NOTES OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN MR. HENDERSON and M. BENES, HELD AT GENEVA ON Sunday, APRIL 14th 1935, at 3 p.m.

PRESENT: MR. HENDERSON, M. BENES, M. ACHNIDES and MR. PALMER.

Mr. Henderson said he had come to Geneva to be present at the first reading of the Report which was to be adopted on the following day by the Committee on the Trade in and Private and State Manufacture of Arms, and to consider the general situation of the Conference in the light of the information which he would receive from the representatives of the United Kingdom, France and Italy as to the results of the Conference at Stresa. He invited M. Bénès to express his views as to the effect of recent events at Stresa and elsewhere on the immediate future proceedings of the Conference.

M. Bénès, although he doubted the prospects of making any immediate progress towards immediate disarmament, considered that it would be a mistake even to contemplate measures for closing the Conference. So long as the Conference was in being the possibility of a reduction and limitation of armaments remained. If the Conference were to be closed Germany could say, with some justification, that the heavily armed Powers, which had met to fulfil their pledges to disarm, had failed to honour them. So long, however, as the Conference was in being Germany was in the position of a party which was refusing to co-operate with States which were endeavouring to reach an agreement on the subject of disarmament. If the Conference were wound up Germany might with some semblance of justification argue that the Nation which had entered the Conference had explicitly failed to secure disarmament and therefore left unfulfilled art. 8 of the Treaty. This would apparently justify Germany in her revision of unilaterally abrogating part V of the same Treaty.
Mr. Henderson said that there could be no question at this stage of closing the Conference. He had seen rumours to the effect that this possibility was under consideration in certain quarters. The Conference, however, could not be closed as a result of the decision taken by certain Governments. Its proceedings could only be terminated as a result of a decision taken by all the States, delegates to the Conference, assembled in plenary session.

The position of the Conference was still determined by the resolution which had been adopted on June 8th 1934. It was still, in fact, awaiting the results of the private negotiations referred to in the resolution adopted by the Conference on that date. He had, as President of the Conference, loyally abided by that resolution and he would take no steps to prejudice the further progress of the negotiations in course. When results had been reached such as would permit the Conference to resume its work, its proceedings would, presumably, be resumed on the basis of previous important decisions which could not be forgotten or ignored.

It did not seem likely, however, that the immediate outcome of the Stresa Conference would be such as would enable a definite decision to be taken at once regarding the procedure to be followed. Probably it would be necessary to reconsider the position in May when the Council of the League would be meeting again in Geneva and when the results of the Conference at Stresa, and any other negotiations to which that Conference might give rise, would be more apparent.
M. Bénès agreed. He further stated his conviction that the delegations at Stresa, more especially the French delegation, regarded the results achieved as a prelude to a serious effort to reach a general agreement upon the question of a limitation of armaments.

Mr. Henderson wondered whether the action to be taken by the Council upon the request of the French Government protesting against the unilateral declaration of Part 5 of the Treaty of Versailles by the German Government, was likely to improve the immediate prospects before the Conference.

M. Bénès said quite frankly that he considered definite action in the sense suggested by the French Government to be absolutely unavoidable and declared that he would support the French Memorandum. He had, however, as yet had no opportunity of consulting the delegations who were coming from Stresa. The position would be clearer within the next twenty-four hours and he hoped to see Mr. Henderson again before his departure for a final exchange of views.

POSTSCRIPT BY M. ACHNIDES.

When Dr. Bénès left the President I accompanied him for a few minutes, when I asked him his opinion as to the prospects of the maintenance of peace which may have been created through the Stresa Conference.

Dr. Bénès said he thought the Stresa proceedings would help to maintain peace, especially as in his conversations with Mr. Eden in Prague he realised that the English were coming round more and more to the point of view generally adopted on the
Continent - i.e. that unless Germany believes the other countries are firm to uphold their decision to maintain peace, peace will be jeopardised.

I said to Dr. Bénès that this point was so important that I should like to convey it to the President, and perhaps he himself would take an opportunity of seeing the President again.

Dr. Bénès said indeed he would, but he hinted that such liberty of language would only be indulged in in a narrower circle than the one in which he had found himself on that day.

Afterwards I conveyed this to the President, who told me that when Dr. Bénès should come to see him again he had better be left alone with him.
RECORD OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION
BETWEEN MR. HENDERSON AND M. AGNIDES
AT 11 a.m. ON MONDAY MARCH 18th 1935.

