

# IS RUSSIA PLANNING NEW WAR?

By FRANK H. SIMONDS  
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Washington, June 7.—While world attention has been very largely concentrated upon the internal political situations in Germany and France in recent days, the cable has continued to carry warnings of danger along the southwestern frontier of Soviet Russia and to indicate the possibility of war in this relatively little known corner of Europe. Is Russia planning a new war and will she make the title to Bessarabia the pretext for a new attempt to disturb the peace of Europe? There are the questions which are now being asked anxiously in more than one capital.

The problem of Bessarabia is at one time the simplest and one of the most vexatious of the post-bellum questions. It is in reality, of course, only one phase of the eternal Eastern question, of the troubles due to the Russian aspiration to acquire Constantinople and thus access to the open sea. If one is to measure the truth by the minutary tone and frequent gestures of Moscow, it is fair to assume that Russia of the Bolsheviks is hastening to set her feet in the pathway so often trod by the Romanoffs.

Rumania acquired Bessarabia as a result of the World War. The actual union was accomplished through the ratification of the provincial council by an overwhelming majority. Actually Bessarabia was once a portion of the province of Moldavia, the western half of which was included within the frontiers of Rumania when that state was created in 1859. Of its three million inhabitants between half and three quarters are of the Rumanian race and speak the Rumanian tongue. The minority, moreover, represents a mixture of many races, Slavs, Turks, Tartars, Bulgarians and even a considerable number of Germans, along with a large sprinkling of Jews. Kishinev, the capital, was the scene of one of the most terrible Russian pogroms early in the present century, one consequence of which was a large migration of the Jewish survivors to America.

History, the will of the majority of the people, geographical and strategic considerations, all combine to justify the present possession of this province by the Rumanians.

The Russian claim, by contrast, is founded upon annexation following war and at the expense of the Turk in 1812. Almost half a century later three counties, near the mouth of the Danube, were retroceded by Russia in 1856, following the Crimean War. Two decades later Russia regained these counties following her war with Turkey, which was liquidated at the Congress of Berlin.

This return of these counties was a particularly odious episode for in the Turkish War the Russians before Plevan had been saved by the aid and devotion of the Rumanian army and in return the benefactors were plundered of Rumanian lands. In part to compensate for this spoliation, half of the Dobrudja was assigned to Rumania. This gave her an outlet on the Black Sea but it also led to the feud with Bulgaria, a feud which has had evil consequences for both the Bulgarians and the Rumanians.

For the Bulgarians, the loss of the Dobrudja was so bitter an injury that they continued to plan revenge. Rumania, in her turn, disturbed by Bulgarian threats, took advantage of Bulgaria's misfortunes in the second Balkan War, when Bulgaria was at war with Greece and Serbia and also was invaded by Turkey. A Rumanian army moved south in Bulgaria and approached Sofia, while the Bulgarian armies were fighting the Greeks and Serbs in Macedonia and Thrace. Already defeated, the Bulgarians were compelled to yield and the Treaty of Bucharest deprived them not merely of more of the Dobrudja but also of Macedonia and Thrace, while the Turks retook Adrianople.

Two years later, when Rumania was invaded by German and Austrian armies Bulgaria had her revenge and Bulgarian armies, together with Turkish, invaded and conquered the Dobrudja, which was ceded to Bulgaria under the terms of the short-lived treaty which followed the German occupation of Bucharest, and the Rumanian surrender, due in turn to the Russian collapse. But under this same settlement Rumania was permitted with German and Austrian consent to take Bessarabia.

When Austria collapsed and Germany surrendered, a year later, Rumania, backed by the Allies, re-occupied the Dobrudja and regained both portions, that which she had acquired in 1878 and that taken in 1913, while she also retained Bessarabia; and this latter province presently through its local parliament gave emphatic approval to the union with Rumania. But meantime a novel quarrel had arisen with Soviet Russia.

This quarrel had its origin in the fact that following the disastrous campaign of 1916, when the Rumanian armies were beaten and driven out of most of their country, the gold reserves of Rumania had been moved from Bucharest to Russian territory and, after the Russian Revolution, fell into the hands of the Bolsheviks. Once she had got clear of her German and Austrian foes, Rumania turned to Russia and demanded the return of her gold. But the Soviet Government met this demand by a counter demand for the return of the province of Bessarabia and for five years the dispute has continued.

At times it has seemed that the Russian demand for the return of the lost province was little more than a way of arriving at a final settlement based upon the surrender by Russia of her claim upon Bessarabia and a relinquishment by Rumania of her claim upon her vanished gold reserves. But in recent weeks Russian insistence has taken on a very menacing character and the threats of war have multiplied. The recent excursion of the king and queen of Ru-

mania to Paris and London was generally interpreted as having been employed, if not designed, to offer the opportunity for an appeal to the two governments to support a wartime ally, threatened again.

