

IVE MIHOVILOVIĆ

ITALIAN EXPANSIONIST POLICY

TOWARDS

ISTRIA, RIJEKA AND DALMATIA

(1945—1953)

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IRREDENTIST ORGANIZATIONS

The irredentists, who have for their object the «liberation» of Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia, and whose ideology and methods of work have been clearly stated in the publications of the «Centro Studi Adriatici», have a number of specific organizations, which we shall discuss here in general terms.

It would, however, be incorrect to suppose that irredentism is propagated by these organizations and their press alone. Irredentism has spread far beyond them. It is now supported by other organizations of a general character, and even by political parties, such as the Democratic-Christian, the neo-fascist «Movimento Sociale Italiano» and by the monarchist press. It is upheld and actively preached by both big and small militaristic organizations of which Italy has quite a number. Briefly said, irredentism has been embraced by all those who have the national or the so-called patriotic programmes. To see that this is true, one need only look at the public manifestations and occasional declarations of such organizations.

Nevertheless, we shall limit ourselves here only to those organizations which are purely irredentist in character, the principal among which, both by organizational forms and public activities, is the «Associazione Nazionale per la Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia». We say that this organization is the principal one, because, unlike other irredentist organizations, which also maintain connection with the ruling circles, is most closely linked with the Italian Government.

The freedom enjoyed by these organizations in their provocative actions against Yugoslavia is made possible only by the permission of the government which grants it all too readily since such actions suit its own plans and aims. The responsibility for that, therefore, rests entirely with the Italian Government. For it not only tolerates, but approves and finances the activities of the organizations which have been set up to work for the annexation of Yugoslav lands, to threaten Yugoslavia's integrity and destroy it as a state.

«Associazione Nazionale per la Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia»

This organization (National Association for Julian March and Dalmatia) is considered to be the main and the strongest irredentist organization. It is such, indeed, both in view of its intensive activities and the number of its members.

The «Associazione Nazionale per la Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia» was organized in protest against the Peace Treaty with Italy in 1947 to work for its revision or total revo-

cation. As its name implies, its claims are not limited only to Trieste, but are extended to include the total territory of the so-called »Julian Venetia« (former Julian March) and Dalmatia itself. It is now openly advocating the »liberation« of those regions.

In view of its character and aims, the fact that Fausto Pecorari was one of the initiators in its formation is of particular importance. At that time Pecorari was one of the most prominent Democratic-Christian deputies in Parliament. He was in close friendship with Alcide De Gasperi, then the President of the Cabinet, who approved the formation of this organization and agreed with its stand that Julian March and Dalmatia are the lands to which Italy has a rightful claim. As it will be shown later, it was Alcide De Gasperi's government that supplied the organization with funds from the very beginning.

At first the organization was known as the »Comitato per la Venezia Giulia e Zara«, but some time later that name was changed to the »Associazione Nazionale per la Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia«. As we see, in this change from the »Committee« to the »Association« the name »Zara« was replaced by the word »Dalmazia«. With this the organization emphasized that it considers as Italian territory not only the town of Zadar in Dalmatia, which, together with the Island of Lastovo, had been given to Italy by the Treaty of Rapallo in 1920, but also the whole of Dalmatia of which a larger part was annexed by Italy after Mussolini's attack on Yugoslavia in 1941.

The organization was intentionally given the task of gathering into its ranks the so-called »refugees« (esuli, profughi), i.e. the Italians who during or after the war left the ethnic Yugoslav territories which were liberated by Yugoslavia. In those regions the Italians were always in minority, while in Dalmatia they were so few in numbers that they were even unnoticed. This task was emphasized mainly because the initiators of the organizations thought that its existence and activities would get greater moral support from the public. But that evidently was only a form, and we now know that the organization was created to serve as a tool for the policy of the Italian Government. The programme of the organization also provides for certain social and economic assistance to the refugees, but in practice that assistance is of secondary importance, as we shall see later on from its budget. What is, however, of primary importance, are its political activities and propaganda in support of the irredentist revendications of Yugoslav lands.

The seat of the organization (its contracted name is ANVGD) is in Rome, where it has its presidency and the executive-committee. In Rome too its congresses are usually held. In the rural areas there are the »district ANVGD committees«, of which about a hundred exist throughout the country. In Italy several districts are grouped into regions (the so-called »regione«) and several district committees are under control of greater regional bodies, the so-called »consulte regionali«.

Local ANVGD organizations with their committees exist in individual Italian towns, and there are also provincial organizations known by different names, such as the »Lega Fiumana«, the »Lega Dalmata«, the »Lega Istriana« and the like. In some places many different organizations exist, but they are all under control of the ANVGD. There are, however, »Lege« which are fully independent.

The organization publishes its own weekly paper »La Difesa Adriatica«.

Second article of the ANVGD Statute, which determines the organization's aims, says:

»The association works for national, moral and supporting aims. It sets itself the following tasks:

1. To develop the defence of the Italian traditions and to preserve the historic, ethnic and spiritual achievements of Julian March and Dalmatia.

2. To acquaint the Italian people with the national, ethnic and economic problems of Julian March and Dalmatia, and thus enlist national support for the revision of those clauses of the Peace Treaty which determine the political positions of those regions.

3. To support the initiatives for organizing and protecting of the interests of the Istrians and Dalmatians living outside the political borders of the mother country, and to make their problems widely known. « (La Difesa Adriatica, Nov. 15, 1952, № 43, Vol. VI.).

This shows that the organization's political aim is of greatest importance. And it is in this spirit that the ANVGD works. It directs its efforts mainly on propaganda of the «Italianism» of Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia, on public manifestations of a political character and on assemblies and congresses, resolutions and memoranda, by which the attention of the public is drawn to the irredentist aims.

The following excerpts from an article published in «La Difesa Adriatica» (June 25, 1951, № 25, Vol. VI) will help us to grasp more clearly the aims of the ANVGD:

«Associazione Nazionale per Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia» is an organization of a cultural and supporting character, standing above all parties, its highest aim being the greatness of the homeland, the affirmation of its ideas and the defence of its sacred borders...

«In the cultural field the association holds conferences, grants scholarships, awards prizes for works of art and historic, folklore and generally scientific studies, encourages, supports, publishes and distributes such works.

«In the national field it appeals to all Italians to preserve their spirit of tradition, pride and honour, and advocates the need for the unity and solidarity above all parties and cliques through which assistance will be given to our mutilated and oppressed provinces. It fights with all the means placed at its disposal by culture, history, traditions, morals and law for the return of the mutilated provinces to the mother country. Trieste, Rijeka, Pula, Cres, Lošinj and Zadar are the places which figure in our history, and their right to return to the mother country cannot be denied.

«It draws the attention of all the Italians to the need of sacred unity. It therefore appeals to them to give their votes to the parties which know where the real borders of the country are and which understand the sacred need for their defence... Let the forgetful remember that the homeland will achieve prosperity and go on advancing only when it is within its real borders, and when all her sons are free. While Trieste, Pula, the Quarnero islands and Zadar are under foreign rule, Italy itself cannot be considered as a country of free men, but as a prison of servants and slaves.»

The «Programme of the Lombard Trend», published in «La Difesa Adriatica» (January 14, 1953, № 3), contains suggestions which ought to be accepted in order to revive the activities of the association and make them more effective. The text of the Programme says in part:

«The action should include:

«A struggle for the revision of the Peace Treaty as far as Julian March and Dalmatia are concerned; for the return of the Free Territory of Trieste to Italy; and for the maintenance of the «status quo» in case of danger...

«Also useful would be special irredentist manifestations which could be organized by the committees with support of the patriotic associations but without any interference of political parties or groups.

