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THE ELECTION OF CANADA TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS COUNCIL IN 1927

BY F. H. SOWARD

For the political scientist the constitutional position of the Council of the League of Nations offers a thorny problem. In general the Assembly and Council are each empowered to deal "with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world."¹ But in addition the Council is assigned special duties by Articles 6, 7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 16 and 24 of the Covenant and by the Treaties of Versailles, St. Germain, Trianon and Neuilly.² The First Assembly tried to delimit the powers of Assembly and Council but it must be admitted that the report³ presented to the Committee on General Organization by M. Viviani and Mr. Rowell was almost a confession of failure. They rejected comparisons with First and Second Chambers or legislative and executive bodies and added "the truth is that the League offers no analogy in constitutional law." The most recent League publication on the organization of the League contents itself with describing the Council as "a semi-permanent organ of the Assembly."⁴ Undeterred by its anomalous position, however, the Council has steadily grown in prestige and moral authority until election to it is keenly coveted by any state. It is the purpose of this article to trace the steps which led to the election of Canada to the Council at the Eighth Assembly. No finer compliment to the growing importance of Canada in international affairs has yet been paid to our nation, a compliment coming appropriately enough, in the year of our Jubilee of Confederation.

In 1918 most of the statesmen and legalists who drafted various plans for a League of Nations were generally agreed that there must be a special committee or Conference at which the Great Powers would be able to exert their proper influence without irritating interruptions from small states, jealously conscious of their theoretical equality with their mightier conferees. Lord Robert Cecil, in his first and second drafts of a constitution for the League, favoured a Council composed exclusively of the great Powers, and frankly remarked to an American colleague at the Peace Conference that he thought "that the Great Powers must run the League and it was just as well to recognize it flatly at the outset."⁵ As might be expected, General Smuts was more sympathetic to the rights of small nations and in his famous pamphlet, "The League of Nations, A Practical Suggestion,"⁶ proposed that the Council should consist of representatives from the Great Powers and in addition two delegates each from panels of "middle Powers" and "minor States." The Great Powers should have a majority of one.

¹ Article 3, Para. 3 and 4, Para. 4 of the Covenant.

² As in Articles 48 and 213 of the Treaty of Versailles, Article 159 of Treaty of St. Germain, Article 60 of the Treaty of Trianon, Article 104 of the Treaty of Neuilly, Etc.

³ Assembly Document 159/20/48/159/1.

⁴ *The Aims and Organisation of the League of Nations*, p. 23. (The Secretariat, Geneva, 1929).

⁵ David Hunter Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant*. Vol. 1, p. 53. (New York, 1928).

⁶ Miller, *op. cit.* vol. 2, Doc. 5.

The Cecil plan is given in Vol. 2 of Miller, Document 6.

President Wilson, whose first draft of the Covenant entirely omitted any reference to a Council,⁷ was much impressed by Smuts' pamphlet and included the whole of his Council Scheme in the Second Draft of the Covenant.⁸ When the American delegation arrived in Paris, David Hunter Miller discussed with Lord Robert Cecil and Cecil Hurst, the respective plans of the two countries. The result was the famous Hurst-Miller draft⁹ which dropped the Smuts' suggestion and substituted for it a plan for a Council composed of the Great Powers to which any state was to be added when its interests were under discussion. It was also suggested rather vaguely that "the Council may at any time co-opt additional members."

At the first session of the League of Nations Commission it was decided to make the Hurst-Miller draft of the Covenant the basis for discussion,¹⁰ although until the last minute Wilson had intended to use his fourth draft¹¹ which retained the Smuts' plan for the Council. It soon became very clear that the representatives of the smaller states on the Commission¹² would oppose the preferential position of the Council even to the extent of threatening not to join the League if the scheme went through.¹³ As the historian of the Conference has said it, "the problem of 'equality of states' was raised in its acutest form."¹⁴

