

HEC 2022/07  
Department of History

Twentieth-Century International  
Economic Thinking, and the Complex  
History of Globalisation (ECOINT)

# WORKING PAPER

**From “economic and social questions” to national containers and two notions of ‘political’: Findings of a systematic analysis of the symbolic construction of ‘economic problems’ in the League of Nation’s *Bruce Report* (1939)**

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ISSN 1725-6720

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**ECOINT**  
Twentieth Century International  
Economic Thinking



European  
Research  
Council



*“This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 885285)”.*

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Published in December 2022 by the European University Institute.  
Badia Fiesolana, via dei Roccettini 9  
I – 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)  
Italy  
[www.eui.eu](http://www.eui.eu)

Views expressed in this publication reflect the opinion of individual author(s) and not those of the European University Institute.

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## **Abstract**

My paper contributes to our understanding of the symbolic construction of 'economic problems' in international organisations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is part of a broader research endeavour into the history of 'international economic thinking'. 'International economic thinking' refers to the ideas regarding the (world) economy that have been generated within the distinct institutional context of 20<sup>th</sup>-century-international organizations and international non-government organizations. The study of the symbolic construction of 'economic problems' contributes to this broader endeavour as it focuses on a central ideational driving force of (national and international) collective action: problems that need to be solved. My empirical focus in this paper is the League of Nations's document *The Development of International Co-Operation in Economic and Social Affairs: Report of the Special Committee* (League of Nations 1939), called Bruce Report. The Bruce Report is the product of a Special Committee that met in August 1939 to suggest reforms to the League's organisation regarding the dealing with what was at that point called 'technical problems'. The Report is interesting because it is about the reform of exactly those parts of the League of Nations that deal with economic and social issues. Hence, I asked: 'How 'economic problems' are symbolically constructed in this document?' My systematic text analysis of the Bruce Report brings out four main findings:

1. There are no 'economic problems' in the world of the Bruce Report. There are 'economic and social questions'.
2. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are (distinctly) political, objective, organic and universal.
3. Economic and social questions relate to issues that exist contained within nation-states.
4. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are at the heart of/essential for international order and the project of global civilisation.

My paper elaborates and supports these findings by providing empirical evidence. It concludes by suggesting four sets of questions to be taken up in subsequent analyses of other documents, such as texts produced in the context of ECOSOC. One of them is: Is the Bruce Report a discursive exemption in regard to the absence of 'economic problems'? If not, do 'social and economic questions' ever get discursively separated? If so, when, how and with which consequences? Relatedly, is the distinction between 'problems' and 'questions' in the text simply a linguistic preference or is it significant?

## **Keywords**

International economic thinking; League of Nations; Bruce Report; economic problems; symbolic constructivism; systematic text analysis

## Introduction

My paper contributes to our understanding of the symbolic construction of ‘economic problems’ in international organisations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is part of a broader research endeavour into the history of ‘international economic thinking’. ‘International economic thinking’ refers to the ideas regarding the (world) economy that have been generated by subjects within the distinct institutional context of 20<sup>th</sup>-century-international organizations and international non-government organizations and the reality these ideas bring out. The goal of the broader project is to capture the landscape of ideas these subjects developed, the impact of these ideas on the course of 20th century economic integration, and, in fact, the very nature of these subjects and their practice of thinking (Sluga 2021). The project combines different analytical perspectives and foci of empirical research.

My present paper on the symbolic construction of ‘economic problems’ contributes to this broader endeavour as it focuses on a central ideational driving force of (national and international) collective action: problems that need to be solved. Collective problems do not exist as such; they are not ahistorical. They come into existence by being identified and framed as problems by social actors within historical discourses. This framing does not constitute a description of reality but discursive *prescription* of what kind of knowledge, skills, actors, actions etc are ‘naturally’ favoured within a distinct moment in time.

Gaining insight into the symbolic construction of ‘economic problems’ in international organisations requires an empirical reconstruction across a large corpus of texts. My present analysis constitutes a first, foundational step into such a, ultimately, large-scale endeavour. I analyse the League of Nations’ document *The Development of International Co-Operation in Economic and Social Affairs: Report of the Special Committee* (League of Nations 1939), called Bruce Report. The empirical findings of this study add value to scholars that are interested in the document of the Bruce Report. Importantly, however, they generate empirically grounded guiding questions and categories and codes for analysis for subsequent studies of other texts.

The Bruce Report (League of Nations 1939) is the product of a Special Committee that met in August 1939 to suggest reforms to the League’s organisation regarding the dealing with what was at that point called TECHNICAL PROBLEMS. I chose the document of the Bruce Report to take a first step into the field of the symbolic construction of ‘economic problems’ in international organisations simply because the Report is about the reform of exactly those parts of the League of Nations that deal with economic and social issues. Furthermore, and intriguingly, the Report’s authors write the Report with a clear awareness that their choice of linguistic signs matters, that their language ‘does’ something. This is apparent in the linguistic meta-reflection with which they start their Report: the authors announce that they use the term ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS instead of the term TECHNICAL PROBLEMS to capture a distinct reality (League of Nations 1939: 5).

My analysis of the symbolic construction of ‘economic problems’ in the Bruce Report brings out four main findings:

1. There are no ‘economic problems’ in the world of the Bruce Report. There are ‘economic and social questions’.
2. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are (distinctly) political, objective, organic and universal.
3. Economic and social questions relate to issues that exist contained within nation-states.
4. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are at the heart of/essential for international order and the project of global civilisation.

The aim of my paper is to elaborate and support my findings by providing empirical evidence. I start my paper with general theoretical assumptions and a reflection on my approach. This is followed by a summary of the content of the Report. Part 4 presents my four main findings. I conclude with a general reflection on my findings and suggest four sets of questions to be taken up in subsequent analyses of other documents, such as texts produced in the context of ECOSOC. One of them is:

Is the Bruce Report a discursive exemption in regard to the absence of ‘economic problems’? If not, do ‘social and economic questions’ ever get discursively separated? If so, when, how and with which consequences? Relatedly, is the distinction between ‘problems’ and ‘questions’ in the text simply a linguistic preference or is it significant?

## 1. The symbolic construction of 'economic problems' as my research focus

It is commonplace that the social world "does not fall from heaven" (Risse 2007: 128) but is constructed by social actors. These social actors, in turn, are themselves products of the social world, the 'discourse', they produce. Studying how the world is symbolically constructed is a critical scholarly endeavour because symbolic captions of the social world are not simply descriptions, they are always also prescriptions. As Weldes et al (1999: 17) put it with reference to Stuart Hall,

[c]onstructions of reality and codes of intelligibility out of which they are produced provide both conditions of possibility and limits on possibility; that is, they make it

possible to act in the world while simultaneously de-fining the 'horizon of the taken-for-granted' (Hall 1988: 44) that marks the boundaries of common sense and acceptable knowledge.

