The thoughts and opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily of the U.S. Government, the U.S. Department of the Navy or the Naval War College.
by outlining the divergent French views, and the chairman had presented the American thesis in an interesting and voluminous document. He could testify to the profound interest aroused among the French delegation by Lord Lee’s speech and to the force of his arguments, which if not convincing were highly impressive. He (Mr. Sarraut) and his colleagues felt that the best tribute which they could pay to Lord Lee’s able address would be to reply to it in detail. He requested, therefore, that time might be given to prepare this reply and also secure a translation of the document presented by the chairman, and that the meeting be adjourned until Friday afternoon.

The chairman asked what was the pleasure of the committee in this matter.

Mr. Balfour said that he placed himself in the chairman’s hands.

After some discussion it was agreed to meet Friday afternoon, December 23, 1921, at 3 p.m., and that the statement to the press should embody such portions of the remarks made at the present sessions as the respective delegates should communicate to the secretary general.

The meeting then adjourned until December 23, 1921, 3 p.m.

SIXTH MEETING—FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1921, 3 P.M.

PRESENT.

United States.—Mr. Hughes, Senator Lodge, Mr. Root, Senator Underwood, Col. Roosevelt, Admiral Coontz. Accompanied by Mr. Wright, Mr. Clark.

British Empire.—Mr. Balfour, Lord Lee, Sir Aukland Geddes, Rear Admiral Sir E. Chatfield, Sir Robert Borden (for Canada), Senator Pearce (for Australia), Sir John Salmond (for New Zealand), Mr. Sastri (for India). Accompanied by Sir Maurice Hankey, Capt. Little, Capt Domville, M. Mousley.

France.—Mr. Sarraut, Mr. Jusserand, Vice Admiral de Bon. Accompanied by Mr. Kammerer, Mr. Denait, Capt. Odend’hal, M. Ponsot.

Italy.—Senator Schanzer, Senator Rolandi-Ricci, Senator Albertini, Vice Admiral Acton. Accompanied by Marquis Visconti-Venosta, Count Pagliano, Commander Prince Ruspoli, Mr. Celesia di Vegliasco.

Japan.—Prince Tokugawa, Mr. Hanihara, Vice Admiral Kato, Capt. Uyeda. Accompanied by Mr. Ichihashi.

The secretary general, assisted by Mr. Cresson, Mr. Pierrepont, and Mr. Wilson.

Interpreters, Mr. Camerlynck and Mr. Talamon.
1. The sixth meeting of the Committee on Limitation of Armament was held in the Columbus Room of the Pan-American Union Building at 3 p.m., December 23, 1921.

2. There were present: For the United States, Mr. Hughes, Senator Lodge, Mr. Root, Senator Underwood, Col. Roosevelt, Admiral Coontz; for the British Empire, Mr. Balfour, Lord Lee, Sir Auckland Geddes, Rear Admiral Sir E. Chatfield, Sir Robert Borden (for Canada), Senator Pearce (for Australia), Sir John Salmond (for New Zealand), Mr. Sastri (for India); for France, Mr. Sarraut, Mr. Jusserand, Vice Admiral de Bon; for Italy, Senator Schanzer, Senator Rolandi-Ricci, Senator Albertini, Vice Admiral Acton; for Japan, Prince Tokugawa, Mr. Hanihara, Vice Admiral Kato, Capt. Uyeda.

3. The following secretaries and technical advisers were present: For the United States, Mr. Wright, Mr. Clark; for the British Empire, Sir Maurice Hankey, Capt. Little, Capt. Domville, Mr. Mousley; for France, Mr. Kammerer, Mr. Denaint, Capt. Oden-d'hal, Mr. Ponsot; for Italy, Marquis Visconti-Venosta, Count Pagliano, Commander Prince Ruspoli, Mr. Celesia di Vegliasco; for Japan, Mr. Ichihashi.

The secretary general, assisted by Mr. Cresson, Mr. Pierrepont, and Mr. Wilson, was present. Mr. Camerlynck and Mr. Talamon (interpreters) were also present.

4. The chairman, Mr. Hughes, suggested that the discussion should continue from the point where it had stopped the day before.

Admiral de Bon said that he desired in the first place to make a statement for the sake of accuracy. In the course of yesterday's session different estimates of the French submarine tonnage were given by Mr. Hughes and Lord Lee. This difference seemed to him to arise in part from the fact that in one case the tonnage was estimated on submerged submarines and in the other on ships on the surface.

