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Kaarel Robert Pusta, Antonius Piip, and Jaan Poska**

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San Jose State University, 1989

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**THE ORIGINS OF ESTONIAN DIPLOMACY, 1917-1922:
THE ROLES OF KAAREL ROBERT PUSTA, ANTONIUS PIIP, AND JAAN POSKA**

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of History

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

By

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December, 1989

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

THE ORIGINS OF ESTONIAN DIPLOMACY, 1917-1922: THE ROLES OF KAAREL ROBERT PUSTA, ANTONIUS PIIP, AND JAAN POSKA

by Eric Allan Sibul

This thesis is a study of Estonian diplomatic history during the period of 1917 to 1922. During this period Estonia emerged from the turmoil of the Bolshevik revolution as a sovereign, internationally recognized state. The achievement of Estonian independence and international recognition was a total national effort, in which the Estonian diplomats Kaarel Robert Pusta, Antonius Piip, and Jaan Poska made crucial contributions. These diplomats worked as a team, where each member played a unique and vital role. In the end their efforts succeeded due to Estonian success on the battlefield. Events highlighted in this study are the sending of the first Estonian diplomatic representatives to foreign nations, Estonian diplomacy at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, the Estonian-Soviet peace negotiations at Tartu in 1919, and the effort to gain full diplomatic recognition of Estonia from the great powers in 1921-22.

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PREFACE

The years of 1917 through 1922 were momentous years in Estonian history. During this period Estonia emerged from the turmoil of the World War and the Russian revolution as a sovereign, internationally recognized state. During this period the Estonians faced a world which was largely hostile to them. From the east they faced the messianic imperialism of the Bolsheviks which threatened their very existence. The Estonians were also faced with the reactionary forces of the White Russians and Baltic German nobility, who sought to restore their old privileges in Estonia and return the nation to servitude in a rebuilt Russian imperium. From the south they faced German military adventurers, who had their own sinister plans for Estonian territory.

The Western powers had mild sympathy to outward hostility to Estonian aspirations. Yet, faced with these seemingly insurmountable odds, the Estonians were able to achieve their goal of national independence. This thesis is a study of how Estonian independence came about. The achievement of Estonian independence and international recognition was a total national effort, in which the Estonian diplomats Kaarel Robert Pusta, Antonius Piip, and Jaan Poska made crucial contributions. These diplomats worked as a team, where each member played a unique and vital role. In the end their efforts succeeded due to Estonian success on the battlefield.

In studying the history of early Estonian foreign policy, one is forced to disregard the conventional wisdom of diplomatic history, namely, that the formulation and execution of policy is the grand design of one "great man" such as Metternich or Bismarck. While individual diplomats such as Kaarel Robert Pusta, Antonius Piip, and Jaan Poska made significant contributions to the Estonian diplomatic efforts, none had a completely dominating role in Estonian diplomacy. Therefore, their individual contributions must be studied as a unit in the broader framework of the struggle for Estonian independence and international recognition. Estonia's diplomats were very much the product of the Estonian national awakening during the

nineteenth century and the national movement in the early twentieth century. Their attitudes reflected the common goals of the national movement. Because the desire for national independence eventually was shared by all but the most extreme political parties, Estonian foreign policy was a cooperative effort of the nation's diplomats whose ideals reflected this broad political consensus.

The well known European philosopher, Count Hermann Keyserling who was a Baltic German from Estonia, wrote in the nineteen twenties on the establishment of an independent Estonian republic. He stated, "I have witnessed in person the birth of a nation. When I was a child the Esthonians did not constitute a nation, but a peasantry and a servant class." Count Keyserling continued, "When the Revolution came, there was suddenly revealed in existence a new people capable of self-government; so suddenly, that I made a solemn vow never again to judge reality from appearances."¹ Raising the question where the Estonian leaders came from, Count Keyserling concluded that they had existed in the midst of the former Russian Empire. This was true of the officers of the Estonian General Staff as well as the unit commanders and non-commissioned officers of the Estonian Army. These men had risen through the ranks of the Russian armed forces and had gained military experience in the First World War. The only exception to this was Admiral Johan Pitka who was in commercial shipping before becoming the commander of the Estonian Navy. It must be noted that without the high quality of leadership on all levels of command in the Estonian Army as well as the élan of the ranks, the gaining of Estonian independence would not have been possible. To develop a functioning political system and to establish the apparatus of government administration, there were competent men in the municipal and provincial governments who gained experience in government affairs since the first Russian revolution in 1905. There were also men who brought their experience from commercial endeavors into the realm of government.

The situation of diplomacy was different. In the Russian Empire, diplomatic careers were exclusive to the nobility. According to the recollection of Kaarel Robert Pusta, Estonia's first professional diplomat, there was only one Baltic German career diplomat who offered his services during the formation of Estonia's foreign service.² Although Estonia's first diplomats lacked knowledge of diplomatic practice,

with the possible exception of Antonius Piip who was a professor of international law, they took on their tasks with resolve and great competence. Like the Estonian military and the political leadership they worked closely toward common goals. The beginning of Estonian diplomacy was very much an ad hoc process. Because of the limited resources of the missions abroad and often the inability to communicate with their government, Estonia's diplomats carried out their instructions to the best of their ability and formed their own policy in the host country. With time a more regular foreign ministerial bureaucracy developed. Despite of the early shortcomings of the foreign policy of Estonia, her diplomatic representatives were able to make strong contributions towards the attainment and preservation of Estonian independence. While the efforts of Estonian diplomats were of great importance in the struggle to attain independence, these efforts were not the sole determinants. The diplomatic efforts would have been fruitless without the success of Estonian military forces as well as the strong sense of unity and commonality of goals among Estonian political parties and social organizations.

Baltic diplomatic history of the 1917-1922 period is covered in general studies of the international affairs of the Baltic by Edgar Anderson and Albert Tarulis.³ More recently, the British historian John Hiden produced a study on the German relations with the Baltic states during the 1918-1933 period.⁴ Certainly, the extensive work of the American historian and political scientist Malbone Watson Graham must be mentioned. He was the first to produce specialized studies on Baltic diplomatic history in the English language. Working primarily during the nineteen twenties and thirties, Graham had access to the archives of the Baltic foreign ministries and was able to interview many important participants in the diplomacy of 1917-1922. He produced careful studies on the diplomatic recognition of Finland, Estonia, and Latvia. These studies are still of great relevance today as an examination of issues in international law regarding the recognition of new states.⁵

Studies specific to the diplomatic history of Latvia during the 1917-1933 period have been compiled by Hugh Rodgers and Janis J. Samts. Lithuanian diplomatic history is covered in the extensive works of Alfred Erich Senn. With the exception of Graham's work on the diplomatic recognition of

Estonia and a substantial section in Arthur Vööbus' fifteen volume work on the history of Estonia, as well as the doctoral dissertation of Imre Lipping which dealt with diplomatic questions as part of a greater study on the problem of the Baltic German minority in Estonia, no major work has appeared in English on the early diplomatic history of Estonia.⁶

However, in the Estonian language there are studies of early diplomatic history, notably the extensive work of Eduard Laaman as well as several studies by Antonius Piip. Both men were participants in the events of the period and did their writing during the nineteen twenties and thirties. Because most of their works has not been translated or reprinted, it is difficult for American researchers to access their material. Fortunately, Laaman's extensive work, *Eesti Iseseisvuse Sünn* [The Birth of Estonian Independence], and Piip's work, *Tormine Aasta* [The Turbulent Year], were reprinted in the nineteen-sixties. Printed as well in the nineteen-sixties were the memoirs of another important participant in the diplomacy of the period, namely Kaarel Robert Pusta. His two volumes of memoirs, *Kehra Metsast Maailma* [From Kehra Forest into the World] and *Saadiku Päevik* [Envoy's Diary], provide unique insight into the events of the period and the character of Estonia's diplomats. The two volume work, *Eesti Vabadussõda* [The Estonian War of Independence], also warrants mention. It is largely a military history but deals with related political and diplomatic questions as well. It was compiled by the Independence War Historical Committee and was first published in 1938 with a short English summary. The researchers of this work primarily used the archives of the Estonian Ministry of War as the source for their study. The two volume work was reprinted in 1951, the English summary in 1968.⁷ In addition, primary sources from the archives of the Hoover Institution of War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford, California have been used. The Hoover Institution archives contain some Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs documents, the papers of Malbone Watson Graham, and unpublished manuscripts by the Estonian diplomats, Nicolai Kostner, Ants Oiderman, and Antonius Piip. The Estonian diplomatic documents were collected by Kaarel Robert Pusta. These documents are mainly from the Estonian Legation in Paris. The papers of Malbone Watson Graham, contain much of the material he collected while researching Estonian diplomacy. These materials include

transcripts of interviews of various Estonian diplomats. Other valuable sources were found in the National Archives of the United States, the Library of Congress, and the Estonian Archives in the U.S.A. located in Lakewood, New Jersey.

I should like to thank the staffs of these institutions for their kind assistance while I was conducting research for this study. I should like to extend special thanks to Hilja Kukk, Slavic reference librarian of the Hoover Institution Library. She provided me with great assistance and support.

Of the other individuals who assisted me, I wish first to thank Irma Eichhorn for her great patience and valuable editorial assistance. Furthermore, I should like to thank Victor de Mattei, Dr. Tõnu Parming, and my father, Dr. Leon H. Sibul, for their assistance and commentary. For the actual preparation of the work, I must extend my special thanks to Malle Sibul, Aalo Cutler, and Wendy Witter. Their typing was expert and tireless. I also should like to extend my warmest appreciation to my family and my friends in San José, California and Washington, D.C. for their emotional support and encouragement. I must also acknowledge the Estonian Student Fund in the U.S.A. which provided me with financial support.

For all of those I must acknowledge in this research project, I must reserve my greatest gratitude for the late Dr. Edgar Anderson. It was through his encouragement that I pursued graduate studies at San José State University. During my studies he provided me with continual guidance, advice, and encouragement. Dr. Anderson died tragically in an automobile accident on July 5, 1989. His death is a great loss for all of those involved in Baltic Studies. Dr. Anderson's contributions were many and he left much important work unfinished. I should like to dedicate this work to him.

NOTES

1. Hermann Keyserling, *Europe*, trans. Maurice Samuel (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 295-96.
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CHAPTER 1

ESTONIA ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION IN 1917

Estonia and the other countries of the eastern Baltic littoral have been the crossroads for economic intercourse as well as for military campaigns. Because the Baltic lands have been the nexus of great communication lines between East and West and North and South, the role of this area is of historical significance. According to the historian Walter Kirchner, Estonia and the other eastern Baltic lands comprise one of the few areas that have had an unique importance throughout recorded history. He compares the historical significance of the Baltic area with that of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Sicily, and the Rhine Valley.¹

In many respects the geographical situation of the eastern Baltic littoral also can be compared to the Levant on the Mediterranean, the Korean peninsula on the Pacific, and the Low Countries on the Atlantic. Like Belgium and Korea, the Baltic area has been situated between great powers who seek to dominate the region. It has been stated that the fundamental Baltic problem is "the struggle for domination, latent or active between Russia and Germany."² While both are principal characters involved, there have been many other players with important stakes in the Baltic drama. It would not go too far to state that whoever controls Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania dominates all of Northern Europe. Furthermore, the power which is in control of the eastern Baltic littoral has the ability to dominate Central Europe. This has been the impetus of the struggle for "dominium maris Baltici" which has taken place over the centuries. These great struggles have exacted a high price from the Baltic peoples.

The territory of historical Estonia has an area of approximately 18,370 square miles (47,549 square kilometers). Within the territory there are 1,512 lakes and, in addition to the continental territory of Estonia, there are 818 islands, the largest being Saaremaa and Hiiumaa in the Baltic Sea. In the east, Estonia is bound by Lake Peipsi and Lake Pihkva. Geologically Estonia is part of the East-European plain

which stretches from the Baltic Sea to the Ural Mountains. Thus, Estonia as well as historical Latvia and Lithuania have no great height; the average elevation is about 200 feet above sea level. The eastern and southern parts of the Baltic area consist of rolling hills while the western part is a lowland covered by meadows, forests, and swamps.³

The territory of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania combined have an area of 68,000 square miles, compared to Finland's area of 129,886 square miles. Finland's geographical position is less exposed than that of its neighbors in the south. Furthermore, the Finnish landscape, which is strewn with exposed boulders and numerous lakes and covered by thick forests, has constituted a formidable obstacle to invaders. In the same way it has hindered economic intercourse.⁴

The interaction between Finnish and Estonian people has been important throughout the history of both nations. Not only are both nations geographically close but ethnographically as well. The Estonians and the Finns are both Finno-Ugric people. The similarity of their language is analogous to the similarity between Spanish and Portuguese. The only other major European people related to the Estonians and the Finns are the Magyars in Central Europe. Unlike the Estonians or Finns, the Latvians and Lithuanians are Indo-European people and speak Indo-Baltic languages. However, these languages are unlike any other Indo-European languages. Latvian and Lithuanian are believed to be related to ancient Sanskrit in India.