Obviously, a social reality in which a certain degree of growth in the production of goods and services within a defined location on planet earth is perceived as the guiding concern for collective action is a fundamentally different reality with fundamentally different desired and legitimate knowledges, skills, actors, and institutions than one in which, say, the degree of happiness of each individual human on Earth is the guiding concern for collective action.

There are infinite ways of studying the symbolical construction of social reality and its consequences. I find the focus on the perception and framing of collective action problems fruitful and practical because I see the definition of and struggle over what is a problem as being at the heart of politics and of international economic thinking. In my view, a reconstruction of collective action problems is a productive, empirical entry point into the exploration of broader discursive dynamics.

As mentioned above, my study contributes to a broader research project on the history of 'international economic thinking', that is the production of ideas regarding the (world) economy by subjects within the distinct institutional context of 20<sup>th</sup>-century-international organizations and international non-government organizations and the reality their thinking brings out. My way into the study of 'international economic thinking' is to focus on the symbolic construction of 'economic problems'. But, of course, 'economic problems' do not exist and wait to be discovered and reconstructed by me. It is their symbolic construction within a distinct historical moment that I am interested in and that can be discovered. Accordingly, I do not start with a definition of 'economic problems'; I am not interested in understanding the symbolic construction of what I define as 'economic problems'.

Instead, to get to the symbolic construction of 'economic problems' I focus on the linguistic sign economic. It is the (webs of) meanings that I discover as being associated with this sign that then guide me in my reconstruction of imaginations of economic problems and the worlds these imaginations bring out. In this sense, 'economic problems' is my research tool, it is an anchor that I chose to set as a preliminary entry point for an exploration of the broader field that is as free and inductive as possible.

For this present paper, I choose the document of the League of Nations' Bruce Report as my field to explore.

There is no shelved method to be applied in the reconstruction of the symbolic construction of 'economic problems', and I am not testing any hypothesis. My approach is shaped by inductive reasoning and my coding scheme arises from circular reading. Of course, this reading is not completely unguided but shaped by my knowledge of linguistic (e.g. Jung 1994), frame semantic (e.g. Busse, Felden and Wulf 2018; Hajer 2004) and discourse methodological (e.g. Landwehr 2009; Böke et al 2000) literature, as well as by experience and insights that I gained in previous, similar research exercises (e.g. Selchow 2016, 2016a, 2017).



To reiterate, my initial focus is the adjective economic, how it is used and the webs of meanings that unfold in and through this use.

Before presenting my empirical findings in part 4, I summarise the text of the Bruce Report. This summary is the result of a close reading of the text. It is as descriptive as possible and only loosely systematised by the question what does the text ‘do’ in each of its sections.

## 2. The document of the Bruce Report: Summary of the text

The Bruce Report is a 26-page-document (6,868 words) produced by a Special Committee at the League of Nations in 1939. The Committee had the task to study and report to the forthcoming Assembly on the appropriate measures of organisation which would ensure the development and expansion of the League’s machinery for dealing with technical problems and promote the active participation of all nations in the efforts made to solve those problems. (League of Nations 1939: 5)<sup>1</sup>

The establishment of the Special Committee was proposed by Secretary-General Avenol and approved by the League’s Council at the end of May 1939. It was chaired by Stanley M. Bruce and met between 7-12 August 1939 in Paris. The Special Committee had six members (listed in Table 1). The Committee’s Report *The Development of International Co-Operation in Economic and Social Affairs: Report of the Special Committee* (Bruce Report) was published in August 1939 in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Norwegian.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 1:** Members of the Committee (see 5)<sup>3</sup>

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<b>1</b>	The Right Honourable S. M. <b>Bruce</b> , C.H., M.C., High Commissioner for Australia in London, formerly Prime Minister (Chairman)
<b>2</b>	M. Maurice <b>Bourquin</b> , Professor at the University of Geneva
<b>3</b>	Mr. Harold <b>Butler</b> , C. 8., Warden of Nuffield College, Oxford, formerly Director of the International Labour Office
<b>4</b>	M. Carl J. <b>Hambro</b> , President of the Norwegian Storting, President of the Norwegian Foreign Affairs Committee
<b>5</b>	M. Charles <b>Rist</b> , President of the Scientific Institute for Economic and Social Research, Paris, former Vice-Governor of the Bank of France
<b>6</b>	H.E. M. F. <b>Tudela</b> , Ambassador, formerly Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru

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<sup>1</sup> From here on, references to the document are made by page numbers in brackets.

<sup>2</sup> See Dubin 1983: 59. Dubin reports that Seymour Jacklin, the League’s treasurer, objected to a German edition, *ibid.*: 71.

<sup>3</sup> See FN 1.

## Summary of the text

The document of the Bruce Report is divided into five sections (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Structure of the Bruce Report (see 3)

I. Introductory
II. The Need for International Economic and Social Co-Operation
III. The Economic and Social Activities of the League
IV. The Need for Development and Expansion
V. The Committee's Proposals Draft for the Central Committee for Economic and Social Questions

### **Introductory**

The *Introductory* is shaped by meta-reflections. It does two things:

- I. First, it legitimises the Report by providing information on the institutional process through which the Report came into being. The reader learns that a Special Committee was approved by the Council on 27 May 1939. Stanley Bruce was 'suggested' (5) as chairman of such committee and the Council approved this suggestion. The Council had further approved that Bruce, "in consultation with the Secretary-General" (5), would nominate members of the Committee. The names of the members of the Special Committee are listed with current and, in four cases, former positions (Table 1).
- II. Second, the *Introductory* is used by the authors to introduce the phrase ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS<sup>4</sup> as a replacement for "the phrase 'technical problems'" (5). The authors identify the phrase TECHNICAL PROBLEMS as a term commonly used "to describe the questions with which the greater part of the League's total activities are concerned" (6). Yet, the authors perceive this terminology as "inadequate" (5). More broadly they criticise the distinction in "the work of the League between 'political' and 'technical' problems" and call this distinction "unfortunate" (6). The authors are concerned that the subject matters that are captured with the phrase TECHNICAL PROBLEMS (Figure 1) "are in every country political questions, frequently the cause of internal controversy and often necessitating international negotiation" (6). The phrase POLITICAL QUESTIONS in the League's language is, however, "normally [used to] refer [...] to problems of political relations between States or [...] what are in each country known as 'foreign affairs'" (6). To acknowledge the 'political' nature of all those matters that are usually referred to with the phrase TECHNICAL PROBLEMS, the authors suggest the new label ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS. While they suggest replacing the phrase TECHNICAL PROBLEMS with ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS the authors of the Bruce Report do not suggest an alternative term for problems regarding 'the relations between States', i.e., for the phrase POLITICAL PROBLEMS.