«The solution of the Julian March problem, which concerns the lands torn away from Italy by the Treaty of Peace, must come as a logical and inevitable consequence of



VENEZIA GIULIA
DALMAZIA

I NOSTRI CANDIDATI

1. Poduie dott. Aldo	15. Lenuzza dr. ing. Ruggero
2. Bogatai Stanislao	16. Mattioli Ermanno
3. Bratos Maria in Corelli	17. Merni prof. Ada
4. Cassini ing. Giorgio	18. Millia prof. Antonio
5. Cattarini Anronio	19. Monai prof. Fulvio
6. Cattonar prof. Mario	20. Nutrizio rag. Luigi
7. Cionci Giuseppe	21. Ognibene Carlo
8. Ciuffarin Arturo	22. Popazzi Giusto
9. Curto Nicolò	23. Predolin Giuseppe
10. Cuschie Guido	24. Pursini Corrado
11. Delise Renato	25. Selenati ing. Gino
12. Di Zorzi prof. Livio	26. Tercelli Adolfo
13. Fabretto dr. Menotti	27. Urbani prof. Mario
14. Gasparini Giulio	28. Verdin Giovanni

The Lion of San Marco, the symbol of Venetian power and glory, and her domination of the Adriatic, is still very much used as a symbol of resurgent irredentism. At the municipal elections in Gorica in December 1952, one party appeared with a symbol which represented the Lion of San Marco in a circle, with the inscription: » Venezia Giulia Dalmazia«

the development of events, and therefore it will be necessary to have two different forces constantly working, one produced by the Government's diplomatic activity, and the other produced by the progress of events itself. At a given time these two forces will have to be backed up by a special action of the association, *which, naturally, cannot be explained here.*

»In regard to patriotic actions, it must stage manifestations of a patriotic character. Shortly, it will be necessary, for instance, to intervene indirectly in the Trieste municipal elections (trains, automobiles, propaganda cards) which will make the Triestini feel that the entire Italian population is solidly behind them.

»It will also be necessary to build, with the assistance of the Government, municipal, and regional boards and private persons, a sacrarium to the memory of the Istrians and Dalmatians who fell in the national wars or were destroyed by Slav barbarism. We must revive the initiative given in 1948, but not carried out, to take an «Albo d'Oro» (golden census) of the fallen Istrians and Dalmatians, so as to document the contribution of our people to the liberation struggle since the unification of Italy.

»Furthermore, it will be necessary to proclaim «Adriatic Day» (Giornata Adriatica), i. e. a day on which the whole of Italy will once a year remember the Italian towns and lands that have been transferred by a dictate to Yugoslavia's sovereignty. The celebration of that day, which would include public manifestations, should be entrusted to a special committee. «

The Programme also emphasizes the need for the popularizing of the irredentist problems because constant pressure will thus be exerted on the governing circles and the public which cannot be allowed to become indifferent. The Government would in that way be under «indirect influence» and forced to enable the Istrians and Dalmatians to avail themselves of all possible means of struggle:

»It is necessary to start a methodical publication of all announcement in the Italian press, and contribute articles to big journals and papers, to publish photographs of Julian and Dalmatian lands and distribute leaflets when desired. «

The Programme gives the following advice for cooperation with the organizations and institutions striving for the same aims:

»Useful and necessary in that action would be complete accord with the «Movimento Istriano Revisionista» (Istrian Revisionist Movement) and with the newly created «Lega del Popolo Istriano» whose aim is to strengthen the ties between the home and the unredeemed lands. The bearers of the action must be our two papers «La Difesa Adriatica» and «Arena di Pola» whose distribution ought be supervised and encouraged by all central and local leaders «.

All that was recommended by the Programme is, in the main lines, being carried out, since the Italian Government supplies adequate funds.

The general secretary of the ANVGD, Dr. Mario de Vidovich, published a statement in «La Difesa Adriatica» (July 14, 1952, № 27, Vol. VI) on some tasks of the organization:

»The association must fulfil its tasks in the patriotic field unless it wants to betray its own aims, which are not limited only to extending assistance to refugees. In my opinion the association's programme should include:

»1. A large «exhibition of the Julian problem» in all its aspects. This exhibition could be organized in conjunction with the institution «Opera Assistenza Profughi Giuliana e Dalmati», so as to get financial aid from the Presidency of the Government and the Ministry of Education.

»2. A formal celebration of «Adriatic Day», the proclamation of which was recommended in the programme submitted to the third congress.



The photograph represents the presidium of the third congress of the «Associazione Nazionale per la Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia» which was held in Rome on February 1—2, 1952. The table is covered by the standard of «Assicurazioni Generali» of Venice bearing the emblem of the Lion of St. Mark as the symbol of Venice. The platform is decorated with the flags of Trieste, Rijeka and Istria

»3. A press conference on current problems, which at the same time would be an introduction to similar conferences on the days of various national and patriotic manifestations.«

Here, too, we see that the association considers it normal for the Government to finance irredentist activities.

In order to illustrate the activities and aims of the «Associazione Nazionale per la Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia», we shall give here a fragment from the report on the proceedings at one of its annual congresses.

The ANVG D held its third congress in Rome (Sala Charitas, 37 Via Due Macelli) on February 1, 2 and 3, 1953. The Italian Government, naturally, took no steps to prevent such a gathering.

The meeting was opened by lawyer Giuseppe Ziliotto, vice-president of the association.

Speaking about the political aims of the association, Ziliotto emphasized:

»I think I can say, without fear of being contradicted, that the association's directives on the political field, just as it was in the past, cannot deviate from the absolute, firm and unbreakable opposition against any yielding. The association must continue to affirm and support our rights to all our Adriatic lands which lie within the borders determined by God and history.

»We know precisely that the spirit which permeates our association is the spirit of unyielding irredentism. We shall always be the resolute and unyielding opponents and enemies of any adaptation of our claims, of any surrendering or compromises.

»Being the heirs of the pure spirit of the Risorgimento, we remind the people that ever since 1870, though the motto was artificially styled »Trento e Trieste«, Italy has been looking with the same feeling on all unliberated lands, on Gorica as on Istria, on Rijeka as on Dalmatia. That was the inspiration of the greatest men of the Risorgimento, that was the faith of our fathers, and that is our own will. «

Continuing his speech, Ziliotto spoke about Italy's position in the community of the western peoples, and concluded that the other members of that community have their firm borders, and that it is only Italy which has not:

»All, except Italy, are bounded by firm and indisputable borders. We are the poorest among them; we have been crippled and our left flank has been left unprotected. Italy has been deprived of her natural, historic protection: the full possession of the Adriatic.

»This is neither imperialism nor incorrectly understood nationalism; this is simply the conception of history, the great teacher which has unchangeable and strict rules against which the waves, no matter how big and strong, are bound to break.

»Demanding, as we do, the return of Italy to our Dalmatian lands we are not depriving other people of their legitimate possessions; we are only asking for the return of what has always been ours « (La Difesa Adriatica, February 9, 1953. № 6, Vol. VI).

At the third congress of the ANVGD Ellio Bracco was elected as new president of the association.

The speech he delivered while taking the president's position, is characteristic, and we shall give here some passages from it:

»We do not ask for something that belongs to others; we only want to return to our home. For it is really our home, our rocks, our dead that we had to leave behind, and which are now waiting for our return.

»And we are not alone. There are six hundred thousand fallen soldiers that bear witness to our rights; there are those who fell in World War II and those that were thrown into ditches by the barbaric hordes; they were our brothers, best and pure.

»... Those who fought from 1915 to 1945 are also with us and for us, my friends. They are our force. With us, too, are the youths from schools and universities, the institutions which are our nurseries for the future. «

Bracco concluded his speech with this poetic appeal:

»Go to your towns and tell the people that our programme is simple: Return! When? Return! How? Return! (La Difesa Adriatica, Feb. 9, 1953, № 6, Vol. I. VI).

On February 10, 1952, the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Peace Treaty with Italy, the president of the ANVGD, Ellio Bracco, issued a proclamation which begins:

»Five years ago, on February 10, 1947, the Treaty of Peace was signed, a treaty which is one of the most tragic and dishonest documents in Italy's history; a treaty that sealed the sad fate of the Istrians and Dalmatians. The last five years were the years of

concentration camps and daily struggles; the years of the dark drama of those who are forced to live under the yoke of the Slavs and the communists.

