MAKING THEIR VOICES HEARD: EXPRESSIONS OF WORLD OPINION
TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS DURING
THE ITALO-ETHIOPIAN DISPUTE
(1934-1938)

By
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the requirements for the degree of
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To the Faculty of Washington State University:
    The members of the Committee appointed to examine the dissertation of Cherri Reni Wemlinger find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

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MAKING THEIR VOICES HEARD: EXPRESSIONS OF WORLD OPINION
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(1934-1938)

ABSTRACT

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Chairs: Heather Streets-Salter and Ray Sun

In December 1934 a frontier skirmish between the Italians and Ethiopians at Walwal in southern Ethiopia touched off the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute (1934-1938). This Dispute, brought before the League of Nations, was one of a number of events in the inter-war period that contributed to public concerns about collective security. The official record deals with the Dispute in the shadow of World War II, Germany, and Japan. Yet beyond the official record is another body of documents that allows us not only to see what governments were doing, but also to glimpse a brief moment in which the people of the world expressed what they were thinking about the Dispute. Although not power brokers or major actors on the political stage, thousands of individuals wrote to the League of Nations. Organizations of all
types—including labor, veterans, women’s groups, church groups, and many others representing millions of people—sent correspondence to the League concerning the Dispute.

This dissertation will look at un-official correspondence from the public sent to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. I argue that the examination of world opinion changes the story of the interwar years, League of Nations historiography, and the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute by considering the ways ordinary people understood the events unfolding around them. This correspondence shows that people who contacted the League of Nations believed that their opinions should be heard and that they could influence change. Current understanding of the League of Nations is marred by ex post facto cynicism because of its ultimate failure to maintain world peace. Exploration of world opinion as it related to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute allows us to see not only how seriously global citizens took the event as a threat to international security, but also allows us to glimpse a brief moment of global hope that the League would be able to keep the peace. In so doing this dissertation both supplements existing historiography on the Dispute and goes beyond it, exploring the period from the point of view of thousands of actors whose voices have never been heard.
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Dedication

In Loving Memory

To my Mother, Lorena Rae Noah, and Father, Freddie Laverne Graham, who both passed away during my graduate program. Neither finished high school, yet they passed to me a legacy worth more than any degree. Through adversity they persevered and I always knew that they loved me regardless of my failure or success. I grieve that they are not here to celebrate this accomplishment with me because it was their love and faith that shaped in me the character to complete this task. Yet, I also take joy in knowing that their memory will be passed to another generation and I take pride in the part I will play in seeing that the history of the world’s unsung people is heard.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my children Erik, Elizabeth, Zachary, and Joshua who are my life’s greatest gift. There are no words to express my love for you and my gratefulness for your support during this process. Together we have experienced love, joy, poverty, loss, and accomplishment. Nothing has shaken our love for one another or dedication to each other’s success. Without your love and your support I would not be here. You are my children, but you are more than that you are my best friends!

Finally, I am a person of faith and had it not been for this none of these accomplishments would have meaning. For that reason I thank God for equipping me to do this work and for providing me with this opportunity.
INTRODUCTION

. . . should you exclude Abyssinia from the League, will you ask the Italian Government what measure of justice they propose to offer to the Emperor of Ethiopia and the people of Abyssinia? As Abyssinia was accepted as a member . . . I see no reason why they should be excluded now. I fail to see why it will endanger Italy’s prestige or the prestige of any other nation if they are allowed to remain.

Mrs. E. K. Carroll
Shepherds Bush, London
September 21, 1936

On a warm July day I was sitting in the League of Nations Archive in Genève examining documents from the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute to augment the research I had been doing in both London and Rome. I was sifting through official documents looking for information on Russia. The archivist had mentioned, prior to my visit, that the archive held a number of boxes of correspondence should I care to examine them. My assumption was that these documents would be official letters from League members to their respective governments. I asked if I could examine some of the boxes that held later material. This was my last archive to visit before completing my research and going home to write my dissertation. I was not convinced that I would find anything of interest. I came across a letter that was not at all pertinent to my research topic, but that caught my eye. It was a hand written letter on plain paper from a woman in Shepherd’s Bush in London and she asked the intriguing question quoted above. Why would a woman from Shepherds Bush be concerned

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1 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 18 correspondence dated September 21, 1936, from Mrs. E. K. Carroll.
about the Emperor of Ethiopia and the Abyssinian people? Why would she care about the position of Ethiopia in the League of Nations? Moreover, what jumped out at me was the word “justice.” Here was a woman in London, presumably of ordinary, middle class background, who was concerned enough that the people of Ethiopia receive justice that she wrote a letter to the League of Nations. I began an earnest examination of the materials in these boxes of correspondence, wondering what more I might find. Did other people take interest in this Dispute? I found letter after letter, one after another, from groups and individuals demanding action, expressing anger, railing against their own government’s inaction, and giving advice about how to settle the Dispute without further endangering the collective security of the world. It was then that I realized that this was the story I wanted to tell. What did the people of the world think about the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute? After examining thousands of documents that expressed the concerns of millions of people, concerns not documented in the official record, I also realized this was a gap in the historiography of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute and, especially, in world history.

In December 1934 a frontier skirmish between the Italians and Ethiopians at Walwal in southern Ethiopia left one hundred fifty Ethiopians and two Italians dead and touched off what would come to be known as the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute (1934-1938). This Dispute was one of a number of events in the inter-war period that contributed to public concerns about collective security. Having just experienced World War I (1914-1918) and being in the throes of the Great Depression (1929-1941), the people of the world were generally weary and looked to the League of Nations as an organization dedicated to keeping the peace. The
official record deals with the Dispute in the shadow of World War II, Germany, and Japan. Yet behind the official record there is another body of documents that sheds light not on what governments were doing, but on what the public—the people of the world—were thinking about the Dispute, and what the ramifications of the outcome would be. Although not power brokers or major actors on the political stage, thousands of individuals wrote to the League. Organizations of all types—including labor, veterans, women’s groups, church groups, and many others representing millions of people—sent correspondence to the League concerning the Dispute. These voices have not been heard. No one has examined these documents in depth to consider world opinion—outside of that represented in the official record—concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

In this dissertation I use the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute as a case study to argue that world opinion does exist and it has been a force influencing global interactions since its first recognizable expression in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, beginning with the antislavery campaign. World opinion is an important research topic in world history. In these boxes there are approximately six thousand documents. Many of these documents are petitions signed by hundreds of people. As discussed throughout this dissertation many of these letters came from organizations that represented millions of people. For instance, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom had forty-five million members. In addition, there is a file that lists the documents received by the League of Nations which records tens of thousands of postcards and telegrams about the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, many of which are not in the archives. Communications with the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute came from all over the world including: Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Japan, China, India, Uruguay, Brazil, United States, Britain, France, Albania, Ethiopia, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Spain, Greece, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Haiti, Hungary, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Ukraine, Romania, Egypt, Finland, Latvia, Mexico, Peru, Philippine Islands, Yugoslavia, Syria, Turkey, Luxemburg, Estonia, Holland, U. S. S. R., Trinidad, Chile, Paraguay, Albania, Cuba, and Ecuador.

The only work that has been done on these documents is a summary piece written in 1936 which looks at organizational response. However, this work does not make any mention of individual responses and does not use an analysis of the organizational response. It simply catalogs the materials that had been received by the League. Helen Hiett, Public Opinion and the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute the Activity of Private Organizations in the Crises, (Geneva: Geneva Research Center, 1936).
modern times it has been influential in shaping social and political responses and to a lesser
degree policies. An examination of world opinion changes the story of the interwar years by
going beyond the official record and looking at the ways ordinary people understood the
events unfolding around them. It also provides a way to examine the forces of change outside
of the official story. Just to provide one example, during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute world
opinion played a primary role in forcing British Foreign Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, and
French Prime Minister, Pierre Laval, out of office.\footnote{This will be covered in more detail in both chapters one and two.} Through an examination of
correspondence sent to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute I argue that
people who contacted the League of Nations believed that their opinions should be heard and
that they could influence change. This is important because current historiography examines
the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute from the perspective of political actors as the final test of the
League of Nations, which failed. Additionally, I argue our current understanding of the
League of Nations is marred by ex post facto cynicism because of its ultimate failure to
maintain world peace. However, people during this period were not yet cynical about the
capabilities of the League. In fact, they were overwhelmingly confident that the League had
the power to stop a major conflagration from occurring. As such, by exploring world opinion
as it related to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute we are able to see not only how seriously global
citizens took the event as a threat to international security, but also to glimpse a brief moment
of global hope that the League would be able to keep the peace. In so doing this dissertation
both supplements existing historiography on the Dispute and goes beyond it, because it
explores the period from the point of view of thousands of actors whose voices have never been heard.

World historians tend to explore the past by focusing on connections and comparisons. They examine global events, including economic, political, and even intellectual connections in ways that change the perspective by expanding the picture to show what lies at the edges of the story that has been told. Yet little has been done to examine world opinion about the topics world historians explore. In fact, Peter Stearns suggests

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“almost no one has yet examined world opinion in any systematic way.” His treatment of the topic is the only world history text that is a theoretical treatment of world opinion. Stearns argues that world opinion though tricky to pin down is an important topic for historians to explore not only because it expands our understanding of past events, but because “at a time when the forces capable of reshaping human lives around the world have outstripped normal political controls, whether the issue of war or environment or exploitation of labor, world opinion stands as one of the only available correctives to abuse.” Theoretically, Stearns work examines world opinion in relation to outcomes. My work goes beyond outcomes and uses archival materials to interrogate the historical formation of world opinion and the public spheres in which it is shaped. The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute provides a unique opportunity to do this because of the rich repository of primary sources.

Additionally, Stearns suggests that this “first stab at a historical record of world opinion” is a basis upon which other historians can build. Because world opinion is a globalized phenomenon Stearns attempts to place it within the theoretical framework of world history in order to address the global historical implications. He identifies both a “clash of civilizations” or world systems theory to consider how world opinion could be framed. Stearns also proposes that sociological studies have theoretical applications to the examination of world opinion and these are dealt with below. Both of these approaches,

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8 Stearns, 5.
9 Stearns, 6.
10 Stearns, 10.
although informative concerning world opinion, fall short as will be shown. Additionally, Stearns’ work is totally based on secondary material. My work expands these theoretical frameworks and uses archival documents in order to examine world opinion during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute changing our understanding of public engagement in political action during the interwar years.

In the interwar years (1918-1939) there was an overwhelming desire for peace that is evident in the League Covenant. However, it was not just diplomats and politicians who worried about peace and collective security. For instance, Clara Ackerman, a farmer’s wife in Iowa, wrote in her diary amidst the discussion of farm prices and depression concerns, “The peace conference is in session at Geneva, Switzerland, at present, trying to thresh out problems pertaining to disarmament . . . It seems like an inopportune time for a peace conference, where on every hand we hear rumors of war.” The people of the world held their collective breath, hoping that the League of Nations would find a way to ensure collective security. It was not until the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute (1934-1938) tested the League of Nations to its most drastic lengths that hope in the League’s ability to ensure peace finally began to evaporate. For three years, thousands of people around the world contacted the League to demand action, and in the process demonstrating faith in their own belief that their voices were important and could have an influence on international affairs. For example, in just the period from August 30 to September 4, 1935, in anticipation of the first meeting to

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12 University of Iowa archives, The Depression Diary of Mrs. Clara Ackerman! 1932-1933.

13 A note on the dates assigned to the Dispute. Historians vary on the official “end” of the Dispute. For this study I am identifying 1938 as the end of this study because the last communications in the archive were received in August 1938.
formally address the Dispute, approximately ten thousand telegrams were cataloged at the League. In response, the *Journal des Nations* (the official publication of the League of Nations) stated that, “this is the spontaneous outburst of a world opinion that believes in the pacific existence that the Covenant teaches.”\(^\text{14}\) In the United States alone there were 794 editorials concerning the Dispute between October 21\(^\text{st}\) and 27\(^\text{th}\) 1935.\(^\text{15}\) Over the course of the Dispute—from December 1934 to August 1938—thousands of individuals or organizations representing the concerns of millions of people reached out to the League of Nations through telegrams, postcards, letters, resolutions, deputations, and social events organized to discuss the Dispute with League Representatives.

This dissertation examines world opinion as an historical phenomenon. When publics—groups of people who congregate outside of the private sphere to discuss political or social issues pertaining to current events—reach a consensus on an issue of global import and communicate this opinion beyond national borders, they express world opinion. World opinion is formed within a public sphere, which is a discursive space where individuals congregate to consider matters of mutual interest and, where possible, reach a consensus about an issue that ignites intense public passion.\(^\text{16}\) World opinion is a specific kind of public opinion. Public opinion is identified as the opinions of the public concerning specific events

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\(^\text{14}\) *Journal des Nations*, September 6, 1935.


or issues of public interest.\footnote{Walter Lippmann, \textit{Public opinion}, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co, 1922) argued that “the public” was ill prepared to understand the complexity of international issues and advocated the use of specialists, who would mold public opinion via the press; Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky in \textit{Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media}, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988) were critical of Lippmann’s views of the media, indicating that mass media is driven by profits and not by any moral concern about shaping the public mind; The views of political scientist Gabriel Almond were combined with Lippman’s ideas about mass media, producing what came to be known as the Almond-Lippmann consensus. This includes the idea that public opinion is unreliable, shifting, disorganized, and swayed by the most recent developments. Gabriel A. Almond (1911—2002) was an American political scientist best known for his pioneering work on comparative politics, political development, and political culture. Ole Holsti and James M. Rosenau “Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders,” \textit{World Politics} 32. (October,1979):1-56 examined the role of belief systems in regard to public opinion.} Whereas individual values tend to be rather stable, public opinion can change rapidly and is subject to a variety of external conditions. Populations exposed to similar information will often influence one another, creating a sort of ‘group think’ that is conceptualized as public opinion and expressed in nationalistic terms. In an international setting, public opinion is better described as world opinion, yet there are distinct differences.\footnote{Although the classical economist Adam Smith (1723-1790) mentioned public opinion in his work, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) was the first fully developed theory of public opinion. He stated that public opinion had the power to make certain that rulers ruled for the greatest good of the greater number. Adam Smith, Adam, \textit{The theory of moral sentiments}, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976). Jeremy Bentham and Laurence J. Lafleur, \textit{An introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation}. (New York: Hafner Pub. Co., 1948).} World opinion transcends national interests and beliefs. Public opinion is primarily a response to media, while world opinion is broader and includes a passionate response about events occurring outside of national boundaries.\footnote{Peter Stearns, \textit{Global Outrage: The impact of World Opinion on Contemporary History}, (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2005), 7-8.} It is a response based on the sense of a shared humanity and universal moral standards—which may or may not be an ingrained part of the individual’s identity. World opinion is rarely in fact truly global. Rather, it represents the opinions of a small part of the overall population that is educated enough and tuned in enough to global events to become involved. There are limitations to the study world
opinion; world opinion is the expression of a finite group of people about a very specific event or issue in a limited time. It is representative and not all encompassing. There is no “globalized idea” because of numerous factors including, but not limited to regional focus, changing circumstances, and special interest. World opinion is difficult to examine because it is hard to identify, is issue dependent, and dissipates quickly.\(^\text{20}\) In fact, there is only one historical work that examines world opinion and it is not based on archival research.\(^\text{21}\)

However, the expression of world opinion to the League of Nations concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute addresses these limitations because there are archival sources that express what world opinion was concerning this particular issue. During this finite period of time the evidence shows that the people who participated in the public sphere by communicating with the League of Nations were overwhelmingly concerned about justice, peace, and collective security (whether they supported the League or not and regardless of whether they supported Italy or Ethiopia). Both men and women participated in the formation and expression of world opinion expressed to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. It can generally be assumed that the bulk of world opinion expressed to the League came from people of European descent. However, a large number of communications came from Mexico, India, South America, and a few from China, Japan, and Africa indicating that at least some of the correspondence came from non-Europeans. Other than the women’s groups and the individual letters from women, it is most likely that the other groups were made up primarily of men.

\(^{20}\) Stearns, 5.

Historically world opinion can be traced back to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Two changes occurred that reshaped how societies operated in connection with one another, giving rise to an international climate that allowed for the creation of world opinion. First, people needed to have knowledge about the distant world. Second, there had to be mechanisms for disseminating strong views among segments of the public. In the early-nineteenth century the first recognizable expression of world opinion coalesced around the issue of slavery. The development of the telegraph and print media gave people in much of the world access to information about issues beyond their local and national borders. This sense of connection and access to information was critical to the formation of world opinion.

Additionally, urbanization as a result of industrialization provided more opportunities for people to congregate and discuss these global issues. In order for world opinion to evolve there needed to be a sense of universal humanity, which emerged during the 18th century as a result of new Protestant religious groups such as the Methodists and Quakers and the widespread acceptance of Enlightenment ideas in western culture. These new Protestant groups (which developed in Britain) incorporated the Enlightenment ideas of fundamental natural rights and equality of all human beings into their belief systems and combined it with Christian principles. As these moral ideologies, whether secular or religious, became prevalent among upper and middle class Euro-Americans and they, in turn, became more aware of the conditions of others far distant it created a new sensibility that applied ethical

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22 Stearns, 26.

23 Stearns, 27.
norms to the circumstances affecting their neighbors near or far. Consistent with the historical phenomenon of world opinion, passion combined with opportunity and slavery was “a force that could impel proponents to seek changes even against their obvious material interest, as the formation of world opinion against slavery impatiently brushed aside economic arguments in favor of moral justice.”^{24,25}

Peter Stearns has argued that since the first expression of world opinion surrounding the abolition movement there have been a variety of other historical moments in which world opinion has played an important role, including the campaign against the slave trade in Zanzibar and against the harsh practices of King Leopold, which ended his tyranny in the Congo.^{26} I argue that the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was one of these moments when an issue gained international interest and world opinion intervened. I believe the reason for this was that the Dispute was viewed as a significant threat to world peace and the people of the world feared another global conflagration. The expression of world opinion concerning slavery has much in common with the expression of world opinion regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute (1934-1938) that is the subject of this dissertation. Like earlier historical moments, the expression of world opinion during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute occurred in response to a perceived moral injustice. In the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, the attacks on Ethiopia by the

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^{25} The moral component of the abolition movement has been challenged for instance in Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, (1944) which suggested that abolition was more about economic changes than moral outrage. Additionally this is not to discount the fact that slavery is still present, but it no longer exists as institution in Western society.

^{26} Stearns, 36.
Italian air force, including the use of poison gas, elicited a strong public response because there was a sense that this was an inhumane or unjust action. World opinion during the Dispute was primarily shaped and expressed through organizations, similar to the anti-slavery movement. However, one major difference in these two situations was the existence of an official organization that was empowered to act on behalf of the international community, the League of Nations.

The abolition movement ended institutional slavery in western culture. The expression of world opinion during the antislavery movement was decidedly western, and was primarily sustained by agitation among the upper and middle classes. Similarly, these were enduring features during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Although world opinion on the Dispute was expressed from virtually every continent, it was nevertheless primarily shaped by Europeans, western-educated people, or by reactions to the west by colonized people. Because of growing anti-imperial sentiment and the sense that Italy was directly challenging international convention by attacking a League member, the plight of the Ethiopians was the catalyst that focused the moral outrage. However, it was not just moral outrage that was at issue, but it was this combined with the fear that the conflict would expand beyond the Dispute that motivated the public to participate in the expression of world opinion. During the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute the public sphere was influenced by multiple motivators including moral outrage and fear of war. The public sphere, as defined by social scientists, is

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27 During the antislavery movement societies proliferated to support abolition including the Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade (Britain, 1787), Society of the Friends of the Blacks (France, 1794), and American Anti-Slavery Society (United States, 1833). In the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute the Friends of Abyssinia (Britain 1935), Aid for Ethiopia (United States, 1935)
an important concept when considering the formation of public opinion, because it provides a sense of how public opinion is shaped through social relationships. Social scientist Jürgen Habermas suggested that the public sphere was peopled by bourgeois males.\textsuperscript{28} However, postmodernists and poststructuralists such as Foucault and Lyotard, as well as feminist theoreticians such as Seyla Benhabib and Nancy Fraser, challenge this limited constitution of the public sphere.\textsuperscript{29} They suggest that marginalized groups formed their own spaces in which opinion regarding issues were formed and from which they were expressed.\textsuperscript{30}

In the case of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute there was not one public sphere, but instead a matrix of spaces in which non-state actors interacted to reach a consensus concerning the

\textsuperscript{28} Jürgen Habermas's *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1989) initiated post-war research on the public sphere in Western societies. The central thesis is that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a distinct forum for public debate was constituted in an area of social life separate from the state apparatus, in which citizens conversed about the issues of the day in an unrestricted manner. This took place either physically in town squares or public meeting places, or on the pages of publications. These discussions were based on universal appeals that all participants could assent to such as justice and the humane treatment of all people. Habermas (1929-) a German sociologist best known for his theory on the concepts of 'communicative rationality' and the 'public sphere'. He has been recognized as one of the leading intellectuals in our time. Focusing on the foundations of social theory, his work analyzes the rule of law in a critical social-evolutionary context, advanced capitalistic societies and democracy, in a contemporary setting.


\textsuperscript{30} Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy". *Social Text*. 1990 (26): 56-80. Other works include Joan Landes, *Women and the public sphere in the age of the French Revolution*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988). Carol Gilligan's work, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1982) is widely used by gender studies researchers and suggests that women, when making decisions think about how the decision and their actions would influence their relationship with others and the relationships between other people. They frame their behavior more in the context of the community or family.
Dispute. The women’s international groups (as discussed in chapter four) created a public sphere for women through meetings, discussion groups, and publications. Similar public spheres were created by labor groups, League of Nations Societies, and a variety of other organizations (as discussed in chapter three). There was nothing particularly exceptional about the public sphere except that it was a space—usually a physical space—where groups of people met and engaged in open dialog about political or social issues. The “public” brought with them ideas about the issues based on their exposure to media—whether print media or, by this time, radio broadcasts. These spheres were as simple as a table in the local feed store, where there was an exchange of ideas, or as complex as huge organizational meetings with workshops attended by thousands of people.

The “public” that inhabited these spheres in the case of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute tended to be upper or middle class people of European descent.31 However, the evidence also indicates that lower-class people, colonized people, and ethnic minorities within European states and the United States also participated in the public spheres concerned with the Dispute. Mikhail Bakhtin argued that “the public” is made up of innumerable and fluid counter-publics that shift based on the particular issue being considered.32 M. I. Young suggested that we must “foster a conception of public which in principle excludes no persons, aspects of persons’ lives, or topic of discussion and which encourages aesthetic as

31 Peter Stearns in Global Outrage points out, world opinion was dependent on the creation of a global “middle class” which was had access to the same news and could express transnational reactions (Global Outrage page 8).

well as discursive expression. In such a public, consensus and sharing may not always be the
goal, but the recognition and appreciation of differences, in the context of confrontation with
power.” ³³ For example, a person in London might belong to a League of Nations Society in
which the consensus concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute supported collective security and
peace in the framework of the League Covenant. This same person might also belong to the
Friends of Abyssinia, and in this public sphere the people were only interested in justice for
the Ethiopians and only supported the League of Nations as long as it worked in favor of
Ethiopian interests. ‘The public’ thus moved within a variety of public spheres, but the world
opinion expressed from the spheres was the same—it supported peace and collective
security.

Historically there have been moments which reshape the human experience. World
War I was just such a moment. This event exposed the weakness of national political controls
and left the public looking for a more effective mechanism to use in arbitrating national
disputes. In the public eye the League of Nations was the solution. The system was tested
during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, when national governments were seeking diplomatic
advantage and world opinion was seeking peace and collective security. Why was world
opinion so engaged at this particular time? One reason was because increased access to
global news through the printed media and radio allowed instantaneous access to information
about world events. Indeed, within hours of Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia in 1936 it was
broadcast over the radio and people all over the world knew it had occurred. As a result, the

³³ M. I. Young, “Impartiality and the Civic Public: Some Implications of Feminist Critiques of Moral and Political
Theory,” in Seyla Benhabib and D. Cornell (eds), Feminism as Critique: On the Politics of Gender in Late
League of Nations began to receive telegrams from concerned groups and individuals immediately. Moreover, the world was able to hear the call for help from the Ethiopian Empress Menen Asfaw and Princess Tsehai Haile Selassie via a radio broadcast sponsored by the *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom* (discussed in chapter 4).

Historiographically very little work has been done on the Dispute in the last seventy-years. Several early articles were published by the Geneva Research Center, an American organization stationed in Genève and tasked with keeping the U. S. public informed about events going on with the League through academic publications. These works speak to the formation of world opinion throughout the Dispute.\(^{34}\) Several texts published in 1936 examine how failure to resolve the conflict could lead to larger problems, an opinion exhibited in the expressions of world opinion sent to the League.\(^{35}\) As the Dispute wore on

\[\text{34 Vera Michele Dean, *The League And The Italian-Ethiopian Dispute* (Geneva: Geneva Research Center, 1935) provides a brief overview of events, the pleas made by each party, and the ensuing response. Dean also wrote another article concerning the Dispute in 1936 “The Quest for Ethiopian Peace,” also commissioned by the Geneva: Geneva Research Center. William Koren, “The Italian-Ethiopian Dispute,” (Geneva: Geneva Research Center, 1935) examines the background as well as the importance of Ethiopia to the European powers including, Britain, France, and Italy. In addition to these a few other articles were published that explored the Dispute including Emile Burns, *Abyssinia And Italy*, (London: V. Gellancz, 1935); Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Division of Intercourse and Education. *Italy And Ethiopia: Background Of Dispute, From The New Statesman And Nation, September 7, 1935* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of Intercourse and Education, 1935); Roberto Forges-Davanzanti, "Italy's Case Against Ethiopia". *Current History* (New York), Vol. 43, no. 1 (October 1935): 8-14; Lee Meriwether. *Italy’s Seizure Of Ethiopia: Does It Merit The Censure Or The Approval Of Mankind?* (St. Louis, MO: Domus Italica, 1935); Henry Rowan-Robinson, *England, Italy, Abyssinia*, (London: W. Clowes and Sons, 1935); Freda White, League of Nations Union: The Abyssinian Dispute, (London: League of Nations Union, 1935).}

and it appeared that Italy had won the conflict several additional works looked at ideas of collective security, sanctions, and Italy’s refusal to adhere to the League Covenant again addressing the concerns that were prevalent in expressions of world opinion.\textsuperscript{36} Two master’s theses produced with the direction of H. B. Chubb are of particular interest.\textsuperscript{37} Although written prior to the end of the Dispute, one in particular exhibits the hope that the world placed in the League to effectively resolve conflict and guarantee collective security. Frank L. Klinberg, examines the “new world order” the League was expected to create; suggesting that it would provide world peace and egalitarian treatment of independent states in international relations.\textsuperscript{38} The old system “characterized by excessive nationalism, secrete alliances, power diplomacy, imperialistic exploitation” would be replaced by a new system “based on internationalism, open covenants, collective action and world justice, and has as its aim lasting peace.”\textsuperscript{39}

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\textsuperscript{37} Herman B. Chubb was a professor of Political Science at the University of Kansas from 1918 to 1957.
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\textsuperscript{38} Frank Klingberg, \textit{The Italo-Ethiopian dispute : a testing of the new world order}, 1936.
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In the late 1960s and early 1970s some official documents relating to the Dispute were published, which resulted the publication of several works. These works examined diplomatic aspects of the Dispute. None of these looked at the correspondence and the public response to this conflict as they were not part of the body of materials published by the League. The most comprehensive treatment of the Dispute was done by George W. Baer. One of these works offers a month by month examination of events leading up to the outbreak of the Second Italo-Ethiopian War to the war. However, the most recent of these works was written in 1976. Other academic work on the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute in the last thirty years has been limited to a few articles, side notes in works on the League of Nations, and a couple of monographs addressing the conflict in relation to the failure of the League of Nations and the role the Great Powers had in its demise. The work of Stephen Chukumba is useful for the examination of the diplomatic aspects of the Dispute that will be discussed in

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chapter two. It focuses specifically on the diplomatic relationships between Britain, France, and the United States as they applied to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The most recent work that is useful for this dissertation is an article published in 1991 by Ethiopian scholar Bahru Zewde. It focuses on the role of the intelligentsia in the Second Italo-Ethiopian war and addresses a series of events that are discussed in chapter five.

This historiography reveals the cynicism with which the League of Nations has been approached as a failed experiment in multi-national governance. My work contributes to world history and League of Nations historiography by contrasting the story that historians have represented concerning the League of Nations and shows that people at the time hoped and believed the League would succeed in guaranteeing collective security. I do this by first providing background about the events surrounding the Dispute and an overview of the correspondence that was sent to the League providing context for the rest of the discussion. In chapter two I examine public opinion in the state sphere. Public opinion, on the national level, was effective leading people to believe that their opinions were worth hearing and could influence outcomes; either by directing, inhibiting, or nullifying political action. It is necessary to examine these expressions of public opinion on the national level because it was

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45 Note that in this second chapter I will be examining public opinion as an expression of national concern as opposed to the broader world opinion that will be discussed in chapters three, four, and five and of which this dissertation is primarily concerned.
at the this level that public opinion had the most visible influence on League actions, through its ability to sway state response to the League of Nations. This examination of expressions of public opinion at the state level had a dual audience. In fact many of the documents sent to the League were also sent to national governments. Understanding the interplay between these expressions of world opinion is critical for contextualizing the correspondence sent to the League of Nations.

In chapter three I examine the letters, resolutions, and telegrams from a variety of groups. These had significant influence not only on League action, but also in practical ways through humanitarian aid and support for sanctions. This provides our first picture of what expressions of world opinion were, how they were shaped, and what they expressed about the existence and dynamism of world opinion concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The material in this chapter connects the public opinion expressed on the national level to world opinion changing the current historiography that looks only at the League’s failure and does not examine the hope people placed in the League to guarantee collective security and keep the peace.

In chapter four, I move from a broad perspective of world opinion to a more focused view by examining international women’s organizations. This reveals sub-arguments regarding the development of women’s international organizations, especially those surrounding the changing roles of women in the public sphere and the use of a constructed collective identity for women. It provides a way to examine the forces at work in shaping world opinion. It also reveals the hope these women placed in the League of Nations to deal with the Dispute in a way that would maintain peace.
Moving from the broad examination of international organizations to the more focused look at women’s organizations, chapter five focuses the research to an even finer point by examining the expressions of world opinion from individual non-state actors. This chapter demonstrates that the public spheres in which world opinion and public opinion were shaped and through which they were expressed were peopled by individuals. These individuals believed that their opinions were important, that they should not only be expressed, but they should be heard and considered for action. Additionally, it reveals the hope that people placed in the League of Nations to deal with the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Unlike international organizations that tended to have formal policy responses, individuals spoke from the heart to express a variety of concerns with the same focus of world opinion as organizations—peace and collective security. Although individuals were expressing the same general opinions as organizations, they were taking personal responsibility for the communication of world opinion. This provides an example of how the ideas developed in the public sphere became part of people’s individual psyches and influenced action on an individual level.

As the story develops through the chapters one can see that the historiography concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute has been shaped by the official record and the cynicism born of the failure of the League. However, the official record does not tell us what the housewife in Shepherds Bush thought or how the dock workers saw their role in the Dispute. There is more to the story, and the examination of world opinion changes the previous story by adding the perspective of non-state actors. Why should we care? Because history is about more than the official record and examining world opinion changes the story.
by showing how people at the time understood the Dispute and their role in international governance. This dissertation contributes to that body of work by examining world opinion during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Additionally, world opinion gives us access to what people at the time were thinking concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute expanding our understanding of the situation by showing what lies at the edges of the official record, which is an essential aspect of world history.
CHAPTER ONE: The League of Nations and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis

On behalf of the Ethiopian people, a Member of the League of Nations, I ask the Assembly to take all measures proper to secure respect for the Covenant. I renew my protest against the violations of treaties of which the Ethiopian people has been victim. I declare before the whole world that the Emperor, the Government, and the people of Ethiopia will not bow before force, that they will use all means in their power to ensure the triumph of right and respect for the Covenant.

His Majesty Haile Selassie
Speech before League of Nations Assembly
July 4, 1936

The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute combined aspects of international government, imperial expansion, and world opinion. An examination of the background provides context for expressions of world opinion sent to the League regarding the Dispute. When the League Covenant was signed in 1919 it contained language that suggested it would be active in guaranteeing collective security. This language was primarily embodied in Article 11 and provided a twofold response to any situation that threatened the peace.

1. Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is

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hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise, the Secretary-General shall, on the request of any Member of the League, forthwith summon a meeting of the Council.

2. It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends.  

The League was committed to action in accordance with the Covenant, and member states were given the right to bring to the attention of the League any issue that threatened collective security. These provisions were innocuous enough to be accepted even by potential aggressors and became the basis for the Ethiopian government’s request for intervention during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

The League had been given many roles through the Covenant, from settling disputes using international arbitration and sanctions, guaranteeing political and territorial sovereignty, to protecting the rights of minority peoples through the mandate system. The League’s ability to meet these expectations was tested during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute and expressions of world opinion sent to the League reflected the public’s awareness of the Covenant. Enthusiasm for disarmament, collective security, and dissolution of empire played

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47 League of Nations Information Section, Essential Facts About the League of Nations, (Geneva, 1938), 16.

48 See Appendix I for the complete text of the League of Nations Covenant.
a vital part in public support for the League of Nations. Journalist, Ellen Hørup\textsuperscript{49} suggested in 1936 that

Imperialism and the League of Nations are to be harnessed together; these two contradictory principles are to be induced to pull the same direction: the square peg shall be forced into the round hole. The basis of imperialism is might over right and that of the League of Nations on the contrary is right over might. Imperialism is a recognition of the conqueror’s right to the submission of a weaker nations, the League of Nations is an assertion of an international right between nations, great and small, strong and weak.\textsuperscript{50}

The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was just such a test of a weaker nation being attacked by a stronger nation and imperial expansion. Although imperialism was still very much a part of the way the world was organized, the inclusion of the mandate system in the Covenant suggested to many that the Great Powers were rethinking empire.

The formation of world opinion regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was strongly influenced by the League of Nations Covenant, and especially by expectations among the public that signatory states would honor their commitments. Through an examination of the treaties signed prior to the outbreak of hostilities between Italy and Ethiopia it is clear that Italy, France, and Britain had economic and strategic interests in Ethiopia. Once the Dispute broke out, contention about how to maintain these interests while also satisfying world opinion became an important part of the British and French response. In order to

\textsuperscript{49} Ellen Hørup, (1871-1953) was an influential Danish journalist. Hørup was an early promoter of feminism, and an arduous opponent of fascism. She served on the Politiken’s board of directors from 1933-1949.

\textsuperscript{50} Ellen Hørup, “Ethiopia, member of the League of Nations?” Reprint of articles published in \textit{Politiken}, the leading paper of Copenhagen (1936), 9.
contextualize the expressions of world opinion it is necessary to have a sense of how events unfolded and what agreements were in place.

After WWI the mandate system gave hope to colonized people that Europeans were making a way to independence for them. The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute before the League of Nations made it clear that imperialism had not waned. Italy, at the very least was active in expanding its imperial holdings. British, American, and French people contacted the League of Nations requesting that Italy be stopped in its attempt to bring Ethiopia under its control because they recognized this action as imperial expansion. However, the Great Powers had other priorities. One of those priorities was to make sure that Italy did not join Germany in an alliance.

This chapter explores the background to the Dispute, examining the treaties and priorities of Britain, France, and Italy regarding Ethiopia. Next I examine the Dispute itself looking at the specific events. This discussion includes the role the League of Nations played in the Dispute. This chapter sets the Dispute in historical context so that I can effectively examine world opinion expressed to the League of Nations about the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

**BACKGROUND TO THE DISPUTE**

In order to better understand expressions of world opinion during the Dispute it is critical to know the political relationships between Italy, France, and Britain. Italy’s interests in Ethiopia had been supported by both France and Britain and there was no reason for Italy to think that anything had changed. The public, on the other hand, believed that conditions
had changed as a result of the formation of the League of Nations and the impression that imperialism was on the wane. The examination of the background to the Dispute provides clarity for discussing the expression of world opinion throughout the rest of this dissertation.

Italian interests in East Africa can be traced back to 1869, when a shipping firm with headquarters in Genoa purchased a strip of land at the port of Assab. The Italian state, preoccupied with its recent unification, did not claim sovereignty in the area. However, by 1882 the shipping company transferred the land to the control of the Italian government. This represented the only piece of the “African pie” that Italy had access to (at that time).  

Although they had originally hoped to form a colony in Northern Africa they were thwarted by the British who supported French interests in Tunisia. Also, in 1869, at about the same time that the Italian shipping firm purchased land at Assab the British opened the Suez Canal. The British needed to block French movements into East Africa because that would threaten the security of the Suez Canal, so they made a strategic decision to support French interests in Northern Africa and encouraged a shift of Italian interests to East Africa.

The movement of Italian troops into Assab in 1882 came at a point when Abyssinia was still recovering from the political disarray that characterized the Zamana Masafent (1769-1855). In 1889 Menelik became emperor. Two goals dominated Menelik’s actions as emperor: to unify Ethiopia under a centralized government and to gain international recognition for Ethiopia as an independent state. In an effort to accomplish these goals

\[51\text{ It should be noted that in 1911 Italy did gain territories in Libya and held those until 1947.}\]

\[52\text{ The Zamana Masafent also known as the Era of the Princes lasted from 1769 to 1855. During this period what is now known as Ethiopia was split into three distinct provinces, Tigray, Shoa, and Amhara. What is now Ethiopia was ruled by a succession of princes and there was constant conflict.}\]
Emperor Menelik (r. 1889-1913) signed the Treaty of Uccialli (1889) which recognized Italy’s occupation of Massawa and gave them a significant portion of the Ethiopian highlands. Misunderstandings about the terms of this treaty were instrumental in the outbreak conflict between Italy and Ethiopia.

In 1891 the British and Italians entered an agreement placing all of Ethiopia, including the western Ethiopian highlands and Lake Tana, under an Italian sphere of influence. As a result of the concerns raised by this alliance between these two imperial powers, in 1893 Menelik denounced the Treaty of Uccialli initiating the First Italo-Ethiopian War (1895-1896) which culminated in the defeat of the Italians at Adwa on March 1, 1896. This win for the Ethiopians had two significant repercussions that are important to this study. First, it stunned the leaders of the European states and put Ethiopia on the “international map” contributing to their acceptance into the League of Nations. Second, it created a sense of shame among Italians not least an adolescent boy named Benito Mussolini, which contributed to the adult Mussolini’s desire for retribution. According to David Matthews,

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53 Massawa is an important port city on the Red Sea coast of modern day Eritrea. It is almost in the center of Eritrea and north of Assab.

54 It is worthwhile to note that the motivations behind Menelik giving Italy rights to part of the highland area which was strategically and economically valuable are unknown. Historians, such as Edward Ullendorff, have suggested that Menelik may have done it to coerce the rases of the north to accept his leadership. With the threat of the European foe perhaps the rases would view Menelik’s leadership as preferable to submission to a European imperialist power. Edward Ullendorff, The Ethiopians (London, 1960).

55 The terms of this treaty were later used by Prime Minister Francesco Crispi to claim Italy’s protectorate over Ethiopia. In article 17 of this treaty Menelik agreed to conduct all of his foreign affairs through the Italian government, or at least that was the Italian interpretation of the language. According to some the Amharic version of the document did not make that clear. It is suggested that Count Pietro Antonelli, who negotiated the agreement, had no such intentions.
Every other European setback had led automatically to punitive expeditions . . . the defeat of the Italians was followed by peace. This result had two effects: it gave the Abyssinians a new legend and a pride, which was to impede even military modernizations, while on the other hand it left to the Italians a humiliating memory. The defeat and its acceptance formed together a disaster which was not consistent with the record of Italy as a great power.56

Menelik signed the Treaty of Addis Ababa, which recognized Ethiopia as a sovereign state under the control of Menelik.

Things began to progress for Menelik and in 1897 the French began to build a railroad from Addis Ababa to the port of Djibouti. A few years later telegraph lines were constructed by French and Italian engineers. In 1905 the National Bank of Egypt founded the Bank of Abyssinia and in 1908 the first school sponsored by the Ethiopian government opened. Menelik’s plan of modernization was moving along. Menelik worked to create international political alliances during his reign. Legations from Russia, Britain, France, and Italy were all established between 1897 and 1908. Additionally, Menelik worked to see that no European power held too much control over any aspect of Ethiopian territory or interests. Recognizing the interests of France, Britain, and Italy, Menelik signed treaties that spread the power out hoping this would help Ethiopia maintain independence. The strategic role of Ethiopia for France, Britain, and Italy provides context for the responses of these governments during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

Before Adwa, Britain had considered Ethiopia as an Italian sphere of influence. The British had relied on Italy as a

watchdog against a possible French advance into the Nile Valley from the East. The French wanted to strengthen their position in Ethiopia in order to use it as a base from which to join hands with their West African possessions. . . . European powers as well as the United States were interested in taking part in the economic exploitation of Ethiopia.\textsuperscript{57}

Menelik’s plan seemed to be workable. However, he did not take into account the role of European family politics.

In December 1906, Britain, Italy, and France entered a separate agreement: the Tripartite Treaty. By the articles of this treaty these three states agreed to consult one another before taking any significant action in Ethiopia that would compromise Ethiopia’s political or territorial integrity. Each agreed to a specific ‘sphere of influence.’ The French got their railway, the British Lake Tana and the Blue Nile, and Italy “was recognized as having an interest in linking her two colonies Eritrea and Italian Somaliland across Ethiopia.”\textsuperscript{58} The British maintained access and control to Lake Tana and the river system of the Nile, which was critical to their use of Egypt as a “bread basket” for the empire. The French needed a transport line from French Somaliland to the Mediterranean. This would be accomplished by building a railroad from French Somaliland to the White Nile.

Italy, France, and Britain had been actively engaged in “dividing” up interests in Ethiopia well before the outbreak of WWI. After the war ended and the League of Nations was created the provisions of the League Covenant stated that signatory states were to respect the territorial integrity and political sovereignty of other member states. The failure of Italy

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\item[\textsuperscript{58}] Ibid.
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to adhere to the Covenant led to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The formation of the League of Nations after WWI was part of the Treaty of Versailles signed on June 28, 1919. For the Axis powers this treaty was harsh. However, even some Allied powers were disappointed in the conditions of peace. The Italians had fought alongside the British, French, and Americans to ensure victory in WWI. Yet at Versailles they were virtually excluded from the negotiations. Land along the Adriatic that was promised to them by the Allies did not materialize. In addition, the economy of Italy was devastated after the war. These conditions prepared the way for Mussolini to gain support, because he claimed that he would revive the glory of the old Roman Empire and help Italy regain the international respect it had lost. The League of Nations was formed as part of the Treaty of Versailles, and Italy was a founding member. When Ethiopia was admitted to the League of Nations in 1923 the Italians strongly protested, but they were unsuccessful. Now the Italians were faced with having the Ethiopians in the same international League as they were. Mussolini had not forgotten the humiliation of Italy’s defeat by Ethiopia at Adwa (1896) and he vowed to “set things right.”

As early as 1924, during the regency of Ras Taffari (who would later be known as Haile Selassie I) the British and Italians once more engaged in back door diplomacy. They signed an agreement in which Britain agreed to recognize Italy’s “exclusive economic interests in western Ethiopia and virtually put the entire country under Italy’s sphere of influence.”59 The Ethiopians filed an appeal before the League, which was supported by France. This appeal came to naught and in 1928 Ethiopia signed the Treaty of Friendship

59 Viveca Halldin Norberg, 44.
The first article of the treaty states “There shall be durable peace and perpetual friendship between the Kingdom of Italy and the Ethiopian Empire.” This treaty was to remain in force for twenty years.

In addition to these treaties there was another one that played a very important part in the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, the Kellogg–Briand Pact (August 27, 1928). This treaty was signed by representatives of numerous countries including Italy, France, and the United Kingdom. It prohibited war and stated a, "frank renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy should be made to the end that the peaceful and friendly relations now existing between their peoples may be perpetuated.” The only exception was the case of self defense. By the time the Pact became effective in July 1929, Ethiopia had also signed on to adhere to the conditions of the Pact. At the beginning of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute the Italians and Ethiopians were bound by three distinct agreements, the 1928 Friendship Treaty, the 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact, and the Covenant of the League of Nations. However, time showed that none of these agreements were effective in curtailing Italian imperial ambitions.

When Woodrow Wilson advocated for a League in 1919 it was intended to create “an alternative to the state of international anarchy . . . fed by excessive secrecy, rampant militarism and autocratic government” that had preceded WWI. Calling on his experience

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60 The logic behind Haile Selassie I’s signing of this treaty was to keep Italy’s expansion into Ethiopian territory at bay and to provide a treaty agreement with which to challenge any future aggression on Italy’s part as a breach of this treat.


62 For a full text of the Kellog-Briand Pact see Supplementary Appendix.

with the Pan-American Union, Wilson proposed an organization that ensured territorial integrity and political independence to all members.\(^{64}\) This was the key idea in the expression of world opinion sent to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Because both Britain and the United States were not threatened by hostile powers on their frontier territories, they could be idealistic. The resultant twenty-six articles were constructed to address disarmament, conditions of labor for working people, international shipping and commerce, rights of racial and ethnic minorities within nations, and the future of colonial possessions.\(^{65}\) It is this final aspect that created the most difficult challenge faced by the League regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The Ethiopians saw the League as their defense against Italian expansion. Italy did not view the League as powerful enough to intervene because they had agreements with both Britain and France concerning an Italian sphere of influence in Ethiopia. These two views came into conflict in 1934 with the escalation of tensions between Italy and Ethiopia.

Prior to the actual outbreak of hostilities at Walwal in December 1934 tensions had been escalating, and Italy’s desire to claim Ethiopia as an imperial territory was clear. Additionally, both British and French interests supported Italy’s claim as long as they received their conciliations. Ethiopian officials believed that they could trust the League of

\(^{64}\) The Pan-American Union was an outgrowth of the 1826 Congress of Panama organized by Simón Bolívar. Bolívar’s dream was an organization that would create an American league which included a mutual defense pact and a supranational parliamentary assembly. The scheme did not work, but in 1889-1890 at the First International Conference of American States in Washington D. C. forming the International Commercial Bureau in 1901-1902. Finally in 1910 in a meeting in Buenos Aires the Union of American Republics was formed and the Pan American Union resulted.

Nations to keep them safe. The European powers involved acted outside of the League framework to reach their strategic goals. The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute illustrated the conflict between imperialism and the League Covenant. In addition, it exposed the weakness of an organization that was subject to the Great Powers and in which small states were virtually powerless.

**THE ITALO-ETHIOPIAN DISPUTE**

The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute came close on the heels of the Manchurian Crisis. As pointed out by Martyn Housden, “If Japanese ambitions in Manchuria proved a ‘turning point’ for collective security, Italy’s colonial ambitions in Africa sounded its death knell.”

The Italians held Somaliland and exerted pressure on Ethiopia from this neighboring territory. Mussolini began to draw up plans for an incursion into Ethiopia in 1932 however, historians have identified the incident at Wal-Wal (December 1934) as the beginning of hostilities. In 1934 Mussolini’s opportunity to expand control in East Africa came as a response to the Walwal incident. On November 22, 1934, one-thousand Ethiopian militiamen arrived at Walwal, an Italian outpost manned by a Somali garrison. The Ethiopians demanded the Somali leave the outpost and they refused. Between December 5th and 7th,

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67 This official beginning of the conflict relates to the Walwal Incident. On November 22, 1934, when one thousand Ethiopian militia commanded by Ethiopian commanders arrived at Walwal (an area well within Ethiopian territory at the time) and demanded that the Dubats (Somali militia working for the Italians) withdraw. The Dubats refused and for reasons that are not completely clear between December 5th and December 7th an armed encounter took place between a newly arrived Italian force and a group of armed Ethiopians. Each side blamed the other for initiating hostilities. This marks the “official” start of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict. On October 3, 1935 Italian forces invaded Ethiopia and Ethiopia declared war on Italy. On October 7, 1935 the League of Nations named Italy the aggressor and began the process of imposing sanctions. On May 5, 1936 the Italians captured Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital and the League dropped all sanctions.
several skirmishes between the Somalis and Ethiopians broke out. The Italians claimed that
they were attacked by Ethiopians and the Ethiopians claimed they were attacked by the
Italians. This incident marks the “official” beginning of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. As the
Dispute continued, both parties looked to the League of Nations for support, or so it seemed.
However, while Ethiopia was seeking arbitration the Italians were moving military troops
and equipment to East Africa. Although Ethiopia was a member of the League, it was not a
member of the European family and family politics would be its undoing.68 Before the dust
settled Italy invaded Ethiopia.

Abyssinia expected that the Treaty between the two countries signed in 1928 would
be honored by Italy leading to an arbitration of the hostilities. However, the Abyssinians
underestimated Mussolini’s resolve. According to historian Philip Morgan, Mussolini
advised his military and civilian leaders that armed conflict had been decided upon stating
that “his empire could not be made in any other way than through war.”69 Immediately
Britain and France became concerned about the resolution of this conflict. It was feared that
swift and decisive action by the League would result in pushing Mussolini into an alliance
with Hitler. Not wanting to leave the issue to the League and yet not desiring to abandon the
idea of collective security, the French and British began a dialogue with Italy outside of the
League framework.

68 The term family politics is mine and describes the diplomatic interchanges that occurred during the Dispute
as Italy, France, and Britain engaged in agreements that were not a part of the League Covenant.

The League of Nations’ direct involvement in the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute formally began on January 3, 1935, when the Ethiopian Government made an appeal to the League under Article 11, paragraph two “It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends.” The British and French weighed the cost of offending Mussolini and that of supporting the Ethiopians and made a strategic decision to attempt to find a settlement to the issue that appeased Mussolini and their electorate.

On January 17, 1935 Pierre Laval, the foreign minister of France, met with Mussolini assuring him that the French would support a “strong position” for Italy in Africa. Once this agreement was signed and Mussolini was relatively sure the French would not intervene he dispatched Generals Graziani and Di Bono with Italian troops to Eritrea. In addition to this assurance from France, Italy through a rather mysterious means gained access to similar assurances from Britain. On February 18, 1935 the “Giornale d’Italia” published the contents of the Maffey report, indicating that Britain had no interests in Abyssinia which would justify resistance to Italian conquest and that an open door policy should be secured if Italy were to gain control of Abyssinia. These events solidified Mussolini’s assumption that his conquest

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70 For a full text of the League of Nations Covenant see Appendix 1.

71 Houdson, 102.

of Ethiopia would meet little international resistance. However, two considerations were to challenge Mussolini’s plan—the League of Nations and world opinion.

In what many considered an effort to stall the League of Nations, the Italian government agreed to arbitration negotiations on May 23, 1935 to address the Walwal incident and ongoing frontier disputes. The Italians made a less than committed effort and the two groups walked away from the table with no agreement. Hoping to defuse the issue the British, French, and Italian Governments met in Paris on August 16, 1935. The French and British representatives tried to no avail to arbitrate a peace that would fulfill Italian imperial goals and placate the Ethiopians. Fearing that the United States would be drawn into the conflict, on August 31, 1935, President Roosevelt signed a bill limiting shipments of arms to any belligerent state and informing American citizens that travel on belligerent ships was at their own risk. Finally on September 3, 1935 the League of Nations completed their work on the Walwal Incident and held both parties blameless. Within a month the Italian army had moved into Ethiopia and overwhelmed the Ethiopian army, which had not been preparing because of their expectation that the League of Nations would intervene.

The force of world opinion weighed heavily on the League of Nations and on October 3rd, the same day that Italy invaded Ethiopia, the League Council acted, declaring that the Italians had violated the League Covenant by resorting to war against Ethiopia. On October 7, 1935 the League Council had named Italy the aggressor and plans were made to apply sanctions against the Italians. Within four days (October 11th) the delegates from fifty-one countries approved the applications of trade sanctions and finally these went into effect on

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73 This was a violation of Article 12. For a full text of the Covenant see Appendix 1.
November 18, 1935. The embargoed items were credit, arms, raw materials (with the exception of oil). In addition, imports from Italy were prohibited in member states. The Italian Government imposed rationing of food and fuel and discontinued economic relations with all powers that honored the sanctions.

World opinion in Britain so strongly supported the Ethiopian cause that on September 11, 1935 at the League Assembly, British Foreign Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare stated,

On behalf of his Majesty’s Government in the United Kingdom, I can say that . . . that Government will be second to none in its intention to fulfil, within the measure of its capacity, the obligations which the Covenant lays upon it . . . In conformity with its precise and explicit obligations, the League stands, and my country stands with it, for the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety, and particularly for steady and collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression.  

Then again in October 1935 the National Government’s Manifesto for the 1935 general election stated,

The League of Nations will remain, as heretofore, the keystone of British foreign policy. The prevention of war and the establishment of settled peace in the world must always be the most vital interest of the British people, and the League is the instrument which has been framed and to which we look for the attainment of these objects. . . . Our attitude to the League is dictated by the conviction that collective security by collective action can alone save us from a return to the old system which resulted in the Great War.  

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Because of public pressure the British government feigned total support for the League, while behind closed doors they were seeking other alternatives.

Fear of a larger conflict mounted, and the British Government made agreements with Spain, Turkey, Yugoslavia, France, and Greece promising mutual support should the conflagration expand beyond Ethiopia. Then on December 9, 1935 Sir Samuel Hoare (British Foreign Minister) and Pierre Laval (French Premier) released their proposal to end the conflict by giving Italy most of Ethiopia and make the whole of Ethiopia an Italian economic sphere of influence. The Ethiopians (expecting that Mussolini would not consent) agreed to the Pact, but as suspected, Mussolini rejected it. Ultimately the outcome was not what Hoare or Laval had hoped for. Hoare was forced to resign from office immediately due to the outrage of world opinion and was replaced by Anthony Eden. Laval’s government failed as a direct result of this debacle and because the public was so angry, he left office January 22, 1936.

Interestingly, the British and French were not the only ones watching developments in Ethiopia. Germany was also biding its time. Foreign Minister Neurath,76 was working the situation with Italy to fulfill the interests of Germany. In 1935 the Germans forbade the export of arms to either belligerent and although the Italians hoped to get raw materials from the Germans they were not willing to participate and in line with the League of Nations imposed an embargo on the export of oils, fats, potatoes, iron, textiles, steel, however

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76 Konstantin Freiherr von Neurath (1873–1956) was a German diplomat who served as Foreign Minister of Germany in the early years of Adolf Hitler’s regime between 1932 and 1938.
continued to sell Italy coal. The Germans issued a statement that they would remain neutral between the League and Italy. However, the German Vice Chancellor, Papen suggested in a statement concerning the Dispute that this was perhaps a ruse, “It might be possible that through the menace to the British imperial interests the Abyssinian adventure would help to bring nearer the realization of the New Order. It remains more probably, however, that a compromise will be made at the Negus’s expense—at the cost of perhaps also of a notable blood-letting of Italy.” The release of the Hoare-Laval Pact was of considerable concern to Hitler as pointed out by Elizabeth Wiskemann,

... the possibility of this compromise [Hoare-Laval Pact] tormented Hitler... On 9 December it seemed that the blow had fallen, for on that day the Hoare-Laval Agreement of 7 December was revealed to the French Press. Consternation reigned in Berlin at the renewed possibility of complete German isolation, and the German Press suddenly became the champion of the League of Nations against this “plot.”

The French, British, and Italians were not the only ones involved in political intrigue. Indeed, the Germans were watching and Wiskemann suggests that had the League succeeded in

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80 Wiskemann, 80.
stopping the conflict between Italy and Ethiopia, the Germans would have been unlikely to have re-militarized the Rhineland.\textsuperscript{81}

The issue of sanctions and their application played heavily in the League’s inability to effectively curtail Italian activities in Ethiopia. Oil sanctions had been a major topic of consideration, but finally in February 1936 Members of the League of Nations gave up on their imposition because they could not guarantee that the United States (the prime exporter of oil to Italy) would honor the sanctions. Additionally, it was feared that sanctions on petroleum would cause severe damage to Italy’s ability to wage war and would drive them into an alliance with Germany. On May 5, 1936 Italy entered Addis Ababa, and Emperor Haile Selassie fled to London. The Italians considered the war over at this point, but the Ethiopians did not. They had been gassed, bombed and their capital captured, but they did not stop fighting. On May 9\textsuperscript{th} the Italian government issued a proclamation annexing Ethiopia. At this point pacification began, albeit not very successfully. On July 4, 1936 the League voted to drop economic sanctions against Italy.

In 1937 the British Government petitioned the League asking them to consider declaring Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia. This drew a significant response from the public with numerous letters being sent supporting the continued resistance of the Ethiopians. The League did meet, but instead of dealing with the issue left it to the discretion of each member state to determine the status of Italian control of Ethiopia. Few actually did, and on December 11, 1937 the Italian government withdrew from the League of Nations. This did not end communications with the League and a few continued to trickle in. By late 1938 both

\textsuperscript{81}Wiskemann, 80.
the French and British Governments had recognized Italian sovereignty in an attempt to get Italian support against German expansion. Only five nations did not recognize Italian sovereignty: Mexico, the Soviet Union, the United States, China, and New Zealand.\footnote{All except the United States were members of the League of Nations at the time. However, New Zealand was a member as a territory of the British and the Soviet Union was expelled in December of 1939.}

The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was a complicated affair. Although it officially began in December 1934 in a small oasis near Walwal in southern Ethiopia, the political negotiations between Italy, Britain, France, and Ethiopia had set the stage for the Dispute over several years. With the formation of the League of Nations and the expectations the people of the world had regarding peace and collective security, the dynamics became even more complex. The above examination of the background to the Dispute contextualizes the expression of world opinion which is the focus of this dissertation.
CHAPTER TWO: National Expressions of Public Opinion Regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute

January 16, 1920 will go down to [sic] history as the date of the birth of the new world. The decision to be taken today . . . will be the first decree of all the free nations leaguing themselves together for the first time in the world to substitute right for might . . . and while realizing the grandeur of the work, we cannot ignore the inevitable difficulties of the enterprise we are serving.\(^{83}\)

Speech by Leon Bourgeois of France at the opening of the League of Nations

In his opening speech it is unclear if the French statesman and President of the League of Nations Council, Leon Bourgeois understood the implications of this statement, but on January 16, 1920, which marked the first Assembly of the League of Nations, Bourgeois anticipated with angst the future challenges the League faced. In the next two decades the League dealt with numerous disputes and crises.\(^{84}\) However, prior to the Italo-


\(^{84}\) The League of Nations dealt with numerous territorial disputes during its history including: Aland Islands (1917) between Sweden and Finland. This dispute resulted from the Russian October Revolution when Finland declared its independence and Aland Islanders wanted to join Sweden instead Finland; issues in Upper Silesia (an area which was contested between Germany and Poland) as a result of the Treaty of Versailles which was successfully settled by the League in 1922; concerns about the frontiers of Albania which had not been settled at the Paris Peace Conference leading to contention between Greece and Italy and resulting in the Corfu incident (1923); the Memel issue in which the French and Polish governments wanted to turn Memel into an international zone and Lithuania wanted to annex the area, in 1924 the League decided to cede Memel to Lithuania and give the area autonomous rights; Hatay State issue in which the Sanjak of Alexandretta was annexed by Turkey with French consent in mid-1939; a dispute between the Kingdom of Iraq and the Republic of Turkey over the former Ottoman province of Mosul in 1926; a territorial dispute between Poland and Lithuania over Vilnius (1920-1938); border conflicts between Columbia and Peru (1922-1932) regarding access to the Amazon River; issues with the Saar plebiscite which voted to become part of Germany in 1935 with
Ethiopian Dispute (1934-1936) the most critical issue faced by the League was the Manchurian Crisis between China and Japan (1931-1933). The concept of collective security, one that most of the world’s people saw as a necessary assurance that another World War would not occur, was only as strong as the states that supported the League.

As previously discussed, world opinion differs from public opinion primarily in its relation to the scope of formation and expression. Where world opinion expresses interest in issues that transcend national borders, public opinion deals with issues on the national level. During the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, public opinion was used within the national community to influence policy. Public opinion had the strongest influence at the national level. The people who sent communications to the League were convinced that their opinions mattered and that they should be heard. This confidence came from their experience at the national level. In order to examine expressions of world opinion to the League it is necessary first to examine public opinion and its influence on policy within the states from which world opinion was communicated to the League. This chapter deals specifically with public opinion concerning the Dispute and the issues that the Dispute presented for states.

League approval. The League also dealt with human rights issues in Liberia (1930) where Firestone, an American company, was accused of using forced labor on their rubber plantation. They intervened in a state conflict when Greece invaded Bulgaria (1925). In other cases the League simply failed to take action, as in the Chaco War in 1932 between Bolivia and Paraguay, the Spanish Civil War (1936), and the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937) where the League turned over arbitration to the Nine Power Treaty Conference.