France possesses at the present time 50 submarines representing a tonnage of 31,391 tons if estimated afloat and of 42,949 tons if estimated when submerged. These figures did not include the 12 submarines whose construction had been authorized by Parliament and for which contracts had been made.

Admiral de Bon then read the following statement:

"The conference entered yesterday upon the consideration of the question of abolishing submarines. It had listened to a remarkable statement and defense of the British point of view by Lord Lee, of Fareham. The argument presented is very complete and very logical, and it may be said that it supports the view favoring abolition of the submarine with the most forcible arguments that can be brought to bear upon this side of the question."
Another consideration of this particularly remarkable and important question was read by Chairman Hughes, and even if he had not had the kindness to enlighten the conference upon the distinguished personality of the members of the advisory committee, the incontestable value of their arguments would have signaled their exceptional ability.

The conclusion of this dissertation is the reverse of the view advocated by the Hon. Lord Lee, of Fareham, and is in favor of the preservation of the submarine.

The two declarations that have been made have brought to light about all the arguments that can be advanced. Accordingly, it would seem as if the debate might almost be regarded as exhausted if we did not have certain differences of opinion regarding the various arguments which it would seem desirable to present to the conference.

I ask permission to review them briefly before you.

In the first place, it has been denied that the submarine was really an efficient weapon, and this is an essential consideration, since, if this were admitted, it is obvious that there would be almost no reason for building submarines.

The submarine as a weapon against warships can not be considered useless. If it is, indeed, true that the Great Fleet was able to remain at sea during several months in the midst of the submarines without any of its ships being hit, it should be remembered that France lost three battleships and five cruisers and had several other ships torpedoed, 130,000 tons in all. To this list I can add a certain number of battleships lost by Great Britain and by Italy.

Finally, the offensive action of the submarines has necessitated the construction of a considerable defensive system, and this certainly had an influence toward weakening the general forces of the nations engaged.

As a means of defense the submarine has not been found useless. It can not, I think, be denied that if Germany maintained her coast intact it was not solely because of the barrier of mines with which she protected it. This could have been crossed by any force suitably provided with mine sweepers if a force of submarines, supplementary to the mine defenses, had not rendered the approach to them really dangerous.

In the Adriatic the submarine also formed one of the most powerful means of action for the enemy.

In the Dardanelles the Allies felt the effect of the use of submarines not only during the major actions but also throughout the long months during which they remained holding tight to the point of Gallipoli Peninsula. The bombardments which the Allies were led to make against the Turkish position were always con-
EXPERIENCE WITH SUBMARINE.

ciderably hindered by the measures for protecting their ships which they were compelled to take on account of the presence or threat of submarines in those waters. The Allies had, moreover, paid for their efforts with the loss of several ships.

"In fighting warships the submarine can be employed as a scout, or rather as an observation post.

"Everyone knows the great extent to which the submarine lends itself in wireless communications. It is obvious that this observation post, so difficult to detect, can approach very near to the enemy, watch his operations, and carry either to the fleet which it is convoying or to its governing authority information which can not otherwise be obtained, especially for navies which have no powerful surface craft at their disposal.

"In a word, in our opinion, the submarine has proven its worth as a means of attack against warships as well as in the protection of coasts.

"The submarine has shown itself especially efficient against the merchant marine.

"I need not recall the very considerable results obtained in the submarine warfare waged by Germany against the commercial fleets of the world. The mind can not return without horror to this subject, which has struck terror to all peoples.

"But what causes this terror is not the fact that the German submarines attacked the merchant vessels of their enemies, but that they did not respect either the neutral flag or steamers loaded with nonbelligerents, or even the transports for the wounded which should have been protected by the Red Cross flag, which flag, however, even on land, they often saw fit to violate. It has always been admissible to attack the enemy's merchant marine, and it will, I think, always seem legitimate to do so. In fact, it is one of the most effective means of seriously crippling one's adversary.

"If, taking an extreme case, one might consider it possible to bring one's adversary to the point of yielding by this process, would it not be less cruel and less wasteful of human life than military operations which would arrive at the same result by direct application of force?

"One may protest against this interpretation, but it is the result of the blockade, which is a legitimate practice, and its effects are not peculiar to submarines.

