

The recent political evolution of Syria and Lebanon, the other principal mandated area, was also brought up during the discussion. M. Paul-Boncour, delegate of France, assured the Committee that negotiations were progressing favourably between the French Republic, the Power entrusted with this mandate, and the Governments of Syria and Lebanon with a view to bringing about the admission of these countries to the League.

At a subsequent meeting the Norwegian delegate (Mr. Andersen), who had been appointed rapporteur, presented a resolution which was adopted by the Committee. The resolution, taking note of the work of the Mandatory Powers, and renewing the Committee's confidence in them, expressed the hope that the problems relating to Palestine may be solved in the near future, account being taken of all the legitimate interests at stake.

Withdrawal of Non-Spanish Combatants from Spain

Senor del Vayo, delegate of Spain, began the discussion on this question, which had been referred to the Committee by the Assembly, by explaining in greater detail the scope and significance of the proposal put forward on 21st September in the plenary meeting of the Assembly by Premier Negrin. He reminded the Committee that, as early as February, 1937, the Spanish Government had taken the position that the withdrawal of the foreigners fighting in Spain was an essential prerequisite to any satisfactory solution of the international difficulties to which the struggle in Spain had given rise. His Government had co-operated with the Non-Intervention Committee's proposals, whenever requested to do so, in spite of their obvious injustice to the Government side. The free and spontaneous decision of the Spanish Government to withdraw immediately all foreigners fighting in the Republican army, without distinction of nationality and including those who have acquired Spanish nationality since the beginning of the struggle, announced to the Assembly by Senor Negrin, provided a further proof of the sincere attachment of his Government to this principle.

In order to satisfy the League and through it the public opinion of the world that this decision had been fully and promptly carried out, the Spanish Government now desired to request the League to set up without delay an international committee whose sole duty would be to verify the complete withdrawal of all non-Spanish combatants engaged in fighting in Spain on the Government side. The Spanish Government would afford the Commission every guarantee, facility and assistance needful for the performance of its duty.

The proposal was discussed at two lengthy sessions of the Sixth Committee on the 28th and 29th September. Early in the discussion the United Kingdom delegate, Mr. Butler, declared that a new situation had been created by Senor Negrin's announcement. He welcomed as a valuable and significant step the withdrawal of foreigners on the Government side but contended that the work of the Non-Intervention Committee was still necessary in order to achieve withdrawal from both sides. The League, he thought, should take no action which would interfere with the execution of the Committee's plan of withdrawal. Without rejecting the possibility of the despatch of a League Commission, Mr. Butler suggested that the work might be undertaken instead by the Non-Intervention Committee. He asked that the Spanish representative give assurances that the despatch of a League Commission would not prejudice subsequent action by the Committee under the Non-Intervention Agreement. He also asked that it be made clear that, if a League Commission were sent, it should have no responsibility for the actual withdrawal and repatriation of foreigners.

Senor de Azcarate, the Spanish delegate, at once replied stating categorically that the despatch of a League Commission would not affect the subsequent execution of the plan of the London Committee. He pointed out that the plan of the Committee could be carried through far more easily if the foreigners