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<sup>4</sup> I use capitals to refer to linguistic signs.

## The Need for International Economic and Social Co-Operation

The **second section** of the document is 1,287 words long. It does two things:

- i. First, it argues for the need for nation-states to co-operate in the tackling of ‘economic and social questions’. The need for “Governmental co-operation in economic and social questions” (7; emphasis added) is justified by the outstanding significance of these questions. “[E]conomic and human values” are the ground for the “progress of civilisation” (6) and the “security of all nations and all classes of the populations” (8), hence, it is essential for all to address them. The need for “Governmental co-operation in economic and social questions” (7; emphasis added) is justified by the changing nature of the world. On the one side, the world is “growing daily closer knit”, shaped by “more rapid” communication and “more efficient” spread of knowledge (7). On the other side, the world is becoming structurally more homogenous. Nation-states

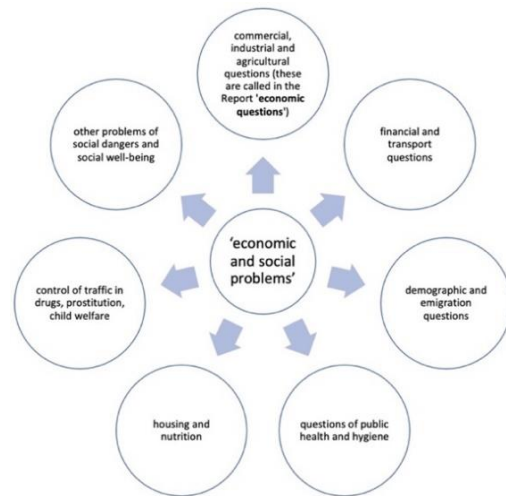


Figure 1: Subject matters that used to be called ‘technical problems’

[for all their diversity of political outlook, are growing in many respects more similar; agricultural States are becoming rapidly industrialised, industrial States are stimulating their agriculture. (7)

It is this changing nature of the world that brings out challenges with an “irresistible dynamism” (8) that “can only be solved by joint effort” (7). “Neither the economic nor the physical contagion - nor, indeed, the moral - can be checked by national action alone, except by recourse to almost complete isolation” (7). Besides posing new challenges, the changing nature of the world also “give[s] greater opportunities for the success of such co-operation” (7).

[T]he fact that the form of economic structure in all countries is tending to become more similar means at once that the problems with which all Governments are faced also acquire greater similarity, and that the opportunities of each country to gain from the experience of others are increased (8).

International co-ordination is about three things: “joint discussion of the nature of the new problems, [...] exchange of experience, and [...] co-ordination of national policies” (8). Underlying all of this is an understanding of economic and social questions as being “subject to scientific treatment” (8). A “better use of scientific and productive resources of the world” is seen as the way to tackle economic and social questions and improve ‘standard of lives’ and “general well-being” (9). Notably, “international discussion” and “association in the work of independent experts” are presented as means through which “Governments can best safeguard themselves against the danger of being pressed by one sectional interest or another to assist it at the expense of the general well-being” (9).

- ii. Second, the second section of the Report points to the value of the “mechanism” that the League of Nations “has built up” to facilitate co-operation between “national authorities” (7). The document implies that there was a general assumption that the League was “an institution concerned solely with the prevention of war”. In stressing

the value of the League for international economic and social co-operation, the document counters this assumption by explaining that the League's "economic and humanitarian work, which is now an essential element in the promotion of peaceful civilisation, has always constituted a large part of its activities, as is witnessed by the fact that more than 60 % of the budget is now devoted to it" (7). At the same time, the document argues that the League's work needs to adjust to the changes that have taken place so that "the mechanism of international collaboration can be rendered at once more efficient and more easily available to all" (7).

### ***The Economic and Social Activities of the League***

The third section of the Bruce Report is the longest section (3,108 words, ~45% of the total word count). It continues the elaboration on the value of the League in facilitating international co-operation. It does this in three ways:

1. First, the document presents "the promotion of economic and social welfare" as one of the founding concerns of the League, as "one of its main objectives" (10). To support this point, the document refers to the League's Covenant and its Article 23. The concern for economic and social welfare is justified as both a goal on its own and because of "the intimate relationship between widespread and progressive prosperity and world peace" (10).
2. Second, the document elaborates on the value of the League in facilitating international co-operation by recounting its past achievements. It does this in three ways:
  - i. The document refers to the historical context of the League's creation as one in which "the flames of war still flickered on the outskirts of the European continent, and famine and pestilence threatened to continue not less effectively the work of bayonet and bombs" (10) and in which the League took action by calling the Financial Conference of Brussels, and facilitating the establishment and work of the Financial Committee, the Health Organisation, and the Transport Organisation (10).
  - ii. The document provides concrete examples of the successful work of the League in the health sector; these examples are "a worldwide system of epidemiological intelligence", the Eastern Bureau, that was set up to deal with epidemic diseases in Asia, supported by states in the region and the Rockefeller Foundation, the sending of medical units to intervene in the spread of epidemics in China, the establishment of the Malaria Commission, inter-Governmental conferences and groups of experts to deal with various issues of public health, and the standardization of therapeutic substances as well as the facilitation and supervision of Conventions, such as the 1925 Geneva Opium Convention (all 12).
  - iii. The document reflects on the issue of "economic depressions" and the League's work on this issue. The document stresses that economic depressions affect everybody, including posing a risk to "national and international order". The authors "are anxious to make clear how great are the interest and importance of [the League's work on social welfare issues] not only to those responsible for formulating and administering national policy but also to the great public of all countries" (15). The document divides the League's work into two categories; it speaks of a "double function" (15) that the League has. On the one side, there is the League's work on the institutionalisation of international co-operation in form of plurilateral or bilateral conventions. The document stresses the increasing relevance of the latter (14) but argues that the co-ordination of national policies "can often be achieved without any formal treaty or agreement" (13). On the other side, and building on this argument, the Report reflects on the League's work that is about the "pooling of ideas and experience" and "simply [...] promoting the spread of knowledge and enabling each country to learn from the experience of others"

- (14). The issues of nutrient and taxation are presented as examples of what this work involves, from the formulation of “guiding principles” and the support for the organisation of “national enquiries” to the raising of awareness (14). The League is called “a clearing-house of ideas and an instrument for the spread of knowledge” (15). The approach to any of these issues and questions is scientific and comprehensive because problems are “intimately [...] interconnected” (15), with the “greater question of population” “behind and in a sense governing all of them” (16).
3. Third, the fourth section of the document argues for the value of the League in facilitating international co-operation by pointing to the nature of the League as a professional organisation that is home to “trained staff constantly engaged at Geneva in tracing the tendencies and gauging the forces which determine the changes in our economic environment” (16). In addition, the document likens the League to a “Government commission set up to advise upon any question” (12) and stresses its value as an organisation that provides national governments with “expert advice [...] not from outside or as a favour, but from an institution which they themselves maintain and on whose services they have a right to call” (17).

