The activities of the United States Army and Navy in the Adriatic following the end of World War I remain largely unknown. From November 1918 to September 1921, US naval and army units controlled a wide territory along the eastern Adriatic coast, including islands, stretching from Istria to Montenegro. Their presence offers us an attractive opportunity to study the military and naval as well as political and psychological aspects of the dispute which emerged because of Italian claims to the eastern coast.

American naval forces "occupied" central Dalmatia and secured a presence in some of its cities and ports in accordance with the provisions of the armistice signed with Austria-Hungary on November 3, 1918. An interesting aspect of this "occupation" was the fact that the American zone was considered a part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, recognized by the US government. The United States found itself in the strange position of having its forces occupying territories of an allied country, despite the fact that that country's frontiers had not yet been determined. The reasons for this situation were primarily political, namely, the desire to restrain the territorial ambitions of another ally, Italy, a member of the victorious coalition. The conditions within the "occupied" zone were unusual as well. The US admirals carried out their authority through the local administration, while the Yugoslav troops stationed in the zone were under the Yugoslav Supreme Command; the Americans relied on these troops to preserve order.

The American presence contributed to the formation of President Woodrow Wilson's policies toward Italy. Numerous reports sent by the American officers described in detail the Italian activities and the treatment of the population along the coast. President Wilson read many of these reports and consulted Admiral William Benson, the Naval Advisor to the Peace Commission before making his decisions.

In the course of their stay on the Adriatic, the Americans' policies changed. Confronted with the situation, the officers could not strictly apply the provisions of the armistice, which
very quickly brought them into open conflict with the Italians, who had preponderant influence in drafting and carrying out the provisions. Initially, Italy was reluctant to allow the Allies and the Americans to participate, considering its own occupation of the Dalmatian coast as a guarantee that it would obtain what had been promised it by the Treaty of London of 1915.

Italy prepared itself for the new situation. Its naval and army units were dispatched to the eastern Adriatic immediately, and its government refused to demobilize. The Italians entrenched themselves in these territories and imposed harsh measures against Yugoslav committees and organizations for self-government which had been established during the last months of the Austro-Hungarian administration. Those who opposed the Italian presence were deported or jailed. Yugoslavs from Austria-Hungary were considered enemies and were treated accordingly.

UNITED STATES NAVY
The differences between the Italian and American occupations were evident from the beginning. Even before the armistice, Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, instructed Admiral Benson that "due to possible Adriatic developments and our desire to show sympathy with Slavonic government being formed in the late Austro-Hungarian Empire, consider it desirable to send flag officer...immediately into the Adriatic." Admiral William W. H. Bullard was detailed to proceed there on the USS Birmingham. After the Austro-Hungarian fleet had surrendered to the representatives of the Yugoslav Committee in Pola, Admiral William Sims, commander of the US Naval Forces in European Waters, instructed Bullard not to attack these ships but to see that they proceed to Corfu under white flags. Memorandum #63, prepared by the Planning Section on November 3, 1918 pointed out that the mission of the United States was to encourage "the early establishment of stable government in Yugoslavia friendly to ourselves." It warned that the greatest threat to this goal were Italy's ambitions in the Adriatic and its jealousy of any interference there by the Allies and the United States, an Associate power. It was necessary, then, to reach an agreement between the Allies, the United States, and Italy in order to prevent frictions. "Yugoslavia should include all territories in which the Slav population preponderates, including adjacent islands so populated." The memorandum urged that the naval bases along the Adriatic be occupied by Allied forces, or preferably the United States, until a stable government friendly to the United States could be established. This was desirable because the Yugoslavs trusted the United States and were suspicious of Italy. It was recommended that American observers be sent into Yugoslavia as soon as possible to inform the US government of local conditions. These recommendations were not acceptable to the Italians, since they threatened the basis of their policies.
Disregarding Italian objections, the Americans proceeded. When Bullard inquired about the status of Yugoslavia, Benson replied that the Yugoslav government had not been recognized, but that the "Yugoslav people have been recognized as belligerents.... Pending receipt of instructions from Washington you may enter into negotiations with representatives of the Yugoslavs as a de facto power, but with reservation that no final and binding agreements can be made without approval of the US Government." Benson intimated that as soon as a stable Yugoslav government was formed, it would be recognized. Several days later, Benson ordered Bullard to send several units to Kotor and other ports to establish cooperation with the British and French officers there, which isolated the Italians. At the same time, Benson ordered Bullard to proceed to Pola to make contact with the Yugoslav representatives. "Do all in your power to convince them that we are in sympathy with their efforts and will do everything to safeguard their national interests."3 Benson was unhappy with the attitude of the Italians, finding it unclear and unsatisfactory: "Due to Italians, the situation is becoming extremely delicate." Benson's straightforward approach could not help but breed new conflicts with the Italians just as the American policy motivated as it was by fairness toward the Yugoslavs and their national interests was bound to be castigated by them.

As the Italian officers showed a growing tendency to politicize the situation (Committee of Admirals, Montenegro), the American position became tougher. The admirals decided not to give in to the Italian demands for a dominant role in carrying out the terms of the armistice. Benson believed that control of and responsibility for important ports should remain with individual Allies, while the flags of all the Allies should be displayed, and that the US naval forces in the Adriatic should be augmented. Both ideas were repugnant to the Italians. When the Allied and American admirals held a conference in Venice, Admiral Bullard noted that "each delegate had instructions which were in conflict with those of others," and doubted whether "it would be possible to accomplish something." Captain Charles Hussey insisted that the Italians were quite dissatisfied with the French, did not want to cooperate with the British, and feared the Americans.4

By the end of November 1918, Benson appeared to be blocking Italian moves everywhere. He insisted that the terms of the Treaty of London should not be approved by the Peace Conference, and that therefore Italy should not be given too free a hand in carrying out the terms of the armistice. He also disapproved of the transfer of the former Austro-Hungarian ships from Pola to Venice, as much as of the Italian occupation of Fiume and the takeover of the Austro-Hungarian merchant fleet, which he believed to be contrary to the terms of the armistice. In the wake of the Italian misuse of the American battalion in
Montenegro, Benson ordered Admiral Bullard not to allow "any part of the naval forces...to be employed independently or conjointly with those of other powers in any expedition or offensive action against any other nation or people, except in self-defence." He informed Secretary Daniels that the situation on the Adriatic was "most unsatisfactory." It is significant that in subsequent months the initiatives proposed or undertaken by the naval personnel on the Adriatic became part of the official US policy at the Paris conference.

The role of the US admirals both at Paris and in the Adriatic was conspicuous. The admirals and officers served both to provide materials and became the intermediaries through whom President Wilson and the commission received news. Admiral Benson played a key role which grew in importance as the crisis deepened. He was repeatedly invited to give his opinions and supply new information. With the exception of "Colonel" House, the commissioners were becoming more and more anti-Italian. Admirals who had served on the Adriatic significantly influenced President Wilson, with Admirals Niblack and Andrews being the most prominent. On March 31, 1919 Niblack left for Paris carrying with him negative impressions of the Italians. There he met with Benson, Lansing, Daniels, and other members of the American commission and impressed upon them the dangers existing in the Adriatic. He submitted a memorandum to President Wilson, in which he accused the Italians of continuous efforts to Italianize Fiume, remove the United States from the region, and usurp all authority. The Italian administration was described as "repressive, cruel, reactionary and malevolent," as well as unfit to be entrusted with the enslavement of 750,000 Slavs. The Allies and the United States came to discuss the Adriatic question. President Wilson told Daniels that in order to establish peace in that part of Europe, Yugoslavia should be given Fiume and Split. The naval officers found a way to turn President Wilson's somewhat nebulous principles into reality. Paradoxically, the Italians had more reason to complain about the US Navy and Admiral Benson than about President Wilson. It was not Wilson, Lansing, House, Bliss, and White but Benson, Bullard, Niblack, Andrews, and Sims who had conceived and conducted US policy on the Adriatic from the very beginning.

Another important issue were the creation and proceedings of the Naval Committee for the Adriatic, as the body which would discuss and resolve conflicts and disputes, including the violations of the armistice in Fiume, Split, and Kotor, but not the situation in the zone occupied by the Italians. The creation of the committee expanded the activities of the US admirals to include observing the behavior of the Italians along the coast. On December 7, 1918 Admiral Bullard was appointed a member of the committee whose work started in Fiume several days later. Aware of what was in store for him, Bullard inquired about the American attitude toward the Treaty of London. Benson replied quickly
that "whether or not the Pact of London will eventually be agreed upon is a question to be decided by the Peace Conference, and until the proceedings of the Peace Conference are made known you should take no action to indicate concurrence in this pact." 8 This decision tended to block the Italian initiatives in the committee and strengthen the position of the Yugoslav government. The Italians did not expect the committee to threaten their position or diminish their influence.

The proceedings of the committee were tumultuous from the beginning. The Italian Admiral Mola told the admirals that the Italian government would not allow an examination of the political questions, only of those connected with the execution of the naval and military terms of the armistice. The same applied to the Italian occupation of Fiume. When it became clear that the Italian government wanted to determine the course of the proceedings, Admiral Benson insisted that the Italian admiral should not be allowed to "dominate the commission or to exercise any independent authority." 9 The majority report castigated the Italian behavior in Fiume and asked that a real Allied administration of the port be established. The Italians were outraged, and Mola was ordered by Rome to suspend the proceedings of the committee. He resigned from the committee, and the American, British, and French admirals demanded that it proceed without him. The Italian government would not allow this to happen. On February 1, 1919 Rear Admiral Ugo Rombo was appointed to take Mola's position. At the committee's meeting in Venice on February 8, Rombo told Admiral Niblack that the Americans should not guide the committee's proceedings since they did not understand the situation in the Adriatic. This made things worse, and the committee refused to accept any of Rombo's proposals. Finally, Italian diplomacy succeeded in barring examination of the report prepared by the committee.

After some delay, the committee, led by Rombo, proceeded to Split. It was a dangerous place, where the presence of an Italian man-of-war, officers, and sailors had the potential of leading to incidents and disorder. Admiral Niblack asked the local authorities and the Yugoslav troops to maintain order, which they failed to do. On February 24, Italian officers and the meeting place of the Italianophiles were attacked. After order was re-established, Rombo demanded that sentries from the Allied ships patrol the city. Niblack opposed this, and Admiral Benson supported him. This infuriated Rombo, who warned Niblack that since the United States had not signed the Treaty of London, it had no right to interfere in "what happens in these territories, as Italy is neither under the control nor the guardianship of the US." Rombo raised other sensitive issues, refusing to grant the Allies the right to inspect the conditions in the Italian zone and questioning the legality of the Yugoslav government. He went so far as to claim that the Yugoslav state-nation did not exist. The admirals were outraged because of his
intemperate language and open hostility to the provincial government. Niblack told Benson that Rombo's behavior would cause bitterness and hostility between the Yugoslavs and Italians, and demanded that Rombo be relieved of his duties on the committee. Rombo rejected the majority report submitted to the committee and insisted that the committee approve an Allied occupation of the US zone. Niblack and other admirals opposed this, believing that the Yugoslav troops were stationed in the zone in accordance with the terms of the armistice. Rombo argued that the terms were not being carried out, and that the provincial government was under the jurisdiction of the Yugoslav government. These two views were irreconcilable, and the minority report signed by Rombo, as well as the majority report, were sent to Paris.