The origin of the races which inhabit the eastern shores of the Baltic are not really known and this question has led to much speculation. However, there is ample proof that they settled on the Baltic shores before the year 2000 B.C. The predominant activity of these people was agriculture; seafaring and trade developed in later times. The political organization which developed in ancient Estonia consisted of eight "counties" which were ruled by elected elders. The "counties" formed a loose confederation, uniting when foreign invaders threatened. At these times war elders were chosen to lead the nation. The same general pattern can be observed in Latvia and Lithuania.⁵

Because of Estonia's favorable geographical position on trade routes between Northern Europe and the Eastern Roman Empire, her people began to engage in commerce and attained considerable prosperity.

Estonians developed considerable seapower in the Baltic. While other powers attempted to raid Estonia, the Estonians did likewise in neighboring areas. The Estonian raids caused much trouble for Denmark and eastern Sweden during the latter half of the twelfth century. In 1187, the Estonians and their allies the Kurs and the Karelians sacked Sigtuna, the first capital of Sweden. The Estonians were also successful on land; several times invading Russian hosts were defeated.⁶

The beginning of the German "Drang nach Osten" began about 1160, when German merchants began arriving at the mouth of the Daugava River in present-day Latvia. About twenty years later the first German missionary arrived on the banks of the Daugava. In 1199, the Archbishop of Bremen nominated Bishop Albert von Buxhoevden to christianize the heathen Baltic peoples. The Baltic lands had remained the last unchristianized lands in Europe, caught between the influence of the Western and Eastern churches. With the support of the Pope, a northern crusade was proclaimed by Bishop Albert von Buxhoevden; the Baltic area was declared "Terra Mariana." Christianization of the Baltic lands was carried out by fire and sword.

In 1200, Bishop Albert landed in Latvia with a large German army. To carry out prolonged military operations, a permanent, Teutonic military order was founded in Latvia in 1202. It was known as the Brothers of the Sword. By 1210, one-third of present Latvia was subdued by the Germans who now felt strong enough to fight the Estonians.

Reacting to this threat, the Estonians federated themselves and raised armies. The forces of the Teutonic Order commenced making war raids into Estonia. With the forces Estonia raised, she was able to counter these raids and to stage counter raids against the Teutonic Order in Latvia. As the war continued, Bishop Albert realized that his forces were not strong enough to defeat the Estonians. This persuaded him to seek an alliance with Valdemar II, King of Denmark.

In 1219, Valdemar II landed in Estonia with a large Danish army. Soon after the landing, the Estonians and Danes fought a major battle. After heavy fighting, the Danes defeated the Estonians. By 1227, the last Estonian stronghold on the island of Saaremaa had fallen. The provinces of Harjumaa,

Revala, and Virumaa in northern Estonia fell under Danish rule while Saaremaa, Ugandi, and the smaller provinces north of the river Emajõgi were ruled by the Teutonic Order. The Danish central government's rule over the Estonian possessions was weak. It depended mainly on the will of its local vassals who were mainly Germanic. These vassals gradually became more despotic and failed to uphold Danish assurances made to Estonian leaders. The discontent of the Estonians against their foreign overlords expressed itself in local uprisings in 1241, 1255, and 1264.⁷

Because of the worsening foreign oppression, a politically and militarily well-planned insurrection took place on April 23, 1343. At the outset, the Estonian forces met with quick success. As the Estonian army began to besiege the Danish stronghold of Tallinn, the leaders of the insurrection sent ambassadors to Swedish authorities in Finland to appeal for assistance for the Estonian cause.

A Swedish military force was sent but arrived too late. The Teutonic Order sent forces from Latvia to assist the Danes. The Teutonic Order was able to defeat the insurrectionist forces before assistance from Finland could arrive. The suppression of the Saint George's Day Insurrection (April 23, 1343) caused great losses for the Estonian population. Yet, with increasing Lithuanian and Russian threats, the Danish colonial enterprise in Estonia was quickly becoming too expensive. For this reason Denmark sold its Northern Estonian territories to the Teutonic Order in 1347.⁸

Accompanying the end of Danish rule in Estonia was the rise of the Hansa League in the Baltic area. Tallinn (Reval), Tartu (Dorpat), and Riga became important outposts of the Hansa city system. The territories of the Teutonic Order and Archbishopric of Riga, along with three bishoprics and the Free City of Riga, joined to form a German ruled state known as the Livonian confederation. The Livonian confederation encompassed the territories of modern Estonia and Latvia.

As for the native population, the situation became progressively worse as the Teutonic overlords consolidated the feudal system. At least during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Baltic area enjoyed a period of comparative peace. But the aggressive Moscovite power which had been suppressed by the Tatars began to threaten. Thus in 1558, Ivan III began the Moscovite attempt to conquer Estonia and

Latvia. The Moscovite campaign was continued by Ivan III's successor, Ivan IV, the Terrible, with a barbarism unknown to Europe.

In grave need of assistance, the Confederation appealed to Poland-Lithuania. The southern power came to the succor of the Confederation which had to cede the southern parts of its possessions in return. In the same way the Confederation ceded the island of Saaremaa to Denmark in 1559. The island would remain under Danish rule until 1645.

When it became clear to the leaders of the Livonian Confederation that they could no longer sustain military resistance to the Moscovites, the city of Tallinn and the nobility of northern Estonia pledged their allegiance to Erik XIV of Sweden. Poland-Lithuania took firm control of Livonia and Kurland. These combined forces were able to drive the Moscovites back to their eastern domain.⁹

Both Swedish and Polish rule improved the lot of the peasants. The Polish king Stephen Bathory called upon the German landlords in Livonia to reform in their treatment of the native population and when the reply was negative, he stripped them of their administrative power, confining this to the Poles by the *Constitutiones Livoniae* in 1582. Bathory brought Jesuit Fathers to Estonians and Latvians who made a point of addressing the people in their languages and even in their dialects. The Jesuits also established schools in Livonia.¹⁰

Soon after Sweden and Poland-Lithuania had thwarted the Russian drive to the West, the two powers came in conflict. Sweden's military power was on the rise and Swedish armies led by the great warrior king, Gustavas Adolphus, defeated the Polish forces in the Baltic. By 1629, all of Livonia was under Swedish control. In the consciousness of the Estonians, Swedish rule in Estonia would be revered as the "good old Swedish times." The Swedish Crown had a generally sympathetic policy towards the Estonian and Latvian peasantry. This was a reflection of domestic politics in Sweden, where the Swedish kings drew their support from the peasantry through sympathetic policies to keep check on the power of the nobility.

By the end of the seventeenth century the Swedish government was well into the process of establishing a comprehensive education system in Estonia and Livonia. The Swedish government also

enacted strong legal measures to protect the peasantry against exploitation by the nobility. These legal measures included limitations on the use of corporal punishment, access to courts for the peasants, and the implementation of work registers in which the obligations of the peasants to the landowners were precisely recorded.¹¹

In the late seventeenth century, resentment among the German nobility in Estonia and Latvia was growing over the Swedish land reform policy of King Charles XI. The reform entailed the reversion of previously granted lands to the crown in an effort to curb the power of the large estate holders. This led the nobility to plot insubordination against the Swedish Crown. The leader of the conspiracy was Johann Reinhold von Patkull. He arrived in 1698 at the court of Augustus II, Elector of Saxony, who was elected king of Poland. Von Patkull suggested to August II that an alliance be formed among Poland, Russia, Denmark, and Brandenburg-Prussia to attack the Swedish Empire. Augustus II, Peter I of Russia, and Frederick IV readily agreed to the plan.

In 1697, Charles XI of Sweden died and his teenage son Charles XII assumed the throne. In 1700, a Saxon army besieged Riga, the Danes attacked the Swedish territory of Holstein, and in short order a Russian army appeared at Estonia's eastern border to besiege Narva. Charles XII with great skill and energy organized Sweden's army and fleet to deal with his enemies. Through quick and daring operations, Charles landed forces in Denmark and forced the Danes out of the coalition. On November 20, 1700, the Swedes inflicted a severe defeat on the vastly numerically superior Russian army at Narva.¹²

Next, Charles turned against the Saxons and after making a daring crossing of the Daugava, the Swedish army defeated the Saxons at Riga. Instead of immediately entering Russia and destroying the remains of the Russian army, Charles entered Poland and spent many futile years trying to install a Polish regime that would be subservient to Sweden. This allowed the Russian military forces to regain strength after Narva. When Charles' army belatedly entered Russia, swinging south to the Ukraine, the vastly outnumbered Swedes were decisively defeated at Poltava in 1709.

By 1710, the Russians had conquered all of Estonia and Latvia. The Great Northern War ended with the Treaty of Nystadt (Uusikaupunki) in 1721. Sweden was forced to cede to Russia all of Estonia, northern Latvia, Ingria, and part of south-eastern Finland. With the treaty of Nystadt, Tsar Peter I guaranteed the local autonomy of the provinces and respected the German institutions and privileges of the nobility. The war had left the Baltic provinces in a state of desolation and ruin. It took nearly a century for Estonia to recover from the destruction wrought by the Great Northern War.¹³

Because of education and knowledge of western ways, the Baltic Germans began to play a key role in the internal administration, foreign policy, and military affairs of the of the backward Russian Empire. The internal affairs of the Baltic provinces were solely controlled by the Baltic Germans, yet in foreign affairs and military policy, Estonia and Latvia were bound to Russian policy.

The Third Partition of Poland in 1795 resulted in the Russian Empire's adding Kurland, Lithuania, and a sizeable portion of Poland to her western territories. Then the Napoleonic Wars and their aftermath were very important for the Baltic provinces because in the period between 1816-1819, serfdom was abolished in Estonia, Livonia, and Kurland.¹⁴ While the Estonians and Latvians gained greater freedom, their economic situation did not improve because they could not readily buy land. The ownership of land remained in the hands of the Baltic Germans.

The Crimean War, 1854-1856, had dramatic influences on the Baltic area. Russia's defeat proved that the empire was economically backward and that it needed to modernize to remain a great power. Consequently, the Tsarist government pushed forward a liberal policy which envisioned an independent Estonian and Latvian farming class. Reforms by the Tsarist government made it possible for peasants to buy land on credit. Yet, there was great impatience with the slowly emerging agricultural reforms. This impatience was manifested by a mass insurrection in the village of Mahtra in June 1858. In the Mahtra insurrection as well as in another similar incident in Harjumaa, manor houses were set on fire and Tsarist troops were called out to restore order. These insurrections were brutally suppressed by the Tsarist authorities. The steady depreciation of Russian currency after the Crimean War helped the Estonian farmers

significantly. For those who were able to buy farms, the depreciation made it much easier to pay their loans while tenant farmers found rents easier to pay. The emerging farming class was also assisted by increased demand for flax caused by the American Civil War.¹⁵ The ones who were able to buy or rent farms established agricultural societies in Tartu, Pärnu, and Viljandi in 1870-1871 to promote modern agricultural methods and to improve the general welfare of the independent farmer. These agricultural societies were quickly followed by dairy, machinery, and consumer cooperatives which greatly strengthened the economic position of the Estonian rural population.¹⁶ By 1900, the Estonians owned about forty percent of privately owned land in Estonia while the Baltic German landlords owned the rest. In Latvia, about four-fifths of the land was still owned by the Baltic Germans in 1900.¹⁷

Another result of the Crimean War was the destruction of the Russian Merchant Marine; this made the Estonians a seafaring nation again. The coastal fishermen became experienced blockade runners and became used to making long ocean voyages. This was significant because Estonians became involved in commercial enterprise and gained greater contact with the outside world.¹⁸

While Estonian commercial enterprise progressed at a slow but steady pace, the prosperity of the agricultural class grew quickly. With the development of a prosperous class of small farmers, Estonia was ready for the national awakening which began in the 1860s. The small farmer and the rural school teacher were the basis of the national awakening. With the new wealth, the farmers were able to send their children to high school and to the university. This new educated class of Estonians formed into a vibrant national intelligentsia. They provided the drive and leadership for the Estonian cultural resurgence which had as its aim national autonomy.¹⁹

The pinnacle of Estonian education was the University of Tartu (Dorpat) which became the national university. It was established by the Swedes in 1632 as the Academia Gustaviana. In 1802, it reopened as a largely German institution; it became an imperial university shortly after its reopening. The University of Tartu developed into the center of Estonian learning. In 1838, an Estonian Learned Society was founded in Tartu and an Estonian Literary Society in Tallinn in 1842.

