private assistance and a better co-ordination of effort among the various bodies engaged in relief work and, on the other, appropriate negotiations with the States directly concerned (country of origin, country of refuge, country in which the refugee finds employment and country of immigration).

2. The fact that the Nansen Office will be wound up before December 31st, 1938, imposes certain specific duties on the League, because the economic depression has placed fresh obstacles in the way of finding employment, of emigration and of assistance in general. Consequently, the Inter-Governmental Commission and the directing organs of the Nansen International Office for Refugees should so order their action that the liquidation of the Office will assume a constructive character—that is to say, its responsibilities in the matter of assistance and finding employment will be handed over on a working basis either to States or to the private associations and groups which are prepared to accept them.

The task of the Office will therefore be to discover the desired solutions before December 31st, 1938. In view of the magnitude of the work accomplished, it is essential that the end of this work should not connote increased distress among the refugees.

3. At the present time, the number of refugees coming from Germany is far smaller than that of the other categories of exiles, and many of them are also far better supplied with means of assistance.

Nevertheless these refugees are entitled to the particular care of the League because their numbers may increase in the future and also because their arrival in many countries follows on former waves of immigration which have already entailed much official and private effort. The liquidation of the London High Commission undoubtedly involves for the League certain responsibilities of which it cannot divest itself. It is therefore essential that an immediate remedy should be found for the situation thus created, particularly as, in their generosity, the Jewish organisations are prepared to make a very liberal contribution to the League's present and future efforts on behalf of this category of refugees.

The situation therefore calls both for provisional measures and for measures of a more permanent character in all spheres—administrative, financial and legal.

4. The fate of the 1933 Convention is of capital importance to those refugees for whom the Nansen Office is responsible and who already enjoy the benefits of the various arrangements concluded. The reasons which have militated against the general adoption of this Convention make it imperative that the Nansen Office and the organs under whose authority it is placed should explore without delay every possibility of establishing a system that would be acceptable to the greatest possible number of States. The essential point is to ensure the permanency of those indispensable guarantees that are now afforded to these categories of refugees by the Nansen Office.

5. Refugees coming from Germany have as yet no international juridical status. This situation should be remedied without delay. In this connection, very wide use should be made of the experience gained since 1921.

The Committee, in fact, believes that it is neither possible nor even desirable to contemplate a system of international juridical protection differing from that which has already been accorded to other categories of refugees in some countries. The task of national public administrations should not be complicated by excessive diversity, and the progress made in unification should

¹ On this point see reference to loss of citizenship: Footnote on page 4.

be turned to the benefit of the refugees coming from Germany. It is to be hoped, in fact, that finally a unified juridical regime applicable to all exiles will be evolved.

6. In the case of some categories of refugees—such as Armenian refugees—there exist certain possibilities of finding work. The Committee has, in fact, been informed by the representatives of Armenian refugees' associations that the authorities of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would not be opposed to settling certain groups of these refugees, if such external help were forthcoming as would make this possible.

7. The problem of settling and finding work for refugees in the countries which first gave them shelter varies in proportion to the economic situation of the country in question.

The Committee is convinced that, while the action of international bodies may be decisive in certain cases, such action is not of itself sufficient. International bodies should be prepared to intervene in many different ways according to the special conditions and, above all, the economic resources of each country.

Action can in fact be taken only in concrete cases, and cannot be moulded into any universal form.

8. The emigration of refugees also depends to a very great extent on the economic conditions in "countries of immigration"—*i.e.*, those countries which, in view of the state of their evolution, would be prepared to receive refugees. The Committee is of opinion that the executive organs of the Nansen Office should, before its liquidation, make every effort to secure the settlement of its refugees in these countries of immigration. As far as the refugees coming from Germany, and in particular Jewish refugees, are concerned, the Committee has noted that relative facilities for colonisation in Palestine, South America and elsewhere open out wide prospects. The object of all official international action in this sphere should be to second the very encouraging efforts made by private organisations and accord the required facilities for the transfer of capital.

9. The refugee problem has, as its corollaries, the problems of assimilation and naturalisation in the countries of asylum or immigration. This is a very complex question, because it involves both the sovereignty of the State that is either prepared or not prepared to grant its citizenship to these exiles and the sincerity of the immigrants' determination to become loyal citizens of another country.

