

Publication of Italian Diplomatic Documents

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At our previous meetings I and my colleague Di Nolfo spoke to you about our Commission and the criteria on which its work is based, keeping you up-to-date on the progress with its publications.

This time I should therefore merely like to make a few brief remarks about the most recent ones.

The Commission for the Publication of *Italian Diplomatic Documents*, which was established in 1946 by Alcide de Gasperi, is made up of University professors and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the Secretary-General and the Director-General for Personnel) to guarantee its functional linkage with the ministry; for its work, it draws on the services of experienced historical and archive researchers currently on the permanent staff of the Foreign Ministry General Secretariat. It is these officials who conduct research into the documentary materials, mainly from the Farnesina Historical Diplomatic Archive, but also from other archives, both public and private, and bring them to the attention of the editor of the volume they are working on, so that the final selection may be made of the documents to be published.

Our collection covers the historic period 1861-1958, and comprises 12 series, of which seven have been completed (I, II, V, VII, VIII, IX and X), three are currently being completed (III, IV and VI), while work has started on preparing the two most recent series, XI and XII, making up a total of 110 volumes published of the 147 planned.

During the course of 2004-2005, for financial reasons and because of a lack of personnel, it was only possible to complete part of the programme I had announced in Canberra : we have nevertheless managed to complete the research on volumes VIII of the third series, III of the sixth series, and XI of the eighth series, and to publish volume VII/VIII of the fourth series. Since the preparatory work on volumes I and II of the new eleventh series has been completed, we are now intending to publish at least four volumes within the next few months.

¹ Présenté par Ennio di Nolfo

Turning now to the individual volumes, the one I have brought with me is **volume VII/VIII of the fourth series** (30 March 1911-18 October 1912) edited by Professor Edoardo Del Vecchio. It contains the documentation on the Italian-Turkish war for the possession of the territories of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, and it charts the beginning of that string of upheavals in the Balkans and rivalry between the European powers that would lead to the Great War.

The forthcoming volumes are :

Volume XI of the eighth series (1 January-22 May 1939), edited by Professor Gianluca Andrè, containing the documentation on a short period but one that was crammed with critical events for the future developments in international relations. It begins with the negotiations for an Italian-German-Japanese alliance, hinging around the crucial event of that period –the break-up of Czechoslovakia- and continues through the Italian occupation of Albania, the end of the Spanish Civil War, and ends with the Italian-German alliance, known as the “Pact of Steel”.

Volume I of the eleventh series (8 May-31 December 1948), edited by Professor Ennio Di Nolfo, deals with the problem of the great decisions that had to be taken in Italian foreign policy in the first Parliament of the Republic. It addresses the delicate plan designed to set about resolving the problems of the colonies and Trieste that had been left open in the peace treaty, and the issues relating to Italian security and her participation in the process of European integration.

Volume II of the eleventh series (1 January-30 June 1949), which I have edited, contains all the negotiations conducted by Italy for membership of the North Atlantic Treaty. It also develops the question of European integration through the documentation on the Italian-French Customs Union agreement and Italy’s participation in the European Union created under the London Treaty of 5 May 1949, instituting the Council of Europe. Lastly, a great deal of space is taken up by the colonial problem which ended with the unfortunate rejection at the United Nations of the Bevin-Sforza Project.