The effort to develop Estonia's national culture received encouragement from the well-established cultural movement in Finland. The secretary of the Finnish Literary Society, Elias Lönnrot, compiled a collection of 21,800 verses from which he composed the Finnish national epic, *Kalevala*, in 1845. *Kalevala* provided confidence in the intellectual powers of the Finnish people from which a strong national movement was born.

Encouraged by the success of Lönnrot's *Kalevala*, the Estonian physician, Dr. Friedrich Robert Faehlmann, drafted an outline of an Estonian national epic poem based on oral tradition. After his death in 1850, the work was continued by his friend Dr. Friedrich Reinhold Krusevald-Ristmet. The completed work *Kalevipoeg* was published between 1857-1861.²⁰

The national movement continued to gain strength in Estonia. In 1857, Johann Woldemar Jannsen founded the Estonian newspaper *Postimees* [The Courier] which later became the organ of Jaan Tõnisson, an important leader of the national movement. Other Estonian newspapers followed the *Postimees* and became organs of rival political factions. The Eesti Üliõpilaste Selts [The Estonian Students Society] was founded in 1870 to strengthen the solidarity of Estonian intellectuals against Germanization and Russification. The blue-black-white banner of the society would later become the flag of the Estonian republic.²¹

The rapid development of Estonian culture in opposition to German and Russian culture engendered a strong sense of separateness on the part of the Estonians. Estonian nationalists began to look back at the almost mythical golden age in which the country was free of both the Russians and the Germans. In this regard, the national movement received great impetus from the national epic *Kalevipoeg* and its contacts with Finnish nationalists. To be sure, the possibility of national independence began to slowly take root in the consciousness of the Estonian nationalists.²² With this growing sense of national identity the intelligentsia's sense of inferiority to Russian and German culture waned and Estonian national ideology grew stronger. With this new self-confidence Estonia's national movement developed a greater political sophistication. Jaan Tõnisson, a 1892 graduate in law from the University of Tartu, emerged as the

foremost ideologist of the national movement in the late nineteenth century. Tõnisson did not accept Baltic German tutelage, but believed that the Estonians and Baltic Germans could work together towards common Baltic development. On the other hand there were nationalist leaders such as Konstantin Päts and Peter Speek who had little desire to cooperate with the Baltic Germans. They saw the Baltic Germans as a powerful hindrance to the development of the Estonian people. While Tõnisson was mainly concerned with preservation and enhancement of Estonian culture, Päts and Speek were mainly concerned with social and economic questions. They stressed Baltic German oppression, emphasizing the poor conditions of the Estonian lower classes. Päts and Speek proved more receptive to radical and revolutionary ideas. Regardless of differences in outlook between the various nationalist leaders, no strong divisions developed in the nationalist movement. As a whole the national movement became more aware of the world outside of Estonia. The Estonian nationalists began to follow trends in the rest of Europe more carefully and developed a strong awareness of other nationalist movements in the Russian Empire.²³

Collaboration began to take place between the Estonian and Latvian national movements. This collaboration developed mainly from Latvian students attending the University of Tartu and Estonians attending Riga Polytechnic. At these institutions the Baltic students realized that their cause had common interests and that cooperation would strengthen both. This cooperation yielded real results in 1901; an Estonian-Latvian coalition wrested municipal government away from the Baltic Germans in the border town of Valga.²⁴

The year 1904 was successful for the Estonian nationalist movement in northern Estonia. Control of the Tallinn city government went to the Estonians through municipal elections. For tactical reasons the mayor was a Russian but his assistant who in actuality controlled the affairs was the able politician Konstantin Päts. In 1912, Jaan Poska would become the first Estonian mayor of Tallinn.²⁵

While, 1904 was an eventful year in Estonian politics, it was an eventful year in world affairs as well. In 1904, war broke out between Japan and Russia. The war was a result of Russian encroachment into Korea; this threatened the Japanese home islands. After negotiations broke down a Japanese naval

squadron under Admiral Heihachiro Togo attacked the Russian naval base at Port Arthur, resulting in the destruction of most of the Russian Pacific Fleet. Thousands of Estonians were mobilized into the Imperial Army and the ill-fated Russian Baltic Fleet. Many of the future members of the Estonian General Staff were young subalterns in the Russian army and gained military experience fighting in Manchuria.

Although Port Arthur fell to the Japanese, the fighting on land remained for the most part a stalemate. The Russian Baltic Fleet made a most remarkable voyage from Liepaja to the Pacific. However, upon reaching the straits of Tsushima in May 1905, it was destroyed by the Japanese in the greatest naval battle up to that time. The war ended in September 1905, with the Treaty of Portsmouth. The defeat of Russia resulted in widespread upheaval within the Russian Empire.

In January 1905, Russian troops fired on a workers' demonstration in St. Petersburg. This was the beginning of the revolution which shook Russia for the next two years. The revolutionary activity quickly spread from Saint Petersburg to the Baltic provinces. In Estonia, the restlessness grew quickly among the landless peasants and the tenant farmers who were suffering high and uncontrolled rents. The independent farmers were not much better off due to heavy mortgage payments and contributions to maintenance of public roads, for which they paid a greater share than the nobility. Also the rising working class in towns had many grievances. During the general strike in Tallinn in October 1905, the workers in Tallinn demanded the election of a Constituent Assembly, freedom of the press, and the right of assembly. During the disturbances of October in Tallinn, 150 people were killed.

After the Tsar's October 17 manifesto granting universal suffrage, civil rights and greater participatory democracy, a national congress of people's representatives was held in Tartu. The congress split between the moderates led by Jaan Tõnisson whose demands called for agricultural reforms and democratic elections and the radicals led by Jaan Teemant who called for armed resistance to Tsarist authorities.

The October Manifesto allowed for the legal formation of political parties in the Russian Empire. Three major political parties of a moderate hue soon formed in Estonia: the National-Liberty party under

the leadership of Jaan Tõnisson, the Radical party under Konstantin Päts, and the Social Democratic party under Peter Speek, who later emigrated to the United States.²⁶

Another national congress was organized by Konstantin Päts in Tallinn, but it did not take place due to a declaration of martial law in Estonia on December 10, 1905. After this declaration, many of the radicals took to the country and proceeded to loot and burn manor houses often assisted by the local population. The revolt raged for a fortnight, especially in central and western Estonia.²⁷

In December 1905, the Russian government organized punitive expeditions which were sent into Baltic provinces. These punitive expeditions consisted of cossacks and Russian sailors from Kronstadt. These punitive expeditions brutally "pacified" the Baltic provinces. Regardless of the repression, gains were made for the Estonian national movement. The Estonians could now send elected representatives to the newly formed Russian Duma. Indirectly the Baltic Germans caused the goal of autonomy to gain greater acceptance among the Estonian nationalists. Jaan Teemant, who was perhaps one of the most radical of the Estonian nationalists, was mockingly labeled "King Jaan I" by Baltic German notables and the German press in Estonia. In the same mocking fashion, every political meeting where Jaan Teemant was present was dubbed as the "founding of the new Estonian republic." The sarcastic remarks about Estonian autonomy caused many young nationalists to reflect on this idea. The formation of an independent republic took firm root in the minds of the Estonian intelligentsia. The desire to become independent was strengthened by similar movements in Finland, Poland, Armenia, and Georgia.²⁸

In the first Russian Duma of 1906, a block of autonomists and federalists formed. This block, led by Polish nationalists, wanted to protect the rights of the various non-Russian groups. Their vision was to turn the Russian Empire into a federated system. The Estonians participated actively in the autonomist-federalist block. The founder of the Estonian National-Liberty party, Jaan Tõnisson, stressed to the Duma the need for internal autonomy for Estonia to the Duma. With the exception of Valga, all local government was dominated by Baltic German institutions.²⁹

In 1907, the election laws for the Duma were changed in order to provide for a more conservative legislative body. As a result the Poles won fourteen seats instead of thirty seven, and the Estonians received two seats instead of five in the third Duma. The majority of the Duma were Russian chauvinists who wanted to carry out Russification throughout the Russian Empire. At this point, the hopes of advancing Estonian political goals through the Russian system looked rather bleak.³⁰

The lack of prospects for political development within the Russian system strengthened the movement for Estonian independence. For the most part this movement was carried out by exiles and emigrés abroad. In 1904, a nationalities congress initiated by the Finnish nationalists was held in Paris. It was attended by representatives of Poland, Georgia, Armenia, and Latvia. The measures adopted by the Congress were mutual support of autonomist movement, granting of self-determination to peoples in Tsarist Russia, and stout resistance to Russification. The next congress was held in 1912; the Estonians were represented by Alexander Keskküla. This man who had been forced into exile after the 1905 revolution thought that Estonia should become an independent republic only as a last resort. He envisioned Estonia separating from the Russian Empire and becoming part of a confederation of northern countries on the same lines of the Swedish Empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries or the Kalmar Union.

The 1912 congress resolved to establish the *L'Union des Nationalités* which would be managed by a permanent commission of the various delegates. In conjunction with this the Lithuanian nationalist Juozas Gabrys and the French journalist Jean Pelissier began to publish the journal *Les Annales des Nationalités*. These activities made Western European public opinion aware of the plight of nationalities under Tsarist rule. It was becoming clear that lands under Russian rule were more than mere geographic expressions.

With the outbreak of World War I in August 1914, thousands of Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians were mobilized into the armed forces of Imperial Russia. To a certain extent the Baltic people were sympathetic to the Russian war effort. The war was against the Germans whom the Estonians and Latvians saw as their oppressors. Because Tsarist Russia was allied to Britain and France, many

nationalists hoped that at the conclusion of the war Russia would be compelled to carry out democratic reforms and possibly the Baltic provinces would receive autonomous rule.³¹

The Lithuanians and the Finns did not have the same expectations as the Estonians and Latvians. The Finns felt deeply betrayed by Russia because of her violation of Finnish constitutional autonomy. The Lithuanian animosity was directed towards their Russian rulers who had meted out harsh punishment for the insurrections of 1830 and 1863. Another factor was German benevolence toward the attempts to preserve the Lithuanian culture within the boundaries of Eastern Prussia.

Baltic troops were mobilized quickly; mobilization in the Baltic provinces was completed six days earlier than in Russia proper. Fifteen out of every hundred Estonians were mobilized into the Imperial Russian Army. The Baltic contribution to the Tsarist army was substantial. Because of their geo-political position, the Baltic provinces were to bear the heaviest burden of the war.

The hasty Russian advance into East Prussia might have saved France by causing the German defeat in the battle of the Marne, but the battlefields of Tannenberg doomed Russia. It was a defeat from which Russia was never able to recover. Baltic troops had a major role in the doomed offensive in East Prussia. The Russian XX Corps consisted of Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian troops. The XX Corps stabilized the Russian front but suffered heavy casualties early in the offensive, therefore gaining its comparison to Napoleon's Old Guard.