85 Please note that throughout this dissertation the terms used to refer to the issue between Italy and Abyssinia from November 1934 until the dropping of sanctions in July 1936 will be referred to as the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute because this is the term used most often in the League of Nations documents. Because this dissertation focuses on the modern state of Ethiopia that term will be used consistently throughout this dissertation. League documents tend to use Abyssinia when referring to the government and Ethiopia when referring to the geographic area. However, that is not consistent. There are “technically” differences; Ethiopia is the name of the modern state that encompasses the area that was once Abyssinia and other city states. It should also be noted that in direct quotes or names of organizations the terms will conform to the original documents.
The need for peace, which weighed so heavily on the public, required two major commitments by the great powers—the commitment to disarmament and arbitration.\textsuperscript{86} In addition, it was critical that the League of Nations and the Great Powers have the resolve to act on their commitment to peace. However, the Manchurian Crisis served to underscore the weaknesses inherent in the League and the weakness in the idea of collective security. These issues were underscored by the crippling effect of identifying an uncontested aggressor, European family politics, Great Powers negotiating outside the League, and the difficulty of gaining a consensus from all state members of the League. The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was sandwiched between the Manchurian Crisis and the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). Yet, the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute elicited a significantly larger public reaction than either of these issues.

This chapter explores the causes and consequences of popular concern by examining the correspondence sent to the League of Nations during Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. This correspondence reveals that people from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, nations, and political and ethnic groups believed that a peaceful resolution to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was critical to avert another world war. It also suggests that resolve exhibited by collective action was needed to show that the international political community was committed to self determination for colonized people and collective security through submission to international arbitration. The public, represented by individuals and groups which directly communicated with the League of Nations, made their voice heard on both

\textsuperscript{86} Note that for the purposes of this dissertation, as pointed out in the introduction the term public refers to those people who communicated directly with the League of Nations as representative of world opinion.
national and international levels. In the subsequent chapters I examine how the pressure brought to bear at the national level influenced League responses to the Dispute.

Perhaps it was the failure of the League to successfully deal with the Manchurian Crisis that was responsible for the extraordinary outpouring of public response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. For whatever reason, the public made its voice heard on both a national and international level. Because historians have identified Hitler’s rise to power in Germany, the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, and continuing fear of problems between Japan and China as more critical to the outbreak of WWII, little historical work has been done to examine the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, and virtually nothing regarding the issue of public opinion in response to the Dispute.

In this chapter I argue that public opinion had a measurable influence on national governments either by directing their responses, by inhibiting responses or by nullifying political action. It is necessary to look at the national political climate in order accurately assess the propagating mechanisms that produced the “public opinion” which influenced national policy regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute and in turn the response by the League of Nations. This is accomplished by looking at groups that were engaged in this discussion on a national level, assessing media influences, and examining the relationship between individuals and groups as part of a national community. I begin by looking at the response of people in France, Britain, and the United States. Then, I divide the remaining states into those that supported sanctions and those that did not. I examine the response of people in Switzerland separately because their situation as a neutral state and home to the League was markedly different than that of people from other parts of the world. Finally, I compare the
response of Italians living in Italy to those living outside of Italy. The reason for this is that the response of these two groups is very different. Ethiopian responses are be dealt with in following chapters. In addition, except for a small contingent, Ethiopians stood united against Italian aggression. This examination of national perspectives adds depth to the discussion of policy changes on an international level in later chapters.

**THE MANCHURIAN CRISIS**

The Manchurian Crisis has been called “the first major crisis of the League” and “a turning point in the history of the League and the world.” It marked the first time the League was faced with a major international crisis between states. The world watched to see if the League, when given the opportunity, to show the strength of the Covenant would act with resolution. It did not; there were no sanctions or warnings of military response. The result of the League’s failure to resolve the matter, and the evident lack of leadership by the League, shook the confidence of smaller states in whether or not the League could guarantee collective security. In addition, it gave fascist dictators like Hitler and Mussolini assurance that the League could not effectively thwart their plans for expansion. The Covenant of the League had been written to allow the League to act in such a crisis, but resolve on the part of the League members was necessary to guarantee action. It was only a year before this resolve

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was once again tested, and this time it involved a European state, making the League’s position even more complicated.

The Manchurian crisis started on September 18, 1931 at approximately 10:30pm when a bomb exploded on the South Manchuria Railway near Mukden, in an area “lawfully” occupied by Japan’s Kwantung Army.\(^90\) In immediate response the Kwantung Army occupied the entire town of Mukden. It was later determined that the bombing was staged by the Kwantung to provide an excuse to expand Japanese control in China. In just a few days China brought the issue before the League invoking Article XI of the Covenant. On October 24, 1931 the League Council advised Japan that troops must withdraw from the railway zone by November 16th.\(^91\) This issue was complicated by the fact that Japan held an internationally recognized right to be in Manchuria. The Japanese military did not draw down and on December 1931 took control of Chinchow. In January 1932 the Japanese military initiated an assault near Shanghai, and in February of the same year gained control of the railway junction at Harbin. In January 1932 China invoked Article XI of the League

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\(^90\) The Treaty of Portsmouth signed at the end of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) granted Japan the lease of the South Manchuria Railway, from Changchun to Lüshun. The Japanese government used this agreement to assert that this included all the rights and privileges that China had granted to Russia in the Li-Lobanov Treaty (1896) and the Kwantung Lease Agreement (1898).

\(^91\) Article XI: Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise the Secretary General shall on the request of any Member of the League forthwith summon a meeting of the Council. It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends. See Appendix I for full text of the League Covenant.
Covenant again and added Article XV to their request.92 The Lytton Commission was formed in December 1931 and a group of four representatives led by V. A. G. R. Bulwer-Lytton spent six weeks in Manchuria in spring 1932.93

The official report from the Lytton Commission was not submitted until October 2, 1932. The Lytton report contained examined numerous extraneous issues: the interests of Russia in the area, the economic interests of Japan, the pre-incident situation in Manchuria, issues relating to the Battle of Songhu (1937), the Chinese anti-Japanese boycott and its negative effects on Japan. However, the report failed to deal with the Mukden incident which initiated the Manchurian Crisis. Although the five members of the commission agreed that the Japanese were at fault, the report failed to comment on the Japanese claims that the Chinese were responsible and Claudel was adamant that Japan not be named the aggressor. However, the report clearly showed that the Kwantung actions were not in self-defense and that the newly formed Manchukuo state did not originate from an independent local movement. These two elements of the report vindicated Chinese claims. In February 1933, after the League of Nations Council had considered the information in the report, a League General Assembly was held and a motion was made to name Japan as the aggressor. Yosuke Matsuoka, the Japanese delegate to the League of Nations, walked out and Japan withdrew from the League on March 27, 1933. The Lytton Commission showed the weakness of the

92 Article XV: If there should arise between Members of the League any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, which is not submitted to arbitration or judicial settlement in accordance with Article 13, the Members of the League agree that they will submit the matter to the Council. Any party to the dispute may effect such submission by giving notice of the existence of the dispute to the Secretary General, who will make all necessary arrangements for a full investigation and consideration thereof.

93 The Lytton Commission included Lytton (United Kingdom), Dr. Heinrich Schnee (Germany), Count Aldrovandi-Marescotti (Italy), Major General Frank McCoy (United States), and General Henri Claudel (France).
League in two critical areas. The League mechanisms were slow to respond to issues. It took a full year for the Lytton report to be made public and it was almost eighteen months before the League took any official action. In addition, it revealed that the League was reluctant to act aggressively to enforce its decisions. At no time during the Manchurian Crisis was the invoking of sanctions suggested. Even though Japan had left the League China remained in the League and actions could still have been taken by the League in China’s behalf. The League had failed. And this failure had far reaching implications in the eyes of people during this period as expressed by a woman from the United States in her correspondence with the League,

We, the people of the universe, have followed each day without much hope, much worry and impatience what measures would be finally taken by the League of Nations to stop the wholesale slaughter committed against society, in Ethiopia and in China. . . We have before us the lethargic conduct of the League regarding the audacity of Japan who, since nineteen-thirty-one defy the world. . . We are convinced that if the League of Nations had really wanted to, Italy’s aggressive war upon Ethiopia would never have become a historical fact, because Japan, when she invaded Manchuria she would have been sent home by the League, forcibly if necessary. This course of action would have has [sic] an appeasing effect upon other nations who already were dreaming of conquest and glory. Now we have an existing danger from the fact that Japan has martyrised [sic] the Chinese for the last four years, defied the League and took Manchuria without any effort being made by the members of the League to stop the vandalism. The wrongs must be righted before we can hhave [sic] and accomplish a permanante [sic] peace, or we will have to pay the price which transgressors must eventually pay.  

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The Manchurian Crisis put the world on edge and it was only a little over a year later that the League was given the opportunity to prove that it could be effective as Victoria suggests the people of the world did connect these two events and were expecting more from the League in response to Italy’s aggressive behavior toward Ethiopia.

**ITALO-ETHIOPIAN DISPUTE**

The response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was complicated by a desire to give the League one more chance to prove its worth as an international body and the precarious state of affairs in Europe at the time. This crisis, as we know, was underscored by the fear of another world war because of Hitler’s rise to power and Mussolini’s fascist ideology. In January 1935, the Ethiopian government appealed to the Council, invoking Article XI of the Covenant and on March 16, 1935 they invoked Article XV much as China had done in response to the Manchurian Crisis. After two months of waiting, in May 1935, Italy finally agreed to arbitration; however the League put off action until September 1935. In September Baron Aloisi (the Italian representative to the League) attempted to justify Italian plans for Ethiopia, listing a number of concerns, from attacks on Italian citizens to tolerating slavery. The issue of slavery played a major role in Italian defense of their actions against Ethiopia, as they alleged that the Ethiopians were “barbaric” in their support of slavery. Aloisi suggested that the League was conforming to the Covenant by supporting Italy. The document concluded by stating that Italy “reserved full liberty to take whatever measures it considered
necessary to protect its interests and safeguard its colonies." In other words, Aloisi was suggesting that Italy had a right to invade Ethiopia because they were part of its colonial sphere of influence. Although it was agreed that some valid points were part made by Aloisi, there was little question concerning the intent of the Italian government in regards to Ethiopia. In response to Aloisi’s speech Maxim Litvinov, the Russian delegate to the League, gave voice to the general view that “the League could not differentiate between members on the basis of internal regime or racial stock or degree of civilization. Neither Italy nor any other country could decide on its own that another League state did not merit the rights of League membership.” Throughout September the League convened committees and made recommendations, but little real action was taken until October 3, 1935 when Italy attacked Ethiopia. The League had to decide; would a repeat of the Manchurian Crisis occur or would it attempt to rekindle confidence in the League’s ability to act in compelling peace? The League chose to act in accordance with the Covenant. The difference in League response to the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis was driven in part by the response to their failure to act decisively in the Manchurian Crisis. In public opinion expressed both to the League and to the leaders of individual states by organizations and individuals, it was clear that decisive action was necessary if the League were to continue as a vital body for international arbitration and collective security.

One of the major tools at the disposal of the League was sanctions as laid out in Article XVI of the Covenant. Their failure to impose sanctions against Japan in the


96 Harris, 63.
Manchurian Crisis was one of the criticisms levied against the League in the correspondence they received. Article XVI of the Covenant allows the League to enforce both military and economic sanctions when states fail to abide by the rules of arbitration. On October 3, 1935 Italian troops moved into Ethiopia. The response from the League Council was immediate. They first denounced the Italian act of war against a member nation. The Council then moved immediately to introduce financial and economic sanctions. During the assembly meeting Alfred Nemours, the delegate from Haiti, stated, “Great or small, strong or weak, near or far, white or coloured[sic], let us never forget that one day we may be somebody’s Abyssinia.” For the first time in League history, on October 10, 1935, fifty representatives of the League of Nations Assembly made the decision to impose economic sanctions in compliance with Article XVI of the Covenant. The only dissenting voices were those of Italy, Albania, Hungary, and Austria (Germany was no longer a member of the League of Nations by this time). The Committee of Eighteen, tasked with responding to the crisis, proposed four primary responses. Proposal one prohibited the export to Italy of arms, ammunition, and implements of war. This received immediate approval on October 11, 1935. Proposals two

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97 Article XVI: Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants it shall ipso facto be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not. See full text of Covenant in Appendix I.


99 Housden, 104.

100 This committee was only one of the committees that dealt with the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute and it considered the application of sanctions.
and three established long term sanctions eliminating the Italian government’s access to sources of cash by denying loans and credits and it prohibited the importation of Italian products into member countries. Proposal four prohibited the export of certain raw materials to Italy, but only those whose production was in large part controlled by states that supported sanctions. 101

The Committee discussed other options, including the closing of the Suez Canal, which would have inhibited the movement of troops and supplies by the Italian government. This proposal was strongly condemned by the British and as a result was shelved. The League Council also considered extending sanctions to cotton, oil, and copper—all of which were used for both military and civilian products. This proposal was put on hold because the United States had these products in sufficient quantities to supply all of Italy’s needs and it was unclear if the United States would participate in an embargo on these raw materials. In order for sanctions on these items to be effective the United States would have had to agree to participate. The League Council did not want to risk U. S. support for the sanctions against Italy and chose to table these considerations. Would the sanctions on arms be enough to curtail Italian aggression in Ethiopia? It was not clear, but public opinion on the implementation of sanctions and collective action by the League clearly illustrates that the world was watching and held strong opinions concerning these events.

France had a vested interest in Italian control of Ethiopia from an imperial perspective, but there was more involved than just imperial concerns when it came to French response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. France had suffered significant damage during WWI and was increasingly uneasy about Germany and Nazi rule since 1933. This connection between Hitler and Mussolini, two fascist leaders, put the French people on edge. When the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute became a conflict and the League decided to take action, the French people found themselves between the proverbial “rock and a hard place.” If they supported League action they might anger the Italians and push Mussolini into a closer relationship with Hitler. Of course, Hitler had by 1935 regained control of the Saar Basin. The French were concerned that any provocation would lead to military engagement and France would be drawn into the conflict. At the outbreak of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute all of these concerns leapt to the forefront and pushed the tide of French public opinion.

The people of France were by far the most prolific in their response to the Dispute, next came people in the United States, and then finally the people of Britain. Among the French there was a decidedly strong body of public support for peace at all costs. Posters were displayed throughout Paris by two major factions: the leftist Front Populaire and the rightest Front National.102 These groups were very different in ideology, but they had the same message: “A bas la Guerre! Vive la Paix!” According to one account, “Both sides

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102 The Front Populaire was a group that included the Radicals of the Left, Independent Socialists, Unified Socialists (2nd international) and Communists (3rd international). The Front National was a right leaning organization and included the Solidarite’ Francaise, Action Francaise, and Jeunesse Patriotes.
accused money interests of trying to start war. The only difference was that the Right added to its appeals, “Down with sanctions!” However, this support for peace was couched in decidedly different terms depending on the political leanings of the groups. Those on the right tended to condemn sanctions and support Franco-Italian friendship “as indispensible to European peace, latin grandeur and occidental civilization.” The left, on the other hand, supported the League and the application of sanctions in accordance with Article XVI of the Covenant. This strong and divergent aspect of public opinion among the French neutralized official action by the French government. Evidence of this is seen in the weak proposal authored by French Prime Minister Pierre Laval and British Foreign Secretary Samuel Hoare. The Hoare-Laval Pact (December 1935)—as discussed in Chapter 1—was a proposal to end the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute by partitioning Ethiopia in order to placate Mussolini. Laval saw this as a way to avoid war, even if it cost Ethiopia a major portion of its sovereign territory. This would fulfill the demand of the French people for peace.

The situation in France provides an intriguing microcosm of the contending sides taken by those who supported the Ethiopians in principle. The French people were more engaged in this conversation than people from any other place in the world, as evidenced by the quantity of their communications with the League. Twice as many pieces of correspondence were sent from French people demanding action on the part of the League as from any other country. The reasons for this are complex, but centered on the desire for peace. France had suffered considerable losses in WWI, and the French people did not want

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103 Heitt, 21.

104 Journal de Genève, November 18, 1935.
another conflict that might draw France into a protracted war. Because of Italy’s close proximity to France many French people were concerned that any move to withstand Mussolini’s quest for empire would result in conflict in Europe. At the same time, the volume of anti-sanctionist and anti-League activity was greater in France than any other country. Sanctions were a constituent part of virtually every political discussion and even led to distinct divisions within in groups that tended to be united on most topics. Hiett points out the profundity of the issues in the examination of the response of French “intellectuals.”

On October 3, 1935 a manifesto entitled “For the Defense of the Occident” appeared in the Parisian press. This article purported to represent the stand of French intellectuals regarding the Italo-Ethiopian conflict. The article was signed by Claude Farrère, Charles Maurras, and sixty-four other prominent men. The article affirmed that “they wanted neither sanctions nor war.” On October 4, 1935 a counter to this manifesto appeared. This counter manifesto also purported to represent the opinion of French intellectuals and had over two-hundred individual signatures, plus the support of the Comité de vigilance des intellectuels which had

105 Hiett, 22.

106 Claude Farrère, nom de plume of Frédéric-Charles Bargone (1876-1957) was a French author and intellectual who, in 1905, received the Prix Goncourt for his novel Les Civilisés. In 1933, Bargone became active in the Comité français pour la protection des intellectuels juifs persecutes (French Committee for the Protection of Jewish intellectuals). In March 1935 he became a member of the Académie Française. Charles Maurras (1868—1952) was an author and intellectual. Maurras was one of the primary thinkers of Action Française; a political movement that was counter-revolutionary, monarchist, and anti-parliamentarist. Maurras’ ideas greatly influenced "nationalisme integral" (integral nationalism). He was a strong supporter of nationalism to the exclusion of all else. A few characteristics of this form of political thought are a rejection of individualism and aggressive-expansionist militarism.

107 Hiett, 22.
eight thousand five hundred members.\footnote{Signatures on this article included Jules Romains, André Paul Guillaume Gide, Romain Rolland, and Pierre de Lanux. Jules Romains, born Louis Henri Jean Farigoule (1885—1972), was a French writer. He received his agrégation in philosophy in 1909. In 1927, he was a signatory on a petition in opposition to a French law regarding the organization of the state in time of war. This law abolished all freedom of expression and intellectual independence during war time. André Paul Guillaume Gide (1869-1951) was a French author and winner of the Nobel Prize in literature (1947). Gide travelled extensively in Africa (July 1926 to May 1927) and his resulting published journal Voyage au Congo and Retour du Tchad had a significant influence on anti-colonial thought in France. In the 1930’s he dallied with communism, but after a visit to Russia in 1936 he emphatically denounced his association with communism. Romain Rolland was born Clamecy, Nièvre (1866—1944) was a writer and dramatist. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1915. Rolland was a lifelong pacifist. In 1935 he went to Moscow and met Joseph Stalin. Pierre de Lanux a French diplomat.} This manifesto, entitled “For Humanity,” stated that the previous “manifesto” did not represent “real French opinion.”\footnote{Heitt, 22.} It went on to suggest that France’s duty with regard to the Italo-Ethiopian conflict was to “join with other governments in respect of international law and in an effort to safeguard peace.”\footnote{Journal des Nations, October 11, 1935.} Between these two opinions was a manifesto “For Justice and Peace” published by Catholic intellectuals, which stood in general denunciation of war.\footnote{L’Aube, October 18, 1935.} In November 1935 the \textit{Petit Journal} published the results of a referendum initiated by individuals, not associated with any particular group. The question asked concerned whether these individuals supported French neutrality or if they supported sanctions. Of the 889,816 respondents, 556,013 supported absolute French neutrality. Economic sanctions were supported by 322,594 and only 11,209 supported military sanctions.\footnote{Le Petit Journal, November 3, 1935.} The same referendum, when conducted in organizations, indicated a larger majority of people who supported sanctions. These contending ideas were not specific to those who were self identified as intellectuals. The
general public in France also formed into distinct camps concerning what should be done about the conflict. Of course, League actions were at the center of the discussion.

The French right and left stood united in their support of Ethiopians for the most part, but diverged on how to maintain peace. The right’s position was that if giving Italy control of Ethiopia was necessary to maintain the peace then that is what should be done. The left saw support for the League and internationalism as the best avenues to a peaceful solution. League meetings tended to galvanize support and spur action by groups. The groups representing the French right under the banner of the Front National sprung to action when the League voted in favor of economic and financial sanctions on October 7, 1935 and then again on November 18, 1935 when sanctions were actually applied. An intense campaign was initiated by the National Committee of Action against Sanctions and War. According to Hiett, this group’s president was in communication with Mussolini and Italian propaganda officials.\textsuperscript{113} The Committee sent representatives to Rome (February 7-14, 1936) and sent a letter to French Deputies demanding absolute French neutrality.\textsuperscript{114} The Committee, in collaboration with all the groups on the French right, held a meeting in November 1935 which was attended by eight-thousand Parisians. As a product of this meeting, a resolution was passed that condemned “sanctions as unfounded in law and bad for the economic interests of France, pledging to fight against the coalition of international Marxists, Free Masons\textsuperscript{115} and Jewish Capitalism.”\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{113} Heitt, 22.

\textsuperscript{114} Ami du Peuple, October 29, 1935.

\textsuperscript{115} One of the most controversial arguments throughout Europe and in the United States was the association of the League with Free Masonry. This association exhibited the idea that Free Masons worked as a group
The fervency of the French right was matched by that of the French left. Evidence indicates that this may have been the case as much for the desire to condemn fascism as to support collective security. Those groups on the French left who were vehemently anti-fascist sent more communications to Geneva than any other section of the French public. Hiett reports that “During the first week of December 1935, five hundred postcards from all parts of France were sent to the League from local sections of this organization in cooperation with local sections of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom and the Mothers and Educators for Peace.”¹¹⁷ In addition to these postcards, the Comité International pour la Defense du Peuple Ethiopien was formed to support the Ethiopians. Prior to the September 4th meeting of the League to consider the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, meetings in villages all over France occurred and as a result hundreds of telegrams, letters, resolutions, and petitions were sent to the League Council requesting that they enact sanctions against Italy. Then on September 5th Victor Basch,¹¹⁸ Leon Jouhaux,¹¹⁹ and fifty groups in the Rassemblement Populaire requested that the League apply Article XVI of the covenant to this dispute.¹²⁰ The French left and the French right were instrumental in controlling world events outside of political venues. In addition, there was a strong concern among Christians about Free Masons and Catholics in particular were strongly opposed to any connection to Free Masons. However, this discussion is outside of the scope of this dissertation.

¹¹⁶ Hiett, 23.

¹¹⁷ Hiett, 22.

¹¹⁸ Victor Basch (1863-1944) was a professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne and a French politician. He was also president of the Ligue des droits de l’homme (1926-1944).

¹¹⁹ Leon Jouhaux (1879-1954) was a French trade union leader. In 1951 he received the Nobel Peace Prize.

¹²⁰ The Rassemblement Populaire supported disarmament and collective security, both part of the major mission of the League. It also supported a strong national struggle against fascism. Victor Basch, (1863—1944)
influencing French government policy. However, they were not the only groups in France that were actively engaged in making their voice heard regarding the Italo-Ethiopian conflict.

Not surprisingly, another group that was active during the dispute was veterans’ organizations. They, like the bulk of French activists during the dispute, were divided regarding how the League should respond, but firm in their stand that war must be avoided. The diversity of responses is seen by examining several groups whose memberships were actively engaged in the discussion. Three large groups, the *Confédération nationale des anciens combatants*, the *Fédération des officiers de réserve républicains*, and the *Union fédérale des associations francaises d’ anciens combatants et victimes de la guerre* supported financial and economic sanctions. The *Union fédérale des mutilés et anciens combattants* supported a centrist response, hoping the League would act in a manner that allowed Italy to satisfy its appetite for colonial expansion. In addition, they wanted the League to “live up to their Covenant obligations.” Their strategy for accomplishing these goals was ambiguous at best. The *Fédérale nationale des anciens combattants* lobbied for French neutrality. In addition to these perspectives among veterans’ groups, there were also those who supported

\[\text{was a professor of German and philosophy as well as co-founder and president the League of Human Rights. Basch was also a supporter of the Freemasons. Basch and his wife were murdered in 1944 and a note was left on his body “the Jew always pays.” Léon Jouhaux (1879—1954) was a French trade union leader and received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1951. Jouhaux was an important figure in the Confédération générale du travail. His interest in unions stemmed from his early work in a match factory. During his involvement in the *Front Populaire* he helped bring about the Matignon Agreement (1936) which gave French workers the right to collective bargaining, paid holidays, and an eight hour day.}

\[121\] *Union federale des associations francaises d’ anciens combattants et victims de la guerre* had 960,000 members and the *Confederation nationale des anciens combattants* had 3,500,000 members. (*Journal des Nations*, October 11, 1935).

\[122\] The *Union federale des mutiles et anciens combattants* had a membership of 1,000,000.

\[123\] The *Federation nationale des anciens combattants* had 180,000 members. (*Petit Journal*, October 22, 1935).
Pierre Laval’s conciliatory procedure and opposed sanctions, the largest of which was the *Union des combatants France-Italie*. These discussions and the lobbying efforts of these different groups in France centered around two poles: supporting League Covenants (which meant the imposition of sanctions) and supporting peace at all cost through French neutrality. However, once the League made their decision and sanctions were imposed, another front appeared to voice its opinion about the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, League actions, and France’s role in the situation, the *syndicats*.

Once sanctions were approved by the League two strong considerations, peace and economics, created even more division in France. Previously active groups were joined by labor and peace organizations in voicing their concern about the impact of the League’s decision on France. Again, it is important to remember that the discussion in France was highly nationalist in nature and looked primarily at keeping French interests safe. If Italy went to war, France should not be drawn in. Economic sanctions had a major impact on the French people because of their lucrative trade relationships with Italy, and economic groups came together to support the deputation of Pierre Laval as an advocate to point out the danger

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124 Pierre Laval (1883-1945) was a French politician and four time Prime Minister of France (1931-1932; 1935-1936; 1940; 1942-1944). An early socialist labor leader, Laval was a pacifist and anarchist. During the interwar-period he made alliances Benito Mussolini and Joseph Stalin’s. On January 4, 1935 he met with Mussolini in Rome, and they signed the Franco-Italian Agreement giving parts of French Somaliland to Italy and supported Italian colonization of Abyssinia. In exchange it was agreed that Italy would support France if hostilities broke out with Germany. Because of his activities in World War II, in which signed orders authorizing the deportation Jews from French soil to the death camps he was tried for war crimes and executed on October 15, 1945.

125 *Le Temps*, September 28, 1935. This group represented 3,000,000 veterans and 17 organizations.
to the French economy represented by them. These economic groups were later joined by groups involved in transportation, including dock workers. The workers in labor groups were concerned about how sanctions would affect them because of the important role that trade with Italy played in the French economy. On November 14, 1935 Henri Berenger gave a speech at the American Club in Paris indicating strong opposition to the application of sanctions in this situation. Groups, whether representing economic interests, peace groups, League supporters, or veterans groups, all had to reconsider their stand when sanctions became a reality. This “drawing of battle fronts” became even more pronounced when the Hoare-Laval agreement was made public.

The Hoare-Laval agreement also raised tensions around the world and elicited a worldwide response. The French government was paralyzed by public opinion. As Hiett points out, “The principal conclusion that appears in regard to public opinion in France

126 Representatives who communicated with Laval include Association industrielle, commercial et agricole, Union syndicale des tissus matieres textiles et habillement, Comite republicain du commerce et de l’industrie, and the Comite national d’expansion economique et douaniere, (Le Temps, November 22, 1935).

127 These groups included the organization of customs and transport agents of Chambery (Petit Journal, October 20, 1935); numerous merchants of Isere (Action Francaise, November 20, 1935); shipping companies from Marseilles and merchants from Mondane (Le Temps, November 20, 1935); as well as the Montpellier Chamber of Commerce (Le Temps, November 26, 1935).

128 Victor Henri Bérenger (1867–1952), French politician and intellectual, was France's ambassador to the United States from 1926 to 1927.


130 The Hoare-Laval Pact was a December 1935 proposal by British Foreign Secretary Samuel Hoare and French Prime Minister Pierre Laval for ending the Italo-Ethiopian dispute. The Pact proposed the partition of Ethiopia, giving parts of Ogaden and Tigray to Italy as well as an economic sphere of influence over southern Ethiopia. The Pact was designed to placate Mussolini and avert all out war between Ethiopia and Italy. As well, the British and the French were concerned with maintaining good relations with the Italians to keep Mussolini from working with Hitler, which both believed posed a major threat to European peace.
during the dispute is that two opposite extremes of organized action tended to have a neutralizing effect on each other and left officialdom small possibility for action other than that of faltering conciliation.” In France the strong show of interest in the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was so equally divided that the French government, in its effort to maintain public support, took no decisive action to assist the League.

**BRITAIN**

France was not the only state in which dissenting voices were heard, but support for Ethiopia was stronger in both Britain and the United States. It was not the League itself that drew the most interest in these two states. Public opinion in Britain and the U. S. centered on the same general principles of economics and peace. However, a third argument came to the forefront in these two states and that was from a more pronounced anti-imperialist sector of the public. Like France, the British had interests in Ethiopia from an imperial standpoint. The British public, although invested in peace, was also concerned with the dissolution of empire and were not willing to support peace at any cost.

Whereas public opinion paralyzed French political action, it drove political change in Britain. The British government was not as committed to supporting the League as the British people were. When the League was formed the British government publicly committed to their obligations to the League. However, they were careful to see that the wording of the Covenant was such that they could avoid any action that they deemed

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131 Hiett, 24.
counterproductive to their own international relations and interests. The British government did not foresee the strong public support for the League, as pointed out by Brice Harris, Jr.:

“Much to its surprise and annoyance, the British government had found itself driven by public opinion to active support of the League of Nations.” 132 The strength of public opinion resulted in the government’s overt acquiescence, while behind the scenes other avenues for settlement of the Dispute were being pursued. This is illustrated by the ill-fated Hoare-Laval agreement. While the British government had tasked Hoare to come up with an agreement that would appease the Italians, get French support, and maintain their imperial interests in Ethiopia; they had underestimated how the public would respond. As soon as the terms were made public it was clear that the British people were not as supportive of appeasement as the government had anticipated. Public opinion was instrumental in forcing the resignation of Sir Samuel Hoare, the British Foreign Secretary. As pointed out by Harold Nicholson, British Diplomat and author, “Scarcely half an hour after this agreement was known in London, public opinion rose in revolt. The lobbies of the House of Commons buzzed with anger and within a few minutes it became evident that either Sir Samuel Hoare and his agreement must be jettisoned or the Government would fall.” 133 Although there were dissenting voices in Britain, they were drowned out by the overwhelming support for the League.

By far the group which exerted the most pressure and which had the strongest impact on political action regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute in Britain was the British League of

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The Union was active throughout the Dispute and worked to influence public opinion in order to shape government policy concerning this situation. Much of their power came from the results of a Peace Ballot which they organized in cooperation with thirty-nine British other organizations. In this ballot every registered voter in Britain was asked if they supported the collective system as represented by the League of Nations. The Peace Ballot of 1934 was initiated in order to ascertain the attitudes of the British public regarding ideas of collective security and their support of the League of Nations. It was a nationwide ballot presented to all registered voters in Great Britain.

Although numbers are sketchy and vary depending on the source there were at least eleven million respondents. In the election held later that same year, just over twenty million people voted. According to the official history, the purpose of the Peace Ballot was to gauge support for the League of Nations and to determine if the British people would support the League’s actions as critical in shaping British foreign policy. Polling started in February 1935 and was completed in June 1935. During this period half-a-million volunteers canvassed registered voters. There were five questions on the ballot, but it was the fifth question that is of interest: “Do you consider that, if a nation insists on attacking another, the other nations should combine to compel it to stop?” Respondents could choose yes or no to two options. The first option was “by economic and non-military measures” and the second

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134 A national organization boasting 1,000,000 members

135 The most complete description of the Peace Ballot during the time was Dame Adelaide Livingstone’s The Peace Ballot: A History. London: Gollancz, 1935.
was “if necessary by military measures.”  

Over ten-million people favored economic action and close to seven-million favored military measures if necessary.  

Initiated prior to the Walwal incident, which brought international attention to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, the Peace Ballot came to be viewed by many as a referendum not only on League involvement in the settling of international disputes, but on halting imperial expansion. Rising international tensions and the release of the results from the Peace Ballot converged and the British Government sensed that public opinion concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was too strongly weighted to ignore.

As a result of the “actual proof of where the country stood,” there was a change in the government’s tone toward the League of Nations. In an article by Sir Walter Layton, a British economist, the author indicated that the public had made their perspective clear and had issued a mandate to the government concerning the League. The people of Britain had shown overwhelmingly that they supported economic sanctions and if necessary military action. It was clear that they expected the British government to support League actions


137 The exact vote counts were: (a) by economic and non-military measures: Yes, 10,027,608. No, 635,074; (b) if necessary, military measures: Yes, 6,784,368. No, 2,351,981.

138 It should be noted that as the conflict between Italy and Ethiopia gained fervency, results of the ballot were noticeably impacted. For example, votes cast from November 1934 to May 1935 showed a weekly increase of votes in favor of military sanctions and a corresponding decrease in votes for reducing the size of the British Navy and Air Force (Livingstone, 44).

139 Hiett, 19.
concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. In September 1935 Hoare addressed the League of Nations concerning the Peace Ballot, saying “The recent response of public opinion shows how completely the nation supports the government in full acceptance of the obligations of League membership.” Prime Minister Baldwin accepted the Ballot as a legitimate call from the nation to support League actions in the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. On October 14, 1935 the Union passed a resolution and sent it to the British government advising that the Union supported the “full use of the collective authority of the League to cut all communications between Italy and the African colonies.” On October 31, 1935 the British League of Nations Union held a “Support the Covenant” meeting in London. At this meeting eight thousand participants pledged to support the League’s use of collective action.

Besides directly influencing government actions, another effect of the Peace Ballot was to spur other organizations to action. From June 28, 1935 to July 2, 1935 the Union held the National Peace Congress in London which resulted in a resolution requesting that the government put pressure on both Italy and Ethiopia to perform their League obligations. As the year continued and tensions escalated peace organizations and civic organizations began to pressure the government to take a stronger stand in support of the League. In addition, these groups began public educational programs regarding sanctions and the

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140 Walter Layton (1884-1966) was a British economist. He also was active in the newspaper industry. Layton was editor of The Economist (1922-1938) and (1944-1963) and editorial director of the News Chronicle (1930-1940) and 1945-1960).


142 Hiett, 20.

underlying issues about the dispute. The British government met representatives of the British Commonwealth and group leaders from August 19-22, 1935 regarding what stand the government should adopt. It was decided that conformity to League Covenants was the most highly favored response. In September, as a prelude to the League of Nations General Meeting numerous organizations in Britain wrote to the League requesting swift and decisive measures be taken in support of Ethiopia, focusing primarily on economic sanctions. Unlike the response by French labor activists, the British Labor Party conference passed a resolution supporting sanctions.

As in France, pacifist groups were determined that war or any action that might provoke war should be avoided. One of these groups which opposed any military conflict was the Council of Christian Pacifists. This group, in cooperation with the No More War Movement, released a statement that both economic and military sanctions were unacceptable and both represented a prelude to war. They also called into question the “moral authority” of the League to impose sanctions. One strategy for opposing “collective” action by the

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145 These groups included the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, the British League of Nations Union, the National League of Young Liberals, the New Commonwealth Society, the National Union of Vehicle Builders, the London Architects and Technicians, as well as a group of 19 clubs and societies associated with Oxford University.

146 *The Times*, October 3, 1935.

147 This group was associated with numerous churches and religious organizations including Unitarian Free Christian Peace Fellowship, Congregational Christian Pacifist Crusade, Society of Friends, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and the Methodist Ministers’ Peace Fellowship. The goal of the group was to form pacifist organizations in churches. To this end there were also movements within the Church of England, The Church of Scotland, the Church of Christ, and the Presbyterian Church of Wales.

148 *Peace Year Book 1935*, 97.
League was what these groups referred to as a preemptive measure to future conflict, requesting that the government re-examine the distribution of colonial resources. The Executive Committee of the National Peace Council requested that both Italy and Ethiopia be asked to attend a conference with other powers to discuss African interests and the issue of raw materials production and distribution. However, these voices did not have the power to impact the British government as did those represented by the British League of Nations Union.

It was at this juncture that it became clear just how important the political influence of those supporting the League of Nations became during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The president of the British League of Nations Union, Robert Cecil, began to prepare for more determined political action. In September of 1935, on the heels of the upcoming elections in Britain, Viscount Cecil (joined by forty-four important figures in Britain) contacted Laval indicating their collective intention to support the League Covenant. On October 28, 1935, Cecil published an open letter indicating that he would not support any candidate that did not support the League. This prompted the British League of Nations Union to circulate a questionnaire to the candidates asking, “Will you support the use of the whole collective force of the League to put an end to the Italian aggression in Ethiopia?” In the elections of November 14, 1935 every major party platform pledged to support the League of Nations and collective action. However, in December 1935 the Hoare-Laval Pact was written and the

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149 Hiett, 20.

150 Daily Telegraph, September 26, 1935.

151 Hiett, 21.
public once more let loose a storm of protest. In this outcry, according to Hiett, “nearly every organization in the country joined in condemnation of the plan.”\textsuperscript{152} It was clear that the people of Britain did not support peace at any cost as the people of France did.

The solidarity represented by British public opinion strengthened political resolve; French public opinion paralyzed state action. For the United States, which was not a member of the League, public opinion did not take on national identity, but remained very much an expression of individual idealism.

\textbf{UNITED STATES}

Public opinion in the United States was varied and complex. The United States had not joined with the international community by becoming a member of the League of Nations even though President Woodrow Wilson was instrumental in the formation of the League. This failure to join the international community was hindered by a change in power in the United States. According to Gary Ostrower, “The League was repudiated not by the public, but by the new chief executive [Warren Harding (1921-1923)] and his appointed officials, who decided against resubmitting the Treaty of Versailles to the Senate for ratification.”\textsuperscript{153} Americans, however, just like the bulk of the world community, wanted peace, and the League was seen as a way to limit conflicts and avert world war. The interest of Americans was embodied in Articles X through XVI, which dealt with collective security. The idea of what the League was and what it was able to do under the Covenant was at times lost on the

\textsuperscript{152} Ibid.

American public. The general mood of people in the United States after WWI had a significant influence on the response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The interwar period witnessed the re-consideration among Americans of the role that the United States should play in world affairs. There were two primary sides to this debate: isolationists and internationalists. Within these two broad categories there were numerous perspectives about how best to meet the basic goals each group desired. Although the discussion of these two perspectives is important, for the purposes of this dissertation only a brief overview is necessary to put the expression of public opinion in relation to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute into context with reference to national interests.

A reluctance to commit to active engagement on an international basis was evident through the failure to participate in League membership, but the debate did not end there. Rather, it raged throughout the interwar period. The central issues on both sides of this debate were “how best to guarantee American security and how much responsibility the United States had for maintaining world peace.” Ultimately both isolationists and internationalists desired peace, but just like people in France, they had different ideas about how to achieve this goal. While the internationalists saw the U. S. as already entangled with the international community and thought that it was necessary to be actively involved in decisions that would, regardless of intent or location, have consequences for Americans; the isolationists saw international entanglements as inevitably leading to involvement in conflict.

The idea of internationalism was lost on pure isolationists. However, not all groups that were categorized as “isolationist” were opposed to involvement with the League. Aware

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154 Harris, 22.
that Europe had historically been prone to conflict, isolationists saw external political engagement as risky. People had witnessed the way alliances during World War I had committed different states to support the interests of other states even though they had no actual stake in the fight. In addition, there was the issue of political obligations which put the U. S. in danger of being drawn into conflict without a threat to U. S. interests. The public was drawn to this side of the debate for a variety of reasons including pacifists that supported peace at any price, ethnic interests, and socio-economic concerns. As discussed with regard to both Britain and France there existed an element in society that strongly abhorred conflict for any reason. The Council of Christian Pacifists whose goal it was to establish pacifist groups in churches was active in the United States as well as Britain and France. For pacifists, isolationists policies were seen as protection against entanglement in conflict. Others argued for isolationism on ethnic grounds. Having experienced how American involvement in WWI benefited the British, German- and Irish- Americans were not supportive of any policy that would promote British interests. This is clearly illustrated by Harris in his discussion of their concerns, “German-and Irish-Americans remembered that intervention in the First World War had aided Great Britain and opposed an active policy after the war on the ground that it would involve cooperation with the hated British. During the Italo-Ethiopian War Italian-Americans joined them, fearing that American involvement would hurt Italy.”155 The socio-economic argument for isolationism suggested that the best way to protect the economic and social status quo in America was to stay out of

155 Harris, 21.
entanglements with the rest of the world. Because Americans were anxious to regain normalcy this argument was very persuasive for many Americans.

The internationalist side of the debate had a different perspective on each of these approaches. The argument of internationalists could best be represented by the idea of “peace through engagement.” Arguing that the world had passed a threshold that could not be reversed, internationalists argued that, as a nation, the United States could not escape the influence of conditions beyond their borders. The U. S. had come out of World War I as the most powerful and wealthy nation on earth and only through international engagement could it retain that status. Issues in other parts of the world would eventually come to the U.S. and if the nation wanted to protect its interests it was better to do that before it had a direct impact within the borders of the United States. Internationalists believed that the United States “should cooperate with other nations to prevent disputes from exploding into armed conflict; the best way to avoid war was to keep it from starting.”\textsuperscript{156} Although internationalists lost a major battle in the defeat of U. S. membership in the League of Nations, they were actively trying to ensure that the United States at the very least not interfere with League actions and possibly encourage American support of the League. The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute provided an opportunity for uniting American internationalists to play on the ideals of sovereignty and self determination, which were part of the fiber of nationalism in the United States.

Internationalists led the way in the United States when it came to voicing concern over the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. This very possibly was influenced by the fact that President Roosevelt fell into the “internationalist” camp regarding foreign policy. Congress, on the

\textsuperscript{156} Harris, 21.
other hand, was more isolationist in their approach to foreign policy decisions. On a
government level the response was focused more on neutrality than on participation in order
to reach a solution. However, in this conflict there were other concerns at play. Even though
the American public was invested in the reality of the contending ideas of isolationism and
internationalism and their application to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, there were social
concerns and a rising freedom of social expression and involvement in government affairs. A
letter to the editor from S. Paul Kramer, in the New York Times suggests that this contention
between isolationism and internationalism was entrenched in the minds of the people in the
United States when it came to U. S. foreign policy:

> Since the early years of the existence of the United States its
> foreign policy has more or less continually been based upon the
> bewildering paradox of extreme isolation and an idealist policy
> of generous and enlightened internationalism . . . . Apparently
> Americans disapprove of the Italian troop movements . . . and
> if one desires to plant the good relations between the United
> States and Italy upon an even firmer foundation than the one
> upon which they now rest, this disapproval by the American
> public of the Italian troop movements into and with Africa
> must be taken into consideration.\(^{158}\)

There are two critical issues that this quote brings up regarding the expression of public
opinion and the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute: U. S. polarization of public opinion between
isolationists and internationalism was not specific to the Dispute and the use of the terms
“generous and enlightened internationalism.” Responses to this crisis were in keeping with

\(^{157}\) Harris, 53.

\(^{158}\) New York Times, March 1, 1935.
responses to other international disturbances. However, as discussed below ideas of race, religion, and the involvement of women played significantly into how U. S. public opinion was expressed. Often in the United States, as well as Britain and France, public opinion was shaped by organizational structures. Even when expressed by individuals the influence of organized campaigns influenced public opinion. In turn the groups were constructed using diverse criteria.

In the United States, as with France, peace was the compelling interest behind the response of the public to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. But unlike France, people in the United States took an “outsider” perspective. Although the danger of the United States getting caught up in a European war was very real, it was seen as a less immediate concern. However, the influence of the peace movement and the divergent ideas of isolationists and internationalists were instrumental in shaping public opinion in the United States. Historians of the peace movement during the interwar period have attempted to categorize and organize these movements. Charles Chatfield, a peace historian, suggests that United States peace organizations fell into two broad categories in the 1930s.

One side was led largely by Clark Eichelberger and the League of Nations Association and was financed by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; it increasingly supported collective security even at the risk of American involvement. The other . . . consisted of a coalition of pacifist leaders in the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, the American Friends Service Committee, and the National Council for the Prevention of War who agitated for strict neutrality with non-discriminatory
embargoes against all belligerents in order to keep America out of any conflict.\textsuperscript{159}

The organizations which favored collective security, according to Ostrower, most often were led by men and not women. The leaders “tended to be financially well off, socially conservative, defenders of the domestic and international status quo, and somewhat distrustful of the masses.”\textsuperscript{160} They were usually involved in large business, law firms, or universities. The \textit{League of Nations Association} was one of the most significant of the pro-League groups.\textsuperscript{161} They encouraged support of the League and pursued other internationalist agendas, such as economic cooperation on an international level and the reduction of economic nationalism. The failure of the League to deal effectively with the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute led to a crisis of confidence among the \textit{League of Nations Association} leadership. Thus, the organization focused more on economic concerns in the hope that more equitable economic situations on a global level would create a more peaceful world.

Although Americans—both isolationists and internationalists—were committed to neutrality, they showed strong support for the League of Nations, sending an equal number of communications as people from Britain, which was a member of the League.\textsuperscript{162} The pacifist


\textsuperscript{160} Ostrower, 27.

\textsuperscript{161} The LNA, was founded in 1923 under the name League of Nations Non-Partisan Association. It encouraged popular membership and when it was founded had a membership of 50,000. Its central office was in New York City. There were 33 regional and state branches. This organization was grew out of a pre-1919 group called the League to Enforce Peace, which was committed to promoting the idea of collective security.

\textsuperscript{162} Hiett, 17.
groups were also pro-League immediately after WWI, but when the likelihood of invoking sanctions became a threat during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute a deep chasm developed between organizations that were part of the American peace movement. It is here that an ambiguity in categorization took place; by the mid 1930s these groups became categorized as “isolationists.” Some groups such as the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom and the National Council for the Prevention of War have been termed isolationists, but a more accurate term is pacifists.

These groups were advocates of League membership for America, but did not want the United States to be obligated to get involved with military engagement to support the League Covenant. According to Frederick J. Libby, leader of the National Council for the Prevention of War, both the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom and the National Council for the Prevention of War walked a tightrope between support for the League and their quest for peace. In other words, they opposed collective security while supporting the League of Nations. Even within the two generally distinct groupings of organizations there was a variety of approaches to the issues of peace and collective security. However, American response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was distinct and prolific. It took on very different characteristics than that in France or Britain.

On an organizational level the most prolific aspect of American public opinion and response centered on aid for Ethiopia. While American organizations (both religious and social) supported aid for Ethiopia, the American government passed the “Joint Resolution on

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Neutrality” in August of 1935, putting an embargo of military materials on all belligerents. A significant sector of the American public was working at cross purposes to the American government to support the cause of Ethiopian independence. For instance the U. S. government had passed neutrality legislation prohibiting the involvement of Americans in the conflict, but numerous African Americans made their way to Ethiopia to fight the Italians. Racial concerns are discussed more specifically in the following chapters and not all prominent African Americans supported Haille Selassie. Other issues concerned the transport of non-embargoed materials bound for Italy and the refusal of dock workers to load the ships.

Dr. Willis N. Huggins organized one of the first groups to take on supplying aid to Ethiopia. While on a trip to London in 1935, Dr. Huggins met with Dr. Azadj Workneh Martin, the Ethiopian minister to Great Britain. During this meeting, and in subsequent letters, Huggins was encouraged by Martin to raise funds for Ethiopia. In order to facilitate this work Dr. Huggins formed the *Friends of Ethiopia*, a group dedicated to aiding Ethiopians during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Another group that was active in supporting Ethiopia based on racial identity was the *African Welfare Committee of the Churches of*

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164 This act signed on August 31, 1935 placed an embargo on general war materials and arms. However, by September the list included other raw materials which could be construed to give either side in the conflict an advantage (Harris, 55).

165 For instance, Marcus Garvey raised concerns about Haille Selassie in a series of speeches he gave in Hyde Park, in 1935.

166 Willis Nathaniel Huggins (1886-1941) was a historian and founder of the Friends of Ethiopia in America (FEA). Huggins campaigned for African and African American history in public school curriculums; and was a promoter of the Black history movement. His network of friends and colleagues included: W.E.B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, , Arthur A. Schomburg, Amy Jacques Garvey, Dantes Bellegarde (the Haitian Ambassador to the United States), President Stenio Vincent of Haiti; Ras Desta Damte of Ethiopia.
Christ in America. Concurrently, the American Committee for Ethiopia was formed as a result of a conversation between religious leaders in the United States and the Ethiopian Consul. This group, the American Committee on the Ethiopian Crisis, was officially established on August 14, 1935 to “aid in maintaining peace between Italy and Ethiopia, to aid Ethiopia in preserving her sovereignty, and to act unofficially between representatives of the Ethiopian government and interested groups outside that country.” One major contribution this group made to the League discussion concerning the conflict was to urge the United States government to send a representative to the September meeting of the League. The American Committee on the Ethiopian Crisis was short lived and in October 1935 when hostilities actually broke out between Ethiopia and Italy the Committee disbanded. However, another group, American Aid for Ethiopia, was formed to give an avenue through which Americans could express their support for Ethiopia. Just like the American Committee on the Ethiopian Crisis, this group was supported by churches from all denominations and locations across America. In time, American Aid for Ethiopia pooled their resources with the Friends of Ethiopia and continued to work raising financial support for Ethiopians. In addition to raising funds, Americans were prolific in their communication with the League expressed through personal correspondence the press in the U. S. also contributed to the expression of public opinion.

Through the press, periodicals, and radio there was a constant barrage of news and opinion about the conflict and about Ethiopia. From November 1934 (the official beginning

\[167\] Hiett, 17.

\[168\] Hiett, 18.
of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute) until October 3, 1935 (when the crisis became a conflict) there were at least one hundred and sixty-five articles speaking directly about the Dispute in the *New York Times* alone. According to a memo gauging press reaction nationwide, “in a representative week, October 21-27, shows that out of 794 editorials dealing with the conflict . . . the majority discuss the League’s efforts to stop the war, praise Britain’s demand for strong League pressure against Italy, endorse Laval’s decision to side with Britain against Italy.” Out of the seven hundred and ninety-four editorials reported, seven hundred and two specifically supported the League, a full eighty-eight percent. Even so Americans, like the French, were concerned about not being drawn into another conflict.

In the response of Americans to the League there was an unusual disparity between the response of organizations and that of individuals. For instance, the *National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War*, one of the largest national women’s organizations, did not take decisive action concerning the League or their stand in support of Ethiopia or Italy. Instead, in a resolution passed on October 21, 1935 the executive committee stated, “that the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War commend heartily the prompt action of the President in proclaiming the application of the Neutrality Law adopted by the last Congress to the Ethiopian War, and congratulate him on his broad interpretation of its implication, as an aid both to our own neutrality and to the efforts of the League of Nations to terminate the war; that if further express the hope that the same high courage and

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169 In this memorandum prepared by the Division of Press Intelligence, Washington, D.C., October 29, 1935 all except the following firmly supported the League of Nations and sanctions against Italy: 31 disapprove the attack of importer, exporters and manufacturers on the President for withdrawal of protection, 13 urge extension of the embargo to include oil, cotton, copper, etc., 8 urge the United States to do its share toward peace, 40 say the United States has gone far enough in cooperation in purely European problems.
determination shall continue to dictate his future interpretations of the United States’ neutrality legislation.” This theme was repeated by the National League of Women Voters, the National Council of Jewish Women and other groups. It is noteworthy that individuals from the United States who were involved in international organizations did not take a “neutrality” stand.

In the United States, the implementation of sanctions was not as critical because the United States was not bound by the Covenant of the League and the government would make an independent decision on how to deal with sanctions. In an assessment of individual correspondence, it is clear that individual Americans supported Ethiopian interests and League action, but were not willing to support active U. S. involvement. Hiett assesses American “national” public opinion from the perspective of a scholar suggesting that if an “American public opinion” exists regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, it is “the sympathy of the spectator rather than the participant for the League’s efforts to prevent aggression and safeguard a weak nation.” As a non-member of the League, people from the United States could add their voices to those of League members, but decisions to support League actions were not mandated to the state by way of the Covenant. Unlike Britain and France, public opinion in the United States did not paralyze government responses, nor did it dictate government action. The government of the United States paid little attention to public opinion concerning the Dispute. It was individual Americans took personal action by going.

170 Hiett, 18.
171 Hiett, 19.
to Ethiopia to fight, contributing money to aid organizations, through international groups contacting the League of Nations, and by contacting the League directly.

**SANCTIONIST STATES**

Due to the complicated nature of the topic of sanctions, an examination of the official response to the implementation of sanctions in the smaller states provides context when discussing correspondence concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute from people in these states. In the United States, Britain, and France, examination of the implementation of sanctions is not as critical to the topic of public opinion because the attitudes of the public are clearly enunciated through the correspondence, response of organizations, and the press. However, because of the complicated nature of sanctions examining the “official” response to sanctions provides context for examining the correspondence sent from people in the smaller states.

The delegates for the Committee of Eighteen, which was tasked with responding to the Italian attack on Ethiopia on October 3, 1935, met from November 27th to November 30th 1935 and again from December 10th to December 12th 1935. The Committee of Eighteen came up with four proposals. Proposal one suggested that the League lift the embargo on arms that had previously been in effect on Ethiopia. It went on to impose an embargo on the exportation of any implements of war to Italy or any of Italy’s colonies. These implements of war included arms and ammunition among other items. The terms of proposal one were
accepted by fifty-two member governments out of fifty-eight total members. Proposal two focused on financial sanctions. It stated that governments of League members should not give the Italian government any loans or credit. In addition, it expanded these terms by putting a moratorium on loans or credit to any company, person, or authority that did business with Italy or in Italian territory, directly or indirectly. Just as with proposal one, proposal two was accepted by the same fifty-two governments. The third proposal dealt with importation of Italian goods. It stated that any goods from Italy or Italian possessions, whether manufactured, grown, or produced should not be accepted for sale in League member states. There were a few exceptions include travelers belongs and printed material. Proposal three was accepted by fifty governments. Proposal four was more specific and prohibited the export of certain raw materials to Italy or Italian colonies. These included rubber, aluminum, alumina, bauxite, iron ore and scrap iron, transport animals such as horses, donkey’s, mules, and camels.\footnote{The reason to include sanctions on these items is because of their military application.} Fifty-one states accepted proposal number four.\footnote{Here is a list of the member states who were active in supporting sanctions: Afghanistan, Union of South Africa, Argentine, Austrailia, Belgium, Bolivia, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iran, Iraq, Irish Free State, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal Roumania, Siam, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Yugoslavia.}

Four member states, Albania, Austria, Hungary, and Paraguay refused to take any action under Article XVI. Guatemala did accept the terms of the proposals, but was slow to take any definitive action. Salvador agreed to all proposals in theory, but stated that only
Proposal III had any bearing on their interaction with Italy. In addition, there was a suggestion of including an embargo on oil, coal and iron. This suggestion was tabled in fear that it would ignite a larger conflict with Italy. This is by no means an exhaustive discussion of sanctions but it provides a general idea of the details in order to examine the support for them among the smaller states.

For members of the League a very different scenario played out. Britain and France were the most powerful members of the League and the United States, one of the more powerful states during this period, was not a member. However, there were many other states in the League whose attitudes about the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute were important. These states fall into one of two major categories—those that supported sanctions and those that did not support sanctions. In some cases it is evident why the state governments chose a particular stance. For instance, the members of the British Commonwealth, because of their association with Britain, would be expected to support the same position on the crisis that was advocated by the British Government. That is not the case with Australia, which refused to support some of the sanctions, based on public response. Many Australians were concerned about the economic impact of sanctions on the Australian economy.


176 Heitt, 10.
In some cases League members were united about applying sanctions, but could not come to agreement about how sanctions should be applied and what products would be included. Although all could agree that the critical issue was the idea of how to maintain peace and settle the dispute without conflict, a consensus of response was a critical dividing point. The other important characteristic of these arguments was support for the League itself. On a state level the lack of support for sanctions tended to be focused in Italy, Germany, and those states who were interested in maintaining ties with Germany. Alignment of the Allies and Axis that would appear in World War II had already taken sides. The United States remained relatively neutral with their support being based on economic involvement with the states that would make up the Allies in World War II. The future Allies Britain, France, Belgium, etc. were supporters of the League and sanctions; while those that did not support sanctions eventually became the Axis powers in WWII, notwithstanding Japan which was no longer a member of the League by this time.

In order to understand the angst of the smaller states regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute it is necessary to get a sense of the League culture. In the League, states were to “theoretically” be treated as equals regardless of their economy, the size of their military, or their status on the world political stage. This did not prove to be the case. An excellent example of attitudes that permeated and frustrated relations between states in the League can be seen in a brief discussion concerning the Conference on Reparations (June 1932); the topic of the Conference was to consider the cancellation of war debts, primarily for Germany.

Throughout 1932 there was great concern about Hitler and changing conditions in Germany. That, combined with the world wide depression, moved the Great Powers to
conclude that perhaps it would be beneficial in the interest of maintaining the peace (the mantra of states and public opinion during the interwar period) to consider reduction or cancellation of Germany’s reparations that were dictated by the Treaty of Versailles (June 28, 1919). On June 10, 1932 the United States, Britain, and France signed a document letting Germany “off the hook” for the prescribed reparations. At the same time there was a discussion going on at the League of Nations concerning war debt, and of course disarmament was still a major topic of concern. It was at this point, in an effort to deal with disarmament, that Hugh Gibson (1883-1954), an American diplomat and what could only be termed an “ambassador-at-large” set up his “American base of operations” in Morges, Switzerland.\footnote{Morges was a small community on the banks of Lake Lausanne strategically placed between Geneva and Lausanne. Many of the statesmen stayed in Lausanne while working in Geneva. His reason for choosing this location was so that he could engage these diplomats in conversation while they took their daily commute to the League of Nations meetings in Geneva.} Gibson then proceeded to work outside of the League confines to influence League decisions. Gibson approached French Prime Minister, Edouard Herriot (1872-1957), suggesting that the United States would not consider a reduction in French war debt unless it was tied to the reduction of French arms. This joining of war debt with arms policy was a back door effort to get the type of disarmament agreement that the United States desired. However, Gibson’s “back door diplomacy” had an unintended effect.

The French did not acquiesce to pressure from Gibson and the anger of the smaller states was roused because it left them entirely out of the conversation. In fact, according to the American writer Elmer Bendiner, “Back-room diplomacy at Morges . . . ended by rousing the fury of the little powers, whose delegates were left to while away the time at
Geneva like children waiting for their indecisive elders to lay down the law.”178 This effectively created a “small powers” against “Great Powers” divide, leaving a large number of powers totally out of the discussion. At the behest of pacifist Spanish diplomat and historian, Salvador de Madariaga y Rojo (1886-1978), Spain, Norway, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, and Czechoslovakia formed what came to be known as the “Straight Eight” in order to oppose the power represented by the “less-than-straight” Five—Britain, France, Italy, Japan (at this time still a member of the League), and the United States (although the U. S. was not a member of the League they, were quite active in influencing League decisions through their foreign policy and pressure brought to bear on member states).179 In contrast, the fact that the League provided an equal footing for smaller states caused significant frustration among the more powerful states. In actuality, if the “Straight Eight” were to go head-to-head with the “Not-so Straight-Five” they could out-vote any proposal set forth by the more powerful states.

This issue of more powerful states versus less powerful states was significant to all parties and caused gridlock in many of the negotiations. An example of this frustration can be seen in a response from Major General Arthur Cecil Temperley (1877-1940), military representative to the League of Nations for the British Government from 1925-1935, when he wrote “The most vociferous representatives of the Small Powers were always nagging at and bulling the Great Powers and telling them to ‘play the game.’ . . . I have some sympathy with


179 Bendiner, 281.
the complaint of Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini against the Constitution of the League that confers equality as between, say Germany and El Salvador.”

The talks of disarmament and war debt dragged on until June 20, 1932 when the Disarmament Conference called a plenary session to be held in two days in order to unveil a U. S. plan. It was at this point that general negotiations came to an interesting intersection. The U. S. plan, presented by Henry L. Stimson, Chairman of the U.S. delegation to World Disarmament Conference, called for an immediate and significant reduction in arms. Here the “Straight Eight” and the “Not-so-Straight Five” dissolved as the French received this plan with coolness and the smaller states applauded the plan. Even the Italians and Germans supported the plan, in theory. It is at this juncture that tying disarmament to war debt came back to haunt the U. S. delegation. The crux of the issue for France was the idea of security and this was not a new concern. In fact it had been an issue for the world community since the formation of the League. As suggested by an article in the *Journal de Genève*,

Mr. Stimson knows that in diplomacy what matters is not to be right, not to have good arguments; it is to have something to give in return for what one asks. America can have disarmament; but she must pay the price. And the price is security. Not security through selective disarmament as M. Gibson proposes; France wants bread not a brioche. The security that Europe asks is the promise that in no case will the

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181 Henry Lewis Stimson (1867 – 1950) was an American statesman and spokesman on foreign policy. He served as Secretary of War under William Howard Taft (1911–1913) and under Franklin D. Roosevelt (1940–1945). He was Chairman of the U.S. delegation to the London Naval Conference (1930 to 1931) and in 1932 was appointed Chairman of the U.S. delegation to World Disarmament Conference in Geneva.
United States ever assist an aggression. That is the price of disarmament. Is M. Stimson in a position to pay it?\textsuperscript{182}

Although this discussion relates more to the idea of disarmament than sanctions, the gravity of these contending concerns crippled the League’s ability to resolve the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute before it became a conflict: leaving the League only the option of sanctions. Peace was such an overwhelming issue for states and the general public that it inhibited decisive action which became the death knells for peace. By the time sanctions were considered by the League the smaller states had been disappointed by the lack of action from the League and were becoming more and more concerned about the changing attitudes in Italy and Germany. When sanctions were put on the table at Genève, the response was supported by most of the members. However, there was the qualification that the matter be handled in a manner that did not generate a warlike response from Italy. However, people in the smaller states overwhelmingly supported sanctions, placing their hope for collective security once more in the hands of the League.