Lord Robert fought hard for the supremacy of the Great Powers but he had only luke-warm support from President Wilson and both France and Italy showed sympathy with the small nations who presented a united front.¹⁵ He finally surrendered and after long debate it was agreed that the Principal Allied and Associated Powers¹⁶ should hold permanent seats on the Council while there should be four non-permanent members to be selected by the Assembly. It was also agreed that any state should be invited to the Council when matters affecting it were under debate and that the Council might later be enlarged in membership if approved by a majority of the Assembly.¹⁷ Until the Assembly should meet, Belgium, Brazil, Greece and Spain were to act on the Council. The choice of Belgium was an obvious tribute to that country for her war effort and a consolation for her failure to secure Brussels as the seat of the League. Spain was the largest of the neutrals, while Brazil was the largest of the Latin American states. Greece was in good standing through the personal prestige of Venizelos. The presence of Japan on the Council was thought adequate representation for Asia although the American delegation favoured the claims of China.¹⁸

During the debates of the Commission the possibility of the Dominions securing or desiring a Council seat did not seem to have been specifically

⁷ It was first published in Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and the World Settlement*. Vol. 3, Doc. 10. (New York, 1923).

⁸ Miller, op. cit. vol. 2, doc. 7.

⁹ Ibid. Docs. 12 and 13.

¹⁰ The French and Italian governments later presented draft plans (Miller, op. cit. vol. 2, docs. 19/20/21) which were much less complete. The Italians proposed to include in the Council four members elected by all League members.

¹¹ Miller, op. cit. vol. 2, doc. 14.

¹² The smaller states were represented at first by five members and later by nine, as compared to the ten delegates from the five Great Powers.

¹³ C. Howard-Ellis, *The Origin, Structure and Working of the League of Nations*. P. 90 (London, 1928).

¹⁴ H. V. Temperley, *History of the Peace Conference of Paris*. Vol. 2, L. 27 (London, 1920).

¹⁵ Florence Wilson, *The Origins of the League Covenant*, pp. 32-37. (London, 1928).

¹⁶ This is the only place in the Covenant where the phrase is used.

¹⁷ Article 4 of the Covenant, Para. 1 and 2. Professor Rappard thinks it was probably the Neutrals who secured the provision for expanding the Council. Rappard, *The Evolution of the League of Nations, Problems of Peace*, Second Series. P. 9 (London, 1928)

¹⁸ Miller, op. cit. vol. 1, p. 477.

Howard-Ellis, op. cit. p. 139.

discussed. Wilson had opposed their representation at the Peace Conference but once he had given way on that point he did not think it fair to protest at their separate membership in the League.¹⁹

It was only while the Covenant was being put in its final form for the printer that the British delegation discovered a possible Ethiopian in the wood-pile. Lord Robert Cecil pointed out to David Hunter Miller, who was supervising the printing of the English version, that the working of the Covenant as approved by the Commission, only provided for the election of "states" to the Council and did not employ in Article 4 the usual expression "members of the League." Such phraseology, it was feared would bar the Dominions from election to the Council. Mr. Miller tells us in his masterly treatise on the drafting of the Covenant that he felt the use of the word "State" in Article 4 was "a clear and definite limitation,"²⁰ and he did not feel free to change the wording of the Article on his own initiative. He consulted Colonel House who approved of his position and told him that, personally he was opposed to Dominion representation on the Council.²¹ Consequently, in a letter dated April 27, 1919, Mr. Miller refused the British request on the ground that "it was the intention of the Commission to exclude the Dominions and colonies from such representation." President Wilson, in company with Colonel House, supported his view.²² Lord Robert was very much disturbed by this denouement and told Colonel House that "the Dominions felt they were being discriminated against, although they did not expect to be in the Council and did not want to be."²³ President Wilson was so impressed by the feeling of the Dominions that he changed his opinions²⁴ and supported a British memorandum circulated among the delegates requesting approval of the desired change. As a result permission was secured, though at the French insistence the word "state" was retained in Articles 8 and 6.²⁵ The episode left rather a bad impression among the Dominion delegates and led to Sir Robert Borden bestirring himself to secure the famous memorandum from the Big Three on May 6, which unequivocally recognized the right of the Dominions to election to the League Council.²⁶ Only Sir Robert can tell us if at that time he foresaw the day when Canada would present her candidature for the Council to her fellow-members, but in 1919, as at the Imperial War Conference of 1917, Canada's War-Time Prime Minister paved the way for the future growth in importance of his country.

