

GREECE AND THE ALBANIAN QUESTION AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Following the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, Albania became the battleground of her neighbors' conflicting interests. Directly involved were Austria-Hungary, Italy, Greece, Serbia, and Montenegro. But more important for Albania, on the eve of the First World War, was that her territory was the main theater of Austro-Italian conflict in the Balkans.

Austria-Hungary's traditional policy was to prevent any power from obtaining direct or indirect control of the eastern shores of the Adriatic. Although Austria-Hungary had extensive economic interests in Albania, the latter's principal value for Vienna, in terms of power politics, was strategic. Vienna's basic policy, therefore, was to block Serbia from gaining an Adriatic exit, and to keep Italy from the eastern shores of that sea. To this end Austria-Hungary had been willing to establish an independent Albanian state in case Turkey lost her European possessions.¹

In terms of economic penetration in Albania, Italy was second only to Austria-Hungary. Moreover, Italy saw Albania as a base for economic penetration of the Balkans and, from a strategic point of view, for establishing hegemony over the Adriatic.² Thus Austria's most important rival in Albania and the

1. *Albania*, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office. No. 17 (London, 1920), 65, 79, 91-93; Ernst Christian Helmreich, *The Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars 1912-1913* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1938), 157, 252-253; W.W. Gottlieb, *Studies in Secret Diplomacy During the First World War* (London, 1957), 157-158; Freiherr von Macchio, *Wahrheit! Fürst Bülow und ich in Rom, 1914-1915* (Vienna, 1931), 21-23; Feldmarschall von Conrad, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit 1906-1918* (Vienna, Leipzig, München, 1922), III, 585, 598, 665, 755, 779.

2. *Montenegro*, Foreign Office Handbooks, No. 19. 31-32, 41, 43-44, 47, 49-50, 53, 62, 65, 72; Gottlieb, 330-331; Francesco Crispi, *Questioni internazionali* (Milan, 1913), 144; A.J. May, *The Hapsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1951), 290-292, 493-494; Francesco Nitti, *Il capitale straniero in Italia* (Bari, 1915), 22-23. Conrad, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit*, III, 598, 665, 755, 779, IV, 171; A.F. Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary, 1879-1914* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1921), II, 175-177; Giovanni Giolitti, *Memoirs of My Life* (London, 1923), 358, 380; Macchio, *Wahrheit! Fürst Bülow...*, 21-23; Antonio Salandra, *La Neutralità Italiana, 1914, Ricordi e Pensieri* (Milan, 1928), 43-44; hereinafter cited as Salandra; William C. Askew, "The Austro-Italian Antagonism, 1896-1914" in L.P. Wal-

Adriatic was her ally Italy. To be sure, Albania was only one of the many issues which embittered Austro-Italian relations. There was perhaps not a single question involving the Adriatic and the Balkans where Italian and Austrian interests coincided.

When the status quo in the Balkans was upset by the disintegration of Turkey in Europe as a result of the First Balkan War, Austro-Italian friction over Albania intensified in spite of the fact that the two nominal allies did cooperate on one issue, the establishment of an autonomous Albanian state. Although the Great Powers accepted in principle the creation of an autonomous Albania, many European statesmen doubted the durability of their experiment. Indeed, Albania's viability was, to say the least, dubious. Article 3 of the Treaty of London (30 May 1913), which terminated the war between Turkey and the Balkan allies, stipulated that the delimitation of the Albanian boundaries and all other questions concerning Albania were to be regulated by the Great Powers. It was subsequently decided that Albania's integrity was to be guaranteed by the Great Powers, with its civil and financial administration supervised by an international control commission. The boundaries of the new state would be fixed by an international delimitation commission appointed by the conference. Finally, a Prince was to be designated by the Great Powers.³

Much of the unrest that ensued in Albania must be attributed to the tardiness of the Great Powers in constituting the boundary delimitation commissions and in establishing the provisional government. It was not until after the middle of October, 1913, that the international delimitation commission was able to start its work for the delimitation of the northern boundary. In the meantime, Serbia, on the pretext that Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey were stirring up the Albanian tribes against her, continued to occupy territory awarded to Albania.

lace and William C. Askew, eds., *Power, Public Opinion and Diplomacy* (Durham, North Carolina, 1959), 198-212.

3. G. P. Gooch and Harold Temperley, eds., *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914* (London, 1927-1938), IX: 2, appendix III, 1050-1051, and nos. 931, 967, 1186; hereinafter cited as B.D.; *Ministère des affaires étrangères, Documents diplomatiques français 1871-1914*. Third Series, 1911-1914 (Paris, 1929-), VI, nos. 520, 562, 569; hereinafter cited as D.D.F.; Ludwig Bittner, Alfred Francis Pribram, Heinrich Srbik, and Hans Uebereberger, eds., *Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik von der Bosnischen Krise 1908 bis zum Kriegsausbruch 1914. Diplomatische Aktenstücke des Österreichisch-Ungarischen Ministeriums des Äusseren* (Vienna, 1930), VI, nos. 6953, 6954, 6971, 6972; hereinafter cited as Ö-U.A.; Johannes Lepsius, Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Friedrich Thimme, eds., *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914. Sammlung der diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes* (Berlin, 1927), XXXIX:1, nos. 12545, 13941, 13958; hereinafter cited as G.P.; Helmreich, 249-257.

Serbia also encouraged internal disorder in an effort to obtain boundary rectifications and a pro-Serbian government. Moreover, Austria delayed the constitution and the work of the delimitation commission, capitalizing upon the prevailing chaos in order to secure a firmer hold of Albanian affairs. Serbia evacuated the frontier districts awarded to Albania only after she was confronted with an Austrian ultimatum (18 October). Her compliance averted an armed conflict, but this confrontation was merely a rehearsal for July, 1914.