To make general recommendations to States on this subject is therefore entirely out of the question. Every State must itself decide each individual case.

Lastly, the Committee believes that it is in the interests of the refugees themselves to encourage among their children the idea that they should become citizens of the country in which they have settled. The second generation will thus be spared the hardships of exile.

10. Official action will never remedy all the evils that have been brought to its notice, but there can be no doubt that private organisations, including organisations founded by the refugees themselves, have already achieved good results.

At the same time, the Committee cannot lay too much stress on the need for all these associations to harmonise their efforts, so as to prevent duplication of work, and thus to enlarge the scope of an activity which will be the more effective if it continues to be conducted on purely philanthropic lines.

11. The Committee was particularly impressed by the position of the intellectuals who have been forced to emigrate—not only members of the liberal professions, including a number of world-famous scientists, authors and artists, but also students, whose education has been abruptly broken off. This is a special problem which, though not equally acute for all the different classes of refugees, affects them all, and to neglect it might endanger the essential interests of civilisation.

12. In the Committee's unanimous opinion, the funds available for assisting refugees should be increased, at all events temporarily.

It is felt that an approach might be made to the Nobel Prize Committee, which would doubtless give favourable consideration to the idea of assigning one or more of the Nobel prizes to the refugee work, as being a contribution to peace and international solidarity.

PART III. — PROPOSALS.

Having thus stated its conclusions, the Committee unanimously decided to formulate the following proposals:

I. PROPOSALS RELATING TO TEMPORARY MEASURES.

1. *An outstanding personality to be appointed provisionally* to undertake until the next session of the Assembly the following duties:

- (a) To act as temporary President of the Nansen International Office for Refugees;
- (b) To initiate any reforms or adaptations which may be required in the internal management of the Office or its representation abroad, as also in connection with its general

activities (relations with Governments, settlement, emigration and assistance, juridical status,¹ etc.);

(c) To submit a special report to the Assembly with a revised winding-up programme on constructive lines.

2. *Another personality to be appointed* who, with the co-operation of the League's technical services, would be responsible during the period between the next session of the Council and the next ordinary session of the Assembly for the discharge of the following duties:

(a) Ensuring the continuity of the London High Commission's work in favour of Jewish and other refugees coming from Germany;

(b) Preparing for and summoning an inter-governmental conference with a view to establishing a general system of legal protection for refugees from Germany and possibly for all refugees;²

(c) Consulting Governments by means of an enquiry with a view to ascertaining the extent to which they would be prepared to receive and find employment for new refugees;

(d) Establishing a programme on the basis of such an enquiry with a view to facilitating the emigration of refugees from Germany to countries prepared to receive them (Palestine, South America, etc.), with due regard for the measures to be taken for the transfer—such transfer being considered indispensable—of (1) all necessary identity documents and (2) as much capital as possible;

(e) Reporting to the Assembly on the general problem of refugees from Germany.

II. PROPOSALS RELATING TO A SUBSEQUENT ORGANISATION.

A. *Main Proposal.*

The Committee recommends by four votes to one the following proposal for adoption by the Council of the League of Nations:

1. An outstanding personality to be appointed, in accordance with the Statutes of the Nansen Office, to act as President of that Office and to attach thereto, in the form of an additional but separate service, a special organisation for refugees coming from Germany.

As regards the Nansen Office:

2. To entrust to the personality appointed the task of winding up the Nansen Office within the prescribed period in accordance with a plan to include:

(i) A scheme for the transfer to Governments of certain of the duties at present performed by the Office;

(ii) A scheme for the transfer of others of these duties to the private organisations;

(iii) A scheme laying down the details of execution of these transfers, in order that the burden of the responsibilities normally devolving on the Nansen Office should not be left to the Governments concerned or to the private groups after December 31st, 1938.

3. The activities of the Office to be organised during the period of liquidation with the help of the technical services of the League of Nations—namely (a) the Legal Section, (b) the Social Section (questions of child welfare and the protection of young people), (c) the Transit Section as regards passport questions, (d) the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation as regards the employment of intellectuals and assistance to students, (e) the International Labour Office as regards the employment and transfer of artisans, workmen and agricultural labourers.