»The new irredentists cannot forget and forgive. They shudder at the thought of Zadar, Rijeka, the Quarnero islands, Eastern Istria — all forsaken as if they were the towns of slaves who can be thrown into hell, or, which is the same, into the hands of aliens, while they are really the towns and lands which conceal great treasures of Italianism, the towns and lands which should have been defended by tooth and nail. There are also the Istrian towns of Pula, Poreč, Rovinj, Pazin and so many others which the tyrannic creators of the Peace Treaty, yielding to the blackmail of the Slavs and satisfying their insatiable greed, took away from Italy against every right, against the tradition of thousand years, against national justice, against humanity.«

The proclamation ends:

»No. No one can go against the truth of history, against the reality of nature. Italianism will triumph again. Therefore we must keep our faith. We must all gather together, help each other, and await the inevitable day of resurrection. And that day will certainly come. The tribulations will once again produce justice.«

»Movimento Istriano Revisionista«

The very name of this organization (Istrian Revisionist Movement) says that its aim is the revision of the Peace Treaty with Italy, by which the new border between Italy and Yugoslavia was set up in 1947. That border line is »unjust« and the Treaty a »dictate«. Italy must recover the borders as determined by the Treaty of Rapallo of 1920. And to do that, it is necessary to wage an uncompromising struggle in Italy itself and in the world. In Italy the national spirit, which, after the defeat in 1943, came into a serious crisis, must be revived. The leadership of this organization is in the hands of real fascists who are today posing either as followers of the new fascist party or as »democrats«, »liberals« and »republicans«. And behind the organization stands the Democratic-Christians deputy in Parliament Bartole.

»The seat of the MIR (as it is usually known) is in Gorica. Both by the number of its members and local organizations it is smaller than the »Associazione Nazionale per la Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia«. Its forces are recruited mainly in the districts of Gorica and Udine.

In parts where the refugees live, the MIR organizes, in addition to political actions, also the so-called »Patronati«, which issue refugee-identification cards, give grants in aid, and find employment for them. There is also a special office, the »Ufficio beni abbandonati MIR« through which the refugees regulate recompensation for the property they left in the Yugoslav territory. Some industrialist within the ranks of the refugees are grouped in the society »Unione industriale MIR«.

Whenever demonstrations and protests connected with Trieste are organized, the MIR members come with the Istrian flags. The »Movimento Istriano Revisionista« issues proclamations, sends protest telegrams and petitions and organizes various assemblies and meetings in Gorica, near the »unjust« border. It publishes periodical irredentist studies and pamphlets, organizes various cultural drives with Istrian emphasis, such as, for

STAMPE



St. Mark the Evangelist, the symbol of Venice, mistress of the Adriatic, also appears in this emblem of the «National Association for the Julian March and Dalmatia». At the feet of St. Mark we find the emblems of Trieste, Istria, Dalmatia and Rijeka: a halberd, a goat, three leopard heads, and an eagle

instance, competitions for irredentist songs in the Istrian dialect. This organization also stages irredentist exhibitions.

The «Movimento Istriano Revisionista» publishes its own weekly paper «Arena di Pola».

«Associazione Nazionale Dalmata»

This organization (the Dalmatian National Association) primarily comprises Italians born in Dalmatia or of Dalmatian origin, as well as Italian «friends» of Dalmatia. Under Austria-Hungary, there were only several tens of thousands of Italians in the whole of Dalmatia, and during Yugoslavia, in the period between the two wars, their number declined still further. Consequently, there cannot be many such Italians or such members of the organization in Italy today either. However, considerable importance is being attributed to this organization, and it frequently appears on the political scene when it is necessary to «affirm the Italian character» of Dalmatia. It is to a certain extent considered as the organization of the «élite» and «intelligentsia».

At the general assembly of this organization which was held in Rome on October 22, 1950, Senator Antonio Tacconi, an old irredentist hailing from Split who played a prominent part in Dalmatia during the fascist occupation in the 1941–1943 period, was elected chairman. The other committee members are solicitor Stefano Selem, secretary, Dr. Mario Uroda, treasurer, as well as Dr. Maurizio Mandel and Dr. Silvio Krekich. The supervisory committee consists of engineer Bussich and attorney Ziliotto.

Immediately after the war, so-called «Comitati Dalmatici» (Dalmatian Committees) were established in Rome and some other Italian cities, which were merged in 1947 into the «Associazione Nazionale Dalmata». A proclamation was issued on this occasion which also contained the following passage:

«The «Comitati Dalmatici» whose initial function was the protection of our moral and material interests, and which at the same time fulfilled their most urgent duties of helping the needy with sincere devotion, have no longer reason to exist. Although they are extremely deserving, due to their political actions and the social assistance they provided, the committees have neither the necessary structure nor strength to assume their social and organizational functions on a broader political scale. For this reason, and with the purpose of enabling sincere collaboration with all allied organizations in other Italian territories which have been sacrificed, we have decided to establish an organization which we long since had in mind, i. e. the «Associazione Nazionale Dalmata».

»To all Italians, regardless of their political affiliation, our association will represent unity, accord, fiery patriotism and mute suffering, as well as the love of the Dalmatians who are ready to champion and persistently uphold the glorious Italian traditions of Dalmatia, unfortunately sacrificed, as well as the consecrated and inalienable rights of Italy on the Adriatic...

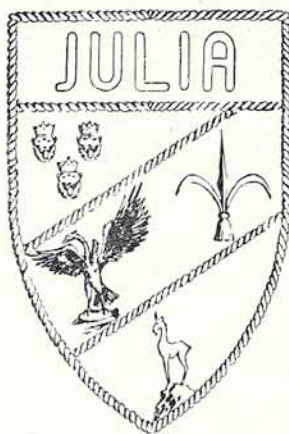
»For all these reasons our »association« must develop, live and prosper and thus overcome all obstacles which might arise on our path with a rapidity worthy of our traditions...

»It is necessary to create »nuclei«, »delegations« and »sections« everywhere. Our women should rally in »women sections«, and youth and students should form »youth groups«. The association will develop an intensive cultural, artistic and sporting activity. It will also endeavour to begin the publication of the review »Rivista Dalmatica« as soon as possible, which will recall what Dalmatia was and still is for Italian history and interests. The association further intends to participate in all manifestations of national life with zeal and interest, flying the blue Dalmatian flag with three leopard heads, and striving to make the fiery and nostalgic Dalmatian songs echo as frequently as possible throughout Italy...

Long live Italian Dalmatia!

The above mentioned review »Rivista Dalmatica« began appearing in 1953.

This irredentist organization is maintained with the support of the fund for irredentism of the Italian Government. Its chief leader, Senator Antonio Tacconi maintains close contacts with the Christian Democrat Party particularly with Alcide De Gasperi and Guido Gonella. Senator Tacconi is also a favoured visitor of the President of the Republic Luigi Einaudi.



Nowadays the irredentists make ample use of the flags of Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia and the emblems of these territories or individual towns. There is, for instance, a sport club called »Julia« in Venice. The emblem of this club consists of the emblems of Dalmatia, Istria, Trieste and Rijeka

»Comitato Liberazione Nazionale dell'Istria«

The seat of this organization is in Trieste, but as all other annexationist parties and organizations, the »Committee of the National Liberation of Istria« is under the control and on the budget of the Italian Government. The committee was founded in the second half of 1945, after the withdrawal of the Yugoslav Army from Trieste. It was founded on the initiative and with the assistance of the Italian Government. Originally the headquarters of the committee were located in Via San Lazzaro 2, moving subsequently to Via Zudecche 1, while it is at present located in Via Santa Caterina 1. Initially Savio Fonda was the most important personage in the committee. The present chairman is Dr. Rinaldo Fragiaco, while Ruggiero Rovatti and Giani Giuricin are secretaries.

