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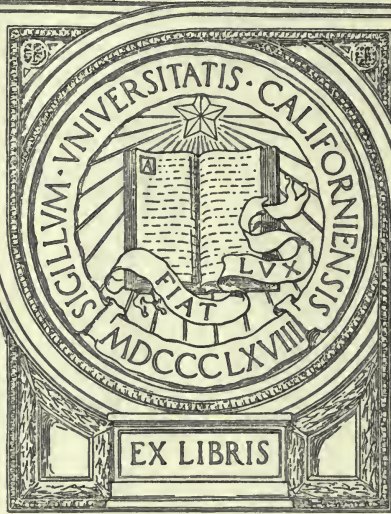
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A B C's  
of  
LEAGUE of NATIONS

by PROF. PITMAN E. POTTER

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LEAGUE OF NATIONS ASSOCIATION  
105 West Monroe St.  
Chicago, Ill.

PRICE FIVE CENTS

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## A B C'S OF LEAGUE OF NATIONS

### 1. *What nations were the original members?*

*Answer:* Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, British Empire, Canada, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Italy, Japan, Liberia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Siam, South Africa, Uruguay.

### 2. *What nations became members by invitation and voluntary accession?*

*Answer:* Argentine Republic, Chile, Columbia, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Persia, Salvador, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Venezuela.

### 3. *What nations became Members by application and election by the Assembly?*

*Answer:* Abyssinia, Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Esthonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Irish Free State, Latvia, Lithunia, Luxemburg.

### 4. *What nations have withdrawn from membership?*

*Answer:* Costa Rica and Brazil.

*NOTE:* Argentina, contrary to the impression held in certain quarters, never withdrew from the League. Brazil and Spain gave notice in June, 1926, that they would withdraw, under the terms of the Covenant, in June, 1928; later Spain gave notice that she would remain a member.

### 5. *What nations are not members?*

*Answer:* Afghanistan, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, Iceland, Mexico, Morocco, Russia, Turkey, United States.

6. What are the present relations between the United States and the League?

*Answer:* The United States participates, both unofficially and officially, in many League activities such as disarmament, drug traffic, economic relations, health, et cetera.

*NOTE:* Germany, before she became a member, likewise participated extensively in League activities. Russia and Turkey also now participate in certain League activities.

7. What new Members are in prospect?

*Answer:* Membership for Egypt, Iraq (now a mandated Territory), Mexico, and Turkey has been given serious official discussion.

#### OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS

1. Whence arise the obligations of Members of the League to one another?

- Answer:* (A) From the Covenant of the League.  
(B) From treaties signed by the Members among themselves.  
(C) From the rules of international law.

2. What are the principal obligations assumed in the Covenant?

- Answer:* (A) To cooperate toward disarmament.  
(B) To respect one another's territory and independence.  
(C) To refrain from war within certain limits.  
(D) To submit all disputes to adjudication, arbitration or conciliation.  
(E) To obey international judicial decisions against themselves.  
(F) To accord certain treatment to labor and to backward peoples; to cooperate in matters of communications and transit and in health matters.

(g) To cooperate to suppress traffic in arms and munitions, in women and children, and in dangerous drugs.

NOTE: Various obligations provided in the Covenant for cooperation in coercive action in the name of the League have now come to be regarded as unworkable and unnecessary; while not formally rescinded they have been tacitly held to be inoperative.

3. *What obligations are assumed by the Members by treaty agreements?*

Answer: Apart from ordinary treaties among themselves regarding all matters of common international interest (commerce, extradition, etc.) League Members have signed many treaties and conventions under League auspices relating to the matters indicated under 2, d-g, above and also such matters as: traffic in obscene publications; intellectual cooperation; industry, trade and finance; social welfare.

4. *What obligations rest upon the Members under general international law?*

Answer: All the common obligations connected with jurisdiction over territory, persons, and property, including obligations incident to the protection of aliens and diplomatic and consular intercourse.

NOTE: Members of the League, acting through committees of experts and conferences, are now engaged in codifying the rules of common international law on all these matters.

5. *How are the obligations of Members enforceable?*

Answer: By the ordinary methods of diplomatic protest and negotiation, and by increasing resort to conciliation and judicial settlement; the employment of armed force by individual Member states is being increasingly discarded and restricted by formal agreement; voluntary cooperation and the exchange of mutual advantages has come to be the principal factors which insure satisfaction of rights and obligations among the Member states.

