

refugees has not been accompanied by outbreaks of disease. Of course, the miseries to which man is subject in warfare are not lacking; but when one reflects that the outbreak of the civil war saw the Government deprived of nearly the whole of its army medical services and much of its medical resources, one cannot help paying tribute to those who built up a new organization which ultimately met reasonable demands. I write some three weeks after the date of the report of the mission, and much has happened within the past few days, but at the end of January the Spanish Government had taken measures to secure the equipment necessary to carry out the plan of evacuation which then appeared to be the most pressing problem calling for solution.

The report deserves to be read. It is ably written (I call your attention to the references to Madrid on page 23), and moreover it well illustrates the value of the technical services of the League, especially in cases of emergency.

The conclusions reached by the mission will be found summarized in the covering letter.

The President himself acted as Rapporteur, but as the debate at the final public meeting of the Council was not so much concerned with the report of the mission as with the question of those who had taken asylum in Embassies and Legations in Madrid, I will devote a few sentences to a debate, at times almost acrimonious, which took place in the private meeting which preceded the public meeting.

The question of the evacuation of the refugees who had sought asylum in Embassies and Legations in Madrid had been raised by the representative of Chile during the ninety-fifth session of the Council, when the Spanish representative had stated in reply, "I am fully prepared to consider, direct with each Government concerned, the problem constituted by the persons who have taken refuge in the way referred to, taking into account all the diverse aspects of the question." The matter was again raised during the private meeting of the Council on the 27th January by the representative of Chile, who complained that nothing had been done in the meantime. Was it not possible, he asked, to reach an agreement on principle with the Spanish representative before the report of the Commission was discussed in public. On the motion of Mr. Eden, the private meeting was adjourned to give the parties an opportunity to negotiate. At the resumption of the sitting the President, who acted as Rapporteur, introduced his report (Document C. 96), and the debate on the question of persons in asylum in Madrid was resumed. It soon became clear that the outstanding point between the representatives of Chile and Spain was the objection of the latter to international intervention, although he was in agreement with his colleague on the necessity for evacuation. He was quite prepared to negotiate with the Chilean Government as with other Governments. At length Mr. Eden intervened, and after pointing out that the differences between the representatives of the countries were not so great as their speeches led one to believe, asked whether it was not possible to open negotiations in the near future at Valencia or Madrid. Ultimately London was agreed on as the place of negotiation, and the private meeting broke up on the understanding that as soon as the Spanish representative had returned to Valencia the necessary instructions to begin negotiations would be given by him.

It will be observed on reference to the Rapporteur's report (Document C. 96), which subsequently came before the Council in public session, that a section is devoted to this question of asylum. The concluding paragraph was slightly modified by the Rapporteur in order to take account of the agreement (as to place and date of meeting) which had been arrived at during the private meeting. As to the report of the Health Mission which visited Spain, the Council agreed to transmit the chapters dealing with the prevention of epidemics to the Health Committee of the League, at the same time laying emphasis on the typhus question and the necessity for consultation on the subject by experts. The debate in public was largely concerned with the right of Embassies and Legations to afford asylum to nationals other than their own. Views were conflicting, and some speakers quoted cases, even going back to the eighteenth century, in support of their contention. There is, however, no need for me to dwell on this aspect, so for full information I refer you to the minutes of the Council.

The ninety-sixth session of the Council terminated on the 27th January.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. J. JORDAN,

High Commissioner for New Zealand.

The Right Honourable the Prime Minister,  
Wellington, New Zealand.