4. A decision to be taken that the Assembly, at its session before the end of 1938, will finally review the work done and will make all necessary recommendations to the Governments and private organisations, particularly to those which, like the Red Cross, for example, might be willing to undertake the task of co-ordinating and even centralising certain forms of assistance.

As regards the Additional Service for Refugees coming from Germany:

5. The administration of the proposed service to be entrusted to a Committee consisting of the representatives of Governments with power to speak and vote and representatives of the Jewish and non-Jewish groups concerned in an advisory capacity.

¹ As regards juridical status, cf. footnote 2 relating to the Inter-Governmental Conference.

² The Committee is of opinion that this Conference might be asked to examine and to endeavour to solve the problem in its widest aspects (see the supplementary observations concerning legal questions (page 11) and M. Hansson's report, Annex 4).

6. The special service for refugees coming from Germany to be administered in such a way as to ensure, when the Nansen Office is no longer in existence, the conversion of this service into an autonomous body placed under the auspices of the League, in accordance with statutes to be determined subsequently.

7. The financial resources and budget of the Office to be determined.

B. *Subsidiary Proposal.*

The Committee decided by four votes to one to lay before the League Council the following alternative in the event of the latter's rejecting the previous proposal:

(a) *As regards the Nansen Office:*

1. The President of the Governing Body to be elected in accordance with the Statutes of the Office.

2. Increased powers of action and control to be given to the President appointed for the final period of liquidation.

3. A decision to be taken as to the enforcement of all administrative, financial and other reforms, and a programme of constructive liquidation to be drawn up similar to that of which particulars are given under points (i), (ii) and (iii) of paragraph 2, and paragraphs 3 and 4 of the first proposal.

(b) *As regards Refugees coming from Germany:*

1. An autonomous international organisation to be set up and placed under the auspices of the League of Nations in accordance with statutes to be determined subsequently.

2. A person to be appointed to act as President of the Governing Body, possibly with the title of High Commissioner.

3. The administration of this organisation to be entrusted to a Board consisting of the representatives of Governments with power to speak and vote, and representatives of the Jewish and non-Jewish groups concerned in an advisory capacity.

4. The financial resources and budget of the organisation to be determined.

5. The seat of the organisation to be decided upon.

C. *Minority Proposal.*

Lastly, the Committee took note of the following proposal submitted by one of its members and rejected by four votes to one:

1. The questions relating to the juridical status of refugees to be settled by the means advocated in the first two proposals (inter-governmental conference, etc.).

2. The tasks of assisting and finding employment for refugees to be entrusted, not to official or semi-official bodies, but to the existing private organisations or to organisations to be set up for this purpose;

3. An international committee for assistance to be set up, entrusted with the duties of co-ordinating, supervising, directing and giving practical assistance to the private organisations in question.

4. The international committee for assistance to keep in close touch with all the technical organs of the League of Nations, the latter to grant the committee the support of its authority.

5. (The administrative organisation and methods of operating the general system contemplated above will not give rise to any special difficulties and could easily be determined.)

D. *Additional Clause concerning Legal Questions, adopted unanimously by the Committee.*

Lastly, the Committee lays stress on the importance which it attaches to the establishment of as uniform and favourable a regime as possible to regulate the legal situation of the refugees (identity documents, passports, etc.), either by means of a single convention or of two conventions, or by any other means (declarations).

It specially emphasises the importance of the general adoption of such a regime in favour of the categories dealt with by the Nansen Office, before the winding-up of that Office as provided for by the Assembly in 1931. As an illustration, the Committee stresses the value of the 1933 Convention, and recommends all measures and negotiations likely to bring about fresh accessions to that instrument.

(Signed) OSUSKÝ,

Chairman.

(Signed) ROLAND-MARCEL,

Rapporteur.



Annex 1.

REPORTS ON THE ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE OFFICIAL BODIES.