The situation in the South was little better. Here, too, the tardiness of the Great Powers in instituting a delimitation commission contributed considerably to the prevailing disorder. The Great Powers thought it desirable to discuss the Aegean Islands and the Epirus boundary questions together, since Greece was the claimant of both. Moreover, all the Great Powers agreed with Berlin's proposal that concessions with regard to the islands should be used as a *quid pro quo* for the settlement of the Epirus boundary. After protracted negotiations the boundary commission reached its final decisions in December 1913. According to the so-called "Florence Protocol" of 19 December 1913, the boundary line was to run roughly between the line proposed by the Austrian Government and that proposed by the Greek Prime Minister, Eleftherios K. Venizelos. The frontier districts awarded to Albania included a large Greek element plus the three important towns claimed by Greece — Argyrocastro, Koritza, and Chimara. Venizelos had no alternative but to accept the decisions of the Powers so long as the Epirus boundary and the Islands question were settled simultaneously. Finally on 13-14 February the Great Powers were able to announce their decision collectively at Athens and Constantinople. Greece was to receive the Aegean Islands in full sovereignty following the complete withdrawal of Greek forces from Albanian territory. Venizelos was compelled to accept the sacrifice of Northern Epirus in order not to alienate the Great Powers on the question of the Aegean Islands. Therefore, in compliance with the decision of the Powers, Greece evacuated all her forces by the end of April.⁵

4. B.D., X:1, nos. 16, 17, 20, 23, 26, 30, notes 4 and 6, 59, and Ch. LXXXIV passim; G.P., XXXVI:1, Ch. CCLXXIX passim; D.D.F., 3d ser., VIII, nos. 193, 215, 236, 242, 267 and passim; Helmreich, 418-428; Edith P. Stickney, *Southern Albania in European Affairs 1912-1923* (Stanford, 1926), 47-54; Ö-U.A., VII passim.

5. G.P., XXXVI: 1 and 2, passim; B.D., X:1, Ch. LXXXIV passim; D.D.F., 3d. ser., VIII, passim; Helmreich, 429-437; Berchtold told the German Ambassador in Vienna, Tschirschky, that he was not actually against Greece on the Albanian question, but that he only desired to secure a strong Albania. A weak Albania, he felt, would not only arouse the expansionist aspirations of Greece and Serbia but would also arouse old rivalries between Austria and Italy. See G.P., XXXVI:1, no. 13927.

The Greek-Epirotes, however, were not prepared to bow to Venizelos' overall national policy, and they had already decided to resist, by force of arms, their incorporation into an independent Albania. Aware of this intent, Britain and Russia proposed the postponement of the evacuation of the Greek forces and the organization of an international force to replace them in order to prevent future disorders. Berlin considered this proposal just and equitable.⁶ But the Powers were again unable to reach a timely agreement upon this proposal. Nor is it certain that Italy and Austria were willing to put an end to the chaos that existed in Albania—they could exploit a chaotic Albania to advance their own interests.

While the Great Powers were dragging their feet on this problem, the Greek Epirotes acted swiftly. Two weeks after the declaration of the Powers of 13-14 February, they declared their independence under the leadership of George Zographos, former Greek Foreign Minister. Zographos proved to be moderate; he demanded administrative autonomy under Albania rather than union with Greece. Thus, the withdrawal of the Greek forces only aggravated the existing tension and irregular warfare was resumed immediately.⁷

The International Control Commission, in an effort to prevent further bloodshed, decided to negotiate directly with the leaders of the autonomous movement. An agreement was finally reached in Corfu on 18 May, which provided considerable local autonomy for the Epirotes of Argyrocastro, Koritza and other districts. The agreement was sanctioned by the Great Powers on 2 July; but it did not put an end to the fighting that had already flared up in the South.⁸

The arrival of Albania's new ruler, Prince Wilhelm von Wied, did not help matters in Central and Northern Albania. He was immediately opposed by the majority of the Albanian Moslems who preferred a Moslem Prince. Wied also alienated the peasants, appointing as ministers the rich feudal landowners who had no peasant support. On top of all of this, Austro-Italian antagonism and intrigues aggravated the crisis. Thus, from the very beginning, the Prince was faced with insurrections and revolts.⁹

No sooner had Wied set foot on Albanian soil than a contest began between the Austrians and Italians as to who would direct the new ruler's policy.

6. B.D., X:1, no. 93 note; G.P., XXXVI:2, 425-428.

7. B.D., X:1, Ch. LXXXIV passim; D.D.F., 3d ser., VIII passim, IX passim; G.P., XXXVI:2, passim.

8. G.P., XXXVI:2, nos. 14381, 14398; D.D.F., 3d ser., X, nos. 209, 251, 254, 255, 278, 278, 280, 281, 283, 396.

9. G.P., XXXVI:1, nos. 14065, 14073, 14076 and marginal note; B.D., X:1, nos. 81, 137.

As Antonio Salandra, now Italian Prime Minister, wrote later: "The new Sovereign was in immediate need of protection. A problem immediately posed itself... Which of the two Ministers—the Austrian or the Italian—was to direct the wavering policy of the poor Prince?"¹⁰ The Prince was pro-Austrian, and he found support among the local Catholic minority.

Inevitably, this led Italy to seek the support of the Moslem majority; she found her champion in the person of the notoriously unscrupulous, but influential Moslem, Essad Pasha Toptani, a native Albanian and a former general of the Turkish Army, who aspired to become the ruler of the new state. As early as September 1913, Serbia had granted him some aid and had agreed to support his designs in return for a favorable rectification of the northern frontier.¹¹ And apparently in the spring of 1914, Essad was in the pay of Italy as well. At this juncture a revolt broke out in Central Albania. Though a Minister of the Prince's government, Essad was connected with the revolt; consequently he was arrested and exiled to Italy (19 May 1914). In Italy, Essad was welcomed, decorated and "honored as a martyr."¹² Fuming over Italy's policy in Albania, Vienna threatened her with "a bold step which would cause the most painful surprise in Italy."¹³

It was obvious that only the intervention of the Great Powers could save the situation. There was some talk of an international force to restore order, but the disinclination of the Powers concerned made this impossible. With the outbreak of the First World War the Prince's position became untenable: he was compelled to abandon his "throne" and Albania on 31 August.¹⁴

On the eve of the First World War, Albania's internal situation was more chaotic than ever. This must be attributed primarily to the policies of the Great Powers; for while they were able to settle the Albanian question, at least on paper and to their own satisfaction, they ignored local conditions and the interests of Albania's Balkan neighbors. Actually, the control of the International

10. Salandra, 42.

11. B.D., X:1, nos. 6, 13, 23, 32, 56, 107, 108, 111, 113; G.P., XXXV:1, no. 13961; Helmreich, 420-441.

12. B.D., X:1, nos. 130, 131, 132, 133; G.P., XXXVI:2, no. 14440; Cornad, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit*, III, 589, 592, 678, 681, 687-688, 692; May, *The Hapsburg Monarchy*, 473; Helmreich 438-439.

