

after the prohibition of recruiting and the despatch of volunteers the London Committee wished to organize a strict control over the frontiers, and despite the very great difficulties which had been encountered the Council would be ignoring reality if they were to contest the services which had been rendered. France was convinced that the vigilance of the system would go on increasing.

M. Delbos asked what would have happened if in the absence of the London agreement no obstacle had been placed in the way of intervention. It was the duty of the Council to recall the most elementary rules of humanity and of international law—those rules which prohibit such acts as the bombardment of open towns and acts which impose the horrors of war upon the non-combatant population.

There were two tasks which the Powers should undertake: (1) The prevention of the atrocity of war falling upon innocent victims, and (2) recall foreign combatants, whose presence in Spain was feeding the civil war and at the same time extending it. The London Committee, by a solemn appeal, was asking for the cessation of cruel methods which nothing could excuse. The withdrawal of foreign combatants raised delicate problems, but nevertheless France firmly hoped that in the early future the plan which was to be laid before the Powers would be accepted and put into operation. He felt sure that no country would fail to accede to the appeal for the application of sentiments of humanity.

“By a unanimous manifestation, the Council will encourage those who are taking efforts in London and will hasten the success of those efforts.”

M. Litvinoff, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics said that the Council had before them a perfectly clear case requiring no further checking or investigation. There was an undoubted case of the violent intrusion of foreign armed forces into the territory of a member of the League of Nations—aggression in its crudest form.

The international steps taken during the last year had obscured the formal side of the case by creating the impression that the Council had before them two warring parties on an equal footing. In reality they had a legitimate Government formed in accordance with the Spanish constitution and a democratic franchise, and vested shortly before the beginning of the events they were discussing with a vote of confidence by the whole Spanish people. “We have before us a Government responsible for the observance of its country’s laws, for public order, for discipline in the army and fleet, and in duty bound to suppress, where necessary by force, any attempt to alter the existing order to the detriment of the interests of the great mass of the people.” On the other hand they had a handful of Generals and officers who had broken their military oath, revolted against the lawful Government and the constitution of their country, and begun hostilities with the help principally of Moroccan troops. M. Litvinoff ventured to recall the simple and indubitable facts because some had begun to forget them. There could be no question whatever of treating the two sides on an equal footing. Other Governments had the right to enter into relations with the Spanish Government and to engage in any commercial transactions they pleased with the Spanish Government, including the sale of war materials without thereby breaking any international rules or obligations. The relations with the rebel Generals on the other hand, and all the more the supply of war materials to them, were a classic example of interference in the internal affairs of another State.

If the events in Spain were confined to internal troubles, to a struggle between the Government and the rebels, not only would the League of Nations have nothing to do with this question, but the events themselves would long ago have come to an end. Any impartial person acquainted with the relationship of forces was bound to admit that the legitimate Spanish Government would long ago have made an end of the rebellion. Unfortunately the documents which had been published proved with the utmost clarity that the rebellion itself was prepared and organized with foreign incitement and foreign aid. From the first day the rebels began to be supplied with arms, aeroplanes, military instructors and pilots from abroad. The volume of these supplies had grown increasingly greater, and in addition men as well as materials had been supplied. Furthermore, the conclusion of an agreement for non-intervention in the affairs of Spain did not prevent this aid being granted. Tens of thousands of well armed and trained foreigners poured into Spain to help the rebels. Many of these foreigners were on active service in the armed forces of other States and formed themselves into large military units on Spanish Territory. Important battles with the army of the Spanish Republic were fought in some cases solely by those foreign military units under the command of foreign generals, and Spanish cities were subjected to bombardment by foreign aeroplanes, controlled by foreign pilots. The position was that the Spanish Republican Army was carrying on an armed struggle not so much against the rebels as against foreign interventionists who had invaded the country. Thus a member of the League of Nations had been subjected to foreign invasion and violation of its territorial integrity and political independence. But it was not only a question of Spain. It was a question of the whole of the peace of Europe. A European State was attempting to impose upon Spain an internal regime and still more a political orientation which were foreign to it and under the cover of this intervention to deprive the country of its independence and subject it to the rule of other States. If this attempt were to succeed there was no guarantee that it would not be repeated in other countries. There was no guarantee that there would not be another attempt in the immediate future to provoke an insurrection in some other country on the ground of international economic discontent, to recognize the head of the rebels as the head of the Government, to introduce foreign troops and foreign arms in aid of the rebels, and thereby to promote the aggressive national policy of the intervening State. The intervention in Spain betrayed a tendency like that of the religious wars of the past—it began a series of new wars and, under the guise of a struggle of ideologies and political regimes, to pursue a policy of aggression and expansion.

It should not be forgotten that Spain at the time the rebellion began had a Government similar in its programme to the Governments existing in many other States. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics also had its own ideology. It would, of course, be very glad if other