The name of the committee speaks eloquently enough of its ultimate ends, i.e. the »liberation« of Istria. By Istria the committee means Zone »B« of the Free Territory of Trieste as well as other territories within Yugoslav frontiers including Rijeka. With such objec-

tives in mind this organization operates in several directions, being actively engaged in terrorism, espionage and propaganda.

The »Comitato Liberazione Nazionale dell'Istria« is primarily a tool of the Italian Government particularly regarding its diplomatic actions directed towards the arrogation of Zone »B«. The committee often sends proclamations, memorandums and telegrams containing Italian claims to Istria to the Government in Rome, needless to say, acting upon orders and instructions from the latter, — or sends them to the Governments of the big powers or the UN Organization. The committee frequently sends its delegations to Rome where they visit the Premier or Foreign Minister who hold consultations with the leaders of the committee when important matters are at stake, all this being registered with the necessary publicity in the daily press.

In Trieste itself, the chairman of the committee Fragiaco and the secretaries are responsible to the federation of annexationist parties and organizations, the so-called »Giunta d'Intesa« (or »Giunta dei Partiti«).

Since its creation until the Autumn of 1946, i.e. for slightly more than a year, this committee (CLN) received subsidies amounting to 250 million liras from the Italian Government. The CLN is still being allotted an ever increasing number of subsidies.

Several trials held before the courts of Zone »B« under Yugoslav military administration have revealed the attempts of the »Comitato Liberazione Nazionale dell'Istria« to organize its illegal cells in this area, having invested large sums for this purpose. The intelligence service of the CLN is under the direction of attorney Pietro Ponis, who is an official of this committee and a councillor of the »Missione Italiana« in Trieste, which subsequently assumed the role of Italian Government representative at the Allied Military Administration of Zone »A«. Ponis is also connected with the Italian Military Intelligence service »SIM«. The espionage network of the CLN has the task of collecting military, political and economic information in Zone »B« and Istria. Apart from this, an illegal organization on Yugoslav territory is to carry out economic sabotage, incite and develop active and passive resistance of the Italians against the present order and the people's state authority. The CLN devotes particular attention to the school system in Zone »B«, and, as revealed in court, organized and bribed Italian teachers and professors in order to recruit them for espionage and sabotage in Zone »B«. These activities were carried out by the »Comitato Liberazione Nazionale« but with the cognizance and under the direction of the »Ente Italiano Studi Esteri« (Italian Institution for Foreign Studies), whose headquarters are located in Trieste, although it is an Italian Government institution and belongs within the competence of the Ministry of Education in Rome.

The organization of the »Comitato Liberazione Nazionale dell'Istria« is directed on behalf of the Roman Government by Dr. Giubelli who is also a high official in the Government »Ufficio Zone Confini« (Bureau for Border Zones) of the Cabinet. Dr. Giubelli makes frequent trips to Trieste for this purpose.

For some time the »Comitato Liberazione Nazionale« published its own newspaper »Il Giornale dell'Istria«, but now uses the daily »Giornale di Trieste« as its mouthpiece.

»Consulta Intercomunale del CLN di Assistenza ed Informazione«

The name of this organization indicates clearly enough that the latter represents some kind of association of communes. There are refugees from Istria in Trieste who consider themselves to be the real representatives of the communes on Yugoslav territory, and

have therefore established this organization in Trieste to which each »Istrian commune« in emigration sends 25 representatives. These representatives are elected at special assemblies of emigrants from the individual communes.

This organization mainly serves propagandist purposes in the foreign political sphere, while its primary aim in the internal field is the instigation of Italian aspirations towards Yugoslavia.

The »Consulta Comunale« is an organ of the »Comitato Liberazione Nazionale dell'Istria« on whose initiative it was created.

»Lega Nazionale«

The »Lega Nazionale« whose seat is in Trieste and which has numerous agencies throughout Italy is also an important factor of irredentism. This organization was founded in 1891 and has a rich tradition. During the time of Austrian rule its primary aim was to open schools in villages where there were no Italians, and thus italianize the Slovene children. The organization financed such schools, and devoted particular care to the opening of kindergartens with the purpose of teaching the children Italian before they reached school age. The Austrian government favoured these activities. To the Yugoslav peoples in these areas the »Lega« left bitter memories.

At present these activities are limited to the Free Territory of Trieste and those parts of Italy where there are Slovenes to be italianized. However, the organization is not satisfied merely with this, and therefore reaches out again towards Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia.

University professor Marino de Szombathely previously a most prominent fascist, now Christian Democrat, a man enjoying the confidence of the Italian Government, headed this organization since the war until some time ago. The title of »Knight of the Italian Crown« was bestowed on him in 1937 for fascist merits. He was a fascist from the beginning, i.e. since 1922 and this was also formally recognized. He held high fascist posts. The other leadership of the »Lega« has similar qualifications. Its present chairman is Carlo de Dolcetti.

The »Statute of the Lega Nazionale« decrees:

»Art. 1. An association called »Lega Nazionale« has been founded in Trieste.

Art. 2. The aim of the association is to promote the knowledge, study and defence of the language, traditions and Italian civilization of the Julian March. In this purpose the association will primarily develop cultural, educational and sponsoring activities, independently of whatever party or party organization.

Art. 3. Trieste is the centre of the »Lega Nazionale«. Sections and groups can be formed in Julian Venice and other parts of Italy under the aegis of the central office. Delegations can be established abroad. The Lega Nazionale can also form special associate organizations with the purpose of achieving social objectives.«

Publishing this new statute in 1951, the chairman of the »Lega Nazionale«, Carlo de Dolcetti, stated in the preamble:

»With the liberation of the Trentino and the Julian March, Zadar and Rijeka in 1928, it seemed that the need for the »Lega« had ceased, so that its activities were actually assumed by institutions of the Italian administration. However, after World War II, with its disastrous consequences for Italy, and after the conclusion of the equally disastrous

Peace Treaty for us Triestines, Julian, Dalmatians and citizens of Rijeka, the »Lega Nazionale« has again become an indispensable shield against the insatiable aspirations of the enemy.»

In 1951, the »Lega Nazionale« published a booklet entitled »La Lega Nazionale di Trieste: Cenni Storici« (The Lega Nazionale in Trieste: A Historical Survey). This is in fact a historical survey of this association since 1891. As to the present activities of the association, we find the following passage on page 30:

»When the Peace Treaty came in power on September 15, 1947 thus sealing the fate and mutilation of so many Italian territories, the »Lega Nazionale« sent a proclamation to her brothers in Italy in which it was also said: The hope which sustained us on the bitter and thorny path of our history will not desert us even now. The free spirit of the Risorgimento animates our hearts, our boundless faith in the Italian star lights our way, although it is bold and daring. We have received the message from Vittorio Orlando: Hold out, hold out, hold out! Here, brother Italians is our order: Hold out! This obligation which we have assumed voluntarily, in the past as today, will be honoured by the strength of an unwavering faith, and the determination of the soldiers on the front line. Truly, Trieste is the front battle trench on the eastern gates of the Fatherland: in Trieste we defend the past and the future together with the valuable achievements of heroism and civilization... The eyes of Istria, so near yet so far are fixed on Trieste. Istria breathes with Trieste and therefrom derives her courage and confidence in the future.«

Needless to say, neither the »Lega Nazionale« limits its aspirations to Trieste and Istria only, but stresses its claims to the entire Dalmatia on all its public manifestations both in Trieste and Italy.

The »Lega Nazionale« can operate only because it receives immense subsidies totalling many millions of liras from the Italian Government. This is no secret. This is spoken of at its public meetings and in the press.