13. Luigi Albertini, *The Origins of the War of 1914* (London, 1952-1953), II, 218.

14. D.D.F., 3d ser., X, nos. 266, 270, 274, 279, 282, 285, 308, 315, 320, 325, 363, 367, 411, 441, 465, 525, 543, 549. The Kaiser declared that he would not risk the life of a single German soldier to rescue Wied; see B.D., X:1, no. 137, 141, 142; Archives of the Greek Foreign Ministry, Gennadius to Streit, 25 July 1914, no. 22584, Theotokis to Streit, 24 July 1914, no. 22328A/5; hereinafter cited as A.G.F.M.

Control Commission had been only nominal. When the war broke out, not only was the boundaries question not settled, the Albanian Government controlled only Durazzo and the adjacent area; the rest of the country was in the hands of various local rebellious groups. Whatever law and order had existed in the North broke down completely in late August following the departure of some naval units and small contingents of the Great Powers stationed in the area.

With the outbreak of war, Albania's neighbors—Italy, Greece, Serbia, Austria, and Montenegro—simply waited for the propitious moment to satisfy their aspirations at her expense. Most active of all at the beginning of the war were the Greek-Epirotes in the South, but new impetus was also given to the intrigues of the Austrian and Italian agents. The Greek Government was particularly concerned at this time, for information reached Athens to the effect that Turkish officers had gone to Albania in an effort to unite the Albanian Moslems against Greece and Serbia.¹⁵

For her part, Rome, at the outbreak of the war, greatly feared a possible Greek-Epirote attack on Valona. In addition to the increased activities of the Greek-Epirotes, rumors spread during the first week of August that Spiros Spiromilios, a leading Epirote leader, intended to proclaim Chimara's union with Greece. The Consulta was convinced that the Greek Government had a hand in this, and San Giuliano, the Italian Foreign Minister, threatened that such activities would eventually agitate Italian "public opinion"—Italy's well-known, time-honored threat—to a degree that would inevitably impair Greco-Italian relations. Athens, disclaiming any part in the Greek-Epirote agitation, promised to do all she could to prevent Spiromilios' proclamation (10 August).¹⁶

Though it seemed that Greece was involved in these activities, there is no evidence to prove conclusively that at this time Venizelos encouraged the movement for union with Greece. It is more likely that he desired to prevent anything that would have impaired Greco-Italian relations, preferring to compromise with Italy.

Be that as it may, the situation in Albania was becoming increasingly worse, in spite of Greece's assurances. The Consulta was deeply disturbed when reports reached Rome, that Greek irregulars had occupied several villages adjacent to Valona and that they intended to occupy the port-city itself. San Giuliano

15. Ministero degli Affari Esteri, *I Documenti Diplomatici Italiani*. 4th Series: 1908-1914, XII, passim; 5th Series: 1914-1918, I, nos. 5, 17, 18, 24, 47; hereinafter cited as D.D.I.; Streit to Alexandropoulos (Varatasios to Forestis), 8 August 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 24721; Griparis to FO, 27 August 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 27721.

16. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 58, 61, 62, 79, 98, 94, 96, 98, 104, 118, 124, 141, 160, 171, 172.

immediately secured Austria's support, and identical notes were presented in Athens (16 August) requesting the Greek Government to respect the decisions of the Great Powers concerning Albania's sovereignty.¹⁷

Venizelos reiterated his assurances, and promised to request Zographos to try to prevent further disorders in Northern Epirus and action against Valona. On 24 August, he promised Bosdari, Italian Minister in Athens, that he would not oppose Italy's interests in Valona, giving him to understand that Italy should not capitalize upon the existing crisis and occupy the port-city.¹⁸ He also intimated that, if the Allies did not object, he would be willing to negotiate directly with Italy for the future cession of Valona to Italy and of Southern Albania to Greece.¹⁹ Grey had already indicated his sympathy for the partition of Albania, and he would undoubtedly go along with direct Greco-Italian negotiations. Sazonov, however, immediately objected. He insisted that the Albanian question should be settled only in association with and with the consent of the Entente Powers, and not by Italy and Greece alone. For the cession of Valona and Southern Albania to Italy and Greece respectively should be conditioned by the former's consent to join the allies against Germany and the latter's consent to make some territorial concessions in Bulgaria's favor for her neutrality or intervention. Thus under Sazonov's pressure the Allies "advised" Greece on 29 August, not to involve herself in the Albanian crisis, and to prevent any action against Valona. Venizelos again reiterated his assurances, and he even intimated that he would not object to Italy's occupation of Valona.²⁰

The generalization of anarchy in August and then Wied's departure persuaded the Consulta that the situation in Albania called for Italy's "protection." Rome was particularly disturbed by the "imminence" of Valona's occupation by the Greek bands—a situation which could serve as a pretext for Italian occupation of Saseno and eventually Valona. San Giuliano decided to request Austria's consent for the occupation in order to "protect" Valona. His pretext lost its strength, however, as a result of Zographos' declaration that the Epirotes

17. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 173, 174, 182, 186, 200, 226, 237, 238, 245, 275, 330.

18. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 402, 428, 433, 435, 442.

19. Komissiya pri Prezidiume Tsik Soyuzu SSR po izdaniyu dokumentov epokhi imperizma, *Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya v epokhu imperializma. Dokumentu iz arkhivov Tsarskogo i Vremennogo Pravitelstv, 1878-1917 gg.* Series III, 1914-1917, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1938-1940), VI:1, 156, note 2; hereinafter cited as M.O.V.E.I.