### ***The Need for Development and Expansion***

The **fourth section** of the Bruce Report is relatively short (512 words). It provides a general idea of how the work of international co-operation should be developed and expanded. The section proposes two moves, (a) the inclusion of as many states as possible in the work of international co-operation, including the League’s work, and (b) the establishment of a dedicated “organ representative both of the authorities responsible in each country for the formulation of policy in these matters and of special experience in the problems which are now being studied” (17). In addition, the section imagines the League “could supply” a platform “for the discussion of [economic and social questions] in such a way as to increase public knowledge and stimulate public interest in regard to them” (18). The latter point is linked to the belief that “an enlightened public opinion” is “the only really potent instrument of progress” (18).

Again, the increase of efficiency in international co-operation is named as the overall goal of the proposed developments and expansions, including the increase in public understanding of them. The authors argue that a strife for more efficiency is justified on two grounds: (a) because of the intrinsic value of progress in economic and social fields, and (b) because it supports the consolidation of national and international order that is essential for peace. To support the latter point, the authors refer to a 1939-letter from the US Secretary of State to the League’s Secretary-General, expressing this point (18). In addition, the document proposes that more efficient international co-operation would benefit the standing of the League and its normative grounds; “both directly and indirectly, success in this aim would strengthen the position of the League and make its principles better understood by the great body of public opinion upon which its success ultimately depends” (18). The authors assure the reader that the work of the League is unique, and that the Report’s suggestions of development and expansion won’t replicate or intervene with existing institutions.

### ***The Committee’s Proposals - Draft for the Central Committee for Economic and Social Questions***

While the fourth section of the Bruce Report outlines two general ways in which the work of international co-operation should be developed and expanded, the **fifth and final section** (1,428 words) provides a concrete proposal. It suggests setting up a “new organisation to be known as the Central Committee for Economic and Social Questions, to which should be entrusted the direction and supervision of the work of the League Committees dealing with

economic and social questions” (19). The fifth section of the document does three things: First, it provides three kinds of meta-reflections.

- i. It legitimises the authors’ proposal for changes to the League’s structure by pointing out that the Committee on the Structure and Functions of the Economic and Financial Organisation that met in May 1939 suggested changes, too. A quote from the Committee is provided (19).
- ii. It provides the authors’ own assessment of the nature of their proposal. The authors call their proposal “far-reaching” (20) and affecting the “essential character” of the organisation of the League’s economic and social work as it has been established in the 1920s (18). At the same time, the authors caution that their proposal can only be seen as a “first step” in a more far-reaching “adaptation of the existing machinery to the changing conditions in the world” (21).
- iii. Furthermore, the section qualifies the implications of the document’s proposal vis-a-vis existing conventions and practices. The authors assure that their proposed changes do “not involve any fundamental constitutional questions” and that their “proposal cannot affect the powers and duties appertaining to the Council as a result of international treaties and conventions. Nor can any proposal we might make affect the rights and powers of Member States represented on the Assembly or the Council having their origin in the Covenant of the League” (20). Furthermore, they put down that none of the changes the new organisation might make to existing structures will “depriv[e] the Council or the Assembly of their normal channels of obtaining technical advice” (20).

Second, the fifth section of the Report elaborates on the aims of the proposed changes. In general, again, the increase in efficiency by bundling up and focusing the work of existing Committees is stressed (16). In particular, the document captures the aims of the authors’ proposal in four points:

- “[...] To bring all this part of the work of the League under the supervision of an agency which should be both effective and representative;
- [...] To meet the fact that the development in the nature of the work results in a growing inter-connection between the activities of the different organisations, and that therefore a co-ordinating direction is more and more required;
- [...] To add fresh efficiency and vigour to the work itself, a result which may naturally be expected to follow if public knowledge in regard to it can be increased and if it becomes the primary interest of the directing organs; for under present conditions, at meetings whether of the Council or of the Assembly, the primary interest both of the delegates and of public opinion is concerned with such questions of international policy as appear on their agenda;
- [...] To give States not members of the League the opportunity of the fullest possible co-operation in the work itself as well as in its direction and supervision” (19).

Third, the fifth section of the Bruce Report provides concrete ideas how the proposed new organisation should look and function. Central points are:

- i. that the Secretary-General should deliver an annual report to the Assembly on the work done by the new organisation. This report is to be discussed in a setting that ensures that it won’t be “overshadowed by the debates on foreign politics” (20).
- ii. that, as far as not ruled out by international conventions or budgetary concerns, the new organisation should be able to appoint both members of its committees and new committees (20).

- iii. that the new organisation should be enabled to “secure the collaboration of persons experienced in economic and social affairs” as non-official members (20).

In addition to these points, a “draft constitution” is provided (see Appendix).

### Global observation

I conclude my summary of the Bruce Report with a global observations related to the term INTERNATIONAL. Throughout the text the adjective INTERNATIONAL is polysemic. Sometimes it refers to the work of the League and sometimes it refers to the collaboration and co-ordination of national authorities. The meaning of the adjective is nebulous.

### 3. ‘Economic problems’ in the Bruce Report

Having summarised the document, I report the findings of my analysis of the symbolic construction of ‘economic problems’ in the Bruce Report. As sketched in part 2 of this paper, at the heart of my research strategy was the focus on the adjective economic.

My analysis brings out four main findings:

- A. There are no ‘economic problems’ in the world of the Bruce Report. There are ‘economic and social questions’.
- B. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are (distinctly) political, objective, organic and universal.
- C. Economic and social questions relate to issues that exist contained within nation-states.
- D. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are at the heart of/essential for international order and the project of global civilisation.

