

The war that neither I nor my Allies shrank back from in order to safeguard the dignity and independence of Serbia has reached the point at which the greatest sacrifices are required from all of us if it is to be finished quickly and with a decisive victory over the enemy. Only the defeat of Germany and Austro-Hungary may ensure a future for Serbia worthy of the heroic deeds of its people and its army accomplished in the course of this year. This defeat alone can permit it to gain access to the sea and to liberate the Slav population groaning under the yoke of the oppressor.

A victory over these two Central Empires can only be achieved if some new actors join in to strengthen the active forces of the Allies. I therefore appeal to Your Majesty, to the wisdom and spirit of self-denial of the Serbian people in the hope that Serbia will find it possible to accept to make the sacrifices considered necessary by the Allies in order to secure the cooperation of other States. This would contribute to a diminishment of the scourges of war, to bringing it to a close more quickly, and to gearing it towards a successful end vindicated by the just cause fought for by the Allies.

(Signed) Nicholas

(The same text was sent to King Peter by the British King)

CABLE OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF ITALY TO HIS MAJESTY PETER I OF SERBIA

While the Italian army is steadily advancing, crushing the horrible defences prepared by our common enemy beforehand, the moment has come for Serbia to demonstrate to the entire world that the political wisdom of the strong nations is inseparable from the political courage of which Serbia has given admirable proofs.

The indisputable experience gained over a long period of time, proven by recent events, has clearly shown that only a decisive victory over our common enemies can bring about a firm assurance of political and economic independence of Serbia as well as the dignity of Your House and Your people.

Only a defeat of our enemies would make it possible for Serbia to gain access to the sea and to

liberate its oppressed brothers groaning under the foreign yoke.

However, in order for this goal to be achieved as quickly as possible it is necessary that the existing military forces of the Allies be joined by new actors.

I am convinced that Your Majesty and the heroic Serbian people will willingly consent to make sacrifices deemed necessary by the Allies in order to ensure the cooperation of other States.

Such a cooperation will enable us to bring nearer the end of the war and to bring this horrible conflict to a happy close, peace and justice.

I appeal to the wisdom and spirit of self-denial of the Serbian people. Italy's friendly feelings towards Serbia have long been known. As Your Majesty has found out from the recently disclosed documents, political and economic independence of Serbia had been, even before our entry into the war, one of basic aims of the Italian political action in the Balkans. My Government and the Italian people look with confidence to the future close friendship with Serbia and We wish fruitful and sincere cooperation between the two nations in the field of trade, joint progress and civilisation.

CABLE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC TO HIS MAJESTY KING PETER OF SERBIA

As the first year of the war is drawing to a close I wish to extend my good wishes to Your Majesty and to the heroic Serbian people. For many long months our Allies and we ourselves have been fighting together with Serbia against the enemies of its independence but we must invest great additional efforts in order to ensure the final victory. Your Majesty may rest assured that, in all diplomatic negotiations necessitated by the events, France and its Allies will continue to have in mind the interests of Serbia. If we ask it to consent to make some sacrifices it is because they are a condition for the final success. These sacrifices will however be made up for by considerable benefits that the Allies intend ensure for Serbia, inter alia, at least the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including a sizeable access to the Adriatic Sea. Your Majesty and we ourselves wish, above all, the destruction of our enemies; that is why we must seek the means to achieve this.

(Signed): Raymond Poincaré

Source: Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belgrade; M. Skakun, Jugoslovensko-bugarski odnosi (Yugoslav-Bulgarian Relations), pp. 296-297.