The smaller states did not feel perfectly satisfied with their victory at the Peace Conference and showed at the early sessions of the Assembly, a tendency to watch the Council and the Great Powers very closely. The first President of the Assembly, M. Hymans, of Belgium, was careful to emphasize the equality of states as "one of the features of this Assembly"²⁷ in his closing address. The chief Argentine delegate presented a motion endorsing the principle of the election of all Council mem-

¹⁹ Baker, op. cit. vol. 1, p. 284.

Miller hints (Vol. 1, p. 492) that "probably some of the British representatives" regretted the developments.

²⁰ Miller, op. cit. vol. 1, p. 479.

²¹ Ibid p. 480. House had also opposed a suggestion to make Newfoundland a member of the League. (Miller op. cit. vol. 1, p. 477.)

²² Miller, op. cit. vol. 1, p. 481.

²³ Ibid p. 481.

²⁴ Sir Robert Borden has paid tribute to Wilson's "consistently considerate attitude towards the Dominions" in his "Canada in the Commonwealth." p. 109. (London, 1929).

²⁵ Miller, op. cit. vol. 2, doc. 31.

²⁶ Borden, op. cit. p. 112.

²⁷ Quoted in "The First Assembly of the League of Nations." p. 11. (World Peace Foundation Vol. IV, No. 1, Boston 1921).

bers and, as we have seen, attempts were made to define the powers of Council and Assembly. On the other hand, the Assembly re-elected without serious opposition, the states named at the Peace Conference, as temporary Council members until the Assembly had met, with the single exception of Greece since the fall of Venizelos "devenue pour l'Entente persona ingrata."²⁸ China replaced Greece.²⁹ In the eyes of a French enthusiast for the League the Council remained somewhat akin to the Holy Alliance, "democratic in name but conservative and authoritarian in practice."³⁰

The question of membership in the Council remained a perennial source of difficulty in the Assembly until the explosion of 1926. This was natural since it involved the relations of the Great and Small Powers, the ambitions of middle states to reach the dignity of a permanent seat on the Council³¹ and the jealous desire of the small states to secure a rotation of office on the Council for at least the temporary members. In 1921 the temporary members of the Council were re-elected but an amendment was adopted to Article 4 of the Covenant which gave the Assembly the power to fix by a two-thirds majority the rules "dealing with the election of the non-permanent members of the Council and particularly such regulations as relate to their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility." As amendments require the consent of all Council members this amendment did not come into effect until 1926, owing to its non-ratification till that date by Spain and France.³² The Third Assembly enlarged in 1922, the number of non-permanent members to six, with only Holland dissenting, and did so with the Council prompting the step. This change of heart on the part of the larger powers seems to indicate a realization that the presence of small powers on the Council, especially if they became satellite states, was an aid rather than a hindrance, provided the process did not go too far. Mr. Howard-Ellis, a close observer of Geneva politics suggests that the increase was "due to the Spanish objection to introducing the system of rotation. . . ., to Allied (particularly French unwillingness to drop any of their smaller clients from the Council, to the desire of part of the Assembly to see an "ex-neutral" on the Council and to the craving of the South Americans for more seats."³³ In filling the six temporary seats the Assembly re-elected three of the previous members, dropping China because of her internal difficulties. The new Council members were Czecho-Slovakia, Sweden and Uruguay, the Little Entente thus gaining a spokesman and Latin America asserting its numerical strength. A resolution was also approved unanimously and reiterated in 1923, 1924 and 1925, that in electing temporary members the choice should be made with "due consideration for the main geographical divisions of the world, the great ethnical groups, the different religious traditions, the various types of civilization and the chief sources of wealth."

²⁸ Georges Scelle, *La Société des Nations à Genève—Les Débuts de son Evolution*, Revue Politique et Parlementaire. Vol. 106 (1921) p. 347.

²⁹ Geographic considerations led to the choice of China. Cf. Arnold J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs*, 1926. P. 12. (London, 1928).

