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THE PEACE BALLOT

The Official History

by

DAME ADELAIDE LIVINGSTONE

(Secretary, National Declaration Committee)

In collaboration with

MARJORIE SCOTT JOHNSTON

With a Statistical Survey of the
Results of the Ballot

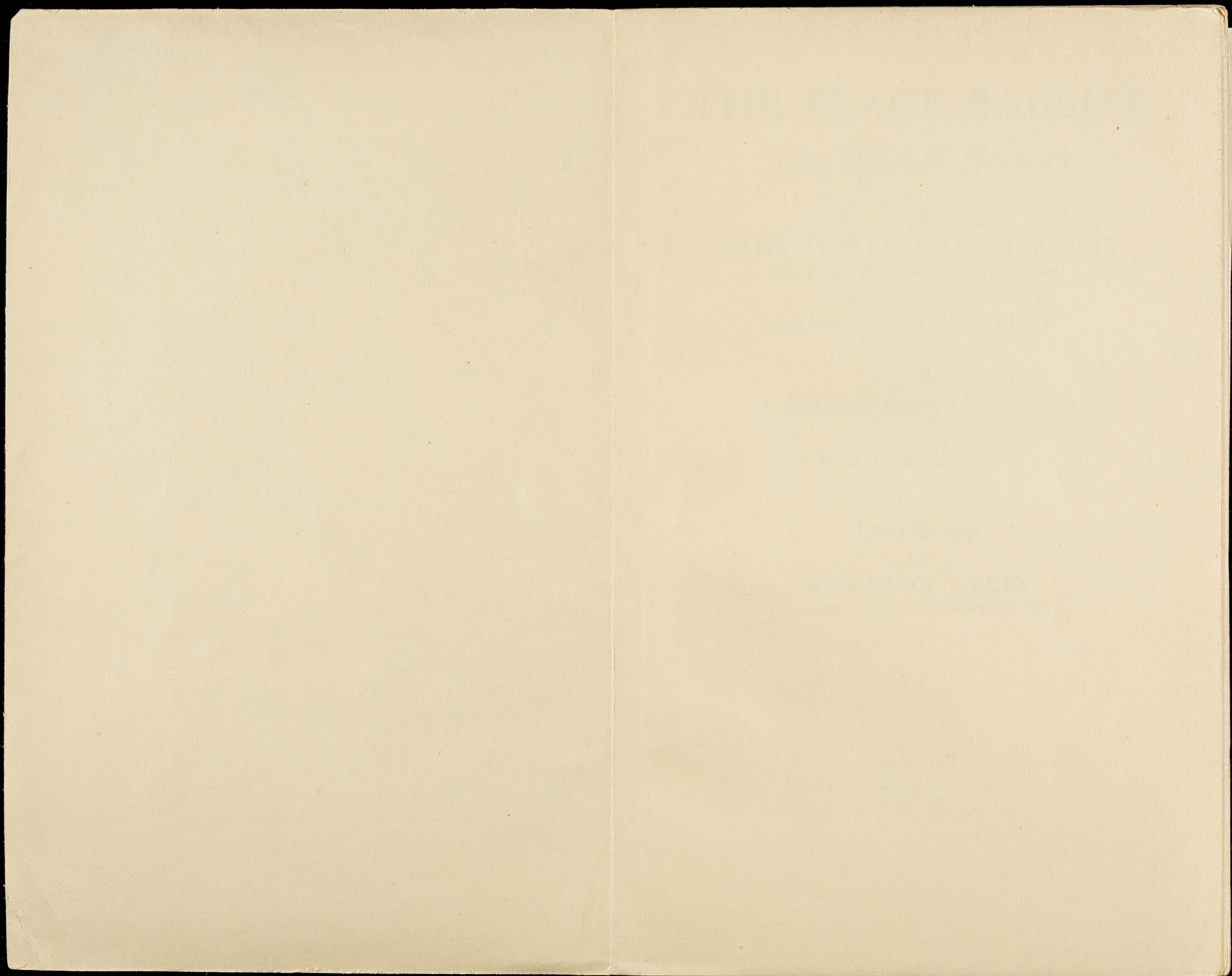
by

WALTER ASHLEY

And Conclusion by

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Foreword

AN ATTEMPT has been made to write an impersonal account of the National Declaration (or Peace Ballot), and scarcely any names are mentioned.

I cannot allow it to be published, however, without expressing my deep gratitude, and that of the National Declaration Committee, to the many organisations who have done so much to help ; and in particular, to the Executive Committee and the officials of the League of Nations Union, here in London and throughout the country, without whose constant co-operation this ambitious scheme could not possibly have been carried through.

I must also add my personal thanks to my entire staff ; and especially to my chief assistants, who have throughout borne heavy responsibilities. The immense debt which is due to the vast army of voluntary workers throughout the country is made clear in Chapter 7.

ADELAIDE LIVINGSTONE

June 1935

The Story of the Ballot

I. HOW IT BEGAN

THE NATIONAL DECLARATION on the League of Nations and Armaments (popularly known as The Peace Ballot) was an attempt to vocalise public opinion on the scale of a General Election, but on a single issue.

It was a constructive democratic experiment of major importance. For the first time in history, British people had the opportunity of making themselves heard on a first-class issue other than, and above, party politics, and free from the heated atmosphere and rivalries of a General Election.

Such a task, it was fully realised, could not be undertaken lightly. If for any reason this Declaration should fail, if the public refused to respond, or if there should be a majority or even a strong minority in favour of Great Britain leaving the League and the collective system, then considerable harm might be done.

Lord Cecil had the necessary courage and vision to take the initiative. He was convinced that those who said Great Britain was apathetic in support of the League were wrong. As a founder of the League of Nations, as British representative on many occasions at the Assembly and Council of the League, as Vice-President of the League of Nations Union since its inception in 1921 and President since 1923, he has been, as everyone knows, closely associated with constructive peace work and a wide variety of opinion all over the world. He was confident that the League had the strong support of an overwhelming majority of the British people.

There was no definite evidence, however, of the extent of this support. The very fact of its existence was being questioned both at home and abroad.

The weathercock of articulate opinion whirled in the winds of contrary propagandas, and the still small voice of John Smith and Mary Brown remained inaudible.

Obviously, the thing to do was to ask John Smith and Mary Brown. It was so obvious, so audaciously simple, that nobody had ever thought of doing it.

If our democracy is a true democracy, John Smith and Mary Brown, and the sum of their opinions, are the things that matter. They are the rock upon which the fabric of our Government is based. Upon their response all advance ultimately depends.

The first object of the Ballot, therefore, was to demonstrate that the British people were behind the Government's expressed object of making "the support and extension of the authority of the League of Nations a cardinal point" in Great Britain's policy.

Secondly, the expression of such a volume of opinion would be bound to have an important influence on peace movements in other countries. The legend of "perfidious Albion" probably arose as much from misunderstandings due to the Englishman's dislike of thinking aloud, as from any other cause. Reading certain English newspapers, the uninformed foreigner might be tempted to believe that the statements of British Ministers in favour of the League and of peace were mere hypocrisy.

Early in 1934, it looked as if the cause of international co-operation were dying. The Disarmament Conference had reached a deadlock, and the possibility of war in Europe was being seriously discussed. The campaign for isolation was being vigorously pressed in certain quarters. A demonstration of British loyalty to the League and the collective peace system was urgently needed.

A third and very important object in taking such a

plebiscite was educational ; to place before the public the real issue—namely, what exactly is involved in Great Britain being a Member of the League of Nations. In a word—to arouse interest and discussion on a matter of vital importance to everyone.

2. THE FIVE QUESTIONS

THE ORIGINAL GERM of the Ballot was a Questionnaire initiated in Ilford in January 1934 by Mr. C. J. A. Boorman, editor of the ILFORD RECORDER and a leading member of the Ilford branch of the League of Nations Union. By means of his newspaper and with the help of some 500 voluntary workers, Mr. Boorman discovered that it was possible and practicable to test and record public opinion on issues which were formerly the peculiar province of professional diplomats and politicians.

The questions and voting in this local ballot—which was open to all residents over 16—were as follows :

	YES ANSWERS	NO ANSWERS
1. Should Great Britain remain in the League of Nations ?	21,532	3,954
2. Should the Disarmament Conference continue ?	20,472	4,960
3. Do you agree with that part of the Locarno Treaty which binds Great Britain to go to the help of France or Germany if the one is attacked by the other ?	5,898	18,498
4. Should the manufacture of armaments by private enterprise be prohibited ?	20,415	4,819

This ballot and its results, which he was asked to announce at the Ilford Town Hall on February 8th, 1934, profoundly impressed Lord Cecil. If such a ballot could be successfully organised at Ilford, why not in a larger place? If the residents of Ilford were so obviously in favour of the League and the continuance of disarmament efforts, might not the citizens of the rest of the country be of the same opinion?

Lord Cecil, in a speech in the House of Lords some time later, himself recalled this early experiment. "It was brought to our notice," he said, "that a Questionnaire of this type had been distributed and answered in a particular district of London with great success. By universal agreement among the lovers of peace, they had all worked together—no division of Parties or Churches or anything of that kind—and a very successful result had been achieved. We said: 'Well, what can be done in one district can be done in all.' That was the whole genesis of the idea and nothing else."

On March 1st, 1934, Lord Cecil put his proposal before the Executive Committee of the League of Nations Union. Though the main idea, startling as it was, was approved, it was felt that the Union could not carry through such a scheme by itself; and further, that, even if outside co-operation could be secured, it could not accept the considerable financial responsibilities involved.

The whole matter was thoroughly explored, however, at a special meeting of the same Committee on March 8th; a number of other national organisations expressed their readiness to co-operate; and, at a further meeting on April 19th, it was finally decided—on the understanding that the Committee set up to organise the Ballot would accept full financial responsibility and subject to ratification by the Union's Council—that the Union should take part.

Meanwhile, the general plan was gradually evolved.

Steps were at once taken to convene a Conference of delegates from representative national bodies, the three political parties, the Churches, peace societies, women's organisations, co-operative guilds, and so on. At this Conference, held on March 27th, a draft of the questions was considered, a plan of campaign laid out, and an executive committee—the National Declaration Committee—set up under the chairmanship of Lord Cecil.

The societies represented then reported to their respective headquarters, with the result that 38 of them officially decided to co-operate, and to appoint representatives on the National Declaration Committee. None of the societies originally convened vetoed the scheme; though a few, including the Conservative Party, left the decision to participate or not to their local branches.

The National Declaration Committee held its first meeting on April 11th, 1934, and proceeded to a detailed consideration of a scheme for organising a Ballot submitted by its Chairman. One proposal which arose in course of the discussion was that, in view of the unfortunate effect which a lukewarm response to a large-scale ballot might have on the prestige of the League in this country, it might be wiser to confine it to twenty or thirty typical districts. But vision and courage won. A cautious test vote in a few districts was discarded in favour of a bold attempt to take the Ballot on a national scale.

It is interesting to recall that, at this stage, a final vote of from four to five millions was generally regarded as the measuring rod of success.

The Questions, as finally drafted, were:

1. Should Great Britain remain a Member of the League of Nations?
2. Are you in favour of an all-round reduction of armaments by international agreement?

3. Are you in favour of the all-round abolition of national military and naval aircraft by international agreement?
4. Should the manufacture and sale of armaments for private profit be prohibited by international agreement?
5. Do you consider that, if a nation insists on attacking another, the other nations should combine to compel it to stop by
 - (a) economic and non-military measures?
 - (b) if necessary, military measures?

Although the general idea of the Ballot had been inspired by the Ilford plebiscite, the Questions, it will be seen, were made more comprehensive and drafted on a wider basis. The one regarding collective security, for example—the last—made no mention of the Locarno Treaty but raised instead the whole matter of combined action against an aggressor nation in its wider and more inclusive aspects—with the result that a large negative majority was turned into large affirmative majorities.