20. M.O.V.E.I., VI:1, nos. 157, 164, 166, and 157 note 1; D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 458, 484; Stieve, 32, 84.

would not march against Valona unless provoked by Moslem attacks. Moreover Athens had categorically denied aggressive intentions.²¹

San Giuliano also thought of sounding Berlin on the possibility of Italy's occupying Saseno as a palliative for Italian public opinion, which was allegedly clamoring for war against Austria-Hungary, as well as a precaution against "Greek aspirations."²² The weakness of this pretext was so obvious that he changed his mind immediately. On 5 September he wrote Salandra: "I do not believe there is danger today for Valona, and there is no pretext for the occupation of the Island of Saseno;... after more mature reflection... I think it, at least for the moment, inopportune, dangerous, and condemned."²³ He rightly assumed that Greece, preoccupied at the moment with the possibility of a Greco-Turkish war, would keep her promise about Valona in order not to impair her relations with Italy.²⁴

San Giuliano's hesitations were reinforced by Austria's attitude. Gottlieb von Jagow, German Foreign Secretary, was prepared to acquiesce in Italy's occupation of Saseno, but Leopold von Berchtold, Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, though he would agree in principle to the provisional occupation of Saseno, suggested, *inter alia*, that Berlin and Vienna should announce their common agreement with Italy's action simultaneously. San Giuliano was not about to do anything that would give the impression of a common understanding with the Central Powers, for such an impression would certainly cause complications in Italy's relations with the Entente Powers, and probably would ruin her chances of securing concessions from the Allies. Moreover, he aimed at Valona only as a prelude to further concessions. Therefore, he informed Vienna that Italy would not act for the time being because the agitation around Valona had diminished and Athens had promised to prevent a Greek-Epirote attack on Valona.²⁵ In fact, both Valona and Durazzo had surrendered to Albanian revolutionists immediately following Wied's departure.²⁶

In the meantime, the situation in Albania was steadily deteriorating. Since the outbreak of the war Austrian and Young Turk agents had been inciting the Albanian Moslems to take up arms against Serbia, and Austrian shipments of arms to them had continued, at least until the end of August. However, the

21. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 447, 460, 462, 473, 485, 509, 544.

22. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 576.

23. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 593.

24. *Ibid.*

25. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 589, 590, 613, 642.

26. Ypsilantis to FO, 2 September 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 28619; Varatas to FO, 3 and 6 September 1914, A.G.F.M., nos. 28873, 29094, 29095.

agents were not very successful during August. This was probably one of the reasons the Austrians abandoned Prince Wied. They doubted that the Albanian Moslems would fight against Serbia so long as Austria supported Wied.²⁷

Following the Prince's flight the Austrian and Young Turk agents resumed their disruptive activities. Money, horses, and munitions were distributed lavishly to Moslem leaders by the Austrian agents, and the number of Young Turk agents was increasing rapidly. During the first days of September their activities were directed not only against Serbia, but also against the Italian supported Essad who wished to return to Albania.²⁸ Obviously, Essad wanted Albania for himself. Thus he opposed Austria for having supported Wied; and the Turks who were supporting the anti-Essad Moslem faction, which wanted to make Prince Burhaneddin, son of Abdul Hamid, ruler of Albania.

The situation in Albania caused much consternation not only in Greece and Serbia but also in Italy; although the Italians, at times, could exploit domestic disorders to their advantage, they certainly did not want the pro-Turkish and pro-Austrian Moslem faction to have the upper hand in Albanian affairs. San Giuliano was well aware that any Moslem action against Serbia or Epirus would provoke further Greek Epirote attacks and perhaps an advance against Valona itself, a situation which would render Greece's occupation of Southern Albania inevitable. He also feared that Valona's occupation by the Greek-Epirotes would lead to a Greco-Italian conflict. At this stage Italy's interests would best be served by the containment of disorder and by the prevention of any developments that would lead to armed intervention by Greece and Serbia. Events indicate that Serbia and Greece thought in similar terms.²⁹

The one influential Moslem leader whom Italy, Greece, and Serbia could count upon to oppose Austrian and Young Turk influence in Albania was Essad, who, in turn, exploited the situation to his advantage—securing aid from all three states for the consolidation of his position. Essad made preparations for his return to Albania immediately following the outbreak of the war. He sought, this time, to secure his position diplomatically; he did not want to depend entirely on Italy. Therefore, he approached both Greece and Serbia for aid, promising in return a favorable settlement of all questions concerning those two powers. He sounded Athens through Greece's Minister in Rome, Lambros Coromilas, but for the moment Venizelos evaded Essad's overtures.³⁰

27. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 124, 215, 270, 344, 455, 461, 462, 472, 473, 507.

28. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 548, 553, 557, 562, 564, 565, 570.

29. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 606, 614, 629, 653, 655.

30. Coromilas to FO, 20 August 1914, A.G.F., no. 1368; Streit to Coromilas, 20 August 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 26596.

Essad sailed from Italy to Albania on 30 August by way of Athens and Nish. Before his departure, he again requested a meeting with Venizelos; at the same time he sent his private secretary to meet Zographos at Yannina with instructions to secure the latter's cooperation for his return to Albania, promising to oppose the Young Turks and restrain the revolutionary activities against autonomous Epirus.²¹ The Epirote leaders not only gave their consent, they actually urged Essad to return to Albania immediately following Wied's departure.³²

Essad met with Venizelos upon his arrival in Athens. He intimated that he was going to Nish on Pashich's invitation. The latter, fearing incursions into Serbian territory by Albanian bands incited by Austria, had requested Essad's cooperation; Pashich had promised, in return, he said, arms, munitions, and eventually soldiers. Essad also spoke of a custom's union, and even of a future defensive-offensive alliance with Serbia. How much truth there was in Essad's intimations is unclear. Most likely he exaggerated hoping to secure Venizelos' promise of future aid. Though unaware of Pashich's position, Venizelos made no commitments to Essad; nonetheless, Essad promised that he would undertake nothing without Greece's consent. Essad was given to understand, however, that he could come into a direct understanding with the leaders of autonomous Epirus.³³

Rome, on the other hand, had no reservations in her support of Essad. She believed that his return to Albania would help solve Italy's problems there. Indeed, San Giuliano saw in Essad his best chance not only to prevent a conflict between Albania and her neighbors but also to secure Valona for Italy, oppose Austria, neutralize Austrian and Turkish intrigues, and secure Italy's position in Albania.³⁴

Essad's chances of success had already improved as a result of Wied's departure, but Austro-Turkish propaganda in Albania against him was reaching such proportions that further delay in his return would have certainly impaired his chances of success.³⁵ In the middle of September, Essad met with both Pashich and the Greek Minister Alexandropoulos at Nish. Pashich told

31. Coromilas to FO, 30 August 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 27752; Ypsilantis to FO, 29 August 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 27810; Forestis to FO, 1 September 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 1799.

