

No. 18

Exchange of Notes between Canada and Italy, November 11th/27, 1935.

(AIDE-MEMOIRE LEFT WITH THE ACTING UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BY THE ROYAL ITALIAN CONSUL GENERAL)

OTTAWA, November 11, 1935.

Point 1: The Italian Government by its note of the 7th October last and through the declarations of its representative at the Council and at the Assembly of the League of Nations has opposed the basis of the Geneva deliberations concerning the Italo-Ethiopian problem.

It has denied the accusation of having failed to fulfil the obligations assumed by virtue of Article 12 of the Covenant.

To-day the Italian Government renews more emphatically its protestations against the seriousness and injustice of the measures that a great number of States members of the League are about to apply against Italy under Article 16 of the Covenant.

In opposition to the deliberations of the League the Italian Government wishes to stress the following points:—

(1) That the reasons given in the Italian memorandum presented to the Assembly of the League, a summary of which is herewith included, have not been given the consideration they deserved.

(2) That the Assembly and the Council of the League have failed to apply the provisions of the Covenant relating to the situation outlined by the Italian Government.

Point 2: The situation which has developed since the last meeting of the Assembly and of the Council of the League has confirmed the reasons and protestations given by the Italians with such evident and significant facts that the very basis upon which decisions against Italy had been reached has been minimized and even annulled. Italy contests the juridical and moral foundation of these decisions.

Indeed numerous Ethiopian tribes led by their civil and religious heads came to place themselves under the protection of Italy.

The Italian Government has abolished slavery in the occupied territories and has given to 16,000 slaves the liberty which they would have awaited in vain from the Government of Addis Ababa which however had pledged itself to free all slaves when the said Governments signed the clauses of the Covenant of the League. The freed populations look upon Italy certainly not as an aggressor State but as a Power which has the right and is capable of extending the high protection which the Covenant of the League under Article 22 recognizes as the mission of civilization entrusted to civilized nations.

The attitude of the populations liberated by the new Government of Scioa and by the religious authorities of Aksum leads us to believe that "a fortiori" a similar "de facto" situation is prevalent in all the territory inhabited by non-Amharic races in which the domination of Addis Ababa