There was little controversy over the actual form and substance of the Questions, for most of them were implicit in the League Covenant, and all of them were of immediate importance.

Questions 2 and 3 were originally drafted as one question: "Are you in favour of an all-round reduction of armaments by international agreement, including the abolition of bombardment from the air?" It was finally decided to divide this question into two.

Experience has since shown that, when the air question was thus separated from that about general disarmament, the control of civil aviation, explicitly mentioned in the Ballot literature, should also have been included in the actual question. This omission was undoubtedly the main cause of Question 3 becoming the second most controversial throughout the Ballot.

Question 5 was divided into two parts dealing with (a)

economic measures, and (b) military measures against an aggressor nation. This was done to meet the point of view of that considerable body of opinion which held that under no circumstances should nations resort to force.

It is interesting to note in this connection that 5*b* has throughout been the most controversial of all the Questions, and 5*a* the second most popular. Later, it was decided to allow the statement "I accept the Christian Pacifist attitude" as an alternative to a *Yes* or *No* answer to either or both sections of Question 5.

The importance of the words "by international agreement" and "all-round" were stressed and repeated throughout, to make it quite clear that none of the questions raised the issue of unilateral disarmament.

The scheme, the questions, the list of societies able and willing to co-operate, most of the literature, and the general plan of action were all prepared before the meeting of the League of Nations Union Council, which was held at Bournemouth in June, 1934.

At this meeting, the final decision to go forward was taken; and the Union's branches all over the country were invited to take the initiative in convening the necessary local conferences. Immediately after, the curtain rose on the first act of what proved to be an historic drama.

3. THE OPENING PHASE

THE FIRST RESULTS of the Ballot were announced at the beginning of November 1934, and at once aroused widespread public interest. Certain great national and provincial newspapers treated them from the first as a matter of considerable importance. As for the isolationist Press, though it was exceedingly uncomplimentary, it managed, by the hysterical vehemence of its opposition, to play its

part—a not inconsiderable one—in making the Ballot widely known.

This important experiment started, in fact, in a blaze of controversy. The most common accusations against it, made both in certain sections of the Press and in Parliament, were (*a*) that the leaflets sent out with the Ballot forms were misleading ; (*b*) that the Ballot was a weapon in the hands of the political opponents of the National Government ; (*c*) that the heading “Peace or War ?” used on some of the literature, was misleading ; and (*d*) that the Questions were too difficult for the public to answer.

As to the first of these, a number of supplementary leaflets were issued, and the attacks quickly ceased. This “rainbow” controversy—for the leaflets in question were of different colours—though in some respects unfortunate, had the advantage of placing the Ballot before the public in the widest sense, and of emphasising the necessity for serious thought implied in the Questions.

Regarding the second accusation, strenuous efforts were made from the outset to establish and sustain the non-party nature of the Ballot. Its very timing was proof of its non-party nature ; the organisers were anxious that it should be completed well before another General Election and the raising of the inevitable banners of party propaganda.

Many political leaders of all parties hastened to express their warm approval of the Ballot and their belief in its non-partisan character ; and representatives of all three political parties, as well as of all religious denominations and all ranks of society and points of view were soon found speaking from the same platform, and working on the same committees, on its behalf.

The Liberal and Labour parties at once gave the Ballot their official approval, and were represented on its Executive Committee. Although the Conservative Party

took no official position, a large number of Conservative Members of Parliament made statements of support and approval.

Many people of influence in all walks of life went out of their way to express their public approval. They included : Mr. Arthur Henderson, President of the Disarmament Conference ; Sir Thomas Inskip, Attorney-General ; Mr. J. H. Thomas, Secretary for the Dominions ; Lord Rochester, Paymaster General ; the Earl of Lytton ; Lord Davies ; Sir Herbert Samuel ; and many other Members of Parliament of all three parties.

Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Dame Sybil Thorndike, Mr. Miles Malleson, Miss Diana Wynyard and Mr. St. John Ervine spoke for the stage. Dame Laura Knight represented painting ; Miss E. M. Delafield, Mr. A. A. Milne, Miss Rose Macaulay and Miss Margaret Kennedy, literary opinion. Mr. Jack Hobbs and Mr. W. W. Wakefield left no doubt regarding the attitude of many sportsmen.

The Lord Mayor of London, Sir Evelyn Wrench, Professor J. B. S. Haldane, Professor Winifred Cullis, Dr. A. D. Lindsay (Master of Balliol), Lady Rhondda, Sir Arthur Salter, Sir Norman Angell, and Mr. H. A. L. Fisher were among many of the other eminent people who expressed warm support.

Religious opinion was fully represented in public statements by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, more than fifty Bishops and Canon H. R. L. Sheppard ; by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland ; by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool ; by the President of the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches, the General Secretary of the Baptist Union and the Moderator of the English Presbyterian Church ; and by the Chief Rabbi. Medicine was represented in a manifesto signed by 61 leading physicians and surgeons.

The third accusation—that the “Peace or War?” heading on some of the Ballot literature was misleading—proved to have a surer foundation. It was found that it tended to obscure the central purpose of the Ballot—which was never intended to make the superfluous query as to whether people preferred peace to war, but to find out upon what principles they believed that the construction of peace should be pursued.

It was taken for granted that everybody in this country preferred peace to war. It was never suggested that those who chose to answer any or all of the questions in the negative, or even to oppose the whole idea of the Ballot, were in any sense “war-mongers.” It was clear, however, that the “Peace or War?” heading was causing misunderstanding, and it was accordingly dropped.

The fourth accusation—that the public was not competent to answer such Questions—was quickly disproved. A public which is capable of electing 615 Members of Parliament on a large number of complicated issues every few years had no difficulty in showing itself fully capable of answering *Yes* or *No* to five definite and closely allied questions of principle. In the Ballot's early stages, it was a case of faith alone. There was no precedent, no certainty. But this confident belief in the good sense of the people was fully justified by the results.

4. THE VOTES POUR IN

NOVEMBER 22ND, 1934, was a red-letter day in the history of the Ballot. Late that evening came the first result—from the little village of Scaldwell, in Northamptonshire. There were huge affirmative majorities for every question. This was extraordinarily interesting. But Scaldwell was only one small and obviously enthusiastic village. What was really going to happen?

Then Turiff (Scotland), West Consett, Huthwaite, Kempsey, part of Bradford and part of Oxford announced their returns. It was found that all these places had also recorded enormous majorities.

By the end of November, 60,000 votes had been received and analysed. The *Yes* majorities for four of the questions were well over 90% of the votes recorded; and even the question which was expected to be the most controversial—5*b*—had 81.1% of affirmative answers. This must have been disturbing to those many publicists who had been affirming for years that the people of this country regarded the League and the whole system of collective security as dead, and wished Great Britain to detach herself from Europe without delay.

But 60,000 was only a beginning. Still the organisers asked themselves: was this a preliminary burst of unsustainable enthusiasm, a rocket whose blaze of splendour would leave only a trail of sparks?

A week later, 72,000 votes had been analysed, and the affirmative percentages had scarcely varied. During the third week, returns came in from Skipton, Blackpool, Dudley, Clitheroe, and part of Bath. Although the total was now 172,000, and the *Yes* answers to Question 5*b* had descended to 75.8% of the votes cast, the other questions showed the same amazing constancy.

The first complete constituency result came from Skipton on December 2nd. It was now possible to calculate, not only the proportions of *Yes* and *No* answers to each question, but—what was even more interesting—the *proportion of people over 18 who had voted*. Skipton's poll was 56%—an encouraging result from a widely scattered rural area.

A good poll was regarded, both at that time and throughout the Ballot, as of much greater importance than high percentages of affirmative answers. It meant a wide and true expression of public opinion.

On December 4th, Dudley, and on December 11th, Norwich and Bury announced their returns. The percentage polls were 42%, 53%, and 66% respectively. The Bury poll was a really good one—it meant that, out of a voting population of 44,300, two out of every three had filled in the forms.

The end of the first month of balloting brought the total *Yes* and *No* votes up to a quarter-of-a-million. The first wave was over.

The rate of progress in these early weeks was steady but slow. This initial slowness was the result of a deliberate policy. Nothing was to be gained by hurrying the preliminaries, by skimping the ground-work of the local committees, the training of workers, or time for thought on the part of the voters. It was later proved over and over again that such thorough ground-work and training were big factors in a good poll.

Soon it was time to think, not in hundreds or thousands, but in millions.

The main drive started after Christmas, by which time over 1,000 local committees were at work. Results began to pour in with increasing velocity, though they were still confined to the smaller towns and districts. What would happen when the big cities began to speak?

The results from the first of these—Bristol—were eagerly awaited. They arrived on January 6th, 1935, and at once placed the Ballot on a new high level of public interest and support. Bristol's five constituencies added 132,773 to the grand total, and the poll was 51½%. If other big cities followed suit, a substantial final result was certain.

This was the beginning of the second act of a drama which rapidly increased in intensity during the next five months. Before the end of January, Hull's four constituencies announced a vote of 83,914 and a 44% poll. During the last days of the month, the total votes recorded passed the first million mark.

On February 21st, Bournemouth redeemed Southern apathy with a 53% poll. A day later Rossendale riposted for the North with a 73% poll, and for some weeks held first place.

On February 23rd, the East came into the picture. Lincoln's vote represented a 60% poll. The second million mark was passed.

During March, the snowball, already large, doubled its size. Another two million votes poured in, to which Birmingham's 12 constituencies contributed a total of 276,125, and a poll of 43%. The theory that the big industrial cities would be apathetic, or impossible to work, was disproved.

Between March 26th and April 2nd, six out of the ten Manchester constituencies announced polls of 45% to 58%; and, on March 27th, Sheffield's seven constituencies added a further 149,347 to the total, with a poll of 43%—a particularly significant result in view of the large number of armaments workers in that city.

April broke all records by adding more than two-and-a-half millions to the total—one million in the week of April 4th to 11th alone.

And now the early London returns began to come in. Streatham, Enfield, East Ham North and East Ham South were among the first, and their polls were 41%, 56%, 42%, and 44% respectively. On April 10th, Edmonton broke the London (and the Southern) record with a 61% poll.

April also saw Keighley and Huddersfield give Yorkshire a lead as second only to Lancashire in the best English constituencies. Huddersfield achieved a 69% poll, and Keighley, 69·8%, beat Nelson and Colne, 69·6%.

In the same month, Edinburgh announced a 52% poll, and its six constituencies added another 158,548 to the grand total. Leicester's three constituencies averaged 65½%.

On April 11th, Wales exploded a triple bombshell. Three Welsh constituencies—Anglesey, Aberdare and Swansea (East) dropped Rossendale to fourth place in the highest constituency polls.

Later in the same month, Wales provided another sensation—Ogmore constituency had gone to the top with a poll of 79%. On May 15th, another Welsh constituency, Cardigan, went still higher, soaring to 83%, only to be itself beaten a fortnight later by two others—Montgomery (86.6%) and Merioneth (86.4%).

By May 1st, the final day for polling in most districts, the grand total of votes recorded at the head office was over 7,000,000 from nearly 1,000 areas. By May 12th, the total had passed the 8,000,000 mark.

Although low returns now began to come in from some London districts, where peculiar difficulties had been encountered, these were offset by others; as, for instance, Dulwich (44%), Wood Green (52%), West Bermondsey (47%) and Uxbridge (50%), and by the excellent polls which continued to stream in from other parts of the country—Dewsbury (56%), Bilston (63%), Colne Valley (64%), Stockport (61%), Stockton-on-Tees (66%), Wigan (55%), Spenn Valley (56%), Consett (60%) and Darwen (60%).

In the middle of May, Glasgow announced its result, adding 236,952 votes to the total; and Belfast followed a few days later. Greenock returned a poll of 51%, and the widely scattered Shetlands the fine figure of 66%.¹

By May 22nd, the total had passed the 9,000,000 mark. Counting and classification went on throughout the rest of May and early June.