"I understand quite well that if this kind of war is allowed, it should be confined within certain limits to prevent it from violating the laws of humanity. That is the precise point on which the charge that all have agreed in bringing without mercy against the Germans is based. But the accusation is brought against the men and not against the instrument that they made use of.
"In order to impart to the war, which they had decided on, the horrible character which they thought would cause our energies to yield, the Germans simply sank the boats which they stopped. You will recall that at the beginning of the submarine campaign the Germans aimed, above all, to inspire terror and expected to obtain from it a moral effect on which they based their hopes. In fact, nobody can have forgotten the propaganda launched at the beginning of 1915 with all the mighty and wily means of German propaganda. It aimed almost exclusively at a moral effect. It was only later on that they took into consideration the material results which could be surely secured by submarine attacks against commercial fleets and that they enlarged progressively their acts of piracy.

"If it is undeniable that Germany made a frightful and astonishing misuse of the submarine against commercial fleets, can one contend that it would have been impossible for her to act otherwise?

"Moreover, did not the Germans misuse, and to excess, practically all their other weapons?

"In the first place, one can not deny that they could have avoided attacks against neutral ships and could have refrained from torpedoing passenger ships without warning, especially hospital ships.

"The success of their fight might have been materially lessened, but they would certainly have gained from a moral viewpoint and the German submarines would not have lost the respect of the civilized world.

"And then is it not permissible to think that war against enemy merchant ships could have been waged differently? Suppose, for instance, that in meeting a merchant ship a submarine advised her that she would be destroyed as soon as security for the crew was assured, either by proximity to the shore or by means of relief. It could prescribe a route to the ship and bring it to a safe place where it would sink it after having removed the crew.

"That is merely a supposition, and I will not attempt here to formulate a doctrine, but you will find in it a thought similar to that which guided the sailors of other days when they were making a prize and taking it to port or until it had been taken from them by the enemy.

"It may be said that the submarine would be exposed to great risks, but were not the frigates and the corsairs of other days exposed to great risks in similar operations? How many of them had perished either in the defense of their capture or because they had been unable to escape the attacks of their enemies in the course of the voyage?"
“Certainly the fruits of submarine warfare would have been smaller if they had been obliged to confine themselves to the limits of honorable warfare, but it is impossible to claim that there would have been none.

“I know very well that to sink a ship even while saving the lives of those on board is a questionable act and may be inadmissible. This is a question of law which ought to be settled by confining such action to cases of absolute necessity.

“In passing I would call your attention to the fact that the cruel use to which the Germans put their submarines was not confined to this type of vessels. They seized merchant vessels and, in order to turn them into cruisers, immediately armed them, keeping their crews on board and thus forcing them to take part in naval engagements, a practice which while less inhuman than that inflicted on the crews that were abandoned on the high seas was nevertheless indefensible.

“It follows from this that the activities of submarines against merchant vessels should be confined within limits that would render their use legitimate. A proper set of rules ought to be drawn up with this object in view. They should be adopted whenever a revision of the rules for applying international law, not only with regard to submarines but to all life at sea in time of war, was undertaken.

“Submarine activity against the enemy’s merchant fleet might be very effective. We have not been able to listen without great emotion as Lord Lee recalled the hours of anguish that all those who had held the guidance of affairs during the war had known and lived through when Great Britain, together at time with France, was threatened with being deprived of the supplies which were indispensable not merely for continuing the struggle but to keep the nation alive.

“This is the consecration of the power of the submarine when exerted to the full extent of its destructive possibilities, without regard for the limits imposed by the most rudimentary principles of humanity and respect for international law. Submarine activity against enemy transports and convoys, within the limits fixed by these considerations which should remain sacred to honorable opponents, can still be of great importance. It can be included among the legitimate methods of warfare as a useful factor, especially for nations which have not a powerful navy.

“In this connection another consideration occurs to me. It is said that the submarine can never be kept from bursting through the moral barrier which ought to limit its activities. It will always yield to the temptation to make unrestricted use of all its powers. Lord Lee has kindly paid the submarine officers and crews of all navies the compliment of stating that he believed them incapable of the acts imputed to the German submarines.
All naval men would be grateful to him. But the honorable first
lord fears that officers and men may be confronted by formal
orders from their Governments, which may be driven by danger
into the weakness of issuing such orders. He does not think
any Government would risk hereafter incurring such a responsi-
bility. He thinks furthermore that if ever a nation were again
to be capable of making such an error, it would not hesitate to
commit analogous excesses with other means, for example, with
air forces which could fill the world with even greater horrors.