A. ASSEMBLY DOCUMENTS.

- A.29.1926.VIII. Conference on Russian and Armenian Refugee Questions. Report by the High Commissioner and Report by the Belgian Representative presented to the Council.
- A.33.1928.VIII. Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish Refugees. Report to the Ninth Ordinary Session of the Assembly.
- A.23.1929.VII. Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean, and Turkish Refugees. Report to the Tenth Assembly.
- A.28.1930.XIII. Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish Refugees. Report by the Secretary-General on the Future Organisation of Refugee Work.
- A.34.1930.XIII. Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish Refugees. Report by the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission attached to the High Commissioner for Refugees.
- A.27.1931. Nansen International Office for Refugees. Report by the Governing Body to the Twelfth Assembly of the League of Nations.
- A.31.1931. Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish Refugees. Report by the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees on its Fourth Session.
- A.24.1932. Nansen International Office for Refugees. Report of the Governing Body.
- A.19.1933. Nansen International Office for Refugees. Report of the Governing Body.
- A.12.1934. Nansen International Office for Refugees. Report of the Governing Body for the Year ending June 30th, 1934.
- A.22.1935.XII. Nansen International Office for Refugees. Report of the Governing Body for the Year ending June 30th, 1935, on the Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean, Saar and Turkish Refugee Problems.
- A.13.1935.XII. Proposal by the Norwegian Government.
- A.36.1935.XII. Petition signed by a Number of International Organisations regarding the Question of Refugees.

B. COUNCIL DOCUMENTS.

- C.650(I).M.311(I).1933. Convention relating to the International Status of Refugees, Geneva, October 28th, 1933.
- C.650(a).M.311(a).1933. *Id.* Final Act.
- C.266.M.136.1933. Report of the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees on the Work of its Fifth Session and Communication from the International Nansen Office for Refugees.
- C.126.M.47.1934. Report of the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees on the Work of its Sixth Session.
- C.137.M.71.1935.XII. *Id.* Work of its Seventh Session.
- C.L.120.1935.XII. Refugees from the Saar: Extension of the Nansen Passport System to these Refugees.
- A.VI./P.V.2 and 7.1935. Sixteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly. Minutes of the Sixth Committee.

C. DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE NANSEN INTERNATIONAL OFFICE FOR REFUGEES.

- Ref./General/I-1931. Inter-Governmental Arrangements dated 1922, 1924, 1926 and 1928, relating to Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish Refugees.

- P.15.1935. History and Competence of Nansen International Office.
 P.16.1935 (in French only). Note par les représentants de la Commission intergouvernementale consultative pour les réfugiés.
 P.17.1935 (in French only). Note des représentants du Conseil d'Administration de l'Office international Nansen.
 P.18.1935 (in French only). Note des représentants de la Commission intergouvernementale consultative et de l'Office international Nansen.

D. DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES COMING FROM GERMANY.

- Report on the Second Meeting of the Governing Body, held in London, May 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1934.
 — Report on the Third Meeting of the Governing Body, held on November 1st and 2nd, 1934.
 — Report on the Fourth Meeting of the Governing Body, held on July 17th, 1935.
 C.A.I.R.40. Extract from a Survey by the High Commissioner for Refugees coming from Germany on the Work done on behalf of German Refugees.
 — "A Crisis in the University World". A pamphlet with a foreword by the High Commissioner.

Annex 2.

LIST OF ORGANISATIONS HAVING SUBMITTED A REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE.

A. PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS DEALING WITH REFUGEES.

- C.A.I.R.1. World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations, Geneva.
 C.A.I.R.38. Society of Friends (Germany Emergency Committee), London.
 C.A.I.R.2. Quakers' Refugee Aid International Service, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.4. World Alliance of Young Women's Christian Associations, Geneva.
 C.A.I.R.8. League of Red Cross Societies, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.22. European Central Office for Inter-Church Aid, Geneva.
 C.A.I.R.35. Save the Children International Union, Geneva.
 C.A.I.R.25. Save the Children Fund and Armenian (Lord Mayor's) Fund, London.
 C.A.I.R.29. Academic Assistance Council, London.
 C.A.I.R.36. International Migration Service, Geneva.
 C.A.I.R.39. International Red Cross Committee.
 C.A.I.R.50. International Committee to secure Employment for Refugee Professional Workers, Geneva.
 C.A.I.R.56. International Students' Service, Geneva.

