24. The Italian memorandum was laid on the Council table on September 4th, 1935, whereas Ethiopia's first appeal to the Council had been made on December 14th, 1934. In the interval between these two dates, the Italian Government opposed the consideration of the question by the Council on the ground that the only appropriate procedure was that provided for in the Italo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1928. Throughout the whole of that period, moreover, the despatch of Italian troops to East Africa was proceeding. These shipments of troops were represented to the Council by the Italian Government as necessary for the defence of its colonies menaced by Ethiopia's military preparations. Ethiopia, on the contrary, drew attention to the official pronouncements made in Italy which, in its opinion, left no doubt " as to the the hostile intentions of the Italian Government ".

25. From the outset of the dispute, the Ethiopian Government has sought a settlement by peaceful means. It has appealed to the procedures of the Covenant. The Italian Government desiring to keep strictly to the procedure of the Italo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1928, the Ethiopian Government assented; it invariably stated that it would faithfully carry out the arbitral award, even if the decision went against it. It agreed that the question of the ownership of Walwal should not be dealt with by the arbitrators, because the Italian Government would not agree to such a course. It asked the Council to despatch neutral observers and offered to lend itself to any enquiries upon which the Council might decide.

26. Once the Walwal dispute had been settled by arbitration, however, the Italian Government submitted its detailed memorandum to the Council in support of its claim to liberty of action. It asserted that a case like that of Ethiopia cannot be settled by the means provided by the Covenant.

It stated that, " since this question affects vital interests and is of primary importance to Italian security and civilisation," it " would be failing in its most elementary duty, did it not cease once and for all to place any confidence in Ethiopia, reserving full liberty to adopt any measures that may become necessary to ensure the safety of its colonies and to safeguard its own interests."

* * *

Such are the circumstances in which hostilities have broken out between Ethiopia and Italy.

Having thus stated the facts of the dispute, the Council should now, in accordance with Article 15 of the Covenant, make known " the recommendations which are deemed just and proper in regard thereto."

The facts brought to its knowledge since its last meeting by the two parties make it first and foremost the urgent duty of the Council to draw attention to the obligation of conforming to the provisions of the Covenant. For the time being, the only recommendation which it makes is that any violation of the Covenant should immediately be brought to an end.

The Council reserves the right to make subsequently such other recommendations as it may consider advisable.