On June 1st, the 10,000,000 mark was passed; and the 11,000,000 was reached less than a week later.

¹ This was a higher poll than that recorded in any Parliamentary election. The Shetlands hold the record for the number of men in proportion to the population who served in the last war.

5. WHAT THE PUBLIC THOUGHT

QUITE EARLY in the Ballot, it was apparent that most of the high polls were coming from the North and from Wales. Lancashire and Yorkshire headed the English list of best constituency polls by a substantial majority, while the best eight of all the constituencies came from Wales. (See pp. 51-54.)

Generally speaking, however, the public responded extraordinarily well all over the country. The Ballot was a new thing, and therefore a queer thing. There were cases of rudeness, there was apathy, there was even downright stupidity; but, on the whole, the Ballot was a notable vindication of British democracy.

A detailed study of the workers' experiences shows that great numbers of people are now taking an intelligent interest in international affairs, and that there is a real and widespread desire for information. In a North Country workers' mess-room, for instance, lunch-time talks on international affairs, on economics and on the Peace Ballot were all well attended.

There is a general consensus of opinion among the voluntary helpers that, if the Ballot was nothing else, it was a great educative force, and not least among themselves. Innumerable people have realised, many of them for the first time, what it means for a nation to be a Member of the League of Nations; what it means to seek and ensure peace by collective action.

In many parts of the country, there has been a marked revival of interest in the League of Nations Union. In the words expressed by Professor Gilbert Murray, Chairman of the Union, in an article, "The Ballot constitutes the greatest enterprise, and in many ways, the greatest public success with which the Union has ever been associated."

On an average, each worker called on from 30 to 40 houses, though many exceeded this number. The volume of their work was greatly increased by many houses requiring several visits. Either the residents were out when they called, or had lost their papers, or required further information, or were simply too inconsiderate to save the worker's time. What was not inappropriately described as "the door-knocker parade" was no "stand easy."

The record for persistence is probably held by a Maryport worker who succeeded in getting a vote from one housewife, by the exercise of great patience and perseverance, at the *twentieth* time of calling. *Housewife*: "I haven't signed it yet." *Worker*: "Come now. All your neighbours have signed this paper, and are watching out of their windows to see if you are going to." *Housewife*: "Oh! Wait a minute and I will give it to you!"

Here are some typical experiences, some serious, some humorous, from the reports of workers and local newspapers. The absolute secrecy of the Ballot was stressed and maintained throughout, and no quotations are made here from anything written on any Ballot form.

A Nottingham worker collected over 3,000 signatures; a Liverpool worker distributed between 10,000 and 11,000 forms; an Eccles worker, aged 80, distributed 107 papers and collected 106; while, in Rock, a scattered Worcestershire village, the forms were taken round by the butcher and newsagent with the meat and newspapers.

In Glasgow tenement houses, a worker knocked at all the doors on one floor, collected the families on the landing, distributed the forms and explained his errand in one speech instead of half a dozen—and then repeated the process on the next floor.

In one town, it was suggested that an allowance should be made for shoe leather worn out in the Cause. In some of the wilder districts, it would take a whole day's hard

The Peace Ballot—Supplementary Sheet

**TOTAL VOTES:
LATEST FIGURES**

THE TOTAL VOTES for each Question immediately prior to publication were as follows (see page 34):

Question	YES	NO	Doubtful	Abstentions	Christian Pacifist	Total
1	11,090,387	355,883	10,470	102,425		11,559,165
2	10,470,489	862,775	12,062	213,839		11,559,165
3	9,533,558	1,689,786	16,976	318,845		11,559,165
4	10,417,329	775,415	15,076	351,345		11,559,165
5a	10,027,608	635,074	27,255	855,107	14,121	11,559,165
5b	6,784,368	2,351,981	40,893	2,364,441	17,482	11,559,165

Approximately 9½ million of these votes were recorded in England, 1 million in Scotland, 1 million in Wales and 70,000 in Northern Ireland.

ALL THE PERCENTAGES of *Yes*, *No* and other answers to each Question, analysed on pages 36–51, remain the same, except for an occasional variation of a single decimal point.

THE FIRST AVERAGE POLL PERCENTAGE given on page 54 and in the summary on page 58 [§8 (d)] now stands at 37.9.

walking to collect six forms. One field labourer was stalked and found to be a scarecrow.

A Bedford man told the caller that he had answered all the questions in the affirmative. "It's *him* I'm thinking of," he said, pointing to his small son. A letter in a Grantham paper signed "Sergeant at 18" read: "I appeal to everybody with power to vote to answer the five questions in the Ballot." These are typical of the attitude of a vast number of voters who went through the last war. In many districts, members of the British Legion took an active part in the work.

In Plymouth, Mr. T. Marks, the "Fishermen's Bishop," preached at a Methodist Church, dressed in his blue fisherman's jersey, urging the congregation to vote in the Ballot. In many parts of the country, the Sunday preceding the taking of the Ballot was observed as "Peace Sunday," and special sermons were preached in the Churches.

A Sussex worker reported: "I was delighted the other day when a man told me he had answered 'Yes' and his wife 'No' to all six questions." Long discussions between husbands and wives, parents and older children—all of whom, if over 18, could themselves vote—were frequent.

The Highfield troupe of Players cancelled their entry in a British Drama League competition in order to give more time to Ballot work.

A Carlisle householder kept his form an extra day so that his daughter could sign it on her 18th birthday. Another young lady, aged 17, although too young to vote herself, took a prominent part in organising the Ballot in Penzance.

A Paddington worker called on a colonel of the fiery type, and was treated to a heated discourse on magnificent imperialism. As he left the house, the colonel said: "It may interest you to know I have answered all the questions 'Yes.'"

A polite distributor, after handing the form and explanatory literature to a Birmingham lady, said helpfully : " If there is anything you don't understand, I shall be only too pleased to explain it when I call again." A gruff voice from within interrupted him : " Gertcha ! We ain't all fools in Birmingham, if you think we are ! "

A country widow of 75 generously contributed 1s. towards expenses. " My rheumatism stops me from taking papers round like you," she explained. " But I must do something to help." Her sole income was her old age pension. A small boy of 8, holding his younger sister by the hand, entered a committee room in Liverpool and handed the secretary 4d. as his contribution to the sinews of peace.

A worker, calling at a house in Kensington, saw the mistress and was told that neither she nor her staff took any interest in the Ballot. Going down to the area door a few minutes later, however, he was handed a complete set of Ballot forms filled in by the entire staff.

In Huddersfield, the committee consisted of a Church of England Canon, a Council Schoolmaster, a Trades Union official, a manufacturer, a railway employee, a bank clerk, weavers, several social workers and an education expert. " Our only regret," said one of them, " is that we did not know one another sooner." This is the sort of team work which helped to produce the 69% Huddersfield poll.

In Swindon, supporters included the Bishop of Bristol, the Rt. Hon. C. Addison, Mr. W. W. Wakefield (the former England Rugby football captain and prospective National Conservative candidate), a Canon of the Roman Catholic Church, and the President of the Free Church Council.

In Bodmin, a Ballot meeting " platform " consisted of a Methodist minister, Mr. Isaac Foot (the Liberal M.P.), the prospective National Conservative candidate, the Archdeacon of Bodmin, a Congregational minister, the

Chairman of the Women's Liberal Association, and the Secretary of the Women's Unionist Association.

In many districts in Scotland, much willing co-operation was afforded by schoolmasters and ministers of all denominations.

These examples of widespread co-operation could be multiplied from an almost inexhaustible store.

The taking of the Ballot in the Orkneys, the Shetland Islands, Skye, Lewis, and other of the more remote islands and districts of Scotland, where none of the co-operating societies had branches, was due solely to the keenness and self-sacrifice of private individuals.

Both Guernsey and the Isle of Man, although not parts of the United Kingdom, organised Ballots on their own initiative ; the results cannot be included in the totals, but they are of great interest.

6. WHAT THE PRESS THOUGHT

FROM THE BEGINNING, four big national newspapers gave the Ballot generous and almost daily hospitality in their columns—the NEWS CHRONICLE, the DAILY HERALD, the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN and the STAR.

THE TIMES, the DAILY TELEGRAPH and the MORNING POST printed, in the early weeks, the Debate in Parliament regarding the Ballot, and a number of letters in their correspondence columns ; but, later, only gave a few items of Ballot news, such as the appeal to vote signed by the Archbishop of York and thirty Bishops, and the statement, dealing with one aspect of the Ballot, by Lord Cecil before the Royal Commission on the Private Manufacture of and Trading in Arms. When the time came for the organising Committee's Chairman to issue an appeal for funds, however, all three papers published it.

In the preliminary stages, the isolationist Press did their best to persuade their readers to have nothing to do with an enterprise which, for some reason best known to the fertile inventors of headlines, they designated as "The Ballot of Blood." Later, this wordy opposition subsided, with only an occasional flutter of the editorial seismograph. Possibly the squad of special investigators which one of these enterprising papers sent post haste to Scaldwell—the first village to announce its results—brought back a discouraging report of people able and determined to think for themselves.

The B.B.C. mentioned the Ballot once or twice in its News Bulletin during its early stages; Lord Cecil was invited to take part with Mr. L. S. Amery in a debate on the Ballot in March; and the LISTENER published the debate and two diagrams illustrating the early voting.

As the Ballot became topical in each district—and in many cases also both before and after that period—local papers all over the country printed many reports, and the help they gave in getting the Ballot known and talked about was invaluable.

Two large groups of provincial newspapers in particular—the Starmer group and Provincial Newspapers—gave a great deal of space to Ballot news, articles, and friendly editorial comment. The Starmer group published long reports in almost every issue of its important dailies—the NORTHERN ECHO, the BIRMINGHAM GAZETTE, the NOTTINGHAM JOURNAL and the YORKSHIRE OBSERVER—as well as in many of its weekly papers. During the main drive, press cuttings came into headquarters at the rate of 1,750 a week.

From the outset, the weekly reviews showed much interest. A special supplement on the Ballot by Sir Norman Angell and other articles and editorial references published by TIME AND TIDE were of great value. The NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, the SPECTATOR, the religious Press

and many other weeklies and monthlies, including the various magazines of the co-operating societies, also devoted much space to the Ballot.

One of the main tasks of the headquarters staff was to act as liaison between these useful sources of publicity and the trend of Ballot events all over the country. It had to keep its fingers on both ends of the hose—at one end, to regulate the flow of news and broadcast it in the right direction; at the other, to keep up the supply, to interview representative people, and to recognise the true significance of events and figures. An official statement was issued to the Press each day, and an analysis of the results each week.

Enquiries were received from correspondents of foreign newspapers, and articles on the Ballot appeared in Canadian, Australian, Indian, African, New Zealand, West Indian, American, French, Russian, German, Swedish, Dutch, Danish, Austrian and Belgian papers.

In February the first number of the BALLOT WORKER appeared, a fortnightly bulletin with diagrams and detailed information regarding figures and progress. The London and Welsh committees also issued informative bulletins of their own.

During the last weeks of the Ballot, when more than 8,000,000 votes had already been recorded, the NEWS CHRONICLE, the STAR, and a number of provincial newspapers published an adaptation of the Ballot Form for the use of any of their readers who might wish to vote but who, for one reason or another, had not yet been able to do so; and the DAILY HERALD urged any of its readers in a like position to write to the Ballot's headquarters for a similar form.

This was done on the distinct understanding that everyone using these forms signed a statement to the effect that they had not previously voted; and the resultant votes will be announced separately as "newspaper votes" and

are not included in any of the totals recorded in the statistical section of this book.

Over 14,000 people took advantage of this opportunity.