## THE COUNCIL

### 1. *What is the Council of the League of Nations?*

*Answer:* It is a body of fourteen persons appointed by certain nations which are entitled to be represented on that body.

### 2. *What nations are entitled to be permanently represented on the Council?*

*Answer:* France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy and Japan are entitled to be represented on the Council at all times.

*NOTE:* Nonpermanent members of the Council are selected by the Assembly of the League annually, one-third retiring each year.

### 3. *Are any other nations or organizations represented on the Council?*

*Answer:* Various nations and organizations, from within the League and from outside its ranks, are invited, at every Council meeting, to attend and participate in discussions, such as: Australia, Bulgaria, Free City of Danzig, Greece, Hungary, etc.; International Health Committee, Committee on Traffic in Women and Children, International Labor Office, etc.

*NOTE:* Inasmuch as action is not taken in the Council so much by voting as by discussion and general agreement this proceeding proves not only practicable but very valuable.

### 4. *How is the Council organized?*

*Answer:* Each Member holds the office of President for three months, in alphabetical order; the Secretary-General of the League acts as Secretary; special committees are created from time to time, as the need arises, to deal with various subjects.



5. *What does the Council do?*

*Answer:* (A) It meets four times a year for meetings averaging a week in duration.

(B) It supervises the routine administrative and financial operations of the League, including the Secretariat and Assembly and (less intimately) the International Labor Office and the Permanent Court of International Justice.

(C) It promotes the holding of conferences and the study of various international problems by Secretariat, Assembly, and special conferences and commissions.

(D) It attempts to find acceptable conciliatory settlements in international disputes among the nations both inside and outside the League.

(E) It coordinates the activities of all League organs.

#### THE ASSEMBLY

1. *What is the Assembly of the League of Nations?*

*Answer:* The Assembly is a body consisting of delegates appointed by the Governments of the States Members of the League, each Member appointing three delegates.

NOTE: There is no reason why delegates should not be elected by popular vote in Member states, but this has nowhere been done, and diplomats, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and Prime Ministers have usually been appointed; a few women are appointed by various Governments.

2. *How is the Assembly organized?*

*Answer:* The President of the Council presides at the opening of the Assembly; the Assembly then elects its own President and six Vice-Presidents. These seven together, with six ex-officio Vice-Presidents who are of the Assembly; six of the Vice-Presidents serve as Chairmen of the six standing committees of the Assembly (Constitutional Ques-

tions; Technical Organizations; Armaments; Budget and Administration; Social Problems; Political Questions); special committees and sub-committees are created from time to time. The Secretary-General of the League acts as Secretary of the Assembly.

### 3. *What does the Assembly do?*

*Answer:* The Assembly meets annually in September, or oftener on special call, each session being designated as a separate Assembly (the Tenth Assembly met in 1929; a Special Assembly met in 1926); at its sessions the Assembly exercises such powers as it possesses, as stated below.

### 4. *What are the powers of the Assembly?*

*Answer:* Either by express provision of the Covenant or by interpretation and usage the Assembly has power to direct and supervise the work of the Council and Secretariat of the League, to elect new members of the League and the elective members of the Council, as well as to share with the Council in the election of members of the Permanent Court of International Justice, and to propose amendments to the League Covenant. It also passes upon the League budget, formulates League policy and principle, and considers "any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world." On most of these matters the Assembly passes resolutions which depend for their effectiveness on the response made by other League organs and by League Members.

### 5. *What is the position of the Assembly in the League?*

*Answer:* The Assembly has come to occupy the dominant position among League organs, directing and supervising the activities of other organs except insofar as the latter are expressly given certain powers by the Covenant; it enjoys greater political and moral prestige than any other organ, constituting as it does, the representative forum of the nations of the world which are Members of the League.

## THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

### 1. *What is the Permanent Court of International Justice?*

*Answer:* A body of eleven men of eleven different nationalities but all of whom are expert jurists and who act not as the agents of any government but as individuals.

### 2. *How is the Court related to the League?*

*Answer:* The Court was established in 1921 by the action of the Members of the League in adopting a Statute which had been drafted by a Commission of Jurists acting under auspices of the Council and Assembly (the Statute may now be adopted by non-Members); the judges are elected by representatives to the Council and Assembly; the Court sits at The Hague (the political departments of the League are at Geneva) and acts in entire independence.