Mr. Henderson rang me up this morning towards eleven o'clock and asked me if the Secretary-General had expressed any opinion about Hitler's move to establish the military clauses of the Versailles Treaty and to institute military service in Germany on the basis of a peace strength of thirty-six divisions.

I said I thought not, as M. Avenol had left Geneva before the news was released from Berlin.

Mr. Henderson asked my opinion on the situation created.

I said I deplored the facts but was not surprised by them. He knew how relentlessly I had urged, from the very earliest days of the Conference, the necessity of concluding a convention before certain demands rose high. At the risk of being misunderstood, I had never varied, and even last year, when Hitler had demanded three hundred thousand men, I had urged that we as the figure of 300,000 was susceptible to vary through negotiations should sign our convention. Today Hitler is no longer content with such modest figures. And if those who have the responsibility of moulding the destinies of Europe continue, as in the past years we shall again miss an opportunity of deriving some good out of the present evil. But undoubtedly, of all the solutions presented, the one we are now confronted with is the worst. It is just as certain that if we do not do something within reasonable time more troubles will shower upon us.
The President said that was his own view, and he expressed his happiness at feeling that we were at one in the matter. He said we ought to strike while the iron was hot in order that some good might come out of the evil that the German move represented. But no time should be lost, so Mr. Henderson had asked for and secured an interview with Sir John Simon at four o’clock this afternoon. He would let me know if anything important resulted from that conversation.

The President also wished me to let him know at once if, in view of the gravity of the situation, an extraordinary Council should meet, as he would like to be in Geneva during such a meeting.

Mr. Henderson said that Mr. Lloyd George thinks the German move gives us a real opportunity for saving Europe from the mess she has got herself into. The President agrees with that view and does not share the indignation expressed in certain quarters. He thinks Germany has been very patient.

I supplemented the information contained in my letter of last Saturday by telling the President that the Secretary-General would be very pleased to see him in Geneva in the first part of April with a view to the fulfilment of the mission envisaged by Mr. Wilson (the giving of fresh impetus to the committees at present at work on manufacture and trade, budgetary publicity and the miscellaneous provisions).

Mr. Henderson said he would probably be here towards the 9th April; he would return to England for Easter, and be back again in Geneva towards the 13th May when the Council meets. He again mentioned the importance of fixing a date for the Bureau, but wished to seize, while there is time, this last opportunity of doing something in the way of a convention.
Mr. Henderson said he was very anxious to know if the German move towards universal military service would put an end to the negotiations which were going on between the principal Powers on the disarmament issue. He very much hoped they would not be interrupted, but, on the contrary, pursued with more vigour than ever.
I went this morning to Cornevin to meet Mr. Henderson on his arrival from Paris. He had dined in that city, before taking his train, with Sir George Clerk, the British Ambassador. In accordance with the information he could get at the Embassy, the position in France had not changed in any notable degree since we had together seen M. Barthou in Paris.

In the speech he made to the Chamber M. Barthou said that he wanted to help Mr. Henderson in his efforts, but the rest of his speech was destructive of the good intentions contained in that statement.

The President wondered in the circumstances whether I was not wrong in suggesting that in his statement to the General Commission he should say very few things, and make his real speech after the situation became clearer through the speeches contributed by the various delegations. It was a fact that nobody seemed to have any constructive ideas now. The British did not seem to be willing to make any fresh move; the French did not know their own line; the Italians seemed to be disposed to take a passive attitude. Should not the President, in these circumstances, give a lead?

I ventured to suggest that giving a lead at the very start might serve the purpose of those who would like to gain time. I could in fact imagine the following absurd situation:

The President makes a speech in which there are concrete proposals. The delegates would only feel two happy to suggest for instance that a Committee should be
constituted to study the proposals and report, say within a week, a fortnight, or a month. A new era of futile meetings would be inaugurated.

The President would have shown the delegations the line of least resistance, and human nature is always apt to follow that line.

I thought it might be better to confront the delegations with their responsibilities, listen to what they would say, and, if the President sees that the general trend is negative, pessimistic, and towards failure, then and then only the President can successfully restore the situation by showing what can still be done to save it.

The President referred to the statement made by Sir John Simon on the 14th October 1933, and said there are certain points which might be extracted from it and, with certain modifications, worked into a resolution the consequences of which would be the return of Germany to the Conference. And if that country did return to the Conference and work within it and accept the Convention, it would practically have re-entered the League too.

