

preserved the independence of the Spanish people. The representatives of Austria, Poland, and Hungary commended the prudence of the Governments of the United Kingdom and France; and altogether the discussion, thus confined as it was to nine speakers, displayed fundamental differences in approach and sympathy such as to make agreement on anything beyond the most innocuous platitudes seem well-nigh impossible.

Nevertheless, the representative Drafting Committee in due course produced an agreed text of a resolution which is worth citing here in full:—

“ The Assembly—

“(1) Associates itself with the Council in recalling that it is the duty of every State to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of other States— a duty which, for members of the League of Nations, has been recognized by the Covenant :

“(2) Affirms that every State is under an obligation to refrain from intervening in the internal affairs of another State ;

“(3) Recalls the special undertakings entered into by the European Governments, and the London Non-Intervention Committee, which, in the intention of the countries to whose initiative it owes its origin, was set up for the purpose of restricting the Spanish conflict and thereby safeguarding peace in the rest of the world ;

“(4) Regrets that not merely has the London Non-Intervention Committee failed, despite the efforts of the majority of its members, of which the Assembly expresses its appreciation, to secure the withdrawal of non-Spanish combatants taking part in the struggle in Spain, but that it must to-day be recognized that there are veritable foreign army corps on Spanish soil, which represents foreign intervention in Spanish affairs ;

“(5) Observes that the Council in its resolution of 29th May last justly described this withdrawal as ‘ the most effective remedy for a situation the great gravity of which, from the standpoint of the general peace, it feels bound to emphasize, and the most certain means of ensuring the full application of the policy of non-intervention ’ ;

“(6) Sincerely trusts that the diplomatic action recently initiated by certain powers will be successful in securing the immediate and complete withdrawal of the non-Spanish combatants taking part in the struggle in Spain ;

“(7) Appeals to the Governments, which must all be animated by the desire to see peace maintained in Europe, to undertake a new and earnest effort in this direction : And notes that, if such a result cannot be obtained in the near future, the members of the League which are parties to the non-intervention agreement will consider ending the policy of non-intervention ;

“(8) Requests the Council, in view of the provisions of Article 11 of the Covenant of the League, to follow attentively the development of the situation in Spain and to seize any opportunity that may arise for seeking a basis for a pacific solution of the conflict.”

When this draft was reported to the Sixth Committee it met with a generally cordial reception. Sharply conflicting views were for the time reconciled in the united emphasis on the urgency of securing immediate and complete withdrawal from Spain of foreign combatants, and on the crucial bearing of this on the issue of continuing or ending the policy of “ non-intervention ”.

The Irish Free State representative took exception to the latter part of paragraph 7 in the proposed resolution ; his Government, he said, would abide by the policy of non-intervention even if the attempt to obtain withdrawal of foreign combatants did not succeed. Dissent from details was voiced also by the representatives of Hungary, Austria, and Portugal, while the representatives of Bulgaria and South Africa said they would not vote in the absence of instructions from their respective Governments.

The draft resolution was put to a vote. The Irish Free State, South Africa, Portugal, Bulgaria, and Austria abstained from voting. With these abstentions the draft was accepted by the Committee, *nem. con.*

Discussion and voting on the resolution in the Assembly did not differ materially from those in the Sixth Committee. Amendments were moved that would have changed the tenor of the resolution, by referring to the participation of foreign army corps “ on both sides ” in Spain (paragraph 4), and by saying (in paragraph 7) that “ certain members ” of the League “ might consider ” ending the policy of non-intervention rather than that “ the members . . . will consider.” These amendments were rejected, New Zealand, of course, voting with the majority for the resolution as it stood. For inserting the words “ on both sides ” the Ayes were three, the Nocs were thirty-two, and thirteen States abstained from voting. On a final vote for or against the resolution in its entirety there were fourteen abstentions, thirty-two States in favour, and two (Albania and Portugal) against. The rule of unanimity being applicable, the resolution technically failed of acceptance by the Assembly—in the words of the *League Journal* (3rd October, 1937), “ the Resolution was not carried unanimously.” But substantially the resolution as carried thus far through League machinery in September-October, 1937, recorded the best compromise statement on the Spanish tragedy that was then possible, with its emphasis on certain States’ armed intervention as the paramount element in that tragedy.

REFUGEES.

The problem of refugees, like the problem of opium, has always occupied the closest attention of the Assembly, but, unlike the problem of opium, its superintendence or solution does not devolve upon the League in virtue of any international convention. The outstanding figure in the League’s refugee work was Dr. Nansen, the famous explorer, who, from the close of the war to his death, devoted his energies to the alleviation of the lot of thousands of peoples who owing to the exigencies of the war had sought refuge in foreign countries. However, it is not for me to deal with the past, but rather to say a few words about the present and about a future which is full of uncertainties. In