

of French troops through their territory should end in a permanent occupation. The Senate sent conciliatory letters to Napoleon, congratulating "the most glorious of Emperors" on his victories, and to Talleyrand, "the most virtuous of Ministers." They offered to transport the French army by sea from Stagno to Ragusavecchia or Porto Rose, thus avoiding the passage through the town of Ragusa, and voted 30,000 piastres for the purpose. Unfortunately, Sankovski, the Russian Commissary, heard of the offer, and threatened that if these were the Republic's intentions he would order the occupation of Ragusavecchia, adding that the garrison would be a Montenegrin one, well knowing how the Ragusans hated and feared those lawless mountaineers. Another Russian agent came to Ragusa on board a frigate, insisted that all arrangements with the French should be cancelled, and ordered the Senate to inform the Russians as to the movements of the French troops. The Senate instructed Bassegli and Zlatarić, their agents in the French camp, to do everything to hinder Molitor's advance, by describing the strength of the Russians and the risks of the march. This they did, and Molitor was so impressed by their statements that he gave up the plan for the moment. His demand for a further loan of 300,000 francs was refused on the plea that the treasury was empty, although as a matter of fact it was not. Siniavin now proposed to attack Ragusa and occupy it, but the Senate's protestations of loyalty to the Tsar, and possibly its bribes, induced him to desist from a move which would have secured him from all fear of a French attack.¹

¹ Pisani, *passim*.