The situation for Russia continuously became worse in the spring and summer of 1915. The German advance continued; Lithuania and Kurland were overrun. During the disorderly retreat of the Russian forces in Kurzeme, two Latvian reserve battalions made a magnificent stand in the defense of Jelgava. These two battalions, which had been trained without authorization, caught the attention of the Russian High Command which soon after considered forming solely Latvian units. On August 8, 1915, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich, commander in chief of the Russian armed forces, signed the order to create elite Latvian units. These were the first Baltic national units.³²

Soon thereafter nine Latvian regiments were raised. Many Estonian and Lithuanian soldiers also served in the ranks of these regiments. Some of these soldiers later became distinguished leaders in their own national armies.³³

These regiments quickly proved their worth. The Latvians were able to hold the German advance to the Daugava. The Latvians became famous for their daring and skillful maneuvers and their employment in desperate offensives. However, the Russians were not able to capitalize on the Latvian feats of arms due to the ineptness of the Russian General Staff and intrigues of influential Baltic German nobles. The Russian command frequently did not bring up reserves or provide artillery support to make costly Latvian breakthroughs a success. The Latvians developed a deep sense of betrayal towards the Russian command. While many of the failures were due to the ineptness and general chaos rampant throughout the Russian military, some also stemmed to a certain extent from deliberate policies. A Russian general remarked, "The more Letts are destroyed, the easier will Russia breathe after."³⁴

After the example of the Latvians, a number of Estonian leaders advocated the formation of Estonian battalions. This was strongly opposed by Jüri Vilms, an Estonian nationalist. He feared that the Estonian regiments would be exploited by the Russians in the same way as the Latvian riflemen.³⁵

The idea of forming Estonian regiments had been considered before. In 1914, the Estonians had proposed to form Estonian battalions at Tartu to serve within the Russian army. However, the Russian High Command had judged the proposal premature and therefore it was not carried out. The first Estonian national unit was not formed until April 1917. However, between 1914 and 1917 approximately 2,132 Estonian officers and 100,000 Estonians of lower ranks served in the Russian army, navy, and air service. Needless to say, this was a considerable number of officers which the small population of Estonia contributed to the Russian military. This large number is even more remarkable because of the difficulty the Estonians had in advancement as non-aristocrats and non-Great Russians. Twelve of these Estonians held the rank of colonel. As with the Estonians, the Lithuanians did not organize national units until 1917. Between 1914 and 1917 approximately 25,000 Lithuanians served in the Russian armed forces.³⁶

Baltic troops also had a role on the Western front in the spring of 1916. The Russian High Command sent four oversized brigades from Arkhangelsk and Vladivostok to France. Two of these brigades were reembarked and sent to the Allied front in Macedonia, at Salonika. The other two remained on the Western front in France. Among the ranks of the Russian forces in France were Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Poles. Some Estonians and Latvians served as part of the Russian Imperial Air Services Mission to France and Italy.³⁷

By the end of 1916, the situation of the Empire had become desperate. Tsar Nicholas II dismissed the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich and assumed personal command of the Russian armed forces, but the Russian military position did not improve. As the Tsar remained at the front commanding Russian forces, internal affairs were being mismanaged by favorites of the Tsarina in Petrograd. Food and fuel shortages were becoming increasingly severe in the cities. Unrest was increasing throughout the Empire. Tsarist Russia was now in its twilight. The situation was now ripe for the establishment of an independent Estonian state. The national movement of nineteenth and early twentieth century was now to reach the ultimate goal of Estonian independence.

NOTES

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CHAPTER 2

ESTONIAN AUTONOMY AND THE BEGINNINGS OF DIPLOMACY

By the beginning of 1917, the Russian Empire reached the verge of revolution. The upper and middle classes had increasingly become defeatist and had lost confidence in the rule of Nicolas II. The situation was well encouraged by the numerous German agents in Petrograd. Dissatisfaction with the Tsar and especially the Tsarina had manifested itself with the murder of the self-styled holy man Gregori Rasputin who was a confidant of the Imperial family. Government affairs were in a terrible state, the Russian Empire had gone bankrupt. In January 1917, a sizeable British-French-Italian Military Mission was sent to Petrograd with the task of trying to reorganize the Russian war effort. The officers of this mission quickly came to the conclusion that a political crisis was imminent and that no one in the Russian government had the capability or fortitude to stave off the coming upheaval.¹

By end of February 1917, food and fuel were desperately short in the cities of the Russian Empire. Food prices were increasing rapidly and queues were becoming greater in length. By that time the railway system had totally collapsed. This situation led to the so-called February revolution which had its beginning with bread riots along the Nevskii Prospekt and the revolt of the Preobrazhenski Guard in Petrograd. With Tsarist authority in collapse, a provisional government was formed under the presidency of Prince Georgi Lvov. When the Tsar, who was in Pskov, was made aware of the situation, he abdicated the throne to Grand Duke Michael on March 15 (March 2, old style Julian calender). In turn, Grand Duke Michael renounced the regency pending convocation of a constituent assembly which would decide the form of government.²

The provisional government became caught between the politicians of the Duma who were already in place in the Tsarist political establishment and the workers' and soldiers' councils (Soviets) who represented chiefly leftist groups. The rising star of the provisional government was the young Socialist

Revolutionary lawyer, Alexander Kerensky. He was able to bridge the gap through his political skills between conservative Duma deputies and extremists in the Soviets. Kerensky played an increasingly central and tragic role in the Russian apocalypse.³

During this period, the Estonian nationalists did not remain inactive. On March 22, (new style Gregorian calendar) representatives of political and social organizations in Tallinn formed the Eesti Liit [Estonian League]. This league consisted of a council and executive committee. All political parties participated in it. The league's task was to cooperate with the Russian provisional government in order to carry out its decrees in Estonia. In particular, its task was to pave the way for self-government.⁴ Two days later a meeting of the representatives of social organizations took place in Tartu. The social organizations decided to demand that all Estonian counties should be united and that radical reform of local government take place. The local governing bodies were at that time organs of the Baltic German nobility.

In Petrograd where there was a large Estonian colony as well as approximately 16,000 Estonian soldiers in the city's garrison, an organization was formed and an agenda was put forward. The demands of the Petrograd Estonians were considerably more radical than those from Tartu and Tallinn. They wanted total independence for Estonia from Russia, except in the area of foreign and military policy.⁵

On March 31, 1917, a delegation from the Eesti Liit in Tallinn arrived in Petrograd with a plan for implementation of self-government. The delegation was sent from one commission to another. The Russian provisional government's Deputy Minister of Interior, B. M. Stsepkin, tried to bring about the rejection of the scheme. He argued that autonomy could only be brought about with the approval of an all Russian constituent assembly which could not be held in the near future. The members of the delegation stressed that what Estonia needed was provisional self-government and that because the zemstvos (local self-government bodies created in Russia during the reign of Alexander II) did not exist in Estonia and Livonia, delay could not be tolerated. The Estonian population of Petrograd came to the assistance of the delegation. An impressive demonstration was organized on April 8. A massive parade marched on the Tauride Palace to make these demands known. In this demonstration 15,000 Estonian soldiers marched in

regimental order. They were accompanied by professionals and workmen. The procession which stretched more than a mile and a half moved toward the seat of the provisional government, with hundreds of blue, black, and white flags flying, bands playing, and choruses singing national songs. The Russians were highly impressed with the order and dimension of the demonstration.⁶

The demonstration brought almost immediate results. On April 12, 1917, the Russian provisional government endorsed the law drafted by Estonian leaders for the autonomy of Estonia. This law joined the counties of Tartu, Võrumaa, Pärnu, and Saaremaa, which were part of Livonia, to Estonia. The Latvian portion of Livonia remained untouched. Estonia was to be under the authority of a commissar appointed by the provisional government. Under the commissar there was to be an Estonian national council (Maanõukogu) to conduct governmental affairs which included tax collection, tax assessment, and the implementation of the decrees of the Russian government. Every county in Estonia would also have its own district council (Maakonna Nõukogu). The Russian Provisional Government appointed Jaan Poska, an eminent Petrograd lawyer and Mayor of Tallinn, to be Commissar for Estonia.⁷

The Estonians had pressed their demand for autonomy at an opportune time. Though the demands were quite modest, they still had to be wrested from the provisional government. As the provisional government's authority declined, it was willing to concede less to the nationalities. A member of the Russian provisional government stated, "Had you [the Estonians] come a little later you would have not got so much." The Latvians, who pressed their demands later, gained less.⁸

The new self-government law and the appointment of Jaan Poska as commissar pleased the Estonians. However, there was strong resentment from others, notably the Baltic barons and the Russian Chinovniks.⁹ The new law abolished the feudal Landtags which had controlled local government; thus affairs were no longer in the hands of the Baltic Germans. The Russian bureaucrats were now being replaced by more competent Estonians in various government bureaus.

Soon after Poska assumed his post, B. M. Stsepkin informed him that there were complaints against him from Russians living in Estonia. These Russians claimed that Poska was "endangering the

relations between different nationalities.¹⁰ They demanded that a Russian be appointed Commissar for Estonia. It was well known that a group of Chinovniks was behind the campaign to defame Poska.

Another route for the Chinovniks to attack Poska was through the Tallinn Workers and Soldiers Soviet. The Tallinn Soviet consisted of Russian shipyard workers, soldiers from the local garrison, and sailors from the Baltic fleet and the naval fortress. For the various defense industries some 15,000 Russians had been imported into Estonia.¹¹ From the beginning the Russians in the Soviet had been afflicted with Bolshevism; their attitude was thus biased against the Estonian self-government. Thus, the jingoist Russian officials found the Soviet a useful tool to serve their own ends.

When Jaan Poska appointed Jüri Jaakson Assistant Commissar for Estonia, Potapov, a minor Russian bureaucrat, proposed to the Soviet that a protest to the Provisional Government should be lodged against the appointment. The proposal was accepted by the Soviet. This was the first interference of a Russian organ into the government affairs of Estonia. Poska stood firmly behind the appointment and the Soviet backed down.¹²

The Soviet became bolder and demanded that Poska should resign and that all power should be vested in the Soviet. Elections took place for the Maanõukogu on May 23, and the new government assumed power in July under Poska's authority. This took place despite the Soviet's demands. Strong resistance mounted in the Estonian countryside against the Soviet's threats. The government bodies in provincial cities sent numerous telegrams to the Provisional Government protesting the Soviet's interference in Estonian affairs. The Provisional Government sent representatives to Tallinn to try to straighten out the matters. However, by this time the influence of the Provisional Government was waning and the efforts had little effect. It was the threat from the Estonian countryside to cut off communication with Tallinn, which most likely had the strongest impact on the Soviet.¹³

With the continued chaos within the Russian Empire and break-down of the discipline in the Russian army facing the German juggernaut, the Estonian leaders were now comforted with the prospect of raising Estonian military forces. As stated previously, the Estonians were wary of forming military units

because of the experience of the Latvian regiments who were deployed recklessly by the Russian High Command and suffered terrible losses. Yet, organization of Estonian military units was already started spontaneously by Estonian soldiers themselves. Estonian soldiers' bureaus were organized simultaneously in Tallinn and Petrograd.¹⁴

Chiefly through the efforts of naval Lieutenant William Tomingas and Johan Pitka, a sea captain, who would become commander of the Estonian navy, ground work began for the formation of Estonian military units. Tomingas felt that the opportunity to organize Estonian soldiers should be seized before it was too late. If this was undertaken, the national units could hopefully defend their own country, for the local population would be more than glad to see their own soldiers providing order and security. Jaan Tõnisson who was against forming regiments because of the sad experience of the Latvians came to share Tomingas' conclusions. Support grew in the Estonian press and in political circles for the formation of Estonian regiments. The Russian military and naval commanders at Tallinn, Colonel K. Kostandi, a Greek, and Rear-Admiral P.N. Leskov, supported the undertaking and through them permission was received from the Provisional Government's minister of war.¹⁵

On April 25, 1917, Colonel Sigfried Pinding, a Baltic German from Estonia, was named head of the First Estonian Regiment at the Tallinn fortification. The organization of the First Regiment was highly successful. A disciplined unit now manned the Tallinn fortification. Colonel Kostandi wanted to raise a second Estonian regiment. However, due to a bureaucratic foul-up a Colonel Homjakov began to raise another Russian regiment instead. When the Estonians demanded that this regiment be disbanded, Homjakov immediately went to the Tallinn Soviet where he received the support of the Chinovniks and Bolsheviks.¹⁶

The Tallinn Soviet verbally attacked the Estonian regiment and on April 29, demanded that it be disbanded. This request was passed on to the Petrograd Soviet along with false telegrams to the Provisional Government claiming that the Regiment had caused a bloody incident in Tallinn on May 1. In actuality, companies of the regiment had participated in a May Day parade and had made a great impression on the

population and the Soviet because of their well-disciplined presence. Because of the reported "incidents," Kerensky, who was now the Provisional Government's minister of war, considered disbanding the Estonian regiment. However, the assistant Minister of War, N. N. Jakubovitch, came up with a compromise solution to the problem; the Estonian Regiment was to be moved from Tallinn to Rakvere. In this provincial city the regiment could organize well and develop discipline and unity. Colonel Alexander Tõnisson was appointed to be the new commander.¹⁷ Although Estonian soldiers came from all parts of the Russian Empire to Rakvere, the Provisional Government hesitated to grant permission for the formation of a new regiment due to the opposition of the Tallinn Soviet.