Most of the states that supported sanctions were northern European countries, Poland, Spain, Czechoslovakia, and a number of South American states. Public opinion, as expressed through communication with the League supporting sanctions, also came from these states. However, it is important to note that just as public opinion was not consistent within Britain, France, or the United States, neither was it in the states that supported sanctions.

There were numerous smaller states in which public opinion supported sanctions, but this discussion is limited to those that responded directly to the League through organizations

\textsuperscript{182} \textit{Journal de Genève}, April, 17, 1932.
or individuals. Some of the smaller states from which a significant public outcry was heard were Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Spain and Switzerland; all were European states with much to lose if conflict broke out in Europe. The people of these states had witnessed WWI first hand. Unlike Americans, who could remain neutral when it came to European “family” politics, smaller siblings of the Great Powers in Europe would experience any new war up close.

The national organizations of the northern European countries strongly denounced Italian aggression. In Holland the organizations voicing their concerns over the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute adopted the motto “We Want Peace.” From the early onset of hostilities in Ethiopia, they called for financial and economic sanctions. They whole heartedly supported decisive League action in accordance with the Covenant. On July 22, 1935, Kerk en Vrede made a request to the Italian Government asking that it settle the dispute peacefully and as a show of good faith withdraw troops from Ethiopia and abandon all war preparations. After the onset of war in October 1935 and while sanctions were being formulated through the League, the Dutch Medical Society, on October 11, 1935, published a manifesto praising governments that directed their people through peaceful methods. This manifesto gained support from Queen Wilhelmina (reign 1890-1948) and three-hundred fifty psychologists and psychiatrists who warned of the “outbreak of a war psychology.” In response to a radio appeal given by the Ethiopian Empress and aired in Holland, a group of women in Haarlem

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183 Kerk en Verde, the Dutch Christian Anti-Militarist Association boasted a membership in 1935 of 8,000 people. The organization focused on promoting peace and disarmament through non-violent means.

184 Hiett, 24.
organized an “Hour for Concentration, Meditation and Prayer for Peace” on October 20, 1935.\(^{185}\) As a result there were gatherings in over two-hundred sixty towns and villages. Public opinion in the Netherlands did impact policy and the state supported sanctions and participated in their enforcement.

While reaction from the Netherlands centered on peace and was focused in Holland, in Belgium the reply was more political. There, response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was well organized and showed strong support for the League and the application of the Covenant to the Dispute. The Belgian League of Nations Associations took the lead and on September 5, 1935 organized a public meeting in Brussels requesting that the League Council enforce the provisions of the Covenant including sanctions.\(^{186}\) This gathering was quickly followed by separate meetings of the Union Catholique and the Association des Libéraux-unis on September 9, 1935. Both gatherings protested Italian aggression toward Ethiopia. On September 25, 1935 a mass protest against all aggression was staged in Bressaux. This meeting was organized by the liberal and communist associations, local Catholic groups, the Red Cross Society,\(^{187}\) merchants, industrialists, and the Fédération des Anciens Combattants.\(^{188}\) After the application of sanctions in October 1935, groups of Belgian youth

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\(^{185}\) Hiett, 24.

\(^{186}\) *Journal des Nations*, September 10, 1935.

\(^{187}\) It should be noted that although the Red Cross was intricately involved in the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute communication from them will not be discussed at length in this dissertation because of their close connection with the League of Nations (Article 25 of the League of Nations Covenant deals with support for the national Red Cross organizations). Additionally, because of their official capacity communication from them is not present in the archival documents being examined here with a few exceptions and those are included.

\(^{188}\) These activities represented the 15,000 people in the town of Bressaux and included a mass meeting, parade, and speakers.
met to congratulate the Belgian government for supporting the League Covenant and the application of sanctions.\textsuperscript{189} Support was also shown by the national committee of the \textit{Alliance Nationale des Unions Chrétiennes de Jeunes gens de Belgique} (National Alliance of Young Men's Christian Unions of Belgium) and on November 24, 1935 they passed a resolution supporting League action.\textsuperscript{190}

Belgian support for peace and League action came from political, youth, and religious groups as well as business leaders. Belgium also contributed to Ethiopian defense through military training. In 1930 a Belgian military mission composed of “three battalions of infantry and a company armed with heavy machine guns” arrived in Ethiopia to train troops including the imperial body guards.\textsuperscript{191} The public outcry in the Netherlands impacted policy, but in Belgium it also influenced government action. The same situation occurred in Sweden because the Swedish Red Cross and Swedish military were actively present in Ethiopia.

Swedish support for Ethiopia went beyond just public opinion and included a material investment. Like the people of the United States, people in Sweden offered practical support for Ethiopia. Unlike the United States, however, the Swedish Government participated by sending military personal to help train Ethiopian officers. In 1934 the Swedes opened the first officer-training school in Ethiopia at Holata, west of Addis Ababa. According to Ethiopian historian Bahru Zewde, “The three-year training programme of the first batch of officers was interrupted by the Italian invasion. The cadets began to make history as

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\textsuperscript{189} These groups included members from the \textit{Union des Jeunesses Ouvrieres and Jeune Europe}.
\textsuperscript{190} Hiett, 24.
\end{flushright}
impassioned patriots rather than as career officers.” In April 1935 a telegram was sent from the Swedish Middle Class Association asking the League to intervene on behalf of Ethiopia.

By August 1935 concern had grown, and the Socialist Democratic Women of Northern European Countries joined with the Labour and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions in a statement indicating “all who do not endeavor to prevent war share in the responsibility for it.” On August 20, 1935 the National Order of Templars of Sweden sent a telegram to the League requesting that they “leave nothing undone to settle the present dispute and to safeguard world peace.” A group of Swedish women telegraphed the League on September 1, 1935 requesting that the League impose sanctions on Italy immediately. A delegation from the Down with Armaments in Every Country organization went to Geneva and on September 6, 1935 presented the League with a petition containing several thousand signatures protesting the impending war and demanding League action. Soon thereafter on September 10, 1935 a delegation arrived in Genève

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192 Bahru Zewde, 148.

193 This group held their conference on social questions in Stockholm from August 1-10, 1935. It was attended by 200 women from Norway, Finland, Sweden, and Denmark.

194 Hiett, 25

195 The Templars reported a membership of 40,000 people.


carrying a resolution representing the support of twenty-thousand Swedish women asking for action on the part of the League.\textsuperscript{198}

In addition to these petitions, delegates from another nine Swedish women’s groups traveled to Geneva and presented the Swedish delegate to the League with a resolution imploring the League to intervene and bring a halt to Italian war preparations. While petitions and delegations were imploring League intervention, the Swedish military and public were assisting the Ethiopians in very practical ways. When conflict broke out the Swedes purchased a Red Cross ambulance through public subscription. Swedish public opinion took on a different fervor than that of many states because of the intimate involvement of Swedish people in harm’s way in Ethiopia. On December 30, 1935 the Italians bombed the Swedish Red Cross ambulance and public opinion “reacted with such violent unanimity that for a time a diplomatic incident threatened.”\textsuperscript{199}

In Poland, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, and Norway there was strong support for the League and for Ethiopia. Where Swedish public opinion overwhelmingly supported Ethiopian interests, people in Poland showed regret at having to choose between Ethiopia and Italy in the Dispute. Although people in Poland supported the territorial integrity of Ethiopia and Ethiopian independence, there was a general concern over the need to censure Italy. One of the strong reasons for this was the shared problem of overpopulation. In fact, a pamphlet produced by the \textit{Polish-Italian Society} condemned Britain, pointing out the “two faced policy

\textsuperscript{198} \textit{Journal des Nations}, September 14, 1935. \\
\textsuperscript{199} Hiett, 24.
of England who wanted Abyssinia for herself.”\textsuperscript{200} However, in an informal poll taken in December 1935 by a Polish journalist from the \textit{KuJer Warszawski}, out of eighty people seventy-nine were sympathetic with the Ethiopians.\textsuperscript{201} As far as major expressions of public opinion in Poland, the most prominent was a large meeting of women held in Warsaw on September 24, 1935. The \textit{Entr’àide Sociale des Femmes Polonaises} sponsored the gathering and “condemned the menace to Ethiopian independence as a violation of the principles of international justice guaranteed by the League.”\textsuperscript{202} Letters from Denmark unanimously supported the League and condemned Italy. Public opinion in Norway came primarily from women’s groups and labor groups. In all cases there was a plea for peaceful settlement of the dispute.

Similarly, in Czechoslovakia it was women who took to the streets as well as workers condemning Italy and calling for broad and decisive League response. The \textit{Evangelical Women of Czechoslovakia} sent a letter to the League on October 1, 1935 asking that the League enforce the Covenant and the idea of sovereignty embodied therein.\textsuperscript{203} In addition, a letter requesting that the League take action to bring the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute to an end resulting in an “honorable peace” was sent by the \textit{Committee of National Branches of International Women’s Organizations for Disarmament} which was affiliated with the

\textsuperscript{200} \textit{The Times}, October 18, 1935.

\textsuperscript{201} Hiett, 24.

\textsuperscript{202} Hiett, 25.

\textsuperscript{203} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 correspondence dated October 1, 1935 the Evangelical Free Women of Czechoslovakia. See Appendix Chapter 2 Item I.
National Council of Women in Czechoslovakia.\textsuperscript{204} According to Hiett, “On September 4, the inhabitants of Narvik, Norway, assembled in a public meeting of protest against the war and appealed to the League to prevent a world war.”\textsuperscript{205} There was a general fear among these smaller European states that another world war would break out if this and other similar conflicts were not negotiated peacefully.

Public opinion in favor of the League from European states did not emanate solely from the north. Greece supported League action on a political level and in Spain public opinion was expressed in favor of League action in response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Greece was very critical of Italian expansion because of having been recipients of Italian aggression. The Spanish government was also generally supportive of League action, but its response was measured the fascist connections between Spain and Italy. Public opinion from Greece was limited to a few letters from individuals and was not characterized by large group responses. However, public opinion in Spain did include group responses as well as individuals. As early as August 1, 1935 the Comité pro Abissinia contacted the League, asking that they protect weaker states from imperial aggression by condemning the use of force.\textsuperscript{206}

The Italian section of the Ligue des Droits de l’Homme (League of Human Rights) located in Barcelona, Spain sent a telegram to the League Council on October 3, 1935 asking

\begin{footnotes}
\item[204] Hiett, 25.
\item[205] Ibid.
\item[206] Hiett, 25.
\end{footnotes}
the League to intervene in favor of peace and justice.\textsuperscript{207} On November 1\textsuperscript{st} of the same year the \textit{Union Sindical Obrera} (Workers Trade Union) sent a strongly worded message in support of Ethiopia and condemning the Italian invasion.\textsuperscript{208} Much like youth in Belgium, youth in Spain identified with the Ethiopians and decried the aggression of “Italy’s imperialist politics in Ethiopia.” The \textit{Juventud Izquierda Republicana} (Republican Left Youth) sent numerous communications to the League requesting that they adhere to the principles of the Covenant and support peace against aggression. In both Greece and Spain the responses pointed out the anti-imperialist sentiment of the public and support for territorial independence as spelled out in the League Covenant. Both Spain and Greece has very close ties to Italy, whether congenial or not and they were geographically located so that they, more than northern European states, had much at stake in expressing their opinions in this conflict. As a result, there was less response from Spain and Greece. However, the expression of public opinion was more decisive when it did occur.

In the case of these smaller European states their support for sanctions and for Ethiopia was complex and layered. They were generally seeking to support the stand of France and Britain because of the power relationships that existed. In addition, many of them had suffered informal colonial control. For instance, the Dodecanese Islands of Greece were held by the Italians from 1912 until 1919. Other smaller states supported sanctions because of the fear that failure to stop Italy would plunge the Great Powers into another war and they would be beneficiaries of the destruction.

\textsuperscript{207} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{208} Heitt, 26.
SWITZERLAND

Switzerland was geographically located in such a manner as to make this dispute a major concern. Public opinion in Switzerland is extremely interesting in this discussion because it was the geographic base of the League of Nations. In addition, the democratic ideals of Switzerland were in direct contrast to the fascist ideology that was developing in Italy. Swiss dedication to neutrality also contributed to a diverse response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. In early 1935, when it was apparent that tensions between Italy and Ethiopia were headed toward conflict, there was a move to convene an international conference to discuss the issue. The Swiss government took swift and decisive action issuing a decree that “the congress could not take place on Swiss territory, that foreigners coming to attend it would be turned back at the frontier, and that foreigners residing in Switzerland taking part in such a congress would be expelled.”

According to the Manchester Guardian Weekly, the reason for this was that such a conference on Swiss territory would endanger the tranquility of the country and endanger international relations. Public opinion in Switzerland was either strongly in support of the League and sanctions or took a nationalist perspective which condemned League actions and was decisively against sanctions.

209 Hiett, 26.
210 Manchester Guardian Weekly, August 16, 1935.
211 The groups supporting the League and sanctions against Italy are numerous and will be discussed later in this dissertation. These include the March 18, 1935 letter from Groups Romands d’Action pour la Paix asking for League intervention, a letter dated April 15, 1935 from the Comite’ Genevois d’Action Contre la Guerre supporting League action to avert war, the July 31, 1935 telegram from the Neuchatel section of the Front
Because the League headquarters was located in Switzerland, the manifestations of public opinion in favor of the League included public meetings held in Genève.

On August 30, 1935 there was a meeting organized by the Parti Socialiste Genevois and the Union des Syndicats du Canton de Genève which was attended by three-thousand people asking the League Council to stop the conflict using arbitration and to bring a halt to war preparations. On September 5, 1935 one-thousand people participated in a meeting arranged by the Parti Socialiste Suisse expressing confidence in the League and asking that the League take decisive action to prevent war. The most influential professional, cultural, and feminist groups in the canton of Genève banded together and presented the League Council with a poster on the opening day of its Assembly discussing the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute (September 5, 1935). The poster expressed their opposition to war and their anticipation of League action. Le Temps reported the resolution of the Swiss Socialist Party to boycott Italian goods. On December 1, 1935, after the outbreak of war between Italy and Ethiopia, the Nouvelle Société Helvétique convened at Bern and expressed solidarity with the Mondial des Femmes Contre la Guerre et le Fascisme appealing to the League to act in order to prevent Italy and Ethiopia from engaging in armed conflict. Popular assemblies were held in numerous locations including Montreuil (August 30, 1935)—organized by the Municipal Council of Montreuil, Luasanne (August 31, 1935)—organized by the Ligue Pour le Christianisme, La Chaux-de Fonds (September 2, 1935), Leucate (September 4, 1935), Geneve (September 4, 1935)—of approximately one-thousand participants, Zurich (September 4, 1935)—organized by the Internationaler Bund Religioser Sozialisten.

212 Hiett, 26.


214 Le Temps, November 26, 1935.

215 This meeting was comprised of delegates from all parts of Switzerland and the vote in favor of supporting the League was unanimous.
League. Many groups in Switzerland strongly supported the League and sanctions, other groups were just as opposed and were vocal in condemning the League and any actions taken by the League.

Swiss groups which did not support the League were predominately nationalist. These groups were committed to Swiss neutrality and believed that support of the League endangered this position. The actions of these groups were given expression not just through contact with the League, but through their national government. The *Journal de Genève* reported on October 20, 1935 that the *Union des Sociétés Patriotiques de Genève* expressed their concern over Swiss involvement with the League, requesting that Switzerland disassociate itself with the economic and financial sanctions approved by the League. On November 22, 1935 the *Union Nationale* and sections of the French right banded together holding a meeting against “sanctions, free masonry, and war.” The reaction of Swiss nationalists against sanctions was echoed in small movements in Britain and the United States, and a large contingent in France. The state response in these cases was to “generally” support sanctions against Italy in one form or another.

The Swiss government did act independently of the League of Nations and in so doing created some diplomatically challenging situations. At one point the Swiss government denied the Ethiopian delegation to the League passage through Switzerland for fear of appearing supportive of the Ethiopians over the Italians. Public opinion in Switzerland had a

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217 *Journal de Genève*, October 20, 1935.

major influence on actions by the Swiss government and although the Swiss delegation to the
League of Nations voted to support some sanctions they were not in favor of all of the
sanctions. For the Swiss government the issue of neutrality was critical because, if war
should break out again, they wanted to retain their status as a neutral state.

**NON-SANCTIONIST STATES**

There were several states which did not support sanctions and individual and
organizational expressions of public opinion against sanctions were received by the League.
In states that did not cooperate with sanctions there was both support for and opposition to
the League expressed through public opinion. People from Germany contributed numerous
letters supporting the League and condemning Italy. These were not organized by groups and
were very individual in nature. In Austria, which had a number of peace societies, there was
no communication with the League because such communication was outlawed in Austria.\(^{219}\)
The Albanian representative to the League refused to name Italy as the aggressor at the
League Assembly meeting in October 1935, but a telegram was received October 10, 1935
from Bucharest (an Albanian colony at the time), expressing solidarity with the League. In the
telegram the respondents advised that the pro-Italian position of the Albanian delegate in
Genève was not in keeping with stand of the Albanian people who strongly supported the
League, “because they will need it someday.”\(^{220}\) As discussed previously people in colonized

\(^{219}\) *Peace Year Book 1935*, 148.

\(^{220}\) Italo-Ethiopian Dispute Correspondence, League of Nations Archive, Geneva, Switzerland, LON R 3645,
Jacket 15227 No. 6.
states or smaller states that were concerned about the future actions of the Great Powers placed their hope in the League of Nations to stand for the collective security of all peoples, not just the powerful.

**NON-MEMBER STATES**

It was not just member states that were affected by the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute and the League’s response to it. There were many states that were not members and their voices are relevant to the examination of the overall response of the public to the Dispute. The United States, for instance, is the largest state that was not part of the League. The importance of political action and public opinion in the United States has been discussed in this chapter. However, the perspective of smaller states which were not part of the League point out another dimension of the political aspects of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Three of the smaller states which weighed in on this discussion were Sa’udi Arabia, Brazil, and Costa Rica. From the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Sa’udi Arabia, Faisal bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud,\(^{221}\) came a letter in response to League inquiry stating

> As the Government responsible for the affairs of the Sacred Land of Islam, His Majesty’s Government is above all anxious to maintain the most friendly and stable relations with neighboring countries or those inhabited by Moslems . . . co-operating with the international community in all matters which concern the tranquillity and peace of the world, it is also

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\(^{221}\) Faisal bin Abdul-Aziz Saud was Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1932 until he became king in 1964.
anxious to support any measures designed to promote world peace in general, to substitute peaceful procedures and arbitration for wars and disputes, and, as far as possible, to restrict the area of conflict. As a non-member of the League of Nations, however, it considers that its participation in economic sanctions would involve heavy responsibilities without the enjoyment of the privileges and advantages conferred on Members of the League. 222

The Faisal letter went on to infer that if the League were to extend rights and privileges to non-member states that Sa’udi Arabia would reconsider its position. The Brazilian respondents, Jose’ Carlos de Macedo Soares, Minister of Foreign Affairs and J. C. Muniz, consul-General of Brazil simply stated that “Not being a Member of the League of Nations, Brazil does not propose to participate in the measures now adopted by that body and reserves its freedom to act in any future contingency as its interests, its international obligations and the principles which have always guided its foreign policy shall dictate.”223 In an even more dismissive response, the representative from Costa Rica stated that “will carefully study the important documents.”224 These states recognized the position they were in not being part of the League and risking their economic welfare without

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222 League of Nations Official Journal Special Supplement No. 150. Dispute Between Ethiopia and Italy Coordination of Measures under Article XVI of the Covenant Proposals and Resolutions of the Co-ordination Committee and the Committee of Eighteen and Official Correspondence and Communications relating thereto. Geneva, 1936, 327.

223 League of Nations Official Journal Special Supplement No. 150. Dispute Between Ethiopia and Italy Coordination of Measures under Article XVI of the Covenant Proposals and Resolutions of the Co-ordination Committee and the Committee of Eighteen and Official Correspondence and Communications relating thereto. Geneva, 1936, 327.

224 League of Nations Official Journal Special Supplement No. 150. Dispute Between Ethiopia and Italy Coordination of Measures under Article XVI of the Covenant Proposals and Resolutions of the Co-ordination Committee and the Committee of Eighteen and Official Correspondence and Communications relating thereto. Geneva, 1936, 327.
benefiting from the “protections” offered by League membership. In less than a year the entire situation was a moot point. However, the people of these states did engage in making their voices heard by participating in international organizations and writing letters to the League to voice their support for or against League action, primarily in the form of sanctions.

ITALY

The majority of telegrams and letters from Italians in Italy begged the League to assist Italy in reaching a peaceful solution and to avoid war, while the response of Italians outside of Italy tended to strongly support Italian imperialism and the right of Italy to move into Ethiopia. On October 15, for instance, the *League of Italian Workers of New York*, contacted the League protesting sanctions. On the other hand, on October 12-13 the *Italian Congress Against the Ethiopian War* held in Brussels sent a telegraph to the League blaming the current conflict with Ethiopia on the fascist regime and expressing that the “Italian people” supported the League’s naming of Italy as the aggressor. However, officially and for all intents and purposes, public opinion in Italy (as expressed through the press and public gatherings) supported the Italian government. It is not the subject of this dissertation to examine the nature of public opinion in Italy except in the case of League communication.

225 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 6 telegram dated October 15, 1935 from the Italian Workers, New York. See Appendix Chapter 2 Item II.

226 *Daily Telegraph*, January 10, 1936.

227 It should be noted that South Tyrol did not support the Italian government even though Austria did. This German speaking area in northern Italy was seceded to Italy in 1919 and had previously been a part of Austria.
THE INFLUENCE OF NATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION

Public opinion concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, whether from people in the more powerful states or smaller states, League Members or non-members, was extraordinary.\textsuperscript{228} The volume of letters and telegrams received by the League of Nations tended to peak around the dates of important meetings: the League Assembly meeting on September 9, 1935; the naming of Italy as the aggressor on October 7, 1935 and the subsequent meetings to determine a response to the Dispute; and the Hoare-Laval proposal in December 1935. Hiett points out that the respondents may have acted for different reasons, but fell into four primary groups; “national and international peace and women’s organizations, peoples of color [sic] throughout the world, workers, and religious groups.”\textsuperscript{229} Among all of these groups there was overwhelming support for League action.

Very few letters were sent to the League from Germany, Italy, Austria, or Hungary in support of Italy. The four primary phases of opinion followed a similar course: pleas to the League to prevent war; a diversity of perspectives on sanctions, how they should or should not be applied; a concern over the re-distribution of colonial raw materials to provide a more equitable economic return for colonized peoples for the use of their natural products; and shock and dismay at the League’s failure and the betrayal of the League by both Britain and France. Despite all of the differing opinions and concerns one aspect that the dispute brought to light was the unanimous support for peace through collective security.


\textsuperscript{229} Hiett, 27.
People from all corners of the globe were concerned that dismissal of Ethiopian concerns would endanger their future and peace. This mother from Pittsburgh who lost her sons in World War I eloquently expresses her loss:

Unknown lying by the roadside
A mother’s boy nobody knows
Was laid away upon a hillside
Where the scented flower grows
There will be a silver lining
And tho now I’m left here sad and lone
When that silver chord has broken
I shall know my Dear Unknown.\(^\text{230}\)

In her letter she goes on to plea with the League to condemn the aggressor and stop the Italian decimation of Ethiopia. Another letter states “If the League protects Ethiopia, -it must and will protect all its members.”\(^\text{231}\) People in smaller states were concerned about the territorial integrity of their own nations, people of color from all parts of the globe were concerned that dismissal of Ethiopian concerns or failure to address Italian aggression would endanger their future, by business people all over the world fearing for their economic future, people in colonial states worried about the loss of status and wealth associated with their national identity as “empires,” or missionaries concerned about their freedom to spread their religious beliefs the basic goal of public opinion was to find and maintain peace and an international obligation to secure the rights of people to territorial security without fear of

\(^{230}\)UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 6 telegram dated October 8, 1935 from mother in Pittsburgh, U.S.A.

\(^{231}\)UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 telegram dated September 26, 1935, from Murray, U.S.A.
invasion. Public opinion was expressed through individual and organizational contact. The response of international organizations was by far the most prevalent.

International organizations bombarded the League during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute with telegrams, letters, postcards, and by sending delegations to visit League representatives. In fact, many of these organizations opened offices in Geneva in order to better respond to actives of the League in a timely fashion. Among these organizations there was strong support for international government and an expectation that the League was poised to fill that role. However, delegates to the League tended to acquiesce to the opinions of their national communities. League delegates were empowered not by the “international community,” but rather by their national governments. As Hiett points out, “The paralogism of an international public opinion clamoring for action from a political entity which represents national—not international—interests, is a new phenomena born with the League of Nations, and it has been strikingly apparent in relation to the Italo-Ethiopian dispute.”232 Because of this public opinion, in order to be effective needed to focus on national action as well as League action.

The expectations of the public concerning the power of the League far outreached the reality. Although some frustration was heaped on national governments when they interfered with League responses, when failure to act was manifest the public blamed the League. The League of Nations was dependent on cooperation from its constituent parts. While the League was applying sanctions to Italy the French were negotiating with the Italians to maintain French interests in Ethiopia once the Italians had gained control. Because sanctions

232 Hiett, 28.
were basically voluntary, the League could not “punish” an offender that did not honor sanctions, when sanctions failed because of non-compliance the League was blamed. After Italy took Addis Ababa on May 5, 1936 Britain and France moved on the League to recognize Italian success and remove sanctions. In July 1936 sanctions were dropped. Some letters to the League condemned the actions of the French and British, but when the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was discussed it was the League that failed.

The stronger position of public opinion was when it influenced the League’s response through national pressure. Those organizations that had representation in Geneva were quick to rally support on a national level. Through their local and national organizations they were able to influence League policies. These successes gave people hope that international governance was possible and that peace through collective security was not the “pipe dream” it had once been considered. However, the eventual failure to avert war and stop an aggressor state was a blow to the idea of collective security.

When sanctions were removed in July 1936, there was considerable concern over the ineffectiveness of the League. The weakness of the British, the unwillingness of the United States to name an aggressor and the back door diplomacy that both the French and British engaged in gave many of the smaller member states reason to doubt if the idea of “collective security” would ever bring them to a place of international equality. Two very poignant examples are seen in the response of both Mexico and Panama in their refusal to participate in the vote to abandon the sanctions placed on Italy after Italy effectively defeated Ethiopia.
The Mexican government representative Narciso Bassols García (1897 – 1959) was so outraged by the lack of League resolve that he made the following statement in a letter dated July 3, 1936,

The Mexican delegation, in conformity with the general attitude taken by its country in the dispute between Ethiopia and Italy; Realising at the same time the intentions and determination of the great majority of the countries attending the present session of the Assembly and the limitations which those intentions and determination inevitably impose on Mexico’s participation in this concrete instance as regards the adoption of resolutions and recommendation in connection with the conflict between Ethiopia and Italy; And whereas it would be inconsistent both with its international role and with its spirit of co-operation to adopt in such circumstances an attitude of systematic obstruction, since the vote of Mexico would prevent unanimity in the Assembly on the measures which it is about to adopt: Declares that it will not participate in the proceedings and votes of the League of Nations in regard to the Italo-Ethiopian dispute for such period as it considers advisable.

Galileo Solis, Head of the Delegation from Panama, expresses quite eloquently the betrayal felt by many of the League members, especially the smaller states who put themselves on the line to support the idea of “collective security” only to see definitive action abandoned in defeat by the League’s decision to drop all sanctions and effectively abandon Ethiopia to Italian control.

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233 Narciso Bassols García was a lawyer, politician, and co-founded the League of Political Action (Liga de Accion Politica). He served as Mexico’s delegate to the League of Nations and criticized Mussolini’s invasion of Ethiopia.

The attitude adopted by the delegation of Panama at the meeting in question [July 4, 1936] should not be regarded as an anti-Italian or pro-Ethiopian attitude; it was directed simply and solely against the so-called “Geneva methods”, which in every case consist in seeking and finding some means of diverting attention from the issue, so as to evade the direct consideration of a serious conflict for which no solution is ever found.

The assembly was convened for the purpose of enquiring into a conflict between two Members of the League and between a de facto situation and a de jure situation arising out of the text of the Covenant. In the opinion of this delegation, that situation should have been dealt with in a frank and sincere spirit. . . . The League was not set up to perform impossibilities, but at the same time it should have taken such steps as would have ensured the future progress of law and peace based on justice.

If . . . the Assembly had reached the conclusion that it was not yet possible to arrive at any satisfactory solution, it should then have said so frankly, admitting the existence of the conflict and requesting the co-operation and collaboration of all Member States, with a view to reaching the best possible solution at its September [1935] session.

Hence, the reason why the delegation of Panama abstained from voting on the resolutions proposed by the Bureau was that it did not approve of the procedure adopted, and was convinced that the proposed resolutions would help to diminish the prestige of the League still further, since they leave untouched and unsettled all the problems for the solution of which the Assembly was convened, but which it decided to evade instead of attacking them. 235

It was unconscionable to many of the smaller states that all member states did not honor their obligations under the League Covenant. When a “Great Power” (in this case Italy) attacked a smaller less powerful Member of the League the League would not follow through with actions against the “Great Power.”

CONCLUSIONS

World opinion played a significant role in League response primarily through pressure put on national political entities. Public opinion influenced the actions of states in some cases and yet in others was ineffective. In some cases, such as Britain, politicians lost their positions because of public opinion. In others, such as the United States, the government simply ignored the public. Yet the American people found ways to support international action outside of the government. In the case of France, public opinion caused such gridlock that France was unable to substantially affect the outcomes of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. In smaller states, like Denmark and Norway, organizations protested to make their voices heard and influence their governments’ response to the Crises. Public opinion did indeed impact political responses either by directing them, inhibiting response, or by nullifying political action.

Understanding the part public opinion played in the formation and expression of world opinion is critical. The volume of communications with the League concerning the Dispute suggests that the people of the world believed that their involvement would make a difference. One reason for this among people from the west was that they were actively engaged in expressing their opinions on a national level. World opinion was shaped in public spheres that, in most cases, were located within national borders. It was in this setting that world opinion was formed. The fact that world opinion overcame national allegiances and expressed ideas that were often at odds with those held by the state is addressed in the following chapters.
CHAPTER THREE: Organizations Respond to the Crisis

It [The British Government] still has a legal obligation and a debt of honour towards the Ethiopian Emperor and his people, who despite past betrayals are continuing to fight for their independence and who will continue their fight even if this last betrayal is consummated. Their struggle against aggression is still part of our struggle, the world-wide struggle, against the use of war as a legitimate instrument of national policy.236

Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals
London (1938)

World opinion as expressed to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute included responses from a variety of non-official organizations. These organizations, better described as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), played a critical role in League activities. Formally, NGOs became part of the League sphere of influence in June 1921 when the League Council decided to put in place a mechanism for recognizing international organizations. In 1923, the League altered the original recognition protocol and adopted new criteria outlined in Articles Twenty-Four and Twenty-Five.237 These articles established the relationship between the League and recognized non-governmental organizations which were approved by the League. In essence, the League set up a system by which groups that chose

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236 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 20 letter dated May 2, 1938 from the Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals.

237 For a complete text of the Covenant please see Appendix I. Article Twenty-Four dealt with the larger issues of recognizing Unofficial Organizations and Article Twenty-Five dealt specifically with the Red Cross.
to comply with oversight could be recognized by the League, stating “All such international bureaux and all commissions for the regulation of matters of international interest hereafter constituted shall be placed under the direction of the League.” These groups were ultimately divided into three major classifications: the first was international bureaux, which dealt with issues that were directly under the purview of the League; the second was international institutes that were directly attached to the League; and the third—which are discussed in this chapter—were the Unofficial International Associations. There were also NGOs that acted independently of the League of Nations. These included political groups, labor organizations, and groups that formed as a direct reaction to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute such as the Friends of Ethiopia.

After the passage of Article Twenty-Four in 1923, the League found that contact with these unofficial international organizations provided an essential tool for gauging world opinion. According to the League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations, “Official League bodies lend an attentive ear to the wishes and suggestions of private associations . . . The League’s administrative services are in constant touch with the

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238 League of Nations Covenant, Article Twenty-Four.

239 According to the League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations (1938) there were six of these: The Central International Office for the Control of the Liquor Traffic in Africa (Brussels), the International Hydrographic Bureau (Monaco); the International Exhibition Office (Paris), the International Office for Information and Research concerning Assistance to Foreigners (Paris), the International Commission for Air Navigation (Paris), and the Nansen International Office for Refugees (Geneva).

240 The League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations (193) defines these as international institutes directly attached to the League these include; the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation (Paris), the International Educational Cinematographic Institute (Rome), and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (Rome).

241 The Red Cross was discussed in Article 25 in the Covenant which encourages the support of voluntary national Red Cross organizations.
international organizations: the Secretariat sends representatives to their congresses and conferences and keeps up a continuous correspondence with them, besides frequent personal contacts.” In addition to this, the League Secretariat created a correspondence list that was circulated to the League Council Members cataloging all of the communications received each day. In this way the correspondence from recognized groups was more effective than letters received from individuals, national groups, or groups that were not officially recognized.

This chapter looks at expressions of world opinion through the examination of correspondence sent to the League of Nations from both recognized unofficial organizations and other organizations. These groups created a public sphere that had a voice outside of national borders. I argue that NGOs had a critical influence on the formation of world opinion concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, and created public spheres centered on specific concerns. The “public spheres” created by these special interest groups focused on labor, economics, religion, racial inequality, and justice in relation to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Participants in these public spheres were able to overcome their differences and reach a consensus in support of peace and collective security. I begin by considering the responses from the League of Nations Societies which shaped world opinion concerning the League, by advancing policies and educating the public about the League and its role in international governance. In particular, the International Federation of League Societies (IFSL) had branches throughout the world and coordinated the activities of member groups exerting significant influence over the shaping of world opinion. Next I examine responses

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from veterans groups, which provides insight about how memories of World War I shaped world opinion on the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. This is followed by an examination of communications from humanitarian groups indicating a shared moral code that overrides individual and regional distinctions, a characteristic of the expression of world opinion. Additionally, the consideration of humanitarian groups provides another way to observe how world opinion was shaped by a shared sense of justice and mutual suffering as part of the human condition. Next, I examine the role of youth in the expression of world opinion, which speaks to the variety of public spheres that were created in response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The examination of public spheres created in response to political ideologies is the next body of material to be examined. The correspondence from these international political groups provides a way to examine world opinion as a response to the complex nature of the political climate during the interwar years. Finally, the examination of groups interested in social concerns such as race and religion further provides a way to look at public spheres and how diverse ideologies are managed in the formation of world opinion. The examination of organizational response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute reveals information about the nature of public spheres and the formation of world opinion. Whether centered on political ideologies, concerns about race and religion, or shared vocational interests, organizations created a basis for overcoming other differences. This ability to overcome differences, which might at other times or in other situations be insurmountable, was an important characteristic of world opinion.

In the early years of the League, several NGOs had representatives on League committees. These representatives shared many of the “rights and privileges of the
As the League came under stronger scrutiny and the public began to lose hope that the League would be able to fulfill its obligations to keep peace and ensure collective security, international organizations became less active in supporting it. However, this did not curtail their communication with the League in an effort to bend League actions to the consensus of world opinion.

World opinion, as expressed to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, came from a variety of groups. In early January 1935, when information began to be disseminated in the popular press that war between Italy and Ethiopia was looming, international peace organizations began to mobilize. These peace organizations were not new, as discussed below. The early responses came from national branches of these organizations, primarily from the U. S., Britain, and France, as we saw in chapter two. When the League agreed to address the issue in September 1935 there was a sharp increase in communication with the League. Delegates from a variety of groups including the International League of Nations Societies and the World Youth Congress Movement arrived in Geneva prior to the September meeting. Several groups sent deputations, set up secretariats, held demonstrations, and arranged social functions. Soon after Italy attacked Ethiopia on October 3rd expressions of world opinion spiked again. These early communications focused on keeping the peace and arbitration. After the League Council met and it was decided to apply Article XVI of the Covenant and impose sanctions, the timbre of

the communications changed and new groups began to make their voices heard.\textsuperscript{244} For the most part, everyone could get behind peace and arbitration, but sanctions brought in new voices and raised new concerns.

Individual states with strong economic ties to Italy were reluctant to enforce strong economic sanctions. In addition, dissention between interests of states and workers caused significant angst. As discussed in chapter two, political parties were forced to choose a side: sanctions or no sanctions. By October 11\textsuperscript{th} France’s Popular Front weighed in, urging the League to action. For instance, in one letter Popular Front leaders condemned Italy’s “act of imperialism” and the cynical attitude of both the leaders of their country and the press.\textsuperscript{245} Another very interested group of respondents were municipal governments. For instance, the day after Italy invaded Ethiopia, the City Council of Houilles, France met and sent a telegram to the League of Nations asking them to apply sanctions against the aggressors.\textsuperscript{246} International organizations tended to center around four interests: economics, peace, race, and religious concerns. Often communications addressed more than one issue, but these general categories are useful for organizational purposes.

There were two major organizations that acted as coordinating bodies for multiple groups, the \textit{International Consultative Group} (ICG)\textsuperscript{247} and the \textit{Peace and Disarmament}

\textsuperscript{244}The League Covenant can be found in Appendix I.

\textsuperscript{245}UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 letter dated October 11, 1935 Republique Francaise. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item I.

\textsuperscript{246}UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 6 letter dated October 4, 1935 Deliberations Du Conseil Municipal. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item II.

\textsuperscript{247}Organizations associated with the \textit{International Consultative Group} include the \textit{Conference Internationale des Associations de Mutiles de Guerre et Anciens Combattants, International Federation of League of Nations}
Committee of Women’s International Organizations. The latter group is discussed in Chapter Four where I examine women’s international organizations, whereas the former is discussed in this chapter. The International Consultative Group was founded in July of 1932 to act as a liaison for the international organizations located in Geneva. Early in the Dispute, the ICG produced a paper entitled “The Present Crisis in the League.” It pointed out the deficiencies of the League Covenant to deal with the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis. This document suggested that the League structure was not adequate to deal with the Dispute because the reforms that the world had hoped for after World War I were unrealized. As a result a reformation of the League was necessary to address the difficulties the world faced. The primary suggestions made were to see that all imperial powers transfer several of their colonial holdings to mandated territories. In addition, it was concluded that both Germany and Italy should be designated as mandatory powers. Major strategic areas were to be converted to international oversight, such as the Panama Canal, Gibraltar, and the Suez Canal. After the September meeting of the League the group sent a resolution to the League listing three major changes,“(1) steps toward the restoration of world trade (2) the policy of the “open door” in all colonies and mandated territories; and (3) appointment by the League Council of a representative world resources board.” This reorganization did not take place, but the group did effectively identify several major issues that were later part of the expressions of world opinion sent to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. World trade

Societies, International Student Organizations, Disarmament Committee of Women’s International Organizations, Interparlimentary Union, Disarmament Committee of Christian International Organizations, among others.

248 Heitt, 5.
249 Heitt, 5.
and allocation of raw materials were issues that the Italian Government identified as contributing to their need to expand and create an empire. In addition, because imperialism was recognized as a provocation for conflict, numerous letters identified this as something that needed to be negotiated before permanent peace could be attained.

**LEAGUE OF NATIONS SOCIETIES**

The League of Nations Societies around the world were created to support the League on the state level. These groups which had affiliates all over the world were a critical tool for shaping world opinion in support of the League of Nations through meetings, rallies, press releases, and public speeches. Through their memberships they also formed a public sphere where people could meet and discuss issues and concerns regarding international security, as well as the other issues that the League could influence such as health, education, and the safety of women and children. These groups no longer exist, and it is difficult to definitively ascertain the characteristics of their membership. However, many of the documents have the names of the officers on their letterhead. These officers are predominantly men, but do include a smattering of women. Additionally, some letters from women indicating membership in a League Society are also present in the archive. Several general assumptions can be made concerning the membership of these organizations—they were most likely elite males, probably internationalists, and either of European descent or western educated. Beyond these generalities, women were represented, though one can assume sparsely, due to the general social environment of the time. Additionally, these women were most likely elite.
However, if you consider Stearns’ postulation that world opinion developed because of the formation of a global middle class, it is plausible that a large number of middle class people were also participants in this public sphere.

The local organizations were affiliated with an international group, the *International Federation of League of Nations Societies*, which expanded the reach of this particular public sphere giving it a global membership.\(^{250}\) The objective of the *International Federation* was to unite the national societies, federations, and councils from the various states to support joint action regarding the League of Nations. The goal of these national groups was to promote “understanding, approval and application of the principles embodied in the Covenant of the League of Nations.”\(^{251}\) In order to accomplish these goals the groups studied international problems and then sent an annual delegation to the General Committee of the Assembly of the League of Nations to communicate the resolutions adopted by the Assemblies of the Federation. The Assemblies held by the International Federation each year dealt with “Education, National Minorities, International Labour Organisations, Economic and Social Questions, Legal and Political Questions.”\(^{252}\) This international group and the affiliated

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\(^{250}\) According the 1938 Handbook of International Organisations published by the League of Nations the International Federation of League Societies had affiliated members in Albania, Union of South Africa, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iran, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tangier, Turkey, United States of America, and Yugoslavia. In addition, there were associated members in Georgia and the Ukraine.


national organizations played a critical role in supporting the League of Nations and provided a real sense of membership on the individual level.

The first communication from the International Federation of the League of Nations Societies concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute came in the form of a resolution. On September 29, 1935 this international group approved a resolution supporting the League’s settlement of the “crisis” (referring to the Walwal incident) in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant. The resolution went on to say that the Federation hoped that a permanent resolution could be reached that was acceptable for both the Italians and the Ethiopians.

There were also suggestions included in the declaration that affiliate groups should increase their efforts to shape world opinion in favor of supporting the League of Nations Covenant. On February 23, 1936 the Executive Committee of the International Federation adopted the following resolution and sent it to the League for presentation to the Committee of Eighteen, which was meeting to discuss sanctions:

Profoundly convinced of the necessity for Members of the League of Nations to bring to a successful conclusion the collective action for security already undertaken and to prevent the aggressor State profiting from its aggression: Notes that the decisions already taken are far from being all the economic and financial measures laid down in Article 16 of the Covenant as binding upon all Members of the League of Nations; Consequently recommends that the Coordinating Committee decide to apply speedily all new measures calculated to be useful in their effects, such as an embargo on oil, and, if need be, closing ports to Italian vessels from touching at ports in these lands, financial assistance to Ethiopia, the victim of aggression, etc. Considers that, alongside of this action, the League of Nations should, in fulfillment of its mission of international solidarity, undertake to find a speedy solution of

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253 Journal des Nations, October 1, 1935.
the problems of distribution of raw materials and of overpopulation in certain countries.\(^{254}\)

This resolution touched on the many challenges the League faced as it attempted to find a solution to the Dispute. It also accentuates the issues that were most often part of the expressions of world opinion sent to the League of Nations by organizations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The Italian Government suggested that they needed Ethiopia as an outlet for overpopulation problems in their state as well as for raw materials. These were major themes for expansion by imperial powers generally. The problem of raw materials distribution became a major topic for the League of Nations Societies as well as many pacifist organizations because imperialism could not be curtailed until there was an equitable way to distribute raw materials to industrialized nations.

In addition to passing and forwarding resolutions passed by the *International Federation*, the international office sometimes forwarded resolutions passed by local branches. For instance, in response to the release of the Hoare-Laval Pact the International Federation forwarded a resolution passed by the Belgian contingent.

The Committee of the Belgian Director for the League of Nations Society recalling under the Covenant, members of the League of Nations, are committed not only to take collective measures to stop attacks, but still maintain independence against aggression and territorial integrity of each member;

Noting that the reconciliation proposed by Misters Laval and Hoare are evidently, much more favorable than those Italy presented before the attack by the Committee of Five Board of

\(^{254}\) UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 14 resolution dated February 23, 1936 from the Union Internationale des Associations pour la Societe des Nations. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item III.
the League of Nations and thus, should they succeed in their current form, they would constitute a bonus for aggression and a formidable precedent for the safety of small countries,

Accordingly express the hope that the Council of the League of Nations would seek a solution more in keeping with the spirit of the Covenant.255

Although the International Federation was not very active in expressing its opinion to the League, affiliate groups were. It is possible that the lack of participation from the International Federation may have been influenced by the fact that the president at the time was Italian.256

Communications from the member societies of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies, on the other hand, was quite prolific. Resolutions supporting the application of sanctions were sent in from the United States, Canada, Britain, France, Sweden, Switzerland, Netherlands, Iran, South Africa, Haiti, and Czechoslovakia. The Albany, New York branch sent in a telegram urging the U. S. government to cooperate with the League through honoring the imposition of sanctions.257 In addition to the Albany group, other League of Nations Societies from the United States—including those from Tennessee, Southern California, Connecticut, Oregon, Middle West Division, and the New England Branch—sent telegrams expressing the idea that support for the League was dependent on

255 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 19, 1935 from the International Federation of League of Nations Societies. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item IV.

256 Heitt, 8.

the Covenant being upheld and that this would be accomplished through the imposition of sanctions.\textsuperscript{258} The Netherlands branch sent in a resolution supporting sanctions and calling for the League to protect the territorial integrity and political independence of member states.\textsuperscript{259} It went on to condemn the Hoare-Laval Pact as advantageous to the Italians, who had been named aggressors by the League Council. The branch in Stockholm Sweden, in response to the release of the Hoare-Laval Pact, sent a telegram addressing the issue. The telegram suggested that the majority opinion of Swedish people was that they were painfully surprised by the League’s promotion of an agreement favoring the aggressor state in violation of the Covenant and their sacrificing of the victims of aggression.\textsuperscript{260} This was followed a week later by a telegram congratulating the League Council on convening an Assembly to address the application of League principles concerning collective security.\textsuperscript{261} Collective security was

\textsuperscript{258} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 13, 1935 from the Nashville, Tennessee Branch of the League of Nations Association; Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 13, 1935 from the Southern California Branch of the League of Nations Association; Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 13, 1935 from the Connecticut Branch of the League of Nations Association; Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 13, 1935 from the Oregon Branch of the League of Nations Association; Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 14, 1935 from the Middle West Division of the League of Nations Association; Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 12, 1935 from the New England Branch of the League of Nations Association.

\textsuperscript{259} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter and resolution dated December 24, 1935 from the Vereeniging Voor Volkenbond en Vrede. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item V.

\textsuperscript{260} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 18, 1935 from the Association of Swedish League of Nations Societies. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item VI.

\textsuperscript{261} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 26, 1935 from the Association of Swedish League of Nations Societies. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item VII.
one of the primary tasks of the League of Nations as described in the Covenant. In many of
the expressions of world opinion from organizations this was identified as the most pressing
concern. In addition, a meeting of the League of Nations Union branch in London resulted in
the Executive Committee sending a letter to the League advising that in the interest of
collective security they should not only continue to apply sanctions, but they should “agree to
the cutting-off of Italy’s communication from Africa by the closing to her of the Suez
Canal. Collective security is addressed in depth in chapter four because it was prevalent in
the correspondence that was received from individuals.

One of the objectives of the League of Nations Societies was to shape world opinion.
As the seriousness of the Dispute became more evident and more groups were pulled into the
discussion one of the League of Nations Society’s in Britain forwarded the following
communication to the League:

Re-affirming its determination to uphold and apply universally the principle of collective security, Considers that, unless the
Italian Government stops the war in Abyssinia forthwith, the Committee of Eighteen should be summoned and effective
sanctions imposed, including oil sanctions, a shipping embargo and, if necessary, the severance of communications between
Italy and Abyssinia . . . That the League of Nations Union should take immediate steps to convince public opinion of the
necessity of these measures and to explain their relation to the present crisis in Western Europe.263

262 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16
letter dated May 11, 1936 from the Executive Committee of the branch of the League of Nations Union at the New Tabernacle.

263 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15
letter dated April 2, 1936 from the Executive Committee of the British League of Nations Union.
This organization clearly identified its mandate to “convince the public” of just how serious this issue was and why the imposition of sanctions was critical to protecting Europe from another global conflagration, exhibiting its appeal to a public sphere that supported a shared opinion which was shaped in part by the organization.

As the conflict heated up, the League of Nations Societies (as well as other international organizations) called on the League to continue to try to settle the Dispute peacefully without rewarding aggression. The fear that this Dispute would lead to another major war was evident in a communication from the Hyde Branch (England): “We of the Hyde Branch of the League of Nations Union are of opinion that no measure would be more valuable for restoring peace and confidence to Europe than the settlement of the Italo-Ethiopian War on terms consistent with the Covenant of the League. We therefore urge that the sanctions now in operation against Italy should be maintained and if necessary intensified.”

The use of gas by the Italians also initiated a major response from the League Unions. The Bristol (England) Branch sent a letter advising the League that “. . . the citizens of Bristol view with the deepest concern the increasing violation of treaty obligations, respect for which is fundamental to international peace and security. Especially it condemns the flagrant violation by Italy in Abyssinia of the Geneva Protocol of 1925, prohibiting gas-warfare.”

The final concern that elicited a major response from League of Nations Unions was the Italian success in taking Addis Ababa and the request by the British government for


265 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 resolution sent with letter dated April 21, 1936 from the League of Nations Union, Bristol and District Council.
the League to recognize Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia. From the League Union in Boston came this encouragement, “in an annual meeting today unanimously declared renewed and unshaken faith in the international cooperation for peace through League of Nations and earnest hope that no temporary victory of forces of disorder will turn League from upholding Covenant by continued and effective sanctions.” 266 The Edinburgh (Scotland) Branch sent a resolution urging “His Majesty’s Government to support the Declaration of the League that Italy was guilty of aggression by refusing to have any part in recognizing Italy’s claim to sovereignty in Ethiopia or in assisting her financially.” 267 The Bristol and District Council sent a declaration stating that “it is incumbent upon the members of the League of Nations not to recognize any situation, treaty or agreement which may be brought about by means contrary to the Covenant of the League of Nations or Pact of Paris.” 268 The letter went on to point out that the Ethiopians, far from giving up, were waging an effective resistance to Italian control.

The Hounslow Branch League of Nations Society contacted the League requesting that it not recognize Italy’s control of Ethiopia. It stated that “true appeasement can come only through justice and not by the shameful betrayal of a small nation at the demand of a

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266 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 telegram received by the League of Nations on May 9, 1936, from the League of Nations Association of Massachusetts.


268 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 20 resolution sent to the League of Nations with letter dated April 30, 1938 from the League of Nations Union, Bristol and District Council.
stronger one.” The Italians pulled out of the League of Nations on December 11, 1937 yet letters continued to be received by the League concerning the Dispute until late 1938. As tensions rose in Europe due to Germany’s rearmament, the British and French sought to appease Italy and keep Mussolini from forging an alliance with Hitler. Those dedicated to the ideals upon which the League of Nations was founded continued to press it to stand firm for collective security. The tenacity of these groups exhibits the power of the public sphere they created. Their collective identity as League supporters and participants in international affairs was shaped by the organizational structure of the League of Nations Societies. These exhibit the argument that NGOs were an influential force for the formation and expression of world opinion to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

**VETERANS GROUPS**

Veterans groups represent another type of organization that was active in communicating with the League. This group formed a special interest group whose membership was mostly male and who had fought in WWI. They were active in both expressions of world opinion and in forming it. Their membership represented a more defined public sphere than that of the League of Nations Societies. However, their shared experiences as soldiers added to the fervency of their outrage over the danger the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute posed for peace and collective security. The expressions of world opinion

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269 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 20 resolution received by the League on May 14, 1938 from the League of Nations Union, Hounslow Branch.
received from veterans groups focused on concerns that the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute and actions taken by the League might escalate into another global conflict. Unlike the League of Nations Unions, which were focused on supporting the League, veterans groups were most interested in seeing that the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute did not escalate and draw in other actors. The *Inter-Allied Federation of Veterans* (*Interalliée Fédération des Anciens Combattants*) informed its membership in October 1935 that “the purpose of the organization is to unite all those who fought with the Allies in 1914-18 to prevent the outbreak of a new war.” This group actively sought to influence the national governments of Britain, France, and Italy. Their national branches were also active in contacting the League. The Belgium section contacted the League of Nations in September 1935, stating that those who had experienced the “great tragedy of 1914-1918” should be the first to “curse the war and wish that all people hold out their hands across borders.” Additionally, the *National Federation of Veterans and Victims of the War* (*Confédération nationale des anciens combattants et victimes de la guerre*) sent in a resolution informing the League that they were imploring “the French government to redouble efforts to end hostilities between Italy and Ethiopia and

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270 This group was founded in 1920. According to the League Handbook of International Organizations (1938), their objective was to reinforce the connections which unified the soldiers of the Allied Powers during World War I and to use the strength and experience of ex-service men to work for peace. This group represented eight million veterans in Britain, United States, France Italy, Poland, Greece, Romania, Yugoslavia, Portugal Czechoslovakia, and Belgium.

271 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 resolution dated October 16, 1935 from the Federation Interalliée des Anciens Combattants. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item VII.

272 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter dated September 20, 1935 from the Federation des Combattants 1914-1918 Bressoux. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item IX.
settle peacefully the current conflict, in an equitable manner and within the framework of the League of Nations.”

Veterans groups strongly supported the League of Nations and mobilized their members to put pressure on national governments to find a peaceful solution to the conflict that was in accordance with the League Covenant.

Another Veterans group that actively expressed their concerns to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was the International Conference of Associations of Wounded Veterans and Veterans (Conférence internationale des associations de mutilés de guerre et d’anciens combattants). This group contacted the League on September 9, 1935 urging them to settle the conflict peacefully and avoid future war. Those who had suffered from World War I, whether as wounded veterans or as orphans, looked to the League to stop the escalation of the Dispute into a global conflict and expected it to protect the territorial integrity and political sovereignty of all member states. The Association of the Disabled, Widows, Orphans of War, and Veterans (Associations de mutilés, veuves, orphelins de la guerre et anciens combattants) sent a letter to the League of Nations in response to the Hoare-Laval agreement advising that their council had met on December 29, 1935 and they were calling on the League of Nations to impose Article 10 of the Covenant, in which the League is responsible for protecting the territorial integrity and political sovereignty of member states against aggression. The group expressed indignation against any proposal that

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273 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 6 resolution dated October 14, 1935 from the Confederation Nationale des Anciens Combattants et Victimes de la Guerre. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item X.

274 This group represented two and a half million veterans in Yugoslavia, Denmark, Belgium, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, and France.

would offer a reward to the aggressor in the Italo-Ethiopian Conflict. The letter went on to encourage the continuation of economic sanctions and urged the League to include an embargo on oil, which would deprive the aggressor the ability to wage modern warfare. In addition, the group suggested that they are against all wars and that only an international economic agreement would succeed in destroying the causes of war.\footnote{UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 resolution received by the League of Nations on January 9, 1936 and entitled “Le Conflit Italo-Ethiopien. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XI.} In the early stages of the conflict veterans groups tended to be cautious about applying sanctions that might lead to expansion of the conflict, but as Italian aggression expanded they began to lean toward the application of sanctions as a means to ensure peace.

One group composed of French and Italian Veterans of World War I, out of Montreuil, France provided one of the strongest statements to the League of Nations by a veterans group. In their letter, the group voiced strong opposition to the attacks of the fascist Italian Government against the Ethiopian people. They also paid tribute to “all victims of this unnecessary [trick] imposed against the interest and willingness of Italian people” and against the fascist government that had reduced Italy to misery and slavery.\footnote{UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 resolution received by the League of Nations on January 16, 1936 from the Association Franco-Italienne des Anciens Combattants. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XII.} Additionally, this group decried the confiscation, by the fascist government, of monies sent by Italian immigrants home to their parents.\footnote{UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 resolution received by the League of Nations on January 16, 1936 from the Association Franco-Italienne des Anciens Combattants. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XII.} This was a very different response from a veterans
group and provides an interesting alternative perspective. One aspect of the expression of world opinion as represented by communication with the League of Nations was that in many cases there was a distinction made between the Italian people and the fascist government. Additionally, in some communications shared identity based on women’s roles as wives and mothers, racial identity, religious beliefs, and general humanity all make it clear that for the people and groups that were actively engaged in expressing their opinions regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, it was personal and not a distant political event. This group of veterans also paid tribute to the Abyssinian people who “fiercely defend freedom” and asked that all people demand that the League impose the most severe sanctions on Italy.279 Another request made by this group was for people to donate money to humanitarian work by giving money to help the Ethiopians and to sponsor the family of a soldier or worker who died of wounds in Africa.280 Again, this was an idea that was repeated in communications from numerous groups who sought practical ways to help those impacted by the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The examination of veterans groups correspondence provides a way to examine the influence of world opinion as well as the mechanisms. Although, perhaps these organizations did not change policy they did influence action on the part of people contributing to the argument that world opinion has influence it is just at times not easily assessed. Additionally, veterans groups as well as humanitarian groups (which are discussed next) employed an unusual method for expressing world opinion—personal humanitarian action.

279 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 resolution received by the League of Nations on January 16, 1936 from the Association Franco-Italienne des Anciens Combattants. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XII.

280 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 resolution received by the League of Nations on January 16, 1936 from the Association Franco-Italienne des Anciens Combattants. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XII.
HUMANITARIAN GROUPS

Humanitarian concerns were part of the expression of world opinion sent to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. These primarily conveyed concern for the Ethiopians and the difficulties they were facing as a result of Italian aggression. Women and children were of special concern to the global community, as reflected in a telegram from elementary school officials located in the city of Puebla, Mexico. This group asked that the League protect the children of Ethiopia from the ravages of war. Other groups used their focus as humanitarians to sue for peace based on shared humanity. One can postulate that the memberships in these groups were probably both men and women of the elite and middle class. The reason for this is that many of the letters from these groups were signed by women and the letterhead for several of them included women as secretaries or officers in some capacity. Again, their status as elite is based on the assumption that (especially during the difficult economic situation the world was facing at this time) there would have been few lower class people that would have had the time or resources to contribute. One aspect of membership that has not yet been considered is the racial configuration of these groups. Because some of the humanitarian groups focused specifically on the assistance to Ethiopia stating one reason as a shared identity it can be assumed that at least some of their membership were of African descent. I argue that these groups, like the League of Nations

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281 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 telegram received by the League of Nations on October 7, 1935 from Puebla de Puebla. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XIII.
Societies and veterans groups, through a shared identity formed a public sphere in which discussions of the Dispute shaped their expressions of world opinion. As a note the opinions from these counter public spheres were not at odds and suggest a connection to an umbrella public sphere that shared the primary world opinion relating to peace and collective security, but incorporated a variety of mechanisms for expressing these opinions.

One such organization based in Uruguay which supported Ethiopian concerns, illustrates the difficulty in identifying a “generalized” world opinion. As discussed in chapter one the Italians created enclaves of Italian culture throughout the world and South America was a major destination for Italian migrants. Many of the letters from Uruguay which are discussed in chapter five dealing with individual expressions of world opinion supported the Italian right to empire. However, this group, *The Humanist Party of Uruguay*, expressed the opinion that as a party they felt that human beings were all bound together in creation and that as part of their program to improve the world there should be no distinctions between peoples based on race, ethics, or morals. As a result, the organization rejected any attempt at aggression that could become a universal war, the true scourge of humanity and paramount cause of all evil. The letter went on to suggest that this group trusted the League of Nations to do what was best for all of the beings of creation. The Italians bombed Red Cross ambulances as well as hospitals, and this elicited a major response from both peace groups and humanitarian groups. French humanitarians sent a telegram on behalf one hundred seventy-five thousand members who indignantly protested the premeditated bombing of Red Cross ambulances by

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282 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 letter dated October 1, 1935 from Montevideo. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XIV.
the Italian Air Force. The organization demanded an investigation and that the League of Nations transmit a radio message to the Italian people telling them what their government was doing. After the experiences of World War I, humanitarian concerns about the rules of war were critical. World opinion expressed to the League clearly demonstrated that many people of the world expected warfare to be more “civilized” than what they had just experienced in World War I. A similar telegram was received from the Committee for the Support of Ethiopian War Victims protesting the bombing of Red Cross ambulances and for the use of gas on Ethiopians by the Italians. Numerous groups addressing humanitarian concerns were specifically focused on aid to Ethiopia and in the United States this was one of the primary ways that the public participated in the discussion. The groups that were created solely to support Ethiopia during the Dispute focused on humanitarian aid as well as on influencing world opinion and affecting policy. The International Committee for the Defense of the Ethiopian People (Comité international pour la défense du peuple éthiopien) was one of the larger groups. It was a consortium of two hundred and fifty national and international organizations that was founded in August 1935 “on the initiative of Italian

283 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on January 7, 1936 from the Ligue Francaise Droits Homme. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XV.

284 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on March, 1936 from the Comite Assistance Victimes Guerre Ethiopie. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XVI.