³⁰ Georges Scelle, *De Genève à Washington*. Revue Politique et Parlementaire. Vol. 109 (1921) p. 169.

³¹ In 1919 Spain had presented to the Peace Conference a claim to a "special situation" on the Council (Toynbee, op. cit. p. 22) and in 1921 a request for a permanent seat had been endorsed by Britain (*The Seventh Year Book of the League of Nations*. P. 145, World Peace Foundation, Vol. 10. Nos. 2 and 3).

In the same year a Chilean delegate had presented her claim and that of Brazil without success.

³² The Spanish action was due to the failure to receive a permanent seat while France was probably aiding her ally Belgium.

³³ Howard-Ellis, op. cit. p. 140.

From 1922 until 1926 no change took place in the Council membership, although there was considerable dissatisfaction at the lack of rotation of office and the tendency of elected members to cling limpet-like to their positions. The failure of some Council members to ratify the amendment to Article 4 was also the cause of soreness among the smaller states. This feeling was expressed in a resolution presented by a Venezuelan delegate to the Assembly of 1925 and adopted unanimously by it.³⁴ "The Assembly, noting that the non-permanent part of the Council at present in office has been re-elected for a year, considers the meaning of this re-election to be that it is subject to the non-permanent part of the Council being renewed as from the election of 1926 by application of the principle of rotation."³⁵

When the Council called an extraordinary session of the Assembly in March, 1926, to admit Germany to the League the long pent up feelings burst out in a dramatic and unfortunate fashion which involved the League in considerable discredit. Germany had made it clear that, in entering the League, she expected a permanent seat on the Council in virtue of her rank as a Great Power. This was in accordance with Paragraphs One and Two of Article 4 of the Covenant which, as Mr. Toynbee has tersely put it "show clearly that the intention was essentially to assign permanent seats on the Council to the Great Powers, all the Great Powers and none but the Great Powers."³⁶ But middle states like Brazil, Poland and Spain felt that they too, should receive recognition as permanent members of the Council and assiduously cultivated, with considerable success, the good graces of the Great Powers. China joined in the struggle for preferment, on general principles, and the resulting clash of ambitions led to the collapse of the Extraordinary Assembly³⁷ and the temporary postponement of the entrance of Germany into the League. The members of the Council atoned for their sins as much as possible by creating a special committee to recommend changes in the composition of the Council which included delegates from the ten Council members and from Germany, Argentine,³⁸ Poland, China and Switzerland. Ironically enough, in view of his attitude in 1918, it fell to the lot of Lord Cecil to take the lead in drafting a plan for enlarging the Council which it was hoped would meet the claims of Spain, Brazil and Poland. His original plan provided for an increase of non-permanent Council members to nine. These should serve three years, one-third retiring each year. A retiring member might stand for re-election if he secured a two-thirds majority of re-eligibility from the Assembly but not more than three members of the Council could receive the privilege at any one time. It was understood that election should still further recognize geographical and other considerations and that three of the nine seats should be the perquisite of Latin America.³⁹

The Committee had not openly rejected the creation of permanent seats for the middle powers in their discussions but it was obvious that they did not intend to satisfy the desires of these states. Accordingly Spain and Brazil gave during the summer the necessary two years' notice

³⁴ Spain did not vote.

³⁵ *Journal of the Sixth Session of the Assembly*, Saturday, September 26th, 1925.

³⁶ Toynbee, op. cit. P. 10.

³⁷ Good accounts of this controversy are to be found in Toynbee, op. cit. Part 1A, Sect. 1; *The Seventh Year Book of the League of Nations*. Op. cit. and William E. Rappard, *Germany at Geneva, Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 4 (New York, 1926).

³⁸ The selection of Argentine, absent from Assembly since 1920, was significant and was probably meant as a reproach to Brazil.

³⁹ Report of the First Session of the Committee on the composition of the Council. (League of Nations Document C. 299. M. 139, 1926, V.)

of withdrawal from the League, the most convincing proof of their dissatisfaction.⁴⁰ Before leaving Spain ratified the amendment to Article 4 previously referred to.⁴¹ As France had also done so a short time before, the way was clear for the Assembly to act as it wished on the composition of the Council. In the second session of the Committee it was definitely stated that only Germany was to receive a permanent seat at the September Assembly.

