

hoped for the co-operation of all the Governments so approached. He dealt with certain aspects of organized help which he thought the League could provide on humanitarian grounds, perhaps through recognized organs, and of the technical assistance which the League could give. He concluded :—

“ If the Council can express its approval of the strict maintenance of non-intervention in the conflict while that conflict endures, if it can throw the weight of its prestige in the scales on the side of bringing the conflict to an end, if it can indicate that it is ready to lend its technical services to encourage an international humanitarian effort to mitigate the sufferings endured by the civilian population, if, finally, it can show itself willing to afford its advice and assistance in the ultimate work of reconstruction, this meeting of the Council will not have been held in vain.”

The speech of the representative of France was largely on the lines of that of Lord Cranborne. He thought that if the Council would adopt as its own the principles of non-intervention already proclaimed it would support an effort which was the best way to put an end to the dangers of which the Spanish Government had given warning. The Council could also show its sympathy with the efforts which it was hoped would be made to bring hostilities to an end.

The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics devoted a part of his speech to the view held by his Government on the subject of non-intervention. He said :—

“ My Government has never considered assistance furnished to the legal Government of the Spanish Republic against the rebels as intervention in the internal affairs of the country or as an infringement of the Covenant of the League of Nations. Prohibition of the sale of arms to a legal Government the victim of an aggression, and, still more, prohibition of the delivery of arms to such a Government when they are the subject of contracts previously entered into, has always been considered by my Government as an arbitrary measure and as a measure which is unjust and contrary to international law.”

He added that, nevertheless, the Soviet Union had acceded to the Non-intervention Agreement and had fulfilled its undertakings under that agreement.

The Polish representative stated that in the opinion of his Government the convocation of the Council was not calculated to bring a lessening of the tension in Spain or a diminution in the sufferings of the Spanish people, and, after listening to the Spanish representative, he thought that the Council's task should be confined to an exchange of views which, however, would be incomplete without tangible results in the direction of pacification, and he welcomed any proposal for the participation of the League's technical organs in efforts designed to improve the unhappy fate of the civil population of Spain.

As for myself, I took an entirely different line. I limited my remarks to the request of the Spanish Government for an examination by the Council of the situation, to the rights conferred by the Covenant on Member States, and to the obligations of Member States under the Covenant in the interests of the maintenance of peace. I submitted that the Spanish request was the business of the League, for the purposes of Article XI of the Covenant, which the Spanish Government had invoked, aimed at removing or alleviating the emergencies which threatened peace between nations, and the Council could deal with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world. I asked whether it was possible to receive further particulars of the cause of the trouble, whether it was the election of February last which gave rise to the trouble remarking that if a nation constitutionally elects a Government that Government must surely be acceptable to the nation, more especially if it allows the means for its own removal. I quoted at length from the speech which the Spanish representative delivered at the Seventeenth Assembly, and concluded :—

“ We are asked as a Council to examine the situation. I wonder, Mr. President, what will happen ? Speaking for myself and the country I represent, I would say that we are most willing to stand with our fellow-members of the Council, and with the members of the Assembly, in going thoroughly into the whole situation, and in acting in the interests of humanity and constitutional government. We are prepared to examine the cause and procedure of the trouble, and if necessary to act in accordance with the requirements of the situation. I say again that, although the statements before us are *ex parte* statements, we must take notice of them. If there is another side of the problem, if there is some justification for the revolt, if there is some justification for intervention by other peoples, let it be stated to this body. If those who have caused the revolt would come forward and state their grievances, I believe that my fellow-members of the Council, the public here assembled, and indeed the whole world, would listen attentively to any claim put forward for such justification. If, therefore, there is another side, can we not invite those representing it to come forward so that we may more fully determine what should be done ? As the Spanish Government's request is that there should be an examination of the situation, I feel, as a member of the Council, that we have a duty to hold the fullest investigation with the greatest possible speed. Having satisfied ourselves on the matter, we should then do our best to bring about a settlement in the interests of humanity, of constitutional government, and in accordance with the policy of the League to which our respective nations have voluntarily pledged themselves.”

On the morning of the 12th December there was an exchange of views between members of the Council, the basis of discussion being a motion which it was proposed to submit at a public meeting later in the day. There is not available a record of this exchange of views, nor do I think it necessary to furnish even a brief account of it. It seemed to me that there was a striving after the barest