2547. Tribute to the memory of Dr. Stresemann.

The President. — On opening the fifty-eighth session of the Council, I feel it is my first duty, on behalf of all those present, to pay a heartfelt tribute to the memory of our colleague, Dr. Stresemann, German Minister for Foreign Affairs, of whom we have been so prematurely bereaved.

We all admired his vitality and powerful personality, his capacity for ceaseless work and for giving his whole soul to a noble ideal: a sum of human qualities which truly endeared him to everyone.

The personality of Gustave Stresemann is characteristic of the psychological evolution of humanity after the war. Although, throughout the whole of his lengthy political career, this great German patriot strove untiringly after his country's welfare, he nevertheless—owing to his breadth of comprehension and remarkable political insight—fully understood that the welfare of one's own country should be based on mutual understanding and on the welfare of the community of nations as a whole.

Before he died he had the satisfaction of seeing the policy of political understandings and international cooperation, of which he was one of the most ardent advocates, firmly established in many different circumstances. His name will live in history and will always be connected with the very important events of these latter years—events which are destined to usher in an era of mutual confidence and lasting peace throughout the world.

I should like to say a word on the great international importance of Dr. Stresemann's work. He was who brought Germany into the League of Nations and, by widening the basis of that institution and giving it a more universal character, thereby rendered eminent services both to the League itself and to his country.

Dr. Stresemann's death is a heavy loss for Germany and for the League. Our consolation is that we are profoundly convinced that the work begun with his help will survive him.

May I add a few words in my capacity as Polish representative? It is only natural that some differences of opinion should have arisen between Poland and Germany during the first few years of the existence of the revived Polish state.

In regard to League of Nations questions on which we were agreed and those on which we differed, and also in regard to questions directly affecting our two countries, I always highly appreciated the courage and profound conviction with which the deceased statesman constantly endeavoured, with increasing success, to further the work of general pacification.

I therefore think it right to express my firm belief that, in spite of the differences of opinion which may have existed between us on particular questions, we had the same feeling that a good understanding between Poland and Germany was necessary for the peace of Europe and to promote the work of the League in every branch of international life.

In conclusion, I would ask M. von Schubert, the honourable representative of Germany, to convey the condolences of the Council to the Government of the Reich and Dr. Stresemann's family.
M. von Schubert. — Mr. President, gentlemen,—To his great regret, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Reich, Dr. Curtius, has been detained at The Hague by the urgent duties which he has to fulfil as head of the German delegation. He had therefore to decide at the last moment not to attend this session of the Council of the League. It falls therefore to me, as representative of the German Government on the Council, to thank you sincerely and cordially for the manner in which, in the name of the Council, you have just seen fit to honour the memory of Dr. Stresemann, the late Foreign Minister. I will forward your observations to my Government and to the family of the deceased.

Allow me to assure you that the tribute paid by the Council to the personality of Gustave Stresemann, both in his capacity as a statesman and as a friend of peace, will be welcomed with sincere and profound gratitude, not only on the part of the German Government and of Dr. Stresemann’s family, but also on the part of German public opinion, which will gratefully echo the feelings you have expressed.

I think that the eloquent remarks which you, Mr. President, have just made as President of the Council, especially those which dealt with the relations between your country and Germany, will remind my fellow-countrymen of the untiring efforts Dr. Stresemann made to consolidate the position of Germany in the world by initiating a sincere rapprochement with other nations, by friendly co-operation and by moving, without prejudice, in the company of all men of goodwill along the road which leads to peace.

I had the honour to assist Dr. Stresemann during the whole time that he was Minister for Foreign Affairs, and I accompanied him on all the journeys which he undertook to attend the sessions of the Council of the League of Nations. I think, therefore, that I am in a position to testify to the positive attitude which he adopted towards the League.

The years during which Dr. Stresemann was at the head of the foreign policy of the Reich were years, too, of hard work for the reconstruction of his country. He was aware that that work could not be crowned with success unless the chasm which the war had opened between peoples were bridged by a policy of rapprochement and conciliation. He soon realised that it was the League of Nations which was in the first place called upon to hasten the movement of this policy of conciliation. That conviction, among others, led to the entry of Germany into the League. No single person more than he, although existing imperfections led to his being ceaselessly criticised, was more profoundly imbued with the ideal which forms the basis of the League and more profoundly conscious of the necessity for an international organisation destined to ensure peace and justice in the relations between nations.

Dr. Stresemann, therefore, both in the Council and in the Assembly, invariably urged a policy of conciliation and the progressive achievement of the ideal of the League though he pointed out with decisive frankness the obstacles which lay in the path of that policy. He was convinced that only a frank and definite explanation of the facts could serve the cause of peace. Strong in his belief in the League and in its high mission, he thought that what was necessary was to speak the truth fearlessly.

Nevertheless, however great his faith, he gave the best proof of it, I think, by devoting his whole energy and sacrificing his health from the very moment that Germany entered the League, to assisting at every session at Geneva, to which he found himself continuously drawn, except on very rare occasions when grave illness prevented his attendance. The memory of the dead statesman cannot be better honoured than by the fact that we, his successors, will continue his work with the same faith and also with the same frankness in order to fulfil the hopes placed by the nations in the League and in the distinguished personalities such as Dr. Stresemann and so many other statesmen who represent them.