The purposes for which the »Lega Nazionale« spends the money received from the government in Rome, were established at a trial held in Venice before the District Court in April 1950, and before the Court of Appeal in 1951. The former administrator of the »Lega«, Gino Monaco was accused of alleged embezzlement. It transpired at this juncture that the Italian Government had on one occasion allocated the sum of 35 million liras to the »Lega« and that out of this amount, 7,298,000 liras were spent for terrorist actions and espionage in Istria and Yugoslavia. It was also established at this trial that the irredentist »Comitato Liberazione Nazionale dell'Istria« of Trieste also participates in this kind of activity on Yugoslav territory. The administrator Monaco disposed of the funds allotted for these activities according to directions and instructions received from high ranking officials in Rome, such as Senator Lucifero, the Chief of the General Staff Marras, Colonel Del Bin, ex Marshal of Italy and now Senator Messe, and the former Defence Minister Jacini. The personages mentioned in court never denied these statements.

The »Lega Nazionale«, i.e. the headquarters of the organization in Trieste, with its agency in Vicenza, organized a great irredentist show in this city in 1953, with the purpose of »proving« the Italian character of Trieste, Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia by means of documentary and illustrative material. The Italian Government provided special financial and moral support for this show through the prefecture in Vicenza. The Prefect of the Province himself, Gino Palutan, who is a prominent member of the »Lega Nazionale« was the sponsor of the exhibition, thus offering yet another public manifestation of the Italian Government attitude towards irredentism.

»Società Istriana di Archeologia e Storia Patria«

This society which was formed in Pula during Austro-Hungarian rule already in 1884, continued its work in the period between the two wars under Italian rule with headquarters in Pula, has now transferred its seat to Venice. This society comprises Italians from Istria who are engaged in the study of archeology, history, and the cultural and political history of Istria from the standpoint of Italian nationalism and irredentism. In Venice the society has continued the publication of its review *»Atti e Memorie delle Società di Archeologia e di Storia«* (Proceedings of the Society for Archeology and National History). The historian Camillo de Franceschi former chairman of the society and editor of the review was its most important personality until his death in October 1953.

In its issue of May 25, 1952 № 20, the irredentist weekly *»Difesa Adriatica«* published a report on the congress of this society which was held in Palazzo Camerlenghi near the Rialto in Venice on May 11, 1952. It is stated in the pathetic introduction of this arti-



The title page of the booklet containing the report submitted by the secretary of the *»Associazione Nazionale per la Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia«* at the third congress held in Rome on February 1—3, 1952. The title page is dominated by the statue of *»mutilated victory«*, because Italy lost Trieste, Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia. The picture also represents the emblems of Trieste, Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia



This is the title page of the membership card of the irredentist organization »Associazione Nazionale per la Venezia Giulia e Dalmazia«. In the center we see the emblem of Trieste (a halberd), Istria (a goat), Dalmatia (three leopard heads) and Rijeka (an eagle)

cle that Venice »received the scholars who flocked to this congress in her motherly embrace«. At this congress Camillo de Franceschi gave an extensive historical survey of the society since 1884 to the present, and stressed that from the beginning the purpose of the society was to »collect and publish all that concerns the ancient and modern history of Istria, so that it can serve as a document for national claims«.

The »Difesa« writes: »The society is now the only living expression of the old Italian culture in Istria, and must therefore raise its voice to refute the lies regarding our regions which are now being launched and written on so many sides. A small book by de Franceschi in confutation of the lies of Josip Smolaka has been published, while the anthology »Venezia Giulia Terra d'Italia« containing the works of various scholars on the history, ethnical configuration and geography of the Julian March was published in 1946. In 1948, after a six year interval de Franceschi succeeded in resuming the publication of the second series of the review »Atti e Memorie«. The society which lost so many deserving members, now again takes its stand in the struggle for the defence of historical truth, and con-

sequently Italian rights... From a former four hundred, membership declined to something over a hundred. From where does so much courage, so much will to live, so much love of science and patriotic works derive? It is most probable that this courage stems from the consciousness that we are in the right, from the patriotism of these men and their invincible will that the voice of freedom and truth should never be quelled.»

Writing of the aforementioned congress, the »Difesa« speaks of the role of science in the irredentist movement in the following terms:

»We should call attention to the fact that today's consciousness is formed and nourished by that of the past. More than other people, the historian is inspired by this consciousness of the past, so that there can be no doubts as to our rights in this field of studies, as these rights are cemented by age-old ties with Italy, and are sealed today by the exile of a whole people. Therefore the historian becomes the truest patriot, and history teaches us which is the best way to achieve our present goals. The flourishing of historical studies in the second half of the 19th Century, led to the glorious epopee of the war of national liberation (1915—1918) while today a revival of these studies which will animate Italians in all parts of our country with faith and patriotism, is much to be desired. The new volumes of »Atti e Memorie« should not be lacking in any Italian home. Particularly the younger generation should approach the »Istrian Society for Archeology and National History« with the purpose of learning, as this society is the most loyal guardian of memories and the greatest authority on that part of Italy known as the Julian March... Let not the Istrian problems and studies be neglected even in the sad days of exile, and let them be the convincing argument against the barbarian and uneducated enemy...«

This passage contains an unequivocal allusion to the fact that such »historical« studies accelerated the Italian intervention in World War I, and that, with similar prospects, they must be renewed and strengthened. The »Difesa« writes in this connection:

»As those who have really given the greatest contribution in blood during the war and the national struggle in our territories, students should also be the first to arm spiritually with the mighty weapon of knowledge for future struggles.«

Consequently the purpose of the »Società Istriana di Archeologia e Storia Patria« is to prepare »scientifically« the new war for the »liberation« of Istria.

The idea and objectives of the »Società Istriana di Archeologia e Storia Patria« can also be seen from the first issue of »Atti e Memorie« (Volume I, of the New Series, Venice 1949), i.e. from the foreword entitled »Ripresa« (Revival) in which it was said:

»After an eight year interval caused by the unfortunate events of war, which led to the ruin and dispersal of the old Italic population of Istria, our review recommences publication today with the wish that even from its forcible exile the voice of our beloved little native country should be heard also in the field of learning... With this issue we open the new series of »Atti e Memorie« with the purpose of preserving the consciousness, — not only of the exiled and wandering Italians, but of all other compatriots who share our sorrow for reasons of national solidarity, (that Trieste and Istria belong by natural right to our Mother Country). We will broaden our programme of studies, thus striving to cover all that can serve to illustrate and lead to better knowledge of the Julian provinces, giving a greater variety of literary and scientific contributions to this review, the first attempt in this respect being this issue, while thanking our new and old contributors who have willingly responded to our appeal.«

The present programme of the extreme irredentists is not limited to Istria only, but also includes Rijeka and Dalmatia. The »Società Istriana« likewise does not limit its aspi-

rations to Istria, as it is stated in the same foreword that the review » will also welcome works regarding Rijeka, the Kvarner Province, as well as Zadar and Dalmatia ». The foreword is concluded with the »hope and faith in supreme Justice which will amend the consequences of the unjust Peace Treaty «.

At the congress of May 11, 1953, Camillo de Franceschi was again elected chairman, Attilio de Grassi, the archeologist, and Marino de Szombathely the Latinist, were elected vice chairmen, Jacopo Cella secretary, Achile Gorlato treasurer, while Bruno Tamaro Torlati, Bacio Ziliotto and Cesare Pagnini are members of the committee.

This society appears with an alleged scientific programme, but the essence of its activity is to distort history by a false historical method, and present facts as best suits the Italian irredentists, or to be more precise, Italian imperialist plans and objectives.

«Associazione Istriana di Studi e Storia Patria»

This association (abbreviated AISSP) maintains its headquarters in Trieste since 1949. It is similar to the previously mentioned »Società Istriana di Archeologia e Storia Patria«, but it is obvious that the activities of this organization are focused primarily towards the popularization of the achievements of irredentist »learning«. In 1952 Cesare Brumati was chairman of this organization, and Bruno Majer secretary.

The chief activity of the association consists in the publication of a review entitled »*Pagine Istriane*«, which has now entered upon its fourth year. Melchior Corelli is editor in chief of this review. (»*Pagine Istriane*« was initially published in Pula from 1903 to 1914, resumed from 1922—1923 in Trieste, and is currently being published in Trieste).