On March 26, the day of the committee's departure for Kotor, Rear Admiral Andrews arrived at Split and replaced Niblack as the commanding officer of the US forces in the Adriatic. The meeting in Kotor began on March 27, and went smoothly. The Allied officers, Admiral Delzons, Commodore Bianchini, and General Thaon, reported on the situation in Kotor. Rombo was restrained, although several questions stirred up bad feelings. These included the problems of the war materials from the former Austro-Hungarian army and navy, ammunition, prerogatives of the local authorities, and the recruitment of the local populace for military service. The conclusions of the committee were virtually unanimous, and with this meeting its functions came to an end.

The US Navy was charged with the administration of a part of the Adriatic coast, central Dalmatia with Split as its center. The terms of the armistice allowed the United States to administer the zone with the assistance of the provincial government and the Yugoslav army units. All steps and proposals of the local authorities were approved by the American admiral, who in certain cases ordered Yugoslav army units to be withdrawn. The combination of cooperation and control made it possible for peace and order to be preserved in the US zone. Aware of the Italians' treatment of the population in the Italian zone and confronted with their interference in the British and French zones, the local population was cooperative. The destiny of Split might have been similar to that of Fiume if the Italians were allowed to carry out their plans. The provincial government looked for ways to eliminate all frictions emerging from the presence of the Yugoslav troops in the US zone. It was not always easy, as the government in Belgrade was impatient to have its authority recognized in the zone, a request which the US admirals denied.

The Americans built a small naval base, established telegraphic communications with Paris, and maintained naval units in Split to preserve order. In early April, Andrews threatened
to land sentries and instructed the Yugoslav commanding officer to intervene in case of disorders, believing that the Italians were looking for the earliest opportunity to land their units, something he wanted to avoid at any cost.

By April rumors were spreading that the Paris Peace Conference would decide that Split and Dalmatia were to belong to Italy. The admirals expected difficulties when this decision was announced. On April 13, Admiral Benson informed Sims and Andrews that the USS Dyer and Gregory should remain in the Adriatic. Andrews considered what he should do if Dalmatia was given to Italy or Yugoslavia, expecting disturbances if Italy got it and knowing that the Americans should try to protect peace. But he expected no difficulties if Yugoslavia got it, since he thought that the local authorities and the Yugoslav troops would keep peace and protect local Italians. The Italians were concerned about clashes with the Americans. Admiral Secchi, minister of the navy, advised Admiral Millo that his officers should avoid all provocation in order to keep peace, while Benson instructed Andrews to avoid any act that might lead to an international conflict. At the same time, Admiral Knapp ordered the dispatch of the cruisers Manley Talbot and Dorsey to the Adriatic.

Both the Americans and Italians were anxious to avoid an open clash, yet the Americans noticed the intensified movements of the Italian troops. On April 29, Andrews reported to the commissioners that a train with twenty-two cars loaded with troops had left Trieste for Fiume; the following day he cabled that additional troops had arrived in Sibenik. On May 2, Benson met with President Wilson, who was anxious to be kept informed of developments in and around Fiume and asked Benson to dispatch a battleship to represent the United States. Benson sent the USS Olympia and informed Andrews that he realized "the delicacy of the situation and the possibilities that might arise from sending the Olympia to Fiume, but at the same time I see no reason why we should not, and will trust the whole situation to you." Several days later, Andrews reported a heavy concentration of Italian troops: 18,000 in Fiume itself, 40,000 spread out along the boundary, and 50,000 in Trieste. Facing this force were 1,000 Yugoslav troops in the vicinity of Fiume. "Where Serbs have picket of two men, Italians confront this with 30 men," wrote Andrews. The Italian forces were too numerous for anyone to attack them. What is more, the Yugoslav soldiers did not want to fight, while General Grazioli told Andrews that he was "most anxious to avoid any actual contact and had given strict instructions to avoid them." Andrews was surprised when General Grazioli consented to withdraw his troops from the armistice line. The situation calmed down slowly, though Benson remained suspicious of Italian intentions. President Wilson himself was not satisfied either, and he wrote to Ambassador Page that the Italians "do not aid much in the effort to clear the situation up." He promised to do everything in his
power to resolve the Adriatic problem, but had some reservations: "The only thing I cannot do is to force a settlement upon people who are not willing to come under the Italian flag."16 He insisted on this until the end.

Early in June, Benson informed Andrews that the size of the forces in the Adriatic would be reduced if the situation permitted, but no date could be determined.17 The exchange of views continued, as many uncertainties remained. Andrews opposed giving any part of Dalmatia to Italy, believing that the Italians had no right to it, and that if they were given it, the Balkans would remain a seedbed of future war. It was not surprising that the Yugoslav government was pleased with Andrews's activities, and expected the same in the future.

Gabriele D'Annunzio's landing in Zadar on November 14, 1919 created a new shock. Zadar was close to the American zone, and the landing was seen as an effort to annex that area to Italy. Andrews believed that Admiral Millo had joined D'Annunzio, thus placing the Italian zone under volunteer control and making the preservation of peace in the area more difficult. Millo worried that friction along the armistice line would lead to hostilities, while incidents in Split and Trogir might result in an Italian invasion of the American zone. If the seizure of Zadar passed without reaction, D'Annunzio would attempt to take other territories he considered Italian. Although Andrews did not believe that the poet would attack the American zone because he was not ready to face the Yugoslav troops, any attempt in this direction might make the American presence precarious indeed.

The Yugoslav legation in Washington demanded American action, otherwise the Yugoslav troops would have to face the Italians. The Department of State instructed the Peace Commission in Paris to ask Admiral Andrews to notify Millo that the landing of Italian troops will be contrary to the wishes of the United States. If the Italians persisted, the Americans would withdraw from Yugoslavia.18 The Yugoslav government did not hesitate to act energetically. On November 28, Admiral Knapp received information that the Yugoslav troops had been reinforced and that there were 10,000 soldiers near Split, although General Lazar Dokic, their commander, was ordered to avoid friction. This made it unlikely that D'Annunzio would land in Split, and soon D'Annunzio and his volunteers left Zadar and returned to Fiume,19 thus saving the US position.

During 1920 and until the US ships left Split in September 1921, no similar situations arose. Wranglings between the American and Italian officers did continue in Split as a result of provocations against the Italians and the mistreatment of Yugoslavs in the Italian zone and elsewhere. The only serious incident occurred in July 1920, when the Italian Captain Giulio Gallo was killed in Split. The Italian minister of the marine
Secchi threatened to send warships to Split in retaliation and insisted that Admiral Andrews had no control of the shore. To this Andrews replied that he had complete control of the shore, and that Secchi was free to send a naval squadron to Split if he so wished. In that case, Italy would start a war with Yugoslavia. A major cause of the disturbances in Split, Andrews believed, was the hostility of its people toward the Italian naval personnel. He advised the Italian officer in Split that the Italian ships should sail out to bring calm and protect the Italian population. The officer refused.20

In December 1919, steps were taken to bring the US ships home. The Allied Military Committee had decided to allocate to Italy four naval vessels of the former Austro-Hungarian navy, which were being guarded by the Americans in Split. In February 1920, the Italian government asked that these units be handed over to it, but this demand was denied. But the very fact that it was made prompted the Americans to stay longer in the Adriatic. It was only in November 1920 that Andrews took the four Austro-Hungarian ships to the Adriatic and surrendered them to the Italians. By that time the Treaty of Rapallo had been signed by Italy and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and disputes were settled.

In September 1920, the Department of State informed the Italian ambassador that the withdrawal of American ships from Split depended on the departure from Split of Italian ships. The Rome government at first said no, but changed its attitude after the American ships departed. In addition, the Americans insisted that Italy evacuate its zone of occupation as well, which it did in April 1921. A short time later Admiral Andrews left Split and handed over command to an officer of a lower rank. Since the order to withdraw was postponed, however, the American destroyers remained in Split until September 1921 after the Italian evacuation of the rest of the occupied territories. The reasons for the prolonged American presence in Split and the Adriatic were eminently political: the Americans waited until the treaty with Italy was concluded and Yugoslavia became more stable and was internationally recognized.

FAILURE OF THE US ARMY

The US Army's presence in Yugoslavia had different origins and purposes from the Navy's, and the outcome of their activities was also different. The US regiment was a part of the Italian Army, and as such became an instrument of Italian policy.

The American 332nd infantry regiment arrived in Italy in June 1918. Its commanding officer, Colonel Henry Wallace, had only nominal command of it. The regiment's dispatch to Italy was justified on the grounds that it would give moral support to the Italians. It did not fight until the end of the war. After the
armistice, the regiment was divided into three battalions, which were sent to the former Austro-Hungarian territories of Fiume and Kotor, where the Italians expected to encounter strong resistance from the Yugoslavs. The regiment's departure to these locations was made easier by the fact that the Yugoslav Committee and the Serbian Supreme Command agreed that Italian troops would be allowed to land only with Allied and American troops. One American battalion went to Kotor, and a few days later another to Fiume, two very sensitive and politically important spots for Italy. The battalion that arrived in Kotor on November 20, 1918, together with an Italian regiment, was stationed in three different places, Kotor, Teodo, and Zelenika.

From the beginning, the Italian command looked for an opportunity to engage the Americans, hoping to use them as a cat's paw in the complicated political situation. They were dispatched to Montenegro to give support to King Nicholas in preventing the unification of that state with Yugoslavia. On November 22, Major Frank Scanland, the Kotor battalion's commanding officer, was told by Admiral Vittorio Mola to proceed to Cetinje, the capital of Montenegro, as part of a larger Italian plan to occupy the larger towns. Scanland consulted Commander Frank Loftin, who commanded the US sub-chaser units in Kotor. Loftin advised Scanland to protest Mola's order and delay departure as long as possible. Loftin thought that the entry of US troops into Montenegro without Washington's authority would be most unusual, and knew that the entry of Italian troops should be resisted. During Scanland's absence from his ship, Mola landed two companies of American troops and instructed them to join the Italian units. Scanland's protests were disregarded, and efforts to communicate with Paris failed.