32. Ypsilantis to FO, 2 September 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 28619.

33. Streit to Alexandropoulos, 2 September 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 28280; Streit, I, 33-34. Alexandropoulos to FO, 4 September 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 28916; D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 638, 645, 663, 665.

34. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 606, 645, 647, 663, 665.

35. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 665, 679, 688.

Alexandropoulos that the "provisional" situation in Albania, whether under Essad or some other leader was to Serbia's and Greece's interests. He also thought that this situation would please Italy, whom Greece and Serbia would have to placate during the war; if Italy remained neutral, said Pashich, Greece and Serbia would be able to partition Albania. Therefore, he concluded, they could not afford to push Essad aside.³⁶

In conversations with Pashich, Essad, declaring himself an enemy of Germany, Turkey and Bulgaria, expressed his desire to work closely with the Entente Powers, Greece, and Montenegro. He requested Serbia's financial and military aid, and he also requested that Pashich use his influence in Athens to persuade Venizelos to supply rifles.³⁷ Eventually, Essad managed to secure limited financial support from Serbia with a promise of further aid; Greece, too, promised future support, and, in return, Essad promised cooperation with autonomous Epirus.³⁸

In the meantime, Young Turk activities in Albania caused much concern in Athens. If Turkey and Austria succeeded in installing Prince Bourhaneddin on the Albanian throne, he doubtless would lead the Albanian Moslems against North Epirus in case of a Greco-Turkish war. Already Austrian and Turkish agents were staging demonstrations against Essad, and had succeeded in swaying the people in some areas against him. Coromilas warned San Giuliano that the "Young Turks intended to serve, from Albania, as instruments of war against Greece, and that would certainly be the cause of serious complications."³⁹ San Giuliano instructed Bosdari on 13 September to warn Athens against using the presence of Young Turks as a pretext for aggression in Albania. He again threatened that such an eventuality "would be interpreted as being directed against this state [Italy]; certainly, Italian public opinion would compel the Royal Government to take a position against Greece, and in such case it would, in reality, be playing Turkey's game."⁴⁰ Bosdari replied on the 14th, that Venizelos "was very grieved by these continuous threats on the part of Italy." Venizelos told Bosdari that he would keep his word, but "certainly if the Turks would attack Greece from Albania, no one could prevent her from defending herself."⁴¹

36. Alexandropoulos to FO, 14 September 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 30269.

37. Alexandropoulos to FO, 21 September 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 31032; D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 679, 688.

38. Alexandropoulos to FO, 17 and 18 September 1914, A.G.F.M., nos. 30804, 30814.

39. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 667.

40. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 667.

41. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 678.

The implications of Venizelos' declaration disturbed San Giuliano; he knew that there was no way to prevent provocations. Rome was also disturbed by certain Turkish proposals to the effect that Izzet Pasha, a native Albanian and General of the Turkish army, be entrusted with the government of Albania. Berchtold also suggested that Wied could be reinstated together with Izzet Pasha. Obviously, insofar as Albania's neighbors were concerned this would be tantamount to having next to them an Austro-Turkish Albania.⁴²

The whole situation convinced San Giuliano that sooner or later Italy would have to occupy Valona. The Consulta, however, was reluctant to resort to the occupation of Valona or Saseno without the prior consent of the Entente, and Sazonov's attitude during the middle of September was not very encouraging. Carlotti, Italian Ambassador in Petrograd, telegraphed San Giuliano on 14 September: "Sazonov thinks ... that advantages of importance will be acquired only by those states which participate in the war and carry their own share of sacrifices for the common victory—'nothing for nothing'." Together with his 'nothing for nothing' principle, Sazonov reiterated his earlier warning to Italy (28 August) of 'now or never.'⁴³

San Giuliano reverted again to Italian public opinion. Taking advantage of certain statements in the Italian press concerning the imminence of an Italian expedition against Valona, he informed the Allies that Italy did not "intend, at least for the present, to proceed to any military expedition in Albania." He added, however, that the internal situation affected Italian interests, and, therefore, he hoped that "the Powers of the Triple Entente are not in principle against our eventual military action in Valona."⁴⁴ The Western Allies answered San Giuliano's note evasively. Carlotti reported that Sazonov told him that "the consent of the Triple Entente to the occupation of Valona by Italy was subordinated... to our cooperation with the three Powers."⁴⁵ Sazonov's "nothing for nothing" principle caused much consternation in Rome.

Nor was the Consulta satisfied with Venizelos' assurances concerning Valona. Yet, Rome also feared that a unilateral action by Italy in Valona would alienate the Entente Powers. And Rome was not prepared at this time to promise Italy's participation in the war. Imperiali, Italian Ambassador in London, advised his government that it should inform the Allies of its readiness to join

42. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 686, 695, 718, 731, 744, 756, 757, 765, 766, 875, 787.

43. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 674, and for earlier discussions for Italy's intervention see nos. 65, 100, 167, 120, 133, 140, 147, 159, 169, 177, 179, 194, 205, 205, 220, 221; also see Gottlieb, 198-209.

44. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 723.

45. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 751, p. 224 note 1.

them under special conditions.⁴⁶ San Giuliano, however, would not hear of it. He felt that Sazonov would not value Italy's participation unless it became obvious that the war would be of long duration and that it would be difficult for the Entente to defeat Germany. But in a protracted war Italy could not participate for that would mean her economic and political ruin. In his reply to Imperiali on 19 September, San Giuliano said that Italian intervention should be postponed until military events in France took a favorable turn for the Allies.⁴⁷ San Giuliano felt, however, that ultimately Italy would have to intervene, and he endeavored to prepare the ground for this eventuality.