That Rumania did get the promise and perhaps the actual contribution of war material from France has been duly stated in the press, this material, of course, covered by a loan. The Rumanian army was reorganized during the war by French officers, General Berthelot among them. There have, too, been rumors of an alliance between France and Rumania, on the lines of the Franco-Polish agreement, but this has not been announced.

I dwell upon this Rumanian affair now, because in its various circumstances it is an admirable illustration of the real difficulties in the European situation. Thus, if there should be a war between Rumania and Russia now, the complications might be almost innumerable. Aside from the possibility that France might be involved, which is less likely under the new Ministry than the outgoing, such a struggle would instantly concern Poland, would have immediate significance for Czechoslovakia and might have repercussions in both Hungary and Bulgaria.

Poland would at once be concerned because she has an alliance with Rumania, based upon the possibility of a Russian attack upon either. Thus if Rumania were attacked by Russia, it would be the duty of Poland to go to her assistance. In theory this would also be the duty of all of the nations which compose the League of Nations, but since the Polish experience with Russia, several years ago, neither Poland nor Rumania can hope for much from the League members with the possible exception of France.

Czechoslovakia and Yugo-Slavia would not be bound to support Rumania against Russia, although all three are members of the Little Entente, but if Hungary attacked Rumania, or if Bulgaria assailed the Rumanians, then both these Slav states would, under the terms of the Little Entente arrangement, be bound to act against Hungary and Bulgaria. Recent dispatches have suggested that Yugo-Slavia might consent to include Russian aggression among the reasons for standing by Rumania in war.

Hungary and Bulgaria would be inclined to take advantage of a Russian invasion of Bessarabia to strike Rumania in the rear, because Hungary is determined to recover Transylvania and the Banat, just as Russia is aiming to reconquer Bessarabia, while between Rumania and Bulgaria stands the old dispute over the Dobrudja, which has already provoked two wars. In Transylvania and the Banat, as in Bessarabia, the vast majority of the population is Rumanian, or, more exactly, the Rumanian element constitutes not only more than half the total population, but outnumbers the German and Magyar fractions more than three to one. In the southern half of the Dobrudja, on the other hand, the Bulgarian population is, or was before the last war, more numerous than the Rumanian.

To add to the complications, Greece has every reason to rear Bulgarian designs on that portion of her territory along the Aegean from the mouth of the Vardar to that of the Maritza; that is, including Salonica, and might make a common cause with the Rumanians and the Serbs. Again, far to the north, the Lithuanians are maintaining a paper state of war with the Poles over the matter of Vilna, and if Poland were involved in a war with Russia, as a result of a Russian attack upon Rumania, Lithuania might seek to regain Vilna and might support the Russians as she did in the recent Russo-Polish War which ended in the Russian defeat and the peace of Riga.

Back of all these possibilities lies also that of Germany. She is openly planning to retake Posen, West Prussia and Upper Silesia from Poland and put an end to the separate state of Danzig. Would she be able to resist the temptation to strike Poland in the rear, while Russia was assailing her in the front and Lithuania in the flank? In addition, Germany looks forward to liberating some three millions of German speaking citizens of the Czechoslovakian state and of annexing all of Bohemia and Moravia, along with the fragment of Cech Silesia and Teschen.

And if Germany moved, what of France? What of Belgium? What for that matter of Great Britain? There you have then the present state of Europe in a brief compass. Ten years ago this very month the assassination of the Austrian Archduke in Serajevo touched a match to the European magazine. Serbia was instantly involved, Serbian danger brought Russia into the dispute and the coming of Russia brought France and Germany in on opposite sides, then England came in and Italy retired from her partnership with the Central Powers to reappear as their foe a few months later. Ultimately countries as far removed as Japan, the United States and Brazil were involved.

In the Europe of 1924, as in that

of 1914, the same system of interdependent agreements subsists. The nations have changed partners, or more precisely their interests would lead them along different lines in many cases, but the old system of alliances holds, just as good today as a decade ago. Russia at the moment is playing a lone hand, she has quarrelled with all the western powers and most recently with Germany. Yet Russia's enemies, Poland and Rumania, are directly or indirectly Germany's foes; Poland directly and Rumania indirectly, because Hungary and Germany would inevitably make a common cause and Rumania is the deadly foe of the Magyars.

Now looking at this situation from the broader point of view, how can the League of Nations operate to preserve peace? Russia is not a member, nor is Germany. Therefore the League has no control whatever over either, and Russia, at least, is not amenable to the thing which is called world sentiment. If Russia attacks Rumania the League can denounce the attack, it can demand that it stop, it can appeal to the other nations to take up arms or to boycott Russia, but that is the sum and substance of its powers.