On the same day the American troops, together with the Italians, began their march towards Cetinje. A number of Serbian and Montenegrin officers approached Scanland and explained to him the aims of the Italian action, and Scanland ordered the Americans to return to Kotor. The Italian troops followed, and Mola's operation failed. This incident created uneasiness and prompted the US naval officers to reconsider their position and speed up their return to the United States. Major Scanland's position was complicated, since he was unable to determine the duties of his battalion and was confronted with Italian hostility. Admiral Bullard tried to obtain a decision from the peace commissioners, insisting that Scanland and the army officers were not familiar with overall US policy, and for that reason were obeying the Italian officers. Bullard was critical of the US Army command, although he blamed the Italians for the incidents.

It took almost a month for the US Army command to react. General Tasker Bliss, a member of the Military Committee of the Supreme War Council, told the members of the Peace Commission on
December 23, 1918 that a regulation regarding the use of US troops ought to be prepared. He added that the major difficulty in carrying out the terms of the armistice was the fact that political considerations played a greater role than military ones. Bliss believed that sending the US troops to Montenegro was contrary to the terms of the armistice, and that the division of the regiment enabled the Italians to use it to their advantage. He proposed that the use of the US troops be prohibited in places which were to be evacuated in accordance with Article III of the military terms of the armistice and in territories to which the Italians had pretensions. But he opposed withdrawing the regiment at that moment and left the resolution of the problem to the Italian and American supreme commands. President Wilson approved this proposal.

Bliss' proposal urged the US Army intelligence to examine the situation. General Treat, who had been delegated to write a report about the problem, insisted that the American presence in areas settled by the Slavs, as well as the fact that the Americans were fraternizing with the Allies, made the Italians unhappy. He added that the size of the units made it impracticable for any other duty but to offer moral support to those who believed that the Allies had forgotten them. He admitted that the commander of the 332nd Division was aware of the potential dangers of joint actions, and proposed that the division be withdrawn.

The Americans again found themselves in the midst of a dispute in Montenegro. On Christmas Eve an uprising broke out, to be known as the Christmas Rebellion, led by Montenegrin royalists and supported by the Italians. Cetinje was under siege, which prompted General Charles Vennel, the commanding officer of the Allied troops in Montenegro, to order Major Scanland to pacify the rebels. The Americans reached Njegusi but did not go further once the rebellion ended with its leaders escaping to the Italian garrisons stationed in Albania. The remaining rebels were brought to Kotor.

The experience of Kotor was repeated in Fiume. In order to give their occupation an Allied character, the Italians sent a battalion of Americans to Fiume, which entered the city on November 19, 1918. The French and British approved of the American presence in Fiume. General John J. Pershing, commander of the US Army in Europe, expressed his opposition to sending the American troops to the Adriatic coast, arguing that those already present could be used to carry out the terms of the armistice. While the Army was yielding to Italian pressure, the Navy was averse to it. Colonel William Everson, the commanding officer of the battalion in Fiume, told Admiral Bullard that he disapproved of having his battalion used by the Italians, and added that the occupation of Fiume was not an Allied action. This idea was equally repugnant to Bullard. He insisted that Colonel Everson
did not have instructions from his command and stated that "the American troops are being used to promote rather than curb Italian activities and our Army representative has not definite instructions.... Army officers...are dominated by the Italians."27 Two days later, Secretary of War Newton Baker ordered General Pershing to withdraw the American troops from Italy and put them under his command. This opened the question of what to do with the American troops under Italian command. It took some time for the Department of War to act on it.

The relationship between the Americans and Italians in Fiume was cleared up following Colonel Everson's testimony to the Committee of Admirals in Fiume in late December 1918. Everson argued that the Italians had ignored the American presence, only keeping in touch with the American command when it was convenient for them and not consulting it about the joint actions in the city and port. The committee concluded that the occupation of Fiume was not in the Allied spirit, and proposed changes. The Italian admiral was against these changes, which included the withdrawal of the Italian troops from Fiume and an increased presence of the Yugoslav troops, as well as pulling the US battalion out of the Italian army. Given these circumstances, it was natural that many representatives of the US Navy and Army and the Peace Commission believed that the withdrawal of the American troops would be a good step to take. The Italian Supreme Command opposed it, and the Italian diplomacy tried to block this initiative.

On November 28, 1918, Baker instructed General Pershing to bring the US troops in Italy under his command,28 and to arrange with Field Marshal Ferdinand Foch, the Supreme Allied Commander, for the American regiment to be returned to France. But nothing came of this. President Wilson was persuaded that the withdrawal of the regiment would "create a bad impression in Italy," and that keeping it there lay in the interest of Allied cooperation, giving rise to fears that it would involve the United States in Balkan politics. It was only a minor diplomatic victory for Italy, but one that proved to be a prelude to new disputes.

While Washington was deciding what to do, General Bliss was involved in discussions with the military committee, which was considering the French solution to the worsening situation along the Adriatic coast. The French proposed that an Allied commission be formed to decide which troops should occupy certain places and who would command them. This was unacceptable to the Americans who did not want to dispatch fresh units there, and the proposal was withdrawn.29

President Wilson's arrival in France made the resolution of the problem possible. On December 18, 1918 Bliss discussed it with the President, telling him that he believed the withdrawal of the regiment at that moment was unfeasible, since it was
integrated with other Allied units there. President Wilson replied that the question of the regiment's political use ought to be answered as soon as possible. He asked Bliss to prepare regulations for the use of the troops in Italy.

On January 10, 1919, following President Wilson's visit to Italy, the Peace Commission discussed the American military presence in Italy. General Bliss insisted that the Italian Supreme Command's use of the regiment was unacceptable to the United States. These conditions were accepted by the commissioners: First, the US troops could be used by the Italian army only in the territories evacuated on the basis of Article III of the armistice of Austria-Hungary; second, the US troops were to be placed together, under the command of an American officer; third, the regiment could not be assigned to an Italian brigade, division, or army corps, but was to be used as an independent unit. President Wilson supported the plan, arguing that the way in which the unit had been used could have created the impression that it was a part of the Italian army.

Thus, a middle ground was found. Bliss and President Wilson prevailed. The unit was not withdrawn immediately, as proposed by Baker, nor left in an unresolved position, as desired by House. This situation provided for cooperation with the Italians, but within strictly defined limits. Since there was no reason for the unit to stay in Fiume and Kotor, it was decided to return it to the United States. Neither General Pietro Badoglio nor Orlando objected to this.

House and others in Paris and Rome who shared his views ought to be blamed for the failure of the US Army in the Adriatic. They not only encouraged the Italians but showed no concern for the difficult situation of the regiment in Kotor and Fiume. The members of the Commission and the Navy prevented the Army from playing an active role in the political events by being divided in their approaches to the American army's role in the Adriatic.

THE FOOD ADMINISTRATION, 1918-19

The end of military operations on land and sea created new tasks in Europe, including the territories of the former Habsburg Monarchy. In the process, new problems emerged, including Italian obstructionism of the activities of the US Food Administration headed by Herbert Hoover on the Adriatic coast and inland. Some European countries were destitute because of the war's ravages, while others had been unable to feed their populations even during times of peace. The Food Administration had far-reaching political and social goals including the belief that by feeding the hungry population in southeastern Europe social unrest could be avoided. Feeding Europe also meant that the American farmers would be relieved of surpluses of food.
produced during the war. The Food Administration believed that close to two hundred million people in eastern and southern Europe -- including parts of Yugoslavia -- were on the verge of starvation.

The success or failure of Hoover's efforts depended on the readiness of Italy, Great Britain, France, and other states to cooperate in helping the poorer countries of Europe. The Italian government was not willing to act according to Hoover's expectations, and obstructed the operation, making excuses, some of them political, others economic, administrative, organizational, and technical. During 1919 there occurred numerous incidents which threatened to bring Italy and the United States into a conflict.

The first obstacle to Hoover's activity was the continuation of the blockade introduced in 1914. Both the Italians and Americans approved of it, since Article V of the naval terms of the armistice with Austria-Hungary provided that "the blockade by the Allied and Associated Powers shall be continued under present conditions." But soon it became clear that the continuation of the blockade was not a good idea. "Colonel" House realized this and attempted to induce the Allies to send food to Austria, Turkey, and Bulgaria to save their civilian populations, although he believed that there would be numerous problems in the execution of his plan. "The impracticability of this [the blockade]," wrote House, "so far as food and other supplies are concerned has already become apparent. Conditions in Austria and Bohemia are of such a character as to make relief on a large scale imperative if serious disturbances are to be avoided." President Wilson remained silent, playing into the Italian hands. At the same time, the Departments of State and War considered removing the blockade. In a technical sense, all lands of the former empire were thought of as enemy territory, and were to be treated as such. This gave the Italians leeway in carrying out their policies toward the Yugoslavs and others. Hoover later wrote that the Italians virtually imposed a blockade on the Yugoslavs, which the United States had to undo.

The first step was to examine the situation in different parts of the new state. As head of the mission to Yugoslavia, Hoover dispatched Colonel J. Atwood, who concluded that there was enough food in Serbia proper, but that Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Montenegro were threatened with starvation. The naval personnel examined the situation in the American zone and found that there was some meat and vegetables in Split, but flour, rice, and oil were scarce. By the middle of December 1918, close cooperation had been established between the Food Administration and the US Navy on the Adriatic. Admiral Benson asked for information about storage facilities in Fiume, Kotor (Cattaro), and Dubrovnik (Ragusa), the size of these ports and availability of labor, and
instructed Admiral Bullard to assist the Food Administration personnel in every way possible in moving around the Adriatic. This was imperative as the Italians were about to make their opposition evident.

The Italians made their first move at the conference of the Naval Committee in Venice on December 13-14, by authorizing their navy to requisition all small vessels, and thus paralyzed the traffic along the coast. This was only the beginning. While in Fiume, Admiral Bullard was told that the Italian authorities were requiring the natives in the occupied zone to sign a declaration stating that they were Italians. "Hungry people will do almost everything," he wrote. Several days later he reported that the Italians were stopping trains carrying food to Split. To him, this was persecution and an attempt to create disorder. Early in January 1919, numerous steamers loaded with food arrived in Trieste, Fiume, Split, Dubrovnik, and Zelenika. Bullard, negotiating for storage in Fiume, met there with Colonels H. McIntosh and Atwood to reach an understanding about their needs. He promised to provide them with a vessel but did not want to use Fiume as a distribution center for food because of the delicate political situation. It was agreed to store the food along the coast, and in order to facilitate its distribution three ships flying the American flag would be requisitioned from Split.