#### A. No ‘economic problems’ but ‘economic and social questions’

My first finding is that there are no ‘economic problems’ in the world of the Bruce Report; the term ECONOMIC PROBLEMS is absent in the text. The adjective ECONOMIC appears 52 times in the Report. 35 times it is used in co-occurrence with the conjunction AND (Figure 2). Other than that, the adjective is mainly used as a pre-modifier. As Figure 2 demonstrates, the term PROBLEM\* is not among the nouns that are pre-modified with ECONOMIC.

Rank	Freq	Range	Cluster
1	35	1	economic and
2	3	1	economic depressions
3	1	1	economic activity
4	1	1	economic aims
5	1	1	economic conditions
6	1	1	economic environment
7	1	1	economic field
8	1	1	economic interdependence
9	1	1	economic nor
10	1	1	economic policy
11	1	1	economic questions
12	1	1	economic repercussions
13	1	1	economic structure
14	1	1	economic welfare
15	1	1	economic well
16	1	1	economic world

Figure 2. Co-occurrences of the adjective ECONOMIC

The co-occurrence of ECONOMIC and the conjunction AND is significant. Having a closer look at it, we see that out of the 35 co-occurrences of the adjective ECONOMIC and the conjunction AND, 31 are followed by the adjective SOCIAL (Figure 3). Figure 4 demonstrates that the phrase ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS is significant. Hence, the primary ‘economic’ issue of concern in the world of the Bruce Report are ‘economic and social questions’.

Total No. of Cluster Types			4	Total No. of Cluster
Rank	Freq	Range	Cluster	
1	31	1	economic and social	
2	2	1	economic and financial	
3	1	1	economic and human	
4	1	1	economic and humanitarian	

Figure 3. Co-occurrences of the adjective ECONOMIC AND

The authors of the Bruce Report introduce the phrase ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS to capture the distinct aspect of the League’s work that, until then, had been “grouped under the heading” TECHNICAL PROBLEMS (6). This is not a simple renaming but a reconceptualization; this unfolds not just through the adjectives ECONOMIC and SOCIAL, which replace TECHNICAL, but also through the replacement of PROBLEMS with QUESTIONS. There is a difference between addressing a ‘problem’ and addressing a ‘question’. I suggest, a problem is an empirical phenomenon that has been identified as problematic, defined and circumscribed; a problem demands targeted (practical) action. A question, on the other side, is an intellectual construct; it demands an (intellectual) answer. Consequently, ‘problems’ and ‘questions’ ask for and favour different kinds of actors, expertise, and experience.

Total No. of Cluster Types			11	Total No. of Cluster Tokens
Rank	Freq	Range	Cluster	
1	11	1	economic and social questions	
2	8	1	economic and social work	
3	3	1	economic and social fields	
4	2	1	economic and social welfare	
5	1	1	economic and social activities	
6	1	1	economic and social affairs	
7	1	1	economic and social co	
8	1	1	economic and social events	
9	1	1	economic and social order	
10	1	1	economic and social organisations	
11	1	1	economic and social research	

Figure 4. Co-occurrences of the adjective ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL

The fact that the adjective ECONOMIC rarely appears without AND SOCIAL makes it hard to establish its distinct meaning. Generally, the meaning of the adjective ECONOMIC in the Bruce Report arises in three ways. First, it is established through a definition. On page 6, the authors specify the ‘economic’ aspect of ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS with the insertion “– including, *inter alia*, commercial, industrial and agricultural questions –”. Accordingly, ECONOMIC is about commerce, industry and agriculture. However, the provided definition is not confined. The term INCLUDING opens it up and makes it flexible. It is not apparent from the text what else the adjective ‘includes’.

Second, the meaning of the adjective ECONOMIC arises in contrast to other adjectives; it is defined negatively. The following quote from page 6 demonstrates this:

These terms embrace economic questions – including, *inter alia*, commercial, industrial and agricultural – questions financial and transport, demographic and emigration questions, questions of public health and hygiene, housing and nutrition, as well as the control of the traffic in drugs, prostitution, child welfare and other problems of social dangers and social well-being. (6)

As apparent in this quote, in addition to the positive definition of the adjective ECONOMIC as being about commerce, industry and agriculture, the adjective is defined negatively as not being about finance, transport, demography and emigration, public health, hygiene, housing, nutrition, traffic in drugs, prostitution, child welfare and ‘other problems of social dangers and social well-being. Furthermore, the meaning of the adjective ECONOMIC is constructed in its co-



occurrence with the other adjectives that we see in Figure 3, joined with the conjunction AND. Accordingly, the meaning/s of ECONOMIC is different from the meaning/s of HUMAN (“civilisation is dependent upon economic and human values”, 6), HUMANITARIAN (“Its economic and humanitarian work [...] has always constituted”, 7) and SOCIAL. The adjective ECONOMIC differs from these other adjectives; yet, the conjunction AND constructs it as equal. None of these other adjectives are clearly defined which means that, overall, the meaning of ECONOMIC is nebulous and undeterminable.

Critically, the adjective economic can actually not be taken on its own. It is to be taken in conjunction with social. economic and social questions constitute a set phrase. This phrase captures

- the prevention of unemployment, the prevention of wide fluctuations in economic activity, the provision of better housing, the suppression and cure of disease. (6)
- commercial, industrial and agricultural [questions] – questions financial and transport, demographic and emigration questions, questions of public health and hygiene, housing and nutrition, as well as the control of the traffic in drugs, prostitution, child welfare and other problems of social dangers and social well-being. (6)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS relate to the “promotion of economic and social welfare” (7) of

- “the ordinary man in every continent of the world” (11) and
- “every man, woman and child” (6).

The third way, in which the meaning of the adjective ECONOMIC, now in conjunction with SOCIAL, arises, is in contrast to the adjective TECHNICAL. The contrast between TECHNICAL and ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL) is the most important symbolic move in the construction of the meaning/s of ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS in the Bruce Report. As the following quote illustrates, the adjective TECHNICAL gets its meaning from the adjective POLITICAL:

The distinction generally made in connection with the work of the League between “political” and “technical” problems is equally unfortunate. The term “political problems” normally refers to problems of political relations between States or, in other words, what are in each country known as “foreign affairs”; but so-called “technical problems” are in every country political questions, frequently the cause of internal controversy and often necessitating international negotiation.

The quote suggests that TECHNICAL stands for ‘not political’. Given that POLITICAL stands for “causing controversy” and “often necessitating international negotiation”, TECHNICAL implies ‘uncontroversial’ and ‘not requiring international negotiation’. As ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL is not TECHNICAL, the phrase implies not ‘uncontroversial’ and not ‘not requiring international negotiation’.

