

SERBIA COUNTING ON WILSON'S AID

Vesnitch Says President Cannot Let Balkan Nation be Exploited Under Secret Treaties.

PARIS, Jan. 5, (Associated Press.)— "France, England, and Russia, in their treaties with Italy and Rumania, disposed of Serbian rights," said Dr. M. R. Vesnitch, Premier of Serbia, yesterday, in an interview given to The Associated Press. "Rumania lost her bargain when she began peace negotiations with the Central Powers in 1917. Does the treaty of 1915 between Italy and France, England and Russia, regarding the eastern coast of the Adriatic still stand in international law?"

"There are two facts which would seem to negative this question. America entered the war after the signing of this treaty. She came in as the avowed enemy of secret treaties, and the Entente accepted that principle. Further, at the time of signing of this treaty, Italy wanted the territory in question as a protection against Slavish domination, backed by Russian power. But, with the political upheaval in Russia, this situation has disappeared. The time is over, it seems to me, when an imperialist policy might be favored in Europe.

"Why should not the nations of the Balkans have the same rights as the others? At the Peace Conference there will be represented four different kinds of nations: First, those who entered the war with the idea of domination; second, those who were defending themselves; third, those who entered it with high ideals, like America, and, fourth, those who entered it as a business proposition. Unhappily for Serbia, those nations surrounding her belong to the last-named class.

"I believe that Serbia will demand to know on what basis she enters the Peace Conference, and I think that in so doing she will have the assistance of America. President Wilson has announced that the United States came into the war to abolish secret treaties. If America enters the conference with such treaties to be considered, what will the people of the world think? What credit will be given in future to those speaking on behalf and in the name of, the United States?"

"Some of these treaties were made with reference to nations which were not consulted, and the Governments concluding them had no right to dispose of peoples not their own."

In the first portion of the foregoing interview, cabled Saturday night, Dr. Vesnitch declared that, if the treaty of 1915, by which Italy was to come into possession of the eastern coast of the Adriatic, should be confirmed by the Peace Conference, "Serbia would fight again, and fight to the finish." He said: "Serbia did not enter this war to become the vassal of any nation. She cannot agree to have Italy control the territory in question." He added, however, that he believed the presence at the Peace Conference of the United States, which had already declared against secret treaties and in favor of the rights of small nations, assured "fair play."