The Seventh Assembly adopted the recommendations of the Committee with one important addition, though some of the states sharply questioned the wisdom of increasing the number of Council and pointed out that the withdrawal of Spain and Brazil had removed the principal motive for creating extra seats. There were complaints that the Council was "railroading" the measure through and the usual utopian desire that the invidious distinction between permanent and non-permanent seats should be abolished.⁴²

The important addition to the scheme was a clause, which Lord Cecil had favoured in the Committee, giving the Assembly the right at any time to decide by a two-thirds majority to proceed to a new election of all the non-permanent members. This provision makes impossible in future the repetition of the procedure by which Brazil had held up the March Assembly. For the first elections it was necessary that only three states should secure a full three year term, and that three should receive a two year term and three a one year term to bring the scheme into proper working.

The elections were extremely interesting and keenly contested. No less than seventeen states were voted upon for the nine seats, four from Latin America,⁴³ three from Asia, nine from Europe and two from British Dominions, the Irish Free State and Canada. Canada had not been a candidate but was given two complimentary votes. Sir George Foster, in a speech to the Assembly the day before the elections, was careful to emphasize the fact that "Canada was making no claim for a seat on the Council but she considered it pertinent to point out that she had equal rights to representation on the Council with all the other fifty-six members of the League."⁴⁴ The Irish candidature was unexpected and was said to have been launched without instructions from Dublin.⁴⁵ A French writer claims that it was displeasing to Sir Austen Chamberlain which would not have been entirely surprising.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Ireland secured ten votes ranking thirteenth on the list. The successful members were Poland,⁴⁷ Rumania and Chile for three years, Holland, Colombia and China for two years, Belgium, Salvador and Czecho-Slovakia for one year.

⁴⁰ Spain withdrew her resignation in 1928 and was elected to the Council at the Ninth Assembly receiving also a certificate of re-eligibility.

⁴¹ See above p. 32.

⁴² Professor Rappard makes the interesting suggestion that all Council members should be elected with a number of candidates equal to the number of the Great Powers considered to be indefinitely re-eligible.

Cf. Rappard, "*The Evolution of the League of Nations.*" Op. cit. p. 16.

⁴³ There was some dissension among the Latin American States at their usual Caucus before the election. Cf. The Communication from the Uruguayan Delegation, read to the Assembly after the Council elections.

Journal of the Seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly, September 17, 1926.

⁴⁴ *Journal of the Seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly*, September 18, 1926.

⁴⁵ Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Conduct of British Empire Foreign Relations since the Peace Settlement*. P. 58. (London 1928) quoting the Times of Sept. 17, 1926.

⁴⁶ Georges Scelle, *Le Bilan de la Septième Assemblée de la Société des Nations*. Revue Politique et Parlementaire. Vol. 120, (1926), p. 81.

⁴⁷ Poland was also given a declaration of re-eligibility, obviously as a recompense for not receiving a permanent seat.

When the Ninth Assembly held its Council elections in 1927, the elections were now on a normal basis as only three candidates were to be chosen, each to receive a three year term. The elections were marked by three features, the refusal to give Belgium the right to stand for re-election under the re-eligibility clause, the election of three states never before on the Council and the successful candidature of Canada.

Belgium had served on the Council since the very beginning, was a Locarno Power and persona gratissima with the Great Powers, who backed her request for a declaration of re-eligibility at the Seventh Assembly.⁴⁸ It was thought that she was certain of re-election⁴⁹ but when the vote was taken she received twenty-nine votes out of forty-eight cast, thus failing by three votes. The defeat was generally considered to have been meant as a vindication of the principle of rotation and as a rebuff to the influence of the Great Powers who, as it will be remembered, were rather in disgrace at the Assembly because of their "hotel conversations."⁵⁰ The selection of three new members was a further indication of the determination of the Assembly to escape from the old habit of leaving the positions of prestige to a favoured few, even though it involved a temporary sacrifice of efficiency.