"Against the possibility of a Government erring to such a point,
all measures the conference may take would be in vain. The
submarine is useful for fighting war fleets; it is useful for
fighting merchant vessels. Our opinion is that it is especially
the weapon of nations not having a large navy. It is, in fact,
a comparatively cheap element in naval warfare, which can
be procured in large numbers at a cost far below that of capital
ships.

"At the time when we are occupied above all with economic
questions, to the point that we are willing to give them prece-
dence over considerations of the safety of nations, this seems, in
the first place, an argument worth remembering. It must be
observed, however, that in the formation of a counter submarine
fleet the experience of the past war has brought out the fact that
we can utilize a considerable number of elements drawn from
both the merchant and fishing fleets.

"The expense of providing the necessary measures of defense
against submarine attack may be notably reduced by this means.

"Moreover, this is an argument of a general nature and applies
to every other naval weapon, from which, in my opinion, the
submarine, as we view it now, does not greatly differ.

"It seems, in fact, that henceforth the submarine has the right
to figure as an integral part of naval forces.

"When it first made its appearance no one knew to what precise
use it might be put.

"Even the Germans themselves, who in 1914 were several years
in advance of other navies as regards submarines, did not fully
realize what use they would make of them. Almost two years of
war went by before they definitely decided upon their plan of
action, because their submarines had not yet been perfected.

"If it was not possible at that time to determine the use which
might be made of the submarine, the means for combating its
activity were still more completely unknown. Unless one has been
embroiled in such circumstances, it is difficult to appreciate the
formidable effort which was necessary to discover the indispens-
able measures for destroying the submarine and to execute
them in the midst of so violent a war, which had up to that
time absorbed all the vital energies of the nations in the struggle upon land.

"However it may be, if this small craft committed frightful depredations, it was not alone because the use made of it was barbarous in the extreme but largely because during many long months there was almost nothing with which it could be combated.

"At the end of the war the situation was changed, and when the armistice came the ravages of the submarines had been greatly lessened; the monthly destruction of merchant ships scarcely exceeded 60,000 tons, and the methods then in preparation for coping with the danger would have considerably reduced this, while the number of submarines destroyed had been steadily increasing.

"To sum up, in judging the submarine it should not be considered at the time of the war, and above all at that precise moment of the war when it was at the height of its effectiveness, but more in perspective and looking somewhat toward the future. As is the case with every new weapon, it first came upon its adversaries when they were without sufficient defense and caused vast damage. Yet from now on, as Lord Lee emphasized, its power would be greatly limited; the risks of destruction which it must run have become very numerous. Without going as far as the first lord in feeling that the submarine has become ineffective against its foes, it is possible to think that the struggle against the submarine may now be carried on under conditions comparable to that of any action between warships.

"A new phase has been reached in the life of the submarine; it will not be the last. There is no doubt that further great progress will be made in two directions—in the power of attack of the submarine and in the efficiency of methods for combating its operations.

"In order to establish certainty upon this point it is enough to recall the case of the torpedo boat. Upon its appearance this little craft was considered an instrument of such power of destruction that, in the view of many distinguished naval men and writers upon maritime subjects, the hour of great battleships had struck; to build them was no longer worth while. The people in France who favored this decision formed a large and influential group. What would have occurred if war had broken out at the moment of this fever in favor of torpedo boats? Evidently, if use had been made of them as arbitrarily as of the submarines by the Germans the damage caused by the torpedo boats would perhaps have been less; but what is certain is that in many respects the conditions surrounding them were analogous to those affecting submarines.

"However, the search for means to oppose the torpedo boat was undertaken. And now not only has this small craft ceased to be
an object of special dread but it has developed into the destroyer or flotilla leader and has been found to be the greatest engine of war against the submarine. In this way the instrument of terror of 40 years ago has shown itself to be an especially efficacious defender of humanity.

"Who says that the same thing will not come to pass in the case of the submarine? We note as a menace which impresses itself greatly upon our minds the advent of powerful airships whose appearance each day strikes us as more real and more imposing. We foresee that they will be capable not only of attacks on land, at present almost irresistible, but also of formidable undertakings far out at sea. In the course of these struggles the airship can spread gas over a considerable area of the sea, paralyzing large ships, possibly squadrons. Then will we not look forward to utilizing the protection of the submarine which, supplied with powerful means against aircraft, may circle around and guard the fleet? The capacity of submerging would enable these guardians temporarily to escape the blows of the adversary in the air. This you will say to-day is fanciful. Perhaps the future will show what the result will be.