In the meantime, the Allies did not seem to modify their attitude on the Albanian issue which was Rome's immediate worry. Clearly, action in Albania was not far off. The Greek-Epirotes were again on the offensive, occupying some villages in the Sanjak of Tepeleni on 21-22 September. News reached Rome that Greek regulars "volunteered" in the Epirote bands and concentration of troops was noticed in the frontier. San Giuliano was unsure of Greek plans: he could not decide whether Greek forces intended to present Italy with a *fait accompli* in occupying Southern Albania, or whether Athens wanted to excite Rome with her troop movements and force her to occupy Valona in order to use this as pretext for a Greek occupation of Southern Albania.⁴⁸

Most likely the Greek Government had something like the latter plan in mind. There is no doubt that Athens would not act in Albania without the consent of the Entente Powers. In fact, Venizelos wanted to come into some understanding with Italy, and again he informed Vienna, as well as the Allies, that he had no objection to Italy's occupation of Valona (21 September).⁴⁹ Thus far, it was the consent of the Entente Powers, or rather the lack of it, that held back Albania's neighbors.

While San Giuliano and Berchtold were instructing their Ministers in Athens to protest the events in Tepeleni, more disturbing news reached Rome. On 25 September, several Ministers of autonomous Epirus and Spiromilios met at Yannina with General Papoulas, Commander of the Greek Fifth Army based in Epirus. The Italian Consul at Yannina, Nuvolari, was informed that it had been decided to place the forces of autonomous Epirus under the direct

46. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 710.

47. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 726, 735, 740, 758, 764, 775; Gottlieb, 303, 204, 208.

48. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 743, 805, p. 478 note 1.

49. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 761; Venizelos to Griparis, 21 September 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 30791; Alexandropoulos to FO, 11 September 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 29780.

command of General Papoulas as part of the Fifth Army, in the forthcoming Greek occupation of Southern Albania.⁵⁰

It is true that for some time the Fifth Army had been training and organizing the forces of autonomous Epirus. It also seems that, contrary to his Government's orders, General Papoulas had some understanding with certain leaders of autonomous Epirus, for undertaking personally the command and organization of the Greek-Epirote forces. In fact, when General Danglis, a friend of Venizelos, took over the command of the Fifth Army in early October, he found evidence to prove that General Papoulas, in agreement with the General Staff, intended to lead the forces of autonomous Epirus independently of the new commander. Concurrently, Papoulas had attached himself to the Zographos partisans who were against Venizelos.⁵¹

No sooner had Nuvolari's report reached Rome than the Epirotes together with Greek "volunteers" attacked and occupied Berat, which was situated on the Northeast of Valona. The assailants of Berat declared, according to reports, that they would not stop until they reached the Shkubi River, which was the Northern limit of the Greek sphere of influence according to the secret protocol of the Greco-Serbian treaty of alliance of 1913.⁵² In reply to Italy's protests about the events in Berat, Venizelos said "he did not have any special information" concerning these events; he only knew "that autonomous Epirus is in a state of complete anarchy, in a way that anything is possible there..." He added that the Epirotes had acted without orders from the government of autonomous Epirus, and that Zographos had decided not to return to Epirus because of ill health and because he could no longer control the various bands in autonomous Epirus. Venizelos made it clear that the only remedy for the situation would be the occupation of Southern Albania by the Greek army. The Consulta, of course, was no longer worried about possible Greek action against Valona; Venizelos had already agreed to Italy's occupation of that town in return for Greece's advance into Southern Albania.⁵³

Needless to say, there could be no better time to press for Allied consent to Italy's occupation of Valona. What concerned the Italian Government was the difficulty of securing Allied consent without committing itself to the Allied cause. Sazonov continued to insist on his "nothing for nothing" principle, intending to use Valona as one of the bargaining elements for Italy's entrance

50. D.D.I., 5th ser., I. no. 820.

51. Danglis to Venizelos, Letter, 19 October 1914, Venizelos Papers, Benaki Museum.

52. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos 822, 853.

53. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos, 844, 845, 864, 847.

in the war. Salandra wrote that Rome had greater difficulties with the Allies than with the Central Powers over the question of Valona.⁵⁴ Thus, in the beginning of October, San Giuliano decided to turn to Great Britain alone, for he felt that Grey had no interest in opposing Italian occupation of Valona; moreover, Grey would be more than happy to prevent a Greco-Italian conflict, the imminence of which Italy exaggerated.

On 3 October, Imperiali was instructed to impress upon Grey the gravity of the situation in Albania, and to make clear that Italy would not remain indifferent to local anarchy and to Greek attacks. Further tension would only aggravate Greco-Italian friction, and probably would augment Greece's territorial aspirations. As for Italy, the occupation of Valona would only be the beginning.⁵⁵ On 2 October, Salandra had written Imperiali:

... the occupation of Valona will become, perhaps in a very short time, indispensable for the prestige of the Government as much internally as externally. It must be considered as the preface to other agreements which we hope to be able to conclude. . . . It should be of primary importance to obtain, if not the explicit consent, the acquiescence of Grey, who I hope will not encourage certain tendencies manifested by Sazonov to Carlotti . . . in the sense of pressuring us.⁵⁶

The next day Imperiali telegraphed Salandra that Grey promised to consider Italy's request with "good will" and that he would not object in principle to the occupation of Valona. However, Grey could not give a positive reply until he had time to consult Paris and Petrograd.⁵⁷ On 4 October, Buchanan, British Ambassador in Petrograd, informed Sazonov that "in Grey's opinion, opposition to Italy in this matter would in all probability ruin all chances of her joining with the Allies and might even turn the scale of Italian public opinion to the other side."⁵⁸ Grey thus requested Sazonov's consent for giving an affirmative reply to Italy's request for a "temporary" occupation of Valona.

Both Grey and Sazonov wanted to prevent Italy's negotiating with the Central Powers on this question. On the day that Imperiali was instructed to begin his parleys with Grey, 2 October, Flotow, German Ambassador in Rome, asked Borserelli, Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs: "Why should you not go to Valona? Who will prevent it? Everybody occupies something nowadays.

54. Salandra, 399-400; D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 812.

55. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 873.

56. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, pp. 518-519 note 2; Salandra, 401-402.

57. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, p. 519n.

58. M.O.V.E.I., VI:1, no. 335; 252. Tsentrarkhiv, *Tsarskaya Rossiya v mirovoi voyny* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1926), 252; hereinafter cited as T.R.V.M.V.