The election of Canada was far from being a "walk-over" and deserves careful examination. Besides Belgium, whose elimination undoubtedly released votes for the election from which Canada would benefit with the others, several states were in the running. The Persian delegates planned to make the attempt as they had done in 1926, but the presence of China on the Council was an obstacle to their ambitions and they withdrew from the race, contenting themselves with reading a formal statement before the election explaining why Persia should be on the Council.⁵¹ Both Portugal and Finland were again contesting the elections and Finland had the support of the Scandanavian bloc and was respected because of her stability and rejection of Soviet overtures.⁵² The candidature of Portugal was not so important in view of the instability of the government of that country. The most formidable contestant was Cuba who was certain to secure one of the three seats in view of the unwritten agreement that there should be three Latin American seats in the Council.⁵³

Her leading delegate M. Aguero y Bethancourt was known in Geneva as the "Great Elector" "in view of his activities in the lobbies in rounding up the Latin American vote."⁵⁴ The last serious contestant was Greece represented by Nicholas Politis, an able international lawyer who worked with M. Benes in drafting the Protocol of Geneva of 1924 and was Ambas-

⁴⁸ She had been elected for a one year term in 1926. All observers agree that the Great Powers supported her.

⁴⁹ According to the Times Special Correspondent, one of her delegates claimed she was promised 38 votes.

⁵⁰ Nansen was said to have lead the opposition to Belgium. Cf. *The Times Weekly Edition*, Sept. 22, 1927.

⁵¹ *The Times Weekly Edition*, September 22, 1927. Persia was elected to the Council in 1928 when China had to step down.

⁵² This is the view of Georges Scelle. Cf. *La Huitième Assemblée de la Société des Nations*, *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, Vol. 133, 1927, p. 102.

⁵³ It is difficult to understand the Latin American influence at Geneva in view of their general attitude and when so many of these states do not attend Geneva. In 1927, for example, 12 were present and 5 absent.

Cf. Percy Alvin, *Latin America and the League of Nations*, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 20, (1926); Don Augustin Edwards (Of Chile), "*Latin America and the League of Nations*," *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, March 1929; Howard-Ellis, *op. cit.* pp. 104, 105, 133.

⁵⁴ Howard-Ellis, *op. cit.* p. 150.

It was charged that in 1926, Cuba had not stood for election because of opposition from the United States, but this was denied. Cf. *Cuba and the Platt Amendment*, *Foreign Policy Information Service*, April 17, 1929. Vol. 5, No. 3, p. 61 ff.

sador of Greece at Paris. He was in close touch with the Little Entente and in favour with France but he seems to have spoiled his chances by being over-eager for the favour of the Great Powers. His speech in the Assembly, in which he modified considerably his enthusiasm for the Protocol as feasible in the near future, was resented by several delegates to judge from the criticism it received in the speeches of orators who followed him.

The Canadian candidature was not the subject of popular interest or demand in Canada before our delegates left for Geneva. Not even the most ardent nationalist had urged that Canada should so demonstrate her increased importance in world affairs. The Ottawa correspondent of the Times hints that the candidature was due to the initiative of French-Canadian members of the Cabinet and this would seem quite possible in view of the activities of Senator Dandurand and M. Lapointe.⁵⁵ According to Sir Herbert Ames, Senator Dandurand did not have the authorization of the Canadian government prior to his arrival in Geneva.⁵⁶ Shortly after his arrival he was visited by M. Lange of Norway who urged that Canada should contest the elections and stated that he thought the Scandinavian states and Germany would probably vote for her.⁵⁷

When Senator Dandurand arrived at his hotel he found there instructions from Ottawa to make an attempt to secure the election of Canada, if he thought conditions were favourable. His first step was to secure the consent and support of the British Empire delegates which was readily afforded in the hope that Canada might blaze a way for the others.⁵⁸ The Canadian delegation made no attempt to bargain for votes.⁵⁹ and had the satisfaction of seeing Canada secure third place in the elections. In the voting Cuba secured forty votes, Finland thirty-three, and Canada twenty-six, twenty-five votes being required to secure a majority. Greece was given twenty-three votes and Portugal sixteen while scattered votes went to Uruguay, Denmark, Siam, Switzerland and Hayti.