285 The groups affiliated with this organization included seventeen international organizations, forty-two national French Organizations, twenty-nine Spanish, sixteen Italian, eleven British, eight Belgian, three each in Switzerland, Holland, Mexico, and Denmark, two each in Brazil, Sweden Yugoslavia, Poland, and Peru, and one each in Germany, Bulgaria, New Zealand, and Luxemburg. There were twelve associations related to race and nineteen organizations of national minorities and colonial people (Heitt, 8).
émigrés in France.” On the eve of the September 1935 meetings at which the Italo-
Ethiopian Dispute would be discussed by the League of Nations Assembly, this group of
organizations prepared a day of mass demonstrations. According to Heitt, “The Committee
won the immediate support of diverse societies and individuals interested in the Ethiopian
affair, and have made a constant effort, not only to organize action in many countries in
opposition to fascist aggression but also to coordinate the action of other groups.” This
body was also instrumental in organizing Arab groups in support of Ethiopia. One such
group was the Association of Blacks and Arabs in Paris. They wrote to the League of Nations
in April 1936 stating that they deplored that the principles of the Covenant relating to
collective security in defense of small nations had been odiously assaulted by the drafts of
certain guarantor powers (speaking of the Hoare-Laval Pact). As non-Europeans who had
suffered colonial control, these groups were especially sensitive to Article 10 and the
guarantee of territorial integrity and political sovereignty it promised. Besides these
activities, the International Committee for the Defense of the Ethiopian People (Comité
international pour la défense du peuple éthiopien) also took a proactive role in shaping world
opinion by distributing propaganda material in the form of bulletins and posters. It also sent

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286 Heitt, 8.

287 Some of the more influential individuals include Viscount Cecil (1864-1958)—one of the architects of the
League of Nations whose service to the League resulted in him being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (1937)—
French artist, Francis Jourdain (1876-1958), and Marcel Cohen (1884-1974) an influential linguist who did
significant work with Ethiopian languages.

288 Heitt, 8-9.

289 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15
letter dated April 10, 1936 from the Comite de Coordination des Associations Noires et Arabes de Paris. See
letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XVII.
out communiqués to the press and, when sanctions were applied, put together groups to monitor large ports to see that the sanctions were being upheld. In December 1935 the *International Committee for the Defense of the Ethiopian People*, sent a letter to the League in response to the release of the Hoare-Laval Pact. It denounced the bargain as a “shady collusion of international high finance” and the reward given to the aggressor as “scandalous encouragement to all warmongers.” In addition, the Committee laid out plans to alert the masses that they could not afford this crushing loss for the prestige of a dictator and to appeal to known organizations and the masses to trigger a huge protest movement to make governments accountable “now on in this conflict, to the will of the people.” This provides some clues as to one way in which world opinion was shaped by organizations that were specifically focused on the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

The affiliate branches of the *International Committee for the Defense of the Ethiopian People* also sent in numerous communications to the League. One telegram to the League from Addis Ababa suggested that the failure of the League to apply sanctions promoted the killing of women and children. It also noted that this caused disillusionment among the

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290 Heitt, 8.

291 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 letter dated December 10, 1935 from the Comite International pour la Defense du Peuple Ethiopien et de la Paix. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XVIII.

292 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 letter dated December 10, 1935 from the Comite International pour la Defense du Peuple Ethiopien et de la Paix. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XVIII.

293 This group included seventeen international organizations, forty-two French, twenty-nine Spanish, sixteen Italian, eight Belgian, three organizations in Mexico, Holland, Denmark, and Switzerland, two organizations in Brazil, Poland, Sweden, Peru, and Yugoslavia, and one each in Bulgaria, New Zealand, Luxemburg, and Germany. It also included twelve associations that were specifically organized to defend the rights of colored peoples, and nine-teen organizations of colonial peoples and national minorities.
Ethiopian people concerning the efficiency of the League of Nations. The group informed the League that the Ethiopians would never surrender any Ethiopian territory and that they would fight to the death to maintain the law guaranteed by Covenant. As the Dispute escalated so did the tenor of the correspondence sent to the League. Even after the Italians claimed “victory” (May 1936) groups that were created specifically to support Ethiopia stayed active, including the International Committee for the Defense of the Ethiopian People and its affiliates. The Haitian section of the Committee wrote to the League expressing several concerns that are representative of the expression of world opinion sent to the League from Committee branches. The Haitian League for the Defense of the Ethiopian People stated that it believed it had a duty to bring to the attention of the League of Nations and all of the member States the historical importance of the debates that would soon be occurring in Geneva concerning the Ethiopian question.

Already, in disputes of importance, the League of Nations has a record of failures which would have allowed a legitimate doubt about its ability to confront the major problems that its founders gave it the task to resolve: just remember the Sino-Japanese issue leading to a violent unilateral rupture of the Covenant, and the conquest of part of the territory of a member of the League of Nations by another State also member of the League of Nations.

. . . However, the need for peace is so deep among the people of all countries, that the world has not resisted the temptation to once again trust the Geneva institution since the announcement of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict.

We do not want to accuse, because it is always easy to do. But we cannot help but see it has not done well, and once

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294 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 telegram received by the League of Nations on October 31, 1935 from Addis Ababa from the Delegation Comite International pour Defense Peuple Ethiopien. See telegram in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XIX.
again, the League of Nations was below its task: it has not even had the courage to vote for oil sanctions, and at the time of writing, thanks to the [Italian] air force and the use of toxic gases, the "Roman peace" reigns over the former empire of the Negus.

We told you earlier that the session in June includes circumstances of decisive importance for the future of the League of Nations and collective security. Indeed, following the triumph of the Left in the French last election, a new ray of hope has emerged: The people of France voted expressly for the organization of Peace indivisible and collective security. The activities of the League of Nations cannot not be affected, since conformity to the will of the French masses, the Popular Front government will pursue an active policy of defense of the Covenant. It goes without saying that any organization serious about Peace is conditional on first the return of Ethiopia’s independence.

Already, in the Americas, especially here in Haiti, a high current is drawn against the Institution of Geneva, and calls are increasing for national governments to leave the League of Nations and to focus their efforts on the organization of Peace in new World. If Geneva fails once again at its task, such a movement would become irresistible, and the Governments would be obliged to take this into account.

We thought you should frankly expose the problem in all its brutality, without using the traditional language of diplomacy . . . In conclusion, we ask not only the maintaining, but also the extension of sanctions until the withdrawal of Italian troops from Ethiopia.295

At this point there was a great deal of pressure being brought to bear against the League in regard to its viability as an organ of international governance. Small states were most at risk if the League failed. They were dependent on the League to protect them from the aggression of more powerful states, and failure to stand for Ethiopia would show the smaller states that the League was a puppet of the Great Powers. If that were proven to be the case the smaller

295 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 letter dated June 5, 1936 from the Haitienne pour la defense du Peuple Etiopiene. See letter in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XX.
states, as the Haiti Defense Committee suggested, would be better off seeking peace on an individual basis.

Although the *International Committee for the Defense of the Ethiopian People* was the largest international organization created specifically to address the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, it and its affiliates were not the only active groups. Most of the other groups were national in scope, but had contact with each other and because of their contribution to the expression of world opinion to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute add an important element to the analysis. The *Friends of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) League of Service* contacted the League in January 1935 to register their support for Ethiopia and concern for the welfare of the Ethiopian people. This group was affiliated with the Friends of Ethiopia (America). They were active in shaping world opinion by printing pamphlets, hosting speeches to inform the public about the plight of the Ethiopians. This group was active in Britain, but did have influence in numerous locations because of its connection with the empire. Additionally, it claimed as its patron H.R.H. Princess Tsehai of Ethiopia. Its first contact with the League of Nations was in the form of a telegram and came from the Arab section of the *Friends of Abyssinia*. It stated “Arab friends Abyssinia in Palestine protest strongly Italian fascist atrocities bombardment hospitals demand petrol sanctions.”

Again the humanitarian aspect of these concerns is evident as the group identified the bombing of hospitals as enough of a concern to warrant increasing pressure on Italy. Sanctions on oil were considered an extreme act. These are discussed in more detail below, but it is important

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296 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 telegram received by the League of Nations on January 9, 1936 from the Arab Friends Abyssinia.
to keep in mind that the implication of oil sanctions was considered to be an act that would expand the hostility in Ethiopia to Europe.

In July 1936 the Friends of Abyssinia sponsored a petition\textsuperscript{297} to protest the suggestion that sanctions be dropped since Italy had declared victory after capturing Addis Ababa. They sent in two-hundred-eighty-six petitions protesting the lifting of sanctions and one-hundred-ninety-four petitions protesting recognition of Italy’s annexation of Ethiopia.\textsuperscript{298} The importance of this particular group in regard to the expression of world opinion to the League of Nations at this particular time was the fact that it was based in Britain. As discussed in chapter one, the British government was attempting to get the League to recognize Italian sovereignty in Ethiopia as an appeasement to garner favor with the Italians and avert an alliance between Italy and Germany. Two communications illustrate the role of world opinion and the way direct communication with the League was used by this group and others to circumvent the “official policy” of the British Government. The first, sent in September 1937, stated “The Friends of Abyssinia League and sympathizers urge Assembly of the League of Nations to abide by the principles of the Covenant, by safeguarding the rights of Ethiopia at Geneva, and by refusing to recognize annexation of Ethiopian territory acquired by Italian conquest.”\textsuperscript{299} The group sent a letter, stating that they had eleven hundred petitions

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{297} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 17 copy of petition received by the League of Nations on July 1, 1936 from the Friends of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) League of Service.
  \item \textsuperscript{298} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 17 cover note received by the League of Nations on January 30, 1936 from the Friends of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) League of Service.
  \item \textsuperscript{299} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 18 letter dated September 11, 1937 from the Friends of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) League of Service.
\end{itemize}
supporters and sympathizers.\textsuperscript{300} Then, on May 3\textsuperscript{rd} 1938, a follow up to the previous correspondence was sent to the League:

We understand from the report in the Times that, at the recent conversation with you [Joseph Avenol, Secretary General of the League of Nations (1933-1940)] in London, it was decided that, when the British proposal that the League should allow member states to recognize Italian sovereignty in Abyssinia is brought before the Council, the Chairman shall interpret the feeling of the meeting and that no vote shall be taken, thus avoiding the certain defeat of the proposal. Is your country is not behind Mr. Chamberlain in his foreign policy, as no doubt you have gathered, in spite of the suppression of news in the times and other conservative papers, nor are many former supporters of the Government in the House.

It seems incredible that two of the greatest member states should not only be prepared to betray Abyssinia but also to obtain the apparent consent of the League by fraud.

This Society, numbering over twelve hundred members, trusts that you, as Secretary General of the League will not countenance this proposal, which can only be regarded by the world as an entirely dishonourable procedure.\textsuperscript{301}

Indeed, the League did proceed just as the above letter states. In their meeting to discuss Italian sovereignty in Abyssinia, representatives from numerous smaller states raised concerns. Eventually, Avenol (President of the League Assembly) decided that they would not vote. This is discussed in more detail below. However, two important elements that this communication brings to light are the importance of the media in shaping world opinion. As discussed in the introduction, the use of the media as a tool for shaping world opinion was

\textsuperscript{300} Just as an interesting side note one of the signatories was historian Arnold Toynbee. Toynbee played an advisory role with the League of Nations and the British Government.

\textsuperscript{301} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 20 letter dated May 3, 1938 from the Friends of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) League of Service.
strongly supported by Habermas. According to the correspondents in this letter the conservative press was misrepresenting world opinion, leaving the public to communicate directly with the League. The second element is related to the first. In many instances the “public” viewed the League as an organization that was equipped to override national interests for the international good. Their inability to do so was disappointing to the public. When considering expressions of world opinion to the League and the expectations of the various publics about what the League could do it is clear that they attributed more power to the League than it had. The public did not recognize that the League was bound by the states. As discussed in chapter one, because states had sold the idea of a League of Nations to their publics vowing to support the Covenant, there was considerable confusion about the League’s role in applying the Covenant. If states did not participate with the League’s “suggestions” there was not mechanism in place to enforce adherence.

Several other groups, specifically created to shape world opinion and lobby the League of Nations, were quite active as conduits for the expression of world opinion. Three of these—the Ethiopia World Federation, United Aid for Ethiopia, and The Ethiopia Pacific Movement—were based in the United States. Another example, the Abyssinia Association, was based in Britain. One thing these organizations had in common was that they were not officially recognized international organizations by the League of Nations. In a letter dated March 20, 1936 the Abyssinia association sent the League a resolution to be distributed to the League members. This resolution was a cooperative project between the Abyssinia Association and the International Committee for the Defense of the Ethiopian People. On March 26th the League responded, advising, “The regulations laid down by the Council do
not permit the Secretary General to transmit to it communications of this nature received from non-official sources. At each regular session of the Council he submits to it a list of such communications, if the source is an international organisation of proper standing. . . . exactly what is the international standing of the organisation on whose behalf you write."

The only recognized group dealing directly with Ethiopia was the *International Committee for the Defense of the Ethiopian People* which speaks directly to the influence officially recognized groups had on the decisions made by the League of Nations and as a consequence the influence of world opinion on the League.

The groups whose interest was primarily humanitarian in nature used unique mechanisms to shape world opinion, including aid and petitions. These groups created a distinct public sphere that was peopled by a very diverse public. Examination of these organizations suggests that it was not only elite people of European descent that were participating in these public spheres and that, just as Fraser suggested, counter public spheres were created to serve as forums for marginalized people to voice world opinion. The opinions, for the most part, were the same—peace and collective security—however the mechanisms for shaping world opinion and expressing it varied.

**YOUTH**

The role of world opinion and the “common man” in government activities underwent great change during the interwar period. The democracy that had been championed before

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302 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 letter dated March 26, 1936 from the Under Secretary General, Director of the Political Section.
World War I, although still flourishing in Euro-American society, was under attack in Germany and Italy as well as USSR, and some states in Eastern Europe. Manifestations of disillusionment with democracy and capitalism were also present in France, Britain, and the United States. Intellectuals in Europe and America were not convinced that enfranchisement of the less educated would result in better government. As a result of the Great Depression that followed World War I, capitalism was also suspect in USSR, Italy, and Germany. As well as manifestations, of concern in Britain, France, and the United States. These concerns contributed to the development of socialism, communism (USSR), fascism (Italy), and National Socialism (Germany). Socialism and communism drew significant support from youth and workers. Both of these political movements were active in voicing their opinions concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute and represent another important block of world opinion. In this case the opinions are heavily influenced by political and religious beliefs. However, among youth unity of purpose often transcended these boundaries. Expressions of world opinion from youth provide a way to consider the diversity within counter public spheres among groups that are not specifically cause oriented. The organizations we have been examining in this chapter so far were bound together by shared commitment to the League, shared experience by veterans, or a shared commitment to humanitarian issues. However, when dealing with youth they represent a public sphere that is bound to one another through an identity based on age. In this section I argue that the public sphere created by youth and their expression of world opinion was different because they crossed racial, social, and religious boundaries that were (for other groups) the elements that defined the counter public sphere they identified with.
Youth were very active in expressing their concerns about the Dispute. In September 1935 a resolution was passed by the 28th Annual Students Camp which was a Christian youth meeting held in India. This camp was attended by college age Christians from the Andhra area of India. Youth of the day were facing a tentative future and the letter which accompanied the resolution sent to the League of Nations very eloquently states what many of the communications from youth during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute included.

During the Camp we faced the Challenge of India to-day with regard to the Religious, economic, social and political problems that are facing the Indian youth now. Among the delegation was a student from Abyssinia and he took active part with us all and we felt that we are all one in Christ whether from East or West, North or South. We offered special prayers for the statesmen of the world so that they may approach the question in a Christian way and solve it in the best interests of His Kingdom.

Youth of the day were concerned about how the world would look when they became adults. In addition, it can be assumed that many of the students at this camp were from colonial areas. The resolution that this group passed stated:

The students and the leaders of the Andhra Christian Students Camp met in Masulipatam would like to unite with the world forces making for international peace, goodwill and harmony

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303 This was a group that had no structure except for their shared experience at this camp. It was a Christian camp for college students. The letter head of the document sent to the League stated that it was from Watyanandam William, M. Sc., Lecturer in Chemistry, Noble College, Masulipatam, S. India. It is assumed that this individual was a sponsor for the camp or an organizer. In addition, it is noted on the communication that the letter was forwarded to the League form the president of the League of Nations Union in India, this means that this communication would have been on the list of correspondence distributed to the League members.

304 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter and resolution received by the League of Nations on September 19, 1935 from Masulipatam, S. India.
and oppose in the name of the Prince of Peace and the God of Love the aggressive attitude of Italy in Abyssinia and appeal to the League of Nations to explore all the possibilities of a peaceful settlement and vindicate once and for ever that we are members of a world family under the fatherhood of God.305

This resolution and the accompanying letter bring up some pertinent concerns about the formation and expression of world opinion with respect to the Italo-Abyssinian Dispute. One thing that must be considered is the role that the “leaders” of the camp played in forming the opinions of the students. Additionally, this should be balanced by the presence of an Abyssinian student who was able to put a very human face on the Dispute. In considering expressions of world opinion and the formative nature of these “world” opinions there is a complex intersection between shared outrage at injustice and influences of those who exert power in the public sphere in which the particular world opinion is shaped. Again, keeping in mind that as Stearns pointed world opinion is not in fact global. The examination of counter public spheres reveals world opinion is an expression of world opinion that is created in multiple public spheres, but that focuses on the same general outcome—in this case peace and collective security.

Humanitarian concerns were also part of the expressions of world opinion sent to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute from youth. This illustrates the overlapping interests of counter-publics. The World’s Alliance of Young Men’s Christian Associations contacted the League in October 1935. This group offered to work with prisoners. “The object of such service would be to render humanitarian service to prisoners

305 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter and resolution received by the League of Nations on September 19, 1935 from Masulipatam, S. India.
on both sides by furnishing means for relieving the inevitable monotony and suffering.”

The letter goes on to discuss the work that this group did in World War I. A student group from Liege, Belgium also identified the importance of humanitarian concerns and protested against Mussolini’s appeal to students around the world. This group added its voice to those of people in Sweden and Norway, suggesting that the Mussolini’s expedition to Africa was only intended to gratify the passions of warriors and imperialists. They stated they could not have any compassion on a nation or man who denied his prior commitments and violated the territory of another nation by inhumane means. The “inhumane means” they were identifying were the bombing of children, the elderly, women, and ambulances among other concerns.

These connections among youth went beyond religious affiliation or political persuasion to express their opinion that the League needed to act quickly and decisively in protecting Ethiopia’s territorial integrity and political sovereignty.

Several youth groups banded together and created a larger public sphere through which to form and express their world opinion. They suggested that the League should apply sanctions to Italy and lift the arms embargo against Ethiopia. The signatory groups on this document included Catholic groups, liberal groups, socialist groups, and other general youth organizations. Another aspect of youth involvement was to look at world opinion and attempt...
to get a sense of what people were thinking in regard to the Dispute. The *International Student Service* group organized a Franco-British conference to study world opinion regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The conference specifically examined the problem of collective security. It was held in Paris (December 27-30, 1935). One hundred university students and professor from Great Britain and France participated.³⁰⁹ Both youth and intellectuals were involved in the new political groups that were growing during this period. Youth groups represented a specialized public sphere which was formative in expressions of world opinion to the League of Nations during the Dispute. As with the youth camp they also spoke to the influences within the public sphere that shaped world opinion. Additionally, as with the youth groups that were also active in rendering humanitarian aid, publics during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute were not one dimensional and exhibited complexity in both formation of opinion and expression.

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**POLITICAL GROUPS**

The political groups that were actively engaged in communicating with the League tended to be socialist, communist, progressive, or specifically anti-fascist. Because these groups all had a similar focus it is useful to talk about them in chronological order and to examine their response to the actions of the League. On October 3, 1935 the Italians invaded Ethiopia, turning a “dispute” into a “conflict.” Immediately, the people of the world responded to the crisis. Those who had been waiting in hopes that the League would be able

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³⁰⁹ Heitt, 8.
to arbitrate peace now bombarded the League of Nations with correspondence. A group of workers from Northern Bohemia, which included trade unionists, cooperative members, athletes, freethinkers, and Communists came in from Czechoslovakia representing thirty thousand workers, contacted the League concerning the Dispute. This group raised the strongest possible protest against the military attack on Abyssinia by Italy's fascists. They asked the League of Nations, and all member states, to apply the most severe sanctions against Italy as the aggressor. Demanding that the freedom of Abyssinia must be secured and Italian fascism defeated, they also suggested that this issue must be dealt with in order to avoid war in Europe. The concerns of this group were mirrored in numerous letters to the League from political groups in response to the attack by Italy on Ethiopia. The Cuban section of the Spanish Socialist party also sent in a letter. This group addressed the League of Nations to protest vigorously against the attitude of Italian fascism which had invaded Abyssinian territory, stating that they had captured the feelings of the Cuban proletariat in showing their support for the Abyssinian people who were “victims of fascist imperialism, so hated in the world by the working classes.” After the attacks in October the League did immediately move to apply sanctions. It was slow in actually implementing them because both the British and French governments hoped to use appeasement to keep Mussolini from forming an alliance with Hitler.

310 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter dated October 4, 1935 from the Proletarischen Organisationen Nordbohmens. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXIII.

311 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 2, 1935 from the Circula Espanol Socialista. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXIV.
The next major event was the premature release of the Hoare-Laval Pact (December 1935), which initiated another major increase in expressions of world opinion to the League of Nations. The Belgium Workers Party contacted the League by telegram:

On behalf of the Belgian Workers' Party with over 600,000 members and which 37% of the country's electorate trusts are protesting against the proposed arrangement of the Italo Ethiopian conflict which is a bonus to the abuser and a denial of justice to the victim who put all his trust in the Covenant of the League of Nations. Its eventual acceptance strongly alarms citizens of small nations for which collective security is the only safeguard against attacks similar to those which the Italian Government has committed vis a vis Ethiopia.312

Like many small states, this worker’s party voiced a major concern about the role of the League in protecting them against the Great Powers. The Hoare-Laval Pact was an agreement steeped in the kind of diplomacy that many believed had contributed to the outbreak of World War I.

This telegram points out another major concern in many of the expressions of world opinion sent to the League of Nations; the idea of, justice. Justice was one of the concepts that was united world opinion across a variety of social, political, and national boundaries to create a consensus of opinion. This was especially important in communications from political parties (and to individuals discussed in chapter five). The political parties that responded to the League were strongly influential in the lives of workers and these parties were also anti-imperialist, associating capitalism and western democracy with imperial

312 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 16, 1935 from the Belgian Workers Party. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXV.
expansion. As a result, the ideals they espoused influenced and shaped “world opinion” within their public sphere among their constituency in relation to the idea of justice and social equality. Both communist and socialist parties had a strong platform from which to engage the public. Similar communications were received from the Social Democratic Party of the Netherlands\textsuperscript{313}, the Popular Front in France\textsuperscript{314}, the local branch of the \textit{World Committee Against War and Fascism} (Comite Mondial Contre la Guerre et le Fascisme)\textsuperscript{315}, and \textit{European Antifascists Aid to Victims out of Argentina}.

Correspondence from an antifascist group in South Africa, in which the correspondents identified themselves as workers, was sent to the League. This group, which met in Johannesburg and represented forty-five thousand nine-hundred workers, passed a resolution stating, “This Conference views with alarm the attempts on the part of Great Britain and France to reach a shameful settlement of the Italo-Abyssinian war by depriving the Abyssinian people of their independence and territory, and declares its wholehearted support and sympathy with the Abyssinian people who are bravely fighting for their

\begin{footnotes}
\item[313] UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 17, 1935 from the Netherlands Social Democratic Party. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXVI.

\item[314] UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 letter dated December 17, 1935 from the Front Populaire. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXVII.

\item[315] UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 18, 1935 from the Comite local de lute contre la guerre et le fascisme de Nimes. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXVIII.

\item[316] UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 18, 1935 from the Federacion Ayuada Vitimas Antifascistas Europeas. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXIX.
\end{footnotes}
independence.\textsuperscript{317} World opinion as expressed to the League often pointed out the bravery with which the Abyssinian people were resisting the Italians, indicating that justice would be for the brave to be supported in defense of their territorial sovereignty and political independence. In addition, justice (as framed by both socialists and communists) as it sought equality supported the opinion that the League was a place that protected the security of small states against incursion from colonial powers. For colonized people this connection was not a new one; since Adowa Ethiopia had been considered a stalwart example of success for “small” states.

Anti-imperialist concerns were often present in communications to the League of Nations from political parties. The Barking Labour Party & Trades Council (England) advised that their organization

\begin{quote}
. . . views with alarm the apathetic inactivity of the League in allowing the savage slaughter of the Abyssinian men, women and children to continue. The using of poison gas by Italy, reveals the depths to which she will descend for the sake of Imperialist greed, and this organisation demands that the League take immediate action to end this carnage, by imposing oil sanctions and treating Italy as an outlaw, until her troops are withdrawn from Abyssinia.\textsuperscript{318}
\end{quote}

Although anti-imperialist sentiments were strong, there were other ideas present in the expression of world opinion sent to the League. Again, going back to the argument that

\textsuperscript{317} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 23, 1935 from the League Against Fascism & War (S.A.).

\textsuperscript{318} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 letter dated April 17, 1936 from the Barking Labour Party & Trades Council.
world opinion supported collective security and world peace; but the methods of assuring them were often at odds within the different public spheres.

As Italy gained control of Addis Ababa in May 1936 there was, within the British and French governments, a continued desire to appease Italy by allowing it control of Ethiopia. By 1938 issues with Germany were moving to a critical stage, and Britain called on the League to recognize Italian sovereignty. A resolution from the Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals provides an example of the changing perspectives in Britain. Although the group recognized the British as an imperial power, they viewed the Commonwealth differently. The document noted that this group “Protests against the British Government’s proposed recognition of the King of Italy as lawful ruler of the whole of Ethiopia. We regard this policy as neither lawful nor honourable, nor well-founded on facts, nor compatible with international security.”

The note then goes on to point out why it is not lawful (it went against Article 10 of the Covenant), not honorable (because the British Government wanted to make a private bargain with the Italy), and not founded on fact (Ethiopia was not subdued). However, it is item number four that is of interest to this discussion:

Furthermore, it is not compatible with international security. For this recognition, sold as part of an imperialist bargain, undermines the foundations upon which international confidence rests. In particular it imperils the security of the British Commonwealth: for it humiliates the League and discredits the collective peace system whose existence is vital to the security of so scattered and vulnerable an Empire. It

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loosens the ties of loyalty and mutual respect which hold together the parts of that commonwealth, the vast majority of whose inhabitants are not white but coloured.\textsuperscript{320}

The League was seen as an organization “vital to the security of so scattered and vulnerable an Empire.” The correspondents recognized the racial/colonial issues that this particular Dispute brought to light, such as the issue of imperial expansion and the unrest among colonized people with the current imperial system. The letter closed with a statement that framed the bulk of world opinion expressed to the League from political parties. They were speaking specifically about the British Government, but this could be extended to include a variety of state actors, including the United States, France, Germany, and Japan.

It [the British Government] still has a legal obligation and a debt of honour towards the Ethiopian Emperor and his people, who despite past betrayals are continuing to fight for their independence and who will continue their fight even if this last betrayal is consummated. Their struggle against aggression is still part of our struggle, the world-wide struggle, against the use of war as a legitimate instrument of national policy.\textsuperscript{321}

The resolution from the I.P.C. was widely distributed because it was identified by other groups as an articulation of their concerns. For instance, the \textit{Artists International Association}

\textsuperscript{320} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 20 letter dated May 2, 1938 from the Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals.

\textsuperscript{321} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 20 letter dated May 2, 1938 from the Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals.
for Peace, for Democracy, for Cultural Progress also sent a copy of this resolution to the League indicating their support for these opinions.\textsuperscript{322}

Political parties were well positioned to influence world opinion and supported ideas such as justice and equality that gained the attention of the public. In the case of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute the public spheres created by political parties shaped world opinion expressed to the League of Nations to get their publics involved in supporting the overall programs of collective security and peace. However, they also shaped opinion to bolster participation in their public sphere in order to influence policy change in their own states. However, in the case of political parties in Britain and France those that were actively contacting the League found in it a place to voice their criticism of national policies. In the eyes the people of the world, as revealed in expressions of world opinion during this time, the League of Nations was an organization created to force national governments to seek the greater good—collective security and peace—and not just their own not just their own political interests.

\textbf{LABOR}

The interests of labor and political parties were among the most influential public spheres for effecting policy through the expression of world opinion to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Communist and socialist political parties were very

\textsuperscript{322} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 21 letter dated May 7, 1938 from the Artists International Association.
heavily peopled by members of the working class. When Italy invaded Ethiopia in October 1935 there was an immediate reaction that combined the interests of both labor and politics. The Czech Communist party sent a telegram to the League of Nations demanding immediate economic and financial sanctions “in the name of one hundred thousand workers in the country.” This group felt that only vigorous action against the fascists would end the war and save the world from a terrible catastrophe. The imposition of sanctions was a critical concern for labor parties. As previously mentioned, the parties that were active in responding to the League were heavily involved with workers. Sanctions were viewed with concern by business owners, but were often supported by the laborers themselves with some groups refusing to load materials bound for Italy regardless of what their state had decided concerning sanctions. Not until sanctions threatened profits did businesses really weigh in on the discussion. In fact, it was not until November 1935, when the League approved the application of sanctions, that the International Trade Committee (Comité International des Echanges) which represented fifteen countries contacted the League asking that they reconsider their decision to impose sanctions on Italy. In contrast, the National Railwaymen’s Union advised members not to transport war supplies to Italy. A similar

323 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 telegram received by the League of Nations on October 4, 1935 from the Czech Communist Party. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXX.

324 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 telegram received by the League of Nations on October 4, 1935 from the Czech Communist Party. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXX.


326 The Times, October 12, 1935.
request had been made by the women of the National Railwaymen’s Union through a telegram received by the League on October 5, 1935 in which they stated, “National Committee of Women Railwaymen in France are painfully moved by the killing of Ethiopian people vehemently protest against Italian fascist aggression call for the League of Nations signatory powers to act according to the Covenant applying economic and financial sanctions in respect to Italy.” 327 This expression of world opinion from two groups within the same larger organization speaks to Nancy Fraser’s discussion of women creating a “counter public sphere” and the complexity of identifying the “public sphere” when dealing with expressions of world opinion from organizations. Each public sphere was peopled with individuals and although consensus was present on the large scale in large organizations this communication reveals that other public spheres existed.

A demonstration was staged in London on October 14th by three hundred hotel and catering workers who were in opposition to the employment of Italian labor in restaurants and hotels in London. 328 In this section I argue that both labor groups were active in contacting the League and shaping world opinion. Additionally businesses also contacted the League of Nations during the Dispute and although their interests were often at cross purposes with labor both groups still expressed world opinion—the desire for peace and collective security. Ultimately both used the mechanisms at their disposal to shape world opinion during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. For business, the owners had the need for

327 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 telegram received by the League of Nations on October 5, 1935 from the National Committee of Women Railwaymen in France. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXXI.

328 Les Temps, October 15, 1935.
maintaining profits to use as leverage to encourage participation in this public sphere. Labor
groups had their identity as the little guys withstanding subjugation by the powerful
corporate elite. In both cases—business and labor—there existed structural organizations for
the dissemination of information that were critical in shaping world opinion.

Labor organizations responded to the Dispute very early in the process and in most
cases condemned Italian aggression. As early as July 1935 the International Federation of
Trade Unions329 and the Labour and Socialist International contacted the League, warning
that its “prestige would be ruined by failure to apply sanctions in so clear a case of
aggression, and appealed to the workers of the world to do all in their power to bring about a
peaceful settlement.”330 In August 1935 (before the September League of Nations meeting to
address the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute) the Labour and Socialist International decided to start a
campaign to encourage governments (primarily the British) to close the Suez Canal to ensure
Ethiopia’s independence and territorial integrity.331 Toward the end of August 1935 the
International Federation of Trade Unions and the Labour and Socialist International
convened another special meeting and honed their joint stand concerning the Italo-Ethiopian
Dispute. It was decided that “respect for the Covenant and application of all sanctions
necessary to stop Italy” should be applied.332 Additionally, in an effort to shape world
opinion, the groups called on their national affiliates to organize meetings and “intensify

329 This group represented nine-million members in thirty countries, according to the International Labor
330 Heitt, 8.
332 Heitt, 9.
action” prior to the September meeting of the League Council. These meetings were organized and included speakers educating the public about the issue and laying out the argument or stance the group supported. As part of the appeal the speakers/leaders enunciated the connection between the overall ideals—in this case collective security and peace—and then made an emotional appeal to gain consensus. These groups contacted the League of Nations, advising them that laborers would cooperate with enforcing the application of sanctions. Labor groups had a strong organizational structure in place and were effective in creating consensus among their constituents.

Once Italy had invaded Ethiopia and the League had named Italy as the aggressor, the International Federation of Trade Unions and the Labour and Socialist International congratulated the League and asked them to take swift action regarding the application of sanctions. At this point workers from around the world contacted the League expressing support for sanctions and their willingness to participate in seeing that sanctions were honored. For example, the Sailors Union of the Pacific sent a resolution contending that a state of war existed between Italy and Ethiopia and that (as in all conflicts) the workers would bear the burden of the conflict. It went on to say,

the members of the Maritime Federation of the Pacific Coast . . . call upon the workers of the world, in the name of God and

333 Heitt, 9.

334 According to the Journal des Nations, December 18, 1935, fifty-two delegates representing national trade unions and socialist parties from ten international federations of professionals and twelve countries supported this resolution.

335 The Times, October 14, 1935.
Humanity, to cooperate with us to prevent a world cataclysm by refusing to aid the aggressor nation in any manner whatsoever . . . we, the Maritime workers, will refuse to handle any ammunition or war materials destined for the aggressor nations . . . we call upon all Maritime workers, including those of Italy, to concur in this action. 336

Workers from several groups in Czechoslovakia weighed in. Printers from Liberec wrote in, raising strong protest against the attack of the Italian fascists against the almost defenseless Abyssinian population, and urging the League of Nations to immediately apply sanctions against the warmongers. 337 The Architects and Technicians Organisation in London wrote in, demanding “that the National Government and the League of Nations immediately operate effective sanctions against Italy, as empowered to do under the Covenant of the League, to end the brutal attack of Italian Fascism on the people of Abyssinia.” 338 Other letters were sent from the General Confederation of Workers and Peasants of Mexico 339, and the National Federation of Workers in the Sugar Industry and Alcohol related Industries. These groups suggested that action be taken against Benito Mussolini, creator of European fascism and representative of the interests of Capitalism, who by show of force and using all instruments

336 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 resolution received by the League of Nations on October 31, 1935 from the Maritime Federation of the Pacific Coast.

337 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 letter received by the League of Nations on October 9, 1935 from the Employees of Schwarzenbach & Co. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXXII.


339 Numerous resolutions were sent to the League during the last two weeks of October 1935 from this group and its affiliates. This organization was a leftist organization that represented one million members.
of war that Italy had criminally, assaulted the weak people of East Africa and Abyssinia. They called on the League of Nations to energetically apply sanctions for their barbarous aggression.\(^3\)\(^{40}\) A series of communications were sent to the League from the Ukraine, also condemning the Italian invasion of Ethiopia and calling for sanctions.\(^3\)\(^{41}\) As mentioned previously, the workers of the world united under the socialist or communist movements saw capitalism as the system that was associated with Italy’s imperial program.

Although labor groups generally supported sanctions against Italy, the *All-Australian Trades Union Congress* voted against supporting sanctions in a meeting held in November 1935. According to newspaper reports the reason for this decision was that sanctions “committed organized labor to support the sending of armed forces overseas to take part in a capitalistic war.”\(^3\)\(^{42}\) While most of the organizations that contacted the League of Nations were active in shaping world opinion and expressing it through resolutions, telegrams, and letters, labor played a more proactive role in supporting Ethiopia through refusing to load or manufacture products destined for Italy, staging strikes if their companies continued to buy products from Italy or sell materials to Italy.

Once talk of sanctions was turned to action, sailors and longshoremen began to refuse to load ships carrying munitions. As a show of support for the Ethiopians, “the Greek

\(^3\)\(^{40}\) UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket letter received by the League of Nations on November 18, 1935 from the General Confederation of Workers and Peasants of Mexico, and National Federation of Workers in the Sugar Industry and Alcohol related Industries. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXXIII.

\(^3\)\(^{41}\) UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 6 telegram received by the League of Nations on October 19, 1935 from the workers of Barkasovo Village. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXXIV.

\(^3\)\(^{42}\) *The Times*, November 28, 1935.
*Syndicats ouvriers unitaires* announced that Greek sailors would strike against helping to send munitions to Italy. . . and asked that the Suez Canal be closed.343 Port Said dock workers refused to unload ships from Italy.344 Sailors on the Greek ship “Joanis Nornikos” and the Dutch ship “Gebria” refused to transport war materials for Italy.345 Dock workers in the United States also took a strong stand against loading materials that could be used against the Ethiopians. A group of sailors who were members of the *California Union of Seamen* refused to sail with the S. S. “Oregon”, which was carrying a cargo of gasoline worth one-million dollars, because they believed the cargo was destined for Italy.346 While most groups could only voice an opinion, laborers could support that expression of public concern with substantive action.

When the Hoare-Laval Pact was released, the expression of world opinion from labor groups to the League of Nations regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute spiked. An international dock workers group representing five-hundred thousand workers, with headquarters in France, sent a telegram to the League protesting the Hoare-Laval Pact as imperialistic and an encouragement to the aggressor, Italy.347 Workers from the Communist

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343 Heitt, 10.

344 *Humanite’,* September 5, 1935.

345 *Humanite’,* September 5, 1935.


347 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 14, 1935 from the Internationale Marins Dockers. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXXV.
Party in London also contacted the League demanding rejection of the Hoare-Laval Pact.\textsuperscript{348} As the Dispute continued, workers remained engaged in the conversation. When the British suggested that sanctions be lifted and Italy’s sovereignty over Ethiopia should be recognized, groups from Britain were especially incensed and contacted the League to voice their opposition.

It was not just workers in the transportation industry that were making their voices heard. For instance, the \textit{Aberdeen Trades Council} sent a letter stating that they would “do everything possible to prevent recognition of Italy in Abyssinia.”\textsuperscript{349} Likewise, the \textit{National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades’ Association} wrote to say that they “most strongly against any attempt to recognise the sovereignty of Italy over Abyssinia . . . We are strongly opposed to all attempts of any country to enter another with arms in order to dominate them, and take away their independence. . . . All lovers of Freedom and Liberty are watching this question very carefully.”\textsuperscript{350} Even educators were active in voicing their opinions. The \textit{University Labour Federation} forwarded a petition from Manchester University stating that recognizing Italy’s sovereignty would be, “betraying the Abyssinian people who are still in arms against the invader, encouraging wanton aggression and defiance of international law, constituting a gross desertion of the principle of collective resistance to aggression to which the British

\textsuperscript{348} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 17, 1935 from the London District Committee British Communist Party.

\textsuperscript{349} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 20 letter dated April 29, 1938 from the Aberdeen Trades Council.

\textsuperscript{350} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 20 letter dated April 29, 1938 from the Aberdeen Trades Council.
Government has pledged itself to adhere, renders still more precarious the maintenance of peace and the safety of the peoples of all countries.”

Labor interests played a major role in communicating world opinion to the League of Nations. Both business and labor groups had organizational structures that provided a mechanism for shaping world opinion within their public sphere. These spheres represented different interests, were peopled by distinct constituencies, and had different ways of dealing with the Dispute. Yet, they still expressed the same overarching opinion— a desire for collective security and peace. These interests were also closely related to political parties or movements. As such, the combined role of labor and political interests were among the most effective forces for influencing policy through the expression of world opinion to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. One of the major reasons for this was that these groups used the power they had in their individual states to influence policy, which trickled into League action. Additionally, political interests and labor had effective organizational structures which they used to shape world opinion. This resulted in their members being well informed about the “party” line and communicating that to the people they were in contact with. Political groups and labor organizations had wide reaching influence on the shaping and expression of world opinion expressed to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

351 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 21 letter dated May 7, 1938 from the University Labour Federation.
RACE AND RELIGION

This section focuses on two social aspects that were active in creating counter public spheres and in shaping the expression of world opinion to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Racial and religious concerns were a major aspect of communications sent to the League. Even when the particular letter did not focus specifically on one or the other of these topics, they often referred to either God’s help or Christian morals or to identifying with the plight of the Ethiopians based on shared racial identity. Additionally, some of the letters were from Europeans who, albeit very imperialistic in nature, were concerned about protecting the Ethiopians.

Racial and religious concerns were intertwined in the expression of world opinion in complex ways and were of significance to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute because of Ethiopia’s history as a Christian nation and the reverence held for Haile Selassie due to his position in the Rastafarian movement. These concerns were expressed in a variety of communications to the League from numerous groups. For instance, labor groups identified race as a concern. The Union of Negro Workers (Union des Travailleurs Nègres) contacted the League asking them to energetically intervene and condemning the “fascist press” which was misleading.

352 The connections between race and religion are especially important regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute because of the place Haile Selassie held in the Black Atlantic World in relation to his religious identity. On November 2, 1930 he was crowned in Addis Ababa as King of Kings, Elect of God, and Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah. Publicity concerning him spread and in Jamaica among the poor he was hailed as a messianic figure that would usher in a future golden age. This came to be known as the Rastafari movement and it spread throughout the Atlantic World. His status was greatly enhanced by the position of Ethiopia in the minds of Blacks in the Americas because it was never colonized by a European nation.
world opinion. This same group contacted the League again in 1936 asking them to impose sanctions and condemning the Hoare-Laval Pact. In this section I talk about race in relation to groups whose membership was racially defined (as with the Union of Negro Workers) and communications from groups that identified race as a concern in their communication with the League of Nations. It is important to note, when discussing both of these issues, that reading bias backward can be problematic. The intent of this section is to examine the ideas of race and religion as expressed by the people of this period to the League of Nations.

The Italian invasion of Ethiopia raised racial tensions among people of color in both the colonies and elsewhere. For instance, a letter was sent from the Negro Welfare Cultural and Social Association in Trinidad, stated “We the Toilers of Trinidad and Tobago view with hatred and indignation the terror in Germany, Brazil, and the Fascist countries of Europe. We appeal to your influential body to intervene to stop this terror which aims at sweeping the world.” A few months later this group sent in a resolution asking the League to act “in the cause of righteousness, peace, and liberty, means be devised by the League of Nations for the

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353 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter dated October 9, 1935 from the Union des Travailleurs Negres. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXXVI.

354 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 14 letter received by the League of Nations on March 2, 1936 from the Union des Travailleurs Negres. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXXVII.

re-establishing of the inviolable independence of Ethiopia.” In many cases, such as this one, race was not the reason the group expressed their opinions, but it was a factor in the creation of this public sphere where the opinion was shaped and through which it gained expression. The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute also caused concern among colonial governments which feared the consequences of the outcome of the Dispute on their subjugated populations. People in the colonies looked on Ethiopia with hope of independence for themselves. If the colonial powers were not willing to support an independent Ethiopia, what hope did currently colonized peoples have of gaining independence? Additionally, the “civilizing” mission would be at risk if the Great Powers allowed Italy to invade Ethiopia. How could this invasion be defended by missionaries according to moral principle? As early as August 1935 the General Mission Board of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa sent a telegram to the League, advising that any war between Ethiopia and Italy would be “fraught with the gravest dangers for Africa.” A telegram sent to the League of Nations in April 1936 the Dutch Council of the World Alliance for International Friendship stated that,

the churches deeply impressed by the appeal of the government of Abyssinia to the League of Nations regards it as a demand of Christian conscience to consider this appeal with all due seriousness and feels prompted to urge on your esteemed assembly the necessity of maintaining the principles right and justices for which the League so vigourously stands.


357 Heitt, 10.

358 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 telegram received by the League on April 7, 1936 from the Dutch Council of the World Alliance of International Friendship.
In early September 1935 the *Universal Federation of Student Christian Associations*, held a meeting at Basel, Switzerland, at which they passed a resolution which suggested “that the conflict, if carried through would affect relations between white and colored races in Africa, making the world-wide evangelistic work of the church more difficult.”\(^{359}\) Race and religion were intertwined and shaped world opinion based on complex concerns that were often at odds. For example, colonized people often expressed opinions that dealt with racial concerns and an anti-imperialist approach, while Christian organizations expressed racial and religious concerns with the “civilizing” mission—an imperialist approach—as justification for swift and decisive League action.

Race was of particular concern to several large organizations whose membership found solidarity in their shared identity as people of color. Some of these groups were international and included both people living in colonial territories and people of color in Euro-America. The *International League for the Protection of Native Races (Ligue internationale pour la defense des indigènes)*\(^{360}\) on September 9, 1935 asked the League of Nations to use its influence to settle the conflict peaceably because if war broke out between Italy and Ethiopia it would “destroy all rights of colored races.”\(^{361}\) Similarly, the *League for

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\(^{359}\) Heitt, 10.

\(^{360}\) This organization was founded in 1913 as an international secretariat of the Leagues for the Protection of Native Races by Louis Ferriere and supported by groups in Britain, Switzerland, Germany, and France. Activities were suspended during WWI, but the group was reorganized in 1920. In 1923 it became an international organization. *League of Nations, Handbook of International Organizations (Associations, Bureaux, Committees, etc.),* (Geneva: Series of League of Nations Publications, 1938), 75-76.

\(^{361}\) Heitt, 11.
the Defense of the Negro Races (Ligue pour la défense des races nègres) demanded that the League respect the Covenant and protect Ethiopia from further Italian aggression.\textsuperscript{362} The Union of International Organizations (Union des associations internationales)\textsuperscript{363} passed a resolution on July 23, 1935 suggesting legislation to protect all black peoples.\textsuperscript{364} The British West Indian Labor Party, (an organization that exemplifies the complex nature of interests involved in expressions of world opinion to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute) included the interests of race, workers, political interests, and the collective unity of people of African descent in their communication. In May 1938, in protest of the British move to have Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia recognized, they sent a resolution to the League stating that the group wanted to “... call the attention of His Majesty’s Government and the Parliament to the injustice meted out to the Abyssinians by Italian invasion and to the resentment and disaffection aroused in the hearts of all African descendents in reaction to European violent intrusion and conquest.”\textsuperscript{365} In addition, at the very beginning of their communication this labor group stated that “The British West Indian Labor Party celebrated on Sunday April 10, 1938, after invoking the aid and blessing of Almighty God the following

\textsuperscript{362} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 telegram received by the League on December 5, 1935 from the Ligue Defense Race Negre. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXXVIII.

\textsuperscript{363} This group was founded in 1910. Their objective was to work to create a common solidarity among international organizations. There were one-hundred-fifty affiliated associations. League of Nations, \textit{Handbook of International Organizations (Associations, Bureaux, Committees, etc.)}, (Geneva: Series of League of Nations Publications, 1929), 24.

\textsuperscript{364} Heitt, 11.

\textsuperscript{365} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 21 letter dated April 12, 1938 from the British West Indian Labor Party.
resolutions.”\textsuperscript{366} This further complicates these discussions of the formation of world opinion. The interests of those that responded to the League were not mono-focal, but were complex in nature. Any particular public sphere was not separate from all other public spheres, but there was often overlap dependent on the individual participants. It is easy to see how expressions of world opinion by colonized labor such as this could raise serious concerns among colonial administrators. After WWI relationships between colonized people and the colonial governments were seriously strained, and even in the metropole people were beginning to see the imperial system as a threat to world peace and an unjust system for the allocation of natural resources. The impracticality of maintaining imperialism was part of the League Covenant, as the Mandate System was specifically set up to attempt to calm colonial unrest and anti-imperial concerns in both the metropole and the colonies.

Youth groups also identified both racial and religious concerns in their communications with the League of Nations. One of the earliest letters sent to the League came from the \textit{Young People’s Progressive League of Ohio} in December 1934, which protested the refusal of Italy to accept arbitration concerning the Walwal incident.\textsuperscript{367} The \textit{Youth Council St. James Presbyterian Church} also contacted the League stating “We emphatically resent the grave injustice done to members of our race in Ethiopia we request the repudiation of Mussolini’s militaristic claims preserve the honor of your word.”\textsuperscript{368}

\textsuperscript{366} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 21 letter dated April 12, 1938 from the British West Indian Labor Party.

\textsuperscript{367} Heitt, 11.

\textsuperscript{368} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 telegram received by the League on May 26, 1938 from the Youth Council St. James Presbyterian Church.
Similarly, the Young Antiracists (Jeunesses Antiracistes), a group of French youth who focused on the fraternity of the races, peace and culture, contacted the League concerning the recognition of Italian sovereignty.369

One of the more interesting responses from youth was sent in from the students at Muskingum College in the United States.370 It is interesting for two reasons; because of the content of the letter and also because of the response it received at the League of Nations. It does not specifically reference race or religion, but as a Christian college and due to its content it has applications to both. The letter stated,

It has been reported to the faculty and students of Muskingum College that Mr. Bashahwarad Habtewold, who graduated from Muskingum in 1929, was murdered by Italians in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, a few weeks ago. This murder, we understood, was in reprisal upon the life of Viceroy Marshall Graziana by two of Mr. Habtewold’s countrymen, in which he had no part directly or indirectly.371

The particular incident being discussed here was an abortive attempt on the life of Graziani on February 19, 1937. Using this as an excuse to kill the intellectuals who had been active in

369 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 20 letter dated May 4, 1938 from the Jeunesses Antiracistes. See document in Appendix Chapter 3 Item XXXIX.

370 In 1836 the “Friends of Education” a group of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians met to discuss the future of education in the village of New Concord, Ohio. In 1837 the Ohio General Assembly, at the behest of the “Friends of Education” authorized the creation of a liberal arts college in New Concord. The school was/is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA). Originally the school only admitted male students, but in 1854 it became coeducational. After the civil war the college grew to encompass both liberal arts and science as the education focus.

371 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 18 letter dated April 21, 1937 from Muskingum College.
inciting resistance, Graziani initiated what became known as the Graziani Massacre.

Ethiopian scholar Bahru Zewde provides an analysis of the events concerning the death of the student mentioned by the group from Muskingum College.

All those intellectuals whom the Italians could lay their hands on were rounded up and most of them were shot after perfunctory interrogations. . . . Singled out as the mastermind of the whole plot was Bashahwerad Gabatwald, who had earlier accompanied the emperor into exile but had then returned and settled in Addis Ababa. According to one informant, the very fact of his return was apparently one of the circumstances that made him a prime suspect in the eyes of the Italians.\(^\text{372}\)

This group goes on to request an investigation of the incident by the League of Nations. The public spheres, through which world opinion is created, are complex. In this case a public sphere was created by associating the issue under consideration with a institutional connection to an individual that was directly affected by the events surrounding the issue—the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. This communication also provides an opportunity to examine the importance of the way world opinion is communicated by the public. In this case when the students wrote they did not just demand general actions against Italy they connected their demand to a specific injustice. This influenced the reception of this communication by the League of Nations Secretariat.

An important aspect of the examination of world opinion concerns the issue of reception. The discussion concerning this communication by the League Secretariat provides an opportunity to look at the importance of reception. Keeping in mind that the United States

was not a member of the League, and that Muskingum College was not a recognized international organization, the discussion that the Secretariat had regarding how to respond to this communication reveals how reception of a piece of correspondence influenced its dissemination. Walters, the Director of the Secretariat, communicated to Monsieur Celinski (who worked in the Political Section at the League of Nations), “I rather hesitate at a merely formal acknowledgment of this letter which cannot but be rather a cold reaction to a generous initiative of a considerable group.” In discussing how world opinion influenced League action, this indicates that there was definitely consideration of the group’s status. It is unclear if Mr. Walters was aware of the reputation of the college itself or if his comments were related to the location of the college in the United States. The final response from the League presents a telling comment that does speak to the power the Secretariat exerted in deciding what materials were forwarded on and which ones were simply filed away. “Your letter of April 21st on behalf of the faculty and of students of Muskingum College has come to me as particularly concerned with communications with the United States. . . . I would like you to know, however, that the letter has been brought to the notice of responsible officials here.”

There is no evidence to suggest that any action was taken by the League itself, but it is clear that this letter did gain the attention of the Secretariat and was put into hands that could have been influenced by its contents. The Muskingum College students were not the only ones

373 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 18 letter dated June 9, 1937 from Walters to M. Celinski.

374 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 18 letter dated June 10, 1937 from A.S.

375 Bahru Zewde adds some additional information concerning this event that although not of particular pertinence to the topic of this dissertation is none the less interesting. Part of the reason for the Italian
to contact the League requesting an enquiry. The *Fulham District Free Church* also sent in a letter requesting that the League take action on the request of the Emperor of Abyssinia “for a full enquiry into the recent massacre in Addis Ababa.” However, the *Fulham District Free Church* did not have the institutional connection that the group from Muskingum College had and there is no archival record to show that the League Secretariat took any special interest in responding to their communication.

It was American blacks who most frequently and vehemently responded to the League of Nations, with race as their primary concern. Many new organizations were created, and existing groups found new purpose in an effort to create consensus among people of color around the world. The *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People*, (NAACP) sent a telegram to the League of Nations on December 13, 1935 after the release of the Hoare-Laval Pact stating

> Any settlement based on partitioning Ethiopia may bring temporary peace but will inevitably create situation which will lead to greater disaster eyes of darker races of world focused on League . . . representing one hundred thousand white and negro Americans submits League would court suicide by

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interest was that “Given his proximity to the exiled emperor, Bashahwerad’s return to Ethiopia could only signify that he must have been entrusted with a special mission. Secondly the Italians had discovered that he had double-crossed them by inserting a coded phrase (*lagizew*, “For the time being”), in a leaflet urging the people of Marhabete to submit, which the Italians had persuaded him to draft. Thirdly, the Italians had prior information, courtesy of the emperor’s private secretary, *Qagnazmach* Takla-Marqos, who later defected to their side that Bashahwerad had been getting copies of Italian legation papers through an Eritrean agent before the war. At any rate, Bashahwerad was interrogated with particular severity, and might well have died under torture.” Bahru Zewde, “The Ethiopian Intelligentsia and the Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935-1941,” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (1993) p.p. 271-295. (page 283)

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376 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 18 letter dated June 8, 1937 from Fulham District Free Church Council.
endorsing robber proposals rewarding shameless aggression of Italy upon Ethiopia urges uncompromising opposition.  

Another letter from the Colored Welfare Association suggested that “We the 17,000,000 Negro people of America have stood by with sympathy and aching hearts to see what initiative the League of Nations would have taken to stop Mussolini atrocities in Ethiopia, but as yet nothing has been done. We once more in the name of Justice call upon you to stop this Modern Caesar of Italy.” From the Ethiopian Pacific Movement, Inc. came another communication that clearly states the concern of people of color.

We the dark people of North, South, and Central America, in combined unity with the entire dark race of this universe, have been patiently waiting and hoping that the League of Nations who represent nearly the entire world, would live up to their signature and obligations, regardless to race, creed, or color and immediately enforce action against an aggressor. . . . Now, although, a big majority of the League of Nations condemned Italy as an aggressor, nothing further has been done to protect one of the oldest kingdoms on earth. A very peaceful country; the very birth itself of civilization; the country that has had a reputation since 6000 B. C. Has never been conquered by a foreign nation. The above facts alone should inspire any peaceful loving people to make an extreme sacrifice to see that justice is rendered. . . . For in view of the present situation in Europe, we are determined that unless the League of Nations does restore to Ethiopia her full sovereignty, it will be with the greatest regret that we will be compelled to call every dark man, woman, and child in the entire universe into United action. We sincerely hope that this can be avoided, because if

377 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by League of Nations on December 14, 1935 from the National Association for Advancement of Coloured People.

we are compelled to this extreme movement, no one can foretell the disaster that will occur.  

Here it is clearly articulated that the very concern that colonizers feared, i.e. that the people of color of the world would take a united stand against aggression, was indeed on the mind of people in some of these organizations. This group suggested that Europeans needed to take notice, because people of color were taking notice suggesting that the League was influenced by the racial identity of the actors. There were numerous religious organizations from a variety of states that contacted the League and identified both race and religion as ideas that shaped their expression of world opinion to the League. A group of *Colored Methodist Episcopal Churches* representing five hundred thousand adherents urged the League to preserve Ethiopian sovereignty.  

Other religious organizations that contacted the League simply did so based on religious belief in justice. The Council of Church and Peace (Kerk en Vrede) of Amsterdam stated that,

. . . taking its stand on the Gospel of Jesus Christ, convinced that war and Christianity are incompatible and believing that worldpeace can be promoted by maintaining the international Justice . . . urges the XVIIIth Assembly to refuse de jure recognition of the government of Italy in Ethiopia because this recognition would be the destruction of the principles of the League of Nations.

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380 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 18 telegram received by the League of Nations on June 22, 1936 from Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.

Others churches simply contacted the League to express their opinions on the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute such as the Providence Baptist Church which sent a letter asking the League to “give right and justice to the Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and his peaceful subjects.” The idea of religious justice was an important force in shaping expressions of world opinion sent to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

**CONCLUSIONS**

World opinion as shaped and expressed through international organizations supported concerns about collective security and peace. The examination of these groups reveals some very specific ideas about world opinion. Organizations, whether centered on shared vocation, religion, race, or political interest were public spheres which provided a place for the participants to learn about, and come to a consensus about, the Dispute. The commonality that brought them into this sphere contributed to their ability to overcome other differences. The reception of world opinion was also dependent on very specific criteria and its influence, although difficult to assess, was at least partially based on this reception. As with example of Muskingum College, the way the League handled the correspondence contributed to its effectiveness in influencing League responses. These groups (as noted in relation to the League of Nations Societies) used the world opinion created within their particular sphere to

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382 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 19 letter dated August 24, 1937 from Providence Baptist Church.
support multiple agendas—especially support for the League of Nations as a body and support for Ethiopia through League action.

One of the primary points of examining organizations and their expressions of opinion to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute is to show that the idea of world opinion is complicated and is in fact not a “global” agreement about a particular action. Although the opinions expressed to the League supported collective security and peace the methods for achieving these goals varied. Instead, world opinion is an expression of concern from multiple public spheres that coalesces around one issue or concern. These organizations represent a variety of special interests, cover a large geographic space, and are peopled with a diverse population. Yet, each one was active in shaping world opinion through mechanisms such as media, petitions, and personal action. Additionally, they were all participants in expressing their opinions to the League of Nations. This shows that they believed their voices were valuable enough to be heard and that they would have influence.

Organizations that contacted the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute were not only active in expressing world opinion, but also in shaping it. Political groups, labor organizations, churches, and organizations specifically created to lobby the League of Nations and influence policy regarding the Dispute actively shaped world opinion through speakers, demonstrations, education, and publications within the public spheres they created. Groups were able to use the sense of “membership” of their constituency to create a place to discuss the Dispute and to educate their participants. In this way they created a consensus which was then expressed to the League of Nations as part of world opinion. Economic concerns were important, but did not outweigh concerns about racial
discrimination and injustice. Although fear of another world war was present, for the most part such fears did not outweigh the desire for justice. In fact, there were those who suggested that the League’s inability to settle the Dispute justly would contribute to significant unrest among people of color around the world. Whether or not contact from organizations changed League policy directly, it did have an impact on national policy and so indirectly influenced League action.

The examination of the correspondence from organizations whether veterans, youth, religious, or labor groups changes the previous historiography concerning the League of Nations by illustrating that to the people of the time it was not a “failed” experiment, but an organization which they believed could succeed in keeping world peace. When viewed in this way the League becomes a step in the process of international governance instead of a failed attempt. Additionally, these documents change the historiography of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute by showing that to the people during this period it was a critical concern. This moves the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute from a sideline in the events leading up to WWII to an important step in that direction. The peaceful and just resolution of the Dispute was seen as necessary to ensure peace. As a world historian, the examination of these documents in contrast with the previous historiography of both the League of Nations and the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, provides a global connection to people outside of the official actors. Finally, world opinion as expressed by the organizations examined in this chapter reveals that support for peace and collective security crossed not only national borders, but ideological ones as well.
CHAPTER FOUR: Women’s International Organizations and the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute

First and foremost we get to know the ideals of womanhood, and we find that our ideals as women and citizens are strangely alike. In spite of differences of tradition and climate, of race, religion, and language, we feel we all have something in common. We perceive that the motor force of the whole movement is the intuitive comprehension of women that they have to go out of their individual homes in order to make the big world more of a home, through all we feel the warm beating of a woman’s heart, and her wonderful optimism in regard to the problems of our day.\(^{383}\)

Finnish Suffragist Annie Furuhjelm
Tenth Anniversary
International Women’s Suffragist Alliance

In the modern world women’s engagement in politics has been directly tied to women’s suffrage. However, even before the women of the world had the right to vote, they were active in the political arena through their influence on men who held power. At other times, women managed to hold power themselves by using social and political conventions to their advantage. In the nineteenth century women began to move toward an international collective identity. As Annie Furuhjelm points out regardless of their background, women have one thing in common: they are women. This move toward equality and a voice has become known as the First Wave of the International Women’s Movement. The topic of this chapter is the examination of correspondence from women who lived during this first wave.