B. ORGANISATIONS DEALING WITH REFUGEES UNDER THE NANSEN OFFICE.

- C.A.I.R.3. Commission centrale pour l'étude de la condition des réfugiés russes, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.5. Union des Associations des émigrés ukrainiens en France, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.11. Comité de protection des émigrés russes en Pologne, Warsaw.
 C.A.I.R.12. Comité central de patronage de la jeunesse universitaire russe à l'étranger, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.13. "Zemgor" Association in Yugoslavia, Belgrade.
 C.A.I.R.14. Comité d'Emigration et Colonisation juive, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.15. Russian Zemstvos and Towns Relief Committee for Russian Citizens abroad, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.26a. *Id.*
 C.A.I.R.16 and 26. Fédération des invalides mutilés de guerre russes à l'étranger.
 C.A.I.R.18. "Comitetul Ukrainian pentru Asistentă emigratilor Ucrainieni in Romania", Bucharest.

- C.A.I.R.19. Union générale arménienne de bienfaisance, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.20 and 26. Union des Médecins russes à l'étranger, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.21 and 26. Ancienne Organisation de la Croix-Rouge russe.
 C.A.I.R.23. Office central des réfugiés russes en France.
 C.A.I.R.46. Haut Conseil des émigrés ukrainiens.
 C.A.I.R.49. Action orthodoxe, Paris.
 Comité central des réfugiés arméniens, Paris.

C. ORGANISATIONS DEALING WITH REFUGEES COMING FROM GERMANY.

- C.A.I.R.6. Hias-Jca Emigration Association " Hicem ", Paris.
 C.A.I.R.7. Jewish Colonisation Association, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.9. Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland, Zurich.
 C.A.I.R.10. Central British Fund for German Jewry, London.
 C.A.I.R.24. Jewish Agency for Palestine, London.
 C.A.I.R.30. Jewish Refugees Committee, London.
 C.A.I.R.33. Comité voor Bijzondere Joodsche Belangen, Amsterdam.
 C.A.I.R.34. Comité d'aide et d'assistance aux victimes de l'antisémitisme en Allemagne, Brussels.
 C.A.I.R.37. Comité des délégations juives, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.42. Comité allemand (Information Office for Emigrants and Refugees from Germany), Paris.
 C.A.I.R.43. Comité national de secours aux réfugiés allemands victimes de l'antisémitisme, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.44. International Federation of Trade Unions, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.45. Union of Universally Organised Orthodox Jewry " Agudas Israel ", London.
 C.A.I.R.48. Czechoslovak National Committee for Refugees from Germany, Prague.
 C.A.I.R.41. Assistance médicale aux enfants des émigrés, Paris.
 C.A.I.R.51. Jewish Committee for the Relief of Refugees from Germany, Warsaw.
 C.A.I.R.52. American Joint Distribution Committee.
 C.A.I.R.58. Fédération des émigrés d'Allemagne en France, Paris.
 Schweiz Israel Gemeindebund, St. Gall.

Annex 3.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF THE NANSEN OFFICE IN 1934.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 1934.

<i>Income :</i>	Swiss francs	Actual budget Swiss francs
Contributions from League of Nations	300,000.00	
Contributions from Governments	9,000.00	
Other income	10,182.80	
	<hr/>	319,182.80
		<hr/>
<i>Expenditure :</i>		319,182.80
Central Service	149,569.80	
Delegations	125,649.40	
Miscellaneous	1,500.00	
Contributions to a Compensation Fund	13,579.20	
	<hr/>	290,298.40
		<hr/>
Surplus on the financial year 1934		28,884.40
		<hr/>
		319,182.80

ASSISTANCE BUDGET.		Actual budget Swiss francs
I. <i>Income:</i>		
Sale of Nansen stamps		132,027.00
Ordinary and special contributions		119,526.00
Repayments on advances		252,369.65
Miscellaneous receipts		12,408.80
Balance in hand on January 1st, 1934		335,604.90
	Total funds administered	851,336.35
II. <i>Expenditure:</i>		
Advances and subsidies (including grants to organisations in France under the Law of May 7th, 1934)		435,335.95
Evacuations paid for out of special contributions		120,357.45
		555,693.40
Miscellaneous expenses		31,386.35
	Total expenditure	587,079.75

* * *

The relief granted to refugees in cash (advances and subsidies) by the High Commission and the Nansen International Office for Refugees in the years 1927-1934 amounted to 2,683,549 Swiss francs.