Before summing up my first finding, there is one other co-occurrence of the adjective ECONOMIC worth highlighting: ECONOMIC DEPRESSIONS. The phrase ECONOMIC DEPRESSIONS appears three times in the text (see Figure 2); in addition, the noun DEPRESSION appears another two times (once in plural and once in singular). Statistically this is not significant. Yet, ‘economic depressions’ are a significant and undesirable phenomenon in the world of the Bruce Report which the activities that fall under the label ‘economic and social questions’ are meant to tackle (13). The use of the plural DEPRESSIONS indicates that ‘economic depressions’ are historical, social phenomena as opposed to an abstract idea or concept.

To sum up, my first finding is that there are no ‘economic problems’ but ‘economic and social questions’ in the world of the Bruce Report. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS constitutes a

phrase. This phrase, which is introduced by the authors to refer to “a large part of [the League’s] activities” (7), is a relatively flexible and open signifier. Notably, the issues it refers to are not ‘uncontroversial’ and not ‘not requiring international negotiation’.

Given my first finding, my following three findings are not about the symbolic construction of ‘economic problems’ in the Bruce Report but of the issues that are related to ‘economic and social questions’. I find:

- A. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are (distinctly) political, objective, organic and universal.
- B. Economic and social questions relate to issues that exist contained within nation-states.
- C. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are at the heart of and essential for international order and the project of global civilisation.

### **B. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are (distinctly) political, objective, organic and universal**

Four characteristics constitute the issues to which economic and social questions relate.

**Political:** Economic and social questions relate to issues that are political. This is made explicit in the authors’ meta-reflection at the beginning of the Report. Here, the authors argue that economic and social questions “are in every country political questions” (6). Continuing the discussion in the previous section, there are two kinds of ‘political’ in the world of the Bruce Report; the adjective POLITICAL is used in two different ways. First, the authors use the adjective POLITICAL as part of the phrase POLITICAL PROBLEMS (6). As quoted above, they explain that

[t]he term “political problems” normally refers to problems of political relations between States or, in other words, what are in each country known as “foreign affairs” (6).

The use of the term NORMALLY presents the phrase POLITICAL PROBLEMS as an established and common terminology within the League of Nations-discourse. The use of quotation marks around POLITICAL PROBLEMS denaturalises this phrase and indicates that the authors take distance to it. The phrase FOREIGN AFFAIRS is also highlighted with quotation marks, indicating the authors’ distance to it. ‘Political’, in this first sense, is something that is human-made, manifest in a “diversity” of “outlook[s]” held by states, and that, potentially, drifts states apart in “political severance” (7). The adjective refers to something that produces and manages the relationship between states.

The second use of the adjective POLITICAL refers to issues that the authors capture with the term ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS. This second kind of ‘political’ is similar to the first as they both differ from ‘technical’. They are both not ‘uncontroversial’ and not ‘not requiring international negotiation’. Yet, the second ‘political’ is about a (potentially undesirable) social reality, that is “of direct concern not simply to experts in different fields or to Governments, but to the citizens of all States” (11). Issues that the authors capture with the term ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS are ‘political’ in the sense that they can and need to be managed through national polices. In sum, economic and social questions relate to issues that are distinctly ‘political’; they are distinctly political because there are two kinds of ‘political’ in the world of the Bruce Report. Issues of economic and social questions fall into the category of the second kind.

**Objective:** Economic and social questions relate to issues that are objective. They just need to be understood properly and correctly. They are part of the “world forces” (16) that *happen* ‘out there’, rather than the “political severance” that is *produced* by states. Being objective means that the issues to which economic and social questions relate are manageable. What

is needed to tackle them is expert advice, “the pooling of ideas and experience”, as well as scientific “evidence drawn from all over the world” (14). Through “a better use of the scientific and productive resources of the world, [various] conditions could be improved out of all knowledge” (9). As suggested above, issues of economic and social questions are ‘political’, in the sense of not ‘uncontroversial’ and not ‘not requiring international negotiation’, but, given their ‘objective’ nature, controversy can be dissolved through evidence. The issues that economic and social questions relate to are predictable. Adequate knowledge, grounded in scientific premises, can counter the ‘feelings’ of countries (9) and ‘irrationality’ of ‘political’ (in the first sense) intrusion into national policymaking. Given that the issues to which economic and social questions relate are ‘objective’, national policymaking can be ‘objective’ and non-partisan.

It is by international discussion, and by the association in the work of independent experts, that Governments can best safeguard themselves against the danger of being pressed by one sectional interest or another to assist it at the expense of the general well-being. (9)

**Organic:** At the same time as being objective, the issues that ‘economic and social questions’ relate to are constructed as being organic. In general, this is realised using the metaphor “environment” (16) for framing the issues of economic and social questions; they constitute the environment, shaped by “tendencies” and “forces” (16), in which life takes place. This environment and the world, as a whole, is alive and in constant motion, in flux, and developing. This is manifest in the use of terms that indicate movement, such as INCREASING, CHANGING and GROWING. In particular, the Report pays specific attention to pandemics and diseases as issues that ‘economic and social questions’ refer to (12-13). Other issues, prominently the above mentioned ‘economics depressions’, are framed as phenomena equal to “epidemics” and “contagious diseases” (13). Being organic and ‘alive’, issues to which ‘economic and social questions’ relate in the Bruce Report, including ‘economic depressions’, spread across the world, “from one section of the population to another, from one territory to another” (13). On the one side, these issues need to be ‘checked’ and ‘controlled’ (7). On the other side, the broader changes, which these issues are a manifestation of and a source for, ask for ‘adaptation’; “there can be no development without adaptation” (8). The notions of development and adaptation, in turn, frame institutional actors in the world of the Bruce Report, i.e. nation-states and the League, as organisms. Indeed, countries “feel” (9) and, although the League is framed as a “machinery”, it consists of “organs” (10). While the mechanic parts of the League are slow, the organic parts are agile and fast.

For, whereas it was by somewhat slow degrees that the League machinery began to take hold of those questions to which the main body of the Covenant relates, the organs which were set up to deal with economic and social questions sprang rapidly – one might almost say violently – into action. (10)

This agility is needed because the world as a whole, including the issues that economic and social questions relate to, is changing “rapidly” (e.g. 16). However, while this change is constant, it is not foundational. It is gradual, which is manifest in the use of the comparative quantifier MORE. MORE indicates degree, not ‘difference in kind’, e.g.

