

countries were to become penetrated with the same ideology. Nevertheless it had never attempted, and would not attempt by any means whatever, least of all by violent means, to impose its ideology upon other peoples. As a State the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had very little interest in the order which existed in Spain, a State with which at the time of the rebellion, they did not even have diplomatic or consular relations, and where there was no Soviet citizen. All that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics wanted was that after the present events, just as it had had before the rebellion, Spain should have the Government which it itself desired and which it had voluntarily elected in accordance with the Constitution it had itself established. His Government preferred that the struggle going on should be settled by the Spaniards themselves. That was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics only interest in the matter.

There were people who regarded themselves as being staunch supporters of the League but who imagined the League of Nations could be kept alive only if no one asked anything or expected anything of it, and that any appeal to the League in an international case of the slightest importance was a threat to the League's very existence. Their ideal of the League was a universal mummy of which they could admire the repose, the immobility and imperturbability. He considered that the League of Nations would be finally doomed to a moral, if not a physical, death if it completely ignored the Spanish appeal and stood aside in the Spanish situation.

Spain was among the original members of the League and had always taken an active part in all its proceedings. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics could therefore only express astonishment at the moderation and, indeed, humility of the Spanish Government, which, in spite of the misfortunes by which it had been overtaken, had not burdened the League with its appeals in the hour of travail, although it had every right to do so.

M. Litvinoff ended by expressing his confidence that the League Council not only in the interests of Spain, but also in the interests of international justice and the League itself, would say a weighty word and afford the maximum assistance possible to the Spanish people.

The representative of the United Kingdom stated that from the outbreak of the civil war the United Kingdom had done all it could to assist in the evacuation of foreigners or Spaniards and to facilitate the exchange of prisoners. The United Kingdom Government could not be charged with partiality. It was willing to take the same action on behalf of Spanish civilians in whatever part of Spain they might be found.

Last December there had been no international machinery for verifying violations of the Non-intervention Agreement, nor was there any agreement among the Powers to prevent their nationals from leaving their own territories for the purpose of taking part in the civil war, but it would be impossible to deny that real progress had been made since December. The scheme of supervision of the Spanish borders had been in operation for some weeks and was reported by the Non-intervention Committee to be working satisfactorily. The Non-intervention Committee had certainly limited foreign interference in the Spanish conflict since December, but, of course, the United Kingdom Government were only one of twenty-seven Governments represented on the committee. Though the committee met in London the United Kingdom had no special responsibility for the work done there by the committee. However, in the view of the United Kingdom the Governments of Europe could not be satisfied that the objectives of the Non-intervention Committee had been realized until the last foreigner had been withdrawn from Spain and until that unhappy country had been left to settle her own destinies in her own way. The United Kingdom Government were firmly opposed to all foreign invasion in Spain and they had long since taken administrative steps to prevent such intervention by their own nationals. Foreigners engaged in hostilities, whether on one side or the other, had no business on Spanish soil. When the cruel conflict was over the Spanish people would not readily forget the part that foreign nations had played in the destruction of Spanish life and property.

Mr. Eden felt sure that the Council would agree that it was their duty to do everything in their power to further the withdrawal of foreign nationals from Spain. Efforts to realize this objective had been actively pursued by the Non-intervention Committee in London. The technical sub-committee of that body which was set up to consider the question had presented a report to the main committee and this had been referred to the Governments for their consideration.

Mr. Eden said that he wished to explain the approach which had been made by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to certain Governments through diplomatic channels. Confidential inquiries had been made of the other principal Governments concerned to ascertain whether those Governments would join with the United Kingdom Government in an approach to both contending parties in Spain. His Majesty's Government had felt that only with the greatest difficulty could an arrangement for the withdrawal of foreign volunteers be carried out in the midst of active hostilities. The objective of the approach to the two parties in Spain was therefore intended to be strictly limited to asking them to agree to a temporary cessation of hostilities on all Spanish fronts for a period sufficient to enable the withdrawals to be arranged. He expressed regret that there had been a leakage regarding the soundings upon which they were engaged with the other Governments, and this had led to a certain element of confusion which could not but further complicate their task. He wished to emphasize the position as his Government now viewed it. Firstly, the Non-intervention Committee had submitted to the European Governments a scheme for the withdrawal of foreign volunteers. Secondly, on the assumption that the scheme would be approved by the Non-intervention Committee and agreed by them to be workable, they were now in communication with the Powers principally concerned so that they could jointly make on the basis of the proposed scheme an approach to the two parties in Spain. Up to the date of the Council meeting no approach had been made to the two parties and none, so far as His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom were concerned, would be made until the Governments represented on the Non-intervention Committee were in agreement, both upon the plan for the withdrawal of volunteers which had already been submitted to them, and upon the need for a temporary cessation of hostilities in order that it could be carried out.