For myself I do not believe that the Russians mean to attack just now, they are more interested in getting recognition and loans than in engaging in hostilities at this moment, but the very earnestness and emphasis with which they press their Bessarabian claims suggests that they are keeping the future open. Moreover, if Russia ever does resume the march upon Constantinople, her pathway lies across Rumania and Bessarabia is the first province she will invade.

Russia, too, clings to her claim upon Constantinople. It was promised to her as reward for her participation in the war. Even the British, through Sir Edward Grey, assented to Russian possession of the ancient objective of the Czars. Did the Russian title, thus witnessed and approved, lapse because Russia after gigantic efforts and colossal sacrifices finally collapsed into revolution and the ignominious Treaty of Brest Litovsk? The Russians at least deny this.

But as long as Germany on the north is determined to regain her lost provinces, provinces which she stole in her own time from their rightful racial and national owners, with the Magyars in the center looking with similar eyes upon Transylvania and the Banat, with Bulgaria set upon recovering the Dobrudja, Macedonia and even Thrace, with Russia in the east looking both to the Baltic and to the Black Seas to recover lost lands, which she also took from their rightful owners in past time, and finally with the present possessors of all these lands determined to defend both their legal and their moral rights, how can there be stable conditions in Europe?

You have there the double situation which I have emphasized so often in these articles. At the moment most, perhaps all of the European peoples prefer to avoid hostilities. Europe is settling down after a long and terribly costly conflict and the present generation desires peace. But while Europe is thus manifesting a desire for peace, practically every European country is deliberately basing its policy upon things which must lead to a new war. Moreover various nations are combining their interests and pooling their military and political resources in such fashion as to insure that when war comes it will immediately involve not two but many countries.

Norman Davis could settle the problem of Memel last winter, because the dispute was between two parties neither of which had to consider the eventuality of war. He could persuade the Lithuanians, in return for the legalizing of their title to Memel, which had been ceded by

Germany to the Allied nations and subsequently seized by the Lithuanians, to agree to certain more or less valuable concessions to the Poles, concessions which the Poles themselves regard as totally inadequate and wholly deceptive, concessions which the Lithuanians regard as excessive.

But he could not persuade the Lithuanians to resign their title to Vilna, a title which is denied by the Poles who actually hold it and have pronounced the union with Poland as irrevocable, and quite properly he did not attempt this impossible task. So a state of war exists between Poland and Lithuania, traffic across frontiers is forbidden and hostilities are, in theory, only suspended during the life of the Armistice of Suvalki. The danger of war in fact, as it now exists on paper, grows out of the fact that both Poland and Lithuania regard Vilna as worth fighting for and for both tolerable peace is predicated upon possession. Remember, too, that the Germans have never recognized their cession of Memel as anything more than a temporary yielding to force—and the same is true so far as all of the lands ceded to Poland, Belgium and Czechoslovakia are concerned. In point of fact they still dream of regaining Alsace-Lorraine.

Quite obviously the beginning of peace in Europe will not be disarmament—even assuming it were possible, as it certainly is not now—but the willingness on the part of nations to accept existing frontiers as permanent or to agree to such readjustment as will create a condition which both parties at interest will regard as tolerable and preferable to new wars. When nations can agree with their neighbors there will be no need of alliances or ententes and then there will be no house of cards to collapse when two cards are removed.

Today, because Russia refuses to regard the loss of Bessarabia as permanent, because she declines to abandon her old aspiration for possession of Constantinople, a new general war in Europe is possible. It is not likely, merely because at the moment the European nations are fought out, presumably. Because a dozen or more other nations, similarly unwilling to accept existing territorial conditions or fearful of a challenge to these conditions, have entered into mutual defense arrangements, a shot on the Danester may one day mean war from the Black Sea to the Baltic and from the Vistula to the Rhine.

As I have said before, I do not regard the Russo-Rumanian situation as a serious menace to peace at the moment, but it does seem to me extraordinarily interesting, as it reveals the degree to which Europe has reverted to her traditional system and the extent to which the situation before the World War is reproduced now, ten years after its outbreak. Memel, and the Black Sea, unknown to Serajevo in 1914 to most Americans, yet it is at least conceivable that this Bessarabian city might tomorrow become as notorious as the Bosnian city of Serajevo, with ultimate consequences quite as far-reaching.

**CHURCHES**

**EPISCOPAL Christ Church**  
Rev. Geo. F. Hill, rector. White Sunday, Sunday school and adult Bible classes, 9:45 a. m. Morning prayer and sermon at 11 a. m. Evening prayer and illustrated lecture on

"Religion and Life in India," at 8 p. m.