This was the beginning of a conflict. Meetings between naval and Food Administration personnel were frequent. They discussed problems in certain parts of the coast, in particular cases of Italian obstruction and measures to overcome it. The Navy and the Food Administration benefited from this cooperation, discovering that the Italians wanted to profit from the blockade, assert their rights to requisition ships, allocate food, control railroads, and devalue the kruna. The Americans' first step was to reduce credits for acquiring food by 24 percent immediately, and later cut them completely, all in an effort to force the government to demobilize, as "the maintenance of present food shipments merely sustains present very large Italian military establishment." Furthermore, large quantities of food were being stored in Genoa and other ports, when it could have been used elsewhere. Admiral Benson was ready to make exceptions to the blockade, and Admiral Niblack urged closer cooperation with the British in exerting pressure on Italian shipping policy. "The Food Commission can not possibly succeed in the distribution of food with the Italians sitting on transportation," wrote Niblack, promising full support. This was followed by Admiral Benson's decision to authorize the Adriatic Committee to issue safe-conducts to ships and to force the Italian authorities to accept them. This brought on Italian wrath, as the Rome government repudiated the action of the Naval Committee in recognizing its right to issue the safe-conducts. There was no other way but to requisition ships and use them to distribute food. This was to cause new troubles with the Naval Committee since Admiral Rombo,
the Italian representative, was not willing to accept its right to proceed. Niblack realized that Admiral Rombo assumed that the Americans had no right to provision the area.

On February 1, Hoover agreed with Vance McCormick, chairman of the War Trades Board, on the need to relax the blockade in southeastern Europe, something the Yugoslav government had suggested in early January which was also the subject of frequent notes and conversations in Washington. On February 11, Hoover wrote a memorandum to the Peace Commission describing the situation and condemning the Italians for blocking trains carrying food from Trieste and Fiume to Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. "The Italians have stopped every effort on their part to reach Trieste with their railway equipment. They have stopped our communications and the only response that we can get to our negotiations and beseeching is the suggestion that until Italy receives more food, and more shipping from the Allies, she does not propose for foodstuffs to be delivered to anybody." Hoover asked that Italy be notified that its advances from the United States would cease immediately unless it changed its attitude toward the blockade and transportation. The Peace Commission accepted this proposal, yet Italy persisted.

Soon, a new accusation was made. The Italian fiscal policy, it was said, did not agree with the interests of the Allies or the Yugoslavs. The Italians devalued the value of the kruna, fixing it at the rate of 2.5 to 1 lira. Niblack suggested that the matter be discussed by the Allied Financial Committee. Norman Davis, a representative of the US Treasury, took it upon himself to solve the problem by persuading the Italians to establish a fixed rate of exchange between the lira and the kruna.

In February new discussions about relaxing the Italian blockade in the Adriatic began, but during the meeting of the Supreme Economic Council the Italian delegate said that Italy could not agree to anything "unless G. Britain or the US helped finance food for his distressed country." On February 20, the Superior Blockade Council adopted a resolution abolishing the blockade and making commerce free in all Adriatic ports, including Montenegro and Albania. On March 8, the Supreme War Council decided that the commercial blockade of the Adriatic should be raised, and the Italian delegates had to accept this decision.

Despite these decisions, the situation did not change. On February 26, Hoover informed the US Peace Commission that he was unable to send food because of Italian obstructions in Trieste and Fiume and that the Food Administration was unable to feed people in Vienna and Prague. Hoover believed that this opposition could be overcome if the Italians were told that they would get no food from the United States unless they changed
their attitude toward the Food Administration. On March 5, McCormick noted that the Italians were making trouble in the Adriatic to have an excuse to fight the Yugoslavs. President Wilson's absence from Paris delayed an American decision, and Hoover became impatient. On March 7, he told the commissioners that the Italians refused to approve his proposal for controlling rail traffic from Trieste and Fiume to Austria. He listed all instances of Italian obstruction from January 15 to March 5, 1919, adding that he was having problems with Yugoslavs, Hungarians, Austrians, and Czechs as well. He told the commissioners that he had not informed the Italians that their food supply would be cut off. Yet neither he nor the American people "would countenance Italy's receiving preferential treatment over Poland, Bohemia or Yugoslav territories, inasmuch as public sentiment was strongly in favor of rendering all assistance to these latter territories in order to help them during the difficult period of their creation." He suggested that Lansing talk to Sonnino about this matter. Lansing agreed to tell Sonnino that unless Italy accepted the US plan, no food would be sent.46 Italy's position did not change. McCormick noted on March 15 that Italy was trying to block everything in order to secure its own needs. He suspected that its aim was to "break up creation of Yugoslavia."47

Lifting the blockade became a major task for all concerned. When on March 21 Admiral Niblack raised the question of the blockade to the Committee of Admirals in Split, Admiral Rombo refused to accept it. He believed that this question should be decided by the Italian government. Other admirals believed that the blockade served no purpose except to interfere with the resumption of normal trade, which was important in eliminating unemployment and unrest.48 The Peace Commission in Paris easily accepted this. The Italian government announced on April 1 that the cessation of the blockade did not invalidate the general wartime provisions -- change of flag of the enemy mercantile fleet and search for contraband of war.49 The decree gave Italy certain freedoms in controlling traffic along the eastern coast, which would be treated as enemy territory.

As soon as it saw an opportunity, the Yugoslav government wanted to retaliate. It imposed an embargo on exports and imports to and from Italy, including traffic of goods through disputed territories. As soon as the embargo was announced, on April 9, 1919, the Italians questioned its legality. They insisted that it was directed against Italy, and that the Yugoslav government which issued it had no jurisdiction over Dalmatia, whose sovereignty had not yet been decided. The Americans were furious. Admiral Andrews arrived in Split on April 14 and called on Dr. Ivan Krstelj, president of the provincial government, telling him that no embargo of this nature could be tolerated, and asked him to rescind it. In a letter to Benson, Andrews suggested that the Yugoslav government be warned.
not to pass such laws in the future, suspecting that the Belgrade government had imposed it on the provincial government. The old Austro-Hungarian tax law was put back into use.

In April 1919, a confrontation between the United States and Italy seemed imminent. The naval authorities assisted the Food Administration in carrying out its duties, in an attempt to keep peace in Dalmatia and elsewhere. Andrews asked that the Italian authorities distribute food in the American zone under the supervision of Lieutenant Alfred Shaw, the Food Administration's representative, to make sure that the food was sold at fair prices or handed out to those who could not pay. Andrews believed that the distribution of food through a single source would produce uniform results. Admiral Rombo refused to accept this proposal and brought it to the Committee of Admirals, insisting that it had been done by an order of the Italian government. Andrews informed the group that the Italian distribution encouraged disturbances and weakened the provincial government. It was being used "more and more as propaganda by being freely given where it will cause trouble." And: "What the Italians send in is unnecessary and a waste, and it originally comes from the States." He believed that if the Italian distribution stopped, the chances of trouble when peace was announced would be reduced, and he asked that no Italian food be sent to the American zone. A clash was unavoidable since the Italian government did not want to act jointly with the Americans.

The clash came on April 19, when after much hesitation President Wilson made up his mind, and in a letter to Norman Davis, he asked the Treasury Department to stop making arrangements for a $50-million-dollar loan to the Italian government "until the air clears, if it does." But this was not all. Several days later, Wilson warned Henry Robinson, the representative of the US Shipping Board, regarding shipments of coal to Italy that "obviously this is not the time to further Italian industrial interests at the expense of feeding a distracted world." Both measures came too late.

Hoover's proposal was accepted, though with some delay. The Americans wanted to avoid upheavals in that part of Europe, and President Wilson believed that food was an important element in achieving this goal.

D'ANNUNZIO AT FIUME (RIJEKA)

Another question which threatened to complicate the American position in the Adriatic was D'Annunzio's raid on Fiume on September 12, 1919. The story of that raid is familiar and does not need to be repeated in detail. The American attitude toward this incident, however, remains unknown. The Navy and the Peace Commission in Paris played a big role in dealing with this threat to the peaceful resolution of the Adriatic problem.
Following the termination of military operations, the situation in Fiume was tense. Although Serbian units had entered Fiume on November 12, 1918, they were forced to evacuate the city several days later when Italian units moved in. A large port with good connections to the interior, Fiume was very desirable for economic, strategic, and political reasons. The Italians claimed the city because of its Italian majority and the desire to control the important railway line. The Yugoslavs argued that it was the only well-developed port on the Adriatic. The Americans insisted that the port was necessary in order to keep the hinterland (Hungary, Yugoslavia, Austria, and Czechoslovakia) supplied with food and, furthermore, were inclined to support the Yugoslav claim to keep it a free port. Fiume also became the center of the British zone, assigned to Great Britain in accordance with the terms of the armistice and the decisions of the Naval Committee for the Adriatic. Finally, the French Eastern Army had established a supply base there and had a fraction of the port and the city under its control. The Italian Consiglio Nazionale ran the city and enjoyed the support of the Italian government and army. Nationalist stirrings and political rivalries made the period that followed the armistice tumultuous and threatening with conflict among the Allies. In July 1919, a clash broke out between the Italian and French soldiers in which a number of French colonial troops were killed. The French reacted sharply, appointing a commission to investigate the incident. This only increased tensions and fears among the Italians that the city and port would be taken away from Italy and handed over either to the new Yugoslav state or to the League of Nations.

Rear Admiral Andrews suggested that Fiume either be taken over indefinitely by the League of Nations or made into a protected free state. He did not believe that Fiume and Susak should be divided, since they were one town. "The great majority of the people are tired of Italian oppression and they want to be a free state," wrote Andrews on the eve of D'Annunzio's raid.55 Andrews, believing that new disorders were imminent, awaited instructions to distribute the vessels under his command. The naval advisor to the Peace Commission, Rear Admiral N. A. McCully, suggested that Andrews should do what he thought was best in the American zone, but that he should not distribute any vessels in zones occupied by the other Powers until authorized by the Supreme War Council.