In addition to the soldiers bureaus in Tallinn and Petrograd, Estonian soldiers' organizations were formed in Finland, in the XII Army on the Riga front, and on the Roumanian front. These organizations which had developed separately of each other began to cooperate more towards common goals.¹⁸ By the end of summer 1917, the Provisional Government finally allowed additional regiments. New regiments began to take shape in Tartu, Viljandi, and Haapsalu. As the Russian army disintegrated, the Russian military authorities found the resolve and discipline of the Estonian regiments a pleasing exception. Thus, the Russian High Command gave permission to form an Estonian division with Colonel Johan Laidoner as commander. However, the newly formed division came into existence too late to do much in defense of Estonia when the Germans landed on the Estonian archipelago in Autumn 1917. The formation of the Estonian Division, though, had laid the groundwork for organization of a national armed forces.¹⁹

Because of the Russian High Command's hesitation to form additional regiments, the difficult struggle to gain the use of the Estonian language in schools, and the increasing resistance of Russian officialdom to Estonian self-government the Estonians began to lose faith in the Provisional Government. The systematic vacillation on the nationality question in which the Provisional Government would yield at weak moments only to renege on promises on the passing of the crisis caused the Estonians to distrust it. Discontent grew among the Estonian population. Total separation of Estonia seemed necessary; a federal arrangement within the Russian Empire no longer seemed possible.²⁰

In addition to this, the population was growing increasingly tired of being menaced by the Russian hooligans of the Tallinn Soviet. The Soviet could in no way be considered an effective government body. As time went on, its sessions degenerated into anarchy. The meeting of the Soviet often erupted into gigantic brawls. While the Soviet began with all Russian parties represented, it ended being mainly Bolshevik. Throughout its active life it was almost totally a Russian organization.²¹

Alexander Keskküla, who in 1917 was cooperating with the Germans in his revolutionary plots, urged the German minister, Conrad Gisbert von Romberg, in Bern, Switzerland, to inform the General Staff to send Lenin (Vladimir Ilich Ulianov) back to Russia. Keskküla recognized Lenin, who was in exile in Switzerland, as a ruthless revolutionary organizer who had the best chance of toppling the Provisional Government and knocking Russia out of the war. Through Keskküla's arrangement Lenin and other revolutionaries were supplied with German money and sent through Germany in a sealed railway carriage to the Baltic coast, onward to Sweden and Finland, and arrived in Petrograd on April 16, 1917.²²

On September 1, 1917, the Germans who had launched a new offensive broke through the Russian lines on the Daugava and captured Riga. The Germans planned to use Riga as a base of operations against Petrograd. In order to do this they needed to control the sea lanes to Riga. The entrance to the Gulf of Riga was dominated by coastal guns on the island of Saaremaa. Thus, the next step for the Germans was the capture of the Estonian islands.²³ Estonia was now in imminent danger of German invasion. On October 12, 1917, a sizeable German landing force, supported by the German Baltic fleet as well as airplanes and zeppelins landed on Saaremaa. The Russians were taken totally by surprise; the Russian military which was in the latter stages of disintegration could do little to resist the invasion.

The Germans quickly overran Saaremaa and Hiiumaa. Finally the Estonian division after much vacillation by the Russian command was ordered to defend the island of Muhu. By this time it was too late and the Estonian division suffered heavy casualties in trying fruitlessly to stem the German advance. By October 18, all three of the large Estonian islands were in German control.²⁴ The inability of the Russian government to deal in a timely manner with the German invasion of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa provided greater

rationale for Estonian independence. The Maanõukogu began to demand from the Provisional Government that it be included in the discussions of military affairs.

After the German landings, panic seized the Russian military forces. Hoards of demoralized Russian soldiers and sailors began to stream out of Estonia, looting the country on the way. The Maanõukogu made a formal protest against this devastation to the Russian Provisional Government as well as to the representatives of the Allied powers in Petrograd. On October 29, 1917, Antonius Piip, a professor of international law at the University of Petrograd, expressed the protests of the Maanõukogu to representatives of Great Britain, France, the United States, and Belgium. This was the beginning of Estonian foreign policy. Piip did not receive replies to these protests; he speculated that they were forwarded back to the various foreign offices as intelligence on the disintegration of the Russian Empire.²⁵

This was a small step but it was the first contact between the Estonians and foreign governments. Whether they liked it or not, the Estonian nationalist leaders were now involved in world affairs. With the occupation of the islands, Estonia became an object of international interest. For the Estonians it became necessary to prevent the division of their nation at the peace settlement concluding the war. Toward this end and for more practical reasons, the Maanõukogu formed two committees for contact with the islands, one in Tallinn and one in Petrograd. The refugees from Saaremaa and Hiiumaa also formed their own committee and established contact with the remaining population on the islands through the Red Cross Societies of Russia and Sweden.²⁶

While cautiously developing relations with the Allied governments, the Estonians also began to develop contacts with the Finnish nationalists. Gustav Suits, an Estonian social-democrat, forwarded the idea of a Finnish-Estonian union. This was looked upon with some interest in Finland. The Finnish independence club "Uusi Päivä" established a mixed commission of Finns and Estonians to encourage closer relations. On September 7, 1917, Jaan Tõnisson advocated a union of Finnic people as part of a larger Baltic-Scandinavian union as the best solution of the Baltic problem.²⁷

The Estonians and Latvians cooperated closely at the conference of Russian minorities which was held from September 21 to 28, 1917. Estonia was represented by Antonius Piip. He developed a good working relationship with the Latvian representative Zigfrids Anna Meierovics. Piip envisioned Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania becoming a regional unit.²⁸

However, not all relations between Estonians and Latvians were good. After the fall of Riga, the Latvian rifle regiments, left without a homeland, became increasingly favorable to the Bolsheviks. Yet, unlike Russian Bolshevik military formations, they maintained their discipline. In the fall of 1917, a number of Latvian Bolshevik regiments had retreated to Tartu and tried to establish control over the whole district. The Latvians raided the offices of the Estonian newspaper *Postimees* and jailed the editor Jaan Tõnisson. The Estonian regiment, formed near Tartu, released Tõnisson and restored the newspaper. The Latvians had fortified the Tartu fire station. Fighting in Tartu was barely averted.²⁹ These incidents left bad feelings among the Estonians towards Latvians. These and other Latvian Bolshevik regiments began to move to the interior of Russia.

Determined to take power, Lenin carefully organized the Bolshevik forces in Petrograd. On the night of November 6-7, 1917, the Red Guards staged a putsch in Petrograd. Government buildings were seized, the members of the Provisional Government were forced to flee, and the Bolsheviks came into power.³⁰ The Bolsheviks now ruled the capital of the Russian Empire. Soon after, a secret police, the CHEKA,³¹ was organized under the Polish nobleman Felix Dzerzhinsky. The Latvian Regiments became the core of the Red army which was being organized by Leon Trotsky. (Lev Bronstein).³²

After the putsch in Petrograd, the executive committee of the Tallinn Soviet wanted to gain control over Estonia as the Bolsheviks ruled Petrograd. They saw that the time and opportunity had come to dissolve the Maanõukogu. Despite the Bolshevik terror and threats the Maanõukogu met on November 15, 1917. The Maanõukogu proclaimed itself the highest authority in Estonia and that all orders and directives would be void unless issued by lawful Estonian authorities. This was the last public meeting of an Estonian governing body until November 1918. The activities of the Estonian leaders were forced

underground. Although the Bolsheviks controlled Tallinn, they could not rule the whole country because the Russian forces in Estonia were not strong enough. In the small towns and countryside the Estonians remained in control and the Maavalitsus continued to function.³³

Despite the ending of public meetings of the Maanõukogu on November 15, 1917, the body continued its activities. The Maanõukogu's Vanematekogu [Elder Council of the National Council] met in secret with Estonian leaders and representatives of all non-Bolshevik parties and Estonian military leaders present. The increasing danger posed by the Bolsheviks and Germans was the main topic of these meetings.³⁴

With the reinforcement of the Bolsheviks at Tartu by Russian soldiers and sailors from Tallinn, Jaan Tõnisson was again taken prisoner. Colonel Alexander Tõnisson, the commander of the first Estonian Regiment was made captive as well. Jaan Tõnisson was released by the Bolsheviks on the condition that he leave Estonia. The Vanematekogu took advantage of this and named Tõnisson to be the Maanõukogu's representative abroad. With the release of Jaan Tõnisson on December 6, 1917, Estonia had her first diplomatic representative.³⁵ He went to Petrograd where he met with representatives of the Estonian committee, on to Finland to establish contact with the newly independent government, and finally to Sweden. Colonel Tõnisson was not released at this time. However, he was released later and became the commander of the Estonian First Division.³⁶

The Bolsheviks in Petrograd were also taking their first steps into diplomacy. On December 26, 1917, Trotsky made formal application to the German High Command for an immediate armistice. On December 2, negotiations between Germany and the Russian Bolsheviks opened at the Polish city of Brest-Litovsk.³⁷

The Estonians had an immediate interest in the armistice negotiations between the Bolsheviks and Germans because of the occupation of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa. Neither side considered the interests of the Estonians in the negotiations. The main concern of the Bolsheviks was safeguarding and consolidating

their power in Petrograd while the main concern of the Germans was gaining as many resources as possible in the east for their strained war economy.

The Baltic Germans were also active during the peace negotiations. Meeting in Riga, the Baltic German leaders called for secession of Estonia and Livonia from the Russian Empire. They planned to establish a state along the lines of the Livonian confederation, which would become an ally of Germany.³⁸

It became clear to the Vanematekogu that Estonia had no choice but to become an independent state. Because the Allied powers professed to support the self-determination of nations, the Allies' benevolence was essential. Support of Estonian independence by the Allied powers at the peace settlement was the best guarantee for Estonia's future. Thus, five delegates were appointed by the Vanematekogu to make contact with the Allied powers.

Members of the Foreign Delegation.

Rarely in diplomatic history have diplomatic delegates been so representative of a society as were Estonia's first seven diplomats. Jaan Tõnisson, who was already in Stockholm by January 1918, was a leader of a political party as well as a newspaper editor. Ferdinand Kull, who later followed the five member foreign delegation, was a Tallinn businessman. The remaining five delegates, were Eduard Virgo a journalist, Mihkel Martna, a social democratic city councillor of Tallinn, Karl Menning, a pastor, and Antonius (Ants) Piip, a professor of international law at the University of Petrograd, and Kaarel Robert Pusta, a young journalist, who was to become Estonia's premier professional diplomat.³⁹ Piip and Pusta were key figures in the beginnings of Estonian diplomacy. Unlike, many of Estonia's other early diplomats, they remained actively involved in the nation's foreign policy after the struggle for independence concluded. Another key figure in the beginnings of Estonian diplomacy was Jaan Poska. He did not leave Estonia with the Foreign Delegation in February 1918, but he joined Piip and Pusta in Paris on January 3, 1919, as head of the Estonian delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. In December 1919, he became the head of the Estonian delegation in peace negotiations with the Bolsheviks at Tartu. Unfortunately, Poska

did not continue his diplomatic activities after the conclusion of peace. He died prematurely on March 9, 1920.

Jaan Poska was born on December 1, 1866. He was the son of the parish clerk of the Laius Orthodox Church. Because of his father's position in the Orthodox Church, he was brought up in the traditional Russian fashion; at home he spoke Russian with his family. Jaan Poska's childhood was a difficult one; he was one of twelve children and his father made a meager salary. Unfortunately, his father died at the age of forty-six and the family had to move from Laius to Tartu.

