

When the last item of the Council's agenda for that day was reached the Spanish representative vacated the President's chair and was succeeded by the representative of Ecuador. It will be observed, on reference to the minutes of the meeting, that the Spanish representative limited himself in his remarks to the question of the insecurity of navigation in the Mediterranean, with which the Spanish Government's telegram (see Document C. 335, M. 226, 1937, VII) had dealt. He referred, as he was entitled to refer in the light of subsequent events, to the warning of his predecessor delivered in the Council Chamber in December, 1936, to the effect that, while the activity of foreign tanks and aeroplanes on Spanish territory was certainly no less grave for the Spanish people than the activity of warships and submarines along the Spanish coast, the latter activity constituted a more menacing danger to general peace, and, further, that the object of the Spanish Government in causing the Council to be summoned "was to nip this danger in the bud, to prevent the growth of this evil to proportions where it became unmanageable." He then referred to incidents, particulars of which had been furnished by his Government in the telegram mentioned above, and he asked the Council whether official indifference and passivity towards the perpetration of this monstrous crime was to be interpreted as meaning that such actions universally considered as atrocities contrary to international law were to be accepted as legitimate and regular. This led him to the agreement which had recently been concluded at Nyon, and he protested against the exclusion of Spain from a conference her membership of which would have been doubly justified as a Mediterranean power and because her ships had been the principal victims. He, however, recognized in the Nyon agreement an advance on the London Committee of Non-Intervention, in spite of its excluding Spanish ships from the system of collective protection. But he protested against such exclusion, which he considered unjustifiable, and went so far as to say that the Spanish Government would have no objection to the naval forces entrusted with the protection of shipping entering Spanish territorial waters were such a course necessary for the fulfilment of their task.

M. Negrin averred that the solving of the problem required loyalty and the courage to face realities. He brushed aside the fiction that acts of aggression against merchant shipping in the Mediterranean were due to some kind of natural phenomena, the origin and causes of which were unknown and impossible to discover.

A further communication from the Spanish Government was circulated to members of the League dealing with the attack on the "Campeador" (Document C. 389, M. 259, 1937, VII).

The Spanish representative was followed by M. Delbos, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, who limited his remarks to the Nyon arrangement. His tone was apologetic, and he promised to transmit to the signatories of that agreement the remarks of the Spanish representative. He added that, whilst the urgent task of the Conference had been to deal with the attacks of submarines, it had not lost sight of the problem raised by attacks by surface craft and by aircraft, and he said that this would be dealt with at a later date.

In view of the attitude on the Spanish question of New Zealand's representative at previous sessions, I felt that a few words by myself were necessary. I dealt in particular with the attack on the S.S. "Campeador," an act of brutality which makes sorry reading. I then touched on League action or want of action in the past. Recently Abyssinia, Spain, and China had in turn appealed to the League, and what had been done to meet these appeals? Which would be the next to turn to the Council for support against the war mania that was abroad to-day? I then asked the opposing party to come forward in order that we might hear their side of the story, and I inquired whether it would not be possible for Spain to submit herself to a regime sponsored by the League under which, after the lapse of the time required for pacification, there could be held an election in which the people of that unhappy country could express their will. I concluded:—

"My main purpose in rising was to express the hope that, whatever might be the committees to which these matters are referred, they will have in mind the acts that have been perpetrated and the bonds of the union into which we have entered; and that they will remember that the purpose of their meeting, the purpose of the Council and the Assembly meeting, is to protect humanity and to oppose unwarranted attacks upon innocent people."

I was followed by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, M. Litvinoff, who seemed to imply in the few words he spoke that he would have something to say on the Spanish question in the Assembly.

The President then adjourned the discussion.

The Ninety-ninth Session of the Council of the League of Nations was opened on the morning of the 29th September. The representative of France took the chair. The agenda for the session (Document C. 398, M. 262, 1937) contained sixteen items, and it was adopted without discussion at the private meeting, at which the following matters were also dealt with:—

#### QUESTION OF ALEXANDRETTA : EXPENSES OF THE COMMISSION APPOINTED TO ORGANIZE AND SUPERVISE THE FIRST ELECTIONS IN THE SANJAK.

The Council having examined the Rapporteur's report (Document C. 392, 1937), and noted that the Governments concerned—those of France and Turkey—were prepared to share the expense incurred passed the following resolution:—

"The Council

"With reference to its resolution of May 29th, 1937,

"Authorizes the Secretary-General, in accordance with the terms of Article 33 of the Financial Regulations, to draw upon the Working Capital Fund to an amount not exceeding 700,000 Swiss francs to meet the expenses of the work of the Commission provided for in the aforesaid resolution, on the understanding that all sums so advanced shall be repaid by the French Government and the Turkish Government in equal proportions,

"And recommends that the repayment of the sums advanced be made from time to time during the continuance of the work of the Commission."