In addition, the Caisse nationale de Crédit agricole in France granted loans, guaranteed by the Office, to Russian refugees, to the amount of 348,000 French francs.

The amount advanced for the settlement of Armenian refugees in Syria in the years 1927-1934 was 11,000,000 French francs.

Annex 4.

SURVEY OF THE PRINCIPAL LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE REFUGEE QUESTION AT THE PRESENT TIME, SUBMITTED BY M. MICHAEL HANSSON.

CHAPTER I. — STATUS OF THE REFUGEE.

Stress has been laid in the report on the necessity for refugees to possess a juridical status, identity documents, and, if necessary, a passport to enable them to lead a normal life from the legal standpoint.

The question might be settled by the Convention of October 28th, 1933. Moreover, the legal protection accorded to refugees under that Convention might be supplemented in certain respects. Lastly, failing the accession of States to the 1933 Convention, a minimum juridical status should be accorded to refugees by adequate means.

Section I. — Convention of October 28th, 1933.

I. Theoretical Value of the Convention.

The Convention of October 28th, 1933, relating to the international status of refugees, which was drawn up with the greatest care, is the result of efforts and studies made under the auspices of the League of Nations, with the assistance of its organisations and the Governments concerned, during the previous twelve years.

The Convention does not merely provide refugees with a normal juridical status, but also guarantees them certain economic and social rights which place them on the same footing as nationals, or at any rate as foreigners enjoying most-favoured-nation treatment.

The Convention represents as it were a goal to be striven for; it confers upon refugees the maximum legal advantages which it has been considered possible to afford them in practice.

2. States which have acceded to the Convention: States which have not yet done so.

At the present time, two years after its conclusion, the Convention is binding upon only three States—Bulgaria, Norway and Czechoslovakia. Three other States—Belgium, Egypt and France—have signed it. The importance of this result should not be underrated, since there is every reason to believe that it will not be long before those States that have signed the Convention will ratify it. Six States, the accession of some of their number being of very great importance, will thus be bound by the Convention and the latter will then be of definite practical value.

The number of States mainly concerned in the refugee problem is limited. The accession of the following eight States is particularly desirable—Austria, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Roumania, Switzerland.

Mention should, however, be made of two factors which restrict the practical value of the Convention of October 28th, 1933. The first is inherent in the actual terms of the Convention, which applies (Article 1) only to certain categories of refugees (mainly Russian refugees). A further decision would have to be taken to enable refugees coming from Germany to benefit by the treatment established by the Convention.

The second factor arises out of the reservations accompanying the States' signatures. Those reservations are fairly numerous. They relate chiefly to the articles regarding the social and economic rights of refugees (Chapters IV to IX). Some, however, relate to the juridical status of refugees in the proper sense of the term (Chapters II and III)—*i.e.*, to the essential part of the Convention. As a rule, however, the scope of these last-named reservations is limited.

3. *Reasons why Certain States have not acceded to the 1933 Convention.*

It is possible that, in the normal course of events, other States will accede to the 1933 Convention, although there is reason to believe that certain States which have hitherto held aloof have no intention of changing their attitude.

The two main reasons why States have adopted this attitude are as follows:

(a) Certain States are unwilling to grant refugees the treatment provided for in the Convention of October 28th, 1933;

(b) Certain States which, in principle, are not opposed to granting refugees the advantages provided for in the 1933 Convention are reluctant to undertake an international obligation in the matter which, if new circumstances should arise, would prevent them from modifying their policy without denouncing the Convention—a denunciation which could not take effect immediately.

4. *Possible Solutions.*

In the first place, an appeal could and should be made to Governments with a view to obtaining further accessions to the 1933 Convention, although the results obtainable by this means will necessarily be limited.

Secondly, two other solutions might be examined, one consisting in making the 1933 Convention more flexible, and the other in binding States which are determined to hold aloof from the 1933 Convention by some other means.

5. *Possibility of making the 1933 Convention more flexible.*

It may seem strange to speak of making the 1933 Convention more flexible, as, in certain respects, it is remarkably elastic.

Article 23 provides that:

“The Contracting Parties may at the moment of signature or accession declare that their signature or accession shall not apply to certain chapters, articles or paragraphs, exclusive of Chapter XI (General Provisions), or may submit reservations . . .”