The world, for all its political severance, is growing daily closer knit; its means of communication daily more rapid; its instruments for the spread of knowledge daily more efficient. At the same time, the constituent parts of the world, for all their diversity of political outlook, are growing in many respects more similar; agricultural States are becoming rapidly industrialised, industrial States are stimulating their agriculture. (7; emphasis added)

**Universal:** Finally, the issues that economic and social questions relate to are framed as being ‘universal’. They are universal in that they affect everybody across gender, age, socio-

economic status, and rank; they affect “the daily lives of every man, woman and child” (6), “from the poorest peasant or industrial worker to the richest financier” (13). And they are universal in that they are of concern “in every country” (6).

### **C. Economic and social questions relate to issues that exist contained within nation-states**

In the previous section, I highlighted four characteristics of the issues to which economic and social questions relate. My third main finding relates to where these issues exist.

Issues to which economic and social questions relate are constructed as existing within nation-states. They are the “great problems of internal social and economic policy” (11; emphasis added). As discussed above they are ‘universal’ in the sense that they exist everywhere across the world, affecting everybody. Yet, there is nothing but nation-states in the world of the Bruce Report. There is no in-between. Issues of economic and social questions spread across the world, but this spreading is a ‘jumping’ from one container to the other; it is a world of bordered national units.

Notably, there is no competition between states when it comes to issues of economic and social questions. As discussed, these issues fall into the second kind of category of ‘political’. They are political on the ground, domestically, within each nation state. But they are not ‘political’ issues that constitutes ‘foreign affairs’. Each government has the genuine aim of solving these issues by themselves and as a principal.

These matters, which affect the daily lives of every man, woman and child, are among the principal preoccupations of statesmen and politicians in all countries, whatever their political structure. (6)

As sketched above, ‘irrational’ partisan voices might try to intervene into the ‘objective’ forming of national policies around issues of economic and social questions but the objective and scientific nature of these issues and the possibility of a world-wide pooling of evidence make it possible to take rational decisions. This kind of framing makes it plausible, reasonable, and ‘natural’ that states provide aid to each other. Of course, given the interconnected nature of the world, which is “growing daily closer knit” (7), and given that, as discussed above, ‘economic depressions’ have the potential of spreading ‘like diseases’, national policies, and a successful tackling of these issues in one state are of relevance in other states. Hence, it is in the interest of one state to provide and support “mutual help [...], the exchange of knowledge and of the fruits of experience” (11). Yet, in the world of the Bruce Report, national (self-)interest is not an explicit driving force for international co-operation and support.<sup>5</sup> Neither is help between nations a normative, moral issue. Mutual help and support, international co-operation is simply reasonable in this world of objective and scientific economic and social questions, in which states become more and more similar and national governments are ‘principally’ and genuinely interested in solving these issues:

The growing similarity in the structure of the various countries and in the difficulties for which they must find solutions, is calculated to induce Governments to pool their experiences and thus enable them to help one another. All are concerned with the maintenance and the improvement of the economic welfare of their citizens with their nutrition, housing and health conditions. And all these questions are subject to scientific treatment. (8)

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<sup>5</sup> This point is shaped by my contemporary standpoint. Today these things are framed as being in the states’ self-interest / national interest.

#### **D. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are at the heart of/essential for international order and the project of global civilisation**

**International order:** The fourth finding in my study of the symbolic construction of issues related to economic and social questions relates to their global relevance.

In the world of the Bruce Report, nation-states are the unquestioned components. Indeed, they are the only components. As suggested above, there is nothing in-between states, and, regarding economic and social questions, there is no competition between states in their strife to tackle these purely domestic and objective issues. States might compare themselves with others and might “feel” (9) disadvantaged in relation to others but, given the objective nature of issues of economic and social questions, through scientific evidence these ‘feelings’ are easily dismantled as irrational; and potential *actual* disadvantages can be solved through practical solutions (9).

The Bruce Report constructs a state-based international order. States are the “constituent parts of the world” (7). Based on their “economic structure” (8), there are two kinds of States, ‘agricultural’ and ‘industrial’ States. Besides States and actors related to the State, the world is occupied by “citizens of all States” (11), “[e]very man, woman and child”, “[t]he ordinary man in every continent of the world”, “men and women all over the world”, “women and children in the Far East”, in particular, and “women and children”, in general, and there is “the great public of all countries” (15). Hence, citizens and national publics are the second main components constituting the international order. Furthermore, there are “experts” as part of the international order that is constructed in the Bruce Report and, of course, there is the League of Nations, mainly referred to with THE LEAGUE, and its “trained staff” (16). Related to the League of Nations there are “member states” and “non-member states”.

The League of Nations is a service provider in this international order. It is a meeting place, “at which, by personal contacts, by the exposition of the motives underlying policy and by work in common, a fuller understanding by each nation of the outlook of others may be reached” (15), and a think tank, which is not even ‘outside’ (17) the nation state. It ‘pools’ knowledge and evidence, and its staff is “tracing the tendencies and gauging the forces which determine the changes in our economic environment” (16). Given its nature as a neutral service provider, as a “clearing-house of ideas and an instrument for the spread of knowledge” (15), the distinction between member states and non-member states is an administrative, not a ‘political’ one. In the constructed world of the Bruce Report, the involvement and engagement of all States, no matter if ‘member’ or not, is reasonable.

In this kind of international order, in which

- a. issues of economic and social questions are domestically political and are contained within nation states
- b. nation states are defined by their economic structure
- c. nation states are the central, indeed, only component of the international order,
- d. citizens and national publics are the only other significant social actor besides states

The tackling of economic and social questions is the central task in keeping states, that is, the international order intact. Focusing on these issues is an issue of ‘appeasement’ of national publics.

It is by international discussion, and by the association in the work of independent experts, that Governments can best safeguard themselves against the danger of being pressed by one sectional interest or another to assist it at the expense of the general well-being. (9)

**Global civilisation project:** Finally, my study of the symbolic construction of issues related to economic and social questions finds that their tackling is at the heart of the project of civilisation. The “promotion of peaceful civilisation” (7), the fostering of the “progress of

civilisation” (6) are the underlying driving force of human action in the world of the Bruce Report. “Economic and human values” (6) are foundational for this progress; civilisation and its progress are “dependent upon” these values (6). The positive relationship between the progress of civilisation and ‘economic and human values’ is an empirical fact. It is something that can be and has been experienced over “the last twenty years” (6).

Yet, related to my earlier point about the fluidity of the world, the interdependence of ‘economic and human values’, on the one, and the ‘progress of civilisation’, on the other side, is not a static relationship but a flexible one. The “extent” of this interdependence has ‘grown’ over the “last twenty years” (6). Consequently, again, as something that is flexible and moving it demands constant work and adjustment. Desired action is about ‘improving’, ‘increasing’, and ‘making more efficient’.