After Poska completed a gymnasium in Tartu, he began to study at the orthodox seminary in Riga. This was in accordance with his father's wishes; furthermore, there was no charge for this study. However, the priesthood did not suit Poska; thus he quit the seminary and returned to Tartu. He obtained a job with the Orthodox Church as a tutor in religious subjects. This allowed Poska to earn money for his family as well as to study for entrance exams for the University of Tartu. Poska passed the exams and began to study medicine. Because the course of study for medicine was lengthy, he changed to law after a year. This allowed him to complete his studies in three years. After his graduation in 1890, Poska took a position with a Tallinn law firm. In the beginning Poska was not well accepted in the legal community which was dominated by the Baltic Germans. However, he won the respect of his colleagues through his hard work and ability.⁴⁰

He proceeded to build his own successful law practice in Tallinn and Saint Petersburg. Poska, unlike Lenin, was very successful as a barrister; he was counsel in the highest courts of the Russian Empire. In 1904, he was elected to Tallinn's municipal government as city attorney. During the turmoil of 1905, Poska was imprisoned for a short time. This would not affect his political career; in 1912 Poska was elected mayor of Tallinn. The municipal government thrived under Poska's broadminded leadership. He accomplished much in education, public health, and social welfare. During Poska's tenure as mayor, the municipal water and sewage system was expanded and improved, a legal aid society was established, public housing became available, and a commercial school for women was opened.⁴¹

After the February Revolution Poska was named Commissar of the Estonian province. He remained Commissar until the Bolshevik putsch in Petrograd, after which he was forced to leave his position. Poska was then elected as Estonian representative to the all Russian Constituent Assembly in Petrograd which met only once in January 1918.

During the time he was in Petrograd in January 1918, Poska and Antonius Piip began the preliminary phases of Estonian diplomacy by establishing contact with the British, French, Belgian and American representatives.⁴² Poska's collaborator in Petrograd, Antonius Piip was born on February 28, 1884, in the Tuhalaane district in Viljandimaa. He was the son of an independent small farmer who became reasonable wealthy in the period following the Crimean War. Piip first attended local parish schools and then the Goldingen Seminary. After completing the seminary, Piip entered the teaching profession. From 1903-05 he taught at the parish school in Marienburg. From 1905-12 he taught school on Saaremaa, first at the Nikolai Orthodox Church parish school and later at Kuresaare's nautical school. From 1913-15 he taught at Janson's school of commerce in Saint Petersburg.

On the island of Saaremaa, Piip was an active member of the community. He helped found the Eesti Selts [Estonian Association] and was its president from 1908-12. He also participated in the founding of a cooperative credit union, Kuresaare's Seamen's Association, mutual insurance company (Mereabi), and Saaremaa's teacher's league.

In 1907 he passed his gymnasium equivalency exam and entered Saint Petersburg University to study law. To supplement his studies he spent a year at the University of Berlin. Piip graduated from the University of Saint Petersburg in 1913. From 1913-16 he conducted research on a scholarship at the same institution, and in 1916 he passed his examination for a master's degree in international law. Piip became a private docent at the University of Saint Petersburg. At the same time he worked for the Russian government, first in the Ministry of Justice and then in the Ministry of Interior.

Piip was an accomplished journalist and writer as well. He wrote for the newspaper *Virulane*, was editor of Kuresaare's newspaper *Hääl* [Voice], and briefly editor in chief of the *Vaba Maa* [Free County]. He

was also editor for five editions of the *Mere Kalender ja Almanac* [Marine Calendar and Almanac]. Piip wrote numerous articles on law, international affairs, and maritime affairs which were published in Estonian, Russian, French, and English newspapers and journals. His associate Kaarel Robert Pusta was an accomplished journalist as well.⁴³

The early experience of Pusta is significant not only as preparation for his diplomatic career, but because of its similarity to many others involved in the national movement before Estonian independence. Kaarel Robert Pusta was born in Narva on February 17, 1883. His father a railway worker, took a position at Kehra, in Harjumaa, where young Pusta spent most of his childhood. From an early age Pusta was an avid reader; he read all Estonian books available in his home as well as in the neighboring farms of Kehra. He learned Russian from the railwaymen at Kehra station and began to read Russian as well.⁴⁴

At age seven he began his education at the parish school in Kehra. Besides reading and arithmetic, singing was an important subject in Estonian schools. Both the parish schools of the country and Russian ministerial schools in the cities stressed singing. This was done for different goals but the result was the same; song played an important part in the lives of the Estonian people. Pusta felt that if Estonia had not been a "singing nation," the Estonian people would have lacked the self-confidence necessary for the rapid development towards independence. The large song festivals and numerous choirs played an important role in the national movement.⁴⁵ Pusta spent only a year at the Kehra school. The schoolmaster recommended that Pusta continue further studies at home. His father found him tutors among the personnel at the railway station.

In the summer of 1896, Alexander Tamm, a teacher at the ministerial school in Tallinn visited Kehra. Impressed with Pusta's superior abilities, Tamm asked Pusta's parents to send their son to school in Tallinn. The Pustas were of modest means and it was difficult to support it. It was only with the assistance of Tamm that Kaarel Robert Pusta was able to attend school in Tallinn.⁴⁶ In Tallinn Pusta successfully completed his education. During his studies he even found time to have an article published in the Estonian magazine *Valgus*.⁴⁷

After leaving school, Pusta became a private teacher in Tallinn. During his spare time he read the works of Samuel Smiles, Herder, Heine, Goethe, Rousseau, and Spinoza. Through Alexander Tamm, Pusta became involved in nationalist and revolutionary activities. He became involved with "Lindanisa," Tallinn's students' friendship association, and the "Russian Literary Circle" in Tallinn.

"Lindanisa" was an organization which promoted the teaching of the Estonian language in the gymnasium and provided public lectures on Estonian literature. This organization of young Estonians developed into a revolutionary cell where Marx was studied and discussed. Its members argued about the merits of being a Bolshevik, Menshevik, or Social Revolutionary. The "Russian Literary Circle" consisted of liberal Russian officials who felt that Russia was coming out of the "ice age" and was heading towards democracy. These men were interested in mixing with Estonian society. Their hope was to establish a liberal newspaper for Estonian society which was written in Russian. The paper appeared for a while but was unsuccessful.⁴⁸

Pusta also came in contact with other Russian intellectuals who formed another literary society. These intellectuals had fled St. Petersburg and were revolutionaries rather than liberal bureaucrats. In this group, Pusta made the acquaintance of Mikkail Kalinin, the future president of the U.S.S.R. Despite his involvement with revolutionaries, Pusta was not a socialist. Pusta was a religious man; he could be best described as a liberal nationalist. His role in the revolutionary cell was mainly that of an observer. However, his minor revolutionary activities caught the attention of the Russian authorities. He was arrested after a search of Pusta's parents' house by gendarmes revealed a copy of the "Erfurt Programme" which Pusta had considered translating into Estonian. The police had become suspicious of Pusta after Otto Sternbeck and he were seen distributing revolutionary fliers in an industrial district of Tallinn.⁴⁹

Pusta was first incarcerated in the prison on Vene Street in Tallinn. The prison was notorious for poor food and sanitary conditions but he noted that, "political prisoners were really treated politely." Food, linens, books, and a lamp were brought from home. Pusta studied French from books which Alexander Tamm brought him.

Pusta was moved to the detention center in St. Petersburg which was the best in Russia. The food was tolerable and the library was well stocked. There he read the works of Puskin, Lermontov, Nekrassov, Gogol, Goncharov, Turgenev, Chekhov, Seller-Mikhailov, and Tolstoy. Pusta was sentenced to a year in prison but because of an amnesty due to the birth of an heir to the throne, he was set free after a few months. On his return to Tallinn, Pusta was kept under police surveillance. After a while he felt it was necessary to go abroad. Like many other exiles he decided to go to Paris.

Pusta left the Russian Empire illegally. He made his way to the Lithuanian-Prussian border where illegal flight, entrance, and book and paper smuggling were rife. He was smuggled out by a system arranged for the Hamburg-America Line to smuggle illegal Lithuanian emigrants to the United States. From Tilsit, Pusta made his way to Paris, meeting an Estonian fellow traveler in Berlin. Pusta was surprised by the lack of passports, checkpoints, and police registration in Western Europe.⁵⁰

In Paris, Pusta met up with Eduard Virgo who was taking journalism courses at the Sorbonne. Soon he made the acquaintance of other members of the small Estonian colony in Paris. These included Alexander Promet and Jaan Koort who were art students, Ado Grenztein, a minor inventor, and Andres Dido (Tiido) who operated a language institute in his own apartment. Dido had been in Paris for fifteen years at the time of Pusta's arrival. He had been exiled for advocating Estonian independence. Dido was perhaps the first to publicly support this idea in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Often the Estonians met at Dido's apartment for political discussions. He was a radical socialist but he wanted no ties with the Russian socialist movement. Dido felt that the Russians should leave Estonia and put their own house in order. This became the line of the newspaper *Õigus* [Truth] which he printed in Paris at his own expense.⁵¹

In Paris Pusta lived a bohemian life. He attended lectures and seminars at the Russian Advanced Social Sciences Institute and went to political discussions at the Cafe Soufflot. Pusta found life in Paris to be too boisterous for serious work and study. Therefore, he left France for Switzerland. He made his way to Berne where he found order and the knowledge that in Berne there was nothing to do but work.⁵²

However, Pusta's residence in Switzerland was cut short. Upon hearing of the 1905 revolution in the Russian Empire and the Tsar's granting of various liberties, he decided to return to Estonia. Making his way to East Prussia, he was again assisted by Lithuanian smugglers in crossing the frontier. Arriving in Tartu, Pusta was able to obtain a legal passport from a sympathetic official. He then returned to Tallinn and took a position on the editorial staff of the newspaper *Virulane*.

Pusta's artist friend, Alexander Promet, also returned to Estonia. The young journalist became interested in Promet's model, Ulrike Grunberg. They were engaged and married in the autumn of 1906. He continued on the *Virulane*, writing mainly on foreign affairs until 1908, when he ran afoul of the censors. Threatened with arrest, he went to St Petersburg and began to attend courses at the "Palme" Association's trade school. Upon completing the courses, Pusta took a position at a lumber mill in Slavjanka on the Neva River. However, he soon returned to St Petersburg and took a new position at the Nevskii Bank.

In the spring of 1910, Pusta was asked by Georg Luiga to join the staff of the newspaper *Päevaleht* [The Daily] in Tallinn. After some hesitation, he consented and returned to Tallinn. He remained on the staff of *Päevaleht* until 1914, when he opened his own print shop. Together with Eduard Virgo, Pusta published a weekly, *Tallinna Elu* [Life in Tallinn].. This continued until 1915, when he was mobilized into the Russian army. In the same year Ulrike Pusta sold the print shop.⁵³

Pusta became a non-commissioned officer in the Russian army's construction organization. He became a supply officer in a unit which built and maintained military roads behind the Polish front. By 1916, his unit no longer had axes, saws, shovels, picks, harnesses, horseshoes, and wire. He travelled to supply depots all over the Russian Empire to obtain these desperately needed items. In the autumn of 1916, Pusta was sent to Batum where a military railway was being built to Tregisont. He remained there until February 1917, when revolution broke out. He made contact with other Estonian soldiers in Caucasia through the Tiflis Estonian Soldiers Committee. Pusta received a telegram from Colonel Ernst Põdder requesting him to return to Estonia and become head of the economic administration for the Estonian

regiment. He returned to Estonia and was appointed by the Maanõukogu as inspector of the food supply committee.⁵⁴

The role of the food supply committee was simply to maintain the nation's food supply, to arrange the import and export of foodstuffs, and chiefly to prevent looting by the demoralized Russian soldiers and sailors on their way to Petrograd. As part of his duties as food inspector he traveled to Helsinki and made contact with the Finnish Food Committee. He arranged the sale of Estonian potatoes to the Finns. The trip to Finland was a perilous one; Pusta traveled on the small vessel *Tarmo* across the gulf of Finland through a winter storm. Despite the difficulties, his trip to Finland was a successful one. Pusta and a delegation of Estonians were able to meet with Pehr Svinhufvud, the Finnish Prime Minister, as well as other Finnish leaders. Through Svinhufvud's government Jaan Tõnisson was able to obtain a passport to travel to Sweden.⁵⁵

When Pusta returned to Tallinn, he was informed that he was chosen to be a member of the Foreign Delegation. He received a document accrediting him as a representative of the Maanõukogu. While the delegates' credentials were hastily drawn up, a memorandum from the Maanõukogu was written in the same hasty fashion. The first task of the Foreign Delegation was to translate the memorandum into English and French. Each delegate was given 13,000 Kerensky rubles. On February 1, 1918, the Foreign Delegation departed for Finland.⁵⁶

When the Foreign Delegation reached Finland, civil war had broken out and a Bolshevik government under Otto Tokoi had come to power in Helsinki. As in any civil war, there was considerable foreign involvement. German agents agitated both among the Bolsheviks and pro-German elements. The German General Staff arranged for the return of the Jägers to Finland in December of 1917.⁵⁷ The Finnish Red forces were armed by the Russian Bolsheviks and were in part led by Russian commissioned and non-commissioned officers. There were considerable numbers of "Russian volunteers" in the ranks of the Red forces. The Red artillery supplied by the Russians was wholly under Russian command.⁵⁸

