

munes, the Lombard League, which soon made Barbarossa's military position untenable. Under Bishop Charles, Turin remained loyal to the emperor and, like the other Piedmontese cities, did not adhere to the League. In January 1168 Barbarossa retreated from Lombardy to Turin, and then decamped ignominiously across the Alps through Susa. As the emperor's fortunes declined, so did those of Bishop Charles, his ally and protégé. The bishop had never been able to count of the undivided support of Turin's citizens; a few years earlier an opposing faction had declared him deposed, and had briefly installed their own candidate on the episcopal throne. After Barbarossa's defeat, Bishop Charles's hold on Turin and his diocese rapidly weakened. Rebellions broke out against him at Chieri and elsewhere in his diocese, and he was confronted by a new threat, from the count of Savoy. Humbert III, who for a long time had avoided committing himself to the emperor, had aided him in his flight across the Alps, and in return had extracted a number of concessions from Barbarossa. These apparently included some kind of recognition of the Savoyard claim to Turin. Humbert would soon make use of this supposed imperial grant to claim the lordship of the city and its territory, although in all probability he would never appear there in person.

In 1169 Bishop Charles died. His successor, Bishop Milo, adopted a radically different political stance. Born to a prominent Milanese family, he sympathized with the Lombard League and aligned himself with the anti-imperial faction at Turin, which had probably helped place him on the episcopal throne. Unlike his predecessor, he accepted the existence of the commune, and collaborated with it. The commune now revived as an administrative institution: the consuls reappear in the documentary record after 1170. They numbered seven in all, and were divided into two ranks, major and minor, probably on the basis of their social status. This division within the consular leadership would now become permanent. At the same time two new institutions start to appear in the records: a general assembly of the citizens, and a smaller council whose functions are not clear, but which was probably an advisory body composed of the leading citizens. Turin's communal government was now mature. From this time on it would function more or less continuously, and in the next century it would eclipse the bishop and assume sole direction of the city's affairs.

Meanwhile the war between Barbarossa and the Lombard League dragged on. In 1174 the emperor returned in force to northern Italy, crossing the Alps by the Mont-Cénis and passing through Turin. But this campaign too was destined to end in failure. At Legnano in 1176