## Conclusion and Outlook

In this paper I reported on my analysis of the symbolic construction of ‘economic problems’ in the League of Nations’ Bruce Report from 1939. My analysis generated four main findings:

1. There are no ‘economic problems’ in the world of the Bruce Report. There are ‘economic and social questions’.
2. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are (distinctly) political, objective, organic and universal.
3. Economic and social questions relate to issues that exist contained within nation-states.
4. Economic and social questions relate to issues that are at the heart of/essential for international order and the project of global civilisation.

Incidentally, my study adds to an existing debate among historians that Dubin (1983: 64-5) points to. This is the debate whether the Bruce Report signals a ‘depolitisation’ of the League and stands for the kind of ‘functionalism’ that Mitrany (e.g. 1966) theorises. My study supports Dubin’s argument against interpretations that read the Bruce Report as a sign for an unfolding functionalism a la Mitrany. Yet, my study also shows that the way Dubin (1983: 64) ‘argues’ is somewhat meaningless. He suggests that it is obvious that the Bruce Report does not signal a ‘depolitisation’ because the authors use the adjective *POLITICAL* to mark the nature of ‘economic and social questions’. Hence, all he does is commenting on the appearance of a particular English linguistic sign in a written text. But linguistic signs are not linked to one or more fixed meanings. Meanings are historical and arise within a context; they are webs (see in detail Selchow 2016). My study adds meaning to Dubin’s point because it provides insights into the meanings associated with the instances of the adjective *POLITICAL* in the Bruce Report. My finding that there are two kinds of ‘political’ in the Bruce Report requires future discussions of the issue to be more nuanced and not to simply rely on a political/non-political dichotomy. My study shows that a scholarly reliance on this dichotomy (explicitly or implicitly) distorts the view and overlooks the complexity and nuances of the historical case.

The actual added value, however, lies in providing scholars with signposts for studies into the symbolic construction of the world. As suggested at the beginning of this paper, the study of the symbolic construction of the world is valuable because the social world and collective action problems are not ahistorical. They are political. They are the products of and feed into historical discourses. As such they do not describe but constitute and prescribe social reality.

In a limited sense, my study’s various empirical insights might already be utilised for interpretations of the ‘consequences’ of ‘economic and social questions’ in and for the world (of the Bruce Report). For instance, if one was interested in the historical positioning, i.e. the power of economists as international actors and producers of public knowledge, one might find value in realising that in the world of the Bruce Report, which is a world without ‘economic

problems’ but full of ‘economic and social questions’, economists ‘naturally’ do not play an outstanding role. They might fall into the group of experts who are needed to tackle these questions, but they do not stand out. Economic expertise is not explicitly desired.

But, of course, such interpretations can only be made cautiously. As pointed out at the beginning of my paper, an analysis of a single text is but an analysis of a single text. It does not enable the development of claims about social reality far beyond the respective text. A broader endeavour of systematic analyses of many texts is needed to reconstruct the world. Hence, the value of my study is the provision of empirically grounded signposts to start off such extended research.

In the context of my broader interest in the history of ‘international economic thinking’, I see value in six sets of follow-on questions:

1. Is the Bruce Report a discursive exemption in regard to the absence of ‘economic problems’? If not, do ‘social and economic questions’ ever get separated? If so, when, how and with which consequences? Relatedly, is the distinction between ‘problems’ and ‘questions’ in the text simply a linguistic preference or is it significant?
2. Is the nebulous meaning of the adjective INTERNATIONAL text-distinct or representative of the historical and contextual discourse?
3. How is the suggested dismissal of the adjective TECHNICAL taken up (or not) in the historical discourse of ‘international economic thinking’ and with which consequences?
4. Is the distinction between the two kinds of ‘political’ unique for the Bruce Report?
5. In the world of the Bruce Report, ‘international cooperation’ is a rational strategy. When, how and with which consequences is ‘international cooperation’ getting framed as a national interest?
6. In the world of the Bruce Report, the tackling of economic and social questions is free of national competition. When does this change and with which consequences?

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A**

Draft constitution (21):

1. A Central Committee shall be set up, to which shall be entrusted the direction and supervision of the work of the committees dealing with economic and social questions.
2. In the first instance, the Central Committee shall comprise representatives of twenty-four States chosen, for a period of one year, by the Assembly on the proposal of its Bureau. Thereafter, the Committee shall comprise such number for such period as may be determined in the light of experience.
3. Any Member of the League not represented on the Central Committee which considers itself specially interested in a particular matter shall be invited to send a representative to sit as a member at any meeting of the Committee during the consideration of such matter.
4. The Central Committee shall be authorised to co-opt not more than eight members appointed in a personal capacity on the grounds of their special competence and authority whose collaboration it considers would prove of special value.
5. The Central Committee shall be requested to study the conditions under which all States desiring to do so may participate in the work relating to economic and social questions, and shall be authorised to take such steps as appear to it appropriate in order to facilitate their participation. Any State so participating shall enjoy the rights conferred on Members of the League under paragraph 3.
6. The Secretary-General shall submit to the Central Committee the annual draft budget relating to economic and social work, which, after examination by the Central Committee, will be dealt with in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the League. This budget shall provide for all the expenditure, direct and indirect, incurred for the purpose of carrying out such work.
7. The Central Committee shall meet at least once a year. An annual report shall be submitted by the Secretary-General to the Assembly on its work and on the programme of future work for which budgetary credits are requested.
8. The Central Committee shall be authorised to draw up its own Rules of Procedure, to approve its agenda, elect its own President and its Bureau, appoint the members of the main standing committees, in so far as existing international conventions permit it to do so, and set up other committees when necessary. Its agenda shall include any questions which a State participating in its work refers to it for consideration. All matters shall be decided by a majority of the members present. The Central Committee shall be empowered to entrust its Bureau with the discharge, in the intervals between its own meetings, of any duties which it may determine.”

### **Appendix B**

The document provides a list of what the League is able to achieve “in the most economical possible way” (16):

- “[...] To collect and sift evidence drawn from all over the world;
- [...] To obtain the services of the best experts in the world working without reward for the good of the cause;
- [...] To arrange meetings between experts working in the same fields, enabling them to discuss their preoccupations, their successes, their failures;
- [...] To provide the essential links between the experts and those responsible for policy;
- [...] To provide constant and automatic opportunities for statesmen to meet and discuss their policy;
- [...] To provide thereby means for better understanding of the aims and policies of different nations;
- [...] To provide machinery for the conclusion of international conventions” (16)