What are the factors which led to the election of Canada? For it should be remembered that Canada secured a seat at the expense of a European candidate⁶⁰ and had to face the natural dislike of Continentals of seeing two representatives from the same Empire sitting on the Council. It should not be forgotten as well, that Sir Austen Chamberlain, while respected, was not loved in Geneva after his famous speech of September 11th which killed the hopes of reviving the Protocol. Much of what is said here in explanation is based upon surmise⁶¹ and comment in Geneva and European capitals at the time, but it should be noted.

⁵⁵ The Times, Sept. 15, 1927. Mr. Toynbee is rather critical of the Government for its action in this connection.

Cf. *The Conduct of the British Empire Foreign Relations since the Peace Settlement*. P. 60.

⁵⁶ Sir Herbert Ames, *Canada and the Council*, The Bulletin of the League of Nations Society in Canada. January 1928. P. 5. Sir Herbert was treasurer of the League of Nations from 1919 to 1926, a delegate from Canada to the League Assembly in 1926 and in close touch with the Canadian delegation in 1927. He says that several states urged Canada to stand for election in 1926 and that the Canadian delegation reported favourably upon this suggestion when they returned to Ottawa.

⁵⁷ This would mean seven or eight votes. The writer was informed of this by Sir Herbert Ames. Senator Dandurand has since informed me that M. Lange's overtures came after his speech in the Assembly which pleased the Scandinavians by its liberal attitude towards the Geneva Protocol.

⁵⁸ There are contrary views as to the attitude of Sir Austen Chamberlain. The Times Correspondent says he welcomed the election "whole heartedly". (Times Weekly Edition, September 22nd, 1927). But M. Pinon in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Vol. 141 (1927) p. 715 declares that Sir Austen was not keen on the proposal.

⁵⁹ Ames, op. cit. p. 5.

⁶⁰ Mr. Toynbee suggests in his "*Conduct of British Empire Foreign Relations since the Peace Settlement*" pp. 59-60, that Canada was competing against Cuba for an American seat on the Council but this can hardly be the case as these seats were regarded as Latin American seats and Canada had never worked with these states.

⁶¹ The writer has had conversations and correspondence with members of the League Secretariat upon this point but the name of his informants, for obvious reasons, cannot be quoted.

Without question, the personality of Senator Dandurand was a factor which materially assisted towards our success. One French observer went so far as to attribute it almost entirely to him.⁶² A delegate to three Assemblies, the only British delegate who has been elected President of the Assembly (1925), a master of both English and French, he was well-known and liked in Geneva. At the opening of the Assembly Senator Dandurand had been elected Chairman of the Second Committee and was consequently well in the public eye. His speech to the Assembly on September 12th was described by Mr. Wickham Steed as "the most helpful British speech yet delivered,"⁶³ and pleased the delegates by its liberal tone in contrast to the cautious admonitions of Sir Austen. Senator Dandurand showed a much more generous attitude towards arbitration and the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice than did the British Foreign Secretary and also made an important reference to minorities that did not pass unnoticed among the ex-enemy states. After emphasizing the difficulty of the problem and his own position as a member of a minority, Senator Dandurand declared "it was the highest expression of civilization for a government to make a minority forget that it was a minority."⁶⁴ *The Frankfurter Zeitung*, in commenting on the Council elections declared that Canada owed her election to this recognition of the minorities problem.⁶⁵

It is believed that the contrast between the British and Canadian speeches at the Assembly induced some delegates to vote for the election of Canada in the impish hope that her presence on the Council might embarrass British policy and in the belief that it might heighten the interest of the Dominions in international problems. Canada was also valued as a "neutral" state which could play a valuable part on the Council by increasing the scanty number of states whose impartiality in European affairs was obviously more possible than for those continental members with embarrassing commitments. With no grievances for which she sought redress, with no lost subjects to plead for, with no boundary dispute to cause a guilty conscience or a troubled spirit, Canada could be expected to furnish delegates who could act as rapporteurs on controversial problems for which it is customary to choose a rapporteur who is free from bias as far as possible. Her stable government was also a factor in her favour that should not be overlooked. Lastly, Canada was naturally recognized to be in close touch with the United States and in sympathy with some of the motives underlying American policy.⁶⁶ With the aid of her Embassy at Washington she could act as a liaison officer between Washington and Geneva and "interpret" the American point of view as in the past she has done at the Imperial Conferences. Thus the *Manchester Guardian* said that the election of Canada expressed the desire of the Assembly to choose a "North American Anglo-Saxon country" which could be "a direct mouth-piece of the Great Republic that holds so obstinately aloof."⁶⁷

