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Extracts from a report by Michael MacWhite on the 33rd Session
of the Council of the League of Nations, with cover letter by MacWhite
(M.L. 02/027)

Geneva, 17 March 1925

A Chara,

I enclose you herewith a short memorandum on the work of the 33rd. Session of the Council of the League of Nations. From what transpired there, it would seem that the British are about to turn their back on the League and the fact that they have already agreed to assist at another disarmament Conference in Washington would lend colour to the idea. The Washington Conference is being called because the Geneva Protocol has been rejected and, consequently, the Conference which was proposed to take place next June under the auspices of the League of Nations for the purpose of limiting armaments has been indefinitely postponed.

Is mise, le meas,

[signed] M. MacWhite
[enclosure]

MEMORANDUM ON THE WORK OF THE 33rd. SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The 33rd. Session of the Council of the League of Nations was opened at Geneva on the 9th. March under circumstances which may be described as dramatic from the standpoint of the Peace of Europe. If we leave aside some questions of a technical nature, its deliberations circled round the cardinal problem of European politics or, in other words, the question of the relations between France and Germany.

The political, moral and economic stability of Europe, and perhaps of the whole world, depends on the possibility of finding effective guarantees of peace. The solution of the problem of reparations was so far the biggest contribution in this respect. The regulation of the commercial relations between France and Germany, even though it be only of a provisional character, has produced a sensible reaction, but it is evident that nothing durable or lasting can be achieved before France has obtained guarantees of her security, which will satisfy French public opinion. This is the kernel of the whole question. In order to achieve this result, three methods of unequal value may be employed. The first is the disarmament of Germany, the second a pact of a limited nature such as the Germans themselves have proposed and the third a general pact of the nature of the Protocol of Geneva.

[matter omitted]

The British declaration rejecting the Protocol, which was read by Mr. Chamberlain made a very bad impression. For the Representatives of the Middle European States who were present, it felt like the pronouncement of a death sentence. It was not couched in diplomatic language and the reference to the League attempting to regulate questions for which it had 'neither capacity nor competence' lead those present to believe that the moment has arrived when the League is considered by Great Britain to be more embarrassing than serviceable to her interests. As long as the League never questioned British policy and accepted without demur British proposals it was lauded to the skies, but now that many of its Members no longer see eye to eye with Britain and take the opportunity of voting against her as at the Opium Conference, it must be made to pay the price and be paraded before the world as a thing of no importance. When Mr. Chamberlain, in winding up his speech, stated that he was not in possession of the views of the Irish Free State on the question of the Protocol, there was a general murmur and everybody looked in my direction. The presumption was that the Saorstát Government held different views and the impression created was very favourable so far as we are concerned.

[matter omitted]

[signed] M.[ichael] MacWhite