**METHODIST First Methodist**  
Rev. N. H. D. Wilson, D.D., pastor. You are cordially invited to all services. Sunday school, Mr. J. A. Hooper, superintendent, 9:50 a. m. Epworth League, 7:15 p. m. Worship with sermon by the pastor, 11 a. m. and 8 p. m. The musical program for the day follows:

**Morning**  
Prelude (organ) Prayer from "Lohengrin"—Wagner.  
Anthem, "O'er Life's Troubled Sea"—Wilson.  
Offertory (organ) Humoresque—Dvorak.

**Evening**  
Prelude (organ) Meditation—Ashford.  
Anthem, "God is My Salvation"—Wilson.  
Offertory (organ) Echoes of Spring—Frml.  
Anthem, "A Rose Brightly Glowing"—Geibel.  
Postlude.

**City Road Methodist Episcopal**  
Rev. Daniel Lane, pastor. 9:30 a. m. Sunday school, George F. Seyffert, superintendent. 11 a. m. worship and sermon. In the absence of the pastor, the morning exercises will consist of a "song service" of old favorite hymns and how they came to be written. The evening service will be conducted by C. R. Pugh, Subject, "Advancement in Life." Following is the musical program:

**Morning**  
Anthem, "The Coming of the Lord"—Cassel.  
Anthem, "Be Strong, Fear Not"—Emerson.  
Ladies' quartet—Selected.  
**Evening**  
Anthem, "I Go to Him for Rest"—Wilson.  
Solo, "He Shall Feed His Flock"—Wilson—Mrs. Geo. W. Bell.  
7 p. m. Junior Epworth League. You are cordially invited to these services.

**BAPTIST First Baptist**  
S. H. Templeman, pastor. Sunday school at 9:30 a. m. C. H. Twiddy, superintendent. Preaching by the pastor at 11 a. m. Subject: "A Great Birthday Present;" and at 8 p. m. the first in a series on "What is the Matter with the Churches." Prayer-meeting Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock. The public is cordially invited to these services.

**Blackwell Memorial**  
Dr. J. H. Thayer, pastor. Sunday school at 9:30 a. m.; E. F. Aydlett, superintendent. At 11 a. m. and 8 p. m. the pastor will preach.  
**Catholic Baptist**  
Rev. R. F. Hall, pastor. Junior B. Y. P. U. meets at 2 o'clock. Sunday school 3 p. m. S. S. Davis, superintendent. Preaching at 8 p. m. by the pastor, B. Y. P. U. Sunday night at 7. Prayer meeting Wednesday night at 8:00. The public is cordially invited.

**Sawyers Creek Baptist**  
Rev. W. J. Banks, pastor. Preaching at 11 a. m. The public is cordially invited.  
**Corinth Baptist**  
Rev. R. F. Hall, pastor. Sunday school each Sunday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock. W. F. Pritchard, Sr., superintendent. Preaching at 3:15 by the pastor, Sr. and Jr. B. Y. P. U. each Sunday night at 8:00. The public is cordially invited.  
**Berea Baptist**  
Rev. R. F. Hall, pastor. Sunday school Sunday morning at 10:00 o'clock. Ben Frank Pritchard, superintendent. Preaching at 11 o'clock by the pastor. The public is cordially invited.

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**PRESBYTERIAN Canon Memorial**  
Rev. Frank H. Scattergood, minister. Sabbath school, 9:45 a. m. Lesson, "The Capture of the Ark." Morning worship, 11 o'clock. Theme: "Spiritual Sustenance." A Communion meditation. At this service the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be administered. All members are urged to be present. Evening worship, 8 o'clock. Theme: "The Rest That Jesus Gives." Mid-week service Wednesday, 8 p. m. Bible study and prayer. All invited to attend these services.

**OTHER DENOMINATIONS First Christian**  
Rev. H. G. Brown, pastor. Preaching at 11 a. m. and 8 p. m. Morning theme: "Worth of a Man." Evening theme: "Call to Service." Sunday school at 2:30 p. m. E. L. Silverthorn, superintendent. Christian Endeavor meets at 7 p. m. Mid-week prayer meeting Wednesday at 8 p. m.  
**Pentecostal Holiness**  
Sunday school at 9:45, J. L. Hill, superintendent. Preaching at 3, 11 and 7:45 o'clock by the pastor, Rev. W. J. Noble. The public is cordially invited to all services.  
**St. Elizabeth's**  
Services will be held in the Catholic Chapel, Hinton Building, at 10:30 Sunday morning by Father Doherty. Visitors are always welcome.

**BIG FIRE AT MIAMI**  
Miami, June 7.—The entire fire department of Miami was called out early today when the Liberty Cumberland Mills warehouses of the riverfront burst into blaze. Total destruction of the warehouse is deemed inevitable and loss of a quarter of a million dollars is predicted. The fire is not expected to spread as the wind is blowing toward the river.

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