7. HALF A MILLION VOLUNTEERS

AS IN ALL undertakings of real magnitude, the organisation had to grow. Nothing like the Ballot had ever been undertaken before. There was no pattern which could be followed, no previous example to act as a guide. The only thing that was ready to hand was the division of the country into parliamentary constituencies. The National Declaration Committee, faced with an ideal, a plan, and the whole of the United Kingdom, had to start from scratch.

The League of Nations Union lent the head of one of its departments to take charge of the organisation, her secretary, and an office which soon became the centre of a vast web.

London and Wales were decentralised. The organisation in the North and East of Scotland was carried out by the respective district councils of the League of Nations Union. All of England (outside London), the West of Scotland, and Northern Ireland had to be organised from the head office.

The first task was to divide this huge area into two (subsequently three) parts, with an officer responsible for each, and to set up local committees in every constituency (as well as, where necessary, in smaller districts). The nucleus of each committee was usually a local branch of the League of Nations Union, or, sometimes, of one or more of the other co-operating societies.

The first step was the convening of a constituency Conference, at which all organisations willing to

co-operate, the Churches, the political bodies, and all other interested organisations were represented. Whenever possible—and it is remarkable how often it was possible—a well-known local figure, such as the Mayor or Chairman of the District Council, was induced to preside in order to emphasise the non-party nature of the proceedings, and give them prominence. In London, for example, 25 mayors acted in this capacity.

The Conference would then constitute itself the general committee for carrying out the campaign in the constituency, elect an executive committee and officers, and make the preliminary appeal for funds, canvassers, and the support of the Press.

In certain cases, local co-operation was not at first forthcoming; the objects of the Ballot were misunderstood, or local secretaries and branches failed to see the importance of the Ballot and refused to be bothered. This threw a heavy burden on to the officers at headquarters responsible for organising the districts in question; great patience and powers of initiative were required to solve the many problems involved, either directly or through one of the four travelling secretaries appointed to represent them.

These efforts, together with the early success of the Ballot elsewhere, undoubtedly did much to overcome such regional apathy where it existed. It is none the less a remarkable tribute to the efforts of the more than 1,000 local secretaries and committees that, before the Ballot was over, most parts of the country had been organised and polled. Not quite every constituency was covered; nor every district in those that were. But the sum total of the work accomplished by these local committees was immense.

The staff at headquarters increased, spreading by sheer force of cubic pressure right through the small house in which they had been lent one room: into the attic, into

converted bathrooms, into the pantries, whose boarded-over sinks were pressed into service as desks.

A literature department was added, whose output of Ballot forms and circulars ultimately amounted to something like 130 tons; a Press department to undertake the work referred to in the last chapter; a Statistical department to check, tabulate, enter and analyse the votes; two appeal secretaries to raise a fund of £12,000.

The work of the local committees is one of the greatest manifestations of voluntary effort seen in this country. Through conviction, personal persuasion, and local Press appeals, many thousands of voluntary workers were enlisted. In London alone there were approximately 35,000; 7,000 in Glasgow; 6,500 in Birmingham; 3,000 in Edinburgh; 3,000 in Manchester; 3,500 in Bristol; 750 in Dundee; 500 in Gloucester; 400 in Reading; 350 in Peterborough; 300 in Dover.

In all, more than half a million people gave up their time to organisation, and to the arduous work of knocking on millions of doors, delivering and collecting millions of papers, answering innumerable questions, and counting the answers. By far the greatest burden rested upon the shoulders of this devoted army of local workers.

In each district arrangements had to be made to collect and instruct the workers, to see that they understood their duties and that they realised the difference between legitimate explanation and unjustifiable persuasion.

Normally, each group of workers had a leader, and special efforts were made thoroughly to instruct these leaders. To them were given the lists of houses (taken from the parliamentary register or local directory) to be called upon by the group for whose work and thoroughness they were responsible.

The difficulties of organisation in rural districts were often very great, owing to the long distances which had

to be covered. In a north of England moorland district, for example, a travelling secretary found seven people willing to undertake key positions, but he had to visit them in seven different valleys.

The Harwich constituency may be regarded as typical of many. The districts to be organised and balloted in this area included people engaged in large oyster fisheries, those who earn their living in the extensive marshes and saltings, dwellers in holiday resorts, workers in the oil-cake mills, farmers, and those engaged in the continental shipping traffic, yachting and ship-building.

Undoubtedly, the result of the Ballot was in almost all areas in direct proportion to the efficiency of the local committee, the ability and number of the canvassers, and the time spent on preparation. That some of these should vary was inevitable. But, speaking generally, the work of this vast body of voluntary workers was on a high level of public spirit and self-sacrifice.

"This army of workers," wrote Lord Cecil, *"is far stronger evidence of the depth of feeling for peace in this country even than the number of voters. All of us who are responsible for having started the Peace Ballot are, as we ought to be, deeply grateful to these admirable patriots."*

8. HOW THE VOTES WERE COUNTED

WHEN THE FORMS for which each local committee was responsible had been collected, it was faced with the task of counting and analysing the answers. The counting had to be done on a uniform and accurate system, for the record of results was the basis of the whole edifice.

Instructions for classifying the votes were issued at the beginning of the Ballot, thus:

"When the Ballot papers have been collected in each district, they should be sent to the head office of the

constituency committee for counting. The counting is to be done under the following headings: *Yes*, *No*, *Doubtful*, and *No Answer*. Answers to a particular question, the meaning of which is not clear, should be placed among the *Doubtfuls*.

"A preliminary return will then be made to headquarters under these four headings. The *Ayes* and *Noes* will be retained by the constituency committee for a period of six months, in case of the necessity of verification; but the *Doubtfuls* will be sent for classification to the head office of the Declaration in London.

"A special classification will be made of those who answer Question 5 by saying, 'I accept the Christian Pacifist position,' and the total figure of those who give this answer will be published.

"It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the counting must be done by responsible people."

At the same time, instructions for the actual process of counting were clearly indicated.

Space for comments was provided on all Ballot papers (see p. 37); and it was soon found that the public were making considerable use of this. Many found the space provided inadequate, and took advantage of the suggestion to attach sheets of paper to their forms. These popular "essays" would make instructive reading, if the secrecy of the Ballot did not preclude their publication. At least they proved the strength and depth of public interest.

A further instruction was issued by headquarters emphasising the necessity of sending to head office all papers where the comment was not a clear emphasis of the *Yes* or *No* answers. Later, a special committee, presided over by Lord Lytton, was set up to deal with the final classification of these *Doubtful* answers, and its work

proved to be one of the most interesting and informative of all the Ballot's activities.¹

An official tabulation form was sent to each constituency. Local committees were asked to state the total parliamentary electorate for their constituency. To this, in accordance with expert actuarial advice received at headquarters, was to be added 9%, to cover the voters between the ages of 18 and 21; and from this, following similar advice, was to be deducted 10% to cover plural votes in Parliamentary elections and those too old or ill to vote, or away in hospitals, on military service, etc. From the resultant figure, together with the total number of signatures obtained, an accurate percentage "poll" could then be calculated.

The answers to each question under all five categories were to be given in detail; these figures, when properly compiled, giving the same total for each of the questions, and thus providing an additional check on accuracy.

The forms were signed by the chairman of the scrutineers, or the chiefs of each local committee. They were then returned to headquarters, where they form a permanent and accurate record of the Ballot in every constituency.

9. WHO PAID?

BUT WHO is behind it? Who is financing it? This was a common question, and suspicious opponents threw out many dark hints.

The truth is that nobody was "behind" the Ballot—except the 38 co-operating societies; and the funds they were able to subscribe, though generous, were never within hailing distance of the necessary total.

A General Election costs the various party headquarters

¹ Many of these *Doubtful* answers did not come to hand until the closing weeks of the ballot, and the Committee is still hard at work.

approximately £500,000. The Peace Ballot headquarters, also working on a nation-wide scale, cost £12,000. This £12,000, apart from the co-operating societies' contributions, was made up entirely of subscriptions raised by the two appeal secretaries and as a result of two appeals by Lord Cecil.

To this fund an illuminating variety of people contributed. They included philanthropic bodies, Members of Parliament and chairmen of Building Societies; newspapers, manufacturers, Trade Unions and the personnel of one of London's biggest shops; schools, Co-operative Societies and firms; sympathisers living in India, Iraq, Egypt, Canada, Southern Rhodesia, Bavaria, Majorca, Trinidad and Czechoslovakia; individuals of every rank and station. Some lights, both big and small, were hidden under bushels labelled "anonymous."

Each local committee was left to cover its own expenses, exclusive of the literature supplied by headquarters. It had to provide for office and equipment, postage, hire of halls for meetings, travelling expenses, publicity, and, in large and difficult areas, the fees of an organising secretary. Their problems were the problems of headquarters in miniature.

The exact amount of work, organisation, and generosity thus entailed throughout the country will probably never be known. It can readily be imagined, however, by anybody who has ever set out to make bricks without either clay or straw—and found both clay and straw miraculously provided.

The Results of the Ballot

A STATISTICAL SURVEY

BY

WALTER ASHLEY

(Assistant Secretary, National Declaration Committee)

THE PRECEDING CHAPTERS tell why and how the Ballot was started and the various stages of its progress. What have been its most important *results*? And what is their main significance?

The statistical results of the Ballot—the first Referendum on a national scale this country has ever seen—can hardly fail to provide material on which, for some time to come, statisticians will exercise their ingenuity, and political students their powers of analysis and dialectic. No historian, however detached, no social investigator, however indifferent to the Ballot's central purpose, can afford to ignore the implications of the 11,000,000 votes which were recorded in the course of it.

This short survey is intended principally, however, for those who, while not greatly interested in statistics in the ordinary way, while even bored by them, are interested in the Ballot, have perhaps been actively working on its behalf, and are anxious to know, first the exact nature, and then the meaning of its results.

1. TOTAL VOTES

FIRST MUST COME A SUMMARY of the grand totals of answers received to each of the 5 Questions for the whole country.

CB

A few late returns have still to come in, but they are unlikely to affect any of the totals to a material degree.¹ (Votes recorded as a result of the publication of the Ballot form in certain newspapers at the end of the Ballot are not included ; neither are those recorded on unsigned Ballot forms.)