### 3. *What powers has the Court?*

*Answer:* Power to formulate its own rules of procedure; power to decide international disputes submitted to it by voluntary agreement of the parties; power to reply to requests from Council and Assembly for advisory opinions upon questions of international law or treaty agreement.

**NOTE:** Over thirty nations have by agreement committed themselves in advance to submission of international disputes to the Court whenever such disputes shall arise; even in such cases the Court has no power of bringing the defendant nation to bar.

### 4. *What has the Court done so far?*

*Answer:* The Court has met annually and in special sessions during the past eight years and rendered numerous decisions and opinions in legal questions, a few of which have been closely connected with critical political controversies among League Members; its decisions have been accepted in all cases.

5. *What are the relations between the United States and the Court?*

*Answer:* The United States was invited to adopt the Statute and thus become a sustaining Member of the Court; Presidents Harding and Coolidge advocated such action; the Senate voted, 76 to 17, in favor of such action, subject to certain conditions; the Members of the Court met in conference and replied to those conditions; President Coolidge held that the reply or replies did not meet all of the conditions. In the Spring of 1929, Elihu Root went to Europe and together with Sir Cecil Hurst worked out a plan known as the Root-Hurst Formula, which it is thought will furnish a satisfactory door through which the United States will soon enter the Court.

#### THE SECRETARIAT

1. *What is the Secretariat of the League of Nations?*

*Answer:* The Secretariat of the League is a corps of some five hundred persons of all nationalities headed by the Secretary-General, Sir Eric Drummond.

2. *How are the persons in the Secretariat selected?*

*Answer:* The Secretary-General was selected by the Peace Conference of Paris in 1919; the remainder have been selected by the Secretary-General with the approval of the Council.

3. *How is the Secretariat organized?*

*Answer:* The Secretariat is divided into three main divisions called the Divisions of General Organization, Internal Services and Special Organizations; in the first are included the offices of the Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, and three Under Secretaries-General, the

Treasurer's office, the office of Internal Administration, and the Political, Information, and International Bureaus Sections, the first two of which are under two Under Secretaries; in the second are included such services as typing, supplies, translating, drafting, editing, library, accounting, and so on (fifteen subdivisions); in the third are the Latin American Bureau and the London and Paris offices, as well as the following sections; Administrative Commissions and Minorities, Economics and Finance, Mandates, Transit and Communications, Health, Social Questions, and Disarmament.

4. *What are the functions of the Secretariat?*

*Answer:* To collect information upon all subjects treated by the Council and Assembly of the League; to assist these organs in securing voluntary cooperation by League Members on various matters; to prepare for the sessions, and to carry out decisions of the Council and Assembly.

5. *What is the position of the Secretariat in the League?*

*Answer:* The Secretariat is the servant of the Council and Assembly; it is continuously in operation as they are not; it is not concerned with problems of policy as they are but with non-political administration; it is the most stable and generally serviceable branch of the League.

## THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION

1. *What is the International Labor Organization?*

*Answer:* The International Labor Organization consists of Member States, a General Conference, a Governing Body, the International Labor Office, and a Commission of Inquiry, which correspond roughly to the Members, Assembly, Council, Secretariat, and Court of the League.

2. *How is the International Labor Organization related to the League?*

*Answer:* The International Labor Organization was created by Part XIII of the Treaty of Versailles; its Member States are the Members of the League; its budget forms part of the League budget; it acts independently of, but in cooperation with, the League; international labor disputes may be submitted to the League Court by any Member of the International Labor Organization.

3. *What powers has the International Labor Organization?*

*Answer:* The International Labor Conference of one employer, one employee, and two government delegates from each of the Member States may draft conventions for submission to Member States; the Governing Body may prepare the work of the Conference and supervise the activities of the International Labor Office; the International Labor Office may study international labor problems for the Member States and the Conference and take appropriate steps to secure acceptance and execution by Members of conventions drafted by the Conference; the Commission of Inquiry may consider any international labor dispute referred to it by the Governing Body on the complaint of a Member State.

4. *What has the International Labor Organization done?*

*Answer:* Numerous labor conventions and recommendations have been drafted by the Conference and submitted to Member States; many valuable studies of labor problems have been made by the Labor Office and reported in periodical publications along with much valuable data concerning labor conditions throughout the world; various labor disputes have been adjusted through the efforts of the Labor Office and a few such disputes have been referred to the World Court.