This article allows States to make as many reservations as they may think fit.

Nevertheless, Governments hesitate to give their accession if it is to be accompanied by so many reservations that the States acceding appear to lay more stress on what they refuse than on what they accept. It might perhaps have been better to provide that the Convention should come into force “by stages” (like the General Act of September 26th, 1928), so that States could accede to it wholly or in part, as it would then have been unnecessary for Governments to formulate so many reservations.

Another means of making the Convention more flexible would be to allow it to be denounced within a short period, say six or three months. The present Article 21 stipulates that the Convention may not be denounced for the first five years after its entry into force. Thereafter the denunciation will take effect one year after the receipt of the notification.

From the point of view of procedure, the Convention could be modified only with the consent of the States at present parties to it. It might be expedient, however, to summon a meeting of the representatives of States already bound by the Convention, of States that have merely signed it, and of States whose accession is desirable, for the purpose of considering whether it would be easier to obtain further accessions if the Convention were modified.

6. *Another Means of inducing Governments to undertake Certain Obligations.*

If it is desired to induce Governments which still refuse to accede to the Convention to undertake certain obligations, those Governments might be asked to make declarations the tenor of which would be more or less similar to those embodied in the 1933 Convention, or which would refer to that Convention. Those declarations, which might be received, for instance, by the Council of the League of Nations, would specify the policy which the Governments intended to adopt in regard to refugees, without binding them in the same way as they would be bound

by an international convention. In order to induce Governments to make such a declaration, it would be necessary to provide that the latter could be modified or withdrawn by the Governments concerned.

7. *Extension of the Benefits of the Convention to Refugees coming from Germany.*

As stated above, the 1933 Convention, in view of the wording of Article 1, does not apply to refugees from Germany.

Some appropriate means of extending the application of the Convention to these refugees must therefore be found. For instance, the Council or Assembly of the League of Nations might agree that an additional protocol be concluded dealing specially with the case in question, or that declarations should be obtained from Governments that are prepared to apply the Convention to refugees coming from Germany, or, again, that States should simply be asked to base their policy on the Convention.

Section II. — Protection of Refugees from Arbitrary Expulsion Orders.

The question of the expulsion of refugees is governed by Article 3 of the 1933 Convention. There can be no question of abolishing or restricting the right which this article accords to States to expel refugees in certain cases.

Nevertheless, it has been strongly urged in various quarters that refugees should be allowed to be heard before an expulsion order is made against them. It sometimes happens that a decision to expel a refugee is taken without his having any knowledge of the reason for his expulsion, and that the decision may be due to a material error, slanderous information or the biased reports of petty officials. The refugee should be informed of the complaints against him, should be allowed to defend himself, and, if necessary, to vindicate his character before an independent and impartial administrative or judicial authority.

Section III. — Proof of the Identity and Status of Refugees.

The refugee's first requirement is proof of his personal identity and status. It is the duty of the Government of the country in which the refugee is staying and of other States, particularly the Government of his country of origin, as far as possible to help the refugee to obtain proof of his identity and status. The Franco-Belgian Agreement of June 30th, 1928, which does not duplicate the Convention of October 28th, 1933, appears to contain all the stipulations that are desirable in the matter. Article 1 of this Agreement, which is open to the accession of all States, provides for the following operations:

- “ (a) Certifying the identity and the position of the refugees;
- “ (b) Certifying their family position and civil status, in so far as these are based on documents issued or action taken in the refugees' country of origin;
- “ (c) Testifying to the regularity, validity and conformity with the previous law of their country of origin of documents issued in such country;
- “ (d) Certifying the signature of refugees and copies and translations of documents drawn up in their own language;
- “ (e) Testifying before the authorities of the country to the good character and conduct of the individual refugee, to his previous record, to his professional qualifications and to his university or academic standing;
- “ (f) Recommending the individual refugee to the competent authorities, particularly with a view to his obtaining visas, permits to reside in the country and admission to schools, libraries, etc.”

In any case Governments, even if they are not parties to the 1933 Convention, should see that the essential need of the refugee to prove his identity and civil status is met.

CHAPTER II. — CERTAIN LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM OF THE SETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES.