⁶² Pierre de Querielle *L'Esprit International à Genève, Le Correspondant*. Vol. 309 (1927) p. 199.

⁶³ *The Observer*, September 18, 1927.

⁶⁴ *Journal of the Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly*. Tuesday, September 13, 1927.

⁶⁵ Quoted in the Round Table, *Germany and Geneva*. Vol. 18 (1927-1928) p. 16.

Senator Dandurand has since shown his sincerity on this question by bringing the position of minorities before the Council in March 1929 and offering concrete suggestions for improvement.

⁶⁶ C. f. *The Canadian position on Article 10 of the Covenant*.

⁶⁷ *The Manchester Guardian Weekly* September 23, 1927.

The success of Canada was generally received favourably throughout Europe and the Empire⁶⁸ and was almost universally regarded as a clear-cut recognition by the rest of the world of the changed position of the Dominions as defined at the last Imperial Conference. As the Canadian Prime Minister said, "it showed a definite recognition of Canada's individuality as a nation."⁶⁹

In Paris, M. René Pinon, the political editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, thought that in general, Canada would side with Great Britain on League issues but would not hesitate to take an independent line on some questions.⁷⁰ H. Wilson Harris in a special article contributed to the liberal weekly, *L'Europe Nouvelle*, summed up his conclusions in the statement, "She (Canada) is far enough away geographically to have the point of view of a deliberate observer, she is near enough spiritually to view European problems sympathetically."⁷¹ It is true that M. Georges Scelle was dissatisfied, since he feared that Canada would reinforce "the Anglo-Saxon influence exercised at present for obstruction" but he consoled himself with the reflection that it might pave the way for "an entire rapprochement with the United States."⁷²

Canada has still (May, 1929) almost fifteen months of service on the Council and we should watch with interest her future policies at League conferences. Since the election there have been indications of our wider appreciation of the honour paid us. The presence of the Canadian Prime Minister at the Eighth Assembly with a notably strong delegation and the speech he delivered during its debates were good auguries for the future. The announcement during the debates in Ottawa on the Peace Pact of Paris, that the Canadian government has circularised the other members of the British Commonwealth regarding the adherence of Canada to the optional clause of the statutes of the Permanent Court of International Justice was another straw in the wind.⁷³ The recent advocacy of the cause of Minorities at the March Council meeting was also significant. We are coming of age in international affairs and may be expected to play an increasingly important role in the struggle for peace and co-operation.

⁶⁸ The *Spectator*, Vol. 139 (1927) p. 142, devoted a leader to it and *L'Europe Nouvelle* secured a special article from H. Wilson Harris, the English journalist and League enthusiast, for its issue of September 24, 1927.

The *New York Times* of September 16th published a special article by Wythe Williams.

⁶⁹ Mr. MacKenzie King's statement to the Press, September 19, 1927. In his statement the Prime Minister quoted as "especially pleasing and noteworthy" the remark of the *London Times*, "There could have been no more emphatic international affirmation of that historical definition of British Imperial relations which was given at the last Imperial Conference."

⁷⁰ René Pinon, *Chronique de la Quinzaine*, *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Vol. 141, (1927) p. 715.

⁷¹ H. Wilson Harris, *Le Canada au Conseil de la Société des Nations*, *L'Europe Nouvelle*, September 27, 1927.

⁷² Georges Scelle, *La Huitième Assemblée de la Société des Nations*, *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, Vol 133 (1927) p. 103.

⁷³ *House of Commons Debates*, February 19th, 1929.