

tions and strengthen in an equitable manner our strategic position in the Adriatic.

These demands comprised: The extension of the boundary in Trentino, a new boundary on the Isonzo, special provision for Trieste, the cession of certain islands of the Curzolari Archipelago, the abandonment of Austrian claims in Albania, and the recognition of our possession of Avlona and the islands of the Aegean Sea, which we occupied during our war with Turkey.

All our demands were categorically rejected. It was not until another month of conversation that Austria-Hungary was induced to increase the zone of territory she was prepared to cede in the Trentino and then only as far as Mezzo Lombardo, thereby excluding the territory inhabited by people of the Italian race, such as the Valle del Noce, Val di Fasso, and Val di Ampezzo. Such a proposal would have given to Italy a boundary of no strategical value. In addition the Austro-Hungarian Government maintained its determination not to make the cession effective before the end of the war.

The repeated refusals of Austria-Hungary were expressly confirmed in a conversation between Baron Burian and the Italian Ambassador at Vienna on April 29. While admitting the possibility of recognizing some of our interests in Avlona and granting the above-mentioned territorial cession in the Trentino, the Austro-Hungarian Government persisted in its opposition to all our other demands, especially those regarding the boundary of the Isonzo, Trieste, and the islands.

The attitude assumed by Austria-Hungary from the beginning of December until the end of April made it evident that she was attempting to temporize without coming to a conclusion. Under such circumstances Italy was confronted by the danger of losing forever the opportunity of realizing her aspirations based upon tradition, nationality, and her desire for a safe position in the Adriatic, while other contingencies in the European conflict menaced her principal interests in other seas.

Hence Italy faced the necessity and duty of recovering that liberty of action to which she was entitled and of seeking protection for her interests, apart from the negotiations which had been dragging uselessly along for five months and without reference to the Treaty of Alliance which had virtually failed as a result of its annulment by the action of Austria-Hungary in July, 1914.

It would not be out of place to observe that the alliance having terminated and there existing no longer any reason for the Italian people to be bound by it, though they had loyally stood by it for so many years because of their desire for peace, there naturally revived in the public mind the grievances against Austria-Hungary which for so many years had been voluntarily repressed.

While the Treaty of Alliance contained no formal agreement for the use of the Italian language or the maintenance of Italian tradition and Italian civilization in the Italian provinces of Austria, nevertheless if the alliance was to be effective in preserving peace and harmony it was indisputably clear that Austria-Hungary, as our ally, should have taken into account the moral obligation of respecting what constituted some of the most vital interests of Italy.

Instead, the constant policy of the Austro-Hungarian Government was to destroy Italian nationality and Italian civilization all along the coast of the Adriatic. A brief statement of the facts and of the tendencies well known to all will suffice.

Substitution of officials of the Italian race by officials of other nationalities; artificial immigration of hundreds of families of a different nationality; replacement of Italian by other labor; exclusion from Trieste by the decree of Prince Hohenlohe of employees who were subjects of Italy; denationalization of the judicial administration; refusal of Austria to permit an Italian university in