He was aware of course of the difficulty of the question of equality of rights, but then the 11th December Protocol, though only taken note of by the General Commission, was an important factor in the situation.

The President then read out extracts from Notes forming part of the parallel and supplementary efforts, from which it appeared that the 11th December Protocol might, to all intents and purposes, be considered one of the fruits of the Conference.

The President spoke next about the question of returning to the Council. He explained that the Council had given a mandate to him. The Conference was convoked by the Council. It was for the Conference and for him as President thereof to report to the Council either success in the form
of a Convention, or failure, - but not to interrupt proceedings at the present stage and have the Council do the remaining work. It was one thing to report success or failure, and another to transfer the work at a certain stage from one body to another body in despite of the mandate given by the latter that the work should be done by the former.

It was finally agreed, on the question of procedure, that the President should remind the General Commission of the adverse circumstances under which the Conference started, as he had said in his inaugural speech, and then add that those circumstances, far from becoming better, had become worse and worse as time went on; then, state how, in spite of all, the Conference had responded to his appeal to prepare the Convention for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, adopting to that end adequate resolutions; and, lastly, put to the Conference the dramatic question whether the Conference would abandon its own ideals and resolutions or whether it meant to abide by them.

At that moment I ventured to say that the neutrals, who had an idea of preparing a minimum Convention fixing limits by agreement to the armaments of all countries, might intervene in the debate and save the situation at the President's beckoning. The neutrals thought they might render the question of German rearmament less difficult to tackle by that method, as all the figures of the armaments, effectives and material, would have to be fixed for all the countries. A limit would have to be fixed for Germany also, probably a little lower than what the Germans are at present asking. There would therefore no longer be any question of unilateral German rearmament if this discreet method were employed.
RECORD OF CONVERSATION
BETWEEN MR. EDEN AND MR. AGNIDES
on Thursday, May 17th 1934

I met Mr. Eden this morning after the Council meeting and had a preliminary talk with him on the disarmament position. This is as indefinite as at the beginning of the week.

Mr. Eden has seen M. Barthou, and he is now convinced that the French have not yet made up their minds as to what they are going to do in the General Commission. For the time being they are concerned with the Saar, and M. Barthou said to Mr. Eden that this is the Saar Week. On his return to Paris he will consult with the Cabinet, and the Government will only then evolve their policy on disarmament.

M. Barthou repeated to Mr. Eden what he had told Mrs. Henderson and myself in Paris, viz, that while Germany is rearming France cannot disarm. That much seems now to be certain.

As regards the rumours that the Conference is going to be closed down, Mr. Eden considered those rumours, to say the least, premature. It will be for the Conference to consider the position in the light of the statements to be made and to see what course to follow.

I think I might interpret that statement in the following manner:

The Conference alone has authority to appreciate whether or not we should close down. No outside authority can decide that. So that legally, if the Conference itself comes to the conclusion that no good can be done by continuing the Conference in the present political circumstances, and consequently closes down, the Council can only then take up the matter, on the report of the President of the Conference, and see
how best it can give effect to Article 8 of the Covenant. Before we parted, Mr. Eden was good enough to tell me that he would receive me some time before he left so that we might proceed to a second exchange of views.
RECORD OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN MR. HENDERSON
and M. BARThOU at the Quai d'Orsay, May 11th,
1934, at 9.30 a.m.

Present:
M. Léger
M. Massigli
M. Agnides

After the conversations which had been outlined the preceding day, Thursday, May 10th, at the luncheon offered by M. Barthou to Mr. Henderson, and at which were present M. Rochat, Chef de Cabinet of the Ministry, M. Vitalis, Director and M. Spitzmuller, Assistant Chief of the French League of Nations Section, it had been decided to terminate the conversations the next day, May 11th, at 9.30 a.m. at the Quai d'Orsay.

The conversations on Thursday merely adumbrated the questions to be considered. On both sides there were only declarations of positions known heretofore and the conversations properly so called only took place on May 11th.

Mr. Henderson first referred to the conversation in Paris that he had had with M. Barthou during his last visit in April and the favourable impression he took away with him. He allowed himself to note in passing the contrast between the tone of that conversation and the tone of the Note of April 17th. He referred particularly to the last paragraph of the Note under reference in which it is said that the General Commission must meet and take up the discussions at the point where they had been left before it was decided to have the parallel and supplementary conversations - which, moreover, have produced no result. The President wanted to know by what means, in accordance with the last paragraph, one might still continue
working in the General Commission.

