

1937.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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# THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

REPORTS OF THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND ON THE 95TH (EXTRAORDINARY), 96TH, AND 97TH SESSIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS HELD AT GENEVA IN THE YEARS 1936 AND 1937.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

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## NINETY-FIFTH (EXTRAORDINARY) SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

New Zealand Government Offices,  
415 Strand, London W.C. 2, 23rd December, 1936.

SIR,—

On the 27th November the Spanish Government sent to the President of the Council of the League of Nations a telegram which, after setting forth certain circumstances which it was alleged constituted armed intervention in the Spanish civil war, affected international relations, and threatened to “disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends,” requested the summoning of the Council to examine the situation under Article XI of the Covenant. The members of the Council were accordingly requested to meet in Geneva on the 10th December. I left London on the afternoon of the 9th.

This is neither the time nor the place to examine the origins of the unhappy conflict in Spain, which, if reports are true, has been characterized by brutality and much unnecessary suffering by women and children. It was with the international situation created by the progress of events that the Council had to deal. This situation is briefly indicated in the telegram to which I have alluded and which has been reproduced in Document C. 515, M. 327. A few sentences are, however, needed to complete the picture.

At the beginning, at any rate, the civil war was the prime concern of the people waging it. It was an internal affair to be settled by the Spanish people. Basing itself on this view, the French Government, early in the struggle, proposed an agreement under which European States should pledge themselves not to intervene. The proposition was accepted, and a committee was set up, its task being to watch the situation. It is claimed by the supporters of the agreement that the Committee by its actions has helped to circumscribe the conflict. There are others, however, who maintain that such actions have, at the same time, prevented the elected Government of Spain from obtaining the supply of munitions of war necessary to deal with the rebellion; indeed, so unfairly has the policy of non-intervention operated, that it has been impossible for the Spanish Government to obtain the fulfilment of munition contracts which were made long before the war broke out. There are other and more serious charges. On the one hand, the Spanish Government have alleged help in munitions and armed forces to the rebels by two great European Powers, with the active assistance of a third, whilst the rebels and their friends charge another Great Power with intervention on the side of the legitimate Government, all such charges constituting a flagrant violation of the Non-intervention Agreement to which those charged are parties. There are those who say with bitterness that the effect of the agreement has been in the sole interests of the rebels. If it were only a question of civil war, unhappy as its consequences might be, the situation would be comparatively simple; but the state of Europe is such that the smallest step in one direction might cause an explosion, the effects of which would be incalculable. The causes of the trouble are many and varied. Undoubtedly there