\(^{383}\) Annie Furuhjelm, “Our Alliance,” Jus Suffragii 8 (1 May 1914), 99.
The women whose voices are represented in the correspondence to the League of Nations concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute hail from all over the world; from Africa, Asia, South America, the United States and various locations in Europe. They were from a variety of religious and ethnic backgrounds. Some were married women, while others were single. Much of the correspondence to the League during this period came from women’s international organizations. The number of women represented by these groups is hard to determine partly because the numbers are only projections, but also because there was overlap in the various organizations. However, using figures presented in the communications, the League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations (1938), and various articles I estimate that the organizations that are discussed in this chapter represent the voices of approximately forty-five to sixty million women worldwide.384

In this chapter I argue that women created a public sphere of their own based on their perceived common identity as women. The role of women and their participation in the formation of world opinion has not been considered by world historians, but the primary sources available concerning the Dispute provide a unique opportunity to discuss their role. I do this by looking at women’s international organizations. Women were just beginning to get involved in international politics when the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute started. It provides an important case study concerning shared identity and world opinion. First, I consider the motivations that drove women’s participation in the public sphere as well as their use of “womanhood” to bolster participation and shape opinion. I do this by looking at the birth of the international women’s movement and women’s peace organizations. Then a closer

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384 These women were primarily western, but the organizations did have participation from women outside of the west. However, the leadership was made of elite western women.
examination of the most active of these groups—*Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom*—provides specific detail. I also briefly overview the activity of other international women’s groups which focus on specific concerns such as fascism, imperialism, and global conflict which illustrates the variety of paths women took to get to the major concern of world opinion expressed by women, peace and collective security.

One thing to consider about the importance of looking at world opinion represented by these international women’s organizations surrounding the Dispute is that it shows—in a way that the official story does not—how deeply they were involved in political concerns, and how active they were in trying to prevent war. The participation of women provides an excellent case study examining how marginalized people created for themselves public spheres from which to examine issues, reach conclusions, and express those opinions as part of a global consensus. Women’s engagement in the shaping and expression of world opinion was due in part to the changing roles of women in western society as a result of World War I. During and after World War I women played a prominent role in the transformation of society, economically, culturally, and politically. As women’s public roles expanded, more women supported suffragists’ movements and demanded a presence in international political action and expression of world opinion. Additionally, new forms of government which were more conducive to women’s participation such as communism and socialism gained a place

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on the world stage. Women were so interested in this particular Dispute that they were willing to spend time and effort to express their opinions concerning its resolution.

Women responded to the League concerning this crisis because of escalating tensions in Europe. There was real concern that failure to settle the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute peacefully would lead to another global conflict. Other elements made this dispute more of an issue for women than the Manchurian Crisis, including Ethiopia’s status as one of two independent states in Africa that had never been colonized by Europeans. The fact that women saw this as an imperial move by the Italians was especially important to feminist women, who tended to be anti-imperialists. In addition, Princess Tsehai Haile Selassie and her plea to women around the world to support peace and to help Ethiopia was an important motivator. The Princess was well known to the European and American women who were leaders of the large international organizations. Because of her ethnic identity she also appealed to non-European women. Of course a large part of their concern also stemmed from the development of fascism and its connection to Germany.

The expression of world opinion by women, as defined by their contact with the League of Nations, was complex and focused almost exclusively on a desire for peace. I examine women’s political engagement during the inter-war years by looking at international women’s peace organizations. Over sixty exclusively women’s national and international

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386 The other state being Liberia.

387 The Princess's name is spelled both Tsehai and Teshay. I will be using the former because it is the spelling used in correspondence with the League of Nations.
organizations388 contacted the League of Nations concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Some of these, such as the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom had a constant presence in Genève. In order to provide an accurate sampling I used examples of the correspondence that articulated the predominate themes, being careful to include the concerns that were less well represented. When choosing which documents to discuss I inventoried every issue raised by the women’s groups. Where numerous groups or pieces of correspondence discussed the same concern I used a sampling. Additionally, numerous national organizations also contributed to world opinion as expressed to the League through letters and telegraphs. I also consider issues that stand out in the correspondence, such as race and religion.

THE BIRTH OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S MOVEMENTS

Although the time period examined in this dissertation is from 1933 to 1938, briefly examining the development of the ideas and structures of the women’s movement prior to this period provides a basis for analyzing the correspondence. In 1915 The International Congress of Women convened at The Hague, Netherlands. More than one-thousand two-hundred women from twelve countries attended. Delegates from Belgium, the United States, Britain, Poland, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy, among others went to The Hague to declare with one voice that they were dedicated to the cause of peace. However, the demographic construction of this group and the international women’s groups that developed in the inter-war years was limited. The constitution of the International Council of Women boldly proclaimed that the organization was “a federation of women of all races, nations, creeds and classes.” However, noble this idea was in theory in reality the memberships of these organizations was almost exclusively women of European descent that were, educated and elite.

There were numerous boundaries that limited universal participation. For instance, the “demands of participation” limited many women “Since members had to undertake lengthy and expensive travel to attend meetings, serve as officers, or participate in ongoing

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390 “The Constitution and Standing Orders of the ICW,” ICW papers, box 1, SSC.
activities, only those with both the leisure and the independent means or with sufficient national or international stature to attract subsidies from organizations or individuals could take part.”  

Economic and social status were by far the most limiting conditions, but other issues also created boundaries, such as race, religion, and age.  

The First Wave International Women’s Movement identified the commonality of women as being their unequal relationship with men and because of this they could find solidarity “across boundaries of nationality, religion, and culture” at the juncture of “feminism, imperialism, and orientalism.” However, this proved more difficult than expected. In her article “Unveiling Scheherazade,” Charlotte Weber examines the inability of western women to extricate themselves from their imperial baggage.

Although Ethiopia was not colonized, it was an African state and imperial attitudes were easily applied because of their racial and ethnic identity. Among elite women in international women’s organizations there was a sense that women “around the world shared a sense of patriarchal oppression.” However, even though western women welcomed non-western women into their ranks they were unable to rid themselves of the idea that “they

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391 Rupp, 53.  
392 The international women’s movement was made of primarily of women of European descent wherever they might live in the world. Leila J. Rupp’s Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women’s Movement, provides an excellent discussion of the demographic makeup of these groups. Another important work on these topics is Joyce Blackwell’s No Peace without Freedom: Race and the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom 1915-1975.  
393 Weber, 126.  
394 Weber, 129.  
395 Ibid.
needed to “help” their more oppressed sisters.”\textsuperscript{396} This idea may have contributed to women’s international organizations interest in the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Later in this chapter as we examine the Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom and its connection to Empress Menen and Princess Tsehai of Ethiopia, there is a sense that the elite women of this group wanted to help their African sisters. Whether this is a result of their imperial mindset is unclear, but it is important to be aware of the “orientalization” of colonized women by western women. However, the women in these organizations were primarily interested in peace. It is this desire to promote peace that drove their communication with the League.

In many cases the women who went to The Hague were not even able to vote in their home countries. It was not until August 1920 that women in the United States were granted full suffrage in all states. In Poland women gained the right to vote with some restrictions in 1918, Italian women were given limited rights in 1925, and the United Kingdom did not grant equal voting rights for all women until 1928.\textsuperscript{397} The International Congress of Women was organized by a Dutch women’s suffrage group whose leader, Aletta Jacobs, appealed to women around the world to assemble on the basis of their shared commitment to peace. These women overcame national divisions and loyalty to contending women’s organizations to create an international women’s movement. These first wave women, with their various political views, shared some very basic ideas. They were overwhelming interested in peace.

\textsuperscript{396} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{397} Women over 30 who met minimum property qualifications were given the right to vote in 1918 through the Representation of the People Act 1918. It was not until 1928 that women were allowed the same voting rights as men through the Representation of the People Act 1928, which extended the voting franchise to all women over the age of 21.
Some were pacifists; some accepted that peace might need to be won through strength. Some were isolationists, while others were internationalists. They were Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, and other religions or had no religious affiliation. Some were feminists and others did not categorize themselves as feminists.

There were three organizations that were at least technically open to all women early in this process; the International Council of Women (the first surviving general group, founded in 1888) the International Alliance of Women (originally the International Women’s Suffrage Alliance, an offshoot of the Council that was officially established in 1904), and the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (which grew from the International Congress of Women at the Hague).\textsuperscript{398} In the inter-war period a multitude of organizations were started. These were organized around single-issues or appealed to a particular constituency of women. These groups interacted with one another in a variety of ways.

At times they created organizations that connected groups based on a specific goal, such as the \textit{International Co-operative Women’s Guild}. This organization was created to “improve the conditions of home life” as well as work for peace.\textsuperscript{399} They formed coalitions comprised of delegates from different groups. An excellent example of this is the \textit{Peace and Disarmament Committee of the Women’s International Organizations}. This group was a coalition of twelve international organizations and five national groups whose purpose was to “give expression in Geneva to the world-wide desire for peace and disarmament.”\textsuperscript{400} Often

\textsuperscript{398} Rupp, 4.


even within groups that had similar ideologies there was variation. For example, the *International Co-operative Women’s Guild* (a socialist group) functioned as part of the women’s movement, while the *Socialist Women’s International* (a socialist group) would have no part of working with the elite women in the international women’s movement.\(^{401}\) By 1934, when the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute began women had been working for equality and suffrage on an international level for nearly twenty years. They had established connections and built networks of cooperation. They had used media and demonstrations to spread their message. In other words, by the time the Dispute arose women from around the world were practiced at making their voices heard. When the Dispute arose these groups found even more common ground for cooperation.

The League of Nations provided a platform for women to bring their issues to an international body. In the *League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations* there were divisions that included women’s groups, but a separate space for feminist groups. For instance the *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom* is under “Politics and International Relations: Pacifism” and the *International Co-operative Women’s Guild* is listed under “Feminism.”\(^{402}\) This distinction separated women’s groups that were specifically interested in furthering women’s equality from women’s groups that were interested in other concerns, whether peace, poverty, education, or other concerns. However, these groups often shared resources and worked together to achieve common goals. After WWI, when women

\[^{401}\] Rupp, 5.

from international groups discovered that no women were included in the Versailles conference, the *Union Francaise pour le Suffrage des Femmes* arranged a meeting of their own. They called together women from auxiliaries of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance in the Allied countries and held their own meeting in Paris. Of course, this caused frustration on the part of women from states that were not on the “winning” side. The goal was to bring a feminist perspective to the proceedings. Working with President Wilson, they organized a women’s commission to advise and instruct a men’s commission about their concerns. Of course, women’s suffrage was off the table. Although not given a real voice at the Versailles conference, women were given a voice before the League of Nations commission.

As a result, women were an active part of the League of Nations. During the League of Nations commission the women requested that they be allowed admission into all permanent bodies of the League, that “as soon as the civilization and democratic development of each country might permit” women be given suffrage in all nations. They also lobbied for the prohibition of trafficking in children and women, as well as formation of bureaus of education and hygiene. Article XVII of the Covenant stated that all positions would be open to women. In addition, their request concerning the traffic in women and children also made it into the Covenant. Because of this inclusion on the international scene women’s groups moved headquarters to Genève and focused their attention on influencing change by active participation in the League of Nations. In 1925, Princess Gabrielle

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403 Rupp, 211.

Radziwill, the League official who coordinated relations with volunteer organizations stated that the “League needs the work of women, and we women need the League of Nations’ help, because the work that we are doing can only bear fruit if it is really sanctioned by our Governments.” For a time women were content to interact with the League through lower level positions and by sponsoring luncheons.

Women’s international organizations appointed representatives to the League. These representatives made visited League delegates to make known the concerns of their particular group. Until 1937, when the League moved into a new building which required a pass, women could catch delegates in the hallways to express their views. Even though “officially” all positions were open to women, very few were appointed to serve at the League Assembly by their national governments. No women served on the League Council, but many were active in the League Secretariat as civil servants holding clerical and secretarial positions. For women who were better educated, low-level appointments were available in departments dealing with women’s issues. The Fifth Committee, *La Commission Sentimentale*, was a particularly popular place for women to serve. This section dealt with the traffic in women and children, as well as other social issues.

However, through significant struggle some women did eventually rise to higher positions in the League. For example, Laura Dreyfus-Barney was appointed to be a member of the Committee of Experts as a specialist on the education of young people about the

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406 Rupp, 215.
Margery Corbett Ashby was appointed as the British delegate to the Disarmament Conference and Bessie Rischbieth, from Australia, was appointed as a substitute delegate to the Assembly in 1935. Jane Addams, founder of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, stated that the “League was a man-made affair.” It was created and directed by men. However, she encouraged women to participate in the hope that it would lend a “woman’s understand, our warmth, our human point of view, our generous impulses” to the entire endeavor.

When it came to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, women’s international organizations played an important role in encouraging the League to take action. Although, there are numerous works on women’s suffrage less scholarship addresses the women’s international movement. The organizations themselves are not the topic of this dissertation so discussion is limited to information pertinent to this dissertation. The rest of this chapter examines the correspondence from these different groups more specifically. Peace organizations had the largest memberships and were the most prolific in their contact with the League. I provide a brief overview of the contending ideas within these peace

407 ICW Bulletin 5, no. 1 (September 1926).
408 Rupp, 216.
409 Jane Addams quoted in Madeleine Doty, “New Year Resolutions,” Pax 2, no. 2 (December 1926).
410 Ibid.
411 Some works, other than those previously mentioned, include: Jane Addams, Emily G. Balch, and Alice Hamilton’s, Women at the Hague: The International Congress of Women and Its Results, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1972) which is a reprint of the original published in 1915; Linda K. Schott’s Reconstructing Women’s Thoughts: The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom Before World War II, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); and Catherine Foster’s Women for All Seasons, (Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1989).
organizations. Then, I look more specifically at the *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom*, which was by far the largest of these groups. The next section looks more closely at women’s groups that focused on other issues. This includes discussions of those that identify collective security, fascism, global conflict, and imperialism as major concerns. In addition, I examine how cultural standing, whether race, religion, or gender influenced the expression of world opinion to the League during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

The engagement of women in the League did not guarantee that women’s groups universally supported the League. By the mid 1930s, after the failure of the League to meet the expectations of many of the international women’s organizations that were interested in peace, women’s international groups began to criticize the League’s ineffectiveness. One of the most vocal in its criticism was the *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom*. In the view of these groups as well as much of the world the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was a test of the League’s resolve and the commitment of the Great Powers to peace and international cooperation. The engagement of women in the League, combined with their commitment to peace, contributed to the large volume of communication sent to the League during the Dispute. The *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom*, was by far the most prolific international organization—women’s or otherwise—in communicating with the League during the Dispute.

**INTERNATIONAL PEACE ORGANIZATIONS**

Peace societies during this inter-war period correspond to a constituency which connected a distinguishing point of view (such as pacifism) with either a social characteristic
or a functional program. For some groups they combined their quest for peace with their socialist tendencies, religious beliefs, or the fact that they were women. In most situations there was also a connection to a particular agenda such as influencing world opinion concerning peace, lobbying national or international governing bodies, or lobbying for disarmament. Each group worked in the national or international interest and focused on a particular segment of society in order to gain support. These international organizations were interrelated. Their membership and leadership often overlapped. Although they each had distinctions, often their goals were very similar—especially when it came to the idea of collective security. In this way the peace groups formed a series of publics that provided potential support for the agendas set by the international peace organizations.

However closely they may have shared goals, their methods often differed significantly. According to Elton Atwater, peace groups in the United States could be divided into several assemblages: those stressing military readiness, those promoting international cooperation, those demanding disarmament, those that lobbied in support of the League of Nations, the absolute pacifists who opposed all war, and socialists who believed that war was a byproduct of capitalism.\textsuperscript{412} These divisions still allowed for mutual cooperation, but the real difference of opinion that formed a distinction among peace societies was the degree of their commitment to pacifism. In one camp were the strict pacifists who did not support any action that would lead to conflict. With regard to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute these organizations did not support sanctions against Italy and, although uncomfortable with Ethiopia’s situation, supported giving Ethiopia to Italy if that avoided war. The organizations

in the other camp supported collective security even at the risk of possible conflict. These
groups believed that peace for one must include a “just” settlement for all. During the Italo-
Ethiopian Dispute these organizations supported sanctions against Italy and called for both
parties to accept arbitration and abide by the League Covenant.

There were three organizations that endeavored to mobilize women the inter-war period. These were the International Alliance for Women’s Suffrage (Alliance Internationale
pour le Suffrage des Femmes) (IAW), the International Council of Women (ICW), and the
largest and most active of the pacifist women’s groups, the Women’s International League
for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). Each of these organizations, to a varying degree,
contributed to the expression of world opinion to the League of Nations. The Women’s
International League for Peace and Freedom is important in this discussion because they
were very active during the Dispute and are representative of the ideas expressed by many of
these groups. As previously mentioned, there has been no examination of the involvement of
women’s organizations in the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Women’s engagement with the
League has also been overlooked by historians. Examining these relationships is important
because the League Covenant stated that women could hold any office in the League of
Nations organization. This was an unusual accommodation for women during this period.
This creates a very interesting bond between women and the League. In addition, in their

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413 League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations (Associations, Bureaux, Committees, etc),
(Geneva: Publications Department, League of Nations, 1929), 92. In the Handbook the English translation of
the Alliance Internationale pour le Suffrage des Femmes is the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage
and Equal Citizenship.
interaction with the League women were starting to exercise their political influence on an international scale.

**WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM**

The *Women’s Peace Party* (WPP) was founded on January 10, 1915 in Washington, D.C. by Jane Addams and Carrie Chapman Catt. It was an advocacy group for peace that “provided a common ground upon which could meet American women from almost every important section of their organizational life.” These women reached out to their counterparts in Europe, and together they planned a conference of neutral nations. On April 28, 1915 women from the *Women’s Peace Party* joined other women from around the world at the *International Congress of Women* at The Hague. In preparation, the leaders for the different groups represented at The Hague had come up with ideas about how to bring a quick end to WWI. They made contact with the leaders of the Allied governments as well as the Central Powers. They contacted President Woodrow Wilson, but he did not respond to their request for a hearing of their ideas. In time, they came to see themselves as part of a “commission of private citizens.” As such, they joined with Henry Ford and supported *Ford’s Peace Expedition*. Although Ford’s Peace Expedition garnered only ridicule from

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416 The Henry Ford Peace Expedition (December 1915 to January 1916) left Hoboken, New Jersey, with one hundred delegates and Henry Ford sailed aboard the steamship Oscar II, to Christiana, Norway. This expedition’s goal was to hold peace meetings in non-belligerent states in Europe. The intention of the expedition organizers was to create a conference of neutral nations that would draw up peace proposals and
the public and the government, such ridicule did not dissuade the resolve of the women in the
Women’s Peace Party.

At the Congress in 1915 much of the platform of WPP was adopted and an
International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace was created. Jane Addams became
the president of this Committee and in a short time the Women’s Peace Party became the
United States’ section of the International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace. After
the end of WWI the International Congress of Women for Permanent Peace held their
second congress. This time they met in Zurich, Switzerland. They denounced the treaty of
Versailles, calling it a scheme of revenge that set the world on the path for another global
conflict. It was at this meeting that they renamed their organization the Women’s
International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). They moved their headquarters to
Genève in order to be near the League of Nations.

The object of the WILPF was to unite women’s efforts to secure the peace. According
to the League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations, the WILPF grouped
together women,

    . . . of different political and philosophic creeds who are united
in their determination to study, make known and destroy the
political, social, economic and psychological causes of war,
and to work for the establishment of conditions of peace. The
primary objectives of the W.I.L.P.F. continue to be: total and
universal disarmament; the abolition of violent means of
coercion for the settlement of all disputes and their replacement
in all cases by some form of pacific agreement; the
development of a world organisation for political, social and
economic co-operation between peoples. Realising that these

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act as a continuous committee for mediation. In February 1916 the Neutral Conference for Continuous
Mediation was established at Stockholm, Sweden. Their work continued until the end of 1916.
objects cannot be attained and that real and lasting peace and true liberty cannot exist with the present system of exploitation, privileges and profits, its members consider that their duty is to facilitate and hasten by non-violent methods a social transformation which will bring about a new regime providing social, economic and political equality for all without distinction of sex, race or beliefs; an economic order established and governed on a worldwide basis in accordance with the needs of the community and not for profit.417

This idea united women from fifty states around the world in a common goal to work for peace.418 The WILPF used numerous methods to reach their objectives including publications, political actions, international congresses, education, and personal contacts with leaders of states and other organizations.

During the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute WILPF communication came in from both the international office and through its national sections. On December 13, 1934, the League received its first communication concerning the Dispute. It came from the WILPF. This letter, from Miss Emily Balch (Honorary International Secretary of the WILPF), informed the President of the League Council, Edvard Benes (Czechoslovakia, Council Session 82), that the WILPF would encourage the League Council to consider the Ethiopian complaint at their next meeting.419 On March 30th and May 20th 1935 appeals requesting that the League


418 According to the League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations, the countries represented by the membership of the WILPF included: National sections in Australia, Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Ukraine, United States of America, and Yugoslavia. Corresponding members in: South Africa, Argentine, China, Cuba, Egypt, Estonia, India, Italy, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Palestine, Peru, Philippine Islands, Portugal, Roumania, Spain, Syria, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and Uruguay.

419 Heitt, 6.
settle the Dispute in accordance with the Covenant were sent by the WILPF. An even more
insistent request was sent July 25, 1935, “This is the League’s final test. Capitulation through
fear of Italy’s withdrawal would greatly weaken the League’s prestige... we want every
resource of moral, political and economic sanctions applied to maintain the principles of the
Covenant.”\textsuperscript{420} The WILPF advocated the application of sanctions long before other groups
and postulated that the League needed to act quickly and with resolve to protect its prestige.

Given that the League had just suffered a severe setback in its handling of the
Manchurian Crisis, it is clear that the leadership of the WILPF realized the danger to the
League if it did not act with resolve. Moreover, keeping in mind the stated objectives of the
WILPF, it is also clear that the continued functioning of the League was important to their
plans. The League was founded on the idea of collective security and disarmament, both of
which were primary objectives of the WILPF. Although it is not clear what the purpose of
the “warning” concerning the League’s prestige was, there is a sense that the WILPF was
making the point that the League as an international body was in jeopardy and that the
WILPF’s continued support hinged on the League’s success in containing the situation in
Ethiopia.

The League delayed addressing the Ethiopian complaint until the Eighty-Eighth
Session of the Council, September, 5-13, 1935.\textsuperscript{421} In anticipation of the opportunity to

\textsuperscript{420} Heitt, 6.

\textsuperscript{421} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3653, Registry File 15266, Jacket 5
influence world opinion, the WILPF hosted a radio broadcast on September 5th.22 In which the Empress of Ethiopia asked the women of the world to help prevent war.”23 On September 6, 1935, in twenty-five countries, the WILPF launched the “Peoples Mandate to Governments” in honor of the founder of the WILPF, Jane Addams.24 The purpose of the document was to influence world opinion and move people to take up the banner of peace. The Mandate called on the League and national governments to create “a world treaty for arms reduction; and international agreements to end economic anarchy.”25 This was followed on September 12th with another letter to the League, once again making it clear that the WILPF membership supported the application of economic, moral, and social pressure on Italy to stop the outbreak of war. The League took no firm action.

However, the Italian government did take action, and “At 5:00 on the morning of October 3, with no declaration of war, vanguards of three of De Bono’s army corps crossed the Ethiopian frontier, and the Italian planes bombed Aduwa and Adigrat. The Italian-Ethiopian war had begun.”26 On October 21, 1935 the Czech section of the WILPF sent a letter to the League congratulating it on naming Italy the aggressor. This letter also warned

22 Note there is a date discrepancy between the two sources that reference this speech. Helen Heitt states that the date of the speech was on September 5, 1935 at the beginning of the League meeting discussing the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Heitt, a contemporary of the speech who worked for the Geneva Research group. Anjahil Parnell author of the text from which the content of the speech is taken places the date as September 28th. Parnell, in the introduction to the book, discusses the issue of dates. It is my determination from that discussion and the desire to influence the League of Nations Council that date probably is September 5th.


24 Heitt, 6.

25 Ibid.

the League of the importance of its response to Italian aggression stating, “Be aware of the
gravity of this situation for the fate of the League of Nations and the future of humanity is at
stake.”427 Once again the WILPF warned the League of the importance of its actions in this
situation. The WILPF represented the opinion of a significant number of women. The exact
numbers of the membership are sketchy and range from forty-five to sixty million women
globally. Yet it is clear that regardless of the exact number, the WILPF represented a large
group of women in a public sphere that expressed world opinion to the League of Nations.
The next largest women’s organization was the International Council of Women which
claimed a membership of thirty-six million women in 1925.428 There are several points that
this early communication brings to the fore. The first is the WILPF’s direct communication
with the League. It is evident that the leadership of this organization was comfortable making
their voice heard at the League. Additionally, the use of the Empress Menen of Ethiopia to
influence world opinion speaks to one of the methods of the WILPF in shaping its expression
in order to support peace through non-violent methods.

In the radio address mentioned above the Empress, with the assistance of Princess
Tsehai,429 called attention to the unity of women regardless of race, religion, and political
affiliation:430

427 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7
correspondence dated October 21, 1935 from the La Ligue De Femmes Pour La Paix et Liberte en
Tchecoslovaquie. See original document in Appendix Chapter 4, Item I.

428 Rupp, 15.

429 The Empress did a portion of the speech in Amharic and then Princess Tsehai read the speech that the
Empress had written in Amharic in English for the radio audience.

430 The entirety of this speech is included in Supplementary Appendix.
At this very moment, when a disastrous war is intended and planned against us, I would like to make clear that all women across the world should make their voices heard and express their opinions. Even though we live in different countries and different climates, all women are related in their stand for the peace of the world. . . . Even though the women of the world are different in race, religion and nationality all of them hate war because it causes the loss of lives of their beloved husbands, brothers and sons. . . . I know that the very intention of war worries the Italian women, too, whether or not they have sons. Therefore, all women of the world have to stand to make their voice heard against the bloodshed and loss of human lives in war. . . . I request all women of the world to join me in prayer to God for truth, justice and peace on earth, and for God’s guidance in the works of the leaders of the world.431

In this speech the Empress and Princess called on the women of the world to unify and make their opinions heard. They also appealed to God for help. This appeal from the women of Ethiopia to the women of the world did not fall on deaf ears, and many women who contacted the League specifically attributed their concern to this speech.

Princess Tsehai of Ethiopia continued to be active in her appeal to women around the world requesting help for the people of her country. On April 27, 1936 she appealed directly to the League of Nations. The influence of her engagement in shaping world opinion is evident in numerous communications with the League of Nations from women. Manifestations of world opinion to the League are detached from the mechanisms which influence the formation of these opinions, unless there are clues provided in the

correspondence itself. In the case of the following pieces of correspondence the authors note that they are contacting the League in response to the request from Princess Tsehai of Ethiopia. On Jun 17, 1936 the League received the following communication from the National Free Church Women’s Council, located in London.

This General Committee of the National Free Church Women’s Council, representing Free Church Women in England and Wales, expresses its deep concern at the wrong done to Abyssinia, and urges H. M. Government to support the League of Nations in refusing to recognize its annexation by Italy. This Committee also tenders respectful sympathy to the Emperor of Abyssinia and Princess Tsehai, and assures them that many Christian women have them and their people in prayerful remembrance.

It is clear that this group was motivated to respond to the appeal of Princess Tsehai because of their imagined connection to her. The appeals by both Emperor Haile Selasise and the Princess were instrumental in solidifying public support for Ethiopians and their struggle to defend their homes.

Princess Tsehai, (1919-1942) was the daughter of Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and the Empress. During the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute and the Second Italo-Ethiopian War (1935-1936), Princess Tsehai supported welfare work in Ethiopian. In 1935, when the Red Cross went into Ethiopia, she volunteered with them. When the royal family fled to Britain in 1936, Princess Tsehai trained as a nurse in Great Ormond Street and Guy’s Hospitals. She returned to Ethiopia with her family in 1941 and died in 1942 of complications during childbirth.

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 correspondence received by the League of Nations on June 17, 1936 from the National Free Church Women’s Council.
Another letter sent to the League, March 31, 1936 from the *Peace and Disarmament Committee of the Women’s International Organisations* provides another example of the influence Princess Tsehai had on world opinion among women.

As a representative body for millions of women of all races, beliefs, and nationalities, the Committee for Peace and Disarmament created by women’s organizations leads to answer the call of Princess Tsehai, President of the Ethiopian Women’s Work Association, seeking the assistance of women from around the world to make known the agony cast upon her people, including women and children in cities and villages, because of the use of gas by the Italian army.

As women with no illusions about the dehumanization caused by war, it is particularly odious to think that civilian populations with no defense are victims of these attacks. The use of gas by Italy against Abyssinia is a deliberate violation of the protocol of 1925. There is no military or defensive strategy for its use. The violation of the treaty is all the more odious because both countries have accepted the call of the Committee of Thirteen as to the peaceful settlement of the conflict by negotiations. While a search for terms of an agreement that would end the conflict are in progress, a terror campaign is conducted.

In light of these facts we want to lodge a protest with the Committee of Thirteen against the use of these methods. We call on all members in the name of humanity to search with energy and perseverance in the name of humanity for a way to

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434 The objectives of the Peace and Disarmament Committee were to spread knowledge of the underlying issues regarding the organization of peace. Member organizations included: International Council of Women; World’s Young Women’s Christian Association; International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, World Union of Women for International Concord, League of Mothers and Educators for Peace, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, League of Jewish Women, European Federation of Soroptimist Clubs, World’s Women’s Christian Temperance Union, International Co-operative Women’s Guild (Observer), International Federation of University Women (Observer), National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War (U.S.A.), Women’s Polish Organizations, Association of Slavic Women, Women’s Peace Crusade (Great Britain), Federation of American Women’s Clubs Overseas. Information taken from the League of Nations Handbook on International Organizations, 1938, 26-27.
end this war and solve this conflict in accordance with the principles of the League of Nations.

We inform the Committee that we have sent a copy of the protest to the international Committee of the Red Cross and to Women of all countries, insisting that each of them pledge to do everything in their power to influence public opinion.\(^{435}\)

The women in this group were not only expressing world opinion, but they were calling on their constituency to make their voices heard by using their resources to shape world opinion within the public sphere inhabited (theoretically) by all women. It is plausible that the reason so many women became involved in this discussion is because of the influence of these large international women’s organizations.

Both of the previous examples were from organizations based in European states.

However, it was not just European women who weighed in on this discussion. In a telegram dated May 13, 1936 a group of Tasmanian women\(^{436}\) add their voice to the cry for Ethiopia, “THOUSANDS WOMEN TASMANIA EIGHTEEN ORGANISATIONS SUPPORT ABYSSINIAN PRINCESSES RECENT WORD APPEAL AND IMPLORE HUMANITYS NAME ABOLITION CHEMICAL WARFARE FUTURE.”\(^{437}\) This is not a formally recognized group, but it is clear that even in Tasmania the Princess was having an impact.

\(^{435}\) UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15
\(^{436}\) Correspondence dated March 31, 1936 from the Peace and Disarmament Committee of the Women’s International Organisations, See original document in Appendix Chapter 4 Item II.

\(^{437}\) There is not indication of the ethnic or cultural make up of this group, but it can be assumed that at this time in history this did not include aboriginal women.

\(^{437}\) UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16
\(^{437}\) Telegram dated May 13, 1936 from Ivy Smith for Tasmanian women.
handwritten letter addressed to the President of the League of Nations from a woman in Brazil also shows solidarity with Princess Tsehai.

In your capacity as representative to the League of Nations I implore you to use your influence and humbly request that you communicate our Christian feelings of sympathy for the cause of young Ethiopian Princess whose heart is full of anxiety for the sad state of her people. The only thing I can do is pray for the protection of the people and that human ambition will be put aside. God is just and will not abandon Ethiopia. Any woman of any nation whether it is affected or not should fully respond to the call of the young Princess’s heart. Give my name to the President, joining the hearts cry of all women imploring justice.  

These communications provide a sense of how important Princess Tsehai’s public participation in Ethiopia’s favor was to women all over the world both in international organizations and as individuals. Princess Tsehai’s plea to women of the world motivated many to become engaged in the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, more than were involved in any other crisis that the League dealt with during the inter-war years. The fact that Empress Menen and Princess Tsehai had been engaged with the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom also contributed to the familiarity of WILPF leaders with conditions in Ethiopia and their status as an independent state.

In some cases, national organizations weighed in separately from the international group headquartered in Genève. By examining an issue that arose in the American branch of the WILPF it becomes clear that the “united front” that appears from the correspondence

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438 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 letter dated April 30, 1936 from Maria de Carvalho, São Paulo, Brazil. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item III.
resident at the League, although representing the general opinion of the international organization, is not the entire picture. In the American branch there were two camps that formed in response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. One group, “led by Dorothy Detzer and Hannah Clothier Hull, argued that neutrality was the only logical choice for America.”439 Detzer did not want the United States to get involved in this “old imperialistic” struggle. The other camp, led by Emily Greene Balch and Mildred Scott Olmsted, “believed that America should employ nonviolent methods to resist the expansion of Fascism and aggression.”440 In examining “world opinion” this range of perspectives points out that “world opinion” is the expression of a finite group of people, concerning a particular situation, at a specific point in time. Although the American branch appears to have had some division the European branches, as represented in the archival documents at the League of Nations, did not reflect any dissonance in opinions.441 As a “general” concern the national branches of the WILPF and the women represented in the membership supported peace and Ethiopia and considered Italy the imperialistic aggressor. The correspondence discussed above shows that the WILPF wanted peace, anticipated future war if the Dispute was not settled peacefully, and recognized this struggle as an imperialistic one.


440 Blackwell, 136.

441 As a note, I did not find any dissenting opinions from European national groups in the League of Nations Archives. However, that does not preclude their existence. In fact since there were chapters in both Italy and Germany it is highly likely that these branches did not agree with the internationals organizations stance.
African American women in the national section of the WILPF took issue with the platform of the national group as compared to the international body of the WILPF. The African American women peace activists in the WILPF followed the lead of Emily Greene Balch and Mildred Scott Olmsted in supporting non-violent resistance to Italian aggression. Race was a major concern for African American peace activists, and their response to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was layered. They identified with Ethiopians because of a sense of shared racial identity. However, they also saw the spread of fascism as a serious threat to them personally. To women of color, whether colonized women (which is discussed below) or women in independent states, this Dispute was about more than just property. It was about the new world order that the League of Nations was tasked to facilitate: a world where they hoped territorial integrity and political sovereignty would be respected and in which small states could count on the larger states to defend collective security.

In response to the release of the Hoare-Laval Pact (December 1935), which threatened Ethiopia’s territorial sovereignty and political independence, the WILPF sent a lengthy document to the League expressing their frustration and reflecting the sentiment of communications they had received from individuals and national sections:

Since the projects of the English and French governments on regulation of the Italo-Ethiopian Conflict have been published we have received from various countries of the world, the expression of their outrage against these proposals. It is rare to see peoples revolt against an alleged peace formula and also be unanimous in their interpretation of this plan. It seems they [Britain and France] paid a premium to Italy, identified by the

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League of Nations as the aggressor, in helping them win the victory by providing guns yet they have not conquered. It seems like treason by the Great Powers vis-à-vis the people who, in good faith and loyalty, have applied sanctions and as a betrayal of Ethiopia which has suffered this unspeakable attack. The people are convinced that only the proposals that ensure absolutely the territorial integrity of Ethiopia and its political independence are possibly a solution for the conflict that restores peace in Africa and guarantees peace for the world. We pray your Excellency will consider public opinion in all countries of the world and inform the members of the Council of the League of Nations that they are asking them to employ without delay the oil embargo against Italy and maintain it until the Italian troops are removed from Ethiopia.\footnote{443}

This letter was followed by a delegation which met with the President of the League Council on December 19, 1935 expressing “the revolt of public opinion against the Hoare-Laval peace proposals and to ask for application of an oil embargo."\footnote{444} This delegation was a coordinated effort and included not only members of the WILPF, but also representatives of eleven other national and international organizations.\footnote{445} This same sentiment was expressed in another letter on January 19, 1936.\footnote{446} However, as we have already seen, sanctions proved

\footnote{443} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 letter from the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, dated December 18, 1935. See original document Appendix Chapter 4, Item IV.

\footnote{444} Journal des Nations, December 20, 1935.

\footnote{445} The organizations with representatives that participated in this delegation were: Alliance Internationale pour le suffrage des Femmes, Soroptomist Club, Ligue des Femmes Juives, World Committee of Women against War and Fascism, International Federation of University Women, World Young Women’s Christian Association, Union Mondiale de la Femme pour la Concorde Internationale, Women’s Peace and Disarmament Committee, International Cooperative Women’s Guilds, Organisation Polonaixe des Femmes pour la Paix, Internationale Syndicale Rouge. Heitt, 6.

\footnote{446} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 letter from the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, dated January 19, 1936.
ineffective due to the lack of quick action and active participation by the Great Powers. On July 4, 1936 the League officially lifted the sanctions imposed against Italy. The WILPF was quick to respond. The leadership of the WILPF voiced their disappointment that sanctions did not succeed. They also communicated their continued support for the League. In some corners this was considered the end of the matter, but not for the WILPF. They continued to advocate for the Ethiopians. The goals of the WILPF were not only peace, but also economic equality and territorial integrity. They persisted tenaciously to achieve these goals.

One major concern continued to elicit communication from the WILPF well after the lifting of sanctions in 1936. This was the British request to the League that it recognize Italian control of Ethiopia. As early as July 1937 the WILPF anticipated this move. At the Ninth Congress July 27-31 they constructed a resolution that was forwarded to the League of Nations. This resolution was sent from numerous national sections and from the international office. However, the only full copy of the document in the League archives is from the Swedish section. The resolution stated:

In the near future, the League of Nations will decide if the conquest of Ethiopia is to be considered accomplished. In the eyes of the world, a crime has been committed against an entire nation. . . . The world has been forced to act as spectators, although viewers have revolted while the League of Nations did not intervene by using all means at its disposal to prevent atrocities. We are often told that a small nation has no possibility of affecting the final decisions of the League of Nations, but nothing can remove the right and the duty to object to the acceptance of an injustice. . . . We must not allow

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447 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 17 letter from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, dated July 3, 1936. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item V.
the conquest of Ethiopia and its disappearance as a free nation.\textsuperscript{448}

This was echoed by letters from the British, Dutch, Czech, and Egyptian sections of the WILPF in late April and early May 1938. However, the British section was especially critical of the role the British government had played in the entire affair. It called on the British government to honor its obligations and not to “aid Italy in her aggression.”\textsuperscript{449} Ultimately the League avoided the issue. During the Hundred-and-First Council Session (May 12, 1938) there was much debate about whether or not to recognize Italy’s sovereignty over Ethiopia. Council President, M. Munters, concluded the meeting by saying,

\begin{quote}
I shall not attempt to summarise these arguments or to draw conclusions as to their application in the particular case which we are considering. It is, however, clear that, in spite of regrets which have been expressed, the great majority of the Members of the Council feel that, so far as the question which we are now discussing is concerned, it is for the individual Members of the League to determine their attitude in the light of their own situation and their own obligation.\textsuperscript{450}
\end{quote}

The League did not recognize Italy’s sovereignty, and Ethiopia remained in the League until its dissolution on April 20, 1946. The WILPF is only one of the many international women’s

\textsuperscript{448} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 19 correspondence from the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom forwarded to the League on September 15, 1937. See original document in Appendix Chapter 4 Item VI.

\textsuperscript{449} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 19 correspondence from the Women’s International League British Section of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom forwarding a copy of a letter sent to Neville Chamberlain on April 21, 1938. In addition supporting materials from the Czech, Dutch, and Egyptian sections were included. See the communication from the section in Egypt in Appendix Chapter 4 Item VII.

\textsuperscript{450} League of Nations Publication, League of Nations Hundred-And-First Session of the Council Minutes: Fifth Meeting (Public) Held on Thursday, May 12\textsuperscript{th}, 1938, at 10:30am. UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive Box R3655 File 34054.
organizations that sent correspondence to the League of Nations during Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. However, they were the most prolific and represented a large group of women. World opinion, as expressed through the WILPF correspondence was representative of much of the communication with the League. They supported sanctions and were supportive of Ethiopia. They were also very concerned about collective security and disarmament. Although the official record does not include specific reference to the influence of the WILPF’s communication to the League concerning the Dispute. In addition, because they were a recognized non-governmental organization their correspondence was reported to all League Delegates.

**WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

The WILPF was one of many international women’s organizations that communicated regularly with the League concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. As mentioned previously, there were over sixty women’s groups identified either through direct correspondence with the League or in League publications that directly addressed the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Of these sixty-six groups nearly half were women’s organizations. These groups represent several basic interests: peace, race, religious concerns, labor, and groups that acted as coordinating bodies for multiple organizations. It is most efficient to examine these groups based on their particular interest as expressed through their communication with the League.
COLLECTIVE SECURITY

Several women’s groups supported collective security through the League and soundly condemned Italy’s aggression as a threat to collective security. The concern about collective security was a significant part of support for the League. The International Council of Women (ICW) was a large organization (representing approximately twenty-five million women) that fit into this category. The ICW was one of the oldest international women’s group of record in the world. The ICW, on September 9, 1935, contacted the League of Nations lending them their full support and confidence that it would settle the dispute by upholding the principles of the League. On October 15, 1935 the National Council of Women of Great Britain held their annual conference in Leicester. There were one thousand women representing one-hundred thirty-one groups from throughout Great Britain and the Dominions. The result of that meeting was the following resolution to the League:

The National Council of Women of Great Britain in Conference assembled welcomes the recent declaration of British policy made by the Foreign Secretary at Geneva.

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451 *League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations* (Associations, Bureaux, Committees, etc), (Geneva: Publications Department, League of Nations, 1929), 93. This group was founded in Washington in 1888. Its objective was to promote among women of all nations solidarity and mutual understanding. The ICW also sought to be a conduit for communication between groups. One of their goals was to provide opportunities for women to meet in various parts of the world to discuss problems related to women and their families. There were national sections in Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Mexico, Netherlands, New South Wales, New Zealand, Norway, Palestine, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Queensland, Roumania, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, South Africa, South Australia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tasmania, United States of America, Uruguay, Victoria, and Western Australia.

452 Weber, 130.

Believing ‘that only by maintaining and strengthening the collective system based on the Covenant of the League of Nations’ can peace be secured and civilisation saved, the Council assures His Majesty’s Government of its unswerving support in the efforts which it is now making to secure these ends through its adherence to and respect for the Covenant of the League of Nations.  

For organizations whose primary concern was collective security, support for the League was paramount. They saw the League as the vehicle to guarantee peace. As with the National Council of Women of Great Britain, these groups also brought pressure to bear on their national governments to support the League and to honor the League Covenant as the foundation for any foreign policy decisions.

Another strategy used by organizations that focused on collective security was to make clear to the League their condemnation of the war and Italian aggression. The National Council of Women of Denmark’s (Danske Kvinders Nationalraad) letter of January 18, 1936 articulates just such concern after the Italian bombing of a Swedish Red Cross ambulance, expressing “its protest that even such an act of violence in disregard of all international regulations has been committed.” These women were concerned about war and the escalation of tensions, but they also desired peace through international cooperation. They, like many others, hoped that the League of Nations would be successful in organizing the peace and avoiding future global conflict.

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The ICW and its affiliates were not the only international organizations that focused their expressions of world opinion around the idea of collective security. Most of the organizations that responded to the League did support the idea of collective security in one form or another. Some organizations viewed it as critical and veered from their organizational objectives to make their voices heard. For instance, the National British Women’s Total Abstinence Union made their voice heard through a letter received by the League on December 17, 1935.456 The president of the Union stated in her letter that the resolution represented the opinion of “over 121,000 women.”457 The resolution in response to the Hoare-Laval proposal urged that “no policy of aggression should be accepted” and “calls upon the members of His Majesty’s Government, in the dispute between Italy and Abyssinia, to uphold the Covenant of the League of Nations in its entirety.”458 Far from their organizational objectives, the women of the Union were clearly concerned with collective security and were supportive of Ethiopia. The issue of collective security challenged any expansion of imperial control because, according to the Covenant, the League was committed to protecting “territorial integrity” and, as a result, the necessity to protect Ethiopia’s independence was integral to maintaining collective security.

456 The National British Women’s Total Abstinence Union was Federated to the World’s Women’s Christian Temperance Union whose objective was to further and support the prohibition of liquor traffic throughout the world. *League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations* (1939), 96.

457 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 hand written letter stamped received by the League on December 17, 1935 from the National British Women’s Total Abstinence Union Honorary Correspondence Secretary Miss Dorothy Staunton.

458 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 typed resolution stamped received by the League on December 17, 1935 from the National British Women’s Total Abstinence Union Chairman of the Committee Mrs. Randolph Clarkson.
Although national groups were discussed in chapter two there are some initiatives that bear consideration here because of their connection to international groups. The Hoare-Laval Pact caused a veritable uproar when it was leaked in advance of its “official” release. In what can only be described as a rapid deployment, numerous French organizations combined their influence to express their disapproval of the Hoare-Laval Pact. This collaborative effort represented the voices of over one million women. Their project was called the *Center for the Women’s Initiative in Defense of Peace* (Centre Feminin d’Initiative pour la defense de la paix). This group of women represented the voices of several national sections of international organizations including: the World Committee of Women Against War and Fascism, the League of Mothers and Women Educators for Peace, and the International League of Women for Peace and Freedom. Their opinions echo those of other groups concerned about collective security. Their message was clear and decisive. The League needed to deal with the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute equitably and successfully or face diminishing support from the people of the world. It was critical that the League not bow to the wishes of the governments of Britain and France at the expense of the Covenant.

The undersigned representatives of women’s groups representing over one million French women grouped in organizations with diverse political and philosophical trends, but united in a common will to peace; say they have a burning desire to see the end of hostilities between Italy and Ethiopia as soon as possible. They believe, however, that lasting peace

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All groups that were involved in this Initiative include: Secular Women for Democratic Action, Committee of French People for Mandates, World Committee of Women Against War and Fascism, Committee of the General Confederation of Female Labor Unit, Feminist Delegations, League of Human Rights, Party of Camille Pelletan, Communist Party, Radical Socialist, Young Social Groups, League of Mothers and Women Educators for Peace, French section of the International League of Women for Peace and Freedom, Union of Women Against War and Misery, Union of Women for the League of Nations.
must be founded on justice and energetically protest against any proposal which, by giving a benefit to the attacker, at the same time violates the moral law and principles enshrined in the Covenant. Desiring to ensure permanent peace to all homes, they implore the members of the League Council not to create a precedent likely to encourage future aggressions and irreparably destroy the people’s faith in the authority of the League of Nations.460

Keep in mind the discussion in chapter two concerning the contending expressions of public opinion in France. The French people were almost equally split between collective security (through application of the League Covenant) and those who wanted peace even if it meant giving Ethiopia to Italy. These contending opinions paralyzed the actions of the French government. It is partially as a result of these contending ideas that Laval attempted to skirt the issue by giving some of Ethiopia to Italy. However, one million women from France did not see this as an acceptable solution. They contacted the League to express two primary concerns—peace and collective security. These national women’s groups were standing in direct opposition to their own government. They voiced their opinion that the Hoare-Laval plan would support imperialism and diminish the League’s status and its ability to ensure peace.

CONCERNS ABOUT FASCISM

Another danger that women identified as threatening peace was the rise of fascism. Women’s groups were motivated to contact the League based on their concern about another

460 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter received by the League December 20, 1935 from the Centre Feminin D’Initiative pour la Defense de la Paix. See original document Appendix Chapter 4, Item VIII.
global conflict because of mounting tension in Europe associated with fascism in Italy and Mussolini’s growing connection with Hitler. In a telegram received from the Women’s National Congress of Uruguay (Congreso Nacional Femenino Uruguay) the group called for “energetic sanctions against Hitler and Mussolini.\textsuperscript{461} In April 1936 the Anti-fascist Women’s Committee of Lyon contacted the League, making a “supreme appeal of pity for Ethiopia to stop the terrible war.”\textsuperscript{462} One of the most active international groups that addressed fascism specifically in their expressions of world opinion to the League of Nations was the World Women’s Committee against War and Fascism (Comite Mondial des Femmes contre la Guerre et le Fascisme).\textsuperscript{463} On September 7\textsuperscript{th} they reminded the League that their purpose was to preserve the peace of the world and they called for sanctions to be imposed on Italy. On September 17\textsuperscript{th} the Committee sent a deputation to the League that included delegates from England, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, France, and Czechoslovakia.\textsuperscript{464} The most aggressive communication from this group was received by the League on October 11, 1935, shortly after the first attack by the Italians on Ethiopia. In this letter the

\textsuperscript{461} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 telegram from Montevideo to Avenol stamped received May 4, 1936. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item IX.

\textsuperscript{462} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 hand written letter from the Anti-fascist Women’s Committee of Lyon dated April 1936. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item X.

\textsuperscript{463} This group was associated with a recognized international organization with the League of Nations. The World Committee Against War and Fascism (Comite Mondial Contre La Guerre et le Fascisme). This group was founded in Amsterdam, August 1932. The goal of the group was to bring together all people opposed to war and fascism. There were affiliates in approximately forty-five countries including Germany and Italy. In addition, numerous groups were also had affiliations including anti-imperialist organizations. League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations (1938), 31-32.

\textsuperscript{464} Heitt, 7.
group calls on all women and all mothers to do their part to stop this war. They encourage them to let their voices be heard through protests, delegations to their own governments, meetings, and communication with the Italian embassy. The letter closes with a strong condemnation of fascism and a call to support democracy as the road to peace, “We are sending a delegation to the embassy and consulates of the Italian Foreign Minister saying in our day of protests that fascism starts war, democracy saves peace.”465 Besides this communication from the international headquarters, several of the national sections also contacted the League. The most active of these were the sections in Amsterdam, Britain, Marseille, and Paris. On October 8, 1935 the Marseille branch of the Committee contacted the League in a letter stating,

Mothers and women of Marseille, persuasions and all conditions, are united in the horror of children, women, and for the fallen Ethiopian soldiers and those feeling the war threatens their homes. We address the League of Nations in order to express our hope that it will not fail at the task that the world has entrusted it with and that it will ensure the strict application of the Covenant and its economic sanctions. 466

One common thread that many of the communications to the League from women’s groups shared was the call to “arms” based on being women and mothers.

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465 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 typed letter from the Comite Mondial Des Femmes Contre la Guerre et La Guerre stamped received by the League on October 11, 1935. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XI.

466 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5, typed letter from the Comite Regional des Femmes Contre La Guerre et le Fascisme, Marseille, dated October 8, 1935. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XXII.
The role of women as mothers and to a lesser extent wives was used to shape world opinion among women. This is evident in the language used in the general resolution from the *World Women’s Committee against War and Fascism* (October 11, 1935) mentioned above.

We mothers.
We women of France.
To all mothers.
To all women of all countries.

Before us is the horrible prospect of the first battle of the Italo-Abyssinian Conflict. We who are not amazons, or mothers sublime but just simply mothers and women with all that these two words contain of love, duty and courage, not resignation or hate. We understand that the time has come for us to give to our husbands and our sons our full cooperation, of our dedication in their struggle for the defense of peace. We call all mothers, all women, it is impossible that any may still not understand the reasons and consequences of war. It is impossible that a single mother still consents preparing for the misery and suffering of her children. We have realized our personalities and our possibilities. We must dare. Our role is to create and not to kill. Peace is in our hands, now only we can salvage it and we will defend it by all means. We refer to the pain of the mothers of Italy and Ethiopia expressing our sadness at the unspeakable crime and its atrocious consequences. We pledge to use our whole power as mothers and women to stop the fighting as soon as possible and as soon as possible and silence the guns forever.\footnote{UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 typed letter from the Comite Mondial Des Femmes Contre la Guerre et La Guerre stamped received by the League on October 11, 1935. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XI.}

This call to mother’s and women was part of many of the communications the League received. This particular resolution speaks very distinctly to the role these women believed
could be used to influence men to seek peace and not war. The statements “We must dare” and “Peace is in our hands, now only we can salvage it” provided women with the sense that they had the power to make a difference. This is something that emanated from their newly found political role through democracies and women attaining the right to vote. The *World Women’s Committee against War and Fascism* also had a section in Italy so the cry to the mothers and women of Italy is language of inclusion. The crafters of this resolution were not only speaking to the League of Nations delegates, but to their membership.

Throughout history women have found creative ways to exert power. This hearkening to their roles as “mothers” and “wives” by women in these international organizations was no accident. In the early nineteenth century the “Cult of Domesticity” or “Cult of True Womanhood” was used to create an “ideal” woman. One that was “feminine” and kept to her socially prescribed role as wife and mother. This applied to upper and middle class women of European descent. Keep in mind that the international women’s groups were led by upper middle class women of European descent. This “ideal” did not apply to women of color, working class women, or immigrant women. Those elite women who sought more access to the public sphere and did not fit this “ideal” were criticized and considered “only semi-women, mental hermaphrodites” by some men and women. In the later nineteenth and early twentieth century women began to seek the vote and more access to the public sphere in greater numbers. Those who were interested in expanding their horizons found it

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468 In should be noted that this “ideal” was promoted by white Protestant men and women in New England and Britain primarily.

useful to appeal to women using the stereotypes that had become an ingrained part of their identities. Women could identify with their roles as mothers and wives. In addition, by using these stereotypes the men they were trying to communicate with also visualized a certain kind of woman. They all had mothers and most had wives. The leaders of these organizations used the tools at their disposal to make the most effective presentation of their case.

Of course the idea that “all” women could identify with the role of mothers and wives was rather complicated. For instance, non-elite women as mothers and wives might not self-identify in the same way as the elite women in these groups did. Then of course there were also women who were not mothers or wives. In addition, the idea that all women would have the same opinion regardless of their station in life was also problematic. It is important to keep in mind that in order to influence the League they were also speaking to men who had a preconceived idea about the role of women.

The activities of these groups, as previously mentioned, did have some influence. Their letters were read by the League Delegates. How much influence they had is hard to say. As discussed below, the League Secretariat was responsive to these groups and although they may not have explicitly discussed their influence it is hard to believe that the delegates did not recognize how important the support of these women for the League of Nations was. Again, most of these women were elite women with access to the ears of powerful men.

GLOBAL CONFLICT

Peace was the primary concern of women who expressed their opinion concerning the Dispute to the League of Nations. National and international groups also worked to shape
world opinion in their respective spheres of influence. These groups also attempted to affect the policy of their respective governments as well as the policies of the League. Although the general topic of peace is present in virtually every piece of correspondence, some groups specifically address the fear of a global conflict. A letter from the Society of Catholic Women in Yugoslavia exhibits the fear of another world conflagration and points out the idea that some women should speak for those who do not have a voice. In their letter, dated September 28, 1935, they indicated that as a group they were “confident that they speak from the heart of all women and mothers all over the world, and especially the heart of those mothers and women which are forbidden to talk to their children, their husbands and brothers in the League of Nations. . . . Do not allow to be repeated in the twentieth-century the beastly massacre of humanity.”

Keeping in mind the role that democracy played in giving women a political voice, it is clear that the women of Yugoslavia represented by this communication were aware of the freedom they exercised; a freedom not available to all women in all states.

A group of women in Holland organized an Hour of Prayer, Concentration and Meditation for Peace. This event took place on Sunday, October 20, 1935 at 8:30pm. During this time people all over the world were encouraged to stop and pray for peace.

Now that mankind lives in fear of rumors of war from Italy and Ethiopia, while the terrible consequences and miseries of the war (1914-1918) that spread throughout the world are still being felt, the undersigned appeal to women and mothers of Holland asking them to meet next Sunday October 20\textsuperscript{th} at 8:30 in the evening to pray, meditate or concentrate for peace, each

\footnote{UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 6, Appel dated September 28, 1935 from Katolicko Žensko Prosvjetno Drustvo Danica Splitu. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XIII.}
in their own church, meeting room or home (or in central meetings). The prayer of the Queen of Ethiopia: “that all women of the world gather in prayer for peace” has given rise to this appeal. This call to women should not be in vain in a moment so serious when the news we receive is that the bloody and cruel succeed. Since we have a duty to protect the life, not only of our children, but that of our neighbors, we should do all that is in our power to prevent the spread of war and ensure peace aware of the task we are responsible for in life. Mothers and women without the distinction of class, of condition, of religion, or of political conviction, all understand what force for good may come from living prayer, concentration and thoughtful meditation.\textsuperscript{471}

This communication was sent to the League and distributed through the press to locations all over the world. It exhibits the sense, present in many of the letters, of a universal desire for peace among women. In addition, it points out that the memory of the past war had not lost its influence and that there was a real fear that the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute would lead to another global war.

In an even more direct expression of world opinion, the Evangelical Women of Czechoslovakia sent a letter dated October 1, 1935 (prior to the actual outbreak of war which occurred on October 3, 1935) warning of the dire consequences of not containing this issue. The letter stated that the women were concerned by Italy’s war against Abyssinia, and “that it was a threat to world peace and also to the existence of the League of Nations.”\textsuperscript{472} Much like the previously discussed communications which focused on ideas of collective security, this

\textsuperscript{471} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 6, typed document with heading “Heure de Priere, de Concentration et de Recueillement pour la Paix: Le Dimanche, 20 Octobre 8.30 du soir. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XIV.

\textsuperscript{472} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5, typed document dated October 1, 1935 Au Conseil de la Societe des Nations Pour les femmes evangeliques de la Tchecoslovaquie. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XV.
letter informs the League not only of the impending threat of world war, but of the League’s need to settle this if it hopes to continue to exist. The Women against Poverty and War were also very direct in their concerns about where this conflict would lead. Their letter of February 1, 1936 stated, “We ask the League of Nations to intervene with Mussolini to stop the bombing and to hasten the end of this Italo-Ethiopian conflict which is a precedent that some Nations can use to trigger new wars that might engulf the world.”

They fully realized that failure to settle this conflict peacefully and with resolve had the potential to embolden Hitler. The fear of global conflict and the memory of WWI encouraged women to band together in the hope that their collective voice would result in changes of policy.

It was not unusual for international women’s groups to band with national groups and put together campaigns to influence the League. One such campaign, organized by the Women’s World Committee Against War and Fascism (Comité mondial des femmes contre la guerre et le fascisme) the International League of Mothers and of Women Teachers for the Promotion of Peace (Ligue Internationale des Meres et Educatrices pour la Paix), and the French Section of the International Women’s League for Peace and Freedom (Section Francaise de la Ligue Internationale des Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberte) was especially effective in getting support. These groups printed postcards and distributed them to their constituencies, who then passed them along to other women. Thousands of these postcards were sent to the League. There were three designs on the fronts, but the message on the back was the same. The women expressed their disgust at the attacks on unarmed people and

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473 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12, typed document dated February 1, 1936 Union des Femmes Contre La Misere et la Guerre. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XVI.
asked that the League “do everything possible to stop forthwith the massacre and prevent the spread of the conflict without sacrificing the independence or territorial integrity of Ethiopia.” These women were interested in peace, but not at the expense of Ethiopia’s independence or territorial integrity.

**IMPERIALISM**

The communication of world opinion from people of color in Euro-America was significant and is discussed at length below. However, expressions from people of color in Euro-America did not cause as much consternation among League member states as the expressions of world opinion from colonized people. The reason for this was because of the tensions that existed between the colonized people and the imperial powers after World War I. Much as slave revolts rocked the America’s in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, World War I had set the imperial scheme on edge. The Mandate system was set up to assure colonized people that the imperial powers were providing an avenue for independence, but failure to protect Ethiopia from the imperial aggression of Italy had the potential to destroy the League’s credibility with colonized people. In India support for the League was tenuous at best, but the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute tended to add to Indian frustration. Indian anger raised tensions at the League when in September 1935 reports

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474 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 8, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 9, and Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 14. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XVII.

475 India was a member of the League as part of the British Empire.
reached Genève that a Dehli Assembly had approved a resolution to withdraw from the League. In October 1935 the opposition party of the Indian Legislature approved a resolution, expressing its frustration with the “dilatory progress of the League in putting sanctions into effect.” However, as the League moved ahead with sanctions attitudes in India began to change. In November 1935 The Statesman of Calcutta did a survey to gauge support for the League. The survey focused on the Indian public’s attitude based specifically on the League’s actions regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The results, as reported in The Statesman, although not enthusiastically supportive of the League, were supportive of Ethiopia: “There is one public opinion in India about the Italo-Ethiopian dispute. Indians, high and low, and of all religions are passionately pro-Ethiopian. They have no prejudices against Italy but dislike her African policy . . . Almost unwillingly they find themselves on the side of the League.” The people of India supported the League only based on its support of Ethiopia against Italian imperial expansion.

Colonized women made their voices heard primarily through the larger women’s organizations, but there were several examples of direct contact with the League by women in the colonies. In October 1935, the National Council of Women (in India) and the All India Women’s Conference met and passed a resolution approving the League’s naming of Italy as the aggressor. These groups also encouraged the League to impose financial and economic sanctions. The Women’s India Association held public meetings and passed executive

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476 Heitt, 12.

477 Ibid.

resolutions condemning Italy’s actions. A resolution from the Egyptian Feminist Union (Union Feministe Egyptienne) dated August 31, 1935, warned the League of Nations that this conflict posed significant danger to Egypt should hostilities spread. It also stated that through peaceful settlement of the Dispute “the League would justify itself before world opinion and that it would never become the instrument of the great imperialistic powers.” There were underlying racial concerns within the international groups but, as these communications point out, colonized women made the connection between the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute and imperialism. It was not so much a “racial” concern as the entire package of their identity as colonial subjects.