Why shouldn't you? Who would object? Certainly not Germany."⁵⁹ On the following day Zimmermann, the German Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs, urged Bolatti, Italian Ambassador in Berlin, that Italy should proceed with the occupation of Saseno.⁶⁰

Rome, however, had no intention of resuming negotiations with the Central Powers, and Berlin's unqualified encouragement was suspect. Apparently Berlin was encouraging Italy to move into Albania in order to create complications in Italo-Entente relations. Some rumors of Rome's earlier parleys with Berlin and Vienna had already reached the Allies. Sazonov warned Carloti; that while the Allies would be willing to "give" Valona to Italy for her intervention against Austria, "... the matter would assume quite a different aspect" should Italy occupy Valona with the consent of the Central Powers (19 September).⁶¹ On 3 October, Imperiali warned Salandra of the "... necessity to avoid any subsequent confidential exchange of views with Berlin and Vienna, which might come to light and alienate forever Grey's confidence and produce a series of consequences injurious to our present and future interests."⁶² On the same day, San Giuliano telegraphed Imperiali that he had no intentions of continuing the discussions with Berlin and Vienna and that his initial request in Berlin of 4 September "was communicated by Bolatti to Zimmermann against my instructions."⁶³ Thus Italy dropped her discussions with Berlin on the Valona question.

Actually, Rome had no qualms about ending negotiations with her former allies, for she suspected Austria's intentions. More than once during August Vienna had categorically reiterated her interest in Albania insisting upon the observance of the decisions of the Ambassadors' conference. It also became obvious during September that she wanted to attach certain conditions to Italy's eventual "provisional" occupation of Valona. And above all, Valona was actually a minor issue, insofar as Italy was concerned, in comparison with her more important aspirations which could be satisfied only at Austria's expense. Referring to Austria's dilatoriness, Carloti effectively summed up the government's position and suspicion in a dispatch to Rome on 3 October:

... it seems, that this belated offer renders valid the doubt that Austria and Germany, fearing that we would pick the proper moment for the satisfaction of our national aspirations, are thinking of return-

59. D.D.I., 5th ser., I. no. 866.

60. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 872, 885, 886.

61. T.R.V.M.V., 250; Salandra, 399-400.

62. Salandra, 403-404.

63. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, no. 873, p. 221n.

ing to the illusion that, for some political satisfaction, and for a rectification in the Trentino, the Royal Government and the Italian people would renounce Trieste, Istria, and Italian Dalmatia and the domination of the Adriatic, which will insure in the future our economic penetration in the Balkans and the Orient.⁶⁴

To be sure, Rome's suspicions of Austrian intentions were not far from the truth. In the middle of October, Berchtold stipulated in a memorandum that conditions and guarantees should be imposed on Italy's occupation of Valona to prevent her domination of the Adriatic and Albania.⁶⁵

During the first week of October Italy's fortunes improved considerably. Rome's talks with Berlin had provided Grey with a strong argument in attempting to persuade Sazonov to give in to Italy's wishes with respect to Valona. Sazonov accepted Grey's views reluctantly, informing Carlotti on 6 October, that he would not object to Italy's "temporary occupation" of Valona. Delcassé said that he considered the occupation of Valona "very natural and would have no objections."⁶⁶ The situation in Albania had also taken a favorable turn. Essad had crossed Albania without much difficulty and was made President.⁶⁷

Though he promised it, order and tranquility did not come with Essad's return. On the one hand, Austrian agents in the North continued to be very active and as a result, the Montenegrins threatened to occupy Scoutari. On the other hand, Serbian agents in Elbasan tried to persuade the population to accept Serbian occupation for the reestablishment of order. Albanian leaders from Tirana and Elbasan were undecided as to whether they should accept Serbia's bid, or request Italy's intervention.⁶⁸ In the South, there were continu-

64. D.D.I., 5th ser., I. no. 883; also no. 35. There were others, of course, whose dreams dwarfed those of Carlotti. Italy's Germanophile Ambassador in Vienna, Avarna, who was not entirely in agreement with his Government's policy, wrote Bolatti on 3 October: "It seems that we follow, purely because of public opinion, a policy exclusively determined by sentimentality, thinking only of the irredentist provinces of Austria and the Adriatic . . . thus losing sight of what should be one of our aims, namely the domination of the Mediterranean. . . . Our policy has always been heretofore uniquely Adriatic, whereas it should be above all Mediterranean and Adriatic in a secondary way. . . . They speak of the Adriatic as if this were the only Italian interest. Of the Mediterranean, where there are purely irredentist lands, one must not think in order not to displease our good brothers the French. It seems that it is sentimentality that directs our policy, while it should be based on our interests." See D.D.I., 5th ser., I. no. 887.

65. Conrad, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit* III, 156-157, 588-589, 678, 701. Also Gottlieb, 235.

66. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 896, 904, 908; T.R.V.M.V., 252-253; Salandra, 404.

67. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 907 annex 1, 908, 917.

68. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 871, 875, 913, 914, 925.

ous bloody encounters between Greek-Epirotes and Albanian Moslems.⁶⁹ All this made Essad's position precarious, but he counted on Italy's help. On 6 October, he insisted to the Italian Consul in Durazzo that the occupation of Valona alone would be dangerous for Italy. He proposed therefore that she simultaneously occupy Valona and Durazzo; he would place 20,000 men under Italy's command in order to prevent a Greco-Serbian domination of the country. But Italy made no commitment for the time being.⁷⁰

It was now obvious in Athens that Venizelos was prepared to reach some understanding with Rome. Conciliatory statements found their way into the press. On 6 October, an article appeared in the Venizelist paper *Patris* severely criticizing the Ministers of autonomous Epirus and others who had directed events in Southern Albania during Zographos' absence. Responsibility for the unfortunate developments there was attributed to those elements in Greece who had contributed to the disorders against the government's policy to the detriment of national interests. No doubt this article had official sympathy.⁷¹ At the same time Venizelos instructed Coromilas to repeat Greece's disinterestedness in Valona and to point out that the attitude of the Italian press toward Greece could hardly facilitate a Greco-Italian agreement of which Salandra had spoken to Coromilas on the previous day.⁷² It seems, however, that the Consulta was reluctant to come to a direct understanding with Greece, that would have been tantamount to recognizing officially Greece's establishment in Southern Albania, something Italy was not disposed to do.