<i>Question</i>	YES	NO	Doubtful	Abstentions	Christian Pacifist	<i>Total</i>
1	10,642,560	337,964	9,878	97,258	—	11,087,660
2	10,058,526	815,365	11,269	202,500	—	11,087,660
3	9,157,145	1,614,159	15,861	300,495	—	11,087,660
4	10,002,849	740,354	14,084	330,373	—	11,087,660
5 ^a	9,627,606	607,165	25,786	813,708	13,395	11,087,660
5 ^b	6,506,777	2,262,261	38,726	2,263,194	16,702	11,087,660

As each district completed its "poll," these votes came in to the central office, at first slowly, then more quickly, and finally in something like an avalanche, thus :

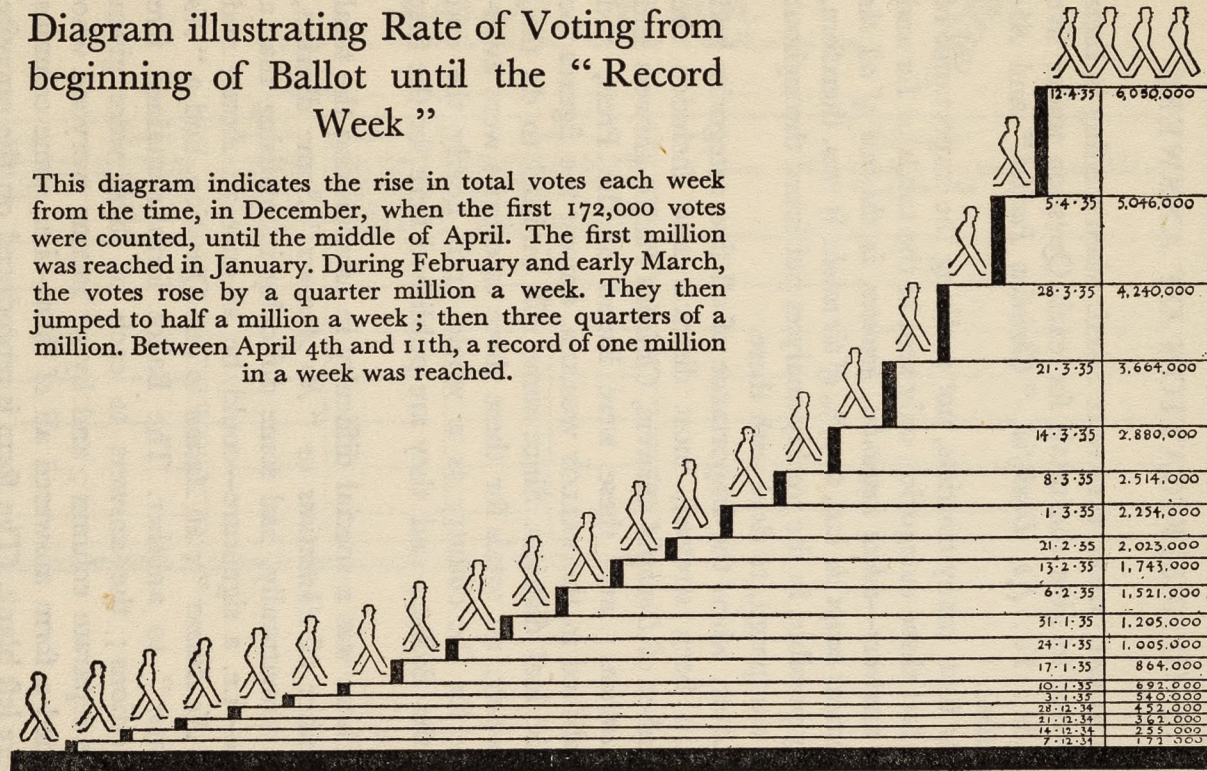
Month	Approximate No. of votes
November 1934	70,000
December 1934	400,000
January 1935	750,000
February 1935	1,000,000
March 1935	2,000,000
April 1935	2,800,000
May 1935	3,100,000

This rapid rate of increase is shown more graphically—up to the "record" period, April 5–12th, when a million votes were received in a single week—in the diagram on the opposite page.

¹ A separate sheet inserted in this book immediately prior to publication gives the totals on that date.

Diagram illustrating Rate of Voting from beginning of Ballot until the "Record Week"

This diagram indicates the rise in total votes each week from the time, in December, when the first 172,000 votes were counted, until the middle of April. The first million was reached in January. During February and early March, the votes rose by a quarter million a week. They then jumped to half a million a week; then three quarters of a million. Between April 4th and 11th, a record of one million in a week was reached.



2. CLASSIFICATION OF ANSWERS

ALL LOCAL COMMITTEES were asked, when sending in their returns, to give the totals for each Question under five heads: *Yes*, *No*, *Doubtful*, "*Christian Pacifist*" and *Abstentions*.

At first, many districts, not realising the importance of the last three categories, only sent in the totals of *Yes* and *No* answers—which amounted, however, in the case of all the Questions except the last, to 97% of the whole. It was, therefore, only possible, in the weekly analyses published throughout the campaign, to deal with these.

Later, when the importance of all five categories had again been stressed, most districts also included the number of *Doubtful* answers, *Christian Pacifist* answers and *Abstentions*; and these were issued to the Press, and published in the *BALLOT WORKER*, among the figures for individual districts. Since some still omitted to do this, however, no totals for these three categories were available for the country as a whole until nearly the end of the Ballot; and they are published here for the first time.

There was a special difficulty in ascertaining the total number of *Abstentions* or "*No Answers*." Some districts, not unnaturally, had some difficulty in realising that a vote—i.e. a signature—could be at once an *Answer* and a "*No Answer*"; an *Answer* to one Question, and a "*No Answer*" to another. The Ballot form contained five Questions; the answers to each of them were given in a separate column; and by no means everyone who signed a form answered all of them—i.e., some columns were left blank. (The form is reproduced on the opposite page.)

Other districts assumed that everyone had answered Question 1; that the total answers to Question 1 were

therefore the same thing as the *total votes* ; and that the number of *Abstentions* to (say) Question 5*b* could readily be ascertained by merely subtracting the total answers to that Question from the total answers to Question 1. The head office, they thought, had but to make this simple calculation to have all the information it required to meet any demand there might be for regular totals for all five categories of answer.

This line of argument was fallacious, since, as shown in the table above, a considerable number of people—close on 100,000—*did not answer Question 1 at all*, but did answer at least one of the others. It was thus impossible to make any calculations in regard to the *Abstentions* for any of the other Questions without first knowing this figure.

3. YES AND NO ANSWERS

THE following table shows the percentages of *Yes* and *No* answers in relation to the *total Yes* and *No* answers :

Question	Total YES and NO answers	YES	%	NO	%
1	10,980,524	10,642,560	97.0	337,964	3.0
2	10,873,891	10,058,526	92.5	815,365	7.5
3	10,771,304	9,157,145	85.0	1,614,159	15.0
4	10,743,203	10,002,849	93.1	740,354	6.9
5 <i>a</i>	10,234,771	9,627,606	94.1	607,165	5.9
5 <i>b</i>	8,769,038	6,506,777	74.2	2,262,261	25.8

Diagrams illustrating two stages in the progress of the voting in regard to these definite *Yes* and *No* answers—i.e., excluding all *Doubtful* answers, *Christian Pacifist* answers, and *Abstentions*—are given opposite this page and the next.

How the First Three-and-a-Half Million Voted Yes and No Answers Only

1 Man represents 100,000 Votes

NOTE — All figures given and illustrated in this diagram represent definite *Yes* and *No* answers only. Figures for *Doubtful* answers, *Christian Pacifist* answers and *Abstentions*, although received from many districts, were not at this time available for the country as a whole (see pp. 36-38).

Question.			Votes Cast
1 For the League of Nations.	YES		3,564,101 (97.3%)
	NO		100,254 (2.7%)
2 For All-round Disarmament.	YES		3,358,295 (92.8%)
	NO		261,663 (7.2%)
3 For Abolition of Naval and Military Aircraft.	YES		3,065,345 (85.3%)
	NO		526,386 (14.7%)
4 For Abolition of Private Manufacture of Arms.	YES		3,328,267 (93.2%)
	NO		243,094 (6.8%)
5A For Economic Action against Aggressor Nation.	YES		3,172,243 (94.1%)
	NO		197,834 (5.9%)
5B For Military Action against Aggressor Nation.	YES		2,103,641 (73.0%)
	NO		765,259 (27.0%)

A similar table was published each week throughout the Ballot, and the percentages recorded therein are worth examining in some detail. The percentages of *Yes* answers to each Question for each million votes received from the first to the eleventh are given below. (A table for the percentages of *No* answers would show, of course, the exact converse.)

PERCENTAGES OF *YES* ANSWERS

to each Question in the Analyses of the 1st million to the 11 million votes

Total YES and NO Answers	No. of Districts	Question					
		1 ¹	2 ¹	3 ¹	4 ¹	5a ¹	5b ¹
1,005,092 (Jan. 24)	152	96·9	93·4	87·1	93·9	94·3	70·2
2,023,450 (Feb. 21)	286	97·1	92·9	86·0	93·7	94·3	72·1
3,045,337 (Mar. 16)	415	97·2	92·8	85·5	93·3	94·1	72·9
4,239,968 (Mar. 28)	566	97·2	92·6	85·0	93·0	94·1	73·7
5,046,383 (April 5)	672	97·2	92·6	85·0	93·0	94·0	74·0
6,267,498 (April 17)	799	97·1	92·5	85·0	93·0	94·0	74·1
7,290,985 (May 2)	1,007	97·1	92·5	85·0	93·0	94·0	74·0
8,110,234 (May 14)	1,124	97·1	92·5	84·9	93·0	94·0	74·5
9,019,043 (May 23)	1,340	97·0	92·5	84·8	93·0	94·0	74·5
10,013,650 (June 1)	1,519	97·0	92·5	85·0	93·0	94·0	74·3
11,087,660 (June 7)	1,645	97·0	92·5	85·0	93·1	94·1	74·2
Lowest Percentage		96·9	92·5	84·8	93·0	94·0	70·2
Highest Percentage		97·2	93·4	87·1	93·9	94·3	74·5
Extent of variation		0·3	0·9	2·3	0·9	0·3	4·3

¹ Question 1 dealt with the League of Nations ; Question 2 with all-round disarmament ; Question 3 with the abolition of naval and military aircraft ; Question 4 with the abolition of the private manufacture of arms ; Question 5a with economic measures against an aggressor nation ; and Question 5b with military measures against an aggressor nation.

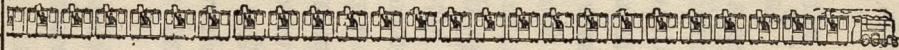











4. THE MEANING OF THE VOTE

ON THE FIGURES given in the above table, three conclusions of some interest may be based :

How the First Six-and-a-Quarter Million Voted

Each Carriage represents 250,000 Votes *Yes* and *No* Answers Only

NOTE — All the figures given and illustrated in this diagram represent definite *Yes* and *No* answers only. Figures for *Doubtful* answers, *Christian Pacifist* answers and *Abstentions*, although received from many districts, had not at this time been received from all, and were not, therefore, available for the country as a whole (see pp. 36-38).

Question			Votes Cast
1	YES		6,083,597 (97.1%)
	NO		183,901 (2.9%)
2	YES		5,732,940 (92.5%)
	NO		467,712 (7.5%)
3	YES		5,206,301 (85.0%)
	NO		942,971 (15.0%)
4	YES		5,712,022 (93.0%)
	NO		430,273 (7.0%)
5A	YES		5,455,836 (94.0%)
	NO		347,551 (6.0%)
5B	YES		3,692,271 (74.1%)
	NO		1,287,424 (25.9%)

1. The millions of people all over the country who answered the questions did not do so without *thought*; and, having thought, they arrived, with a quite extraordinary degree of universality, at similar opinions.

Glance at the table on p. 40. On January 24th, when the first million votes (from 152 districts) had been recorded, 96.9 per cent. of those who had given a definite answer to Question 1 (on the League of Nations) were found to have answered *Yes*. On February 21st, when the first two million votes (from 286 districts) were analysed, the affirmative percentage was 97.1. The corresponding percentages for three millions (415 districts), four (566), five (672), six (799), seven (1,007), eight (1,124), nine (1,340), ten (1,519) and eleven millions (1,645 districts), were, it will be seen, 97.2, 97.2, 97.2, 97.1, 97.1, 97.1, 97.0, 97.0., and 97.0. In brief, the utmost extent of the variation was an almost negligible fraction—0.3 per cent.

For Questions 2, 4 and 5a, the extent of the variation was, in the same way, from the first million votes to the eleven million, less than 1 per cent. Even for the two Questions which were throughout the most controversial—3 and 5b—the utmost extent of variation was no more than 2.3% and 4.3% respectively.

What is still more remarkable, this extraordinary consistency of public opinion was apparent in almost all the detailed returns sent in from individual districts. Only very occasionally, for example, did any of the percentages of *Yes* answers to Questions 1, 2, 4 or 5a recorded by this or that district—from large cities to large towns, from small towns to small villages—fall below 90%; in almost every case, they were well over that figure.

