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"Gentlemen, what should we do now? Should we agree to the demands of the Germans?" President Sidonio Pais asked.

"Your Excellency, this is indeed a very difficult choice. If the choice is wrong, then Portugal will be finished." Foreign Minister Castro said.

"It would be great if the Azores were not our territory!" The Minister of Finance sighed.

Other senior officials of the Portuguese government also shook their heads and smiled wryly. This may be the helplessness of the small country. The geographical location of the Azores is very important. If it is in the hands of a big country, it will be an important base. But for a small country like Portugal to have such an important strategic location as the Azores, that would be a disaster rather than luck.

"Your Excellency, can we find a way to delay it first and wait for a while to see the situation." Castro suggested.

President Sidonio Pais couldn't help but smile, this is a good way. Of course, there is no way around this.

"Then we will start negotiations with the Germans. The price they give is to pay us 300 million marks for purchase. If it is leased, it will be 6 million marks a year for 99 years. We are in these two plans Negotiate with the Germans and stall for time!" said President Sidonio Pais.

"Yes, Your Excellency the President." The senior officials of Portugal replied. However, the sadness on everyone's faces did not dissipate. After all, even if delaying tactics are used to delay time, it cannot be delayed indefinitely. Once the patience of the Germans is worn out, the Germans will inevitably force the Kingdom of Portugal to make a choice. At that time, they have no way to delay any longer.

The next day, Portuguese Foreign Minister Castro officially started talks with German Foreign Minister Vachter.

"Your Excellency, Minister of Foreign Affairs, I don't know what your country is thinking about? For the security and peace of Europe, Portugal will sell or lease the Azores to the German Empire. This is also very beneficial to you. For the Kingdom of Portugal, the three DM 100 million is enough to improve the poor financial situation of the Kingdom of Portugal," Vachter said.

"Your Excellency, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 300 million marks is indeed a lot. However, the important strategic position of the Azores is obvious. We believe that if the Azores are to be sold, 300 million marks are far from enough." Strohm said.

Vachter was overjoyed. Although the Portuguese seemed to want to take the opportunity to increase the price, as long as they were willing to talk, it would be a good thing. It's better than the Portuguese directly refusing to talk about it.

"Your Excellency, Minister of Foreign Affairs, if you think the price of 300 million marks is not appropriate, then the price can be raised a little more. In this way, we will increase it by another 50 million marks. What do you think? The German Empire is very concerned about this." Strohm said with a smile.

Although, the German side performed very well, which made Castro somewhat at a loss as to how to proceed with the conversation. However, the original intention of the Portuguese government is not to really want to reach this deal, but to use this to delay time!

The two sides are constantly haggling on the issue of price. In the end, Wahit raised the price to 500 million marks. However, Castro still did not let go. This made Wahit a little dissatisfied. After all, the highest price given by Germany was 500 million marks. If it exceeds this price, the German side will not accept it.

Although, 500 million marks is nothing to the rich and powerful Germany. But the German government didn't want to be taken advantage of by the Portuguese.

Castro just took this opportunity and proposed to simply discuss the lease period and rent if the Azores were leased.

For a few days, Vachter discussed this with Castro. However, even if Wahit continued to make concessions, Portugal also did not agree.

Wachit is not a fool, he also realized that the Portuguese government has no sincerity at all, they are just delaying time.

The visit of the German Foreign Minister to Portugal has already aroused the attention of other countries. Especially the United States on the other side of the ocean is paying special attention to this. The US embassy in Portugal, as well as the British embassy in Portugal, have taken action to actively inquire about the intentions of the Germans.

The current Portuguese government has no sense of secrecy at all. It is like a sieve, and the Americans and British have easily obtained relevant information.

Learning that Germany actually wanted to buy or lease the Azores from Portugal shocked the United States and Britain. You know, if Germany really builds the Azores into a military base. Then, the German Navy will be able to have a strong bridgehead in the Atlantic Ocean. The power of the German navy can easily expand to the mid-Atlantic. Even, as long as the German Navy is willing, it can set off from the Azores at any time and reach the east coast of the United States within a few days. This is too great a threat to the United States and the United Kingdom.

"Gentlemen, it is clear that the Germans have not given up on oppressing us. They have begun to bully Portugal and sell or lease the Azores to them. It will not be a good thing for us if their purpose is achieved. We must try to prevent the Germans from occupying the Azores!" President Woodrow Wilson said.

"Your Excellency, judging from the reaction of the Portuguese government, they do not want to sell or lease the Azores to the Germans. However, in the face of strong pressure from Germany, they may eventually have to compromise. At that time, the Germans will be able to The Azores are legitimately occupied," Secretary of State Bryan said.

Woodrow? President Wilson nodded, this is indeed a very difficult question. Portugal is just a small European country, and Germany is already the world's hegemon. In the face of Germany's request, it may be difficult for Portugal to say no, and it dare not say no. In that case, Portugal may eventually have to compromise.

"Your Excellency, the Germans have just stated to the world that they are working for peace? So, on the issue of Portugal, I am afraid they have no intention of using force. If we can give Portugal some support, maybe we can strengthen their confidence," Admiral Daniels said.

President Wilson's eyes lit up, and he immediately asked the embassy in Portugal to take immediate action to express support to the Portuguese government on behalf of the United States.