Section I. — Distribution of Refugees.

The status of refugee is not, of course, a permanent one. The policy followed in regard to refugees should aim at getting rid of that status.

The refugee ceases to be one, and once more comes under one of the normal categories, when he is either repatriated to his country of origin or becomes naturalised.

Unfortunately, in most cases, repatriation appears to be a purely theoretical solution, since the reasons which led the refugee to leave his country of origin prevent him from returning, unless there is a change in the situation.

If repatriation is impossible, as is usually the case in practice, the naturalisation of the refugee in the country that received him must be the final solution, although, of course, it requires the consent of both parties—the refugee and the State concerned. As a rule, their consent is not obtainable until after a certain time has elapsed. Meanwhile, the refugee must be enabled to live under conditions which are as satisfactory as possible both to him and to the country of refuge.

In this connection, it appears necessary to facilitate the emigration to other countries of refugees who, only too often, are concentrated in excessive numbers in States bordering on the country of origin. In this way, the burdens resulting from an influx of refugees, which it is unfair for a few countries to have to bear almost exclusively, would be distributed among them all.

At the same time, it is much easier for the refugees to adapt themselves to new conditions if they are allowed to settle in a country where their abilities can be turned to account and in which the labour market is not overcrowded. In this way, the refugee, instead of being a burden, may become an asset to the country that receives him.

The statements made before the Committee show that a considerable number of refugees have already been settled in the Near East and in overseas countries through the Nansen Office and private organisations. A liberal policy in the matter of emigration should be adopted.

Section II. — Assistance to Refugees.

It is not sufficient to give a refugee a juridical status in order to enable him to lead a normal life. A very liberal status, which will make it possible for him to obtain employment and extend to him the benefit of social laws, will, of course, help to improve his material circumstances and keep him from want. But the refugee, like any other individual, must find work if he is to live in security. In certain cases, this is a very difficult matter, owing to the unemployment among nationals of the country itself caused by the existing economic depression, and it is not possible to give work to refugees in preference to nationals. A suitable distribution of refugees among the different countries might help to solve the problem.

The settlement of certain refugees would be greatly facilitated if they were able to dispose of the property belonging to them in their country of origin. In view of the heavy burden placed on the countries of refuge, the Committee considers it an international duty for the countries of origin of the refugees at least to alleviate, to some extent, the burdens imposed by the presence of the refugees in the territory of other States. The country of origin of the refugees should enable them to liquidate and transfer their assets under suitable conditions, so as to facilitate their settlement in the countries of refuge and their emigration, if necessary, to countries other than that in which they first found refuge. In this way, the cost of assisting emigrants without means, old people and those who are infirm or sick would not have to be borne entirely, without any compensation, by the countries which receive the refugees.

A fortiori, the country of origin of the refugees cannot refuse to transmit legal documents of every kind—and, in particular, documents relating to civil status—of importance to the refugee and consequently to the country in which he is residing.

Section III. — Private Organisations for Assistance to Refugees.

Private organisations have an essential part to play in protecting, settling and assisting refugees. A great deal has already been done by these associations.

If their efforts are to be fully effective, they should be more closely co-ordinated, and the organisations should, if possible, be amalgamated and re-grouped.

In order to facilitate the work of the private organisations and to increase their authority, the League of Nations might confer upon such organisations as it may deem fit a sort of international recognition of public utility.

CHAPTER III. — SUGGESTED CONCLUSIONS.

(1) Governments should be urged to furnish a refugee with proof of his identity and status, and the refugee's country of origin should be urged to grant the necessary facilities.

(2) An appeal should be made to Governments to ratify the 1933 Convention and to accede to the Franco-Belgian Agreement of 1928.

(3) The advisability of convening a meeting of representatives of States bound by the 1933 Convention, States signatories of that Convention, and States whose accession is deemed to be desirable should be considered, and such representatives should study the means of inducing other States to accept the Convention.

(4) The benefits of the 1933 Convention should be extended to refugees coming from Germany by means of a special protocol or declarations on the part of Governments.

(5) An arrangement should be negotiated with the German Government to enable refugees to liquidate their assets in Germany and transfer them abroad, and to grant them the necessary facilities for the communication of all legal documents relating to them.