The Estonians, however, maintained fairly good relations with the Red government in Helsinki. It was the position of the Foreign Delegation that the civil war was an internal Finnish affair and that they would deal with whoever was currently in power. Mihkel Martna, who was in Helsinki before the other members of the delegation, maintained close relations with Bolshevik Foreign Commissar Yrjö Sirola. Sirola conceded that the Estonian Foreign Delegation was a bourgeois organ, but because it was an internal Estonian matter, the Foreign Commissar granted certificates of transit through Red Finland.⁵⁹

Because of the fighting, travel between Helsinki and Stockholm had been disrupted. The delegation found a communal apartment and waited until transport could be arranged. In Stockholm, Jaan Tõnisson was able to arrange their passage to Sweden with the help of the Swedish Foreign Minister, Johannes Hellner. The Foreign Delegation was to be taken by the Swedish navy to Sweden from the harbor in Mäntyluotto. However, as they waited at Mäntyluotto, one of the two small ships coming to pick up refugees floundered on ice and sank on the way into the harbor. They were informed by the Swedish officer in charge that he had orders to pick up the Foreign Delegation, but he could only take women and children since the other vessel had sunk. Only Hilda Tõnisson who was accompanying the Foreign Delegation, was able to gain passage to Sweden.⁶⁰

Because of the continuing civil war, Swedish forces began to occupy the Åland (Ahvenamaa) Islands. This was done to protect the population which was mostly Swedish and for strategic purposes to protect the sea lanes to Stockholm. Because of this, the Foreign Delegation decided to cross the ice on the Gulf of Bothnia on sleighs and make contact with the Swedes in the Ålands. Entering the Ålands, they were told by the Swedish soldiers to go to the town of Eckeros where the Swedish navy had broken the ice and had ships in the harbor. When they arrived in Eckeros they were aghast when they saw the German dreadnought *Rhineland* and several German transports but only one Swedish ship. The forces of General Count Rüdiger von der Goltz had begun their intervention in the Finnish civil war. Upon interrogation by the German authorities, the Foreign Delegation learned that German forces had occupied all of Estonia after negotiations had broken down at Brest-Litovsk. The Estonian diplomats told the Germans that the purpose

of their mission was to make contact with the occupied islands. Since this was no longer necessary, the Germans told them they would be put on a German transport and taken to Danzig where they could return to Estonia. The Estonians insisted that they had to go to Stockholm to meet up with the head of their delegation.

On the next day the Swedish gunboat *Svenskund* appeared in Eckeros harbor. Pusta and Menning were able to talk to the captain of the Swedish boat who radioed back to Stockholm for instructions. The captain was instructed to bring them aboard and take them to Stockholm. Once aboard the *Svenskund* the Estonians were greatly relieved. From the German point of view, they were on an espionage mission which could have ended in a field trial and execution.⁶¹

The continuation of the Estonian diplomatic activity and survival of the Estonian diplomats owed much to the support of Johann Hellner. The Estonian delegation arrived in Stockholm on March 13, 1918. There they learned of the dramatic events which had taken place in Estonia during February 1918.⁶²

NOTES

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3. Graham, *New Governments*, 44-45; Katkov, *Russia 1917*, 388-92.
4. M. Oiderman, "Estonian Independence," TMs, Tallinn, n.d., 14, Herbert C. Hoover Archives, Hoover Institution for War, Peace, and Revolution, Stanford, California. Hereafter cited as H.H.A.
5. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 6-7.
6. Laaman, *Eesti Iseseisvuse Süüd*, 79. Oiderman, 15; Vabadussõja Ajaloo Komitee, *Eesti Vabadussõda*, 1: 27; L. Leontin, "L'Indépendance de l'Estonie," *Revue d'Histoire de la Guerre Mondiale* 11, no. 2 (April 1933): 120.
7. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 8; Leontin, "L'Indépendance de l'Estonie," 120.
8. Graham, *New Governments*, 52; Oiderman, 15.
9. Term for stern, self-righteous, short-sighted minor Russian bureaucrats.
10. Olavi Arens, "The Estonian Maapäev During 1917," in *The Baltic States in Peace and War 1917-1945*, eds. V. Stanley Vardys and Romuald J. Misiunas (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), 23; Oiderman, 16.
11. Piip, "Bolshevism and Estonia," 2. Lecture delivered at the Brookings Institution for International Affairs, September 17, 1925, H.H.A.
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14. Oiderman, 21; Vabadussõja Ajaloo Komitee, 1: 63.
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16. *Ibid.*, 22-23.
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23. D. Erich von Tschischwitz, *The Army and the Navy During the Conquest of the Baltic Island in October 1917*, trans. H. H. Hassfield (Quantic: Military Library Marine School, 1931), 5-7.
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25. Watson Malbone Graham, "Memorandum of a Conversation with Professor Piip at the Club Casa Del Mar, Santa Monica, California June 25, 1932. 1-2 p.m., Box 6, Papers of H.H.A.; " Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 21.
26. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 22-23.
27. Edgar Anderson, "Finnish-Baltic Relations, 1918-1940: An Appraisal," *Scandinavian Studies* 54, no. 1 (Winter 1982): 53; Eduard Laaman, *Eesti Iseseisvuse Süüd*, 186.
28. Robert Paul Browder and Alexander F. Kerensky, eds. *The Russian Provisional Government 1917: Documents* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), 3: 1460, 1800-1; Mihkel Martna, *Estland: Die Esten und die Estnische Frage* (Zürich: Kommissions Verlag W. Trosch Olten, 1919), 92.
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30. Moorehead, 245-52.
31. Chrozvychainaya Komissiya (Extraordinary Commission).
32. Edgar Anderson, "The Role of the Latvian Riflemen During the Russian Civil War, *Sirenleks*, no. 34-35 (1975): 10.
33. Arens, "The Estonian Maapäev During 1917," 28-30; Karl Ast, "Estonia's Struggle for Independence," *The Baltic Review*, no. 13 (February 28, 1958): 50-51.
34. Pusta, *Kehra Metsast Maailma*, 200.
35. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 59; Pusta *Kehra Metsast Maailma*, 197-98.
36. Kaarel R. Pusta, "Jaan Tõnisson Eesti Välispoliitikuna ja Diplomaadina," [Jaan Tõnisson in Estonian Foreign Policy and Diplomacy] in Jaan Tõnisson, ed. Johannes Aavik (Stockholm: Kirjastus Vaba Eesti, 1960), 237.
37. John Wheeler-Bennett, *The Forgotten Peace Brest-Litovsk*, March 1918 (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1939), 75.
38. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 46-47.
39. Malbone W. Graham, *The Diplomatic Recognition of the Border States*, vol. 2, *Estonia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1939), hereafter cited as Graham, *Diplomatic Recognition*, 2, *Estonia*; Leontin, "L'Indépendance de l'Estonie," 122.
40. A. R. Cederberg, ed., *Eesti Biograafiline Leksikon* [Estonian Biographical Dictionary] (Tartu: K/U Loodus, 1929), 389. "Jaan Poska Noorusmaalt," [From the Youth of Jaan Poska] *Triinu*, no. 144 (Spring 1989): 25.

41. Cederberg, 389.
42. Ibid., 389-90.
43. Ibid., 380-81. *Documents of the American Relief Administration: European Operations, 1918-1922*, vol. 15, *Baltic Provinces* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1932), 66. Hereafter cited as *Docs. of A.R.A.*
44. Pusta, *Kehra Metsast Maaailma*, 20.
45. Ibid., 25-26.
46. Ibid., 31-32.
47. While getting an article published at such a young age was an admirable feat, *Valgus* was in no way a reputable publication. This rather seamy magazine was published by a notorious police provocateur, Jakob Kõrvi; Lumiste, *Eesti Ajakirjanduse Ajalugu*, 101-4.
48. Pusta, *Kehra Metsast Maaailma*, 53-54.
49. Ibid., 55-56.
50. Ibid., 60-80.
51. Ibid., 96-97.
52. Ibid., 111.
53. Ibid., 112-61.
54. Ibid., 161-92.
55. Ibid., 193-202.
56. Pusta, *Kehra Metsast Maaailma*, 205; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 13-14.
57. Jägers were Finns who made their way to Germany in 1915 and received military training. They fought as part of German forces on the Riga front in a separate Jäger regiment.
58. Rudolf Holsti, "Memoires and Recollections of Rudolf Holsti: Abridgement of the Author's Memoirs" (1930), 14, H.H.A.; Wuorinen, *A History of Finland*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 270.
59. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 121; Kaarel Robert Pusta, "Eesti Iseseisvus de Facto ja de Jure," [Estonian Independence de Facto and de Jure], *Kaitse Kodu!*, no. 3 (August, 1928): 15; Pusta, *Kehra Metsast Maaailma*, 208.
60. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 124; Pusta, "Eesti Iseseisvus de Facto ja de Jure," 151; Pusta, *Kehra Metsast Maaailma*, 211; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 16.
61. Jüri Vilms who fled Estonia after the German occupation was arrested by the German in Finland and executed.
62. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 125-30; Pusta, "Eesti Iseseisvus de Facto ja de Jure," 151; *Kehra Metsast Maaailma*, 214-13; *Saadiku Päevik*, 20-21.

CHAPTER 3

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE WORK OF THE FOREIGN DELEGATION

On February 10, 1918, negotiations at Brest-Litovsk broke down and eight days later German forces again went on the offensive, advancing north from Riga. The Bolsheviks were taken completely by surprise and the Russian forces fled hastily from Estonia. In view of the imminent German occupation, the Vanematekogu had formed the Eesti Pääste Komitee [Estonian Rescue Committee] consisting of Konstantin Päts, Jüri Vilms, and Konstantin Konik to continue government activity. This was done because they foresaw that clandestine activity would become more difficult under rigorous German martial rule than it had been during the Bolshevik chaos.

The hasty departure of the Bolsheviks enabled the Rescue Committee to make the formal declaration of independence. This was publicly declared in a "Manifesto to the Estonian people" which appeared in Pärnu on February 23, 1918, and on the following day, February 24, in Tallinn. Estonia was proclaimed an independent, democratic, neutral republic.¹

The manifesto was received with great enthusiasm. Tallinn on February 24 was in a holiday mood in spite of fighting between the retreating Russians and Johannes Pitka's Omakaitse [Self-defense] force. The members of the Maanõukogu emerged from underground and a Provisional Government was formed with Konstantin Päts as Premier.

On February 25, German troops entered Tallinn. Soon the whole country was occupied and placed under martial law. The German authorities did not recognize the Provisional Government. The Rescue Committee planned to go underground but Konstantin Päts was arrested and sent to a concentration camp in Lithuania. Jüri Vilms was killed while trying to escape abroad.²

The soldiers of the Estonian division were not interned as prisoners of war and were allowed to remain in their unit. However, after about a month, the Germans forcefully disbanded the Estonian division. The Germans took the division's supplies which consisted of 12,000 rifles, fifty guns, clothing, leather goods, and ammunition. This loss made the beginning of the Independence War extremely difficult for the Estonian army.³

On March 3 the Peace of Brest-Litovsk was signed, ending the war between Russia and Germany. The Germans acquired only the island of Saaremaa but were given the right to maintain police forces in the rest of the Baltic provinces.⁴ Under the German occupation Baltic German government institutions were recreated. The Baltic Germans sought to establish a Baltic Duchy under the Duke of Menchenburg, Adolf Friedrich. The activities of the Baltic Germans and the Auswärtiges Amt [German Foreign Office] were moving toward forming Estonia, Ösel [Saaremaa], Livonia, and Courland into German vassal states.⁵ The Baltic Germans had also sent a delegation to Stockholm before Estonia was occupied. Tõnisson did much in countering their effort to influence the Swedish Foreign Minister.

