Mr. Henderson, accompanied by Mr. Agnides, received a deputation, headed by Lord Cecil, from the Executive Committee, in the London office of the League of Nations on Wednesday, 31st October, at 11.30 a.m. Neither Professor Murray nor Mr. Noel Baker were able to be present.

Lord Cecil asked Mr. Henderson what he wished the League of Nations Union to do now, and Mr. Henderson asked Lord Cecil what suggestions the Union had to make.

Lord Cecil said that Mr. Norman Davis, in conversation with him, had made three proposals. The first was that the Disarmament Conference should be brought to a sudden end, and with that view Mr. Davis thought that the British Government was inclined to agree. The second proposal was that some little things should first be done: for example, a Convention might provide for budgetary publicity, for some measure of international control over the manufacture and sale of arms for private profit, and for the setting up of a Permanent Disarmament Commission. The third proposal was that the Conference should go on, but Mr. Davis did not see clearly how this was to be accomplished. Lord Cecil had made a fourth suggestion, viz: that there should be a prolonged adjournment to some definite date, say a year hence. In Lord Cecil's opinion it would be a fatal mistake to allow the Conference to come to an end without
first every effort having been made to get each Government to say openly and plainly what it thinks should be done.

Mr. Henderson, in reply, said that it was necessary to retain the co-operation of the United States if the Conference was to go on; and that therefore it was necessary to decide upon a course of action which would enable Mr. Norman Davis and Mr. Hugh Wilson to obtain the necessary appropriations from Congress. In Mr. Henderson's opinion these considerations ruled out the fourth proposal made by Lord Cecil. Moreover, a long adjournment might diminish public interest in the Conference and allow the whole thing to peter out. On the other hand there was Mr. Litvinoff's proposal for a permanent body representative of the whole collective system which is centred in the League of Nations but is not confined to Members of the League: this was not a bad idea.

Mr. Henderson thought that the Bureau might meet in the near future, for example at the time of the forthcoming special Assembly of the League.

Mr. Agnides observed that the German Government had let it be known that if the Disarmament Conference were to resume its sessions without Germany being represented, and were to reach conclusions which were not inconsistent with Germany's
willing to accept the conclusions. Mr. Henderson said that the Disarmament Conference would not be able to do much until Germany came back, and the British Government were really trying to facilitate Germany's return to the Conference. If, meanwhile, the Conference goes on, it might strengthen the present Draft Report on the Trade in and Manufacture of Armaments.

Lord Cecil asked why it should not also deal with the international control of civil aviation, to which Mr. Henderson replied that the British Government did not wish an inquiry into the possibilities of international control of civil aviation to proceed in Germany's absence.

Lord Cecil observed that it was in any case essential to keep the Disarmament Conference in being. Mr. Henderson agreed and added that he had no objection to this being publicly stated. Not only in respect of aerial disarmament but in many other matters also much progress had been made. The work done must not be sacrificed. He was going to see representatives of the British Government, together with Mr. Norman Davis, at the Foreign Office tomorrow.

Mr. Henderson was pleased to learn how much attention was being paid in the National Declaration to the problem of prohibiting by international
agreement to the manufacture and sale of armaments for private profit.

31.10.34.