Besides these groups of colonized women, a couple of other groups specifically addressed the idea of imperialism in their communication with the League. The International Alliance for Women’s Suffrage (Alliance Internationale pour le Suffrage des Femmes) (IAW), met in Geneva in September and asked the League to deal with the distribution of raw materials and support respect for the political integrity of states. Both of these issues

479 Heitt, 12-13.
480 Heitt, 12.
481 The need for this organization was decided upon in Washington in 1902. It was officially organized in Berlin in 1904. States in which there are affiliated societies include: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bermuda, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Newfoundland, New Zealand, Norway, Palestine, Peru, Porto Rico, Portugal, Rhodesia, Roumania, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Union of South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United States of America, and Uruguay. This group was founded on the principle of equality. It had two primary objectives, to secure enfranchisement for women in all nations and to educate women to be active citizens. League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations (Associations, Bureaux, Committees, etc), (Geneva: Publications Department, League of Nations, 1929), 92.
482 Heitt, 7
were of considerable concern to anti-imperialists. Although this dissertation does not delve into the problem of the distribution of raw materials, it was a topic that garnered a considerable amount of discussion in the League. In order to dissolve empire it was necessary to guarantee imperial powers cheap access to the raw materials they needed for industrial expansion and still satisfy the needs of colonized people to control the distribution of their raw materials while maintaining political and territorial integrity. In a letter dated January 28, 1936 a group of French women in the Organisation de Femmes de Malakoff (Women’s Organization of Malakoff) sent a letter to the League stating that this, “Group of mothers and wives strongly protest to you against the continuation of the Italo-Ethiopian Conflict. We support the aggressive application of sanctions against Italy. The women want the League of Nations to act to stop the war and to stop imperialism. We will fight with all of our energy for the peace of the entire world.” It is clear from these letters that there were women communicating with the League expressing their concerns about the Dispute based on the perception that it was an expansion of empire. The League was founded on the ideal of “territorial integrity and political sovereignty” and colonized people placed their hope in the League to facilitate the dissolution of empire. The attack by Italy on Ethiopia and the failure of the League and Great Powers to act quickly and decisively was seen as contrary to the League’s mission. Women who contacted the League were interested in peace, but they also realized the importance of Ethiopian independence.

483 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 8, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 13 hand written letter from the Organisation de Femmes de Malakoff dated January 28, 1936. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XVIII.
CULTURAL STANDING AND THE EXPRESSION OF WORLD OPINION

As mentioned earlier, world opinion represents the views of a finite group of people during a specific period of time. It is not necessarily a “global” representation and it was most often—especially during this period—dominated by western voices. Additionally, the people both shaping and expressing world opinion were generally elite or middle class. However, that does not discount the influence of people—in this case women—that also participated. During the period of high imperialism (1830-1914) independent Ethiopia was considered a bastion of hope for colonized people. With the defeat of the Italian military at Adowa (March 1, 1896) Ethiopia solidified its place not only among people of color, but in the minds of Europeans. The invasion of Italy enhanced a sense of racial solidarity among people of color and raised the ire of colonized people. Although all three of the major international women’s organizations claimed to be seeking equality and uniting women of all races, religions, and nations they were not completely successful at dealing with issues of race and religion. The IAW “claimed women’s rights as its primary goal, espousing a liberal feminism that sought legal and political equality with men.” As discussed previously, this political equality assumed a level of commonality between women that was naïve at best. Although that process is still not completed, the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was one situation where women of the world did make their voices heard regardless of racial differences.

When considering race in relation to world opinion regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, there are numerous issues to consider. The impact of the “racial” identity of

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Ethiopians has been considered one of the reasons that the League did not respond as quickly and decisively as they might have if it were a European state. However, the goal of this dissertation is not to examine the League’s response but rather to look at world opinion. The influence of racial identity regarding world opinion is discussed elsewhere. Here I want to examine the cooperation between women and how the responses of women of color were received by the League as well as examining the concerns of colonial women as expressed in world opinion through direct contact with the League of Nations.

The communication discussed below is the only piece of correspondence in the archive from a women’s group that identifies itself as “women of color.” There are individual women who write to the League specifically communicating their racial identity. As is seen in the next chapter, these are individuals and their communication is treated differently than that of recognized international organizations. Heitt’s article references an exchange of correspondence involving The World Union of Colored Women for Peace and International Concord and the World Union of Women for International Concord (Union Mondiale de la Femmes pour la Concorde Internationale), of which they are an affiliate and the League of nations.

The World Union of Colored Women for Peace and International Concord wrote to the League on July 9 [1935] asking that Ethiopia be given every possible consideration and on July 13 a petition signed by the heads of 31 negro

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485 League of Nations, Handbook of International Organisations (Associations, Bureaux, Committees, etc.), (Geneva: League of Nations Publications, 1938), 33-34. Founded in 1915, this group deemed itself an educational movement to promote peace. It had affiliates connected directly to the central office instead of having national sections. There were groups in Australia, Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Netherlands Indies, Norway, Poland, Roumania, Switzerland, United States of America, and Uruguay.
organizations in the United States and representing a total membership of 150,000, was presented to Mr. Benes on behalf of this organization by a Geneva committee of the Union Modiale des Femmes pour la Concorde international. The petition voiced the apprehension of colored peoples toward the developing war situation.\textsuperscript{486}

However, upon examination of the primary documents other interesting details come to light. 

*The World Union of Colored Women for Peace and International Concord* did send a document to the League, as Heitt suggests, but it did not reach its intended target.\textsuperscript{487}

In the archive, the petition from this group is accompanied by a letter from the international organization, dated September 13, 1935, which states:

\begin{quote}
Fearing to prolong the session this afternoon, we present you with a request letter which we take to heart. We have been asked by one of our branches in America, *The World Union of Colored Women for Peace and International Concord*, to transmit to the League of Nations the attached appeal. We learned that this document, submitted in August, had not reached its intended goal and we request that it be restored to us. Acknowledging the importance of the mandate that was entrusted to us, we present you this petition signed by nearly 150,000 people grouped in 31 associations. What is of particular interest is that these wishes emanate from a country that does not yet belong to the League of Nations and groups exclusively comprised of people belonging to the colored races. Sharing the same desires as the League of Nations, we try tirelessly to awaken interest and public confidence in this institution, this call is a direct result of our efforts. There also is an urgent need to give satisfaction to those which we are responsible for transmitting these calls by assuring them that they are duly welcomed by the great institution to which they
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{486} Heitt, 11.

\textsuperscript{487} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter from *The World Union of Colored Women for Peace and International Concord* signed by Fannie R. Givens.
are intended. This satisfaction is sure to be a valuable incentive for thousands to show their support for the League of Nations.\footnote{UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter from Union Mondiale de la Femme pour la Concorde Internationale dated September 13, 1935. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XIX.}

The original document was forwarded to the League in July or August, but had not been put on the correspondence list distributed to the League delegates as requested. Due to this group’s affiliation with an organization that was officially recognized by the League, this was unusual. Correspondence from recognized organizations was entered on the list and made available to the League Council. After the receipt of the letter from the international branch, the following communication was sent from the office of the Secretary General.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of September 13, 1935, addressed to the President of the Assembly, transmitting the appeal of one of the branches of the Union in America “The World Union of Colored Women for Peace and International Concord.” I will not fail to inform the council of the League of Nations of receipt of your letter, by way of the list of international non-official communications, which is distributed regularly to the Council. Please accept, Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.\footnote{UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter from signed by F. P. Walters dated September 30, 1935. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 Item XX.}

This letter, dated September 30, 1935, acknowledges the receipt of the September 13th letter. However, it does not provide any explanation about the earlier communication and why it had not been added to the list of correspondence distributed to the League delegates. Perhaps this was simply an oversight by the League communications office, but it is evident that
when the international group sent in the petition it was quickly attended to. For this group it was not unusual that *The World Union of Colored Women for Peace and International Concord* existed as such. The *World Union for Peace and International Concord* had other affiliates in member states that were recognized based on their particular interest and “The Union has succeeded in bringing about valuable concerted action between social institutions which were divided or weakened by divergent tendencies or by minority questions.”490 In this case, an international women’s organization promoted the interests of a sub-group within their body that self-identified in racial terms.

As previously stated, Jane Addams (founder of the *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom*) argued that the “League was a man-made affair.”491 Just as discussed above regarding race, at times women’s voices were discounted. In examining the correspondence concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute there are several occasions where the person handling the correspondence made comments concerning the “quality” of the opinions expressed. There were perks to being recognized by the League as a non-official organization. The communications of organizations that held this designation were put on an official list that was distributed to all League Delegates. As a result, League Delegates were informed of the world opinion expressed by these organizations. An *International Co-operative Women’s Guild*’s letter to the League in November 1935, presented an interesting example of the benefits of being a recognized group even if the communication was deemed


491 Jane Addams quoted in Madeleine Doty, “New Year Resolutions,” *Pax* 2, no. 2 (December 1926).
“foolish.” As mentioned earlier, the objectives of this organization were to “improve the conditions of home life” as well as work for peace. This group had guild chapters in thirteen countries and one of their stated activities was to “express the housewife’s point of view in international affairs” and to work in favor of “peace and total disarmament.” The goals of this group were similar to the goals of most of the groups (not just women’s groups) that were expressing their opinion to the League through correspondence.

The executive committee of the International Co-operative Women’s Guild sent a letter to the League dated November 14, 1935. Through this letter the groups asked that after peace was restored and in order to secure a lasting peace “the promises made in the peace treaties as to universal disarmament must be kept.” Additionally, after the cessation of hostilities “all nations must be given access to the sources of raw materials.” The demands this group was making were no different than those made by other groups. However, the individual at the League who processed the letter sent a communication to Mr. Walters (the individual in charge of dealing with communication) stating “This is rather a foolish communication but Miss Kallia tells me that this organisation is a respectable one, so I

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493 Guild chapters were located in Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia-Czech speaking group, Czechoslovakia-German speaking group, Irish Free State, Norway, Poland, Polish Ukraine, Sweden, Switzerland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.


suppose we must place this resolution on the list submitted to the Council.” Having read the original document it is unclear what the individual who deemed the communication “foolish” saw that elicited this response. It is not the purpose of this dissertation to examine bias, however in order to examine world opinion having a sense of the reception the communications received speaks to the effectiveness of these communications. Compared to the previously discussed communication from the World Women’s Committee against War and Fascism this letter does not call women to action. Rather, it proposed to the League what actions it needed to take. In this case, regardless of the fact that this communication was deemed “foolish,” it was added to the list and circulated.

As previously discussed the identity of women as “mothers and wives” was used by women’s groups to speak to their members and create a shared identity. In some cases this could have been used to identify with males in the League. However, it appears in this case that this organization’s identity as a “domestic” group may have worked against them. Why the person reading the letter made this connection is unknown, but the only information the person had was that it was a women’s group, plus the description of the group in the League of Nations Handbook of International Organizations. It is impossible to draw any definitive conclusions concerning this, but in contrast to the rest of the communication from women’s international groups I felt it was important to include this situation. There was no other example of such comments concerning any other international women’s organizations.

496 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 8, letter to Mr. Walters dated November 19, 1935.
However, in the next Chapter I discuss some similar comments made concerning letters from Sylvia Pankhurst.497

In both of the cases presented in this section two concerns come to light, how seriously did the League take communications from women and what role did race play in the reception of letters? Except for colonized women this is the only case of an organization whose membership is exclusively made up of women of color. It is telling that they needed the international organization (which consisted of primarily elite women of European descent) to press the League to get this letter on the communication list. Perhaps it was an oversight? In the second case the letter is from a group that identify themselves as “housewives.” Did that identity bring up stereotypes that had been associated with the cult of domesticity? Again, it is impossible to tell without imposing on the documents meanings that are not explicit. However, a thorough examination of the primary documents requires that these questions at least be considered.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has examined the materials sent to the League by women’s organizations. As mentioned previously, these materials have not been examined in any academic work. However, these documents reveal significant detail about the involvement of

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497 The decision not to include Sylvia Pankhurst in this chapter was a deliberate one. Sylvia Pankhurst is an important figure not only in regard to the international women’s movement, but also in regard to her connection with Ethiopia. However, she will not be discussed in this chapter because communication from her was not connected to the international women’s organizations through archival correspondence. In addition, the letters from her are very different than those sent in from the international women’s groups and they contribute to the argument in Chapter 5.
women in international affairs during the interwar period. Women had experienced the effects of World War I primarily through the loss of husbands, sons, brothers, and fathers. They also experienced the destruction of their homes and the depravation that war brings. Women were looking to the League for peace. The international peace organizations represented millions of women around the world, from all walks of life and ethnic communities. The correspondence shows that women in these groups recognized fascism, imperialism, and the threat of another global war as threats to world peace. In the opinion of women in the large international organizations, the League Covenant had been written to deal with these threats and provide collective security.

It was not unusual for women in these groups to be active in their states in an attempt to get them to support the League. In many cases the women were critical of their own states and encouraged the League of Nations to act in direct opposition to their state government. This was especially the case regarding the Hoare-Laval Pact. In some cases organizations went beyond their group “objectives” and got involved in lobbying the League. In addition to the large international groups like the *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom*, there were numerous national and international groups which were active in expressing en masse the opinions of women in their organizations. Whether colonized women in Egypt or India, elite American and European women, or an Empress and Princess from Africa, women saw themselves as a united front against the horrors of war. With a united voice they echoed the sentiments of the women in the *World Women’s Committee*.
against War and Fascism, “We must dare . . . Peace is in our hands, now only we can salvage it.”

And they did dare, by making their voices heard to the League of Nations.

World opinion as represented in this case study of its expression to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute by women’s international organizations reveals the complexity of its formation and expression. Additionally, it shows that within the examination of world opinion concerning women during this period resides deeper and significant sub-arguments concerning the created collective identity of women. Women, like men, exhibited concern about a variety of issues and these concerns were a part of their expression of world opinion. Although world opinion as discussed earlier is formed in a public sphere in which the individual actors move outside of the differences to support a collective concern, when it is effective these other issues—race, religion, resistance to fascism, concerns about imperialism—are used to support the issue that has gained the attention of the public.

Unlike the people represented in the previous chapter, the women’s groups represented in this chapter shared one obvious commonality: they were all women. Additionally, many of the international women’s organizations were focused on maintaining global peace. The examination of these documents contributes to the historiography of world opinion by examining the idea of public sphere through a common “identity”: in this case, women. The women represented in these organizations were primarily elite and Euro-American as well as western educated. However, these organizations did cross ideological

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498 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 typed letter from the Comite Mondial Des Femmes Contre la Guerre et La Guerre stamped received by the League on October 11, 1935. See original document Appendix Chapter 4 item XI.
and geographical boundaries. This examination shows the ways that world opinion can be formed through creating a shared public sphere. It also adds a new dimension to both world historiography and the historiography of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute by providing a way to examine the influence that the Empress and Princess Tsehai had on world opinion through their specific appeals to women. League historiography is also changed through examining these materials. These documents reveal the role women played in the League of Nations organizations and the reception of women’s opinions by the League. It also reveals the agency women expressed when contacting the League.
CHAPTER FIVE: Expressions of World Opinion from Individual Non-state Actors

One of the agonizing recollections of July, 1914, is the way in which the issue of peace and war rocked dizzily on the edge of the precipice. . . . And then suddenly . . . the whole situation crashed to the bottom. . . . The world had failed to create any machinery for the settlement of international disputes. . . . There were no precedents to serve as guides in the peaceful adjustment of quarrels, and the pyramiding of armaments between rival nations had reached dizzying heights. . . . The world had gotten itself into a blind alley from which there appeared to be no escape. . . . The League of Nations is the world’s answer to the insistent question of 7,000,000 dead who lie on Europe’s battlefields. It represents an attempt to build into international relationships and to make compulsory all the factors that were lacking in 1914; delay, discussion, arbitration, law; in other words, an obligation, written into the bond, for the human family to think before it acts, and to try the processes of peace before it resorts to those of war.

Raymond B. Fosdick
*New York Times*
October 17, 1920

In the eyes of the people of the world the League of Nations was more than an international organization. It became a symbol infused with highly explosive passions such as the fear of war and the desire for unending peace. During the interwar years people expressed their ideas to the League of Nations because at its creation the League the public viewed it as having the power to deal with international disputes.

Shifting from examinations of world opinion in broad terms, this chapter focuses the on the expression of world opinion by individual non-state actors. Individuals peopled the

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public spheres in which world opinion and public opinion were shaped and through which they were expressed. These individuals thought their opinions were significant: that they should not only be articulated, but they should be heeded. People placed hope in the League of Nations to deal with the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute in a just manner that protected peace and collective security. Unlike organizations that corresponded with the League with formal policy responses, individuals spoke from the heart, expressing a variety of concerns with the same focus of world opinion as organizations—peace and collective security. Although individuals were expressing the same general opinions as organizations, they made themselves personally accountable for communicating world opinion. The ideas developed in the public sphere influenced action on an individual level and motivated them to contact the League directly, not waiting on organizations to take action. At the very root of the expression of world opinion to the League of Nations was the individual non-state actor.

Communications to the League from organizations tended to be in the form of resolutions or petitions. These were most often well constructed and expressed a particular sentiment, i.e. sanctions, no sanctions, disarm, sue for peace, etc. Theoretically, from a political perspective, communications sent by organizations were more effective because of the volume of world opinion represented. In addition, the communications sent to the League of Nations from recognized non-official organizations were included on an “official” communication list which was made available to League delegates. Communications from individuals, on the other hand, were less readily available. Although public opinion expressed by groups represented millions of people, the correspondence from individuals is equally compelling. It is in communication from individuals that a sense of what non-elite
people of the world thought. In these letters and telegrams diverse participants communicated their concerns about world peace using religious fervor, fear of global conflict, anger at injustice, and anti-imperial sentiment as reasons for the League to act. While organizations were almost exclusively managed by the elite, individual correspondence was sent to the League from people in a variety of stations in life. From a nine year old boy in Maine\(^{500}\) to veterans from around the world,\(^{501}\) the variety of concerns was so diverse that it is difficult to place them into an organizational structure. Additionally, very few letters from organizations supported Italy yet many individuals wrote in supporting the Italian cause.

The idea that the public had the power to make a difference was communicated by letters to the League from individuals. Unlike organizations, which tended to send communications that were “formal,” individuals were more expressive. For instance, one correspondent from the U. S. stated, regarding the power of world opinion, “In view of the unanimous decision of the 50 odd nations to outlaw Italy, it is obvious that you have world Public Opinion with you, which, as you know, is the biggest factor in all disputes.”\(^{502}\) The letter goes on to suggest that the League should run a daily ad in several of the leading newspapers

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\(^{500}\) UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 8 correspondence received by the League on November 16, 1935 from Lowell Harper. In this letter a nine year old from Maine tells the League “I guess you think I am crazy trying to stop the war in Ethiopia. But I cut a piece in my paper today. It might help in try to stop the war.” In the archive there was no newspaper piece attached to the letter so one can only wonder what piece the child was speaking about.

\(^{501}\) See examples in Chapter 3.

\(^{502}\) UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 8 correspondence dated October 31, 1935 from P. Digby Roberts.
... a full page of three or four of the leading papers of all the capitols and important cities of Europe. On this page, state daily your case against Italy... specific stress being placed on the fact that Italy’s authorized representatives signed for the Italian nation along with 51 other nations, its sacred pledge to the articles of the League, that their dictator, has broken that pledge, and thus brought ignominy and loss of confidence for the Italian people. That the Italian people should know what inevitable results they are sure to suffer, by incurring the enmity of world Public Opinion, both in morale and commerce, which is the death-knell of prosperity. Such a page, blazed before the public every day is bound to filter into Italy, by word of mouth or otherwise and result in disillusion to the braggadocio of their leader.

The power of world opinion, according to this individual, would be enough to cause disillusionment among the Italian people. In addition, the writer points out what was (at the time) one of the most powerful tools for shaping world opinion—print media. It is clear that world opinion was considered a powerful tool for shaping policy and open to influence.

The examination of world opinion sent to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute is important to this dissertation because it provides a picture of individual opinion that is not present in the organizational correspondence. Individuals who were willing to invest the time and effort in writing the League of Nations showed a commitment to, and interest in, the Dispute that bears examination. The materials in this chapter are only a representative pool and more work is needed to give individual correspondence the adequate attention. However, for the purposes of this dissertation my examination serves to place individual correspondence on the map. From this material we learn, unlike the organizational

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correspondence, very practical information. First, there were numerous people who wrote to
the League of Nations supporting Italy—this was not as evident in the organizational
responses. We learn that people were concerned about the very practical impact of this
conflict not only on themselves, but on other individual people as well. Additionally,
expressions of racism and bias are more evident in individual correspondence than they were
in organizational letters. Moreover, the voices of non-elite people are more likely represented
here. Finally, we can examine how world opinion was being shaped by some of the
comments made in these documents.

Correspondence from individuals presents distinct challenges when compared to
correspondence sent in from organizations. One major issue is the anonymity of the
respondent. With organizational correspondence it is usually clear what the
organization’s focus is whether a peace group, women’s group, group of people focusing on
economic concerns etc. When dealing with individual letters, unless the person happens to be
famous, it is necessary to depend on the clues in the correspondence itself, which was
problematic and sparse. It is challenging because what an individual communicated about
him or herself may have been more related to self perception than a quantitatively important
detail. It is sparse because for the most part the people were writing concerning the Dispute
and were less forthcoming about themselves. Except for geographic location and sometimes
whether male or female, little information is available. In many cases the individuals did not
include their names or where they lived, again complicating the issues.

Another major concern in examining individual correspondence to the League is the
sheer volume. Individuals sent in thousands of documents. Some of these individuals sent in
four or five pieces of correspondence within a two year time period. Because each communication was so personal, it often could fall into multiple organizational categories, again complicating its examination in this dissertation. Although one of my goals is to bring to light the rich body of primary sources available concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, thus far I have only been able to look at the individual correspondence in a very limited manner.

Individual letters and telegrams were not as accessible to the League members as organizational materials. Additionally, individuals were less likely to go to Genève and lobby delegates than organizational representatives. One could argue that individual correspondence had little or no impact on the actions taken by League representatives. However, impact is hard to measure and is not directional. Did the people who took the time and spent the money to contact the League also contact people in their local government? The possibility is strong that they did and in many cases the individual correspondent specifically states that they sent a letter to their own government, other governments, or to Mussolini. When measuring impact it is critical to take into account that when you see one letter from a particular individual it may or may not represent contacts to numerous people. As far as changing policy one letter might make little difference, but thousands of letters might. When considering directionality, the letter writing may not have changed League policy, but what did it mean to that individual and the people they influenced? Although both are very difficult, if not impossible, to gauge they are worth consideration.
In his study of world opinion Peter Stearns provides a perspective that is important to the discussion of world opinion and individual responses to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

While the force of world opinion against Italian invasion was inadequate, the mobilization did have a more enduring consequence: enlisting the voices of leaders in Africa and the African Diaspora on human rights issues affecting this global community. Building on efforts earlier in the century to identify a pan-African constituency, various individuals and groups in Europe, the Caribbean, and the United States, as well as Africa itself, expressed strong protest against the Italian action in Ethiopia. Groups like the council on Africa, an African American lobbying organization, originated in this movement. The existence of an international African movement was an important addition to world opinion. It mobilized both on African issues and on concerns affecting African descendants, like the later civil rights movements in the United States. There was some spillover into concerns about human rights in other colonial or post colonial situations. The African and diaspora contribution to the later formation of world opinion in South African apartheid was particularly important, with direct links to the outrage generated against the Italian campaigns in the mid-1930s.⁵⁰⁴

The impact of world opinion is complicated and the long term consequences of an event such as the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute can be overlooked if other events occur near the same time that have major historical implications. That is one major reason why, although complicated, a general examination of the expression of world opinion generally and by individuals during the Italo-Ethiopian dispute is so important.

⁵⁰⁴ Stearns, 83-84.
As far as determining statistical data from the letters about the individuals that is very problematic. In some cases the people were “famous.” For instance in the section on Ethiopia in this chapter I discuss correspondence from Sylvia Pankhurst who was an important figure in both women’s international organizations and Ethiopian history. Her work as a political activism is well known. However, this Dispute changed her life and had a long term impact on historical research and academic organizations in Ethiopia itself. Generally we know that the people who contacted the League lived all over the world. People from India, South America, Africa, the United States, and various locations in Europe contacted the League during the Dispute. Because of the needed literacy to write a letter we can assume that they were educated and middle class, but that assumption is tenuous at best. We know they had access to media of one form or another; otherwise they would not have been aware of what was going on in Ethiopia. Little else can be ascertained except (as mentioned previously) for the details provided in the correspondence itself by the individual authors.

This chapter examines individual responses from men and women, looking at concerns about collective security, plans for settling the Dispute, social concerns, letters supporting one actor or the other, as well as a brief consideration of fringe opinions. I consider many of the major concerns that were evident in organizational communication. First, I look at communications dealing with collective security, including concerns about disarmament, peace, and war concerns (both anti-war concerns and those letters that focused specifically on fear of another global conflict). Materials from individuals were different from those sent in by organizations because individuals had much loftier expectations than organizations. Among individuals there was an overly optimistic expectation that the League
of Nations could “reign in” rogue states. International organizations were more likely to recognize the League’s limitations. This difference speaks to the way that media shaped world opinion among non-elite people. Because the leaders of organizations were often intimately involved in their national governments they were, by and large, aware that League action was limited. Next, I examine communications that focused more on social concerns, such as race, religion, justice, democracy, and imperialism. These topics played a more pronounced role in letters from individuals than they did in materials from international organizations. Then I look at letters that were supportive or condemning of the actors in the Dispute. Again, support for Italy was extremely limited in communications from organizations, but did play a role in letters from individuals. Additionally, strong support for Ethiopia was communicated in terms of shared identity. In both cases individual responses were distinct from those in organizational communication. Finally, I examine what I have deemed to be fringe materials—materials that express opinions and solutions outside of the “mainstream.” These materials are not easily placed in one of the above categories, yet they are interesting and provide another way to examine expressions of world opinion during this period. These are important to the discussion of world opinion because they reveal that people were thinking through a solution which indicates that they were aware of the possible terms for settlement of the Dispute. This indicates that they were exposed to media which was actively discussing the topic. In each of these categories there are contending ideas, much more so than the organizational correspondence represented. Consideration of communication from individuals provides depth and balance to the discussion of world opinion as expressed to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. By
examining this correspondence in this final chapter I accomplish two critical goals: giving voice to non-elite people and providing a sampling of materials available concerning the Dispute that have not been examined as a unit.

**COLLECTIVE SECURITY**

The relationship between the League of Nations, nation states, and empires was complicated during the early period of the League’s history. The League’s role in collective security and peace was seen as pivotal, but the implementation of this power was murky. After the end of World War I the major imperial powers, of which Britain was the most influential, were attempting to maintain power while navigating the “new world order.” The people of the world were, generally, convinced that imperialism was a major factor in igniting WWI. They were looking to the League to grant independence to colonized people in an orderly fashion through the mandate system outlined in the Covenant. Imperial powers were loathe to commit themselves to any particular political action that would jeopardize their economic or political power.\(^5^0\)\(^5\) This complex interweaving of interests of empire and obligations to an international body (the League of Nations) committed to peace presented a landscape rife with landmines. State interests had to be weighed against maintaining peace, and the impact any action would have on the legitimacy of the League. For the most part, peace at all cost was the primary directive.

In expressions of world opinion sent to the League during the interwar period, and intricately woven into the desire for peace, was the focus on collective security. With its inception at the 1919 Peace Conference, the League took shape as an institution geared toward creating an international body that could facilitate international relations on a contractual basis, which gave member states a venue from which to settle disputes. In addition, the League was set up “to give the people of the world practical and effective means for expressing and affirming their will to peace.” The public had a distorted view of what the League could do for numerous reasons the most prominent of which was that states had over emphasized League power to get their citizens to support League membership. This distorted perspective was especially evident in communications from individuals and many of the letters to the League during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute offered suggestions for settling the Dispute that went beyond what the League could do. More importantly, they went beyond what powerful member states (Britain and France) were willing to support. In the preamble to the League Covenant it clearly defines the role the League was tasked to take on the stage of world affairs. The League was created:

In order to promote international cooperation and to achieve international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war, by the prescription of open, just and honorable relations between nations, by the firm establishment of the understanding of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another.  

506 Marcel Hoden, “Europe without the League” Foreign Affairs. 1 October 1939, 14.

The Covenant put larger and smaller states on an even playing field, or so it would seem. They were to interact according to the obligations put forth in the Covenant. The structure demanded that each state respect the independence and sovereignty of member states. No state had the right to act independently of the League and to resort to violence against member states. Instead, they were to discuss their issues and submit to arbitration.

Individuals looked to the League as a way to utopian peace. For instance, one letter from India provides some of the lofty ideals attributed to the League.

The League was conceived and inaugurated in that highest spirit of political wisdom . . . Ever since its inception in 1920, it has of course done much service for the benefit of the world, and if the League has anywhere shown signs of disappointing . . . it is because of the failure of some Powers to abide by the League Spirit. . . . The Italo-Abyssinian dispute would have by this time drifted into war but for the League. The world is still hoping that Mussolini would be brought into a reasonable frame of mind, and that Italy’s enlightened Self-interest would dissuade him from a Suicidal course.  

This individual’s letter brings up several pertinent aspects of the types of letters written to the League. The writer’s expression of hope that the League would be able to facilitate peaceful settlement and support for the League as an organization is a recurring element.

As the September 1935 meeting of the League of Nations approached, at which they were scheduled to discuss the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, letters to the League increased in

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508 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 correspondence received by the League on September 25, 1935 from Sachehida Nauda, Bengal. Two important notes concerning this letter, it is impossible from the letter to tell the status of this person. However, it should be noted that the individual was hopeful of going to work for the League.
number both from individuals and organizations. People watched closely to see what the League would do. The threat to collective security represented by the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was of great concern to people all over the world, including the United States. Although the U. S. did not join the League, Americans were very active in letting the League members know their opinions. One compelling example from J. B. Murray, in New York, who wrote to the League several times and also to the French Government concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, specifically addressed the idea of collective security.

Since its formation, the League of Nations has been in a formative condition, like the “Federation” of States [referring to the formation of the United States]. Now a crisis has arisen which discloses a weakness in that League, the possibility of one member aggrandizing itself by swallowing up in whole or in part a weaker member. By a repetition of that process, and the resulting increase in extent and power of a single member, ultimately no member of the League would be safe. . . . That became obvious to the weaker members of the League, and perhaps also to some of those stronger and accounts for the flocking of members to the standard raised by England in support of the integrity of the League . . . they realized that “United we stand, divided we fall” and that in unity alone lay their strength and safety, -their (as Stanley Baldwin so tersely phrased it) “Collective Security.”

Murray goes on to suggest that France would benefit from supporting the British position and the League. In this communication the idea of nationalism is joined with internationalism in a way that is evident in numerous communications. World opinion from individuals was often formed by what people read in their local newspapers or heard their local politicians say.

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while the opinion sent from organizations were carefully crafted by their leadership and represented the interests of the group and not necessarily individual interests. As a result individuals were more likely to express frustration with their own state government as well as with the actions of another state. In Murray’s letter three entities were addressed: small states, large states, and because the letter was written to Pierre Laval, Prime Minister of France, French actions. The idea that if the League did not stand and act decisively “no state was safe,” was a critical aspect of collective security. Collective security embodied not just the idea of peace, but a sense that the League should deal with aggression before it became widespread.

For many people in the 1930s, the memory of World War I was still quite vivid. In the opinion of many Americans, the United States had been drawn into a “European” war, and the increasing tension in Europe did not bode well for peace there. As a result many Americans were concerned that world peace was threatened. Murray’s letter goes on to more specifically address the crossroads that many felt the League (and thereby the world) had reached:

In reality, the present crisis is a God send. It is an opportunity given you and given all the members of the League to achieve your independence from the Servitude of War to the Liberty of Peace, by strengthening the Covenant between you, and thereby emancipating yourselves from Fear, and the Slavery of not knowing at what moment your people may be summoned forth to slaughter under the tyranny of present governments and conditions, - to obtain in exchange the Freedom of Peace, the undisturbed enjoyment of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness . . . It compels you [France] to decide whether you will choose a peaceful Europe and achieve your independence,
or continue the old conditions of plannings, plotting, Fear and War.  

Although this letter was from an American, the sentiment expressed was a thread that connected the communications of those who viewed collective security as a primary concern, as is seen in more detail below.

The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, in the eyes of many, was a test for the League of Nations. Could the League be an effective organization to overcome state interests and protect the world from another global conflagration? That question was at the heart of the League’s very existence. On October 3rd Murray wrote once again, this time urging the League to action: “All that now is required is courage, -courage not on the parts of one, two or three nations alone, but courage on the part of all. . . The Rubicon is before you, -only this time it is a rightful Rubicon. Will you cross it? Only by acting unitedly, can you hope to have safety;-can you hope to have Permanent peace.”

In retrospect the idea of “permanent peace” seems idealistic. However, for people during this time there was a genuine hope that another global war would not happen.

Even so, as universal as the idea of a permanent peace was, the methods to achieve this peace were varied among those individuals who wrote to the League of Nations. Some saw sanctions as the answer, while others focused solely on general disarmament. Other ideas were more complex and focused on compromise. Although both organizations and

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individuals communicated with the League about collective security, individuals expressed a deep passion for permanent peace based in idealism. Regarding the shaping of world opinion this suggests that the shaping of world opinion among the elite leadership of organizations was emanating from sources that were aware of League limitations, while non-elite people getting their information from the popular press were more likely to have unrealistic expectations.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR ENDING THE DISPUTE**

Regardless of whether individuals expressing their opinions to the League were seeking peace or collective security, plans for how to achieve the ultimate goal of settling the conflict without an expansion of hostilities was a critical concern. The League received a variety of plans on how to settle the Dispute from college professors to laborers. Some strategies were very simple others quite elaborate. Although a few organizations sent in plans to the League of Nations about how to settle the Dispute these were much more prevalent in correspondence from individuals. Also, the plans from individuals were generally much more detailed and complex.

The plans to settle the Dispute provided by individuals present a marked distinction from those sent in by groups in both varieties of solutions and in quantity of plans. For every one plan sent in by an organization there were three sent in by individuals. One can only postulate why individuals were so comfortable sending the League of Nations solutions to a
problem that baffled the diplomats and politicians. However, two elements are evident. The people of the world in large numbers had buy-in when it came to the League of Nations. Colonized people and people in smaller states viewed the League as the great equalizer—or at the very least hoped that would be the case. People from Euro-America believed that not only would their voices be heard, but their suggestions would be welcomed and were worthy of being enacted by the League of Nations. Why did individuals feel such buy-in? That is a complicated matter, but two major contributing factors were: the way states promoted the League in order to gain public support for membership and the continued coverage of League activities in the popular media. Another contributing factor was hope. It is this factor that is a major distinction between organizational responses and individual responses. Although organizations suggested that they had hope the League would act, individuals were more committed to the idea. War, economic depression, and a general social malaise characterized this period in world history. Yet, the people of the world wanted to believe that the League of Nations would bring the world peace and prosperity, health and safety. Because of these factors individuals had both motivation to write the League of Nations and confidence that their ideas would be considered.

An Austrian proposal is representative of many of the suggestions made in correspondence to the League. In this letter the author suggests, “Ethiopia should make concessions of territory to Italy but not of sovereign possessions, more like the concessions in China. Subsequently there should be a plebiscite to see whether the inhabitants of the concessions would prefer to be Italians. There should be League commissioners in the rest of Ethiopia to help modernize it, with perhaps international military forces. There should also
be international law courts."\textsuperscript{512} This letter was sent in November 1935 and in December 1935 (shortly after the release of the Hoare-Laval Pact) the author contacted the League again to find out if the plan that had been sent in was going to be used.

Detailed in my letter of 21 November this year, containing various peace proposals for the accommodation of the conflict, addressing the current president of the League of Nations... I have not at present learned that my proposals would be used. If possible that the Franco-English peace proposals are accompanied by poor success, I beg you to kindly present and use my propositions at the next meeting of the Council in the interest of peace. A supplement to my proposals of 21 November I would suggest once again, that in the interest of better and faster economic development of the two (currently belligerent) countries... that Italy receive the right to build a railway between the Italian Colonies of Italian Eritrea and the Somali with all the same rights of control, protection and administration (and neither more nor less) as analogous in case of the French railway between Djibouti and Addis Ababa, if Abyssinia first receives a sovereign way to the sea, with a port, with the same right to build a railroad into two parts: on each hand-is great profit and advantage, and neither party has any detriment and disadvantage.\textsuperscript{513}

The author’s confidence in contacting the League of Nations is clear as the correspondent’s awareness of pervious treaties, again pointing out that individuals who contacted the League had a sense of world politics. This proposal contains the essence of numerous plans that were sent to the League. Italy would receive some land and a railroad to connect its colonies and Ethiopia would get access to the sea that was sovereign. These plans came from people living

\textsuperscript{512} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 8 letter dated November 21, 1935 from Innsbruck. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item I.

\textsuperscript{513} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 17, 1935 from Innsbruck. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item II.
in a variety of geographic areas. It is interesting that they seem so similar in nature. This
speaks to the way information was dispersed through radio and print media. It is clear that
the people sending this correspondence to the League are aware of the concerns that both the
Italians and Ethiopians had expressed concerning the Dispute.

Another, more elaborate plan was sent in from a “native” of Argentina. This letter sets out a detailed description of how Italy and Ethiopia should settle the Dispute through mutual agreement. It contains all of the elements of the aforementioned plan with a few distinct differences. The author of this letter acknowledges recognition of Italy’s need for revenge “I understand that Italy has had the satisfaction that their arms require in order to avenge their past defeats on African soil.” An acknowledgement of the perception that Italy would not give up the lands it had already won in the conflict was also present. This letter was sent in December 1935 after the Hoare-Laval Pact had been released and refused. However, the Italians had not yet taken Addis Ababa (which did not happen until May 1935).

The map, in Figure 1, was included to show what the correspondent felt would be an acceptable land compromise. As noted on the map the Italians would gains the land in red and the Ethiopians would have access to the Indian Ocean through the area with hash marks. In addition to this, Ethiopia would get access to the holy city of Axum through a small corridor. Italy also would be compelled by the League of Nations to fulfill certain obligations including, “the construction of an Ethiopian port on the Indian Ocean, the construction of a railway from this port to Addis Ababa, and the construction of roads from Addis Ababa to all

514 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 21, 1935 from Buenos Aires, Argentina. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item III.
capitals of the Ethiopian provinces.”^515 There were also financial concessions that were part of this plan. “Italy would provide Ethiopia an interest-free loan for the acquisition of its merchant fleet, which will be amortized with 50% of Customs fees to its cancellation.” In exchange, Italy would be able to work Ethiopia’s mines for ten years. Fifty percent of what was produced would be used to amortize the capital invested by Italy. Once the payment of capital was finished Ethiopia would receive eighty percent of the net earnings and twenty

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515 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 21, 1935 from Buenos Aires, Argentina. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item III.
percent would go to Italy." In addition, “Italy would be obliged to purchase all of Ethiopia’s agricultural products and livestock at the set international prices for ten years.

As you can see this was a very complicated plan and it sounded very similar to the League of Nations Mandates handed down after WWI.

As mentioned, there were numerous plans put forth by individuals to settle the Dispute, which speaks to the place this event held in the public eye. Some, like the one above were quite elaborate, while others were quite simple. One letter suggests closing the Suez Canal to Italian ships and then offering Italian soldiers the option of staying in Ethiopia and working. Others express understanding of Italy’s need for resources and the “need” for colonies suggesting that,

Although in public opinion Italy is held as an aggressor Nation, there is no doubt the fact to be considered that the Creator intends that the natural resources of the earth shall be used for the greatest benefit of mankind. Under such an arrangement Italy would acquire much needed Oil and Mineral lands and territory for colonization, and Ethiopia would have money for development and thus be enabled to become a small nation of the first class.

516 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 21, 1935 from Buenos Aires, Argentina. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item III.

517 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 21, 1935 from Buenos Aires, Argentina. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item III.

518 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter received by the League of Nations on October 4, 1935 and discussed in League communication entitled Résumé. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item IV.

Although world opinion as expressed to the League of Nations by individuals during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was solidly on the side of Ethiopia, it was clear that those (primarily of European descent) which advocated compromise as a solution to the conflict viewed Ethiopia in a “colonial” perspective. This presents another aspect of concerns sent to the League of Nations during the Dispute from individuals that was distinct from opinions sent in by organizations. Letters from individuals focused more or were more likely to identify social concerns as major issues in their letters.

**SOCIAL CONCERNS**

The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute not only brought to the forefront issues with the League of Nations and concern about the ability of the League to adequately enforce collective security for the world, it also elicited responses on the basis of social justice. During the inter-war years the world was experiencing major changes. Communism was on the rise in USSR and Democratic movements were spreading across the globe. At the same time, the League of Nations Mandates were offering hope to colonized peoples that they would soon be free of imperial control. Places like India were moving rapidly toward independence, while in other situations imperial control was being strengthened as in the case of Japan and China. Economic depression had engulfed Europe and the United States after WWI and contributed to the rise of fascism in Italy and National Socialism (Nazism) in Germany. World opinion as expressed to the League of Nations through correspondence from individuals reveals that social concerns were prominent in the minds of the people of the
world. This section examines correspondence that addressed imperialism, justice, race and religion. These topics provide a very personal look at what the individuals who wrote to the League were thinking in relation to the Ital-Ethiopian Dispute. Additionally, this aspect of communication with the League was a major distinction between individual and organizational correspondence. Individuals were more expressive when it came to discussing social concerns.

To understand the expression of world opinion in the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute which dealt with the social ideas of race, religion, justice, and imperialism it is necessary to have a sense of the place that Ethiopia held in the public mind. Ethiopia was an almost mythical place in the eyes of many people of color around the world. As William R. Scott, speaking of the idea of Ethiopianism\(^{520}\) suggests, “In December 1934, when the Italo-Ethiopian conflict erupted, this complex of religious, romantic and political ideas known as Ethiopianism still persisted as an important theme in Afro-American thought, contributing significantly to the immense reaction of Afro-Americans to the war.\(^{521}\) However, Americans of African descent were not the only ones who were impacted by the success of a small non-European state against a European imperial power. As we have seen, Italian imperialism in Ethiopia during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute caused an outcry of international protest. Why such an outcry

\(^{520}\) Ethiopianism was a complex ideal held by Africans throughout the world and also a part of the identity of colonized people. It was a religious movement that derived from references to Ethiopia in the Christian Bible and was reinforced by the Ethiopian defeat of Italy at Adowa in March 1896. In time the movement spread from its location of inception in sub-Saharan Africa during the colonial period to Africans throughout the world. It embodied not only religious elements, but also represented the dignity of black Africans. In addition, adherents to the movement were expressing their frustration at discrimination and the hierarchical structures of Euro-American society. Their desire was for restoration of African political and cultural autonomy.

over a situation that has only gained slight attention by historians? It is partially due to the
fact that Ethiopia had been welcomed into the League as an equal with the other states.

Ethiopia, like all of the states that signed the Covenant, agreed to mutual support and respect
for territorial sovereignty and political independence. When Italy invaded the Ethiopian
Emperor Haile Selassie, sent this message to the League in the hands of Captain Brophil, of
the Red Cross,

> My country, which has never thought in terms of war, and
taken steps to protect itself against modern warfare, is being
attacked by the best-equipped military nation in the world. A
defenseless nation, accused of being backward, is being treated
with medieval barbarism. For what? We have done nothing to
Italy. We foster no imperialist ambitions, and desire nothing
except to be left in peace and rear our children as citizens of
Ethiopia. Instead, we are being tortured by a ruthless invader
who cares not for sanctity of human life, property or the written
and spoken pledge. We are being gassed and bombed. The
screams of women and children rise from the smoking ruins of
our towns and cities, while Europe talks. We ask for nothing to
which we are not entitled; nothing except that our inalienable
rights be respected, that Italy be checked, and that the great
Nations responsible for the League Covenant respect the
obligations it involves.522

The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute garnered a larger response in communication sent to the League
than any other conflict. The reasons for this are complex and include the timing of the
incident as well as the legendary reputation of Ethiopia. The fact that they had remained an
independent state while an entire continent was carved up by Europeans and their identity as

522 Quoted in a small pamphlet by Norman Angell entitled “Mustard Gas and You.” (Crescent, South Wales:
a Christian nation were also major contributors. This combined with the fear of fascism created a perfect storm for response when Italy invaded. As Scott points out,

Italian imperialism in Ethiopia provoked an outburst of international concern, sympathy, and in some instances vehement protest from the general public. Private citizens the world over denounced Italy’s violation of Ethiopian sovereignty, describing the incursion as a deliberate act of war and plunder which the civilized world abhorred. It was reported from Geneva that international peace groups, labor unions, and religious bodies had soundly condemned Italian imperialism and that the colonized peoples of color in India, Africa, the Middle East and America were demanding justice for both Ethiopia and themselves.\textsuperscript{523}

Indeed, the public outcry against Italy was strong, but it was not the only voice. As discussed below there were many who wrote the League in sympathy with Italy. Yet, overwhelmingly support for Ethiopia poured into the League.

From Czechoslovakia came a note after a public meeting in Muglinova “in accordance with the demands of the workers of every country in Europe and the world, the suitable and necessary measures against the aggressors and disturbers of the peace. We express our determined anti-war and anti-imperialist sentiments, and we resolved to uphold peace by the side of its true defenders.”\textsuperscript{524} This note brings up a major movement active in the world during this period that had a profound impact on world opinion: the communist movement. Workers were uniting in support of their fellow workers and any population

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\textsuperscript{524} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter received by the League of Nations on October 14, 1935 from Sefan Mercak Registry letter no 664.
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deemed in need of support against the imperialist European states.\textsuperscript{525} These concerns were especially evident in correspondence from individuals from a non-western setting.

One response, from South Africa (it is unclear if this individual was of European descent), provided a plan for a military force to be created and used by the League to deal with general hostilities. This communication suggested that sanctions were too slow and that Italy was false in its dealings with the League “making war . . . in the midst of peace negotiations.”\textsuperscript{526} Speaking to Italy’s concern about their expanding population and the idea that they needed colonies for their people to live in, this individual suggested that the League limit population growth, asking “Could not then, your League make it an International Law, that all marriages must be limited to three or four children.”\textsuperscript{527} Although, this sounds like a rather “fringe” suggestion it exemplifies the frustration of people living outside of Europe about the attitude that “other places” were available for European settlement. Of course it also speaks to the frustration of the people of the world with European family politics.

The idea of justice was expressed by many of the letters the League received. Some suggested the war was an “unjust” war and as such had to be stopped. One such letter from Britain provides a good example of some of the ideas that were present in many of the letters.

\textsuperscript{525} For a discussion of imperialism from a communist perspective that is applicable to this time period see Vladimir Lenin’s \textit{Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism; a Popular Outline} : Rev. Translation. London: Lawrence, 1934. First published in 1916.

\textsuperscript{526} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 letter dated January 20, 1936 from Cape Town, South Africa.

\textsuperscript{527} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 letter dated January 20, 1936 from Cape Town, South Africa.
The world (outside Italy) is agreed that the war against Abysinia is an unjust war—a war of conquest pure and simple—and as such it is universally condemned. If God is just, then an unjust war must be condemned by Him also. Hence, if Italy was to win her war it would be not only victory over Abyssinia and the League, but a victory over God. Is it at all likely that such a victory will be achieved? Italy may be mighty, but is it mightier than God? . . . Presumably when Italy started her war she had no idea that it would arouse such a strong and world-wide opposition. . . . The League was founded to “stamp out” war, and to this end its members agreed to take collective action against any aggressor. Therefore in imposing Sanctions upon Italy the League members are simply fulfilling their obligations. They have no desire to injure Italy; their desire is to protect themselves in the future by making “Collective Security” a reality.528

This like many of those sent to the League express the idea that the authors do not condemn Italy, but that this war is a war of conquest and in direct violation of the League Covenant. Even among people in Euro-America there was a growing sentiment that imperialism had to end and international justice prevail. Both individuals and organizations expressed these ideas, but individuals tended to add correspondence with Mussolini directly and the religious expressions exhibited here. One aspect illustrated in this letter and representative in much of the individual correspondence was the idea that Mussolini was a rational individual and that he would be moved by this correspondence. The author makes a note at the beginning that a copy of this letter was sent to Mussolini. Again, this was a common occurrence. Many respondents sent Mussolini letters urging him to change his position toward Ethiopia. In addition, the references to religion and to God’s opinion of the war are important because of

the connection between the Catholic Church and Italy. Again, world opinion was on the side of peace and the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was a serious threat to collective security.

The idea of justice was directly connected to the League of Nations which was expected, according to world opinion, to keep the peace and protect member states. One individual puts it quite plainly, “What the dickens do you reckon you’re doing? Where’s the League of Nations? Mobilize every country in the world immediately and march on Italy, give them the choice of being wiped out or doing their worst in the world. . . . Tell the Italians they must look upon these frontier incidents as we do the N. W. frontier in India, bound to happen now and again.” Expressions of world opinion clearly saw justice as the League’s business. This letter which was sent to the League shortly after the Italian invasion of Ethiopia calls for strong action. Many of the communications that dealt with the idea of justice demanded aggressive action. In a letter from Sweden the writer suggests anyone who forcibly enters someone else’s property and “murders tens of thousands of people and bombards and destroys hospitals and mission houses should not be rewarded with the acquisition of land, but should be condemned to death by slow torture.” It was clear that

529 It should be noted that the Catholic Church was not outwardly supportive of Mussolini at first. In time the Pope did give passing approval to the invasion of Ethiopia. Note of this is made by Helen Heitt in her article previously cited on “Public Opinion and the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.” Citing a statement by the Pope in April of 1935 Heitt suggests that if prayers and efforts toward peace were unsuccessful it would be necessary to entreat God to “confound the nations whose will is war.” (Heitt, 14) However, in a speech by Cardinal Pacelli, Papal Secretary of State addressing at a conference attended by a number of important fascist leaders the Cardinal hailed the Duce as “the rebuilder of Imperial Rome and the patron of culture.” (This was reported in the New York Herald, February 24, 1936).

530 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 6 letter received by the League of Nations on October 16, 1935 from Maurice Hughes.

these correspondents were not supportive of peace at the expense of Ethiopia and wanted the League to exact swift and decisive retribution against Italy. This is another difference between organizational responses and those from individuals; individuals were more likely to express extreme views such as the one in this letter that Mussolini should be “condemned to death by slow torture.”

Other expressions of world opinion from individuals clearly recognized that Ethiopia was being used as a pawn to buy Italy’s favor. After the release of the Hoare-Laval plan the following letter was written and is an example of many of the documents the League received,

There must be thousands or even millions of people in this country alone, who are looking . . . to the League to see what justice is done to Abyssinia and not to allow the Great Powers to make some unfair bargain about that country in order to buy Italian support with the present European crisis. Up to the time of the . . . ‘Peace Proposals’ I was a keen supporter of the National Government and of the politics for which P.M. Baldwin stood. It must be difficult for any foreigner to realize what the feeling in this country at that time was. People of all classes and shades . . . whether they cared about the League or not were horrified at the government’s actions in helping to bring forward those proposals. If you will stand for justice now I assure you that you will have the support of the British People. 532

This communication illustrates the concern of many of the people who wrote to the League that the Great Powers were more invested in protecting political interests than they were in

532 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 letter dated April 4, 1936 from Hoardene, Church Hill, Camberley, Surrey.
acting in accordance with their obligations as outlined in the League Covenant. As previously discussed, they also saw the League as a place to express their frustration with their own governments in the expectation that the League could act independently of the Great Powers. They expected the League to stand for justice when their own states would not. Although not different from organizational responses, this again illustrates the perception individuals had about the League as an advocate of international justice when the states were not supporting the world’s best interest over the states.

Once Italy had taken Addis Ababa and Haile Selassie (May 1936) had fled to London the League met to discuss the removal of sanctions and at Britain’s request recognition of Italy’s sovereignty over Ethiopia. This created another strong response of world opinion from individuals sent to the League regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. One letter from the United States provides a clear overview of what many of the correspondents expressed.

In the name of Justice, Honour, Honesty, and Sincerity we the undersigned feel it our duty to beseech you to do everything possible to aid Ethiopia and Emperor Haile Selasse in their hour of greatest need. We implore you to aid the cause of justice by advocating:

1. Non recognition of Italy’s claim of annexation of Ethiopia.
2. Maintenance of existing sanctions against Italy.
3. Additional Sanctions (e.g. Oil, Credit, Loan)
4. Restoration of the complete Sovereignty of Ethiopia.
5. Indemnity to Ethiopia by Italy.

The civilized world looks on in horror and amazement at the wanton aggression by a powerful State upon a defenseless and peaceful people. Rape, mass murders, poison gas, and every conceivable barbarity have been inflicted on even women and children by Italy a member of the League upon Ethiopia another member. Many of your petitioners fought in France, Belgium and Italy during the World War in response to the cry
“Remember suffering Belgium and bleeding France!” The bones of many of the fathers of your petitioners rest in the fields of Flanders. They gave their lives “To make the World Safe for Democracy.” Have we sacrificed in vain?

Gentlemen, you cannot desert Ethiopia and leave her to the atrocious aggressor, any more than your respective Governments would desert the vaults of their Treasuries and leave them to a band of armed robbers. Let Justice and Honesty prevail, then and only then can we sincerely say “Peace on Earth, Goodwill to Men.”

This letter signed by five people touches the very heart of the issue for many of those who wrote to the League. What did we fight the last war for if it was not to protect smaller states from aggression and to “make the world safe for democracy?” Individuals were strongly interested in the League’s success. People wanted peace and this desire for peace was a great motivator for individuals to contact the League. World opinion as expressed by individuals was shaped in part by print media. At the same time that the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was making headlines so were activities in Germany. Such events as the Enabling Act (March 23, 1934) giving Hitler plenary powers, the Night of the Long Knives (June 30 and July 2, 1934), and later the remilitarized the Rhineland (March 7, 1936) all created great concern among individuals. As the writer of this letters asks “Have we sacrificed in vain?”

The public was not unaware of the danger to world peace represented by the activities of Italy and Germany. In concert they were even more of a concern. Germany was not a member of the League of Nations, but Italy was and the public sensed that if Italy were stopped in its bid for Ethiopia it might give Germany pause. However, as the public

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perceived a great cleavage was developing and events in Germany had a significant influence on how individuals communicated with the League of Nations regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. This is a distinction between individual and organizational responses that bears examination.

One example relates to the League of Nations decision to apply sanctions to Italy after their attack on Ethiopia October 3, 1935. The impact of world opinion on this quick action by the League was expressed through numerous letters. In order to put this discussion in context, it is useful to consider what influence this quick action had on Italy and Germany. The only other major conflict that the League dealt with up to this time—the Manchurian Conflict—it had taken a year to even consider any action against Japan, and by then it was too late. Marcel Hoden, an eyewitness to these events, provided a compelling perspective about how the League’s response to Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia influenced both Italy and Germany,

Intense fear was aroused both in Germany and Italy, as we know now for a certainty from numerous witnesses, diplomatic, military and other. Mussolini has never been able to forgive or forget the deep anxiety which descended on his people, while in Germany too the impression made on the public by the League’s prompt and vigorous action was profoundly disturbing to the Nazi Government. From that moment the two dictators realized that they had no choice: the influence of the League must be destroyed.  

The diplomatic aspects of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute are not the topic of this dissertation, but the concerns addressed here are important because they are echoed in the letters written

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534 Hoden, 17-18.
to the League. In this case the League acted quickly and voted to impose sanctions. However, its quick action to impose sanctions was stalled by the inaction of the powerful states. Additionally, diplomatic ties were not severed with Italy (the named aggressor in this Dispute) as the Covenant demanded and this left the door open for more ‘back door diplomacy.’ This failure to sever diplomatic ties did not go unnoticed. Several people recognized that failure to severe diplomatic ties would weaken League power and wrote to the League as a result calling on it to abide by the Covenant. “I call on you, in accordance with your obligations under Article 16 of the League Covenant, to sever all diplomatic relations with Italy, and to take immediate and effective action to stop Mussolini . . . in Africa.” The individuals who wrote to the League of Nations were quite clear that the League needed to act decisively and made it clear that what the League did regarding Italy would influence Germany. Organizations did not make this clear connection, even though it could be assumed they too recognized the threat.

When taking into account the deteriorating situation in Europe, Hitler’s appointment as Chancellor in 1933 and then his ascension to President in 1934 and the general unrest in Germany due to the severity of the depression, besides the threat of rearmament in Germany the entire world on edge. Although Britain and France were trying to appease both Italy and Germany, many saw this as an affront to the lives of those who died in World War I. Imperial ideology was recognized as a contributor to WWI and Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia was identified by the public as imperial expansion.

The ideas of imperialism race and justice are intertwined in many of the communications sent to the League by individuals. One of the most interesting letters that talked about these issues was from a woman. “Is it not monstrously unjust and cowardly to permit the use of air planes armed with deadly bombs by Italy in Ethiopia when the Ethiopians are not equipped with them? The use of planes on one side, and not upon the other, is manifestly, unfair/even inhuman. Yet this is done without Europe protesting.”

Figure 2 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 20, 1935 from Mrs. R. Alice von Benninghoven.

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However, it was not just the words that condemned the action the correspondent includes a cartoon (Figure 2) with comments that expressed even more poignantly the message. A close examination of the cartoon revealed not just the actual print, but the very strongly worded comments by the writer of this letter. Like many of the people who corresponded with the League there was a clear message that the European powers were “ganging up” on the people from the rest of the world. Note Mussolini is sitting on Haile Selassie. This document also speaks to how print media was a powerful tool for shaping world opinion among individuals, perhaps even more than it did organizations. Groups were led by elite people who had direct access to government leaders. Their responses to the Dispute were, most likely, partially influenced by these relationships as well as the prevailing goals of the group. Race was not specifically mentioned as a concern by the writer of this letter, but the association with the cartoon was clear. In addition, the imperialist connotation was also present.

Expressions of world opinion, from individuals, that dealt with race specifically reveal the imperialist perspective that was present in the European states. Even those who were supporting Ethiopia use rather charged language in their correspondence. For instance one letter from Sweden contained an appeal to the League “to stop the wholesale murder of the black race.” In another letter, forty-five people joined together stating, “We . . . lovers of peace and human treatment for all peoples, regardless of nationality or colour. Do View with . . . horror, the shameful atrocities committed in Abyssinia under the direction of

537 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 letter dated January 18, 1936 from Mr. Landtmasson (the original letter is missing so the information is from a note included in the archive folder).
Mussolini.” Here the signatories appeal to the League as members of a global community. Again, after World War I great hope was placed in the League to deal with imperial expansion. This expression of world opinion by individuals clearly shows that these particular people were standing with the Ethiopians not because of race, but in spite of it. They were standing against aggression by greater powers on lesser powers. Later in the letter it states “In the name of our common humanity we make an urgent appeal for drastic measures by the “League,” to bring about an early termination of this wicked onslaught on a defenseless people.” Again, although standing with Ethiopia and for humanitarian treatment there was a perception of the Ethiopians as “defenseless.” It is relevant to note that this perspective was enunciated by Emperor Haile Selassie as noted in the speech referenced above. “My country, which has never thought in terms of war, and taken steps to protect itself against modern warfare, is being attacked by the best-equipped military nation in the world. A defenseless nation.” Selassie’s speech was published in newspapers and talked about in radio broadcasts. Because it was in Amharic it was not readily accessible by most individuals in the original language.

Another letter provides an example of some of the communications to the League which use race as a part of their discussion. This letter from a British soldier specifically

538 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 letter dated April 14, 1936 from Ernest C. Burt.

539 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 letter dated April 14, 1936 from Ernest C. Burt.


541 New York Times, July 1, 1936.
addresses Frances back door diplomacy and then stated “Whether a person be black or white give them the same sort of justice as you expect. Mussolini is as much a barbarian as the worst of the black races . . . there are other ways to tame a wild race without bombing women and children.” This letter reveals a bit of the formation of world opinion regarding the Dispute. Mussolini’s representative to the League, Aliosi, brought a lengthy document to the September 1935 League of Nations Assembly pointing out the barbarity of the Ethiopians and suggesting that Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia was a “humanitarian” effort to deliver the people of Ethiopia from their “barbaric” past. As this letter from the British soldier (as well as many others) indicated there was public concern that barbarity was not just the prevue of Ethiopians. Mussolini’s advocacy of bombing women and children as well as using gas was also barbaric.

There were also those who wrote as a response to shared racial identity. These primarily came from the United States. One example came from a woman in the United States.