"Be that as it may, the last war has shown that hereafter the naval warfare can be carried on simultaneously under water, on the surface, and in the air. That is to say, we must, for the moment, consider the naval war of the future from this angle, if this greatest of misfortunes should, contrary to the wishes of all, some day occur.

"These are actual facts from which there is no possible escape. None of you would know how to undertake to stop the progress of human ingenuity. It has taken possession of the submarine domain. This is a fact which we are unable to prevent.

"It is very certain that the submarine, the only device by which man has succeeded in navigating under water, can not yet serve any industrial purpose or peaceful aim. This characteristic it shares with the torpedo boat and with most other weapons.

"I have set forth the views of the French Navy relative to the suppression of submarines. I have still a word to say on the importance of the number of submarines.

"The figures which have been laid before the committee have emphasized the paramount consideration which must guide it in forming an opinion.

"Lord Lee has stated that the Germans constructed 320 submarines and that generally they had only ten of them in active service at sea at any one time. This would indicate that the proposals for submarines to be constructed must be estimated on a basis considerably larger than that employed in fixing the number of these little boats that it is thought necessary to use.
"In truth, we have not quite the same figures. We have estimated that on an average one can figure that the Germans had possessed 80 to 100 completed submarines which at the time could be termed in existence. Of this number they were able to keep about 15 or 20 at sea at once. And the reduction thus noted from the number of existing submarines to the number in condition to use was due to two causes—the need to allow the crews to rest, and the need of maintenance of these small boats on which the wear and tear was terrific, making constant repairs necessary.

"The advisory committee, whose perfectly clear, exact, and precise report could be considered as an excellent base for estimating, had calculated 90,000 tons to be the tonnage necessary for the United States and Great Britain. No doubt that had been the limit of reduction which those wise men had considered reasonable. Taking it that one of the present submarines and, a fortiori, a submarine of a future type, an improvement on its predecessors, should have a tonnage of about 1,000 tons, the figures proposed by the American committee represent 90 submarines of recent type; that is to say, 15 or 20 capable of simultaneous action. This seems indeed the minimum submarine strength a power desirous of making use of this contrivance should have.

"It is proposed, however, to reduce this already very small number. If we fall below this limit, we will end by having a force of no use whatsoever, and this measure will be nearly equivalent to abolishing the submarine. I think that in this conference we should at all costs abstain from making decisions which may not be practicable and which, even before our thoughts are on the way to realization, may weaken these to the point that instead of being an element of moral strength and confidence to the world the decisions of the conference might be a cause of doubt and anxiety.

"My observation on the decrease of the tonnage seems to me all the better founded in that it applies more forcibly in the case of the construction of submarines of a greater tonnage, the freedom to build which has been asked for by most of us.

"Never has the program of navies gone forward more rapidly than now. It will lead us before long to increase the size of the submarine.

"We are convinced that the idea of large-sized submarines could not be dismissed. If you impose too narrow a limit on submarine tonnage, you will obstruct the progress of submarine science. What you would accomplish on the one hand you would undo on the other.

"To draw a conclusion from the foregoing, I think that we can not reasonably limit submarine tonnage, since we have before us an entirely new weapon, concerning which no one of us can fore-
see the possible transformation and growth, perhaps in the near future.

“If, in spite of this idea—which is a menace to no one, first, because I think no one here can consider that any one of us could become the enemy of any other, and, secondly, because we can agree in mutual confidence to keep each other informed of our future constructions—you wish absolutely to fix a limit to submarine tonnage, I believe that 90,000 tons is the absolute minimum for all the navies who may want to have a submarine force.”

Mr. Balfour said: “Since the very remarkable statement of the antisubmarine case made by Lord Lee, two notable contributions have been made to this debate. One was the document which you, Mr. Chairman, read out yesterday representing the views of the American advisory committee. The other was the speech of the gallant admiral who has just sat down. I rather wish that the advisory committee could have heard that speech before they drew up their report. They had reached the conclusion that the destruction of commerce by submarines was not the legitimate business of submarines, and they were under the impression that regulations could be framed which would prevent what they held to be the inhuman employment of this particular weapon of war. But had they heard the speech to which we have just listened they would have seen, I think, that while Admiral de Bon condemned, as we should all expect him to condemn, the misuse of the submarine against merchant ships, it was the action of submarines upon merchant ships which he regards as, on the whole, the most important purpose to which that weapon of maritime warfare can be put. And is he not right? Is there any man who knows what occurred in the late war; is there any man who knows what must occur in the course of any future war, who doubts that if submarines are sent on their dangerous and difficult mission—one of the most difficult and most dangerous, as well as one of the most disagreeable tasks which can be imposed upon sailors—it is for something more important than the remote chance of destroying some well-guarded ship of war? Is there any man who doubts that if they are once let loose to deal with merchantmen their powers will not in the stress of war be abused in the future as they have been so grossly abused in the past? It is vain to dwell upon the fact that the submarine is a useful scout, that the submarine may destroy a few unguarded and careless ships of war and impose upon any attacking forces precautions which no doubt they would gladly forego.