5. *What have been the relations between the United States and the Labor Organization?*

*Answer:* Mr. Samuel Gompers was largely responsible for the creation of the Labor Organization; there was great hostility to American membership in the Senate and we have never joined; American labor has manifested a friendly attitude toward the Organization in many of its activities and individual Americans have taken part frequently therein; the Organization maintains an office in Washington.

### SPECIAL ORGANIZATIONS OF THE LEAGUE

1. *What are these so-called "Special Organizations?"*

*Answer:* They include three technical organizations, six permanent advisory commissions, and certain temporary preparatory committees for conferences on various subjects.

2. *What are the technical organizations?*

*Answer:* The Health Organization, which consists of a Health Committee and numerous technical sub-committees, conferences and missions, and which cooperates with the International Office of Public Hygiene in Paris; the Economics and Finance Organization, which consists of two Committees (Economics; Finance), each having numerous sub-committees (on Unfair Competition, Double Taxation, etc.); and the Communications and Transit Organization, which consists of an Advisory and Technical Committee and numerous sub-committees (Railways, Electrical Questions, Tonnage Measurement, etc.).

While the United States government cooperates officially and wholeheartedly with the Health Section activities of the League, it is private American philanthropy which pays to a large extent the Section's expenses. The Rockefeller Foundation has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars besides underwriting the famous Singapore Epidemiological Base.

3. *What are the advisory commissions?*

*Answer:* The Permanent Mandates Commission, the Permanent Advisory Commission on Disarmament, the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs, the Traffic in Women and Children Committee, the Child Welfare Committee, and the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation.

4. *What are the preparatory committees?*

*Answer:* These have recently included the Preparatory Committee for the General Economic Conference, the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, the Committee of Experts for the Progressive Codification of International Law and the Preparatory Committee for the First Codification Conference, the Preparatory Press Experts' Committee for the Conference of Press Experts and others.

5. *How are these organizations constituted and what are their functions?*

*Answer:* These organizations have been set up by the Council, acting on provisions of the Covenant or proposals from the Assembly or Member States; the personnel of these bodies is selected in part by the Council and in part by national Governments; the functions of these organizations are to study the problems of international relations to which their names refer, in cooperation with the Secretariat, to advise the Council and Assembly and the Member States, and (in the case of conferences held in connection with all three types of organization) to draft conventions for signature and ratification by national Governments.

## ACTIVITIES OF THE LEAGUE

1. *What subject matters lie within the scope of League activity?*

*Answer:* Any matter affecting the peace of the world; that is, all phases of international relations, economic,



political, or legal, such as commercial and humanitarian problems where no national policies are involved, disputes over questions of conflicting policy not regulated by international law, and international legal questions.

2. *What methods are employed in treating such questions?*

*Answer:* Investigation, collection and publication of information upon all varieties of problems in international relations by the Secretariat, Labor Office, and Commissions; consideration, recommendation and discussion of projected international agreements or conventions by the same bodies and finally in international conferences, including the Assembly and Labor Conference; agreement among the interested parties on such projects or in the settlement of international political disputes in conference, Assembly, or Council; adjudication of legal questions by the Court; execution or administration of such agreements, including internal financial administration and also including field work such as famine relief by the Secretariat, Labor Office, and Commissions and their field services.

3. *What results are attained in these various activities?*

*Answer:* Publication of much information useful to students of international affairs and to national Governments; settlement of numerous political and legal questions or disputes among Member States; conclusion of many treaties which then serve as bases on which international relations rest in the future; actual conduct of, or aid to those engaged in, world intercourse (health work; aerial navigation).

4. *In these activities what are the relations existing among League organs?*

*Answer:* The Assembly outlines the general principles and policies of League activity and supervises the activities of the Council and Secretariat and the internal constitutional development of the League as a whole (election of Members, amendments to Covenant); the Council prepares

for Assembly meetings, carries out Assembly resolutions, supervises the Secretariat, and watches over all League interests between Assembly meetings; the Secretariat prepares for Council and Assembly meetings, carries out Assembly and Council resolutions, and watches over all the interests of the League between Council meetings; the Court and the Labor Organization carry on their activities independently, as already described.

*5. What degree of discretion or authority of its own over Member states has the League or any of its organs in these activities?*

*Answer:* Little or none; the great effectiveness of all the activities of the organs of the League depends upon voluntary support by the Members; in a few cases Members have by voluntary agreement given such authority to the Court or the Council or Secretariat.

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