Ethiopia, Ethiopia sympathy, Black America sends to you. Our hearts are heavy with regret that we have so little to offer. Do we owe allegiance to a country that does the same to us that Italy is doing to you? There is no difference. Mustard gas and machine guns bring no surer death than the lynchers’ rope or southern bullets. We thought that civilization and Christianity reigned supreme. That’s the message missionaries bring to you. Somewhere in Holy Writ, we were taught, too, that someone was his brother’s keeper. Ethiopia, we have found, you and I, it does not mean black brother. We are the targets at which civilization fires. Exploited by both Jew and Gentile, how can we help you? We are not cowards; neutrality makes us seem

542 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 letter received by the League of Nations on December 16, 1935 from A. W. Barnes a British soldier.
so. We will know what to do, every man of us, in the next world conflagration, (and there’ll be one). We’ll be shot at sunrise; turned traitor. We’ll be avenged, Ethiopia, you and I." 543

In this letter we hear the voice of many African Americans during this period who were frustrated at the stand the United States was taking. African Americans, just like colonized peoples who fought in World War I on the side of their respective European allies, hoped that when the war was over and they returned home things would be different. However, they found that their situation had not changed and their race defined their mobility. The U. S. government forbade people from leaving the United States and going to Ethiopia to fight and this may have played a role in this person’s reference to “we are not cowards; neutrality makes us seem so.” The connection with Ethiopianism is clear in this letter also and the shared sense of subjugation based on race is evident. Race, like justice, played a complex role in the expression of world opinion to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. What is communicated here by comparison to material sent in by organizations is the expression of racial frustration. Organizations, even those that were based on racial identity, used more formal language that was “diplomatic” to express their ideas. However, individuals revealed their thoughts about the issues. This is very important for this study because it allows us to get a glimpse of the social climate at the time that is not clearly seen in organizational responses. Future study needs to be done to examine how the frustrations raised as a result of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute and its ineffectual resolution may have

543 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 letter received by the League of Nations on May 1, 1936 from Aileen Walker Hobson.
Many of the communications previously discussed have had religious references in them. This was a consistent aspect of the materials sent to the League by individuals. For instance a group of workers from Prague sent a telegram stating that at this grave time in history must war decide a major international conflict. The students of the Church of the Czech Brethren protested the methods of warfare to be “highly unworthy of Christianity.” There were numerous expressions of world opinion to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute that made references to religious ideals. However, there were others that were more pointed in their use of religion as a tool to protest the Italian invasion. One example that was indicative of many of these letters came from Copenhagen, Denmark. This letter was sent to Mussolini, Haile Selassie, statesmen of the world, and to the League of Nations. It is quite lengthy, but the excerpt below provides a general idea of the pronouncements made.

The Christian Society in Denmark have handed me, in my capacity of publicist, the following revelation, which was revealed on October the tenth 1935 at 12 a.m. to the communions apostle and seer in contemplation of Christ bearing his crown of thorns. The words of the revelation were made known to mankind as follows: . . . You, holder of power, who now tramps the holiest of the laws of life under foot, who breaks the peace and crushes his fellows in the dust: know that your end shall be a sorry one! Know you: Before the eyes of your soul, an army of suffering wretches will file by- and every

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544 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter received by the League of Nations on October 5, 1935 from Church of the Czech Brethren. See letter in Chapter 5 Item VI.
sigh will strike you like a shot from a bow! Know you: Vengeance is mine, sayeth the Lord!! Know you: For every soul forced by you into Death-will you be called to account!!! You will knock of the door of my realm; but I know you not! For all you have done, shall you pay to the last . . . !545

There were numerous letters that followed a very similar bent. This correspondence usually focused on the violence being done to the Ethiopians.

Another very intriguing letter with a strong religious tone came from a woman in Scotland. It is worth examining here because of our previous discussion of women’s identity as mothers and wives. This letter, like the one discussed above, it was written to Mussolini and a copy sent to the League.

It is a terrible thing this warfare that is going on. My heart is sore sick when I think of the poor women and children that are being cut down without mercy, and what for dear Sir. Has God given woman to bear sons and daughters just for this? Or has he no greater or nobler gift to bestow on mankind than hate one of another? . . . Did Signora you wife bear your two lovely boys for destruction? Surely not. I love little children, whether they be Italian, Ethiopian, or any other nationality on earth. I myself ask of you as a Daughter of God and a believer in the Son of God, - That you will abstain from further blood-shed and make your peace with all men under the Covenant of the Blood of Jesus, shed on Calvary for all men. Black as well as white men.546

Here was an individual woman pleading with Mussolini based on his connection to with his wife and children. It is interesting that this letter uses the term “nationality” and not race. The


writer does identify the idea of race in the last statement “Black as well as white men.” The letters discussed above represent just a few of the letters sent to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute which referenced religion. However, they provide a sampling of the types of communications that were received. Unlike organizational responses individuals wrote to the League and expressed in clear personal language their concerns. Individuals were much more likely to reveal racial and religious ideas. Looking at their letters provides a much clearer picture of the social climate at the time than do organizational responses, adding breadth and depth to this work.

**WORLD OPINION Chooses A Side: Letters That Specifically Supported Ehtiopia Or Italy**

**ITALY**

Although a considerable amount of world opinion expressed to the League supported the Ethiopian cause, there were those who supported Italy’s “right” to empire. The issue of “world opinion” as a uniform expression is complicated by these examples. It is useful to consider these in relation to previous discussions about the fact that “world opinion” is not global. These expressions also demonstrate a distinction between individual and organizational correspondence to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. For instance, a letter from Argentina suggests that supplanting barbaric civilization is part of the divine mandate for civilized peoples and that this is what Italy is attempting to do in Ethiopia. The author indicates that the League of Nations should recognize Italy’s annexation
of Ethiopia as part of the new Italian Empire.\textsuperscript{547} It is impossible to tell the nationality of the individual sending the letter, but the message is clear, the Italians will bring civilization to Ethiopia. One issue that seriously compromises letters supporting Italy from around the world is the Italian practice of creating Italian communities in a variety of locations. Prior to World War I, when it became evident that Italy was going to have difficulty acquiring colonies in Africa the state embarked on a different plan. In this plan Italians (most generally southern Italians) were relocated to countries all over the world, but most prominently in the United States and South America. These “colonies” were outlets for Italy’s growing population and created markets for Italian products. Because of this letters from the United States and South America, could very possibly be from Italians living abroad. However, it is impossible to ascertain unless the author specifically provides that information.

Religion was also used in support of the Italian cause just as it was in condemning it. For instance, one writer suggested that “Although Italy may be considered an aggressor nation I believe that under our Creator the natural resources of the earth are meant to be developed and used for the best advantage of the human race. I believe the peace plan offered by Foreign Sec Hoare and Premier Laval was planned towards this end.”\textsuperscript{548} The author of this letter goes on to suggest a plan which like many of the plans put forth by the public, suggested a compromise very much like a mandate. However, this correspondence, like

\textsuperscript{547} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 17 letter received by the League of Nations July 10, 1936 from Buenos Aires. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item VII.

\textsuperscript{548} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 21, 1935 from Hugh Reddington.
much received by the League, was most interested in the peaceful settlement of the war without escalation; if it meant placating Italy’s desire for empire that was acceptable.

Another important detail that is revealed by examining individual responses, which is not evident in organizational materials is the support for Italy from within Ethiopian. This support for Italy came primarily from the Muslim communities. Mussolini’s support was especially strong in Harrar where “Italian liberation was eagerly received.” Another example of Muslim support for Italian control of Ethiopia comes from Addis Ababa.

For the knowledge of the peoples of the whole world we the undersigned, in the name of all the Muslims living in Ethiopia, cry out with all our strength that the whole world may hear. According to what we learn from the newspapers, certain powers are seeking to interfere with Italy’s full possession of Ethiopia. We Muslims of Ethiopia, of which we form half of the population or even more, pray to God and to all nations that they will never permit the return of the ignorant and destructive Amhara Government, which robbed us of our goods and made us slaves in our own country, regarding us as chattels; and we all with one voice bet and implore you that God may give you light. Since the arrival of the Italian Government we have been restored to our human dignity, we are living in peace and well-being, and we do not wish for any other Government than the Italian in Ethiopia.

As this letter suggests there was a Muslim contingent that welcomed Italian governance in Ethiopia. It was often the case that individuals and groups that suffered persecution at the hands of one faction welcomed another, hoping that they would be more sympathetic. The

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550 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 18 telegram dated August 21, 1936 from Addis-Ababa. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item VIII.
Muslims had undergone considerable abuse by the government of Ethiopia, which was controlled by the Amharic people who were primarily Christian. Religion became part of the discussion on numerous levels and at times was used to mask other intents.

A letter from Switzerland supports the subjugation of the Ethiopians by the Italians, stating “Abyssinia, and especially its ruler, have lost my sympathy, since it became known, that the real heir to the throne has been kept in prison attached to another prisoner, and died therein, 38 years old, last year. Such treatment is not even afflicted to dogs. Let them bleed.” It is unclear who this “real heir” is as prior to Selassie’s reign Ethiopia was not a unified state and there were numerous people who could claim to be the rightful heir. However, this author also makes some rather unfortunate comments about Jews so one could surmise that the individual was a fascist or Nazi. These are opinions that were not part of organizational responses, but which add another layer of complexity to the contending issues the League was tasked to address. Again, world opinion as expressed to the League by individuals was a complicated affair and these opinions must be considered independent of knowing the identity of the writer. The benefit of mentioning these rather fringe opinions is to accentuate the diversity of world opinion that was expressed to the League and to provide some contrast to the overwhelming support for Ethiopia.

In addition to these types of letters, others simply supported Italy for one reason or another. One example speaks to the issue of sanctions and the League’s lack of applying


552 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 letter dated January 7, 1936 from C. A. Lindenmeyer to President Franklin Roosevelt.
them to the Japanese, but deciding to apply them to Italy. The writer states “A vote for sanctions against Italy would be a gross injustice because sanctions were never used against the Japanese in 1931.”\footnote{553 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 telegram received by the League of Nations October 12, 1935 from Trena. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item IX.} This inaction on the League’s part to a very similar conflict was pointed out by several of the correspondents. Again, no similar concerns were ever raised by organizations. A telegram from Havana, Cuba suggests “immediate cessation of hostilities under the following conditions: the release of Ethiopian slaves, assignment to Italy of the territory it needs, immediate truce troops staying where they are found today.”\footnote{554 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 telegram received by the League of Nations October 5, 1935 from Fredrik Norman. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item X.} In a similar vein, a woman from Madrid suggests that the League set up a plebiscite to decide the fate of the country (Ethiopia).\footnote{555 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 letter dated May 18, 1936 from Mme Pilar de Navascuez Sola. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item XI.} Another example comes from Canada,

It seems to one that the League of Nations is not acting in Justice to the Italian people. Haile Selassie has taken the heads of all his own relations, what about taking his head. What will a man not do who bears such a character. Mussolini has done, and is doing nothing more, than protecting his own people. He bears no ill-will towards any nation. My verdict is, that the policy of the League of Nations is all wrong. Am not afraid to sign my name, because am sure am in the right.\footnote{556 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 letter dated October 8, 1935 from Charles M. Curling.}
These are only a few of the letters that came into the League in support of Italy. There were approximately fifty such letters. Although a small number compared to the thousands that either supported Ethiopia or simply called for action on the part of the League of Nations. These letters bring up some significant issues that must be at least considered. Two important points concerning this communication are that support for Italy was primarily expressed by individuals and because of this the examination of individual correspondence is critical to this study. Additionally, and probably even more important the voices of people from outside of Euro-America are most prominent in individual correspondence.

Most of the letters that the League received were extremely critical of Italy and talked about Ethiopia in somewhat idealistic terms. Ethiopia was not without its faults. It had acted as an imperial state and had taken control of territory that essentially belonged to others. Slavery and ill treatment of its enemies was also an issue for the Ethiopian government. The consideration of these letters provides some balance to the examination of world opinion expressed to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute.

ETHIOPIA

World opinion, as expressed to the League of Nations by individuals during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, in favor of Ethiopia has been discussed in the previous chapters in regard to organizational responses. However, before closing this chapter I would like to take a look at just a few of the individual letters that came into the League. These materials show support for Ethiopia in two ways, strongly anti-Italian or strongly in support of Ethiopia. I would like to begin with discussing correspondence from Sylvia Pankhurst (1882-1960). She was one of
the most prolific individuals who wrote to the League in support of Ethiopia. Although involved in numerous organizations Pankhurst was not “officially” part of the communication sent to the League through the organizations previously discussed. The reasons for this are unclear, but may be influenced by her loss of favor in British society after WWI because of her connection to communism and her lack of support for Britain’s role in WWI. An examination of correspondence from individuals contributes material from a person who was instrumental in advocating for the Ethiopian cause. And who, through her personal contacts and publication of the *New Times and Ethiopian News* also helped to shape world opinion during the Dispute. Even though some of the communications from Pankhurst came from organizations, they were not recognized by the League or international in scope.

It is important to understand why Pankhurst’s involvement is important and in order to do this it is necessary to get a sense of who she was and how she was viewed by Ethiopians. On May 5, 1936 the Italian army entered Addis Ababa; this is also the date of Pankhurst’s birthday and the day she founded the *New Times and Ethiopian News*. She fought tirelessly to extricate Ethiopia from Italian occupation. Pankhurst and the Ethiopian Emperor, Haile Selassie, became friends and in 1956 she moved to Ethiopia. There she founded the *Ethiopia Observer*. Pankhurst died in 1960 and was honored by Haile Selassie. She was given a state funeral and buried in front of the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Addis

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557 Pankhurst was instrumental in founding the Communist party in Britain. In 1920 she hosted the inaugural meeting of the British Section of the Third International at the International Socialist Club in London. She founded and published the *Workers’ Dreadnought* (from 1920 to 1924). She was active in the Communist Party of Great Britain founded in 1920, but was expelled when she would not hand over the *Workers’ Dreadnought* to the leadership as requested. She continued to be an active communist until the early 1930’s when her political concerns focused on anti-fascism and anti-colonialism.

Ababa in an area that was reserved for those who fought in the war with Italy.\textsuperscript{559} Her work on behalf of Ethiopia both during and after the Dispute earned her great favor among Ethiopians.

By the time the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute broke out Pankhurst had a well established reputation as a feminist activist and this contributed to how correspondence from her was received by the League of Nations. Because of her reputation as a radical some of her correspondence to the League of Nations was not treated with the utmost respect. For instance, in a letter sent to the League by Pankhurst as a representative of the Women’s International Matteotti Committee\textsuperscript{560} the author points out that there are numerous anti-fascist Italians fleeing Italy so they will not have to go to Ethiopia and fight for a cause they do not support. Pankhurst notes that these Italians are being turned away by other states and asks the League to provide some documentation that would give them what amounts to refugee status.\textsuperscript{561} However, the more interesting information is noted on the bottom of a letter to Mr. F. P. Walters, Under Secretary-General, Director of the Political Section of the League of Nations. Walters writes in his own hand “I think it advisable to be very prudent in our reply to this letter which deals with a purely hypothetical problem. I don’t consider Miss


\textsuperscript{560} This group was named after Giacomo Matteotti (1885-1924) an Italian socialist politician and an ardent anti-fascist.

\textsuperscript{561} UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 letter dated October 21, 1935 from Women’s International Matteotti Committee.
Pankhurst as responsible and trustworthy correspondent." This is an interesting concern and it is noteworthy that a woman who became such an important part of Ethiopian history was treated with such suspicion. There is no further communication from Pankhurst in the archive until 1937, nearly a year after the League had dropped sanctions against Italy.

In the 1937 communication Pankhurst had prepared a petition to protest the execution of political prisoners in Ethiopia. This document is signed by numerous well placed individuals. However, once again at the bottom of the document was a note by Walters directing the clerk to “review the position of the signatories of the petition by name and reply and acknowledge receipt of the letter and the petition.” Several other letters were sent by Pankhurst and were summarily dismissed because she was not associated with a recognized non-official organization. Without an examination of individual correspondence Pankhurst’s contribution would go unrecognized in this study while her work on behalf of Ethiopia is an important part of the story from the Ethiopian perspective. This also brings up a particular concern about the expression of world opinion and its influence on the League of Nations. Because the communications sent by individuals were not treated in the same manner as those from recognized organizations, it is probable that they had less influence on League action. However, when specific events such as the actual invasion of Ethiopia, the release of the Hoare-Laval pact, or the request by the British to recognize Italian sovereignty over

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562 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 letter dated October 28, 1935 from Mr. Walters.

563 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 18 letter dated April 19, 1937 from E. Sylvia Pankhurst.
Ethiopia occurred and the League was deluged with letters and telegrams it is plausible that note was taken of the volume of supporters of a specific response.

The voice of colonized people is also a major contribution provided by the examination of individual communications to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. The Egyptian Coptic Church was very concerned and sent a telegram to the League after the Italians bombed a Swedish Red Cross Hospital as well as a Red Crescent Hospital. “As president Egyptian medical mission for Abyssinia officially recognized we strongly protest against such behaviour contrary to all international treaties and to all principles of humanity we hope you take strong action.” This note points out one aspect of several of the letters that were sent specifically supporting Ethiopia which communicated the frustration of the public at the brutality of the Italian attacks. After just going through a war and the establishment of basic rules of engagement, it was expected that bombing hospitals, using gas, and targeting civilians would be avoided. However, this was not the case and numerous letters were written to protest these attacks. Another telegram from Harrar protested the bombing of the city after the military stationed there had left. As noted previously people from India were very interested in the Dispute and made their voice heard through numerous telegrams and letters. Once such letter was sent to the League demanding that Mussolini stop the war immediately, “Signor Mussolini! I command thee to stop the war

564 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on January 6, 1936 from Prince Omar Tousson Youannes Coptic Patriarch.

565 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 telegram received by the League of Nations on April 1, 1936 from Eveque Jarrosseau. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item XII.
at once.” The letter then goes on to suggest that “If ye are fond of war at all, Let there be a brain fight between ye and Abyssinian wall.” Another interesting letter came from Maur Murat Chan, who claimed to be the son of the desert and head of the guard for the defense of the freedoms of Hindus, Arabs and Negroes. In this letter the correspondent protested against Italy's aggression against Ethiopia. To colonized people the Italian invasion of Ethiopia was a critical test for the League and they watched it very closely. In addition, many contacted the League to express their concern about the Dispute. The interest of people from colonial holdings is another contribution that is most accessible through individual correspondence.

**FRINGE OPINION**

Some of the correspondence received by the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute was very difficult to categorize. As stated previously, individuals were much more likely to communicate ideas that could be viewed as “fringe” opinions. Even though these were out of the mainstream of opinion sent to the League during the Dispute, they are nevertheless useful to consider because they bring up some intriguing considerations. This section includes a brief examination of some of these more unusual letters. Most of these call for some sort of plan to end the Dispute, while others are scathing responses to the event. The correspondent in one letter called for the “entire League to help

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567 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 letter received by the League of Nations on December 14, 1935 from Maur Murat Chan. See letter in Appendix Chapter 5 Item XIII.
me to bring lasting peace to the world via the mandates asked for by me, especially in re: the Italo-Abyssin conflict.” It goes on to request a meeting with Hawariat (the Ethiopian representative to the League) in a private place because the respondent has information about the “unpleasant facts about acts of treason committed by certain persons against Haile Seilassie, Emperor of Abyssinia.”

The letter then goes into a very detailed plan for settling the Dispute. Another letter from England suggests an African colonial police force and then proceeds to give a very detailed plan for creating this force. It even suggests the specific number of officers from each of the colonies. One letter asks that the League connect a group of people in Shanghai with others who are anti-war. These people are concerned about another world war if the Dispute is not settled peacefully. Another rather intriguing letter was sent from the Peshawar area. The author asks that the message of this communication be given to the League members so that they may “take this message to every individual man and woman of his country. Asking them to become Muslims otherwise the vengeance of God is sure to befall them in the course of war.”

Other letters contained scathing comments about the League, including one that suggested the new League of Nations building be furnished with cells “with solitary confinement, corresponding to the usual system of lunatic

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570 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 letter dated February 20, 1936 from Kao Ta-Tung.

571 UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 letter received by the League of Nations on October 28, 1935 from Abdul Ghofoor Sethi, Mohalakheshki, Peshawar City, (India).
asylums, for the comfort of the gentlemen who are to be convoked there.” These letters and many others contained interesting approaches to the problems facing the League of Nations. The expression of world opinion by individuals was very different from that expressed by organizations. It was considerably more personal and often contained suggestions that were beyond the League’s ability to address. However, letters from individuals provide a very different perspective of what the non-elite people of the world were expressing concerning the Dispute.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The Italo-Ethiopian Dispute elicited a major expression of world opinion through letters and telegrams to the League of Nations. Men, women, and even children sent notes to the League expressing their ideas. Some supported Italy, most focused on collective security, and all expressed the heartfelt concern of those invested in the outcome of the Dispute. World opinion was shaped by organizations, print media, and radio in public spheres that were peopled with individual non-state actors. The individuals thought of the Dispute and the role the League should play in intricate terms. The variety of issues raised by these letters illustrates the complexity of the Dispute itself, as well as the political climate of the world during the inter-war years. As a world history topic, examination of world opinion regarding the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute provides a way to examine one of the first international organizations whose job it was to maintain world peace from the perspective of the people.

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who were actively engaged with the League. World opinion, whether expressed on a national level, through organizations, or by individuals provides yet another layer to the complexities of historical analysis that goes beyond the “official” record.

The material contributed by individuals adds depth and breadth to the discussion of world opinion to the League of Nations during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. It provides access to the voice of colonized people, people outside of Euro-America, and supporters of Italy that is lacking in organizational responses. Additionally, these letters create a sense of the social climate during the period. Because they are less formal and more expressive than many of the organizational communications they reveal the strong feelings of people. Also of considerable importance, communications from individuals shed light on the voices of non-elite people, fleshing out the idea of “world opinion” that represents more than just the elite.

As seen in the examination of organizational responses and responses from women the people of the world were gravely concerned about the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. World opinion supported peaceful and just resolution of the Dispute because the people involved viewed it as critical to maintaining world peace. Examination of the correspondence sent to the League, whether from organizations or individuals, changes the historiography of the League of Nations by showing that although current historiography views it as a failure, people at the time viewed it with hope and expectation. This perspective provides a way to consider the League of Nations in the context of the time and as a step toward international governance. The historiography of the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute is also changed by the examination of world opinion. Instead of a footnote, it is clear that the people of the world considered the Dispute to be a critical event at the time. Using archival sources to examine
world opinion, as this dissertation has done, demonstrates that it is possible to explore global history using sources that go well beyond the official record. Just as important, it demonstrates that ‘world opinion’ is a phenomenon that has a history, and that for certain historical moments it is possible to write this history using archival, rather than secondary, sources.
EPILOGUE

The principles world opinion has advocated have been sound, and this has held true even as the range of issues open to public scrutiny has expanded. The considerable record of moral accuracy continues. Peter Stearns, *Global Outrage*.

Studying the League of Nations, particularly at this time in world history, is critical due to recent events which make it painfully clear that nation state boundaries, whether geographic or political, are no longer useful in defining international relations, much as they failed during the interwar period. The roots of the current global economic crisis and the “war on terror” have brought the importance of international cooperation and interconnectedness to the forefront of the nightly news. For this reason examining this early attempt at international cooperation provides historical context regarding international organizations like the League of Nations and the United Nations. Forty years ago, Ruth Henig suggested that “In an age when inter-state co-operation is more vital to our survival than ever before, there is much that a study of the League of Nations can tell us about the ways in which states are prepared to co-operate with each other as members of an

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international body.” Although not a new concern, it is still a vital concern and one worth exploring.

Historically, collective security pacts and the use of sanctions have proven ineffective, as illustrated so clearly during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute. Yet, they are still widely used to control independent states. Additionally, the role oil played in the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute situates the changing patterns of global commerce. During the Dispute the United States refused to stop exporting oil to Italy and hindered the League of Nations from placing sanctions on oil, even though world opinion strongly favored an embargo. Conflict over arms and raw materials were critical to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute, just as they contribute to conflict now. During the Dispute it was the United States, Britain and France that were unwilling to fully support sanctions instead of China and Russia. Examination of these complicated relationships puts current conflict in context and suggests that little has been accomplished when it comes to international governance. The implications are worth examining, especially in light of how national interests outweigh the hope for peace, both then and now.

Ultimately this adherence to national interests over international cooperation led to the outbreak of WWII when the League was not able to “keep the peace” as most of the world had hoped. Although global war has not recurred, war still plagues many places in the world. This is why doing this dissertation at this time is relevant to the historiography. International organizations, whether the United Nations, the World Bank, the Arab League, NATO, etc. are part of the world we live in. The nation state still plays a critical role, but

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more and more international organizations are taking a greater role in the everyday life of the world’s citizens. Examining world opinion concerning the League of Nations and, more specifically, the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute helps to historicize the complicated nature of internationalism and the conflict between state interests and international interests. Moreover, it points out the cost of failure to arbitrate peace and how the interests of smaller powers and great powers must be considered for the collective good.

Did world opinion have any impact on policy during the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute? The answer to that question is complicated. On the national level public opinion did have an influence, causing Sir Samuel Hoare to lose his job and Pierre Laval to lose the respect of many French people. I contend that the League was quick to apply sanctions partly because world opinion so strongly supported them and because so many people contacted the League. Others would disagree. Stearns suggests—albeit with no archival evidence to back him up—that “the force of world opinion against Italian invasion was inadequate.” However, I believe the inadequacy was not so much in world opinion, but in the states and the leaders who were unwilling to set aside imperial ambition for the good of the whole. If the British had followed the “opinion” of the people in Britain, the outcome of the Dispute might have been different. Houden points out that “The steadfast attitude of the League delegates reflected not only their desire to protest against Italy’s violation of the Covenant, but a feeling of betrayal and anger on the part of the smaller powers toward the Great Powers.”

Therein was the problem that the League faced. They could apply sanctions and posture, but

575 Stearns, 83.

576 Hoden, 20.
if the major powers (Britain, France, and the United States) did not honor the League’s decisions, they were ultimately ineffective.

Regardless of the impact world opinion had on influencing changes in policy, examining it provides a historical picture of a crucial time in world history and the role of everyday people flexing their political muscle about an issue that was of great concern to them at the time. Besides, it is impossible to gauge the influence world opinion may have had on individual actors who were making decisions about policy. We would all like to think that our voices have been heard and that they made a difference. Now the voices of those who spent time, money, and energy to speak out concerning the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute have at least in part been heard.
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APPENDIX
SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX

ITEM I

The Covenant of the League of Nations

(INCLUDING AMENDMENTS ADOPTED TO DECEMBER, 1924)

THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES,

In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war, by the prescription of open, just and honourable relations between nations, by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organised peoples with one another,

Agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations.

ARTICLE 1.

The original Members of the League of Nations shall be those of the Signatories which are named in the Annex to this Covenant and also such of those other States named in the Annex as shall accede without reservation to this Covenant. Such accession shall be effected by a Declaration deposited with the Secretariat within two months of the coming into force of the Covenant. Notice thereof shall be sent to all other Members of the League.

Any fully self-governing State, Dominion or Colony not named in the Annex may become a Member of the League if its admission is agreed to by two-thirds of the Assembly, provided that it shall give effective guarantees of its sincere intention to observe its international

obligations, and shall accept such regulations as may be prescribed by the League in regard to its military, naval and air forces and armaments.

Any Member of the League may, after two years' notice of its intention so to do, withdraw from the League, provided that all its international obligations and all its obligations under this Covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal.

ARTICLE 2.

The action of the League under this Covenant shall be effected through the instrumentality of an Assembly and of a Council, with a permanent Secretariat.

ARTICLE 3.

The Assembly shall consist of Representatives of the Members of the League.

The Assembly shall meet at stated intervals and from time to time as occasion may require at the Seat of the League or at such other place as may be decided upon.

The Assembly may deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world. At meetings of the Assembly each Member of the League shall have one vote, and may have not more than three Representatives.

ARTICLE 4.

The Council shall consist of Representatives of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, together with Representatives of four other Members of the League. These four Members of the League shall be selected by the Assembly from time to time in its discretion. Until the appointment of the Representatives of the four Members of the League first selected by the Assembly, Representatives of Belgium, Brazil, Spain and Greece shall be members of the Council.

With the approval of the majority of the Assembly, the Council may name additional Members of the League whose Representatives shall always be members of the Council; the Council, with like approval may increase the number of Members of the League to be selected by the Assembly for representation on the Council.

The Council shall meet from time to time as occasion may require, and at least once a year, at the Seat of the League, or at such other place as may be decided upon.

The Council may deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world.
Any Member of the League not represented on the Council shall be invited to send a Representative to sit as a member at any meeting of the Council during the consideration of matters specially affecting the interests of that Member of the League.

At meetings of the Council, each Member of the League represented on the Council shall have one vote, and may have not more than one Representative.

**ARTICLE 5.**

Except where otherwise expressly provided in this Covenant or by the terms of the present Treaty, decisions at any meeting of the Assembly or of the Council shall require the agreement of all the Members of the League represented at the meeting.

All matters of procedure at meetings of the Assembly or of the Council, including the appointment of Committees to investigate particular matters, shall be regulated by the Assembly or by the Council and may be decided by a majority of the Members of the League represented at the meeting.

The first meeting of the Assembly and the first meeting of the Council shall be summoned by the President of the United States of America.

**ARTICLE 6.**

The permanent Secretariat shall be established at the Seat of the League. The Secretariat shall comprise a Secretary General and such secretaries and staff as may be required.

The first Secretary General shall be the person named in the Annex; thereafter the Secretary General shall be appointed by the Council with the approval of the majority of the Assembly.

The secretaries and staff of the Secretariat shall be appointed by the Secretary General with the approval of the Council.

The Secretary General shall act in that capacity at all meetings of the Assembly and of the Council.

The expenses of the League shall be borne by the Members of the League in the proportion decided by the Assembly.

**ARTICLE 7.**

The Seat of the League is established at Geneva.
The Council may at any time decide that the Seat of the League shall be established elsewhere.

All positions under or in connection with the League, including the Secretariat, shall be open equally to men and women.

Representatives of the Members of the League and officials of the League when engaged on the business of the League shall enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunities.

The buildings and other property occupied by the League or its officials or by Representatives attending its meetings shall be inviolable.

**ARTICLE 8.**

The Members of the League recognise that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations.

The Council, taking account of the geographical situation and circumstances of each State, shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration and action of the several Governments. Such plans shall be subject to reconsideration and revision at least every ten years.

After these plans shall have been adopted by the several Governments, the limits of armaments therein fixed shall not be exceeded without the concurrence of the Council.

The Members of the League agree that the manufacture by private enterprise of munitions and implements of war is open to grave objections. The Council shall advise how the evil effects attendant upon such manufacture can be prevented, due regard being had to the necessities of those Members of the League which are not able to manufacture the munitions and implements of war necessary for their safety.

The Members of the League undertake to interchange full and frank information as to the scale of their armaments, their military, naval and air programmes and the condition of such of their industries as are adaptable to war-like purposes.

**ARTICLE 9.**

A permanent Commission shall be constituted to advise the Council on the execution of the provisions of Articles 1 and 8 and on military, naval and air questions generally.
ARTICLE 10.

The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

ARTICLE 11.

Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise the Secretary General shall on the request of any Member of the League forthwith summon a meeting of the Council.

It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends.

ARTICLE 12.

The Members of the League agree that, if there should arise between them any dispute likely to lead to a rupture they will submit the matter either to arbitration or judicial settlement or to enquiry by the Council, and they agree in no case to resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators or the judicial decision, or the report by the Council. In any case under this Article the award of the arbitrators or the judicial decision shall be made within a reasonable time, and the report of the Council shall be made within six months after the submission of the dispute.

ARTICLE 13.

The Members of the League agree that whenever any dispute shall arise between them which they recognise to be suitable for submission to arbitration or judicial settlement and which cannot be satisfactorily settled by diplomacy, they will submit the whole subject-matter to arbitration or judicial settlement.

Disputes as to the interpretation of a treaty, as to any question of international law, as to the existence of any fact which if established would constitute a breach of any international obligation, or as to the extent and nature of the reparation to be made for any such breach, are declared to be among those which are generally suitable for submission to arbitration or judicial settlement.
For the consideration of any such dispute, the court to which the case is referred shall be the Permanent Court of International Justice, established in accordance with Article 14, or any tribunal agreed on by the parties to the dispute or stipulated in any convention existing between them.

The Members of the League agree that they will carry out in full good faith any award or decision that may be rendered, and that they will not resort to war against a Member of the League which complies therewith. In the event of any failure to carry out such an award or decision, the Council shall propose what steps should be taken to give effect thereto.

ARTICLE 14.

The Council shall formulate and submit to the Members of the League for adoption plans for the establishment of a Permanent Court of International Justice. The Court shall be competent to hear and determine any dispute of an international character which the parties thereto submit to it. The Court may also give an advisory opinion upon any dispute or question referred to it by the Council or by the Assembly.

ARTICLE 15.

If there should arise between Members of the League any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, which is not submitted to arbitration or judicial settlement in accordance with Article 13, the Members of the League agree that they will submit the matter to the Council. Any party to the dispute may effect such submission by giving notice of the existence of the dispute to the Secretary General, who will make all necessary arrangements for a full investigation and consideration thereof.

For this purpose the parties to the dispute will communicate to the Secretary General, as promptly as possible, statements of their case with all the relevant facts and papers, and the Council may forthwith direct the publication thereof.

The Council shall endeavour to effect a settlement of the dispute, and if such efforts are successful, a statement shall be made public giving such facts and explanations regarding the dispute and the terms of settlement thereof as the Council may deem appropriate.

If the dispute is not thus settled, the Council either unanimously or by a majority vote shall make and publish a report containing a statement of the facts of the dispute and the recommendations which are deemed just and proper in regard thereto.
Any Member of the League represented on the Council may make public a statement of the facts of the dispute and of its conclusions regarding the same.

If a report by the Council is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League agree that they will not go to war with any party to the dispute which complies with the recommendations of the report.

If the Council fails to reach a report which is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof, other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League reserve to themselves the right to take such action as they shall consider necessary for the maintenance of right and justice.

If the dispute between the parties is claimed by one of them, and is found by the Council, to arise out of a matter which by international law is solely within the domestic jurisdiction of that party, the Council shall so report, and shall make no recommendation as to its settlement.

The Council may in any case under this Article refer the dispute to the Assembly. The dispute shall be so referred at the request of either party to the dispute, provided that such request be made within fourteen days after the submission of the dispute to the Council.

In any case referred to the Assembly, all the provisions of this Article and of Article 12 relating to the action and powers of the Council shall apply to the action and powers of the Assembly, provided that a report made by the Assembly, if concurred in by the Representatives of those Members of the League represented on the Council and of a majority of the other Members of the League, exclusive in each case of the Representatives of the parties to the dispute, shall have the same force as a report by the Council concurred in by all the members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute.

**ARTICLE 16.**

Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Articles 12, 13 or 15, it shall ipso facto be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not.
It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League shall severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the covenants of the League.

The Members of the League agree, further, that they will mutually support one another in the financial and economic measures which are taken under this Article, in order to minimise the loss and inconvenience resulting from the above measures, and that they will mutually support one another in resisting any special measures aimed at one of their number by the covenant-breaking State, and that they will take the necessary steps to afford passage through their territory to the forces of any of the Members of the League which are co-operating to protect the covenants of the League.

Any Member of the League which has violated any covenant of the League may be declared to be no longer a Member of the League by a vote of the Council concurred in by the Representatives of all the other Members of the League represented thereon.

**ARTICLE 17.**

In the event of a dispute between a Member of the League and a State which is not a Member of the League, or between States not Members of the League, the State or States not Members of the League shall be invited to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, upon such conditions as the Council may deem just. If such invitation is accepted, the provisions of Articles 12 to 16 inclusive shall be applied with such modifications as may be deemed necessary by the Council.

Upon such invitation being given the Council shall immediately institute an inquiry into the circumstances of the dispute and recommend such action as may seem best and most effectual in the circumstances.

If a State so invited shall refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, and shall resort to war against a Member of the League, the provisions of Article 16 shall be applicable as against the State taking such action.

If both parties to the dispute when so invited refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, the Council may take such measures and make such recommendations as will prevent hostilities and will result in the settlement of the dispute.
ARTICLE 18.

Every treaty or international engagement entered into hereafter by any Member of the League shall be forthwith registered with the Secretariat and shall as soon as possible be published by it. No such treaty or international engagement shall be binding until so registered.

ARTICLE 19.

The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world.

ARTICLE 20.

The Members of the League severally agree that this Covenant is accepted as abrogating all obligations or understandings inter se which are inconsistent with the terms thereof, and solemnly undertake that they will not hereafter enter into any engagements inconsistent with the terms thereof.

In case any Member of the League shall, before becoming a Member of the League, have undertaken any obligations inconsistent with the terms of this Covenant, it shall be the duty of such Member to take immediate steps to procure its release from such obligations.

ARTICLE 21.

Nothing in this Covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements, such as treaties of arbitration or regional understandings like the Monroe doctrine, for securing the maintenance of peace.

ARTICLE 22.

To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilisation and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.

The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to
accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League.

The character of the mandate must differ according to the stage of the development of the people, the geographical situation of the territory, its economic conditions and other similar circumstances.

Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory.

Other peoples, especially those of Central Africa, are at such a stage that the Mandatory must be responsible for the administration of the territory under conditions which will guarantee freedom of conscience and religion, subject only to the maintenance of public order and morals, the prohibition of abuses such as the slave trade, the arms traffic and the liquor traffic, and the prevention of the establishment of fortifications or military and naval bases and of military training of the natives for other than police purposes and the defence of territory, and will also secure equal opportunities for the trade and commerce of other Members of the League.

There are territories, such as South-West Africa and certain of the South Pacific Islands, which, owing to the sparseness of their population, or their small size, or their remoteness from the centres of civilisation, or their geographical contiguity to the territory of the Mandatory, and other circumstances, can be best administered under the laws of the Mandatory as integral portions of its territory, subject to the safeguards above mentioned in the interests of the indigenous population.

In every case of mandate, the Mandatory shall render to the Council an annual report in reference to the territory committed to its charge.

The degree of authority, control, or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory shall, if not previously agreed upon by the Members of the League, be explicitly defined in each case by the Council.

A permanent Commission shall be constituted to receive and examine the annual reports of the Mandatories and to advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates.
ARTICLE 23.

Subject to and in accordance with the provisions of international conventions existing or hereafter to be agreed upon, the Members of the League:

(a) will endeavour to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions of labour for men, women, and children, both in their own countries and in all countries to which their commercial and industrial relations extend, and for that purpose will establish and maintain the necessary international organisations;

(b) undertake to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control;

(c) will entrust the League with the general supervision over the execution of agreements with regard to the traffic in women and children, and the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs;

(d) will entrust the League with the general supervision of the trade in arms and ammunition with the countries in which the control of this traffic is necessary in the common interest;

(e) will make provision to secure and maintain freedom of communications and of transit and equitable treatment for the commerce of all Members of the League. In this connection, the special necessities of the regions devastated during the war of 1914-1918 shall be borne in mind;

(f) will endeavour to take steps in matters of international concern for the prevention and control of disease.

ARTICLE 24.

There shall be placed under the direction of the League all international bureaux already established by general treaties if the parties to such treaties consent. All such international bureaux and all commissions for the regulation of matters of international interest hereafter constituted shall be placed under the direction of the League.

In all matters of international interest which are regulated by general convention but which are not placed under the control of international bureaux or commissions, the Secretariat of the League shall, subject to the consent of the Council and if desired by the parties, collect and distribute all relevant information and shall render any other assistance which may be necessary or desirable.
The Council may include as part of the expenses of the Secretariat the expenses of any bureau or commission which is placed under the direction of the League.

ARTICLE 25.

The Members of the League agree to encourage and promote the establishment and co-operation of duly authorised voluntary national Red Cross organisations having as purposes the improvement of health, the prevention of disease and the mitigation of suffering throughout the world.

ARTICLE 26.

Amendments to this Covenant will take effect when ratified by the Members of the League whose Representatives compose the Council and by a majority of the Members of the League whose Representatives compose the Assembly.

No such amendments shall bind any Member of the League which signifies its dissent therefrom, but in that case it shall cease to be a Member of the League.
SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX

ITEM II

Radio Address by Empress Menen Asfaw and Princess Tsehai of Ethiopia on September 5, 1935

The first part of the speech was made by Empress Menen in Amharic. She then had Princess Tsehai read the rest in English. The Empress began with the following statement, “I am pleased to be able to make my voice heard by all women across the world. I would like to thank the World Women’s Association for its determination to stand by Ethiopia at this time when the enemy is getting ready to invade our country and fight our people. In order to make what I am saying understood by all listeners, our beloved daughter Tsehai will now read my speech in the English language.”

Below is the content of the radio speech read by Princess Tsehai:

At this very moment, when a disastrous war is intended and planned against us, I would like to make clear that all women across the world should make their voices heard and express their opinions. Even though we live in different countries and different climates, all women are related in their stand for the peace of the world. It is obvious that war is the worst evil and brings much suffering to mankind. Even though the women of the world are different in race, religion and nationality all of them hat war because it causes the loss of lives of their beloved husbands, brothers and sons.

I know that the very intention of war worries the Italian women, too, whether or not they have sons. Therefore, all women of the world have to stand to make their voice heard against the bloodshed and loss of human lives in war. Ethiopia is not willing to take any military action. Ethiopia is always ready for peace and has been doing every necessary activity in the past months to avert the intended war.

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578 The transcript of this speech is from the following source. Anjahl Parnell, The Biography of Empress Menen Asfaw: The Mother of the Ethiopian Nation, (Kealakekua, Hawaii: Roots Publishing, 2011), Kindle location 1430. This book is a reprint and translation from Ge’ez of an earlier text entitled, "Her Imperial Majesty Menen Asfaw" which was written shortly after her death in 1962. The material included here is a direct quotation of the source.
The people of Ethiopia have shown a friendly attitude to foreigners who have come here for various reasons. The people have an ancient tradition of welcoming guests. However, a government is planning to control Ethiopia in order to satisfy its own selfish needs. It is mobilizing its army on the border of Ethiopia and planning to cause great losses.

I have no doubt that the peace association, which the women of the world have established, would do everything in its power to protect mankind and lead the leaders towards a peaceful way. I also pray to God for help in this challenging task. I have strong conviction that this association proceeds with its task and achieves fruitful success.

However, if the war becomes inevitable, we women have to undertake our duties by nursing the wounded and easing the sufferings of war as much as possible. It is a great consolation for us to have women who have stood by us for peace during peaceful times and also during times of hardship. I have full confidence that these women would give their support in treating and nursing wounded soldiers and those sacrificing themselves for their country.

I request all women of the world to join me in prayer to God for truth, justice and peace on earth, and for God’s guidance in the works of the leaders of the world.
SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX

ITEM III

KELLOGG-BRIAND PACT

Treaty between the United States and other Powers providing for the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy. Signed at Paris, August 27, 1928; ratification advised by the Senate, January 16, 1929; ratified by the President, January 17, 1929; instruments of ratification deposited at Washington by the United States of America, Australia, Dominion of Canada, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Great Britain, India, Irish Free State, Italy, New Zealand, and Union of South Africa, March 2, 1929: By Poland, March 26, 1929; by Belgium, March 27 1929; by France, April 22, 1929; by Japan, July 24, 1929; proclaimed, July 24, 1929.

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A PROCLAMATION.

WHEREAS a Treaty between the President of the United States Of America, the President of the German Reich, His Majesty the King of the Belgians, the President of the French Republic, His Majesty the King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, His Majesty the King of Italy, His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, the President of the Republic of Poland, and the President of the Czechoslovak Republic, providing for the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy, was concluded and signed by their respective Plenipotentiaries at Paris on the twenty-seventh day of August, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight, the original of which Treaty, being in the English and the French languages, is word for word as follows:


Deeply sensible of their solemn duty to promote the welfare of mankind;
Persuaded that the time has, come when a frank renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy should be made to the end that the peaceful and friendly relations now existing between their peoples may be perpetuated;

Convinced that all changes in their relations with one another should be sought only by pacific means and be the result of a peaceful and orderly process, and that any signatory Power which shall
hereafter seek to promote its ts national interests by resort to war a should be denied the benefits furnished by this Treaty;

Hopeful that, encouraged by their example, all the other nations of the world will join in this humane endeavor and by adhering to the present Treaty as soon as it comes into force bring their peoples within the scope of its beneficent provisions, thus uniting the civilized nations of the world in a common renunciation of war as an instrument of their national policy;

Have decided to conclude a Treaty and for that purpose have appointed as their respective Plenipotentiaries:

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GERMAN REICH:
Dr Gustav STRESEMANN, Minister of Foreign Affairs;

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:
The Honorable Frank B. KELLOGG, Secretary of State;

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF THE BELGIANS:
Mr Paul HYMANS, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister of State;

THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC:
Mr. Aristide BRIAND Minister for Foreign Affairs;

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, IRELAND AND THE BRITISH DOMINIONS BEYOND THE SEAS, EMPEROR OF INDIA:

For GREAT BRITAIN and NORTHERN IRELAND and all parts of the British Empire which are not separate Members of the League of Nations:

The Right Honourable Lord CUSHENDUN, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Acting-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs;

For the DOMINION OF CANADA:

The Right Honourable William Lyon MACKENZIE KING, Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs;

For the COMMONWEALTH of AUSTRALIA:

The Honourable Alexander John McLACHLAN, Member of the Executive Federal Council;

For the DOMINION OF NEW ZEALAND:

The Honourable Sir Christopher James PARR High Commissioner for New Zealand in Great Britain;
For the UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA:

The Honourable Jacobus Stephanus SMIT, High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa in Great Britain;

For the IRISH FREE STATE:

Mr. William Thomas COSGRAVE, President of the Executive Council;

For INDIA:

The Right Honourable Lord CUSHENDUN, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs;

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF ITALY:
Count Gaetano MANZONI, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at Paris.

HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN:
Count UCHIDA, Privy Councillor;

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND:
Mr. A. ZALESKI, Minister for Foreign Affairs;

THE PRESIDENT OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC:
Dr Eduard BENES, Minister for Foreign Affairs;

who, having communicated to one another their full powers found in good and due form have agreed upon the following articles:

ARTICLE I
The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it, as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another.

ARTICLE II
The High Contracting Parties agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them, shall never be sought except by pacific means.

ARTICLE III
The present Treaty shall be ratified by the High Contracting Parties named in the Preamble in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements, and shall take effect as between them as soon as all their several instruments of ratification shall have been deposited at Washington.
This Treaty shall, when it has come into effect as prescribed in the preceding paragraph, remain open as long as may be necessary for adherence by all the other Powers of the world. Every instrument evidencing the adherence of a Power shall be deposited at Washington and the Treaty shall immediately upon such deposit become effective as; between the Power thus adhering and the other Powers parties hereto.

It shall be the duty of the Government of the United States to furnish each Government named in the Preamble and every Government subsequently adhering to this Treaty with a certified copy of the Treaty and of every instrument of ratification or adherence. It shall also be the duty of the Government of the United States telegraphically to notify such Governments immediately upon the deposit with it of each instrument of ratification or adherence.

IN FAITH WHEREOF the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed this Treaty in the French and English languages both texts having equal force, and hereunto affix their seals.

DONE at Paris, the twenty-seventh day of August in the year one thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight.

Certified to be a true copy of the signed original deposited with the Government of the United States of America.

FRANK B. KELLOGG
Secretary of State of the United States of America

AND WHEREAS it is stipulated in the said Treaty that it shall take effect as between the High Contracting Parties as soon as all the several instruments of ratification shall have been deposited at Washington;
AND WHEREAS the said Treaty has been duly ratified on the parts of all the High Contracting Parties and their several instruments of ratification have been deposited with the Government of the United States of America, the last on July 24, 1929;

NOW THEREFORE, be it known that I, Herbert Hoover, President of the United States of America, have caused the said Treaty to be made public, to the end that the same and every article and clause thereof may be observed and fulfilled with good faith by the United States and the citizens thereof.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE at the city of Washington this twenty-fourth day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and twenty-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and fifty-fourth

HERBERT HOOVER

By the President:
HENRY L STIMSON

Secretary of State

NOTE BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ADHERING COUNTRIES

When this Treaty became effective on July 24, 1929, the instruments of ratification of all of the signatory powers having been deposited at Washington, the following countries, having deposited instruments of definitive adherence, became parties to it:

Afghanistan
Albania
Austria
Bulgaria
China
Cuba
Croats and Slovenes
Denmark
Dominican Republic
Egypt
Estonia
Norway
Turkey
Ethiopia
Finland
Guatemala

Hungary
Iceland
Kingdom of the Serbs
Latvia
Liberia
Lithuania
Netherlands
Nicaragua
Panama
Peru
Portugal
Rumania
Russia
Siam

Spain
Sweden

Additional adhesions deposited subsequent to July 24, 1929. Persia, July 2, 1929; Greece, August 3, 1929; Honduras, August 6, 1929; Chile, August 12, 1929; Luxemburg August 14, 1929; Danzig, September 11, 1929; Costa Rica, October 1, 1929; Venezuela, October 24, 1929.

Source:
United States Statutes at Large
Vol 46 Part 2 Page 2343
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APPENDIX CHAPTER 2

APPENDIX CHAPTER 2 ITEM I

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 correspondence dated October 1, 1935 the Evangelical Free Women of Czechoslovakia.

Prague le 1. Octobre 1935.

Au Conseil de la Société des Nations
a Genève.

Les femmes évangéliques de la Tchécoslovaquie sont inquiétées par la guerre de l'Italie contre l'Abyssinie qui menace non seulement la paix mondiale, mais encore l'existence de la Société des Nations. C'est pourquoi nous demandons que la souveraineté de chaque nation soit respectée et nous sommes convaincus que la Société des Nations trouve dans ses statuts tous les moyens nécessaires pour forcer le perturbateur de ces principes à les respecter.

Au même temps nous rappelons avec insistance le Traité de la Paix de Versailles qui promet le désarmement général et nous demandons que le désarmement complet de tous soit exécuté et qu'on introduise le contrôle international de la fabrication des armes.

Pour les femmes évangéliques de la Tchécoslovaquie

J. Mathezova
la secrétaire.

Licmida Malá
la présidente.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 2 ITEM II


Nous sommes des travailleurs italiens et nous voulons protester contre les sanctions votées contre notre patrie. Stop nous savons ce que veut dire chercher le pain à l'étranger et pour ça nous comprenons la politique d'expansion que l'Italie fasciste a entreprise pour avoir au justice que à Versailles les allies ont lui refuse stop la société des Nations en hommage à son covenant aurait pu et du faire cette justice mais elle a préféré voter les sanctions évidemment pour suivre la volonté de Lange Terre que est denonce à l'opinion publique.
UNIVERSELLE STOP LANGLETERRE QUE NA RIEN FAIT POUR LA
MANCHURIE ET POUR LE PARAGUAY ET LA BOLIVIE ETAI DEJA
DEQUALIFIE MORALEMENT AVANT LA SOCIETE DES NATIONS AUSSI
QUE AVANT LE MONDE DEQUALIFIE PLUS ENCORE POUR SON TRAITE
NAVAL AVEC

LALLEMAGNE ET POUR CA ELLE A TRAHI LA SOCIETE MEME AT LES
RAISONS DE LA PAIX QUELLE DIT DE DEFENDRE ET SOUTENIR STOP
VOILA QU'IL EST ARRIVE LE MOMENT QUE LES NATIONS EUROPEENNES
OUVRENT LES YEUX POUR ET COMPRENDRE QUE LA POLITIQUE ANGLAISE
EST TOUJOURS LA MEME SAUVAGE EGOISTE INSATIABLE
HORS DE L'HUMANITÉ CONTRE LA CIVILISATION STOP LA TYRANNIE ANGLAISE DOIT FINIR ET LA SOCIÉTÉ DES NATIONS ELLE MEME DEVRAIT SEN DELEVER STOP LA CONTROVERSE ITALOÆTÔPIÈNE A DONNE LA MERE DE TOUT LE MAL QUE L'ANGLETERRE PEUT FAIRE A L'HUMANITÉ STOP LA SOCIÉTÉ DES NATIONS A LE SACRE DEVOIR

DE CESEER DE ETRE COMPLICE ET GARANT DE LA CRIMINALITÉ ANGLAISE A LIGUE DES TRAVAILLEURS ITALIENS DE NEW YORK

LE SECRÉTAIRE GENERAL ENZO GUISTINIANI

Fait à... 16/10

K.
La représentation du Mouvement du Front Populaire ne peut qualifier l’offense qu’en des termes les plus severes.

Elle considère qu’en pareilles circonstances le terme "Brigandage" convient beaucoup mieux que celui de "Croisade".

Persuadée d’être fidèlement l’interprète des sentiments de l’immense majorité du peuple de France, la représentation du Mouvement du Front Populaire à l’Hôtel de Ville de Paris déclare :

1° Que l’acte de l’Impérialisme italien sera enregistré par l’histoire comme un forfait et jugé comme tel.

2° Que les journaux de ce pays, leurs animateurs qui ne craignent pas, avec un cynisme qui semble s’expliquer par un désintéressement en voie de disparition, d’apporter leur appui à l’indéfendable cause, ne pourront être impitoyablement classés ailleurs que parmi les complices.

3° La représentation estime que le déclenchement des moyens d’action dans le domaine économique et financier d’impose sans plus attendre afin de contraindre l’agresseur à arreter à ce qu’il se propose, c’est à dire l’emprise de tout un peuple sous le poids d’un matériau de guerre formidable.

Les élus du Front Populaire sont persuadés que les travailleurs veilleront à la stricte application de ces mesures, animées en cela par le flot de nobles pensées qui les guident naturellement vers ceux qui luttent dans l’unique but de repousser l’agression brutale.

Les élus du Front Populaire à l’Hôtel de Ville de Paris, restent certains d’être ainsi serviteurs de la Paix et traducteurs des sentiments réels de tous les hommes vraiment dignes de cette appellation.

ORDRE DU JOUR VOTE A L’UNANIMITE A JAY LE 12 OCTOBRE 1935
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM II

APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM III

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 14 resolution dated February 23, 1936 from the Union Internationale des Associations pour la Societe des Nations.

UNION INTERNATIONALE DES ASSOCIATIONS POUR LA SOCIETE DES NATIONS
GENEVE, 46 route de Ferney.

LE CONFLIT ITALO-ETHIOPIEN

Résolution adoptée par le Bureau de l'Union en sa séance du 23 février 1936.

Le Bureau,

Profondément convaincu de la nécessité pour les membres de la Société des Nations de mener à bien l'action collective de sécurité entreprise, et d'éviter que l'État agresseur tire un profit de l'agression,

Constate que les décisions actuellement prises sont loin d'avoir épuisé toutes les mesures économiques et financières prévues à l'art. XVI du Pacte comme obligatoires pour tous les membres de la S.D.N.,

Emet en conséquence le vœu que le Comité de Coordination décide la mise en vigueur rapide de toutes nouvelles mesures dont un résultat utile peut être attendu, tels l'embargo sur le pétrole et, éventuellement, l'interdiction des ports aux navires italiens, l'interdiction de toutes exportations à destination de la Somalie et de l'Erythrée italiennes et des escales dans leurs ports - l'assistance financière à l'Éthiopie, victime d'agression, etc.,

Estime que, parallèlement à cette action, il est désirable que la Société des Nations, conformément à sa mission de solidarité internationale, entreprenne de donner une solution rapide aux problèmes de la distribution des matières premières, et aux problèmes relatifs à la surpopulation de divers pays.
Le Secrétariat général de l’Union Internationale des Associations pour la Société des Nations a l’honneur de communiquer à Messieurs les Membres du Conseil la résolution suivante qu’il vient de recevoir de l’Union Belge pour la S.D.N. (17 décembre 1935):

"Le Comité Directeur de l’Union Belge pour la S.D.N., rappelant qu’aux termes du Pacte, les Membres de la S.D.N. ont pris l’engagement, non seulement de prendre des mesures collectives en vue de faire cesser des agressions, mais encore de maintenir contre toute agression l’indépendance et l’intégrité territoriale de chaque Membre;

"Constatant que les propositions de conciliation de M. Laval et Hoare sont, de toute évidence, beaucoup plus favorables à l’Italie que celles présentées avant l’agression par le Comité des Cinq du Conseil de la S.D.N. et qu’ainsi, si elles devaient aboutir dans leur forme actuelle, elles constituerient une prime à l’agression et un précédent redoutable pour la sécurité des petits pays,

"Exprime en conséquence le vœu que le Conseil de la Société des Nations recherche une solution plus conforme à l’esprit du Pacte."

Avec ses salutations expressées,

Le Secrétaire Général
TH. RUISSEN

A Monsieur Avenol
Secrétaire Général
Société des Nations
Genève.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM V

Le comité exécutif de l’association française pour la Société des Nations et la Paix,

s’inspirant du fait qu’en vertu des dispositions du Pacte les Membres de la Société des Nations se sont engagés non seulement à appliquer des mesures de sanction pour mettre fin à des actes d’agression, mais également à respecter et à maintenir contre toute agression externe l’intégrité territoriale et l’indépendance politique de tous les Membres de la Société;

constatant que les suggestions tendant à mettre fin au conflit italo-éthiopien présentées par les ministres Laval et Hoare contiennent évidemment une solution plus avantageuse pour l’Italie que le projet soumis aux Parties avant l’agression par le Comité des Cinq du Conseil, de sorte que l’acceptation intégrale de ces suggestions aurait l’air de constituer une prime pour l’agresseur et ordonnerait un précédent peu désirable;

saluant avec une vive satisfaction que le danger qui recemment a menacé les principes et les fins de la Société des Nations, a été éliminé par le fait que le Conseil a virtuellement adopté ces suggestions, exprime sa confiance que les Membres poursuivront vigoureusement la politique des sanctions et que, d'une façon générale, on évitera tout ce qui diminuera le prestige de la Ligue.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM VI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 18, 1935 from the Association of Swedish League of Nations Societies.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM VII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 26, 1935 from the Association of Swedish League of Nations Societies.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM VIII

APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM IX


Fédération des Combattants 1914-1918 Bressoux

Présidence: rue du Moulin, N° 73,
Télé. 28039.

BRESSOUX, LE 20 septembre 1935.

Messieurs les Président et Membres du Comité de la Paix, Bressoux.

Messieurs,

Messieurs,

Je crois qu’il est de notre devoir de nous présenter à la récente réunion à laquelle il vous a été dit avec invité. Nous avons l’honneur de porter à votre connaissance que nous sommes tout disposés à adherer au mouvement que vous voulez créer au sein de la Commune en faveur de la Paix.

Et c’est du reste, ceux-là qui, comme nous, ont connu toutes les horreurs de la grande tragédie de 1914-1918, qui doivent être les premiers à maudire la guerre et à souhaiter que tous les peuples se tendent la main par dessus les frontières.

Veuillez agréer, Messieurs, l’expression de notre considération très distinguée.

Pour le COMITÉ :

Le Trésorier, Le Président, Le Secrétaire,

[Signatures]
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM X


CONSEIL D’ADMINISTRATION DU 14 OCTOBRE 1935

MOTION VOTÉE À L’UNANIMITÉ

Le Conseil d’Administration de la Confédération Nationale des Anciens Combattants et Victimes de la Guerre, fidèle à sa doctrine et à toutes les amitiés nées de la Guerre,

se plaçant sur le terrain de l’intérêt national qu’on ne saurait séparer du maintien de la Paix,

s’élève avec indignation contre les campagnes qui tendent à introduire des préoccupations de politique intérieure dans les questions internationales,

proclame une fois de plus son attachement au respect des engagements signés,

adjure le Gouvernement Français de redoubler d’efforts pour mettre fin aux hostilités entre l’Italie et l’Éthiopie et régler pacifiquement le conflit actuel, d’une manière équitable et dans le cadre de la S.D.N.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 resolution received by the League of Nations on January 9, 1936 and entitled “Le Conflit Italo-Ethiopien.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 resolution received by the League of Nations on January 16, 1936 from the Association Franco-Italienne des Anciens Combattants.

ASSOCIATION FRANCO-ITALIENNE DES ANCIENS COMBATTANTS
Section de Montreal

Les Anciens Combattants adhérents à la section de Montreal de l'Association Franco-Italienne des Anciens Combattants, renouvellent leurs protestations contre l'agression du Gouvernement fasciste Italien contre le peuple Éthiopien.

Ils rendent hommage à toutes les victimes de cette "inutile strage" imposé contre l'intérêt et la volonté du peuple Italien.

Ils élèvent leurs plus vives protestations

Contre le gouvernement fasciste qui, après avoir réduit à la misère et à l'esclavage l'Italie, avec elle ménage impôse aux épouses italiennes le dernier sacrifice possible, la renoncement du propre souvenir nuptial.

Contre la misère des mères économiques que les émigrés Italiens envoient à leurs parents.

Contre le bombardement des hôpitaux, ambulances et des populations civiles.

Contre l'emploi des gaz asphyxiant par l'aviation fasciste, dans le but de cacher son incapacité militaire.

Ils rendent hommage au peuple Éthiopien qui, farouchement, défend sa liberté.

Ils font un pressant appel à tous les peuples, à toutes les personnalités, à toutes les associations d'Anciens Combattants et autres, sans distinction de race ou de religion, pour lesquels la Paix et la Liberté sont le "Patrimoine Suprême" à exiger des Gouvernements de la S.D.N. l'application la plus severe des sanctions, seul moyen pour imposer le respect des lois de la S.D.N.

Pour prouver leur attachement à la Paix et à la Justice, versent au Comité Mondial pour la défense du peuple Éthiopien la somme de 50 francs pour son œuvre humanitaire, et s'engagent à patronner la famille d'un soldat ou ouvrier mort ou blessé en Afrique.

Ils se séparent aux cris de Vive l'Italie, Vive les Sanctions, Vive la Paix.

Repartition immédiat des troupes italiennes de l'Afrique.

L'Assemblée Générale du 5/1/1936
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XIII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 telegram received by the League of Nations on October 7, 1935 from Puebla de Puebla.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XIV


Montevideo Octubre 1º de 1935
Sr M. Avenol
Secretario General de la Liga de las Naciones
Ginebra.