M. Barthou declared that the ideas which he was propounding were not his own personal ideas, but the unanimous opinion of the Cabinet. It is therefore in the name of France that he would answer all the questions put to him. Moreover a meeting of the Cabinet had taken place yesterday and M. Barthou had been heard and approved.

The change which Mr. Henderson had noted in the tone of their conversation last April as compared with the tone of the Note of April 17th was due, not to France, but to Germany which had published its recent war budget, for the French point of view has not changed. It is precisely that as set forth in the letter which M. Barthou had addressed on the 10th February to the President of the Conference. French policy has continued to conform to the policy of the Disarmament Conference. As for the content of the Note of April 17th, it is in accord with the content of the Note of April 6th. Mr. Henderson himself had seen this Note before it was communicated to the British Government. The position which France has taken up cannot be understood without a careful examination of the Note of April 6th. The French Government has not published it in reference to the British Government's request not to publish it. But this constitutes a break in the exchange of notes which cannot be understood without the Note of April 6th which the French Government intends, in order to make clear its position, to publish in a blue book.

Mr. Henderson asked M. Barthou if he did not see a certain contradiction between the attitude which France had maintained in the past and that which is evidenced by the Note of April 17th, for the President could not forget that the previous French Government had accepted the declaration made by Sir John
Simon in the Bureau on October 14th - a declaration which nevertheless was not conform to the new principles which were incorporated in the Note of April 17th. In these circumstances how would the discussions in the General Commission be resumed at the point where they were left off?

M. Barthou answered that France would declare at the General Commission that French policy had remained in line with principles the policy of the General Commission, that, in the second place, it was by a feeling of loyalty that the French Government had refused to take the British Memorandum of January 29th as a basis of a future Convention and that, thirdly, if there was any change for the worse in the situation it was not due to France but to the German budget which confirmed the unilateral rearmament of Germany. M. Barthou then recalled that it was the British Government itself which had asked for explanations in Berlin concerning the new budget. It was known that the German answer was a mockery and a defiance and that the aggravation of the situation was due to that fact, so that if the attitude of France appears to have changed, that change is due to a change in the previous situation, caused by the new German budget.

The President asked M. Barthou if, under such conditions, he retained any hope of seeing the discussions reach a conclusion since suspicion in certain countries such as England and evidenced France also as in the press, there was a growing sentiment that after the Note of April 17th the situation was becoming inextricable. According to newspapers, there was nothing left for the Conference to do but to close its doors. Mr. Henderson felt that it was extremely regrettable that all the efforts made during the last two years should come to nothing and the very fact that during two years so many countries, with the exception of Germany, had been keen to continue the
the work was a sign of this fine effort.

M. Barthou drew Mr. Henderson's attention to the fact that the Note of April 17th did not close the door; that he agreed with Mr. Henderson that it would be regrettable to lose the result of the magnificent efforts which had been made over two years and he equally agreed with him that the situation would be much more serious if we closed the Conference than it was on the opening day of the Conference. It is for this reason that M. Barthou felt that the work should be resumed as he had already indicated.

Mr. Henderson, basing himself on the situation such as it presents itself to-day, wondered if one could get very far in the General Commission or if one would not be obliged to recognise failure. Some thought that if there were no hope of reaching definite conclusion it would be preferable frankly. There was another tendency which believed in going from adjournment to adjournment and in liquidating the Conference. What was the opinion of M. Barthou in this regard? Did he believe that the Conference could continue to do useful work or did he rather believe it would be preferable to close the Conference? What would be the attitude of France in the General Commission?

M. Barthou answered that he did not wish to make a choice between two methods - the dilatory method which consisted in avoiding work by successive adjournments, or the direct method which consisted in closing the Conference without more ado, but if it was necessary to close, M. Barthou certainly preferred the direct method to the indirect method. Perhaps Mr. Henderson himself had furnished in his explanations another solution which might constitute a compromise solution and which would consist in going first to the Bureau and then to the
General Commission. The Bureau would first sort out the questions and prepare them for the General Commission so that it would not be necessary to repeat the same thing in two instances. For, as Mr. Henderson had remarked, what had been said in private session in the Bureau would immediately be transmitted by each delegation to its press services for their own ends. With regard to the last point raised by Mr. Henderson, M. Barthou could assure him that the position of France would not be difficult in the General Commission. Faithful to the line of conduct defined from the very beginning by his predecessors, she would only have to continue to declare herself closely attached to the principles set forth in the past by the French delegation and accepted by the General Commission.
He agreed with Mr. Henderson that it was necessary to reach practical results provided a procedure was prepared. However, Mr. Barthou did not know the procedure of Geneva sufficiently well, and it was for that reason that he was expecting some guidance from the President. He believed that the President himself recognised the loyalty of the efforts conceded by France and he thanked him.