“From Admiral de Bon’s own speech it is clear that the main object they serve is the destruction of commerce; and I can not doubt that if this had been heard and thoroughly considered by
the advisory committee, the conclusion they would have come to would not have been so very remote from that which has impressed itself upon the British Empire delegation. Now, I do not in the least desire unduly to minimize the utility of submarines for genuine war purposes, but I can not help thinking that Admiral de Bon has exaggerated it. I can assure him that he is in error in supposing that the immunity from attack enjoyed by the German coasts was, in the least degree, due to their submarines. I speak with knowledge upon this subject, and I can assure him that he is under some misapprehension. Neither do I believe that you will find that submarines, on the whole, are any defense against attack by ships of war upon an undefended coast town. That is, I believe, one of the duties which the Italian delegation think can be performed by submarines, but I greatly doubt it. The Germans were able from time to time, without much difficulty, to send a swift ship across the North Sea, throw a few shells into an undefended port, and then seek safety in flight. That produced some suffering and effected some destruction, though whether the cost of the damage done by a shell is greater than the cost of the shell itself may perhaps be doubted. I remember one particular case in which an attack of this kind was made upon an open town on the east coast of England where there actually was a submarine; but it takes some time for a submarine to get ready; it takes some time for it to submerge; it is difficult for it to reach a much swifter surface vessel; and, though the submarine did its best, the aggressor was far away before anything could be done either in the way of protection or revenge.

"Is it not in the minds of all of us who followed the history of the late war that the British ships bombarded hour after hour the Flemish coast of Zeebrugge, which was full of submarines? The damage these submarines inflicted was trifling, and they never checked the bombardment. Take the case of the Dardanelles. We lay opposite the Dardanelles, in the most perilous circumstances you could well conceive, month after month, with submarines ever on the watch seeking what they could destroy. What they destroyed was quite insignificant. Now, if submarines could not render it impossible for ships to lie in the open opposite the Dardanelles, how can we believe that they are going to prove a very efficient weapon to maritime defense? I do not wish to dwell further upon this aspect of the question, because I do not think, as I have already indicated, that it is the fighting use of the submarine which is really before us now. The question before us now is whether you are going to encourage an instrument of war which, if it be encouraged, if indeed it be permitted at all, will undoubtedly be used in the illegitimate destruction of commerce. Now, who is that going to injure? There are two of the
powers represented here who, I think, have little or nothing to fear in such a connection. I mean the United States and Japan. Both are remote from any possible aggressor, and the United States are self-sufficient. How about the other three?

"Take the case of Italy. Italy is not an island, but for the purposes of this debate she almost counts as an island. I remember the extreme difficulty we had in supplying her even with the minimum of coal necessary to keep her arsenals and manufactories going during the war. I doubt whether she could feed herself or supply herself or continue as an efficient fighting unit if she were really blockaded, if her sea commerce were cut off, which, please God, will never be. The fact that you are going to give a general blessing to submarines—at least so I gather—puts it in the power of every State that has a seaboard at all to make itself a formidable, aggressive enemy. You talk of the submarine as if it were by nature something that encouraged defense and discouraged attack. It is nothing of the kind. A State which is itself not dependent upon sea-borne commerce, but which has some access to the sea, can, without building a battleship, without having any great naval estimates, make itself one of the most formidable of aggressive powers to its maritime neighbors. Italy has five neighbors in the Mediterranean. I hope and believe that peace, eternal peace, will reign in those ancient homes of civilization. But we are considering these matters from, as it were, the cold and calculating point of view of some member of a general staff. He, looking at the problem without any political bias, merely as a question of strategy, would say to Italy, 'You have five neighbors, each one of which can, if it desired it, blockade your coast without employing a single surface ship.' No troops need be landed, no battles fought. You would perish without being conquered. Now, compare with this case the case of France. France is nearly self-supporting in point of food, and France has a great land frontier which gives her access, directly and indirectly, to all the great markets of the world. No maritime power can blockade her. But though secure from the sea, Mr. Briand tells us that she is in a position of very grave insecurity on the side of the land, and he certainly indicated to an attentive world that France not only required a large army now but as events develop she might again call for assistance from overseas, across the Atlantic or across the Channel.