After D'Annunzio's move, Andrews asked his superiors what would be the American policy toward Fiume. Should the United States accept the new situation? If it did, vessels should not be kept there, not even for moral effect or to avoid incidents. If it did not, how should US opposition be made known? If the United States decided to be passive, plans should be made to withdraw the forces and stores; if it was to be active, Andrews
believed that a show of force would suffice. He believed that an announcement should be made that a naval force of six dreadnoughts and destroyers would be sent from the United States, that the Italian government should be informed that an economic blockade would begin soon, and that the United States should cooperate with Britain and France. But there was no reply from Paris or Washington.56

On September 12, Andrews heard that an "army" of 1,000 armed men was advancing on the city from the west; there were no disorders and D'Annunzio promised that there would be no violence. Andrews, in Fiume aboard the USS Pittsburgh, was able to follow the events closely. His earlier reports indicating that new incidents were likely proved right. During the next several days consultations took place between the American, British, and French officers. Italian General Pittaluga came aboard the Pittsburgh and announced that D'Annunzio was in control of the troops, which had gone over to the rebels. The Italian battleship Dante Alighieri could not be counted on either, since its crew had mutinied. Andrews asked Pittaluga whether he realized that an Italian attack on the British and French troops would "mean a finish of Italy." The general answered in the affirmative and insisted that D'Annunzio was doing everything to prevent such an attack. The same day, Andrews learned that the Italians had dissolved the Allied Command and that Pittaluga had left town. In the evening, General Di Robillant met with Andrews and the Allied officers and informed them that he had orders from the government to retake Fiume at any cost, and that he thought it advisable that all Allied troops embark on their ships and move out of the harbor, since he could not protect them. The French and British agreed to this, and Andrews also sailed out. On September 15, Di Robillant was replaced by General Pietro Badoglio, deputy chief of staff of the Italian army, who informed Andrews that the rebels would neither be given an ultimatum nor attacked. Andrews was unhappy with the removal of Di Robillant, believing that he, unlike Badoglio, would have dealt with the rebels energetically. The American admiral concluded that the Italian officers had not the slightest intention of suppressing the rebellion, and were only ready to talk to give the impression that Fiume would become Italian. "For the Allies to allow this to take place would mean a loss of prestige and augur ill for the future of the Adriatic and Balkan states and for the effectiveness of the League of Nations," wrote Andrews.57

In a long letter to Admiral McCully, Andrews analyzed current conditions and made a forecast for the future. He believed that the troops had rebelled against the Italian government because of dissatisfaction with its policy in Fiume. Both the population and soldiers felt strongly about Fiume, and the people were ready to join the rebels. The Fiume incident could become an issue to spark off a revolution in Italy. In
case Italy should retain Fiume, Andrews believed, "it is practically certain that the Yugoslavs will attack them with the intention of taking it away from them." 58

In the next few days the Americans discussed what to do. Andrews favored strong action, and on September 19 informed McCully that the Allies should retake Fiume by force either in conjunction with or separately from the Italians, and restore its former status. The Allied forces should be reinforced and attack on both land and sea. This would lead to war between the Allies and Italy. Frank Polk, the head of the Peace Commission, took a different position. He told McCully that an armed force should be deployed only to protect American lives, property, and national dignity. Polk insisted that it was the task of the Italian government to provide the ways and means to put an end to the mutiny of its own armed forces. 59

The situation became more complicated when a rumor spread that D'Annunzio was preparing to attack other cities along the coast, namely Zadar, Split, and Trogir. The Yugoslavs became agitated, and Milenko Vesnic, their delegate to the Peace Conference, told Polk that the Yugoslav government was afraid that a war was in the offing, to which Polk replied that they should stay calm. On the night of September 23, three trucks carrying Italian troops crossed the boundary and headed in the direction of Split. Rumors circulated that about 2,000 troops were ready to attack Split. The troops arrived at Trogir (Trau) and Admiral Enrico Millo, governor of Dalmatia, asked Admiral Andrews to bring them back. Andrews dispatched the USS Cowell and a few sub-chasers to Trogir and asked the Yugoslav commanding officer to keep his troops quiet until the Italians returned. He also asked the provincial government of Dalmatia to maintain order in Split. The Italians were sent away, while the Cowell's crew stayed behind to police the town and protect Italian sympathizers. Andrews continued to insist on sending reinforcements to the Adriatic. Polk agreed to keep the Cowell, Harden, and Kilty until further orders. The population of Trogir greeted the American sailors with ovations.60 The danger was removed, but not its causes.

In the days that followed, numerous consultations took place between Fiume, Split, Paris, and Washington. Andrews instructed ships under his command to cooperate with the French and British, even though their orders were different. The British had orders not to participate in any conflict with the Italians, and the French had been instructed to stay and defend themselves if attacked. The Americans were to stand aside in case of an attack. But officers were ordered not to grant leave to crews and to keep armaments and torpedoes ready. In Paris, Polk, General Tasker Bliss, Henry White, and Admiral McCully tried to secure the cooperation of the British and French in making the Italians more amenable. On September 25, Polk told the Supreme
Council that if D'Annunzio attacked Split, the US forces would use arms and be assisted by the Yugoslavs, which could bring about a war between Italy and Yugoslavia. The Italian delegate, Scialoja, insisted that the Americans should preserve peace and order in Split. Polk asked Washington for instructions. An intensive exchange of views went on between Admiral Harry Knapp, commander of US Naval Forces in Europe, and the Department of the Navy. Knapp argued that Andrews's forces should be strengthened to serve as a warning to the Italians not to proceed. US ships sent to the Adriatic ought to be well prepared and supplied, and should include destroyers, battleships, submarine chasers, and mine sweepers.

On September 26, Daniels authorized Knapp to retain three US ships for service in the Adriatic to protect Americans. President Wilson, ill as he was, was adamant in his opposition to the Italian plans. He informed William Phillips, assistant secretary of state, that he approved of the decision to send the strongest reinforcements to the Adriatic as soon as possible. This, he believed, would help to maintain order and prevent the use of force. Next day, Knapp cabled instructions to Andrews to let the Italian admiral know that "seizing by, and the occupation of, the Italians of any territory beyond the limits of the Zone allotted to them, through any military demonstration, will be considered ultimately to lead to bloodshed, and war will be undoubtedly precipitated, the results and duration of which cannot now be anticipated. The US cannot but feel the gravest concern over the commission of such action by the Italian forces in and adjacent to the waters where vessels of the US are now stationed." This was believed to be sufficient to deter Italian action.

The British and French decision to recognize Italian rights to Fiume brought the United States into an awkward position. It was difficult for it to proceed alone, as it was only an Associate Power, and the administration was exposed to criticism from the US Congress. Yet Daniels, with Wilson's support, decided to make a move. On September 28, he ordered Knapp to send Andrews the reinforcements that had been asked for. He expected to detail units from other forces if necessary.

The American readiness to act was soon cooled down considerably. The British and French decided to abstain and the Italians moved to control D'Annunzio's movements along the coast. On September 30, McCully cabled Andrews that "our position in the Adriatic sea is somewhat vague for nobody foresaw any such complications as have arisen." He listed several reasons to stand aside, claiming that "our influence is moral rather than physical, it has been recognized by Serbs and Italians alike and had been exercised with firmness. It would be an affront if now the Italians seized Split or any other place in the presence of our ships.... At the same time I think we should not use military.
even if they do." Andrews met several times with Admiral Millo and the Italian commanding officer in Split, who assured him that no further raids would take place. Andrews seemed willing to accept Millo's assurances, although the Yugoslav officers were apprehensive. Despite the uneasiness among some Americans and Yugoslavs, the basic aim appeared to have been achieved: D'Annunzio was neutralized, Italian cooperation was secured, and the Yugoslavs cooled down. One fact, however, came to the surface: the Allies were prepared to give up their rights to calm Italian sensitivity. The Americans, though ready to defend their position in the Adriatic, had no recourse but to reconcile themselves with manifestations of goodwill. But through this conflict between Italy and Yugoslavia was again avoided.

The Adriatic events had an echo in the American press. On September 26, 1919, The Washington Post reported that the Marines had landed in Trogir by direction of the British Admiralty, and without the approval of President Wilson or Daniels. The US Senate passed a resolution asking for verification. On October 1, Daniels admitted the landing in Trogir, but testified to the Senate that the United States' action was guided by the desire to prevent an armed conflict between Italy and Yugoslavia. This reply seemed to satisfy the senators preoccupied with the ratification of the Treaty of Versailles.

Early in October, a new exchange of views on future policy took place. The administration was not anxious to exert too much pressure on Italy in order to make it act in accordance with the Allies' wishes. Lansing rejected the suggestion that a blockade be imposed in case Italy refused to withdraw from Fiume, since this would embitter the political situation and make the position of any government more difficult. Andrews seemed to change his views as well, believing now that the United States should act jointly with the Allies to prevent war between Italy and Yugoslavia. Andrews's reasons were obvious: the United States did not have the force to interfere if a conflict broke out on land, and it would have been equally unfeasible to oppose the Italian fleet without battleships. Furthermore, he claimed that the crisis had passed and that no new force was needed in the Adriatic. Lansing accepted this and informed Daniels that no new instructions to Andrews were necessary. The situation was delicate, but had been handled well.

Calm prevailed, only to be broken when Italian newspapers published a story that an American fleet was sailing to the Adriatic. Polk worried that this might increase tensions, and defused the problem by advising the US embassy in Rome to inform the foreign ministry that there was no truth in this. He believed that the rumor had originated with D'Annunzio's American admirer Whitney Warren. Warren supported Italian territorial claims on the Adriatic and carried on an extensive correspondence with the chief of staff of the Italian navy, Admiral Paolo Thaon.
Another incident which showed that Admiral Millo could not control the Italian zone and was thus forced to tolerate the rebels occurred when D'Annunzio's forces landed in Zadar on November 22. They soon withdrew, but their landing created a stir, prompting Andrews to reconsider the position of the US Navy in the Adriatic. He believed that D'Annunzio's action made future compromises less likely and his role of peacemaker questionable. He thought that D'Annunzio might decide to take Split, which would make the US position untenable: "The people of Yugoslavia have come to look on the US as their champions in their desires and efforts to unite into a self governing nation, and they believe that the US will not stand by and see their territory invaded by the usurping Italians without making some effort to assist the Yugoslavs." Obviously, Andrews was concerned with the image of the United States and of President Wilson, and worried about the situation they might face in case of Italian actions in the neighborhood of Split. If this were to happen and the Allies refused to act jointly, Andrews proposed, the United States should withdraw. General Bliss came to a similar conclusion. After analyzing the attitudes of France and Great Britain and the US Navy's situation in the Adriatic, he argued that keeping a small force would only bring trouble. He recommended that unless the situation changed, the United States should withdraw its naval forces immediately. Admiral Knapp had a different point of view. While recognizing the difficult position of the US naval detachment in the Adriatic, he believed that it should not be withdrawn because of its "value as a moral factor, and the possibility that its presence may contribute to avert an outbreak of war between Serbo-Croat-Slovene state and Italy." Knapp also advised that an effort be made to secure British and French support for the US naval force. If they denied it, however, he was willing to consider a withdrawal. The final decision was in Lansing's hands. Andrews was instructed not to attempt to prevent an attack from the sea within the American zone, but to resist any attempt to seize the Austro-Hungarian vessels in American custody. This was the only possible solution. Thus, the US Navy remained in the Adriatic for almost two more years and smoothed over many more disputes. The Fiume raid lost its initial significance, and the United States turned its attention to its own zone and naval forces in Split.

CONCLUSIONS

From its very beginning as an independent state, Yugoslavia was faced with Italian opposition. With Dalmatia, Fiume, and Kotor in dispute between the two countries, the United States became involved in the region since it supported Yugoslavia, which was unable to protect itself. The conflict on the Adriatic had an echo in Europe and the United States. After having been forgotten during the world war, the region suddenly took center
stage at the Paris Peace Conference.