Mr. Henderson answered that the reason he had fixed the meeting of the General Commission for May 29th was due to his desire to be sure of the presence of Dr. Benes who, for various internal reasons, could not be in Geneva before the 29th. The proposal to have a meeting of the Bureau the day before had the disadvantage of the absence of Dr. Benes. Moreover, it might be said that if both the meetings were going to do the same work, that of the Bureau would be superfluous.

Mr. Barthou agreed with the President and wondered if it might not be possible to arrange matters by having a meeting of the Bureau the day before the date fixed for the General Commission. There was no doubt that a complete discussion in the Bureau followed by a complete discussion in the General Commission should be avoided; it was a bad method. On the other hand, he considered that the method which consisted in going directly to the General Commission and setting forth all the divergencies there was dangerous. He concluded by suggesting that the meeting of the Bureau, as he had already said previously, should take place the day before the meeting of the General Commission.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Henderson would like to call the Bureau for Monday, May 28th, at 3.30 and the General Commission for Tuesday, the 29th, at 3.30. In case
of necessity, the Bureau could also meet Tuesday morning.

Mr. Barthou declared that he agreed with these dates. Mr. Henderson did not believe that it would be possible to go further to-day, but before leaving he wanted to ask Mr. Barthou one or two questions on the substance of the problem. Mr. Henderson was much preoccupied with the question of the return of Germany to the Conference. Human beings being what they are, it could not be expected that a Government having taken a decision could modify it without a valid reason. In other words, the German Government, to come back to Geneva must obtain a certain satisfaction on the basis of the Agreement of December 11th, 1932, concerning the equality of rights. This equality could be assured in two ways, either by massive reduction in the armaments of the heavily-armed countries, or by a slight German re-armament accompanied by a slight reduction in the armed countries. He believed he was correct in declaring that the majority of the delegations at the Conference, including the neutral countries, whose recent or orandum indicated the same tendency - agreed that the only method actually possible was the second: namely, a moderate re-armament accompanied by a corresponding reduction.

On the other hand, he understood very well that in conformity with the text itself of the Agreement of December 11th, 1932, France might wonder what would be the equivalent in terms of security against this grant of re-armament to Germany. Mr. Henderson believed that, on the one hand, it might be possible to obtain from England a clear declaration concerning the undertakings assumed at Locarno, and especially
those contained in Annex F. In the second place, it would be possible to obtain precise guarantees of execution of the provisions of the Convention. On the basis of these concessions in the matter of guarantees, could France concede a certain degree of disarmament? The opposition has never opposed Locarno in the British Parliament. M. Barthou would recall that Mr. Henderson himself had worked seven weeks in 1924 to obtain the Protocol. If the present British Government made a declaration concerning Locarno, and, on the other hand, consented to guarantees of execution, the resulting situation would be very strong, because in case of change of Government he and his followers would strongly back the undertakings assumed by the present Government.

Mr. Barthou answered that in so far as the return of Germany was concerned, he feared that this return would not take place, but for the sake of discussion he was prepared to admit the hypothesis. The return of Germany to the General Commission would be the prelude to its return in the League of Nations.

On the other hand, M. Barthou noted the opinion of the President with regard to the declaration concerning the Locarno Agreement and the possible granting of guarantees of execution.

France has never ceased to say that she would collaborate in the work of disarmament if she obtained complete guarantees of security. The situation would change if the guarantees were obtained, but it was not possible to forget that the British Government had not retained the Protocol. With regard to the framing of a Convention, including the disarmament of France and the re-armament of
Germany, M. Barthou was obliged to say to Mr. Henderson that he himself would have no illusions on this point. No French Government of to-day or to-morrow could accept that France should disarm whilst Germany was re-arming.

Mr. Henderson then read part of the declaration of Sir John Simon of October 14th, and he reached the conclusion from this declaration that France accepted a certain re-armament of Germany and certain reductions in armaments for herself and the other armed countries. The note of April 17th was in contradiction with these undertakings.