This association also includes the »Sottocomitato per la celebrazione degli Istriani illustri« (Subcommittee for the honouring of famous Istrians), i.e. a committee whose task is to commemorate prominent Italians from Istria by publications and other means. This committee also publishes fiction written by Italians from Istria, arranges shows of Italian painters from Istria, organizes concerts etc.

The AISSP and the above mentioned subcommittee enjoy the moral and material support of the Christian Democrat Administration of the Trieste municipality, and this fact is also publicly stressed in »*Pagine Istriane*«. The Mayor of Trieste Gianni Bartoli wrote a preface for the »*Pagine Istriane*« in November 1950 (N° 4, Year III) where he dealt with the objectives of the association and review, stressing the fact that the municipal administration considered it to be its sacred duty to support this activity. Bartoli writes:

»Commemorating the great men of Istria in the course of her thousand year history we are opening a treasure chest of immeasurable value containing one soul, one idea, one language, one tradition all worthy of comparison with the most famous regions of Italy, to a world which knows little or nothing of the Istrian people. We are unveiling our treasure, i.e. the microcosm of Istria, Istrian facts, studies and art, to a world which measures each gesture by the false standards of convention and compromise, but now the world will at last have to recognize the fact that the sublimity of the proud life, vast knowledge, and Italic faith have made this country (Istria) the truest and most loyal Italian province. «

Bartoli concludes with the deep conviction that »the day will soon come when Italy will return to those areas where it was always present, where people and inanimate objects, souls and the very stones breathe its sublime name «.



«Terre perdute» (Lost Territories) are one of the irredentist publications which appear in present-day Italy. It was published as a special supplement of the paper «Asso di bastoni» in Rome, in February 1952. On the last page we find the following note: «Licence № 2319 of the Tribunal of Rome.»

This means that the Roman law court permitted the publication and diffusion of this mouthpiece of extreme irredentism which illustrated its front page with the flags of Istria, Dalmatia, Rhodes, and Rijeka, while devoting a large part of its contents to the aspirations of Italy to the French territories of Brige and Tenda

«Deputazione di Storia Patria delle tre Venezie»

This historical society deals exclusively with the history of the three Venices, one of which is «Julian Venice» or Julian March, meaning Istria with Trieste and Rijeka. The chief purpose of this society is to «prove» on the basis of history that these regions belong to Italy.

The guiding ideas of this society could best be seen at its general annual conference held in Trento on May 25, 1952, as reported by the «Difesa Adriatica». At this conference the historians unanimously adopted the resolution proposed by Senator Dudan and professor De Benvenuti, two prominent Dalmatian irredentist writers. The resolution reads as follows:

«At its annual session «La Deputazione di Storia Patria delle Tre Venezie» again stresses the undeniable historical and national rights of Italy to all countries and cities Roman, Venetian, and Italian, on the eastern coast of the Adriatic, contrary to all the recent improvised pretensions of the barbarian dictatorial imperialisms.»

This conference was presided by Member of Parliament Cessi.

«Associazione Nazionale Artistico Culturale Giuliano Dalmata»

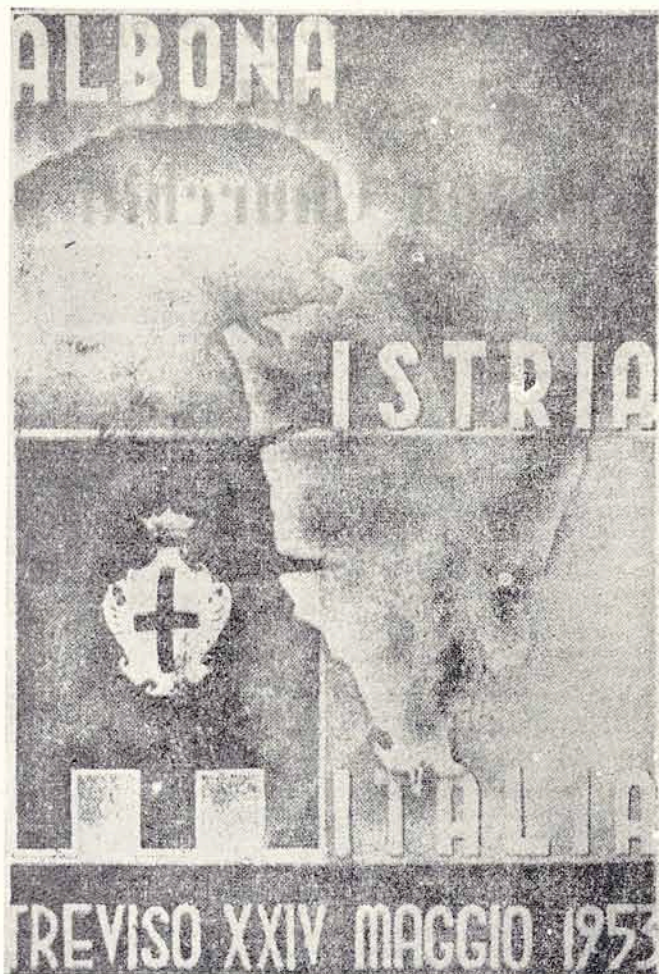
This organization was established on March 16, 1952 in Rome. The «Difesa Adriatica» published an extensive report on the ceremony which marked the founding of this society in its issue of April 5, 1952 (N° 14, Year IV). This society numbers numerous composers, singers, conductors, poets, painters and sculptors among its members. The purpose of this organization is to promote the irredentist ideas in the cultural sphere.

It can be seen from the irredentist press that this society often organizes musical and other performances, where most of the programme consists of irredentist events.

«Dante Alighieri»

«Dante Alighieri» occupies a notable position among the Italian organizations engaged in the propagation of irredentism. This is an old organization whose programme stipulates the promotion of Italianism in the world through cultural means, and devotes particular attention to Italians living abroad who should be protected from denationalization. During Austro-Hungarian rule this organization was greatly concerned for the Italians living in that country, while transferring its solicitude to the Italians living in Yugoslavia, i.e. those few Italians in Dalmatia in the period between the two wars. Today this organization demands the «liberation» of Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia.

Until his death in 1952, Vittorio E. Orlando, the Italian Prime Minister during World War I and the immediate post war period which marked the conclusion of the Peace Treaty, presided this organization. Apart from this, in view of his well known ideas on Italian expansion to the East, Orlando was considered the chief exponent of Italian claims towards Yugoslavia. Since his death, the organization is headed by its former vice president Senator Bergamini. This organization maintains numerous agencies in various cities including Trieste.



An irredentist manifestation dedicated to the Istrian townlet of Labin (Albona) which is located in Istria on Yugoslav territory, was held in the Italian town of Treviso. The papers published reproductions of the decorative panneau (panel) in the hall where the manifestation was held. The panneau consists of a large picture of the Istrian peninsula with the inscription »Albona—Istria—Italia«

On the occasion of the national congress of the »Dante Alighieri« organization which was held in Pescara in September 1953, the Trieste committee of the organization sent a »message« to the congress which was published in the September 4, 1953 issue of »Messaggero Veneto« and which also contains the following passage:

»The Trieste committee sends its greetings to the congress of »Dante Alighieri« which is being held in Pescara, the birth place of the soldier-poet, the poet of »Amarissimo«

(this is how D'Annunzio called the Adriatic near Rijeka) whom Rijeka acclaimed as its liberator, and reminds all Italians and the world in general, that apart from Zone »B« and the Free Territory of Trieste, (which is not free in spite of the false allegations to the contrary) the most Italian cities of Zadar, Rijeka, Pula, Rovinj, Poreč, Pazin, both islands of Lošinj and all Italian towns on the coast and interior of Istria languish under the despised tyranny.»

Several speeches in the same vein were held at the congress of Pescara. The congress was invested with a markedly irredentist and anti-Yugoslav character.