"How, then, shall we think of this encouragement of submarines, these passionate declarations against any interference with the development of this promising weapon of war which is still in its infancy? The submarines which the French propose to build will be no protection against the submarines of Germany. On what, then, is she going to rely? On the trawlers and fisher-
men of her own coasts? If the experience of the past is any guide to the future, these will be wholly insufficient. At a moment when everything turned upon keeping open the communications between France, Britain, and the United States the contribution of small craft to this vital object was as follows: France, 257 vessels; Italy, 288 vessels; Great Britain, 3,676 vessels. These figures speak for themselves; and it is manifest that but for the assistance given by British trawlers, fishermen, and merchant seamen the exclusion from Italy of the necessities of national existence, the exclusion from France of the allied armies and munitions would have been complete, and the war would have been lost. Supposing now that the situation which I have just described were reproduced, as M. Briand fears that it may be reproduced; supposing that France’s allies come to her assistance, as I hope they will; is it not clear that France will again be as dependent on British antisubmarine craft as she was three or four years ago? Is this a tolerable situation? I can not believe that on reflection our French friends will think so. This is a conference for the diminution of naval armaments, and surely it is fitting that we should remember not merely that the submarine is an instrument of warfare certain to be abused but that the building of them in large numbers inflicts a double burden on the world—a burden on the country which possesses them and a burden also on the countries against which they may possibly be used.

“Think not, however, that I am making any appeal of a purely national character. People are apt to suppose that Great Britain is the country which has most to fear from submarine warfare. They look at the map; they see that Great Britain is wholly dependent on sea-borne supplies and that opposite her coasts are harbors over which she has no control flanking the long lines of commercial communication which connect her with distant parts of her own Empire, with the markets which she serves, and the countries from which she draws her raw material. They argue that a country so situated is at the mercy of submarine warfare.

“Now, it is true that our position has its strategical difficulties; but we have faced them before; we have faced them successfully; and if ever the necessity should arise we shall face them successfully again. Lord Lee yesterday called attention to the critical moment of the war. I remember it well, for I was coming over to this country, and daily we received by wireless the returns of our loss of merchant tonnage. A very simple calculation sufficed to show that if this state of things continued the war would end in tragedy. In the struggle between the attack by submarines and the defense, the attack was winning. All such
struggles, however, have their ups and downs, and this was the very nadir of our fortunes. But it brought its own remedy. Courage, invention, and organization did their work, and months before the end of the war on land piracy at sea had lost its terrors. And so it will be again if the necessity should arise. We shall know how to protect ourselves, and if need be we shall know how to protect our allies. But when those allies themselves multiply their fleets of submarines at our very doors we know not what to think of a position so incongruous and so strange.

"But there are considerations to be kept in mind which are wider even than the most important international relations—considerations of humanity, considerations of public morality. Admiral de Bon observed just now that the submarine must develop. You could not, he observed, stop the progress of invention. I confess that, in so far as the progress of invention consists in devising new methods of warfare, I would stop it to-morrow if I could; and this conference could not do better work than to stop it in so far as it can be stopped. And, surely, if the powers represented in this room set themselves resolutely to the task, the submarine could be banned. I believe the conscience of mankind would help us; I believe the public opinion of the world would be on our side; and the result of our labors would be approved, not merely by those who wish to diminish the burden of excessive taxation, but by those who believe that, if the possibility of war must be admitted, we should do something to make it more humane."

Senator Schanzer said: "We have listened with the greatest attention to Mr. Balfour's important speech. "Mr. Balfour has recalled England's efficient aid for Italy's supplies during the war. I wish in the first place to express to the British delegate, who represents his country with such a great authority, Italy's sincere gratitude. We shall never forget what England has done, and Mr. Balfour knows the cordial friendship for England which is traditional among the Italian people and constitutes one of the surest bases of all Italian policy.

"I wish furthermore to express to Mr. Balfour my thanks also for the important remarks he made on the particular conditions of Italy, which depends completely on the sea for her supplies, which can be blockaded with the greatest facility owing to the fact that the Mediterranean is like a lake, and which can be exposed to an offensive action on the part of as many as five maritime neighbors. His observations are such as to justify, better than I could ever have done myself, the position that the Italian delegation has assumed in the present debate.

