Senator LaFontaine, President of the
Bureau International de la Paix has addressed
to the
President and the Preparatory Commission
on Disarmament the following appeal:

To the President and Members of the
Preparatory Commission on Disarmament

GENEVA

Gentlemen,

We might content ourselves by reproducing the pro-
tests which, in the name of Millions of men and women who have
had faith in the pacific work of the League of Nations, we ad-
dressed to your Commission on the occasion of its last meeting.
But even in the heart of the Assembly of the League of Nations
the delegates manifested their regrets that the essential ob-
ject envisaged by the League, in spite of numerous and vain
discussions, has not been attained and we hope that their
speeches will be better listened to and better observed than
were our protests.

It is not to be doubted that the confidence of the
peoples in the great institution of Geneva has diminished year
by year and that a further set back may result in lamentable
discredit of the League. The peoples demand that the reduction
of armaments shall at last be realised. It is not necessary
that that which happened at London on the occasion of the Na-
val Conference should happen again at Geneva and that we should
arrive, under the fallacious pretext of parity, at a limitation
which in actual fact is only a disguised increase which does
not deceive anyone. Article 8 of the Pact of the League of
Nations prescribes a reduction and not a limitations of arma-
ments. Has the last word been inserted intentionally in place of the former? It is, therefore, a question of arriving at a reduction; any other solution would be derisive, and a betrayal to the engagements solemnly subscribed to.

The terms of the Pact of Paris have again accentuated the extent of these engagements in condemning war and in renouncing recourse thereto as an instrument of national policy. To condemn war is to condemn the use of the weapons of war. To condemn war is to compare it to crime, the most odious of crimes. To maintain armaments above that which is necessary to constitute a police force to maintain international public order and as a servant of right would be to become an accomplice in the possible perpetuation of this crime. Are you prepared to incur such a responsibility?

We are content to make an appeal to your conscience which will dictate to you your duty.

Be persuaded that the accomplishment of this sacred duty will accord you joy unequalled. Think of the immense range, moral and economic, of the gesture which you have to make. Every human being aspires to life and it is only be an inconceivable aberration that men accepted as an act of superior culture the task of inflicting premature death on those who constitute the most vital and the most vigorous elements of the races, their hope and their pride, and to inflict it upon them as a hideous and unmerited torture. You have to make it that this cannot happen again; this was the promise published incessantly during the course of the ignoble and cowardly which terrified the world for over four years of nightmare. It is for you to keep this promise if you do not wish to betray the word given by the governments whose mandates you hold. Is it not already enough to see the peoples groaning under the
weight of the crushing charges that the wars of the past have accumulated on them. Because of a policy of mistrust and hate knowingly fostered by the war profiteers, the world sees these charges being increased every day and soon they will be double what they were in 1914, whilst millions of workers desirous of assuring the well being of their loved ones through their labour are reduced to unemployment, cruel unemployment because billions of gold francs are swallowed up in a bottomless pit of preparations for a new last war. To this paradoxical and tragic situation you can put an end and help to bring a smile once again to the lips of those whose fists are already clenched, ready to pay dearly for privations they have unjustly undergone.

If it is not for love for other men and in obedience to the precepts twice millenary of Him who said "Thou shalt not kill and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" at least a horrible vision of the revolts which will make the streets of the cities and the avenues of the capitals run with blood will make you decide to accomplish the work of the salvation of the public of the world. Do not consent to be the virtual executioners and gravediggers of the generations which are to come.

If our appeal is pathetic and comminatory it is because we have the conviction to express that which the multitudes think, desire and wish.