The following figures, taken at random from 1,645 returns *and irrespective of whether the poll was high or low*, may serve as an illustration (the figures given being confined to those recorded on these four Questions):

WORLINGHAM (SUFFOLK)

Question	YES	%	NO	%
1	95	.. 95.0	5	.. 5.0
2	90	.. 91.0	9	.. 9.0
4	84	.. 85.7	14	.. 14.3
5a	96	.. 99.0	1	.. 1.0

LETCHWORTH :

1	4,466	.. 95.8	197	.. 4.2
2	4,361	.. 94.3	266	.. 5.7
4	4,357	.. 94.9	235	.. 5.1
5a	4,143	.. 94.3	250	.. 5.7

CREWE :

1	25,683	.. 97.8	565	.. 2.2
2	24,384	.. 93.5	1,689	.. 6.5
4	23,800	.. 94.2	1,468	.. 5.8
5a	23,467	.. 95.6	1,077	.. 4.4

BIRMINGHAM :

1	267,916	.. 97.7	6,274	.. 2.3
2	245,112	.. 90.1	27,075	.. 9.9
4	242,418	.. 90.2	26,429	.. 9.8
5a	239,214	.. 93.6	16,465	.. 6.4

2. The six Questions all the way through kept the same relation to each other in respect of "popularity."

This is also shown in the table on p. 40, from which it will be seen that the following order of "popularity" of the Questions never once varied :

- I. Question 1 (League of Nations)
- II. Question 5a (Collective security by non-military measures)
- III. Question 4 (Abolition of private manufacture of arms)

IV. Question 2 (All-round disarmament)

V. Question 3 (Abolition of naval and military aircraft)

VI. Question 5*b* (Collective security by military measures)

The graph given on the opposite page, plotted week by week from November until May, shows that the six lines representing the percentages of affirmative answers to each Question *never once crossed*.

3. While the desire of the voting public for the abolition of naval and military aircraft at first slightly decreased, its desire for collective security, even if it involves military measures, steadily increased all the way through up to nearly the end.

This is shown in a condensed form in the table on p. 40, and in greater detail on the graph. Week by week, from January 24th to March 28th, the percentages of *Yes* answers to Question 3 slightly but steadily decreased. Week by week, from January 24th to May 23rd, the percentage of *Yes* answers to Question 5*b*, also slightly, but no less steadily and with greater persistence, increased.

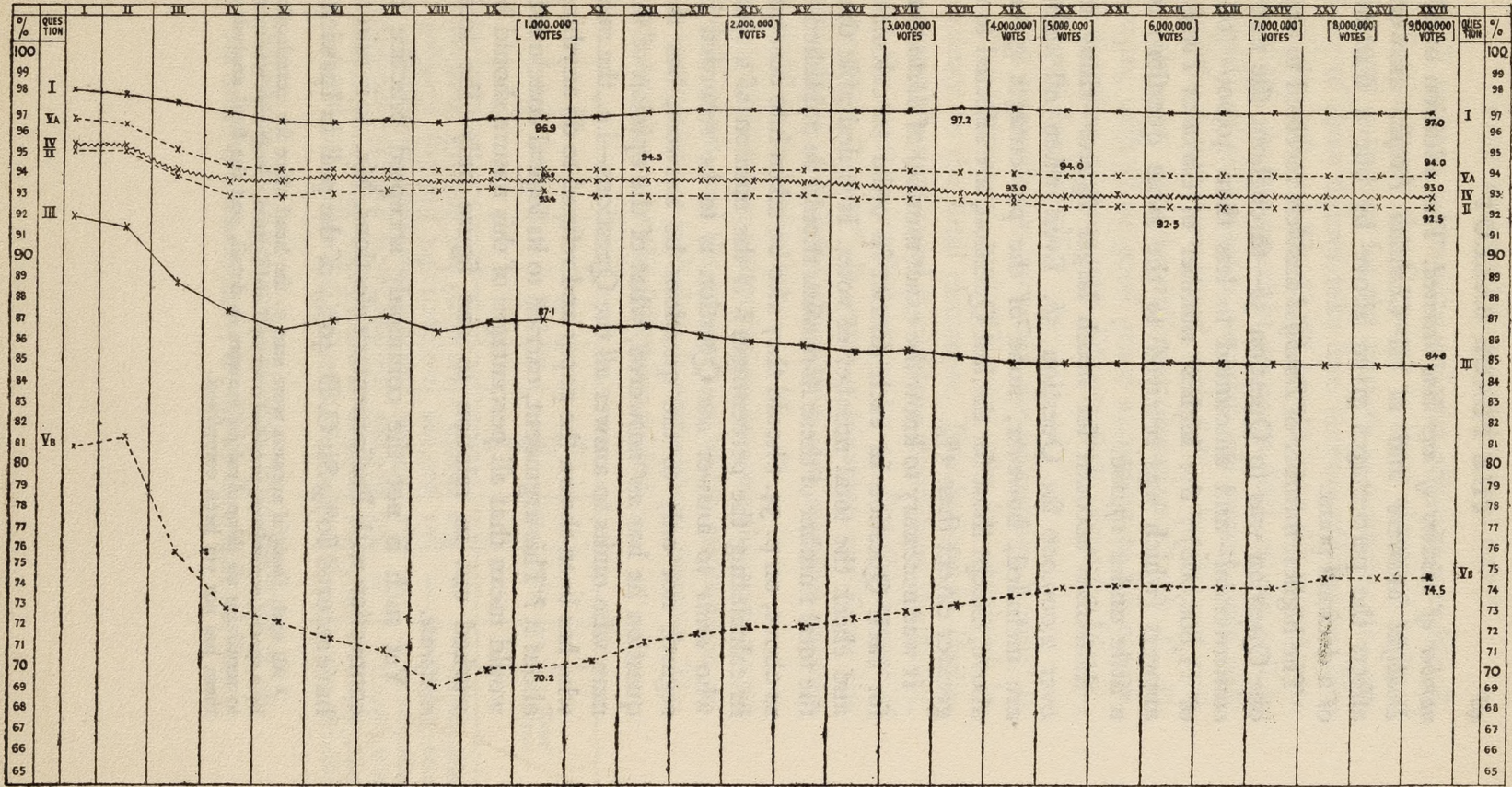
It is interesting to speculate on the connection, if any, between these two phenomena ; and between either, or both, of them and recent events in the realm of international politics.

5. DOUBTFUL ANSWERS; CHRISTIAN PACIFIST ANSWERS; ABSTENTIONS

THE *Yes* and *No* answers represent, as has been said, for all the Questions except the last, *at least 97% of the whole*

GRAPH SHOWING PERCENTAGE OF YES ANSWERS IN RELATION TO TOTAL YES AND NO ANSWERS TO EACH QUESTION AS REVEALED BY WEEKLY ANALYSIS. (Excluding *Doubtful* answers, *Christian Pacifist* answers and *Abstentions*)

← Weeks from November 23rd, 1934, to May 24th, 1935 →



number of answers of any kind received. The addition of all *Doubtful* answers and of all *Christian Pacifist* answers affects the percentages given above by but a fraction of a decimal point.

The highest number of *Doubtful* answers received to any one Question was to Question 5*b*—throughout the most controversial—and amounted to less than 40,000¹ (out of 11,000,000); the highest number of *Christian Pacifist* answers (which was received to the same question) to a little under 17,000.

Abstentions account for much larger figures—rising to over 2,000,000 for Question 5*b*. Even when all these are included, however, none of the percentages given above, except those for the last Question, are affected to a greater extent than 3%.

It was necessary to know the exact number of *Abstentions* for each Question in each district in order to calculate and check the total number of votes. It is desirable that the total number of these *Abstentions* should be published—as above, on p. 34. Should they also be taken into account in calculating the percentages? If the opinion of a man who *omits* to answer *one* Question is to be recorded in regard, not only to the questions he answers, but the question he has *not* answered, what of the opinion of the man who omits to answer *all* the Questions—i.e., the man who has been shown the paper and refused to do anything about it? This argument, carried to its logical conclusion, would mean that all percentages of this nature should be worked out in relation to one figure only—the total *electorate*.

Yet such is not the commonly accepted practice in connection with Parliamentary elections. Mr. A. is said to have secured 60%, Sir C. D. 40%, of the poll in Ipswich;

¹ All such *Doubtful* answers were sent to the head office for examination by a special committee, presided over by Lord Lytton. Great care was taken to scrutinise all these *Doubtful* answers in detail, and the final analysis of them has not yet been completed.

Mr. B. to have achieved a majority of 5,000 over Mr. E. in Nottingham; the G. party to have obtained 74% of the total votes cast for the country as a whole, etc., etc. None of these figures take into account *Abstentions*. Not even the defeated Sir. C. D. would have the temerity to say “Mr. A. has no right to claim 60% of the poll in Ipswich. *If all non-voters are taken into account*, only 36% voted for him as compared with 64% who did not vote for him—an entirely different situation!” Sir C. D. accepts, with ill or good grace according to his nature, the fact that, of those who *did* vote, 60% voted for Mr. A., only 40% for himself.

It is interesting to ascertain the percentage “poll” in each constituency, and this can only be obtained by reference to the total electorate. This is done in Parliamentary elections; and it was done throughout the Ballot, with the results recorded on pp. 51–54. But this matter of percentage “polls” is quite a separate one from the percentages of definite affirmative and negative answers received to each question.

Nevertheless, some comparison between the percentages already given, and the percentages which result when all five categories are included, is not without interest. The latter are shown in the following table:

Question	YES	%	NO	%	Doubtful	%	Abstentions	%	C/P	%	Total Votes
1	10,642,560	96.0	337,964	3.0	9,878	0.1	97,258	0.9	—	—	11,087,660
2	10,058,526	90.7	815,365	7.4	11,269	0.1	202,500	1.8	—	—	11,087,660
3	9,157,145	82.6	1,614,159	14.6	15,861	0.1	300,495	2.7	—	—	11,087,660
4	10,002,849	90.2	740,354	6.7	14,084	0.1	330,373	3.0	—	—	11,087,660
5 <i>a</i>	9,627,606	86.8	607,165	5.5	25,786	0.2	813,708	7.4	13,395	0.1	11,087,660
5 <i>b</i>	6,506,777	58.6	2,262,261	20.4	38,726	0.4	2,263,194	20.4	16,702	0.2	11,087,660

Comparing these percentages with those given on p. 38 for *Yes* and *No* answers only, it will be seen that the latter

do not greatly differ from the former, in respect of the first four Questions, as a result of any of the additions ; nor, in respect of the last Question, by the addition of the *Doubtful* and the *Christian Pacifist* answers ; but that the percentages in regard to the last Question are affected considerably by the addition of the *Abstentions*. Here are the comparative percentages for the *Yes* answers to each Question :

Question	Percentage in relation to total YES and NO answers only	Order	Percentage in relation to total for all answers and Abstentions	Order
1	97.0	I	96.0	I
2	92.5	IV	90.7	II
3	85.0	V	82.6	V
4	93.1	III	90.2	III
5a	94.1	II	86.8	IV
5b	74.2	VI	58.6	VI

Three of the *Yes* percentages in the second list remain, it will be seen, over 90% ; two others are still over 80% ; and only that for the second section of the last Question represents a majority which can be regarded as anything but overwhelming.

As to the order, Question 1 still remains the most "popular," Question 4 remains third ; Question 3 remains fifth ; Question 5b remains sixth, or least "popular." The only difference between the two lists, in fact, is that Question 2 (regarding disarmament) and Question 5a (regarding collective security by economic measures) change places ; Question 2 going up from fourth place to second, Question 5a, by reason of the many people who abstained from answering it, dropping from second place to fourth.

6. THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE

THE *Yes* and *No* answers to the five Questions may now be shown in relation to each Question, as follows :

QUESTION 1. *Should Great Britain remain a member of the League of Nations ?*

Total <i>Yes</i> answers :	10,642,560 ¹
Total <i>No</i> answers :	337,964
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> and <i>No</i> answers :	97.0
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> , <i>No</i> and <i>Doubtful</i> answers and <i>Abstentions</i> :	96.0

In many districts, both large and small, the percentage of *Yes* answers in relation to the total *Yes* and *No* answers was even higher, amounting in some cases to 100%, as the following figures illustrate :

	YES	NO	YES Percentage
Porthleven (Cornwall)	892	0	100
Melbost and Branahuie (Hebrides)	107	0	100
Ceres (Fife)	243	1	99.6
Shetland Islands	10,478	48	99.5
Essendon (Hertfordshire)	196	1	99.5
Kirkconnel (Dumfries)	1,374	8	99.4
Forest of Dean (Gloucestershire)	12,326	102	99.2
Barnard Castle (Durham)	10,695	81	99.2
Castleford (Yorkshire)	12,738	109	99.2
Colne Valley (Yorkshire)	34,452	309	99.1
Durham (Durham)	21,560	224	99.0

(A similar list for Wales is given on p. 56.)

¹This total and those for the *Yes* answers to Questions 2, 3, 4 and 5a were considerably in excess of the record vote ever secured by any political party in any General Election (apart from the abnormal Election of 1931)—the 8,656,473 obtained by the Conservative party in 1929.

QUESTION 2. *Are you in favour of an all-round reduction of armaments by international agreement?*

Total <i>Yes</i> answers :	10,058,526 ¹
Total <i>No</i> answers :	815,365
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> and <i>No</i> answers :	92.5
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> , <i>No</i> and <i>Doubtful</i> answers and <i>Abstentions</i> :	90.7

QUESTION 3. *Are you in favour of the all-round abolition of national military and naval aircraft by international agreement?*

Total <i>Yes</i> answers :	9,157,145 ¹
Total <i>No</i> answers :	1,614,159
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> and <i>No</i> answers :	85.0
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> , <i>No</i> and <i>Doubtful</i> answers and <i>Abstentions</i> :	82.6

QUESTION 4. *Should the manufacture and sale of arms for private profit be prohibited by international agreement?*

Total <i>Yes</i> answers :	10,002,849 ¹
Total <i>No</i> answers :	740,354
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> and <i>No</i> answers :	93.1
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> , <i>No</i> and <i>Doubtful</i> answers and <i>Abstentions</i> :	90.2

The voting on this Question is of particular interest in view of the enquiry now in progress by the Royal Commission on the Manufacture of and Trading in Arms.

Even in those towns where a considerable number of the working population is dependent on armaments-manufacture for its living, the proportion of affirmative answers to this Question was very high. Here are the figures for some of these districts :

¹ See Note on previous page.

	YES	NO
Coventry	56,473	4,197
Sheffield	126,268	16,525
Portsmouth	36,804	4,705
Birmingham	242,418	26,429
Barrow-in-Furness	8,269	956

QUESTION 5a. *Do you consider that, if a nation insists on attacking another, the other nations should combine to compel it to stop by economic and non-military measures?*

Total <i>Yes</i> answers :	9,627,606 ¹
Total <i>No</i> answers :	607,165
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> and <i>No</i> answers :	94.1
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> , <i>No</i> , <i>Doubtful</i> and <i>Christian Pacifist</i> answers and <i>Abstentions</i> :	86.8

QUESTION 5b. *Do you consider that, if a nation insists on attacking another, the other nations should combine to compel it to stop by, if necessary, military measures?*

Total <i>Yes</i> answers :	6,506,777
Total <i>No</i> answers :	2,262,261
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> and <i>No</i> answers :	74.2
Percentage of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> , <i>No</i> , <i>Doubtful</i> and <i>Christian Pacifist</i> answers and <i>Abstentions</i> :	58.6

7. THE POLLS

THE POLLS RECORDED for complete constituencies varied from 86.6% to 7.8%, according to the thoroughness of the local organisation, the absence or presence of special local difficulties (in some districts almost insurmountable during the short time available), and the enthusiasm of the workers. On the whole, they were highest in Wales

¹ See Note on p. 49.

and the North of England, lowest in the South and West; though in both the South and West there were some notable exceptions. Many polls were higher than those recorded in Parliamentary elections; very many higher than those recorded in Local Government elections.

The "record" poll was achieved in the Montgomery constituency in Wales—86.6%. The most successful city with more than one constituency was Leicester—65.5%.

The following 42 constituencies (including 13 in Wales and 11 in Lancashire) polled more than 60% of the population over 18—a stupendous task, when it is remembered that every vote had to be secured in writing at the voter's own house:

Constituency	Electorate	Votes	% Poll
1. Montgomery (Wales)	30,941	26,797	86.6
2. Merioneth (Wales)	28,675	24,790	86.4
3. Cardigan (Wales)	39,088	32,503	83.1
4. Carnarvon (Wales)	37,005	29,941	80.1
5. Ogmores (Wales)	49,026	38,558	78.6
6. Anglesey (Wales)	33,363	25,723	77.1
7. Aberdare (Wales)	54,343	41,246	75.8
8. Swansea, East (Wales)	35,803	26,258	73.3
9. Rossendale (Lancashire)	45,715	33,349	72.9
10. Batley and Morley (Lancs.)	49,520	35,353	71.4
11. Ashton-under-Lyne (Lancs.)	31,707	22,518	71.0
12. Keighley (Yorkshire)	47,828	33,384	69.8
13. Nelson and Colne (Lancashire)	54,609	38,008	69.6
14. Huddersfield (Yorkshire)	82,051	56,472	68.8
15. Rhondda, West (Wales)	40,913	28,038	68.4
16. Stalybridge and Hyde (Ches.)	58,629	39,919	68.1
17. Farnworth (Surrey)	44,029	29,949	68.0
18. Merthyr Tydvil (Wales)	43,315	29,434	67.9
19. Bury (Lancashire)	44,300	29,284	66.1
20. Stockton-on-Tees (Durham)	36,272	23,906	65.9
21-3. Leicester (3 constituencies)	164,926	108,252	65.6
24. Eccles (Lancashire)	52,836	34,055	64.5
{ Wakefield (Yorkshire)	32,845	21,062	64.1
25. { Neath (Wales)	62,989	40,306	64.1
{ Rhondda, East (Wales)	43,276	27,778	64.1
28. Colne Valley (Yorkshire)	54,600	34,840	63.8

Constituency	Electorate	Votes	% Poll
29. { Newcastle-under-Lyme (Staffs.)	44,001	28,036	63.7
{ Carlisle (Cumberland)	37,664	24,003	63.7
31. Sowerby (Yorkshire)	45,226	28,785	63.6
32. { Bilston (Staffordshire)	45,305	28,639	63.2
{ West Houghton (Lancashire)	42,383	26,773	63.2
34. Caerphilly (Wales)	44,852	27,917	62.2
35. Accrington (Lancashire)	53,291	33,012	61.9
36. Stockport (Cheshire)	88,440	54,283	61.4
37. Edmonton (London)	56,595	34,621	61.3
38. Knutsford (Cheshire)	51,186	31,127	60.8
39. Stretford (Lancashire)	70,953	43,033	60.7
40. Lincoln (Lincolnshire)	39,264	23,669	60.3
41. Darwen (Lancashire)	39,501	23,747	60.1
42. Blackley (Lancashire)	42,358	25,418	60.0

THE LARGE CITIES, where the workers had a most difficult and arduous task to cover all the ground in a very short space of time, polled as follows¹:

Constituency	Electorate	Votes	% Poll
1. Leicester	164,926	108,252	65.6
2. Edinburgh	300,696	158,548	51.6
3. Bristol	258,060	132,773	51.5
4. Hull	189,374	83,914	44.3
5. Birmingham	646,858	276,125	43.0
6. Sheffield	348,332	149,347	42.9
7. Manchester & Salford	611,345	257,454	42.1
8. Leeds	319,737	133,656	41.8
9. Nottingham	176,875	70,886	40.1
10. Bradford	206,364	78,348	38.0
11. Glasgow	633,394	236,952	37.4
12. Stoke-on-Trent	146,349	49,370	33.7
13. Plymouth	126,574	41,608	32.9
14. Newcastle-upon-Tyne	186,108	59,774	32.1
15. Cardiff	126,258	40,444	32.0
16. London	5,395,601	1,580,848	29.3
17. Liverpool	514,521	142,865	28.0
18. Portsmouth	153,771	42,523	27.7

¹ Most of these cities include large business areas in which many of the Parliamentary voters are non-residential plural voters. In the Ballot, no one was allowed to vote more than once, and no forms were delivered at offices. An allowance for this difference was made in the standard method of calculation applied to the whole country (see next page). Most of these cities, if treated separately, would show a higher poll than that here recorded.

Many villages and towns, such as the following, achieved remarkably high polls :

	Voters	% Poll
Plumtree (Nottinghamshire)	145	97.3
Anstruther (Fife)	1,144	95.3
Great Houghton (Yorkshire)	982	93.0
Tow Law (Durham)	2,032	91.9
Chevington (Northumberland)	2,188	89.1
Northwood (Middlesex)	4,572	88.4

All polls were calculated, following actuarial advice and consultation with the three political parties, by adding 9% to the Parliamentary electorate (1934 Register), to cover voters between the ages of 18 and 21 ; and deducting 10%, to cover plural voters in Parliamentary Elections, those too old or ill to vote, or away from home in hospitals, etc., or on military service. (The corresponding deduction made by the political parties in Parliamentary Elections varies from 12½% in country districts to 25% in certain London areas.) Great care was taken to see that no one voted more than once, and all local committees were asked to see that no papers were delivered at offices.

The total votes cast up to the time this book went to press (11,087,660) represent 36.3% of the total voters over 18 in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (30,511,263). This percentage will be slightly increased by a number of late returns. Many districts, particularly in Scotland and Northern Ireland, however, were not completely covered.

The average poll for the 341 constituencies to send in full returns before this book went to press was 43.1% (total electorate : 17,625,125 : total votes : 7,596,764). Even in some of these constituencies, however, it was not possible to organise the Ballot in every district. It is impossible to calculate an accurate poll for the whole of the electorate who were given an opportunity of voting ; but it must be substantially above this latter figure, probably not far short, if at all, of 50%.

8. RESULTS IN LONDON

THE FOLLOWING is an analysis of the total votes received in the 99 constituencies in the Greater London area, organised by the London National Declaration Committee :

Question	YES	%	NO	%	Doubtful	%	Abstentions	%	Christian Pacifist	%	Total
1	1,490,340	94.3	67,912	4.3	3,702	0.2	18,894	1.2	—	—	1,580,848
2	1,429,454	90.4	119,249	7.5	3,248	0.3	28,897	1.8	—	—	1,580,848
3	1,280,780	81.0	253,048	16.1	4,535	0.3	42,485	2.6	—	—	1,580,848
4	1,437,636	90.9	97,364	6.2	3,901	0.2	41,947	2.7	—	—	1,580,848
5a	1,375,061	86.9	87,743	5.6	7,224	0.5	110,042	6.9	778	0.1	1,580,848
5b	875,275	55.4	385,886	24.4	9,940	0.6	308,969	19.5	778	0.1	1,580,848

The total votes, 1,580,848, in relation to the total electorate of 5,395,601, represent a poll of 29.3%.