The presence of the US naval and army units and the Food Administration in the Adriatic had far-reaching consequences. From the beginning of the war, President Wilson had argued that all problems between the Allies and the new and defeated states, the Adriatic seaboard included, ought to be resolved by the Peace Conference. The Italian government and armed forces did not want to accept this. President Wilson was determined to put his principles into practice. His resolve on the Adriatic issue was strengthened by information he received from the Navy, the Army and the Food Administration. He perceived the Italian territorial claims as an attack on his main goals.

It should be pointed out that the presence of the American naval units in the Adriatic prevented an outbreak of hostilities between Italy and Yugoslavia. The American admirals were able to exert political and moral pressure on both sides and to reduce tensions. This was difficult, since they did not receive the support they expected from the French and British. Another difficulty for the Americans was the fact that Italy belonged to the victorious coalition, and was therefore entitled to be treated accordingly, while a part of the Yugoslav state was considered enemy territory. The Americans did not refute the Italian claim, but believed that the Italians were unnecessarily harsh and that their policies were near-sighted and counterproductive. The United States believed that future cooperation was more important than temporary gains, good neighborliness more conducive to future cooperation.

The consolidation of American policy after the armistice brought about the establishment of Yugoslav authority in Dalmatia and the close cooperation between the US admirals and the local authorities. It was a course of events with which Italy was not very pleased. In fact, its aggressiveness and the failure of the Adriatic Committee to create a solution made the cooperation unavoidable. The US Navy and Food Administration carried out distinctly separate policies, which could not coexist with the Italian concept of Allied cooperation in which the Italian admirals would impose a policy to further Italian interests.

ENDNOTES

1. Daniels to Benson, Washington, November 2, 1918, Naval Records, box 683. Navy Branch, National Archives, Washington, DC.


4. Bullard to Sims, Venice, November 16, 1918; Memorandum to Admiral Benson, November 20, 1918, Naval Records, Box 683.

5. Benson to Bullard, Paris, November 30, 1918; Benson to Train, Paris, secret, November 30, 1918; Benson to Daniels, Paris, December 3, 1918, Naval Records, Boxes 142, 579, 603.


7. Daniels, Our Navy at War, Washington, 1922, pp. 405-406.


13. Andrews to Benson, Split, April 29 and 30, 1919. Naval Records, boxes 144 and 682. Additional information confirmed the heavy concentration of Italian troops.


18. Lansing to Polk, Washington, November 26, 1919, very urgent, Naval Records, box 685.


21. General Treat to Col. Wallace, Padua, November 12, 1918, 332nd Infantry Division, Army Records, box 3534, the National Archives.


25. Nolan to Treat, December 24, 1918; Treat to Nolan, Padua, January 11, 1919, Army Records, box 3535.


29. Bliss diary, December 23, 1918, Bliss papers.


34. Polk diary, November 11, 1918, Papers and diary of Frank Polk, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University.


36. War Diary, November 22, 1918, Naval Records, Box 684.


38. Bullard to Benson, Fiume, December 26 and 31, 1918, secret, Naval Records, boxes 682 and 683.

39. Bullard to Benson, Fiume, January 4 and 6, 1919, Naval Records, box 682.


41. Diaries of Vance McCormick, February 1, 1919, House collection, Yale University; Polk diary, January 9, 1919, Polk Papers; Polk to Commission, Washington, January 20, 1919, Wilson Papers, series VIII-A, box 12.

42. Memo: Italian obstruction, February 11, 1919, House Papers.

43. Niblack to Benson, Venice, February 12, 1919; Davis to Benson, Paris, February 26, 1919, Benson Papers, box 33.

44. McCormick Diary, February 17, 1919, House Papers.


46. Meeting of the commissioners, March 7, 1919, Harrison Papers, box 109.

47. McCormick Diary, March 15, 1919.

48. Minutes of the meeting of March 21, 1919, Naval Records, box 682.

49. Capt. Train to Andrews, Rome, April 1, 1919, Naval Records, box 684.

50. Andrews to Benson, Split, April 16, 17, 19, 24, 1919, Benson Papers, boxes 31 and 32.
51. Andrews to Giulio Menini, Split, April 2, 1919, Naval Records, box 685; Andrews to Benson, Venice, April 9, 1919, Naval Records, box 143.

52. Wilson to Davis, Paris, April 19, 1919, Norman Davis Papers, MSS Division, Library of Congress.


55. Andrews to Knapp, Fiume, September 1 and 2, 1919, Record Group 45, subject file, box 685, Naval Records.


60. Andrews to McCully, September 25, 1919, Naval Records, box 682; *Papers and Diary of Frank K. Polk*, Polk Diary, September 25, 1919, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University.

61. Andrews to USS Stirling, Fiume, September 25, 1919, Naval Records, box 685; Bliss to Polk, September 25, 1919 and Polk to Bliss, September 25, 1919, Bliss Papers, box 69.


64. Knapp to Andrews, London, 1919, Naval Records, box 682. In other instructions sent to Andrews, it was indicated that only joint Allied and American action stood any chance of success. The British and French, however, did not seem ready for such action. Daniels, The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, edited by David Cronon, Lincoln NE, 1963; September 28, 1919.

65. Andrews had under his command the USS Olympia, Pittsburgh, Sacramento, seven destroyers, and two sub-chasers. Knapp to chief of naval operations, September 29, 1919, Daniels Papers, box 40.


67. Memorandum for the secretary of the navy, October 1, 1919, prepared by Admiral McKean, chief of naval operations, Naval Records, box 685, 66th Congress, first session, Senate documents, XV, document 117.

68. Lansing to Polk, Washington, October 3, 1919, strictly confidential, #3345, PPC 186.3411/888, National Archives.

69. Andrews to McCully, Split, October 5, 1919, Naval Records, box 685; Lansing to Daniels, Washington, October 9, 1919, Daniels Papers, box 46. Several days later, Polk told Andrews who came to Paris, that the US had no intention of changing its position on Fiume, Polk Diary, October 15, 1919, Polk Papers.

70. Polk claimed that Warren had no influence, was a self-advertiser, and that his views should not be taken seriously. Polk to Jay, Paris, November 19, 1919, secret, PPC 186.3411/1017B; Andrews to Benson, Split, March 30, 1919, Benson Papers, box 32. For Warren's views, see Whitney Warren, The Just Claims of Italy. The question of the Trentin, of Trieste and of the Adriatic, Paris, no date.


72. Bliss to Polk, Paris, November 30, 1919, Bliss Papers, box 69.

73. Memorandum by McCully, December 5, 1919; Lansing to Daniels, Washington, December 11, 1919, State Department files, 763.72119/8165, National Archives.
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Professor Zivojinovic has exhaustively described the attitudes and outlook of American naval and army units assigned to the disputed areas in the Adriatic between Italy and Yugoslavia. The troops were there, we are told, "to restrain the excessive territorial ambitions of another ally, Italy, a member of the victorious coalition." An underlying thesis of the paper is that President Wilson was persuaded to pursue a policy grounded on justice and equity in the Adriatic by US military men attached to the occupation forces who kept him fully apprised of Italy's ill-treatment of the local Yugoslav population and discourteous behavior toward Allied military representatives trying manfully to uphold law and order along the Dalmatian coast. It was not Wilson, Lansing, House, and others who conceived and conducted American policy in the Adriatic, but Benson, Bullard, Niblack, Andrews, and Sims, all military men. While that novel thesis -- the predominant influence of the American military on Wilson's Adriatic policy -- might reasonably be questioned, it is doubtless true that the Italian Adriatic Command turned out to be Italy's worst ambassador to the American delegation at the Paris Peace Conference.

In the unbroken litany recounted here of Uncle Sam's disinterestedness and goodwill in rendering the Yugoslavs justice, only the American battalions stationed in Fiume are found to be wanting in their task of holding the Italians at bay. Blame for this, according to Zivojinovic, rests squarely with Colonel House who, hoodwinked by the Italians, deprived the Army of an active role in political happenings in the area. But this was an aberration. On the whole, as the author points out, the Americans, in a job well done, sincerely believed that Italian selfishness and greed were impeding their efforts to secure peace and rehabilitation in southeastern Europe. If Zivojinovic has still to explain the incongruities and dangers in the American disposition to moralize on questions traditionally dealt with according to the dictates of realpolitik, he has irrefutably documented Italian misbehavior and aggressiveness toward the Yugoslav population residing in their zones of military occupation. It would not have caused the Americans by surprise had they known what we now know that the Italian Command in December 1918 had issued orders for its units to sow discontent against the fledgling Yugoslav state wherever and in whatever manner possible, especially in Fiume and Dalmatia.
How did Dalmatia come to occupy a high place in Italy's irredentist objectives? Before the war, not even the Trento e Trieste people gave it much attention. Moreover, the general staff thought Dalmatia to be a liability, while the navy, apart from Admiral Thaon di Revel, was content with Pola, Lissa, and Valona. A major idea behind the Treaty of London, which had got the Italians into the war on the side of the Allies in 1915 by a large gift of Slav-populated areas, had been to deny the use of the Dalmatian coastline to Russia. But with Russia distracted by the Bolshevik revolution, this was no longer an issue in 1918. By insisting on the Treaty of London plus Fiume, Sonnino and Orlando were mocking logic and testing the patience of Allies already feeling the heat from Wilson on all their wartime secret treaties. They pandered to the cry of vittoria mutilata and thereby obscured the fact that Italy had been the decisive victor over an hereditary enemy which lay in fragments. Italy's territorial acquisitions, which were considerable, enabled the peninsula for the first time to enjoy strong and defensible frontiers. But Sonnino's brand of pragmatic sacro egoismo, perverted into a frenzied intoxication by the polished words of a certain well-known Italian poet laureate, succeeded in silencing the Mazzinians who had been calling for cooperation between Italy and the south Slavs. If Yugoslavia could not be strangled at birth by promoting Croatian separatism and Montenegrin independence, then it could be contained through support of Romanian and Austrian claims, an Italian protectorate over Albania, and an arrangement with Hungary whereby Fiume would be brought under Italian tutelage and Croatia under Italian domination.

With this background, it is easy to understand that the Americans would not be alone in coming down hard on the Italians. They were ably seconded by the British whose archives are replete with criticism, especially over Italy's machinations in Fiume. "It is incredible that Italy could go beyond the London treaty; there is nothing in the Armistice which permits Italy occupation of Fiume" minuted one British official.1 Major Harold Temperley was especially indignant that "the Italians were using their influence for their own purposes"2 Captain Edwards reported that the Italians were obstructing Allied efforts to revictualize the semi-starved natives all along the Adriatic coast. "The aggressive manner in which the Italians persist in adopting is extremely irksome to the Yugo-Slavs, who are extremely anxious to do everything possible to assist the British, French, and Americans."3 The Political Intelligence Department, Lord Northcliffe's Department of Propaganda In Enemy Countries, and the Foreign Office were at one in faulting the Italians for disrupting Allied efforts to restore order in Dalmatia. But among the British military there was a different view put forth, in Fiume of all places. According to Lt. Colonel Rocke, "on the whole the Italians appear to be handling an extremely difficult and serious situation tactfully and firmly. The three chiefs,
Lt. Comm. Admiral Cagni at Pola, Admiral Millo at Sebenico, and Lieut-Gen. Grazioli at Fiume appear to be men of outstanding ability."4 The Admiralty reported that Grazioli was "a thorough gentleman."5 As if to justify the Italian presence, reports came in describing the Yugoslav element mired in a hopeless condition of anarchy and Bolshevism.6 Lord Cavan, the Commander of British troops in Italy, reported in late December on one of his frequent visits to the hotly contested city: "I visited Fiume the other day and what struck me was not so much the difficulty with Jugoslavs as with the French.... I like the Italian Governor, a tactful man."7 The French? That invites us to open up the discussion a little by probing behind Italian behavior.