Con la mayor consideración:-

El Partido Humanista del Uruguay, con sede en la Avenida 18 de Julio 1462, es un Partido profundamente humano que se siente unido a todos los seres de la creación, y tiene como base en su programa el perfeccionamiento continuado de un mundo mejor en donde no hayan humilladores ni humillados, ni distinciones racionales ni falsos privilegios.-

Como este partido preconiza el perfeccionamiento evolutivo, acepta en principio el orden de cosas establecido y respeta por igual a todas las Patrias soberanas con sus diversidades de étnicas y modalidades, pensando que todo lo que reine en la Tierra, nuestra patria común, es obra que está realizándose por todos nosotros.-

Pero el Partido Humanista del Uruguay repudia por todos los medios a su alcance, la violencia; y por eso, en el actual conflicto Italo-Etiop, manifiesta su sentir colectivo, rechazando una vez mas toda tentativa de agresión que puede convertirse en una guerra Universal, verdadero flagelo de la Humanidad y causa principalísima de todos los males.-

Así, pues, deseamos que ese poderoso Organismo Internacional, que es la Liga de las Naciones, y que tiene en sus manos todos los medios para evitar la guerra, utilice las facultades de que dispone para conjurar esa desgracia Universal.

Deseamos que así se haga, y confiamos en que se hará así para el mayor bien de todos los seres de la creación.

Por intermedio de la Liga de las Naciones, el //
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XV

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on January 7, 1936 from the Ligue Francaise Droits Homme.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XVI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on March, 1936 from the Comité Assistance Victimes Guerre Ethiopie.
COMBARREMENTS INCESSANTS PAR YPERITE ET AUTRES GAZ ASPHYXIANTS LANCEES AVIATEURS ITALIENS DESTRUCTION SYSTEMATIQUE AMBULANCES OBLIGEES TRAVAILLER CAMOUFLÉES ET CACHER MALADES BLESSÉS DANS FORÊT, PHOTOS CES CRIMES SUIVENT, PROTESTE ÉNERGIQUEMENT CONTRE CES BARBARIES INCRÉDULES FAIT APPEL PRESSANT AUX FRANÇAIS SECOURIR CROIX ROUGE ÉTHIOPIENNE EN DÉTRESSE, PARS AVEC AMBULANCES NOUVELLE DESTINATION FRONT DESSIE GINGOLD - COMITÉ ASSISTANCE PARIS.
COMITE DE COORDINATION DES ASSOCIATIONS NOIRES ET ARABES DE PARIS

PARIS, 10 AVRIL 1936

A Monsieur MADARIAGA, Président du COMITE DES TREIZE GENEVE

Monsieur le Président,

Les Associations noires et arabes de Paris déplorent que les principes du Covenant à Genève de la sécurité collective venant en défense d’un petit peuple victime d’une agression odieuse, soient justement mis en péril par certaines puissances garantes des traités, et non parmi les moindres.

Les Associations Noires et Arabes de Paris affirment que la Paix sera toujours précaire si la Loi Internationale n’est pas égale pour tous. Elles croient, en effet, la Paix indivisible, c’est pourquoi elles proclament avec force que le geste de Hitler, déchirant les accords de Locarno, est et reste impossible si l’agression de Mussolini avait vu se dresser devant elle des forces capables de l’arrêter.

“Au fil des ans le Noir et les Arabes constatent une fois de plus que les puissances occidentales, ouvertement ou non, acceptent l’inégualité des races pour légitimer les procédés de violence à l’égard des peuples de couleur, afin de les " réduire " et les " civiliser " dans la mesure où cela sert leurs intérêts.

Ayant analysé les forces engagées dans le conflit italo-éthiopien, elles constatent également :

a) Que les Gouvernements qui, à Genève, ont réagi en faveur du maintien de l’indépendance de l’Éthiopie, sont ceux dont l’opinion publique fur la plus intransigeante à ce sujet,

b) Qu’au sein d’un même pays, ces forces se trouvant du côté des masses, travailleurs de la pensée et travailleurs manuels, ayant réalisé le danger des fascismes régimes facistes qui, pour semaîntenir, sont dans l’obligation d’exaspérer les aspirations des couches dirigeantes, d’y mettre la nation à l’unisson, jusqu’à étouffer dans la vie nationale, tout autre idéal que la " Force brutale ".

**********
En conséquence, les Noirs et les Arabes se déclarent prêts :

- A lutter par tous les moyens en faveur de l'indépendance de l'Éthiopie et de son intégrité territoriale,

- A exiger de la S.D.N. les mesures les plus énergiques pour arrêter l'agresseur et sauver l'Éthiopie.

- A défendre tout autre peuple qui pourrait subir une agression non provoquée ; en refusant de servir l'agresseur, en aidant l'agressé.

LE COMITÉ DE COORDINATION

(Signature)

[Signature]

[Signature]
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XVIII


COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL POUR LA DÉFENSE DU PEUPLE ÉTHIOPIEN ET DE LA PAIX

 receipt dated December 10, 1935.

Le fait seul que des propositions soient avancées qui sont en violation flagrante des principes de "droit international"; de l'indépendance du peuple éthiopien et en opposition directe aux décisions prises par la Société contre l'agresseur — ne peut que soulèver la protestation la plus formelle, la plus véhémence de l'opinion mondiale.

Au moment précis où l'agresseur donne en Éthiopie la preuve de ses méthodes barbares, en livrant à la destruction des villes ouvertes et d'un hôpital américain protégé par l'insigne de la Croix-Rouge, au massacre des femmes et des enfants, et tandis que le peuple éthiopien défend heroïquement sa patrie,

les gouvernements français et anglais vouraient entraîner la S.D.N. à fournir aide et compensation à Mussolini et dépouiller un petit peuple, de sa terre, de son indépendance et de sa liberté.

Si ce crime s'accomplissait, il constituerait une triple trahison:
- Trahison des principes de la S.D.N.,
- Trahison du droit primordial d'un peuple à l'indépendance,
- Trahison la plus scélérate de la cause de la Paix qui ne saurait jamais s'instaurer au répris de la Justice et de la véritable civilisation.


Le Comité International

DENONCE ce marchandage en cours dissimulant mal les louches collusions de la haute finance internationales,

DENONCE cette récompense à l'agresseur qui constituerait l'encouragement le plus scandaleux à tous les fauteurs de guerre,

ALERTE les masses populaires,
Tous ceux qui ont fait confiance à la S.D.N. pour la défense collective de la Paix,
Tous ceux qui ne peuvent permettre l'écrasement du faible pour le sinistre prestige d'un dictateur,

APPELLE les organisations et les masses populaires à déclencher immédiatement un vaste mouvement de protestation indignée capable d'imposer aux gouvernements responsables, le respect de ce qui est désormais, dans ce conflit, la volonté des peuples.

Le Secrétariat,
Jean LONGUET, Paul PERRIN
Leo WANNER

L'un des Présidents
Pierre COT
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XIX


DELEGATION COMITE INTERNATIONAL POUR DEFENSE PEUPLE ETHIOPIEN

RAPPELANT TERRORISME SON TELEGRAMME DU 9 OCTOBRE CONSTATE NON

APPLICATION SANCTIONS FAVORISE MASSACRE JOURNALIERS FEMMES ENFANTS

STOP DESILLUSION CROISSANTE PEUPLE ETHIOPIEN SUR EFFICACITE SOCIETE

DES NATIONS STOP INFORME QUE NATION TOUTE ENTIERE ACCEPTERA JAMAIS

CESSION TERRITOIRE STOP
REPOUSSANT TOUTES MANOEUVRES ETHIOPIE VA LUTTER JUSQUA LA MORT POUR MAINTIEN DROIT INTEGRALE GARANTI PAR COVENANT STOP SITUATION EXIGE PROMPTE ET TOTALE APPLICATION TOUTES SANCTIONS VRAIMENT EFFICACES = HUNTER DUMONT +
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XX

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 letter dated June 5, 1936 from the Haitienne pour la defense du Peuple Etiopiene.
Nous vous disions plus haut que la cession de juin empruntait à l'circumstance une importance décisive pour l'avenir de la S.D.N. et de la sécurité collective. En effet, par suite du triomphe des Gauches aux dernières élections françaises, une nouvelle lueur d'espoir a surgi : le Peuple de France a voté expressément pour l'organisation de la Paix indivisible et de la sécurité collective. Les activités de la S.D.N. ne pourront pas ne pas s'en ressentir, puisqu'en conformité de la volonté des masses françaises, le Gouvernement du Front Populaire devra pratiquer une politique active de défense du Pacte. Il va sans dire que toute organisation sérieuse de la Paix a pour condition première la restitution de son indépendance à l'Ethiopie.

Le Monde est décidé à ne plus croire à la S.D.N. et à ses principes constitutifs : la sécurité collective et la Paix indivisible si elle n'y met le juste prix : la S.D.N. défendra l'indépendance de l'Ethiopie ou bien elle se discréditera irrévocablement.

Dès à, dans les Amériques, notamment ici en Haïti, un front courant se dessine contre l'institution genevoise, et les appels se multiplient aux Gouvernements nationaux de laisser la S.D.N. et de concentrer leurs efforts à l'organisation de la Paix dans le Nouveau Monde. Si Genève devait faillir cette fois encore à sa tâche, un pareil mouvement deviendrait irrésistible, et les Gouvernements seraient obligés d'en tenir compte. Nous avons cru devoir franchement vous exposer le problème dans toute sa brutalité, sans employer le langage diplomatique traditionnel, parce que, à nos yeux, la S.D.N. marit qu'on la défende même contre elle-même pour empêcher que ne sombre définitivement le noble idéal qu'elle représente et pour lequel nous nous combattons.

En conclusion, nous demandons non seulement le maintien, mais encore l'extension des sanctions jusqu'au retrait des troupes italiennes de l'Ethiopie.

Agrées, Monsieur le Secrétaire général, nos sentiments les meilleurs.

Pour la Ligue,

Étienne D. CHARLIER,
Président.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12 letter received by the League of Nations on February 20, 1936 from the Etudiants Liegeois.
Un document envoyé de nombreux groupements de jeunesse a été au maintien de la paix dans l’avenir, la section belge du groupement jeunesse appartenant aux tendances politiques les plus diverses, réunis à Bruxelles le mercredi 10 octobre.

Après examen de la situation internationale et plus précisément de l’évolution du conflit italo-éthiopien,

Considérant que la politique extérieure de la Belgique doit s’appuyer sur la Société des Nations, garante de sa sécurité et de son indépendance,

Considérant qu’il importe en conséquence que notre pays fasse un effort énergique et immédiat des sanctions prévues par le Pacte contre tout État qui, selon nous, escamote la paix dans l’avenir en plaçant l’aiguilleur éventuel devant la portée de voir se dresser automatiquement contre lui toutes les puissances signataires du Pacte.

Adressent leurs félicitations au Gouvernement belge tant pour son attitude à Genève, que pour la célérité avec laquelle, en application de la proposition internationale votée le 21 octobre, il a levé l’embargo sur les armes destinées à l’Éthiopie.

Lui font confiance pour l’exécution de toutes les mesures décidées ultérieurement par la S.D.N., dans le but de mettre fin à la guerre,

Formulent le vœu que rien ne soit négligé à Genève pour aboutir à un règlement équitable du conflit.

Signé par :
 Lucienne Didier et le groupe JEUNE EUROPE - Pierre Seigneur, Alphonse Zimmer de Gunchy - Raymond De Becker - Émile Hambréin et le groupe de l’AVANT GARDE (catholique) - Mathieu de Jonque, Président de la CENTRALE POLITIQUE DE JEUNESSE (catholique) - Marcel Grégoire, Henri Micaise, Jean Masselin et le groupe de la CITE CHRISTIENNE - Marcel Laloire et Marcel Verreytse pour le groupe de l’ESPRIT NOUVEAU (catholique) - Jacques Lefrançais et le groupe ESPRIT (catholique) - André Musacchi (catholique) - Roger Mota, Président de la FEDERATION DES JEUNES GARDES LIBERALES de Bruxelles - au nom de la FEDERATION NATIONALE DES JEUNES GARDES LIBERALES DE BELGIQUE - Marcel Houtman (libéral) - Henri Janne (libéral) - Marcel-Henri Jasper - Député de Bruxelles (libéral) - Jean Milon - l’UNION DES JEUNESSES OUVRIERES (socialiste) - Hector Dubois - Jeune Garde socialiste, pour l’ACTION SOCIALISTE - Jean Draper (socialiste) - Marcel Grégoire du Comité des Jeunes Garde socialistes - Albert Chomé et le groupe EQUILIBRE.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXIII


Reichenberg, den 6. Oktober 1935.

Sehr geehrte Herren!


Im Auftrage der
proletarischen Organisationen
Nordbohmens

J. Wunderlich

Mitglied der
Böhmischen Nationalversammlung.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXIV

APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXV

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 16, 1935 from the Belgian Workers Party.
ALARME VIVEMENT LES CIToyENS DES PETITES NATIONS POUR QUI
LE REGIME DE SECURITE COLLECTIVE CONSTITUE LA SEULLE
SAUVEGARDE CONTRE DES AGRESSIONS SEMBLABLES A CELLES DONT
LE GOUVERNEMENT ITALIEN S'EST RENDU COUPEABLE VIS A VIS
DE L'ETHIOPIE - POUR LE COMITE DIRECTEUR DU PARTI
OUVRIER BELGE LES VICE PRESIDENTS NAUTERS ET BOUCHERT
LES SECRETAIRES DELVIGNE ET DE BLOCK RUE JOSEPH STEVENS 17

CT 500 MYL 27% 17 = ??

Veuillez agreer, Monsieur le Secretaire
General, les assurances de ma consideration

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APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXVI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 17, 1935 from the Netherlands Social Democratic Party.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXVII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 letter dated December 17, 1935 from the Front Populaire.
(Suite)

Le Front Populaire fait sien l’ordre du jour de nos Camara-
des Libéraux et Travaillistes de la Chambre des Communes Anglaise
ainsi conçu :

Le Front populaire, présente à Monsieur le Président de
la S.D.N. ses respectueuses salutations.

Pour le Comité et par Ordre :

Le Secrétaire Général :

[Signature]
Comité local de lutte contre la guerre et le fascisme de Nîmes.

Mâcon, 14 décembre 1935.

Monsieur le Président du Conseil de la Société des Nations,


Le Comité estime que la solution du conflit Italo-Ethiopien ne peut être étudiée que dans une assemblée plénière de la Société des Nations. Surtout ne demander instamment au Conseil de la S.D.N. de ne pas souscrire à un projet qui consommerait l'échec de la politique d'arbitrage et de sécurité collective et ruinerait définitivement l'autorité du Pacte et de la Société des Nations en même temps que tout espoir de paix.

Le Comité réclame énergiquement respect de l'intégrité territoriale de l'Ethiopiejet, en attendant une solution juste du conflit, l'application stricte des sanctions pacifiques votées à Genève à l'agresseur, et leur extension à l'acier et au pétrole, sanctions qui seules peuvent paralyser toute guerre d'agression actuelle et future.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Président, mes salutations antifascistes et anti-guerrières.

Pour le Bureau,

accédant

26/12

1935

Fact Registry
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXIX

En Buenos Aires, a los trece días del mes de diciembre del año mil novecientos treinta y cinco, la FEDERACIÓN DE LOS PATRIA- MÓS DE AYUDA A LAS VÍCTIMAS ANTIFASCISTAS EUROPEAS, reunida en asamblea extraordinaria,

CONSIDERANDO, que las proposiciones de paz anglo-francesas para la solución del conflicto italo-etiopés resultan una primia al Estado declarado agresor por la misma Liga de las Naciones y a sugerencia de Gran Bretaña, además de representar un agravio a la con- tumible agresión contra un Estado débil,

Que, por esa prima, no solo el fascismo italiano asista y legaliza su prepotencia en el Exterior, sino también en el Interior, pretendiéndose autorizarlo a continuar en sus represiones po- líticas y sociales y agravarlas;

Que el fascismo triunfante hará aún más penosa y triste la condición política y jurídica de los etiopes que caerán bajo su jurisdicción, mientras que por otro lado establecerá con sus acoso- tumbrados métodos de violencia y de arbitrariedad una emigración, emigración y personal de los trabajadores italianos a aquellas tierras e inas- ertas regiones africanas, dando así lugar también a otras viola- ciones del derecho público nacional e internacional;

Que todo esto no puede ser sanadito por la Asamblea de Ginebra a propuesta de dos de las más fuertes naciones europeas, y dar lugar a una decepción tan vasta, honda y universal que no deja de hacer perder la poca confianza que todavía queda en la suste- tada justicia internacional, de que se hicieron paladinos 32 nacio- nes de la Liga;

De libera:

Que se comunique a la Liga de las Naciones la presente nota con que se pide que la solución del conflicto italo-etiopés sea en el sentido del que ha sido considerado, bajo su aspecto e incluido también como aquí ha sido considerado, bajo su aspecto y particularmente teniendo presente los gobiernos de Francia e Inglaterra.

Ampliándose el campo de jurisdicción del poderío del fas- mo del senor Mussolini y agraviándose las triste e inhumanas con- dición de un multiplicado número de víctimas, no habrá posibili- dad por parte de la misma Liga, que sancionaría la paz injusta de remediar los males que ella arrecaría y de amparar, en todo, el mayor número de víctimas que el fascismo creará.

Federación
AYUDA
VÍCTIMAS
ANTIFASCISTAS
EUROPEAS

Secretario

ES COPIA FIEL
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXX

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 telegram received by the League of Nations on October 4, 1935 from the Czech Communist Party.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXXI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 telegram received by the League of Nations on October 5, 1935 from the National Committee of Women Railwaymen in France.

Telegramm – Télégramme – Telegramma

MONSIEUR LE PRÉSIDENT
SOCIÉTÉ DES NATIONS GENÈVE

COMITE NATIONAL CHEMINIÈRES FEMMES DE CHEMINOTS DE FRANCE DØLOUREUSEMENT EMU PAR MASSACRE PEUPLE ETHIOPIEN
PROTESTE VÉHÉMENTEMENT CONTRE AGRESSION FASCISTE ITALIENNE
RECLAME SON AGISSE PRES PUISSANCES SIGNATAIRES PACTE POUR
APPLICATION SANCTIONS ÉCONOMIQUES ET FINANCIÈRES EGARD

au nom de... au nom de... au nom de...

400
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXXII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 letter received by the League of Nations on October 9, 1935 from the Employees of Schwarzenbach & Co.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXXIII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket letter received by the League of Nations on November 18, 1935 from the General Confederation of Workers and Peasants of Mexico, and National Federation of Workers in the Sugar Industry and Alcohol related Industries.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXXIV

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 6 telegram received by the League of Nations on October 19, 1935 from the workers of Barkasovo Village.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXXV

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 10 telegram received by the League of Nations on December 14, 1935 from the Internationale Marins Dockers.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXXVI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter dated October 9, 1935 from the Union des Travailleurs Negres.

Union des Travailleurs Negres
ASSOCIATION CULTURELLE ET D’ENTRAIDE
Rue Charlot
PARIS (3)

Paris, le 9 Octobre 1935.

ORDRE DU JOUR DE L’ASSEMBLEE MENSUELLE
DU 9 OCTOBRE 1935, VOTE A L’ABSENCE

"L’UNION DES TRAVAILLEURS NEGRES" après avoir entendu les diverses interventions de ses membres et de ses sympathisants:

Demande à la Société des Nations qu’elle intervienne énergiquement pour mettre fin à la guerre atroce provoquée par l’Italie fasciste contre l’Ethiopie, violant ainsi l’intégrité d’un peuple pacifique et le pacte de la S.D.S.

Proteste énergiquement contre l’attitude du gouvernement Laval qui soutient la presse fasciste, induisent en erreur l’opinion publique.

Réclame le respect du Pacte et l’application rigoureuse de l’article 16.

Le Secrétaire:

Para [illegible]
10/10/35

[Handwritten note]
L'injuste guerre de conquête entreprise par l'Italie fasciste contre l'Ethiopie, dure depuis quatre mois.

L'Italie fasciste depuis longtemps se préparait à cette guerre. Disposant d'armements puissants, elle pensait pouvoir écraser l'Ethiopie au bout de quelques semaines.

Elle s'est heurtée à l'héroïque résistance du peuple abyssin, décidé aux plus grands sacrifices pour la défense de son indépendance nationale et de son intégrité territoriale.

L'Ethiopie, dans sa résistance, a donné au monde entier la preuve de son respect absolu de la loi internationale, tandis que l'Italie fasciste viole cyniquement tous ses engagements en massacrant la population civile éthiopienne et en détruisant, à coups de bombes d'avions, les ambulances, de la Croix-Rouge.


L'Union des Travailleurs Nègres constate que l'application des sanctions contre l'Italie se heurte à des lenteurs qui favorisent les désœuvres de Mussolini.

Elle éprouve une vive inquiétude au sujet des intrigues de la diplomatie fasciste auprès des Chancelleries européennes.

Elle dénonce les récentes démarches faites à Londres par un émissaire de Mussolini qui a posé les conditions dans lesquelles l'Italie accepterait de faire la paix et qui se résument ainsi : "Dès le mois prochain, l'Ethiopie sera calme et tranquille..."
L'Union des Travailleurs Nigros
ASSOCIATION CULTURELLLE ET D'ENTRAIDE

57, Rue Charlot
PARIS (3)

Paris, le

--- Ordre du jour suite ---

territoire et les partager ensuite entre l'Italie, la France et
la Grande-Bretagne."

De telles propositions sont inacceptables. Aucun membre
de la Société des Nations ne saurait y souscrire; ce serait
une consécration honteuse de la loi du plus fort et la négation
totale du droit de souveraineté de peuples faibles.

L'Union des Travailleurs Nigros fonde des espérances sur
le gouvernement français pour déjouer toutes les intrigues
tendant au désarmement de l'Éthiopie et demande au Chef du
Gouvernement de mettre tout son prestige et toute son influence
au service de la cause du peuple éthiopien, qui est la cause
du droit et de la justice, notamment en intervenant à Genève
pour l'application stricte des sanctions, telles qu'elles sont
stipulées à l'article 16 du convenant de la Société des Nations
et l'aide financière à donner à ce pays.

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APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXXVIII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 telegram received by the League on December 5, 1935 from the Ligue Defense Race Negre.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 3 ITEM XXXIX

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 20 letter dated May 4, 1938 from the Jeunesses Antiracistes.

PAR AVION:

Monsieur le Secrétaire Général

de la Société des Nations

Genève,

Monsieur le Secrétaire Général,


Elles considèrent qu’une pareille reconnaissance, outre qu’elle porterais atteinte à la foi des peuples en l’organisme de Genève, considéré comme un simple enregistreur de coupes de forces, favoriserait de futures agressions en rendant légales toutes les iniquités.

La reconnaissance de la conquête de l’Abyssinie est un nouveau défi au droit des peuples à vivre libres, un recul des forces de la Paix.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Secrétaire Général, l’expression de nos sentiments distingués.

Le Secrétaire.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4

APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM I

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 7 dated October 21, 1935 from the La Ligue De Femmes Pour La Paix et Liberte en Tchecoslovaquie.
En tant qu'organisme représentatif de millions de femmes de toutes races, de toutes convictions et de toutes nationalités, le Comité pour la Paix et le Décompte créé par les Organisations Féminines Internationales est amené à répondre à l'appel que la Princesse Tsahai, Présidente de l'"Ethiopian Women's Work Association" a lancé aux femmes du monde entier leur demandant leur aide contre l'agression qu'imposa à son peuple et notamment aux femmes et aux enfants dans les villes et les villages, l'emploi de gaz par les armées italiennes.

En tant que femmes, et bien que nous n'ayons aucune illusion sur l'humanisation de la guerre, il nous est particulièrement odieux de penser que la population civile, sans défense, est victime de ces attaques. Celles-ci, si de plus constituant une violation formelle et délibérée du Protocole de 1899 sur l'emploi des gaz asphyxiants par lequel l'Italie et l'Abyssinie sont liées, alors qu'aucune excuse de nécessité de défense militaire du territoire ne peut être alléguée.

Cette violation du Traité est d'autant plus flagrante que les deux pays ont accepté l'appel du Comité des Trêves quant au règlement pacifique du conflit par voie de négociations. Alors que l'on cherche les termes d'un accord susceptible de solutionner le conflit, une campagne de terrorisme est menée.

En face de ces faits, nous désirons protester auprès du Comité des Trêves contre l'emploi de ces méthodes. Nous demandons en nom de l'humanité, à tous ses membres de chercher avec énergie et persévérance les moyens les plus efficaces pour mettre fin à cette guerre et solutionner le conflit selon les principes de la Société des Nations.

Nous nous permets d'informer ce Comité que nous envoyons copie de cette protestation au Comité International de la Croix Rouge ainsi qu'aux femmes de tous les pays, en insistant auprès d'elles pour que chacun fasse tout ce qui est en son pouvoir pour en maintenir l'opinion publique.

31 mars 1936.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM III

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 letter dated April 30, 1936 from Maria de Carvalho, São Paulo, Brazil.

Au très respectable et Digne Président de la Société des Nations

M. le Président

En votre qualité de représentant de la Ligue de la Société des Nations, j'ose implorez votre haute influence.

C'est une brésilienne qui vous pieux humblement d'ètre l'interprète de ses sentiments de sympathie pour la cause de la jeune princesse Tshabæ, d'Ethiopie, dont le coeur est si angoissé par la triste
situación de su pueblo.

El solo medio que me dispone

es d'implorar la protección del Très-Haut

sobre su pueblo, sacrificado a la ambición

del hombre. Dios es justo, y me

no abandonará.

Toda mujer, de cualquier nación,

siente la sufrimiento en su fondo del corazón, a la voz suplicante de esta

joven princesa.

Juro, señora, Senor Presidente, juro

que mi nombre es de todas las mujeres

de corazón implorando justicia.

Dígame aceptar la expresión de mi

profounda consideración y vive gratitud,

Maria Ritual de Carvalho
Monsieur Mius Guinasu
Président du Conseil de la Société des Nations
Genève

Excellence,

Depuis que les projets des Gouvernements français et anglais concernant le règlement du conflit italo-éthiopien ont été publiés, nous recevons des différents pays du monde l’expression de leur indignation à l’égard de ces propositions.

Il est rare de voir les peuples se révolter spontanément contre une prétendue formule de paix et être aussi unanimes dans l’interprétation de cette formule.

Elle leur paraît une prime accordée à l’Italie, solennellement reconnue et reconnue comme agresseur par le Conseil de la Société des Nations en lui prononçant une victoire que les armes ne lui ont pas conquis.

Elle leur paraît comme une trahison vis-à-vis des peuples qui, de bonne foi, et par fidélité envers celle-ci, ont appliqué les sanctions comme une trahison commise par les Grands Puissances et comme une trahison envers l’Éthiopie qui a subi cette attaque inqualifiable.

Les peuples sont convaincus que seules des propositions garantissant absolument l’intégrité territoriale de l’Éthiopie et son indépendance politique peuvent amener une solution du conflit qui rétablit la paix en Afrique et la garantit pour le monde entier.


Veuillez, Excellence, agréer l’expression de notre haute considération

(signé) : Clara Ragaz, Gertrud Boer
Joint Chairman

Déclaration du "CENTRE FÉMININ D’INITIATIVE POUR LA DEFENSE DE LA PAIX"

Les déléguées féminines des groupements susmentionnés, représentant plus d’un million de femmes françaises groupées dans des organisations de tendances politiques et philosophiques diverses, mais unies dans une commune volonté de paix, affirment leur ardent désir de voir cesser le plus rapidement possible les hostilités entre l’Italie et l’Ethiopie.

Elles estiment toutefois qu’une paix durable ne pourrait être fondée que sur la justice et protestent énergiquement contre toutes propositions qui, en donnant une prime à l’agresseur, violeraient à la fois la loi morale et les principes insérés dans le Pacte d’Alма.

Désireuses d’assurer une paix permanente à tous les foyers, elles adjurèrent les membres du Conseil de ne pas créer un précédent susceptible d’encourager des agressions futures et de ruiner irremédiablement dans l’esprit des peuples l’autorité de la Société des Nations.

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM
THE HAGUE 1915 ZURICH 1919 VIENNA 1921 THE HAGUE 1922 WASHINGTON 1924
DUBLIN 1926 PRAGUE 1929 GRENOBLE 1932 ZURICH 1934

Honorary President: Jane Adams
Members in 50 Countries

Ligue Internationale de Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberté.
Madame Gertrude Saer, Vice-Présidente.
Madame Camille Drevet,
Mme, Anne Sueblin-Forsythe,

Ligue des Mères et des Éducatrices pour la Paix.
Madame Ruysen,

Union Féminine pour la Société des Nations.
Madame Germain,

Comité Mondial des Femmes contre la Guerre et le Fascisme.
Madame Gabrielle Duchêne,
Madame Bernadette Cattaneo,
Madame Bartholdi,
Miss Gardiner.
Excellence,

Nous avons beaucoup regretté que la demande d’audience que nous vous avons adressée n’ait pas reçu une réponse favorable. Nous tenons, à l’occasion de cette assemblée extraordinaire de la Société des Nations à vous exprimer, comme vice-présidentes de la Ligue Internationale de Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberté, notre profond regret de ce que, dans le conflit italo-syriéen, les sanctions n’ont pas été appliquées d’une manière énergique et loyale et qu’en conséquence elles n’ont pas pu jouer dans la solution de ce conflit le rôle décisif que nous en attendions pour le maintien des principes fondamentaux de la Société des Nations.

Nous nous joignons à ceux qui, malgré la levée des sanctions, continuent à considérer comme toujours en vigueur le jugement condamnant l’agresseur, prononcé par 52 nations.

Nous souhaitons de tout cœur que l’idée de la solidarité internationale des peuples et la défense internationale de la paix, propagée dès son origine par la Société des Nations, soient enfin mises en pratique.

Veuillez agréer, Excellence, l’assurance de notre haute considération.

Pour les Vice-Présidentes,

G. Baer, C. Razes, C. Ramondt

[Signature]
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM VI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 19 correspondence from the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom forwarded to the League on September 15, 1937.

WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

HONORARY PRESIDENT: JANE ADDAMS, I. HULL HOMER, CHICAGO, U.S.A.

HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS: LIDA GUSTAVA HEYMANN.

CHAIRMAN: CLARA RAGAZ, GERTRUD BEER, C. RAMONDOT-FIORDIMARIN.

EMILY G. BALCH, U.S.A.; DOROTHY DETZER, U.S.A.; CAMILLE DREVET, FRANCE; GABRIELLE DOUMÉHIN, FRANCE.

LOLA HANGANOWA, CZECHO-SLOVAKIA; YELLA HERTZKA, AUSTRIA; M. L. HIND, NORWAY; EDITH M. JURGENSEN, JUTLAND.

DR. KAJA SADBERG, SWEDEN.

International Headquarters.

12, Rue du Vieux-College, Genève, Switzerland.


le 15 septembre 1937.

Monsieur J. Avenol
Secrétaire Général de la Société des Nations
Genève.

Monsieur,

Nous avons l'honneur de vous envoyer ci-joint une résolution adoptée par le IXe Congrès de notre Ligue au sujet de l'Ethiopie et vous prions de bien vouloir la communiquer aux États-Membres de la Société des Nations.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de notre plus haute considération.

Pour les Vice-Présidentes:

Clara Ragaz, Gertrud Beer, K.E. Innis.

[Handwritten text not legible]
ETHIOPIE

Le IXe Congrès Mondial de la Ligue Internationale de Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberté, réuni à Luhacovice du 27 - 31 juillet 1937, accepte par acclamation et envoie à la Société des Nations la Résolution suivante:

Dans un proche avenir, la Société des Nations aura à décider si la conquête de l’Ethiopie doit être considérée par elle comme un fait accompli. Aux yeux du monde entier, un crime a été commis contre toute une nation. Les inventions les plus perfectionnées de la technique moderne ont été mises au service de la barbarie. Le monde a été contraint de rester spectateur, quoique spectateur révolté, tandis que la Société des Nations n’osait pas intervenir en empoyant tous les moyens à sa disposition, pour empêcher les atrocités.

On nous dit souvent qu’une petite nation en particulier n’a pas la possibilité d’influer sur les décisions finales de la Société des Nations. Mais rien ne peut nous enlever le droit et le devoir de nous opposer à l’accentuation d’une injustice.

Nous ne nous avouons pas sur le sacrifice économique que devra s’imposer volontiers tout État qui accepte pas
la conquête de l’Ethiopie et sa disparition en tant que libre nation. Mais il y a d’autres valeurs que les valeurs économiques.

La Section Suédoise de la Ligue Internationale de Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberté fait appel à son Gouvernement, pour qu’il prenne en considération le point de vue exposé ci-dessus et qu’il le souligne quand la question se présentera devant le Conseil et l’Assemblée de la Société des Nations, agissant ainsi en accord avec l’Article 10 du Pacte.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM VII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 19 correspondence from the Women’s International League British Section of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom forwarding a copy of a letter sent to Neville Chamberlain on April 21, 1938. In addition supporting materials from the Czech, Dutch, and Egyptian sections were included. See the communication from the section in Egypt.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM VIII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter received by the League December 20, 1935 from the Centre Feminin D'Initiative pour la Defense de la Paix.

Déclaration du "CENTRE FEMININ D'INITIATIVE POUR LA DEFENSE DE LA PAIX"

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Leurs déléguées féminines des groupements soulignées, représentent plus d'un million de femmes françaises groupées dans des organisations de tendances politiques et philosophiques diverses, mais unies dans une commune volonté de paix, affirment leur ardent désir de voir cesser le plus rapidement possible les hostilités entre l'Italie et l'Ethiopie.

Elles estimant toutefois qu'une Paix durable ne pourra être fondée que sur la justice et protestent énergiquement non contre toutes propositions qui, en donnant une prime honte à l'agresseur, violeraient à la fois la loi morale et les principes inscrits dans la Paix.

Soudées, elles s'ajurant les membres du Conseil de ne pas craindre un précédent susceptible d'encourager les agressions futures et de ruiner immédiatement dans l'esprit des peuples l'autorité de la Société des Nations.

APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM IX

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 telegram from Montevideo to Avenol stamped received May 4, 1936.
Monsieur le Président,

Le Comité antifasciste des femmes et la Section lyonnaise vous adresse un solide appel en faveur de l'étrangère afin de faire cesser cette affreuse guerre qui ne nous touche qu'indirectement car toutes les femmes de racistes et de fascistes sont dans le même camp de mort et de carnage. Les femmes françaises souffrent de ce long bataille comme les femmes du monde entier. Nous avons une impatience redoutable pour aider à arrêter ce crime et nous lisons partout des appels émissaires de gouvernements pour devoir au moins l'armistice immédiate en attendant une solution définitive. Nous avons des sanctions pétroliers et autres moyens d'action. Nous cherchons nos moyens de faire entendre notre voix. Permettez-nous, monsieur le Président.
...e solliciter encore notre bénédiction pour demeure connaissance et notre reconnaissance à l'ensemble des nations réunies.

Veuillez agréer d'ancien de bonne l'hommage de notre reconnaissante gratitude et nos très respectueuses salutations.

Poue de Courte

Le Gardin

3 avril 1736
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM XI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 typed letter from the Comité Mondial Des Femmes Contre la Guerre et La Guerre stamped received by the League on October 11, 1935.

Nous les Mères,
Nous les Femmes de France,

À toutes les Mères,
À toutes les Femmes de tous les pays.

Devant l’horrible perspective ouverte par ces premiers combats italo-abruitiens,

Nous qui ne sommes ni des “amazones, ni des mères sublimes” mes des mères et des femmes tout simplement, avec tout ce que ces deux mots comportent d’amour, de devoir et de courage, et non de rémission ou de haine.

Nous comprenons que les temps sont venus pour nous d’apporter à nos maris et à nos fils toute notre collaboration, tout notre dévouement dans leur lutte pour la défense de la Paix.

Nous appelons à nous les mères, toutes les femmes, il est impossible que quelqu’un d’entre nous se tromper encore sur les raisons des conséquences d’une guerre.

Il est impossible qu’une seule mère consente encore à un seul sacrifice pour préparer la matière et la souffrance des enfants de ses enfants.

Nous avons pris conscience de notre personnalité et de nos possibilités.
Il nous faut agir.
Notre rôle est de créer et non de tuer.
La Paix est entre nos mains, nous devons maintenant pousser la sauve pour nous et nous les défendrons par tous les moyens.


Nous faisons le serment d’employer toutes nos forces de mères et de femmes pour que s’arrêter la plus rapidement possible les combats commencés et que les canons se taient à jamais.

En conséquence, nous décidons:

1) De nous adresser à la société des Nations, afin de lui exprimer notre espoir qu’elle ne faille pas à la tache que le monde entier lui confie et qu’elle veillera à l’application stricte du pacte et de ses sanctions économiques.

2) D’envoyer à une paix durable ne pourra être assurée sans le désarmement total et universel, demandons que cette question soit mise au plus tôt à l’ordre du jour et qu’elle entre, sans plus tarder dans la voie des réalisations.

Pour faire entendre leur voix et leur volonté implacable d’arrêter guerre, nous appelons les femmes,

Par les Meetings, par des protestations, par des délégations auprès du Gouvernement et de l’Ambassade Italiennes.

À envoyer des délégations à l’Ambassade et aux Consuls Italiens au Ministre des Affaires Étrangeres et à affirmer dans ses ordes du Roy de protestation que si le fascisme déclare la guerre, la démocratie sauvera la Paix.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM XXII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5, typed letter from the Comité Regional des Femmes Contre La Guerre et le Fascisme, Marseille, dated October 8, 1935.

Les mères et les femmes de Marseille, de toutes tendances et de toutes conditions, unies dans une même horreur à la pénée des enfants, des femmes et des soldats déjà tombés sur le sol éthiopien et sentant la guerre menacer leurs foyers, s’adressent à la SOCIETE DES NATIONS afin de lui exprimer leur espoir qu’elle ne faillira pas à la tâche que le monde entier lui a confiée et qu’elle veillera à l’application stricte du PAUTE et de ses sanctions économiques.

Pensant qu’une paix durable ne pourra être assurée sans le désarmement total et universel, les femmes demandent que cette question soit mise au plus tôt à l’ordre du jour et qu’elle entre sans tarder dans la voie des réalisations.

Le Comité.
La société des femmes catholiques DANICA à Split (Yougoslavie) convaincue de parler du cœur de toutes les femmes et de toutes les mères du monde entier, et en particulier du cœur de ces mères et femmes auxquelles est interdit de parler pour leurs enfants, leurs maris et leurs frères envoie à la Société des Nations cet appel:

L'État, c'est un organisme vivant formé par nous, femmes, nos enfants, nos maris et nos frères, et il ne doit pas être un Moloch cruel qui dévore les vies et la prospérité de millions de citoyens. Convaincus que la massacre insensée et fou des peuples n'apportera pas de bénédiction, de fortune, de satisfaction ni au vainqueur ni au vaincu, nous insistons sur ce que le bien-être et la prospérité des nations exige non des massacres, mais seulement des actions favorisant le progrès.

C'est pour cela que nous appelons à cette Institution:

- au nom de la mère du soldat incomme;
- au nom des victimes de la dernière guerre dont les ossements ne se sont pas encore décomposés dans les tombeaux;
- au nom des invalides de guerre qui avec leurs corps mutilés errant dans tous les coins du monde comme un terrible memento de la guerre passée;
- au nom des orphelins affamés qui, à cause des circonstances désastreuses et de l'après-guerre, cherchent en vain un morceau de pain...
au nom des millions qui perdent leurs forces, leur dignité et l’orgueil jeunesse en charge qui est l’unique conséquence de la guerre ;
au nom de tous les hommades et suicidés, des malheureux qui, l’après-guerre a pris la possibilité d’une vie normale et honnête ;
au nom de toutes les jeunes filles dont la âme a été tuée par la guerre mondiale et ses conséquences, et qui erreront dans le monde comme des spectres dans la lutte instinctive pour conserver leur pauvres corps ;
au nom de tous les êtres innocibles qui ne sont pas nés parce que leurs parents ne veulent pas qu’ils soient livrés aux canons ;
au nom de tous les petits, faibles, pourris ;
au nom de toutes les mères et femmes du monde entier sans distinction de races, nations et religions.

Nous appellerons chacun qui par des paroles hypocrites sur les devoirs sacrés cache sa cruauté et son avidité du pays étranger.
Nous accusons de même les fabricants d’armes qui accumulent leurs richesses sur des peuples émancipées. Le martyre des victimes de guerre poursuivra leur conséquence, et les liens et les surnoms des orphelins de guerre, des veuves et des mères affligées les accompagneront jusqu’à la mort.
Nous prions le bon Dieu de veiller sur vous dans les moments les plus difficiles et de donner de la force à votre raison pour qu’elle saute remporter la victoire sur la passion, l’avidité et la haine.

[Signature]

致: 秘書

DANICA

Pour la présidente:

[Signature]
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM XIV


Heure Prier, de Concentration et de Recueillement pour la Paix.

Le Dimanche, 20 Octobre 8.30 du soir.

L'endroit exact sera indiqué dans les journaux des églises, des sociétés etc.

LES FEMMES RÉPONDENT À L'IMPÉRATRICE D'ETHIOPIE!

A toutes les femmes et à toutes les mères!

Maintenant que l'humanité vit dans l'angoisse des bruits de guerre venant d'Italie et d'Ethiopie, au moment où les terribles conséquences et les misères que la guerre de 1914-1918 a répandues dans le monde se font encore sentir, les soussignées font appel aux femmes et aux mères hollandaises en leur demandant de se réunir le Dimanche 20 octobre prochain à 8.30 du soir, pour prier, se concentrer ou se recueillir pour la Paix, chacune dans son église, sa salle de réunion ou sa maison (ou dans des réunions centrales). La prière de la reine d'Ethiopie: "que toutes les femmes du monde se réunissent dans une prière pour la paix" a donné lieu à cet appel.

Un pareil appel aux femmes ne doit pas être fait en vain, dans un moment si grave où les nouvelles d'une lutte sanglante et cruelle nous parviennent.

Puisque nous avons le devoir de protéger la vie, non seulement celle de nos enfants, mais aussi celle de nos prochains, faisons tout ce qui est dans notre pouvoir pour contribuer à prévenir l'extension de la guerre et à assurer la paix, conscientes de la tâche responsable que nous avons à remplir dans la vie.

Femmes et mères! sans distinction de classe, de condition, de religion ou de conviction politique, comprenez toutes quelle force et quel bien peuvent être la prière vivante, la concentration des pensées et le recueillement!

SI VOUS VOULEZ LA PAIX
PRÉPAREZ LA PAIX!!

FEMMES ET MÈRES
QUE VOS LAMPE NE S'ÉTEIGNENT PAS!

Le comité central:
Mme. E.J. Micolée-Riem Vis, Harlem
Garenkokerskade 31 r’d.
Mme. N. Dyserinck-Van Gilse, van der Pals, Aerdenhout.
Au Conseil de la Société des Nations
à Genève.

Les femmes évangéliques de la Tchécoslovaquie sont
inquiétées par la guerre de l’Italie contre l’Abyssinie qui
menace non seulement la paix mondiale, mais encore l’existence
de la Société des Nations—c’est pourquoi nous demandons que la
souveraineté de chaque nation soit respectée et nous sommes
convaincus que la Société des Nations trouve dans ses statuts
tous les moyens nécessaires pour forcer le perturbateur de ces
principes à les respecter.

Au même temps nous rappelons avec insistance le Traité
de la Paix de Versailles qui promet le désarmement général et
nous demandons que le désarmement complet de tous soit exécuté
et qu’on introduise le contrôle international de la fabrication
des armes.

Pour les femmes évangéliques de la Tchécoslovaquie

J. Matoušová
la secrétaire.

Lidmila Malá
la présidente.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM XVI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 12, typed document dated February 1, 1936 Union des Femmes Contre La Misere et la Guerre.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM XVII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 8, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 9, and Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 14.
CORRESPONDANCE

Nous, femmes, mères, éducatrices, ouvrières, répondant à l'appel du Comité Mondial des Femmes contre la Guerre et le Fascisme, de la Ligue Internationale des Mères et des Éducatrices pour la Paix, de la Section Française de la Ligue Internationale des Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberté.

Révoltées par l'assassinat d'un peuple presque désarmé,

Conjurons la S. D. N. de tout mettre en œuvre pour arrêter sans délai le massacre et prévenir l'extension du conflit sans sacrifier l'indépendance ni l'intégrité territoriale de l'Éthiopie.

Signature : A. Ausendar
Adresse : 20 Place d'Armes

Monsieur le Président
DE LA SOCIÉTÉ DES NATIONS
GENÈVE

SUISSE
LIGUE INTERNATIONALE des MÈRES et des ÉDUCATRICES pour la PAIX
BUREAU CENTRAL : 1, Rue Lacretelle prolongée, PARIS (XVe)

(Reproduction gracieusement autorisée par L’Œuvre)

La Civilisation Occidentale pénètre chez les Barbares

Prix : 0 fr. 10 — 10 fr. le cent.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 4 ITEM XVIII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 8, Box R3647, Registry File 15227, Jacket 13 hand written letter from the Organisation de Femmes de Malakoff dated January 28, 1936.

Malakoff le 28 janvier 1936

Organisation de Femmes de Malakoff, seine (sation du Clos Montelou) et

Monsieur le Secrétaire du bureau de la société des Nations et Genève

Reunie en assemblée générale le samedi 25 janvier 1936

Groupant des Mères et des Épouses

protestant avec force auprès de Vous,

contre la continuation du conflit guerrier Italo-Ethiopien.

Elles réclament l’application

des sanctions à la nation agressive

d’Italie.

Les Femmes veulent que la S.D. N. arrête

ta guerre, celle là, et celle de tous les

imperialismes

Mères épouses nous lutterons de toute

notre energie pour obtenir le

Paix du Monde entier

Recevez Monsieur nos salutations feministes

Le Bureau
APPENDIX CHAPTER FOUR ITEM XIX

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter from Union Mondiale de la Femme pour la Concorde Internationale dated September 13, 1935.

A son Excellence Monsieur R. Danks
Président de la 16ème Assemblée
de la Société des Nations
GENEVE

Monsieur le Président,

 Craignant de prolonger la séance de ce après-midi, nous vous présentons par lettre une requête qui nous tient particulièrement à cœur.


Ayant conscience de l'importance du mandat qui nous a été confié, nous vous présentons cet appel, signé de près de 150.000 personnes groupées en 31 associations.

L'intérêt particulier de ces vœux est qu'ils émanent d'un pays qui n'appartient pas encore à la Société des Nations et des groupes composés exclusivement de membres appartenant aux races de couleur.

Conformément au désir même de la Société des Nations, nous cherchons inlassablement à éveiller l'intérêt et la confiance du public pour cette institution; cet appel est un résultat direct de nos efforts, aussi nous semble-t-il urgent de pouvoir donner satisfaction à ceux qui nous chargent de transmettre leurs appels en les assurant qu'ils sont dûment accueillis par la grande Institution à laquelle ils sont destinés. Cette satisfaction ne manquera pas d'être un encouragement précieux pour des milliers d'êtres à travailler toujours davantage en faveur de la Société des Nations.
Madame,

J'ai l'honneur d'adresser réception de votre lettre du 13 septembre 1935, adressée au Président de l'Assemblée, transmettant l'appel d'une des branches de votre Union en Amérique, "The World Union of Colored Women for Peace and International Concord".

Je ne peux qu'exprimer ma satisfaction de la réception de votre lettre, par le biais de la liste des communications des organisations internationales non- officielles qui sont distribuées régulièrement au Conseil.

Veuillez agréer, Madame, l'expression de ma considération la plus distinguée.

Pour le Secrétaire général,

le Sous-secrétaire général
Directeur de la Section politique:

(\( g \) F. P. Walters)

Madame la Présidente de
l'Union mondiale de la Femme pour la concorde internationale
17, Bd. helvétique
GÈNEVE.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 5

APPENDIX CHAPTER 5 ITEM I


[Image of the letter]

Seit Monaten besteht der Volksbund unverborgen, im Italien, zu bedrohen, ein Kompromiss, einen Weg des Ausgleiches zu finden. In einerseits und der starren Haltung der beiden Gegner, besonders Italiens, andererseits, einerseits, die Frieden und die friedlichen Verhandlungen zu erreichen, die im Interesse der Weltfrieden und auch unendlich notwendig ist.

Im Folgenden unterbreite ich Ihnen, Herr Präsident, ein Empfehlung, dessen Verwirklichung geeignet wäre, einen der beiden Konflikte zwischen beiden zu ermöglichen.

Abessinien betrachtet als einen der größten Gebiete seines Landes, etwa die eine oder andere oder mehrere Provinzen, ab, jedoch nicht als annektierte Kolonialland der Kgl. Italienischen Krone, sondern als integrale und völkerrechtliche Teile der Fifasien, möglichst in Frieden und Friedensverhandlungen zu erreichen, die im Interesse der Weltfrieden und auch unendlich notwendig ist.
statt- 
zurufen. — Ebenso selbstverständlich hätten die Grenzgebiete topogra-
phisch aufgenommen, die Grenzen genau festgelegt, abgesteckt und karte-
zu werden, um künftiger Zwischenfälle vielmehr von vornherein auszu-
schließen oder deren Gefahrenmomente Wenigstens auf ein Mindestma-

Um Italien weiterhin wirtschaftspolitisch noch besonders angese-
genkommen, wurde ich vorschlagen, dass sich Abessinien das Verpflicht-
ungen zfolgt zu behandeln, also die Freihandelbehinderungen und -
seitig, besonders errungen Entwicklung des gegenseitigen Handelsverhält-
heit zuzulassen, Selbstverständlichkeit bleibt, dass Vorschriften Zollfrei-
unbenommen, nach Belieben auch anderen Staaten irgendwelche Zollbeg-
ner die Überzeugehung haben zu dürfen, dass der Weges von Abessinien
sich von Jahrhundert zu Jahrhundert, wenn nicht von Jahrzehnt zu Jahrzehn-
der, mit den Länden der Welthandelsstraßen in der Weltgeschichte und
und modernisieren, zu modernisieren und zu vorschriften, und die ganze
Organisation, Verwaltung, Insektenwesen, Prüfung, Zollwesen, Kultur
und Unterhalt, Landwirtschaft, Gesundheits- und Sozialwesen, Justiz,
Handel, Gewerbe, Industrie, Bergbau und Verkehr, etc., nach
Grundsätzen moderner Erfahrungen, sowie des Rechts der Geschäftigkeit,
die bedeutungsvolle und wichtige Aufgabe zu erfüllen und auch das
verlässliche-erzieh. und straffe Durchführung durchzustreben, zu regeln,
und in den Absichten, dass die Abessinischen Regierungen vorschriften,
gleichzeitige Faschleute als Regierungspersonen und Beamte zu übernehmen,
Die von ihnen wäre zu erwarten, ob nicht nur
Unterstützung und Sicherung dieser Regierungsbeamten wurde gleichzei-

tig auch bevollmächtigte Vertragss-Personen und Eingriffe des Verkehrs-

Zur Verhinderung neuer kriegerischer Konflikte im Falle etw.

gar künftiger Grenzzwischenfälle trotz Errichtung der vorgeschlagenen
neutralen Zone wäre vorschlägsweise im Voraus ein ordentliches Inter-
nationales Schieds-, Civil- und Straf-Gericht zu schaffen, das auf Grund

ebenfalls im Voraus bereits (Wenigstens richtlinienmässig) festzustan-
den. Gesetzes-Paragraphe vorkommende Fälle nicht als politische, sondern
als gewöhnliche civile- und strafrechtliche Auseinandersetzungen be-

liebt zu behandeln hütte, wenn nicht organisierte, offensichtlich wohl-

vorbereitete und von Behörden inspirierte und/oder andere Ueberfälle er-

folgen, die ebenfalls durch dieses Internationale Gericht abgeleh-

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Haben bitte, Herr Präsident, meine Propositionen einer eingehenden Prüfung und Erwägung unterziehen und alles daran setzen, nach Möglichkeit auf dieser durchaus leicht realisierbaren, beiden Vertragspartnern nur Vorteile bietenden Grundlage, einen sofortigen Friedensschluss, der nur vom guten Willen der beiden Gegner abhängig ist, herbeizuführen. —

Ich darf Sie doch um Bestätigung über den Empfang dieser meiner Propositionen, wie auch um Ihre Stellungnahme hieszu, bitten.

Genehmigen Sie, Herr Präsident, den Ausdruck meiner ganz besonderen Hochachtung

Siegfried

Bekanntget!
APPENDIX CHAPTER 5 ITEM II

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3646, Registry File 15227, Jacket 11 letter dated December 17, 1935 from Innsbruck.
De mi mayor consideración:

El que abajo figura, Miguel Pasuzzi, de nacionalidad argentina, se permite molestar vuestra atención, para rogarle con más encarecimiento, estudié en lo posible la formulación de un plan para la restitución de las regiones africanas que nos ha expuesto. Hace tanto en la seguridad de que V.E. estudiará en lo que nos ha expuesto. Hace tanto en la seguridad de que V.E. estudiará en lo posible la formulación de un plan para la restitución de las regiones africanas que nos ha expuesto. Hace tanto en la seguridad de que V.E. estudiará en lo posible la formulación de un plan para la restitución de las regiones africanas que nos ha expuesto.

I.- SIETOppia permitiría con Italia las tierras que toman desde Dolo en el límite con la Somalia Italiana hasta la línea hasta el S.E. de Harrar (20 Kms al S. y 20 Kms al E. de Harrar desde este punto hasta Makalle). De esta forma hasta Eritrea Italiana, y todo lo que está a su izquierda hasta la línea de la Iglesia de Eritrea Italiana, con la antigua línea de la Iglesia de Eritrea Italiana, con la antigua línea de la Iglesia de Eritrea Italiana, resultando en cambio:

II.- La ciudad santa de Aksum con un corredor hasta la nueva frontera con la Nueva Etiopía.

III.- La parte S.O. de la Somalia Italiana que comprende desde la frontera etíope al Norte, hasta el Río Juba al Este y el Océano Indico al Sur, con lo que se obtiene a Etiopía una salida al mar que tanto necesita para su desarrollo industrial, comercial y económico en general.

Además Italia se obligaría por ante la Sociedad de las Naciones a:

1.- La construcción de un puerto etíope sobre el Océano Indico.

2.- La construcción de un Ferrocarril desde este Puerto hasta Addis Ababa hasta las capitales de provincias etíopes.

3.- Italia facilitaría a Etiopía un Crédito sin interés para la adquisición de su flota mercante, el cual sería amortizado con el 50% de las entradas líquidas con su cancelación.

4.- Italia se obligaría a explotar durante 10 años todas las minas y yacimientos etíopes, y de su producto el 50% sería para Etiopía y el 50% para amortizar el Capital invertido. Una vez pagado este Capital Etiopía percibiría el 50% de las ganancias líquidas y el 50% del saldo. Luego de los 10 años, Etiopía liquidaría directamente estas explotaciones.

5.- Italia se obligaría a adquirir Etiopía durante 10 años todo el derecho agrícola-ganadero al precio que fijen las bolsas internas. Todos estos trabajos serán controlados por personal técnico nombrado por la Sociedad de las Naciones. Desempeñándose ante V.E. toda la tranquilidad y prosperidad que merece.

Atte.,

M. Pascuzzi & CIA
RINCON 1109
Buenos Aires 8 de diciembre de 1935
UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter received by the League of Nations on October 4, 1935 and discussed in League communication entitled Résumé.
Résumé.

L'expéditeur de la lettre croit de son devoir de communiquer à la Société des Nations certaines réflexions concernant le conflit italo-éthiopien. Si l'on veut empêcher la guerre, il faut avant tout rechercher les causes du conflit. À cet égard, les responsabilités du fascisme lui paraissent très lourdes, à cause de l'éducation militaire de la jeunesse.

Pour empêcher la guerre, l'expéditeur de la lettre recommande une solution consistant à offrir aux soldats de l'armée italienne d'Afrique la possibilité de s'établir en Ethiopie et d'y accomplir un travail utile.

Il critique également le régime actuel en Allemagne, qui, pour pouvoir réserver, plonge la population dans la misère. Cependant, il ne s'agit pas de combattre ces régimes par les armes, mais il faut faire disparaître les causes qui ont permis de les établir.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 5 ITEM V

APPENDIX CHAPTER 5 ITEM VI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 letter received by the League of Nations on October 5, 1935 from Church of the Czech Brethren.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 5 ITEM VII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 17 letter received by the League of Nations July 10, 1936 from Buenos Aires.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 5 ITEM VIII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3649, Registry File 15227, Jacket 18 telegram dated August 21, 1936 from Addis-Ababa.
ANCHE PIU INVOCHIOMO DA DIO ET DA TUTTE LE NAZIONI CHE NON
FACCiano RITORNARE MAI IL GOVERNO DEGLI AMHARA IGNORANTE ET
APPORTATORE DI DANNI CHE HA RUBATO I NOSTRI BENI ET -
CI HA FATTO SCHIAVI NEL NOSTRO PAESE CONSIDERANDOCI COME
OGGETTI DI COMMERCIO ET TUTTI UNITI VI SCONGIURIAMO ET
INVOCIAMO CHE DIO VI ILLUMINI SENTIAMO NOI ALTRI ORMAI DOPO LA
VENUTA DEL GOVERNO ITALIANO RESTITUITI ALLA NOSTRA DIGNITA DI
UOMINI VI VIVIAMO IN PACE ET BENESSERE ET NON VOGLIAMO IN E'TIOPIA
ALTRO GOVERNO CHE NON SIA QUELLO ITALIANO ALT
- CADI DJAME AHMAD, CADI ALUNED ABDALLA, HAGI BARASO
MUCHAMEP IUSEN BADRI MUSA IBRAHIM ABUBACHER IBRAHIM SCERIF EL
HAGI ABEDEL SAMED IBRAHIM ABUBACHER ABDIHLAHMAN EL SIEIK HATIMA
AHMED ABDALLA HAGI HAMZA ABDIHLAHMAN EL SIEIK BUSCERA BEN

HASAN EL SIEIK OMAR BISCIR GIALMAL HASAN OMAR - IBRAHIM SALEH
ABDALLA ABBE FOGHI MUHAMED ALMED MUHAMED GIAMAL SEIH BISCIR
AHMED EL SIEIK MAHMUD EL FACHI MUHAMED +
APPENDIX CHAPTER 5 ITEM IX

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 telegram received by the League of Nations October 12, 1935 from Trena.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 5 ITEM X

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3645, Registry File 15227, Jacket 5 telegram received by the League of Nations October 5, 1935 from Fredrik Norman.
APPENDIX CHAPTER 5 ITEM XI

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 16 letter dated May 18, 1936 from Mme Pilar de Navascuez Sola.
Cercano: Inmediatamente después de apro-
bad el dictamen, la Sociedad de Naciones
acordará proponer por otros cinco años la
misión colonizadora de Italia, siempre bajo
la inspección de aquella entidad, hasta el
momento considerado oportuno, sea a los
5 primeros años, o después de la prorrogá-
la misión. Etiopía responderá a un plis-
decito, en el que decidirá su autonomía
durante su dominación de Italia o de la
Sociedad de Naciones.

Cuando se decida Abisinia dependa
bajo la tutela directa de la Sociedad de
Naciones, se le asegurará a Italia la pro-
viedad y desarrollo en explotación de las
riquezas que hubiese descubierto y devan
éstas durante su misión de coloniza-
ación directa.

Gobierno: La Sociedad de Naciones, asegu-
ran un desarme absoluto de Abisinia,
durante la ocupación italiana, como después
en caso de autonomía.

Texto: Si el plisdecito, Etiopía decide
que Italia presigne un labor de ocu-
pación, también lo sería bajo un estatu-
\(\text{t} \text{a} \text{t} \text{i} \text{o} \text{n} \text{a} \text{b} \text{e} \text{n} \text{e} \text{t} \text{i} \text{a} \text{d} \text{a} \text{c} \text{i} \text{ó} \text{n} \text{d} \text{i} \text{r} \text{i} \text{c} \text{i} \text{a} \text{n} \text{d} \text{a} \text{r} \text{a} \text{b} \text{e} \text{s} \text{e} \text{r} \text{a} \text{d} \text{ur} \text{a} \text{s} \text{e} \text{s} \text{e} \text{r} \text{a} \text{d} \text{e} \text{s} \text{u} \text{s} \text{u} \text{a} \text{m} \text{o} \text{n} \text{ía}

a Italia un puesto en la comisión gubernamental del país.

Esta humilde pugnancia, que expone a la Secretaría de la Sociedad de Naciones, en este día de la buena voluntad, creo tiene salvar el prestigio de la entidad francesa, a la vez que el hecho consumado de Italia quedaba respetado, sujeto al plan posterior que dejó apuntado.

Bien comprendo que no está el camino de la paz, aunque con ello se pretenda volver a el tiempo del momento que aporta a la Sociedad de Naciones. El Par del Mundo está en la unión de los pueblos, emporando con los Estados Unidos de Europa, como proseguido el malogrado Mr Briand.

Repetidamente y con cordiales

Saludos

[Signature]

Madrid
Villanueva 38-2°
APPENDIX CHAPTER 5 ITEM XII

UNOG Library, League of Nations Archive, Genève, Switzerland, Box R3648, Registry File 15227, Jacket 15 telegram received by the League of Nations on April 1, 1936 from Eveque Jarrosseau.
Liga Narodów

Liga Narodów, która w jej cechu ma ścisłe prawa międzynarodowe, ma na swój cel wzmocnienie pokoju i bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego. W drodze pośrednictwa z jej stroną działa. W sprawach międzynarodowych Liga Narodów przemawia na rzecz wiedzy i rozumienia, pomaga w rozwiązywaniu konfliktów, a w sporach między narodami podejmuje decyzje oświecające. Liga Narodów jest na rzecz pokoju i ochrony praw narodów.

[signature]