The London constituencies with the highest polls were as follows :

Constituency	Electorate	Votes	% Poll
Edmonton	56,495	34,621	61.3
Enfield	54,525	30,459	55.9
Wood Green	81,438	42,252	51.9
Walthamstow, East	44,153	22,611	51.2
Uxbridge	88,756	44,756	50.4

9. RESULTS IN WALES

THE BALLOT was organised in Wales by the Welsh National Declaration Committee with great thoroughness, and the results were remarkable. The total votes for the whole country were as follows :

Question	YES	%	NO	%	Abstentions	%	Christian Pacifist	%	Total
1	997,809	97.8	16,233	1.6	6,446	0.6	—	—	1,020,488
2	969,393	95.0	39,784	3.9	11,311	1.1	—	—	1,020,488
3	922,191	90.4	83,376	8.2	14,921	1.4	—	—	1,020,488
4	953,256	93.4	50,927	5.0	16,305	1.6	—	—	1,020,488
5a	905,036	88.7	51,730	5.1	57,317	5.6	6,404	0.6	1,020,488
5b	577,212	56.6	247,854	24.3	187,723	18.4	7,699	0.7	1,020,488

Polling generally was very high and, in addition to the 13 constituencies mentioned on pp. 52-53, the following Welsh districts, among many others, recorded notable polls :

	Voters	% Poll
Llangwnadl	124	100
Penygroes	1,335	99.5
Trefeglwys	645	98.5
Llanymawddwy	628	98.4
Neyland	1314	96.9
Maesteg	15,150	96.5

Numerous Welsh districts secured a unanimous, or almost unanimous, vote on Question 1—"Should Great Britain remain a Member of the League of Nations?" Here are a few of them :

	YES	NO	YES Percentages
Dolwyddelan	520	0	100
Llaniestyn	409	0	100
Cray	228	0	100
Manafan	216	0	100
Llanycrwys	178	0	100
Yspytty Ifan	128	0	100
Caersws	870	1	99.9
Skewen	5,624	23	99.6
Llanelly	1,551	5	99.6
Merthyr Tydvil	29,148	220	99.2
Aberdare	40,556	327	99.2
Ogmore	38,089	341	99.1

10. SUMMARY¹

1. THE TOTAL NUMBER of votes, or signatures, recorded in the Ballot up to the time this book went to press was 11,087,660.
2. (a) 97% of these were, for the first 4 Questions, definite *Yes* or *No* answers.
(b) The highest number of *Doubtful* answers to any one Question was under 40,000.
(c) The highest number of *Christian Pacifist* answers to any one Question was 16,702.
(d) The number of *Abstentions* was negligible, except in regard to Question 5.
3. (a) The percentage of *Yes* answers in relation to the total *Yes* and *No* answers was over 92% for four of the Questions, 85% for Question 3, and 74% for Question 5b.
(b) The percentage of *Yes* answers in relation to the total for all answers and *Abstentions* was over 90% for three of the Questions, over 82% for two others, and 58.6% for Question 5b.
4. The Questions were not answered without thought ; and the opinions which resulted were similar all over the country.
5. The Questions remained throughout in the same order of "popularity."

¹All the other figures recorded herein are subject to the addition of a few late returns. The latest totals are given on a separate sheet inserted in this book immediately prior to publication.

6. (a) The *Yes* majorities to Question 3 slightly decreased during the Ballot.
 (b) The *Yes* majorities to Question 5*b* steadily increased during the Ballot.
7. The Royal Commission on the Manufacture of and Trading in Arms had emphatic evidence of the will of the people in the voting on Question 4 :
- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| For 10,002,849 | Against 740,354 |
| % of <i>Yes</i> answers in relation to total <i>Yes</i> and <i>No</i> answers : 93·1 | |
- Overwhelming affirmative majorities to this Question were recorded even in the arms-manufacturing towns.
8. (a) The highest polls were recorded in Wales and the North of England.
 (b) The record poll, 86·6%, was recorded in the Montgomery constituency, Wales.
 (c) 41 other constituencies recorded polls of over 60%.
 (d) The average poll for the whole country (including many uncovered areas) was 36·3%.¹
 (e) The average poll for the 341 constituencies to send in their returns before this book went to press was 43·1.
 (f) The average poll for the whole country in respect of those who were afforded the opportunity of voting is not ascertainable, but certainly fell little short, if at all, of 50%.

¹ This is slightly rising as a result of the arrival of late returns. See the separate sheet for the latest figure.

Conclusion

BY

VISCOUNT CECIL

THE BALLOT IS OVER. More than eleven millions of our fellow-countrymen have declared their opinions on the broad issue of Peace and Disarmament through the League of Nations, and on the subsidiary points raised by the questions put to them. Their answer has been plain and decisive, as the preceding pages have shown.

What, then, is to be the final outcome of all the immense labour and considerable sums of money which have been so freely given to attain this striking result? To answer that question, we must look back at the objects with which the Ballot was started more than a year ago.

At that time, certain things were clear. The situation in Europe had become very bad and was rapidly getting worse. The world was moving towards war. The disastrous events in the Far East had shaken the whole system of organised peace—a militarist nation, ignoring its international engagements, had seized vast provinces belonging to a neighbour, and had successfully defied the protests of Geneva.

Several countries in Europe had accepted dictatorships which openly preached force as the right method for settling international relations. Two great countries had given notice of withdrawal from the League. Economic nationalism, the product of the grave commercial and financial world crisis, had helped to revive the old doctrines of isolation and racialism reminiscent of the worst medieval times. Europe appeared to be drifting back into the tribalism from which it had been rescued by Christian civilisation.

Inevitably, this tendency had seriously weakened the League of Nations. That institution rests upon the conception that the interests of each nation will be best

served by the well-being of all, and that nationalism must not be allowed to infringe this principle. Hence the growth of tribalism had brought about a revival of the fashion, prevalent in the early days of the League, to sneer at and belittle Geneva ; and to be indifferent, if not actually hostile, to international Disarmament.

And yet to many of us it appeared that the only hope for the future was in the League. We regarded it, however imperfect it might be, as in the direct line of Christian progress. We held that a policy of national isolation was both futile and immoral ; and that a return to the old ideas of military preparation and alliances as the guarantee of peace could only lead to another war even more desolating than that of 1914. We believed, therefore, that it was urgent to reverse the disintegrating movement in progress, and to restore as far as possible the prestige and authority of the League of Nations.

Obviously, as private citizens in a single member of the European community, our opportunities to help were limited. We could not direct the policy of our country, much less that of Europe. But we were convinced that the British peoples had unrivalled influence in the councils of the nations ; and that, if the British Government could be encouraged to resume its leadership at Geneva, much could still be done to arrest the threatened relapse into international anarchy.

Our first object, therefore, was to assure the Administration that, in the support of the collective system, they had behind them the overwhelming approval of the people of the United Kingdom. We were confident of the existence of that approval, and we hoped that by the Ballot we should be able to make it articulate.

The result has exceeded our most sanguine expectations. The timid and the doubters have been shown to be mistaken. Once again the British people have responded splendidly to a frank appeal for their assistance.

Can we say that British policy has been in any degree assisted by our efforts ? I think we certainly can. Since the Ballot was started, there can be no doubt that a great change has come over the tone of public statements about the League. Up to a year ago official references to the League were rare and, when they did occur, they were politely sceptical. They reminded me of the way in which M. Clemenceau always began his conversations on the subject. " I like the League," he would say, " I like the League—but I do not believe in it."

Now that tone has almost vanished. When it made its reappearance in the recent White Paper on Defence, it was greeted with such widespread disapproval that I hope we have seen the last of it. Certainly most ministerial utterances on the subject are of a very different character.

When the Lord Privy Seal recently professed his conviction that reliance on the League was our only hope, his was no longer the voice of one crying in the ministerial wilderness, but rather a clear and vigorous repetition of the now usual official praise of the collective system.

Nor is the change confined to speeches. The intervention in the Saar, the action on the Serbo-Hungarian dispute over the responsibility for the assassination of King Alexander, the insistence on a peaceful settlement of the Abyssinian difficulty are all welcome instances of a vigorous use of the League machinery to solve international problems.

It is no doubt difficult to be sure that these signs of revived reliance on the League have any connection with the Ballot. *Post hoc* is not always *propter hoc*. But I am myself well assured that the Ballot has played a valuable part in this revival, and none of us have ever claimed that it could do more.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to think that all is now well. On the contrary, recent events in Europe are in the highest degree disquieting. They need not be set

out here. It is enough to say that every agency for peace must be fully employed if we are to get back to even such a position in Europe as the League occupied in 1931. We have begun well. But it is only a beginning.

Our first business is to bring home to influential quarters full knowledge of what has actually been achieved. I hope therefore that, by the time these words are read, we shall have resolved to bring formally before the Government the results of the Ballot. That should be done by an influential Deputation to the Prime Minister or Foreign Secretary.

But that is not enough. Ministers can do no more than Parliament approves. We should therefore bring the National Declaration to the notice of every Member of Parliament. The machinery created all over the country for the Ballot must not be allowed to disappear. In some form or other it should be kept in being in every constituency.

As a first step, an interview should be sought through its means with each Member of Parliament, in order to present to him the result of the Ballot not only in his own constituency but throughout the country.

Nor must we forget that a second object of the Ballot was to convey to foreign countries the assurance that the British people stood firmly behind the League. If the Continent could be sure of that, it would be a great appeasement of the anxiety, almost amounting to panic, with which recent developments are there regarded.

That is why I personally have attached so much importance to the answers to both branches of Question 5. In recent years too many people, some of them occupying influential positions, have been ready to suggest that, contrary to all the best traditions of their history, the British people would not be ready to fulfil their obligations under the Covenant; that they would never be ready to risk their money, and still less their lives, in the repression of lawless breaches of international peace. It is satisfactory to know that there is no justification for such a slander on

our people. By immense majorities, they have declared themselves ready to restrain an aggressor by economic action and, with more reluctance and by smaller but still important majorities, to follow this up, if it should prove essential, by military measures.

Not less important has been the answer to Question 3. All-round abolition of national naval and military aircraft, which has been supported in eighty-five per cent of these answers, is, I am convinced, the way of true security for the world against the greatest of man-made perils. No doubt there are difficulties. But, if the whole influence of the British Empire is used to secure this policy, I believe it will be successful. Control or internationalisation of civil aviation will be essential, and on this our Government should put forward a practical scheme forthwith. Should it turn out to be impossible, in the situation that has now developed, to secure agreement at once upon all-round abolition, we ought next to try for abolition of all "bombing" planes and the prohibition of *all* bombing. Our object should be to reduce the danger of war, especially the danger of sudden smashing attack—not to attempt to make rules for the polite conduct of war.

I trust that adequate steps will be taken to bring these very satisfactory results before the notice of the people of Europe, and that they will be urged to furnish proof that their fellow-countrymen are as earnest in the pursuit of peace as we are ourselves.

I have just said that a considerable minority were averse from enforcing peace by military action. There was also an appreciable minority who did not favour the abolition of air warfare. I cannot help feeling that the hesitation on both points is largely due to misunderstanding. No doubt there is a certain school of opinion worthy of the utmost respect who conscientiously object to the use of force for any purpose whatsoever, even to protect the weak from oppression by the strong. But their numbers

would scarcely account for the size of the minority on Question 5*b* and would certainly not explain at all the action of those who voted (on Question 3) against the suppression of air warfare. In each case, the explanation of the greater part of these negative votes is more likely to have been a misapprehension of the argument on the opposite side.

In other words, though the third object of the Ballot—the education of the people—has been in great measure attained by it, much still remains to be done in this direction. For this purpose, it would not be enough to maintain a nucleus of Declaration machinery which I have already said would be in certain other ways desirable. Such machinery would not be appropriate for the continuance of an educational campaign. But the Peace Societies, and particularly the League of Nations Union, are well suited for educational work. Much has already been done by the Union in this direction, and its capacity for teaching is only limited by the extent of its membership. I hope very much, therefore, that one of the results of the Ballot may be a large increase in the membership of the League of Nations Union. Nothing would more effectually drive home the lessons of the Ballot.

Here, then, is a programme of immediate action to carry on the work so splendidly begun. Let us “tell the world,” including the Government, Parliament, and foreign opinion, what the Ballot has revealed to be the opinion of the British people; and let us strengthen and complete knowledge of these topics by writing and speaking, by the platform and the Press, and above all by enrolling in permanent societies large numbers of those who have shown by their votes that they are deeply interested in these questions.

In that way we may hope to make support for Peace and Disarmament through the League as axiomatic in our public life as other elementary doctrines of political and international morality.