The activities of the »Dante Alighieri« society are frequently reported by the irredentist organ »Difesa Adriatica« and other papers, thus revealing that irredentist speeches devoted to Dalmatia are often held in Rome and other cities where this organization operates. This society often organizes competitions for poems and studies of irredentist content. It also provides scholarships for the education and schooling of Istrians, Dalmatians, and natives of Rijeka, with the purpose of insuring a sufficient number of intellectuals who will champion irredentism.

The Italian Government finances this organization because of its irredentist programme. The Minister of Education, Segni, sent a congratulatory telegram to the congress of Pescara, while the government was represented by the Under Secretary of that same Ministry, Di Rocco.

»Compagnia Volontari Giuliani e Dalmati«

This organization with a militarist and irredentist programme and objectives was established after World War I by those Istrians, Dalmatians and natives of Rijeka who volunteered in the Italian Army against Austria during the war. In the period between the two wars the organization was engaged in propaganda activities for the »liberation« of Dalmatia, while its present activities are expanded to Istria and Rijeka who are no longer »free«. The organization has its headquarters in Trieste and Gorica.

In February 1953, at the special session of its leadership, the organization adopted the following resolution:

»On behalf of two thousand and more Julian volunteers in the Italian armed forces during World War I, for the liberation of the Julian March, Rijeka and Dalmatia;

On behalf of over three hundred of our brothers who were killed in action;

We warn the national Government of the necessity of solemnly and publicly claiming the entire 1940 frontier for Italy and the Atlantic defence system;

We appeal to the Government to refrain from making any further concessions or actions which might deteriorate the position of the Istrians.»

The »Difesa Adriatica« which published this resolution in its issue of February 7, 1953 № 5 Year VII, declares:

»Only in this way, (i. e. by the restitution of the 1940 frontiers to Italy) will the »Porta Orientale d'Italia« (Italy's Eastern Gates), which is at the same time one of the most important approaches to the west, be insured. These gates are unfortunately open now, and only the Italians are called upon to keep them closed...«

This organization publishes its organ entitled »La Porta Orientale« (The Eastern Gates) since several years. This review is written in the spirit of the foregoing resolution, and in accordance with irredentist and militaristic traditions.

D'Annunzian Organizations

The Italian poet Gabriele D'Annunzio owes his place in history also to the Rijeka adventure. At the time of the negotiations on the delimitation between Italy and Yugoslavia he invaded Rijeka at the head of an illegal military formation in order to prejudice the handing over of Rijeka to Italy. The starting point of his march on Rijeka was the small town of Ronchi, so that this adventure is generally known as the «Marcia di Ronchi».

Today the irredentists glorify D'Annunzio and are intoxicated by the idea of renewing his undertaking, particularly as regards Trieste, but also where other territories are concerned. Organizations under the name of «Gruppi D'Annunziani», whose programme includes the «liberation» of Trieste, Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia are being formed in Italy.

It was in this spirit that the «Leggione del Vittoriale» was formed in 1952, on the 32nd anniversary of the «Marcia di Ronchi». Vittoriale is the name of the palatial villa in Gardone on the Lake of Garda where D'Annunzio lived until his death and where he was buried.

The newspaper «Arena di Pola» in its issue of September 24, 1952, writes under the title «Vittoriale Legion Formed» that many «legionnaires from Rijeka and Dalmatia» who were formerly under D'Annunzio's command in Rijeka, gathered in Gardone on September 14, 1952. They decided to establish a military formation of the same shock type as that in 1919.

«Arena di Pola» writes:

«The «Leggione del Vittoriale» rallied at Vittoriale, the ideal point of assembly, while the Legion itself is an ideal synthesis of the former D'Annunzian legions».

This new militarist organization has its own «temporary directorate» which consists of Umberto Donati of Venice, Mario Colombini of Brescia, Umberto Goscarelli and Pietro Tomincic of Milan, Giorgio Conighi, solicitor Battista Adami of Trento, and Ada Anesi-Conci. The «Arena» further declares:

«The final organization of the Vittoriale Legion, which will also include the families of deceased or killed legionnaires, apart from living ex-legionnaires, will be confirmed at the Vittoriale on January 26, 1952, on the anniversary of the Rijeka Christmas (the Rijeka massacre in 1920, author's note) while the Regent of the Legion for 1953 will also be elected on this occasion».

This post was entrusted to Battista Adami. The organization has an «ideal» programme. Its most important feature is the worship of D'Annunzio and his heroism, and it is in this aim that the Legion will endeavour to convert the Vittoriale into the greatest Italian national shrine, thus fulfilling the wish of the late soldier poet, while transforming his grave in the Vittoriale Park into a Mecca of all Italian nationalists. The programme also stated that all those who lost their lives in the fight for Rijeka will also be commemorated.

The «Arena» continues with a description of the flag and emblem of the Legion which represent the aspirations towards Rijeka and the Yugoslav territories, and states:

«The flag of the Legion will unite the colours of the Prince of Snežnik (D'Annunzio's title) with the emblems of the Italian Kvarner Regency.»

All this took place not only in public, but also with the support and in the presence of responsible organs of the Italian Government. In the first place, the Vittoriale is today

a property of the state, maintained by government funds, while its »Sovrintendente« (Superintendent) who is a government employee, set the palace at the disposal of this provocative gathering of adventurers.

In its issue of September 27, 1952 the »Difesa Adriatica« writes that »this assembly was attended by the military and civil authorities«.

In its issue of September 20, 1952 the »Difesa« describes the solemn mass which was held for »those who gave their lives for Rijeka and Dalmatia in the past and present«.



Ricordando il diktat è doveroso ricordare anche lo slancio generoso della gioventù italiana, che protestò sempre contro la grande ingiustizia. Qui studenti romani manifestano nel nome di Zara martire.

The demonstrations which are so often organized in Italy in connection with the Trieste issue invariably develop into demonstrations for Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia. Photographs appear in the Italian press which testify to the above. The one above was published in the »Difesa Adriatica« of February 14, 1953 with the following caption: »When recalling the dictate it is also our duty to remember the élan of the Italian youth who always protested against this monstrous injustice. Here the Roman students hold manifestations for the martyr town of Zadar«

»In the church which was decorated by the flags of Rijeka and Dalmatia, one immediately noticed also the flag of the Lega Nazionale of Trieste. Laurel wreaths were laid on the grave of the Commander (D'Annunzio) bearing the flags of our non-liberated cities.«

All these events took place in an institution of government character which is financed by the state, and in the presence of military and civilian dignitaries.

The »Arena di Pola« publishes the telegrams and resolutions which the »legionnaires« sent to the President of the Republic, the mayors of Trieste and Gorica, after the inauguration of the new organization, and which were read and received with warm applause by the high civil and military authorities.

In its telegram to the President of the Republic Einaudi, the «Legion» proclaims its creation «within these sacred walls where love for our persecuted brothers in Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia is cherished, within the walls dedicated to the «Adriatic Cause» which culminated in the bold undertaking of Gabriele D'Annunzio, and in which the legionnaires still fervently believe.»

The President of the Republic is also urged in this telegram to «inspire the activities of the Government in the sense of unwavering persistence in the claiming of the entire territory of Trieste and Istria».

Another telegram was sent to the mayor of Trieste Bartoli, with the purpose of inciting his resistance to the «barbarism of the Balkan Babylon». D'Annunzio's spirit is with Bartoli today, while the newly formed legion promises the Triestines (irredentists) that it is always with them both now and in the future, and that it is ready to repeat the gesture made by D'Annunzio 33 years ago, when he marched on Rijeka with his «arditi from Ronchi». The telegram ends with the slogan:

«The fatherland of the Venetians is the entire Adriatic. Usque ad ultra.»

The telegram to the mayor of Gorica speaks of an «unjust frontier» which Gorica allegedly bears with great difficulty, but:

«There are still dawns that have not yet broken. The firm faith of the Sacred Gorica will accelerate the advent of such a dawn».