Grey, who had been anxious to balance Italy's presence in Albania, was finally able to secure Rome's consent to Greece's occupation of Southern Albania. Having already secured Grey's consent, Venizelos, on 15 October, made it known that Greek forces would occupy Argyrocastro and other districts.⁷³ Two days later Rome informed the Allies that she would not object to Greece's occupation of Argyrocastro;⁷⁴ concurrently Bosdari requested

69. During the middle of October in an attack against a Moslem village in the district of Premeti a Greek-Epirote band of that district killed about 175 men, women and children. See The North Epirus Collection, Papageorgiou Papers, 59/528, in Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece.

70. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 898, 902, 907.

71. D.D.I., 5th ser., I, nos. 881, 906; *Patris*, 6 October, 1914.

72. Coromilas to FO, 10 October 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 34481; Venizelos to Coromilas, 10 October 1914, A. .F.M., no. 34481.

73. M.O.V.E.I., VI:1, no. 393 note 2; Andreadis to FO, 23 December, 1914, A.G.F.M. no. 45396.

74. M.O.V.E.I., VI:1, no. 393. Preparations for the occupation of Southern Albania had been underway for some time. The 8th Division of Preveza had been instructed to prepare

Venizelos not to make Italy's consent public.⁷⁵ Finally, on 26 October, Greek forces landed in Santi Quaranta and proceeded to the occupation of Argyrocastro. Venizelos did not conceal his intention to advance to Koritza and perhaps further North, as far as Berat if necessary. There was even talk in Athens that the Greek forces would not evacuate Southern Albania unless it were demanded by the Allies.⁷⁶ On the same day, an Italian "sanitary mission" landed in Saseno "for the protection of Albania's neutrality."⁷⁷

The occupation of Southern Albania by the Greek forces brought at least a semblance of order in that part of Albania, but the turmoil in Central and Northern Albania continued unabated. Albanian bands in the North were organized led perhaps by Austrian officers with the intention of making incursions into Montenegro.⁷⁸ By the end of November the situation became so critical that Essad decided to launch a full-scale attack on the insurgents who refused to accept his authority.⁷⁹

During December Essad repeatedly urged Venizelos to give him rifles and munitions without Italy's knowledge, arguing that it was not to Greece's interest for him to become completely dependent on and thus subservient to Italy.⁸⁰ He went as far as to request Greek occupation of certain points North of the Greek occupation zone.⁸¹ Possibly Essad simply wanted to incite a Greco-Italian dispute. But he was actually in need of munitions. Italy was willing to provide Essad enough supplies to keep him active but not enough to enable him to become master of Albania. Rome advised Athens not to give Essad more munitions; they said that he might ally himself with the Young Turks—an unlikely possibility.⁸² Italy's opposition did not deter Venizelos from sending rifles and munitions to Essad in Durazzo, hoping thereby to secure his cooperation for a favorable settlement of the Albanian question.

secretly for a landing at Santi Quaranta. According to the Chief of Staff of the Division, preparations were delayed because of financial difficulties. See Theodoros Pangalos. *Ta Apomnimonemata mou* (Athens, 1959), II, 22-23.

75. M.O.V.E.I., VI:1, p. 406 note 3.

76. M.O.V.E.I., VI:1, no. 439, p. 252 note 2.

77. Salandra, 406-408.

78. Evgeniadis to FO, 15 November 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 40025.

79. Varatasis to FO, 12 December 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 44119.

80. Ypsilantis to FO, 13 December 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 44143.

81. Ypsilantis to FO, 23 December 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 45383; Venizelos to Ypsilantis, 26 December 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 45382.

82. Venizelos to Coromilas, 15 December 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 44143; Coromilas to FO, 21 December 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 45200A/5; Venizelos to Varatasis, 22 December 1914, A.G.F.M., no. 45201.

The time was now ripe for Italy's next step—her occupation of Valona and its hinterland. On Christmas day marines and carabinieri landed and occupied the town on Essad's alleged request. But at the same time Essad's pleas in Athens were becoming more desperate. On 1 January, the Greek Consul at Durazzo telegraphed Athens that "Essad is desperate. He makes a last call to the Greek Government requesting it to supply him with munitions as soon as possible."⁸³ The situation in Durazzo itself was becoming untenable. The Serbian Consul requested that his Government occupy Central Albania. And Rome, in defiance of Sazonov's opposition, extended her occupation to the environs of Valona, and was even ready to occupy Durazzo to "protect" the foreign residents. Venizelos immediately dispatched a warship with orders to deliver the requested munitions to Essad and to protect the Greek citizens in Durazzo. Rome strenuously opposed this action. Finally, as a result of Russia's objections, neither the Italians nor the Greeks landed forces at Durazzo. During the first week of January, however, the first shipment of Greek arms reached Durazzo and a second was under way. Thus, Italy's plans for an ultimate occupation of Durazzo were frustrated.⁸⁴

Thus, by the end of 1914, the Southern Albanian question was settled, temporarily at least, to the satisfaction of both Greece and Italy, although intrigues and disorders continued unabated. They had had their way without making any commitments to any of the belligerent blocs thereby frustrating Sazonov's intention to use Albania as a bargaining point in his negotiations for their respective entrance into the war.

Memphis State University
Memphis, Tennessee

GEORGE B. LEON

83. Varatas to FO, 1 January 1915, A.G.F.M., no. 47814.

84. Varatas to Venizelos, 3 January 1915, A.G.F.M., no. 47939; Venizelos to Varatas, 3, 7, 9 January 1915, A.G.F.M., nos. 43147, 47952, 48672. Politis, Memorandum on conversation with Bosdari, 4 January 1915, A.G.F.M.; Venizelos to the Greek Legations of London, Paris, Petrograd, Berlin, Vienna and Rome, 4 January 1915, A.G.F.M., no. 48442; Captain Gerontas to Naval Ministry, 7 January 1915, A.G.F.M., no. 48496; Venizelos to Coromilas 7 January 1915, A.G.F.M., no. 48448; Coromilas to Venizelos, 8 January 1915, A.G.F.M., no. 2450; Dragoumis to Venizelos, 12 January 1915, A.G.F.M., no. 49279; Ypsilantis to FO, 13 January 1915, A.G.F.M., no. 49272.