For long, contemporaries and historians have enjoyed open season on Italy, particularly on Sonnino who has been faulted for fighting "la nostra guerra" and for imparting the notion that Italy was only a provisional ally whose ambition should be slaked lest it jump the fence back over to a revamped Triplice. A parochial product of an earlier age, so goes the received opinion, he failed to take due note of the great changes wrought by the Bolshevik revolution and America's entry into the war.

Orlando was less constant and more flexible than his foreign minister. Too clever by half, he ended up fooling the Italian people, the Allies, and perhaps even himself through his mimicry of Wilsonian principles when, in fact, he doggedly pursued Sonninian realpolitik. There were technical failings as well. The Italian ambassador to Washington, Macchi di Cellere, delivered reports to Rome containing almost outright falsifications of Wilson's motives and policies that doubtless contributed to Orlando's unwarranted belief in Wilson's readiness to abide Italian wishes. No less damaging was the Italian failure to try to reach a preliminary understanding with the American President before the Peace Conference opened. The ongoing wrangling in the Italian delegation did not help Rome's cause either.

In spite of Sonnino's refusal to undergo an "agonizing reappraisal" of Italian policy, he emerged in the postwar era bearing much justifiable bitterness against his allies. In the Balkan theater, France, in 1917, underhandedly engineered a Venizeolos coup in Greece which seemed to presage a French takeover of the country. Since the charismatic Greek populist leader harbored expansive Pan-Hellenic dreams, he obviously represented a threat to Italian interests in northern Epirus and the Dodecanese islands. Through the unsavory Albanian bandit Essad, the French, too, seemed bent on replacing Italian influence in Albania with their own.8 British perfidy also tormented Sonnino. Ever anxious to extricate themselves from important commitments in Asia Minor made to the Italians in April 1917 at St. Jean de Maurienne on the flimsy pretext that Russia failed to stamp its approval, the British intended to freeze
Italy out of their broadly defined imperial zones notwithstanding Italy's treaty rights, albeit vague ones, which had to be taken into consideration. The mercurial David Lloyd George, while at one moment advocating an all-out offensive on the Italian front to gain the elusive military breakthrough, at the next would authorize secret talks with the Habsburgs which, if successfully negotiated, would have left Italy high and dry with gains from its hereditary foe in a separate peace amounting to even less than Giolitti's notorious paracchino. Although publicly the British never wavered in standing by their Treaty of London obligations toward Italy, there is little doubt that they were secretly praying that Wilson would put his foot down and get them out of the mess which Lord Grey had got the country into when he signed the Treaty in April 1915. And Sonnino knew it. Small surprise that the Italian foreign minister sometimes wondered who was friend and who was enemy. But in spite of the outright hostility and mutual recrimination punctuating Italy's relations with France and Britain, Sonnino remained steadfastly loyal to both the war and his allies right up to the end. But on the matter of Yugoslavia, there could be no meeting of minds if the Allies should show even the slightest interest in the creation of a southern Slav kingdom. For Sonnino regarded the Croatians, who distinguished themselves with bravery and valor fighting in the Habsburg armies against Italy, with the same unrelieved hatred as the French regarded the Germans.

It is a lamentable fact that at the time when Orlando and Sonnino walked away from the Paris Peace Conference in April 1919, Italians of practically all political stripes had become disillusioned with Wilsonian principles and convinced that the American president bore their country an implacable hostility. Irritated by the persistent Yugoslav clamor for all of Istria, those Italians who had been working for reconciliation with their Adriatic neighbor broke off their Allied contacts, withdrew into a sullen silence, and thereby abandoned the field to their country's xenophobic zealots.

But only after their erstwhile friends in the West had badly let them down. Throughout 1918, a strong nucleus of Italian liberals and democrats, frustrated by Sonnino's intractability, was determined to work out an understanding based on Mazzinian principles with key representatives from the Yugoslav Committee. British idealists stepped forward as mediators: Wickham Steed, Arthur Evans, and R. W. Seton Watson, who founded The New Europe, a journal that espoused the causes of the suppressed nationalities of the Habsburg Empire. Under Steed's auspices, an informal Italo-Yugoslav understanding was worked out in December 1917 which laid the groundwork for the Torre-Trumbic agreement the following January. Italian representatives in these negotiations included General Mola and Guglielmo Emanuel, Il Corriere della Sera's London correspondent. The stage was thus set for the Rome Congress of Oppressed Nations, held in April, at
which a large Italian delegation composed of a wide spread of radicals, republicans, reformists, socialists, liberals, conservatives, and nationalists, gave their approval to a series of resolutions promising independence to the newly awakened peoples of Eastern Europe. Amidst the euphoria, however, Gaetano Salvemini, whose moral Mazzinianism stood out against the more pragmatic approach of the Corriere group -- to say nothing of the blatant opportunism of the nationalists at the Congress -- interjected a cautionary note: "The discussion with the Slavs outside Italy must be conducted by us, the Italian democrats; our friends in Britain, France and America, without explicitly opposing the Slavs, must create among their countrymen a climate of sympathy and condemn all acts of incitement on the part of overzealous friends of the Slav propagandists." A bitter confrontation over Istria, Salvemini warned, would not only assist Austria but "lead Italy back, deluded, humiliated, fiercely inflamed against France and Britain, into alliance with the Central Powers." The origins of the vittoria mutilata are not to be traced solely to D'Annunzio and Mussolini.

Thereafter, the Steed and Seton-Watson group, joined by Northcliffe's propaganda agency, worked assiduously to tear up the Treaty of London in favor of a new Yugoslav state whose boundaries with Italy would be delineated along nationality lines. To bring about this end, they did not refrain from persistent intervention in Italian politics to bring Sonnino into line or, if all persuasion failed, to engineer his removal from office. Orlando at first seemed perplexed by this onslaught. Confiding in Rodd, the British ambassador to Rome, he found that in Paris "old friends and allies and their interests seemed to count for much less than the newly discovered Jugo-Slavs." Why, he repined, were Northcliffe and Steed "allowed to intervene in the direction of international affairs"? Rodd, who resented any outside intrusion into his diplomatic bailiwick, reported that "we seem to have got ourselves into a false position by placing this country in the hands of the 'Italian Committee'," which "can only do us harm and lay us open to a charge of insincerity." Who represented His Majesty's Government's policy, he asked, the Foreign Office or Northcliffe's Italian Committee?

His fears were not unwarranted for, in Paris, after the armistice, Steed was everywhere. In November he saw House and urged him to press for an order from Foch that only American troops should occupy southern Slav territories. "House will do this," he reported. Examples of his pro-Yugoslav politicking are legion. Finally, Albertini, who in August had lead the outspoken but unsuccessful campaign against Sonnino, lost patience with his British friends. In an article entitled "Troppp Zelo," published on 6 December, the great Italian press mogul brought The New Europe to book for its scurrilous attacks against Italy and obvious pro-Yugoslav bent. The Corriere, which had been supporting reconciliation with the south Slavs, was
being placed in an untenable position toward its own readership. It is not too far-fetched to believe that Albertini and Bissolati, who approved the article, had given up the anti-Sonnino campaign in reaction to the violent broadsides of their liberal friends in the West who seemed not to notice that their great objective -- reconciliation between Italy and Yugoslavia--had no chance of success without the support of Italian moderate opinion.14 A wave of resignations from *The New Europe* followed in January: Silva, Salvemini, Borgese. Apart from being outstanding paragons of political sanity and balance, they shared the undeniable alienation of the Italian Democratic Establishment from the Wilsonian movement in Europe even before Wilson set foot in Paris.

Once the Peace Conference got under way, the Italians rightly suspected a collusion in anti-Italianism between Steed and Co. and the American peace delegation. Together, the Anglo-Americans cooked up proposals favoring the Yugoslav thesis and coached the Yugoslav delegation on how to approach Wilson. Steed wrote to Northcliffe on 4 February: "Seton-Watson and I are slogging away at the Adriatic settlement. We worked until late last night preparing maps and memoranda as a basis for the American proposal to the Italians, and Seton-Watson submitted them this morning on my behalf."15 On the next day Frazier, the American go-between, wondered if Steed could think of a possible method by which Wilson would be able to impose a settlement on Italy. Steed: "I promised to prepare Trumbic so that any proposal the President might make would be certain not to be opposed by him. Then when Orlando came, the President could tell Orlando what the general decision must be."16 Frazier agreed and left Steed to work it out with the Yugoslavs. And on 11 February at dinner with Frazier: "Trumbic and I held a conspiracy in my bedroom, and I wrote the two letters for the Southern Slavs containing the official proposal for a Wilson arbitration."17 In March, House showed Steed the map and the memorandum that were going to Wilson for his guidance. This was Douglas Johnson's final frontier line which, once Wilson had adopted it, would become the famous "Wilson line."18 Between it and Arthur Evan's *New Europe* line of October 1917, the paternal relationship is direct and clear.

Steed wound up his Paris stint with the following, rather pompous, reflection: "It is because I have always foreseen that Italy would never get any real satisfaction out of the Treaty of London, that I have worked to put her in a political and moral position so exalted in regard to the Jugo-Slavs, Rumanians and the Czecho-Slovaks, that the moral satisfaction she might thus have obtained, and the economic openings which she would have secured, might compensate her for territorial disappointments. But she dropped the bone for the shadow and is now terribly disappointed to find the shadow somewhat insubstantial."19
No matter what the merits of the Adriatic dispute, and the Italians managed brilliantly to botch their side of the story, they were, in truth, the victims of a gang-up. Although the Anglo-Americans did not shrink from plain speech when addressing the Yugoslavs, their censure of Yugoslav intransigence was never as fierce as their condemnation of Italian excesses. This made them vulnerable to the charge from even moderate and friendly Italians that they were applying a double standard. Perhaps the paper we have just heard should pose an additional question: did the American military in the Adriatic suffer from the same bias?