M. Barthou did not see the contradiction, and referred to his note of February 10th, in which it was clearly indicated that France could not accept a convention in which there would be combined German re-armament and French disarmament.
This declaration had been made previously to avoid any misapprehension in the Note of April 17th and was the logical sequel to the letter of February 10th. On the other hand, he recalled to Mr. Henderson that it was France which had remained faithful to the Declarations of the 14th October, which had been accepted, besides herself, by Great Britain and the United States. Subsequently, it was Great Britain which had diverged from them.

M. Barthou wanted to draw the attention of Mr. Henderson also to a question which closely affected the public opinion of his country. He referred to the letter which in 1932 Mr. Hitler had addressed to Mr. von Papen. In that letter it had been said that the only way to resolve the question of equality of rights in disarmament was to place Europe before an accomplished fact. This theory had been put into practical application by the unilateral re- armament of Germany, and public opinion, which knew these two facts, had lost confidence in Germany.

M. Barthou added that, nevertheless, he had not lost hope. It is true that he did not expect any miracle, but the reality of facts revealed that the General Commission might have as a reaction the creation of such a need of general security that possibly a solution might evolve therefrom.

Mr. Henderson then asked M. Barthou if he had in mind in the last part of his declaration an Agreement concerning security which would go beyond Locarno. He understood that he was asking a very delicate question and he did not expect an immediate answer if M. Barthou was not in a
position to give it right away.

M. Barthou declared he was not in a position to answer this question at the moment.

The President then asked M. Barthou if he did not agree with him that the longer we waited the more difficult would it be to put limits to that evil, which was the re-armament of Germany. It was much easier to draw up a convention at this time than to do it in six months, for the level reached by Germany to-day would be exceeded at that time, and it would be all the more difficult to limit the evil. That is why he considered it essential if any hope was retained of concluding a convention, to do it immediately.

M. Barthou did not believe that the re-armament of Germany could become more accentuated if Great Britain wished that it should be otherwise. He again drew the attention of the President to the identity of the views of the French Government revealed in the memorandum of October 14th, 1933, in the French note of January 1st and in the very last French note. This agreement had arisen not on account of France, but on account of the British memorandum of January 29th last. It was very difficult for him to say immediately on what basis an agreement might be reached, since he was not yet informed concerning all opinions. He was going to Geneva for the Council. He would meet his British colleagues and others, and was therefore in a position to prejudge the future and to solve, in his office with Mr. Henderson, the whole question of disarmament. This was all the more so, as there were questions which he could address to the British Government but not to Mr. Henderson, who did not represent it. One of these questions would be the following: is Great Britain prepared to remove from its
memorandum of January 29th the part concerning the disarmament of France? He recalled to Mr. Henderson the conversation which he had had with his predecessor, Mr. Paul-Boncour, and Mr. Paul Hymans on the 27th December last, when Mr. Hymans had strongly urged Mr. Paul-Boncour to admit in a way the accomplished fact of German re-armament. Mr. Paul-Boncour had clearly refused, opposing the ideas of Mr. Hymans.

At the end of this meeting a communiqué was given to the Press, stating that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France and Mr. Henderson had continued the conversation of the preceding day in the same spirit of cordiality and that they had decided to maintain the date of the meeting of the General Commission on the 29th May and to hold a preparatory meeting of the Bureau the preceding day.

Mr. Barthou expressed his pleasure in having met Mr. Henderson and Mr. Henderson the President expressed himself in the same terms.

At this time Mr. Leger spoke privately with the President and Mr. Barthou did the same thing with Mr. Aghnides, to whom he spoke of the length and the importance of the meeting they had just held, having in its course dissipated certain misunderstandings. He also had had the opportunity, thanks to this meeting, of showing Mr. Henderson that all hope was not lost and that the French memorandum did not close the door.

Mr. Barthou then spoke to him of the undesirability of concluding a hasty agreement and said particularly that he never would have signed the agreement of December 11th, 1932, because the question was badly put. The same was true in the case of the two questions propounded by the British
Government in the note of Sir John Simon. If the French answer had been affirmative to the question, the principle of reduction would have been conceded by France, while the quid pro quo consisting in the granting of guarantees of execution would not have been so definitely defined. This quid pro quo, on the contrary, would have been the object of bargaining and would include possibly lesser and greater concessions. Mr. Barthou then asked certain questions of Mr. Aghnides which evidenced friendly feeling towards him.