«Gruppi D'Annunziani»

An organization which is guided and inspired by the ideas and work of Gabriele D'Annunzio operated under this name in Rome and some other Italian cities. In its issue of February 23, 1952, the «Difesa Adriatica» publishes the proclamation of the Roman organization which also sets forth its programme. The proclamation reads as follows:

«The «Gruppi D'Annunziani» are not a political party, but a union of Italians who wish to disseminate the following ideas and principles among the present and future generations by means of assemblies, conferences, clubs, etc.:

Acquaintance with the literary works of the Poet as well as the study of the historical and national importance of his work as writer and soldier:

The ideal substance of the undertaking of Ronchi, which according to the definition of D'Annunzio himself, was not only an action of conquest and defence of a material frontier, but the sum of those ethical and spiritual values which constitute the mainstay and essence of a Nation and People.»

The programme also declared the following:

«Mother countries do not die, they live in us. Let our fatherland revive in our souls, which will unite us all in the name of the Poet who always served only Italy».

The concrete purpose of this organization: the return to Rijeka, which D'Annunzio restituted to Italy, the return to Istria and Dalmatia.

In its issue of September 25, 1951 (N° 35, Year V) the «Difesa Adriatica» published one of the proclamations of this organization which states:

«Brothers and comrades from the Julian March, Istria, and Dalmatia! Those who are inspired by the actions of the Poet Soldier, those who are inspired by this myth, did not forget today's anniversary of the March of Ronchi and the Rijeka undertaking. Thirty

two years have elapsed since that historical year when the flower of the Italian youth followed D'Annunzio and came to you. Tragical and disastrous events have ensued since then, but now as then we are always near you, with you, for you with the same fervent passion and firm resolution. Brothers from the Julian March, Dalmatia and Rijeka, the Gruppi D'Annunziani appeal to you to close your ranks today in the commemoration of September 12, 1919, now remote but always dear and near to the hearts of all Italians. Long live Zadar! Long live Rijeka! Long live Pula! Long live Dalmatia! Long live Italy! «

The secretary general of this organization is Francesco Gori, who is also the vice-president of the organization »Arditi Romani«, a militarist organization consisting of former members of the crack formations in World War I and D'Annunzio's legionnaires. The ideal of the »Arditi« and the members of the »Gruppi D'Annunziani« is an armed surprise attack on the Yugoslav territory thus restituting the »old frontiers« to Italy.

»Fronte Nazionale «

A new organization was formed in Rome in 1946 under this name with the objective of restituting the old Italian frontiers both in the East and in Africa.

This organization held its congress in Gorica on September 2—3, 1951. The »Difesa Adriatica« gave the following report of this event in its issue of September 8, 1951 (№ 34, Year V):

»The fact that the organization chose Gorica for the site of its congress indicates the great sensibility of feeling with which this movement approaches the Adriatic problems. « The programme of the »Fronte Nazionale« whose leadership consists of Ezio Garibaldi, Fidanzio dall'Ora, Leone Zingales, Maurizio Mandel and Michele Tumminelli, is »the revindication of the Sacred Frontiers of our Fatherland and the legitimate interests of the Italians in the international sphere«. It is further stressed in the programme that the movement »will protect the nonliberated Italians in every respect«. The »Difesa« concludes on the following note: »thus we shall have a loyal ally for our future struggles in this movement«.

It is also significant that a descendant of Giuseppe Garibaldi should be at the head of this movement, and that this name should now be used for imperialist plans.

»Gruppo Irredentista Studentesco «

A student organization entitled »Gruppo Irredentista Studentesco« was established in the town of Nuoro in Sardinia on January 11, 1953. The February 7, 1953 issue of »Difesa Adriatica« gives an extensive comment of this event.

Students belonging to all political trends enrolled in this organization. The Statute of the organization decrees:

»I. Gruppo Irredentista Studentesco is founded with the aim of achieving the unity of all students who do not recognize the validity of the clauses of the Peace Treaty which mutilate our national territory.

»II. This unity which derives from our national feeling, is an act of due and just solidarity with our brothers in Trieste, Istria, Dalmatia, Brige and Tende, and at the same time expresses the revolt against the plunder committed at the expense of Italy.

»III. The Gruppo Irredentista Studentesco strives to call attention to the suffering of the population severed from its Mother Country as a consequence of the destructive madness and rage, with which Italy was punished by the victors not in a loyal war, but with the aid of her degenerate sons.«

In point IV of its programme, this student organization lays particular stress on the struggle against all treaties and arrangements which would compromise the right of Italy

Giovani

Da troppi anni il brigante slavo
occupa le nostre terre.

ORA BASTA!!

Per Trieste, per l'Istria e la
Dalmazia italiane
Scendiamo nelle piazze

I Giovani del M.S.I.

Tambone - Roma

Facsimile of a handbill diffused during the demonstrations in Rome in October 1953, which were organized in connection with the decision of the USA and Great Britain of October 8 to hand over Zone »A« of the FTT to Italy. The handbill is signed by the »Youth of the Movimento Sociale Italiano« and reads: »Young men, for many years already the Slovene bandits occupy our territories. Now it is enough! Long live the Italian territories of Trieste, Istria and Dalmatia! Let us gather in the public squares and streets!«

to the Eastern Coast of the Adriatic, and therefore strives to mobilize all Italian students and develop a broad action for »just territorial revindications« which will be a »precondition for the restoration of the dignity of our Nation«.

The inauguration of this organization was marked by posters bearing a proclamation entitled »Adunata« (Meeting), and which spoke of the »liberation« of Trieste, Istria, Rijeka and Dalmatia, but also Brige and Tenda (now within French frontiers).

The »Difesa Adriatica« published the following comment:

»Not only in Nuoro, but it is also certain that throughout Italy students will respond to this appeal.«

»Centro Culturale Francesco Patrizio«

The headquarters of this society are located in Trieste. According to its programme its purpose is the educational advancement of its members and the broad strata of the population. However its activities follow a markedly irredentist trend. The ideas of this association can be easily discerned from the statements of its chairman Dr. Sisinio Zuech.

Dr. Zuech declared that the activities of the organization are »in absolute harmony with the activities of the Italian Government«. Interpreting the term of »Venetia Giulia« he advanced the theory that it does not merely include Trieste, Zone »A«, and Zone B, but also —

»the whole vast geographic complex, ethnical and political which spreads from the Timava River to Riječina (near Rijeka), and from the peaks of Dinara to the barrier which separates Dalmatia from the Balkans.«

Dr. Zuech affirms that all irredentist organizations must wage an unrelenting struggle for the achievement and affirmation of the »absolute unity of this Italian province«. This must also be realized by the big powers on the west, because this »constitutes the test of goodwill of all democratic countries.«

Apart from the irredentist organizations of political character listed above, there are also several other smaller and less known organizations.

There is for instance an organization called »Comitato Italiano pro Bacino Adriatico« (Italian Committee for the Adriatic Basin). This organization published a book by General Giovanni Esposito entitled »Trieste e la sua Odissea« in 1952. During the German occupation of Trieste after 1943, Esposito commanded the Italian army in Trieste and collaborated with the Germans, and consequently surveys the period from the irredentist point of view in his book. He is also the most important personage in this organization.

In some Italian cities, (for instance in Verona) there exists an organization entitled »Associazione deg' i Amici della Venezia Giulia« (Society of Friends of the Julian March), with the aim of propagating the idea of »liberation« of that province.

The »Unione Nazionale Fratelli d'Italia« (National Federation of Italian Brothers) whose seat is in Rome, is also considered as an irredentist organization.

The organization »Squadra D'Azione Italia« which operated in 1945 and was subsequently dissolved, was revived in November 1953. Its seat is in Rome. Its aims are irredentist, and apart from the Yugoslav territories its programme also includes Albania. It comprises former fascists, legionnaires and arditi. Here are some slogans of this organization: »For Italy today and always! Out with all aliens!« It contemplates the achievement of its objectives by terrorism and uprisings. The organization is »illegal«.

Numerous sports organizations, such as football, rowing, and mountaineering clubs bear irredentist names.