ENDNOTES

2. FO 608/16, 29 November 1918.
3. FO 371/3138/198773, 3 December 1918.
4. FO 371/3138/202570, 9 December 1918.
5. FO 371/3138/214001, 30 December 1918.
6. FO 371/3137/187972, 14 November 1918.
7. FO 800/203, 26 December 1918.
12. FO 800/203, 7 November 1918.

14. FO 371/3232/205932, 10 December 1918.

15. The Times Archive, Wickham Steed Papers (hereafter cited as WSP), 4 February 1919.

16. WSP, 5 February 1919.

17. WSP, 11 February 1919.

18. WSP, 24 March 1919.

19. WSP, 10 May 1919.
Twice in this century, in 1918 and again in 1945, the United States has intervened in the upper Adriatic to prevent a military conflict between Italy and Yugoslavia. In both cases, the United States took the side of the militarily weaker state against the nation that was at least nominally a close wartime ally. Both times, the United States, using its military and economic power, succeeded in its immediate basic objective of preventing an armed clash. In neither case, however, was US power sufficient to prevent a final settlement that penalized its client state: Yugoslavia lost Fiume and other territory to the inflamed nationalism of post-World War I Italy, and Italy returned this territory together with significant segments of Venezia Giulia and the hinterland of Trieste to a revolutionary-nationalist Yugoslavia after World War II. In both situations, American efforts to control the peacemaking process ran afoul of the ambitions of other powers. In 1919, the British and French governments provided backing for Italian objectives. As signatories of the 1915 Treaty of London, they could not abandon Italy's claims without giving up some of their own. In 1946-47, the Soviet Union demanded and won major concessions at Italy's expense for its Yugoslav ally.

This essay underlines a number of the factors that influenced the success and failures of American intervention in the Adriatic on both occasions. In 1919, as in 1945, the United States was capable of a formidable projection of its power into the region. Between 1919 and 1921 American military power, primarily in the form of the US fleet, shielded the fledgling Yugoslav state from heavy-handed Italian efforts to dismember it. American economic power in the form of food and the possibility of loans to finance reconstruction, had a powerful impact in providing stability in war-devastated Yugoslavia and in moderating Italian expansionism. As the case of Fiume demonstrated, however, the US ability to forge a settlement was severely limited by two factors: a lack of solidarity with its French and British allies and the unwillingness of American leaders to use force to achieve their objectives.

I do not question the wisdom of avoiding a recourse to force. The stakes in the Adriatic were certainly not great enough from the American perspective to justify military action against Italy, no matter what commanders on the scene may have believed in the heat of the crisis. Once the United States ruled
out military force as an option, however, its diplomatic strategy changed and concessions, in the form of recognition of de facto Italian control of portions of the Istrian peninsula, followed.

The Istrian solution that emerged piecemeal after 1919 satisfied no one. Italian leaders complained bitterly of the "mutilated victory" and of the role the United States played in denying their wartime objectives. Yugoslav politicians were equally dissatisfied with permanent Italian occupation of territory they claimed, including the economically important ports of Trieste, Fiume, and Pola. The seeds of the post-World War II great-power clash over Trieste were planted in 1918-19. Finally, the US inability to enforce a peace settlement based on just and mutually agreed national boundaries in Istria, and in other parts of Central Europe, called Wilson's vision of a democratic world order into question at home. The first American attempt to carry out a major restructuring of the international order on the basis of its democratic-nationalist ideology had failed. The Italo-Yugoslav conflict over the Adriatic coast played a significant role in this failure.

Even the initial US success in preventing Italian efforts to dismember Yugoslavia had consequences that ran counter to American objectives. Inflamed Italian nationalism after World War I undermined the legitimacy of the Liberal state and smothered Italy's evolution toward democracy. Wilson's Republican successors, who shared his broad objective of a stable world order even while differing on strategy, had to contend with an authoritarian Italian state whose potential for disruption of the Mediterranean was dramatically illustrated at Corfu in 1923. While the Italian political leadership bears the overwhelming responsibility for the triumph of Mussolini's Blackshirts, the United States unwittingly nudged Italy along the road to Fascism with its Adriatic power politics.

It is within this larger ideological and political canvas that this essay provides us with useful detail on the means and agents that the United States employed in its struggle with Italy. The author details the role of the US Navy and the US Food Administration in protecting and assisting the Yugoslav state. He demonstrates how craftily the Italian authorities initially used a small detachment of US Army troops as a cat's-paw in their efforts to create an "allied" cover for Italy's plans of territorial expansion.

The discussion of Italian activities is, however, hampered by the author's evident bias against Italy and championing of Yugoslav territorial claims. It is easy to sympathize with Yugoslavia on these issues. Italian imperialism in the Balkans -- an economic and territorial expansionism that dated into the late nineteenth century and intensified during and after the industrial take-off of 1896-1907 -- was a major cause of regional
instability. But I think that the paper would benefit from a wider discussion of Italian aims and the constraints under which post-World War I Italian leaders operated. I found no reference to the standard works on Italy's diplomatic or political history in the notes to this paper. Italian objectives, seen through the optic of US officials obsessed with defending Yugoslav territorial integrity, become one-dimensional: greedy imperialism aimed at dismembering Yugoslavia.

Italian leaders created many of their own problems. No European ruling class entered the war with less reason. No society was more divided over the war. No nation had less reason to boast of military success. Thus, the acquisition of territory was a desperate necessity for Italy's ruling class: its legitimacy was at stake.

Certain Italian problems were not, however, of the Italians' own creation. Primary among these was the relationship with the United States: Italy's "American problem." In their struggle to retain legitimacy, Italian leaders faced a degree of opposition from each of their major allies. The United States, however, opposed Italian ambitions to an extent that startled Italy's leaders. The Italians fundamentally misread Wilson's character and ambitions. Badly informed by their ambassador in Washington, they believed that his diplomacy was simply a cynical mask for US imperial ambition. They failed to realize that idealism and national interest coexisted within the Wilsonian formulation. Thus, the Italians expected to force Wilson into a deal by employing delaying tactics at Versailles and by presenting him with a fait accompli in the Adriatic. Instead, they exasperated the American president and undermined support among the other allies.

Orlando, Sonnino, and other Italian leaders also complained that the effects of the US refusal to recognize the legality of carefully negotiated Allied wartime agreements was to destroy the principle of the sanctity of agreements among the allies and to deny Italy rights that it had won, however narrowly, on the battlefield. Italy entered World War I on the basis of a classic balance-of-power arrangement, the Treaty of London, which was designed to complete the Risorgimento by uniting all Italians into a single state and to reinforce Italy's great-power claims by acquiring colonial territory in the Balkans and Anatolia. The United States rejected traditional cabinet diplomacy and its arrangements. The American president, exasperated Italian leaders charged, wanted to change the rules of the game to the detriment of Italy's interests after the game had concluded.

Italian leaders had further cause for resentment because of Wilson's efforts to appeal over their heads to the Italian people. While Wilson's 1919 visit to Italy failed to create a consensus for US political objectives, it further polarized the
Italian debate over the shape of a postwar treaty and significantly reduced the already limited maneuvering space available to Italian leaders. The Italian politicians were caught between a growing Socialist movement determined to call them to account for the war and an increasingly powerful extreme right that demanded immediate and wide-scale Italian expansion.

Moreover, the manner in which the United States enforced its plans for a restructured world order exposed many of Italy's weaknesses. Italy claimed great-power status from a woefully inadequate economic base and, as the author notes, had to rely on cooperation of the other great powers to gain its Balkan objectives. It was too weak to challenge the United States in the Adriatic, Italian home waters, directly. This was a humiliating position for Italy since its weaknesses were exposed before both a discontent domestic opinion and its neighbors.

At the root of Italy's American problem was its concern about the impact that US involvement had on the international order. The United States' entry into the war gave the contest a new type of ideological character. The ultimate objective of Wilsonian diplomacy was conservative: to stabilize the world order. Its means, however, were radical in the context of European, and particularly Italian, politics of 1918. Wilson's calls for a postwar restructuring of international relations based on national self-determination, free trade, democracy, arms reduction, and a League of Nations meant that Italy had to limit its territorial objectives and abandon its economic and political expansionism in the Balkans together with its colonial ambitions in Anatolia. While ready to meet some of Italy's territorial demands, Wilson could not permit Italy to dismember another state without abandoning his vision of a new international order.

The Italians were scarcely enamored of the US effort to impose a new system of international behavior and order that had as its basis an American reading of the history of international relations. A peace settlement "Made in the USA" offered them nothing. Thus, the conflict between the United States and Italy over the Adriatic was the rawest example of the struggle between traditional European imperialism and American visions of a US-led and -inspired world order based on cooperation among democratic nation states.

These conflicts between the United States and Italy over the postwar world were played out in two fora. The clash between Sonnino and Wilson at Versailles is well known. This paper gives us a glimpse of the longer battle along the Adriatic. The cockpit of this struggle were the interallied military commissions that supervised the Balkan armistice. The author makes frequent reference to these discussions but what we need is more information on the organization, character, and operations of these committees and on the debates that took place within
Another area that merits exploration in the context of the author's objectives is the role of US financial power. The paper implies that the possibility of loans for postwar reconstruction tempered Italian territorial ambitions in the Balkans. Dollar diplomacy became the primary tool of American foreign policy in the 1920s. Giangiacomo Migone2 has illustrated the important role US bank loans played in Mussolini's ultimate political and social stabilization of postwar Italy as well as in tempering Fascist foreign policy. This essay suggests that the Italian leaders of 1919-21 were equally susceptible to this type of diplomatic leverage. We need more information on US plans and demarches and on the Italian response.

While the description of Italian motivation is one-sided, the author is even more abstemious in treating Yugoslav objectives and the efforts the leaders of that newly created kingdom made to influence US policy and to support US officials in the Adriatic. Relative political and military weakness produces serious diplomatic activity. We need to know more about the cooperation (and conflicts) between the two states at the regional level in order to assess the effectiveness of American policies.

In summation, I would suggest that the author has provided us with much useful new material on US actions in the Adriatic in the immediate aftermath of World War I. He now needs to give his essay more focus and to remove its polemical thrust by rooting it in a broader perspective of national objectives. By doing this, he can make a significant contribution to our understanding of the dynamics of US foreign policy and its practical effects in the Adriatic region.

ENDNOTES

1. Among a large number of important works, Piero Melograni, Storia Politica della grande guerra (Bari, 1972); B. Tobia, "Il partito Socialista Italiano e la politica di Woodrow Wilson," Storia Contemporanea 6: June 1974, pp. 275-306; Michael Ledeen, The First Duce (Baltimore, 1977); R. Webster, Industrial Imperialism in Italy (California, 1975); R. Bosworth, Italy: The Least of the Great Powers (Cambridge, 1979); and the still useful R. Albrecht Carrie, Italy at the Paris Peace Conference (New York, 1938).

2. Stati uniti e Fascismo (Milan, 1980).