"Mr. Balfour has contested the utility of the submarine for coast defense. He maintains that submarines are of no help in
guaranteeing the supplies of a country which is dependent on the sea, and holds, on the other hand, that they are a menace to these supplies. He has said that submarines are a danger, especially for Italy, whose coasts can be easily blockaded and whose maritime neighbors might make use of submarines as an offensive weapon. We are confronted by a substantial technical difference of opinion. Your authority and that of Lord Lee's are no doubt very great, but there are technical experts of great authority who insist upon the necessity of still maintaining submarines as a defensive weapon. This opinion is shared by our naval experts and by our Government.

"We are disposed, however, to pursue together with you the study of this problem; only we must point out that it does not seem possible to us to-day to decide on the suppression of submarines because many of the States that could avail themselves of this dangerous weapon are not represented in this conference. Were we to decide to-day the suppression of submarines we would evidently be placing ourselves in a dangerous condition of manifest inferiority in respect to those States which are not represented here and which might continue to use submarines. The Italian delegation believes, therefore, that this problem must be examined subsequently in a wider conference. For the present, however, one point is clear in our minds, and that is that the best course would be to follow even in this case the spirit of the American proposal and consequently to limitate submarines to the measure strictly necessary for the ends of a purely defensive naval policy."

Admiral de Bon asked the committee for a moment's attention. An error, he said, had been made which might be corrected by a moment's reference to the minutes. Contrary to what Mr. Balfour seemed to believe, he had never stated that it was permissible to use submarines to destroy commercial vessels. He had said that the Germans, during the war, had used them in an unnecessary and cruel manner, but he had never said that France intended to use them in any similar practice; it had never entered into his thesis that submarine war on commerce was right or permissible. He said he hoped that the minutes would make this point clear. To sum up, he had said the Germans might have used the submarine less barbarously; that did not mean that he intended to preach barbarity himself.

Mr. Balfour said that the last thing he had intended was to misrepresent Admiral De Bon. He was certain that if the admiral ever had control of a navy in time of war he would conduct the operations in accordance with the dictates of humanity and the fine traditions of the great service to which he belonged. What he had attempted to show, however, was that, if the submarine was to play the great rôle in future wars which Admiral
de Bon had suggested in his speech it could only do so by resorting to extreme methods, for it was futile to suppose that submarines would make a practice of stopping merchant ships and placing prize crews on board to take them into port.

Senator Schanzer asked permission to inquire with respect to the Christmas holiday. He said he had been informed that there would be a recess until Tuesday after Christmas, and asked whether it was correct that a meeting would be held on Tuesday afternoon.

The chairman stated that as the servant of the conference he did not feel at liberty to recommend any Christmas recess unless this was the expressed desire of the delegates. He said that if in the judgment of the delegates the conference had arrived at a point where progress could be made, he would suggest that a meeting be held the following morning. If at that meeting a point should be reached where further immediate progress might be made, a meeting could be held the following Monday. This, he said, could be decided according to circumstances.

The chairman then referred to the question of the public statement for the press and asked whether it would be agreeable to the French and British Empire delegations to publish in full the arguments of Admiral de Bon and Mr. Balfour. This was agreed to by these delegations.

The meeting then adjourned until the following morning, December 24, 1921, at 11 o'clock.

SEVENTH MEETING—SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1921, 11 A. M.

PRESENT.

United States.—Mr. Hughes, Senator Lodge, Mr. Root, Col. Roosevelt, Admiral Coontz. Accompanied by Mr. Wright and Mr. Clark.

British Empire.—Mr. Balfour, Lord Lee, Sir Auckland Geddes, Rear Admiral Sir E. Chatfield, Sir Robert Borden (for Canada), Senator Pearce (for Australia), Sir John Salmond (for New Zealand), Mr. Sastri (for India). Accompanied by Sir Maurice Hankey, Capt. Little, Capt. Domville, Mr. Mousley.

France.—Mr. Sarraut, Mr. Jusserand, Vice Admiral de Bon. Accompanied by Mr. Kammerer, Mr. Denaint, Capt. Odend'hal, Mr. Ponsot.

Italy.—Senator Schanzer, Senator Rolandi-Ricci, Senator Albertini, Vice Admiral Baron Acton. Accompanied by Marquis Visconti-Venosta, Count Pagliano, Commander Prince Ruspoli, Mr. Celesia di Vegliasco.