After the members of the Foreign Delegation had found accommodations in Stockholm, they began their diplomatic activity. These activities began with a visit to the Swedish Foreign Minister, Johannes Hellner. Pusta felt that little could be expected of this audience. Sweden declined to recognize Finnish independence which had been declared on December 6, 1917. Swedish recognition would only come after Germany and Soviet Russia granted their recognition. Sweden was a small power at that time and could not realistically practice power politics in the Baltic. Although the Swedes had a strong interest in Finnish as well as Estonian independence, they had to tread carefully between their two powerful neighbors. Nevertheless, Hellner gave the delegation a cordial reception. After reading the Maanõukogu's memorandum and listening to the delegation's verbal explanations, the Swedish Foreign Minister told the Estonians that Sweden was sympathetic to the Estonian cause but as a neutral power could not be the first one to recognize a nation emerging from the war. However, Jaan Tõnisson was considered the representative of Estonia in Sweden. Hellner assured them that the Estonians who would remain in Sweden would receive cordial

treatment from the Swedish government. To those delegates who would continue into other countries he wished luck.⁶ Piip noted that during the meeting the delegates only touched upon their people's "intuitive sympathy and mystical respect for Sweden," i.e., what is known as the "good old Swedish times" in Estonian history.⁷ Sweden's interest in the Estonian situation was not only historical in nature. There was concern for the welfare of the Swedish minority living on the Estonian islands. The Foreign Delegation came into contact with representatives of refugees from the islands who had fled to Sweden. The main desire of these Swedes, which they expressed to the Estonian delegates, was to return to their homes as soon as possible.⁸

On March 21, Pusta, Piip, and Virgo left Stockholm for Kristiania (Oslo) where Virgo met with the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Nils Claus Ihlen, to clarify Norway's position the Estonian situation. The Norwegian position paralleled that of Sweden.⁹

Jaan Tõnisson, Mihkel Martna, and Karl Menning remained initially in Stockholm. Tõnisson planned to go to Switzerland and Martna to Berlin where they hoped to influence the German socialists. From Kristiania, Pusta, Piip, and Virgo made their way to Bergen where they boarded a mail ship to Britain. The voyage was hazardous due to minefields and submarine warfare but uneventful. They landed in Aberdeen and proceeded by train to London. On April 9, the Estonian delegates arrived in London.¹⁰

The members of the Foreign Delegation immediately went about the task of establishing contact with the Foreign Office. Because they knew little about "official" London and even less of its diplomatic practice, they were fortunate to come into contact with Rudolf Holsti, the Finnish representative in London. Holsti, who had received a doctorate from the London School of Economics and who later became the Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs, had established all necessary contacts in the Foreign Office. He became the trusted guide and associate of the Estonians.¹¹

After Piip became the Estonian representative in London, Piip assisted Zigfrids Anna Meierovics, the Latvian representative, who arrived in August 1918, to establish first contacts with the Foreign Office.¹² This led to close cooperation among the Baltic diplomats in London. Piip, Meierovics, and

Holsti would meet at least once a week at the Royal Societies Club, of which Holsti was a member, to plan together their diplomatic demarches.¹³

Through Holsti the Estonian delegation became acquainted with Professor James Young Simpson who was head of the Foreign Office's Russian section. Being a Scot, Simpson was sympathetic to the plight of smaller nations. He became an important contact in the Foreign Delegation's diplomatic efforts.¹⁴

On April 23 (Saint George's Day), the Foreign Delegation met with the British Foreign Secretary, Arthur James Balfour. Lord Hardinge of Penhurst, the Assistant Foreign Secretary, was also present. Lord Hardinge, the former Viceroy of India and British Ambassador to Russia, was very knowledgeable about the Estonian situation. During his time as British ambassador he had made many trips to Estonia. In 1907, Lord Hardinge arranged the meeting between King Edward VII, the king of England, and Tsar Nicolas II which took place in Tallinn. The delegation now presented a diplomatic note which dealt with the German occupation of Estonia and verbally affirmed the wishes of the Estonian people to stay independent of German and Russian domination. Balfour and Hardinge listened politely and asked some questions about the delegation's members and activities. They promised to give a reply to their presentation within a few days. The reply came on May 3, 1918, and stated that the British government was sympathetic to the aspiration of the Estonian people and was willing to recognize the Maanõukogu as *de facto* government of Estonia until the peace conference could convene and resolve the Estonian question. The British government promised to work for the admission of Estonia to the peace conference but could not make a categorical pledge to this effect. This reply also affirmed the Foreign Office's willingness to accept Piip as an informal diplomatic representative in London.¹⁵

Balfour's reply to the Foreign Delegation differed from that given by Sir Esmé Howard, the British ambassador in Stockholm. Howard's note stated that the Asutav Kogu [Constituent Assembly of Estonia] was recognized rather than the Maanõukogu [National Council] as *de facto* government until the peace conference could decide Estonia's status "under the basis of self-determination."¹⁶

Britain's granting *de facto* recognition was an important step towards Estonia's international status for becoming an independent state. The British had practical reasons for supporting Estonian independence. Foremost, since the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk put Estonia under German influence, the British wanted to block the international legitimacy of any Baltic German government which would seek possible alliance with Imperial Germany. The British feared that once a pro-German government was established mobilization would be carried out in Estonia and according to Lt. Colonel H. H. Wade, the British military attaché in Copenhagen, the Germans could raise 200,000 soldiers from the Estonian population which was by no means a negligible addition to German manpower.¹⁷ There was also the question of seapower. If at the end of the war as a result of a negotiated settlement at the expense of Russia the German navy had access to Estonian, Finnish, and Latvian ports, the Baltic would become a German lake.

Estonia's ports were highly important to Britain for commercial and military reasons. No matter if Germany was defeated militarily, she would still remain a great economic power. After the war Germans would for all practical purposes be shut out of markets and raw material supplies in Western Europe as well as overseas territories. Germany could find new markets and raw materials in Russia. Colonel Wade stated in a report to London, "Germany's geographical position and knowledge of Slav psychology give her advantages of which she cannot be deprived."¹⁸ He feared that after the war Germany would launch an economic offensive against Britain using Russia as a base. As a commercial counter-offensive Britain could use ports of an independent Estonia as a gateway to Russia's markets and raw materials. Furthermore, because the Estonian people were for the most part anti-German and resistant to Bolshevism, Britain could strengthen its general influence in Northern Europe through the benevolence of the Estonians.¹⁹

Soon after the audience with Balfour, Pusta and Virgo went to see the French ambassador in London, Paul Cambon. They told Cambon that they wished to present a memorandum to the Quai d'Orsay (the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The French ambassador arranged travel passes for the two Estonians who were considered Estonian government representatives by the Quai d'Orsay. Cambon, who was an old school diplomat, told Pusta that their work in Paris would be difficult and would require

improvisation and inventiveness. However, Cambon said that because the cause of the Estonians was just, they should be able to obtain independence and recognition. On May 5, 1918, Pusta and Virgo left London for Paris.²⁰ When Pusta and Virgo arrived in Paris, the war was far more in evidence than it was in London. Food was strictly rationed and Paris was bombarded nightly by German aircraft and daily by the "Big Bertha" long distance guns.

With a letter of introduction from Rudolf Holsti, they made the acquaintance of Erik Ehrström, the semi-official representative of Finland in Paris. Like Holsti, Ehrström proved to be very helpful. With his assistance, the Foreign Delegation's memorandum was translated into proper French. He also advised the Estonians on dealing with the Quai d'Orsay. Ehrström arranged a meeting between Pusta and Virgo and Henri Kammerer, the head of the Russian bureau of the Foreign Ministry, for May 8, 1918. This meeting led to an audience with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stephen Jean Marie Pichon, on May 12.²¹

The meeting with Pichon was cordial and a written reply to the Foreign Delegation's requests was given the next day. In the reply, the French conveyed their support of the Estonian people in their struggle for independence. Pichon's note to the Estonians expressed willingness temporarily to recognize the Maanõukogu as *de facto* government of Estonia until the peace conference could finally decide the nation's future status in accordance with the wishes of the Estonian people. Pusta was also welcomed as the diplomatic representative of the Estonian Provisional Government. For the most part, France's policy on recognition of Estonia was favorable except France reserved her right to collect Estonia's portion of Imperial Russia's loans from France.²²

While France's policy toward recognition of Estonia was similar to that of Great Britain, the policies were not identical. Britain stressed free access to ports and in her general policy toward Russia showed a certain benevolency towards the Bolsheviks. The British were not interested in rebuilding the Russian Empire to its previous form. The French on the other hand were more in favor of restoring Russia to her former position. In the past, Russia was an important ally, balancing German power in the east. It

was Piip's impression that influential emigrés from the Tsarist and Provisional Governments of Russia had more influence on French politicians than they had on English political figures.²³

Nevertheless, Estonian independence was supported by the French. On May 17, 1918, *Le Temps*, the largest paper in France and the unofficial organ of the Quai d'Orsay, ran an editorial which emphasized that the Estonians' memorandum to Pichon was "a typical example of why an Allied victory was necessary for the freedom of small nations."²⁴

Soon after, another article appeared on the activities of the Foreign Delegation, this time in the *Journal des Débats*, which was edited by August Gavain, a former French diplomat and a well-known foreign policy publicist. After Gavain conducted an interview with Pusta, an article appeared in the *Journal des Débats* titled, "The Estonian Question." Gavain's article recounted Pusta's and Virgo's arrival in Paris and their meeting with Pichon. Gavain went on to discuss France's relationship with Russia. He expressed regret that one of the most cultured parts of the Russian Empire wanted to depart but noted that one of the Allied war aims was the freedom of small nations. Furthermore, Gavain emphatically stated that the Estonian people had freely and firmly voiced their desires and thus France should respect and support these desires.²⁵ Although Gavain had not expressed much interest in the Estonian problem during the interview with Pusta, he published this article and later would offer columns in his paper for Pusta's use. Gavain and Pusta became lifetime friends.²⁶

Pusta's experience as a journalist allowed him to develop good relations with the French press. In June and July of 1918, he was very successful in publicizing the Estonian question in the press. He was able to get a series of articles published in the French papers and made influential friends in the press like Gavain.²⁷

Another important person with whom Pusta became acquainted was Professor Paul Boyer who was the director of the Institute of Eastern Languages and an expert on Russian affairs for the Quai d'Orsay. He advised Pusta immediately to visit the widow of a former prime minister, Madame Aline Menard-Dorian, who held political soirées at her home on Rue de la Faisanderiel. Professor Boyer also suggested that he

should meet with the ambassador of the Russian Provisional Government, Vassili Maklakov, who had remained in the Russian embassy on Rue de Grenelle.²⁸

Pusta attended the soirées of Madame Menard-Dorian who was the eccentric daughter of a French industrialist. There he met Victor Bache, the president of la Ligue des Droits de l'Homme as well as a variety of other writers and publicists. He even made the acquaintance of Marcel Cachin, the editor of the French communist paper, *L'Humanité*.²⁹

Another person who provided Pusta with important contacts was Andres Dido. Pusta looked up his old friend who was still living in Montmartre district and still operated his language institute. When asked to help the Foreign Delegation, Dido consented with great emotion. During the years Dido had spent in Paris, he had made the acquaintance of important French socialists. Through Dido, Pusta made contact with the important socialist figure, Albert Thomas. Thomas had been Minister of Munitions and later became the director of the International Labor Office in Geneva. He was the editor of the newspaper *L'Information* which provided important publicity for the Foreign Delegation. For the most part, Dido was helpful to Pusta and Piip; however, due to his fierce undiplomatic style in demanding support for Estonian independence, he was on occasion a source of embarrassing incidents.³⁰

Pusta also made important acquaintances through Ehrström. One of the first of these acquaintances was Professor Albert de la Pradelle, who became a confidant of and legal advisor to the Estonian delegation. In the early years of twentieth century, Ehrström and de la Pradelle had worked together collecting signatures in Western Europe against the Russification of Finland under governor-general Nikolai Ivanovich Bobrikov. Other contacts included Senator Andre Honnorat, the Minister of Education, Michel Cote, the director of the wartime information bureau, Emile Moeller, specialist on Scandinavian and Baltic affairs for the General Staff, Joseph Noulens, the ambassador to Petrograd, Henri Franklin-Bouillon, chairman of the foreign affairs committee of the Chamber of Deputies, and senators Georges Reynald, Eugene Ballero, Joseph Barthelemy, and Marius Moutet.³¹

Making contact with influential members of the French government and the press was important for the Foreign Delegation's efforts; this gave the Estonian problem wide exposure and countered the efforts of the Russian emigrés in Paris. Pusta's experience as a journalist, his knowledge of French society, and his educational background were vital in carrying out this task.

In the summer of 1918, Pusta established contact with the Belgian government. At that time all that remained of Belgian territory was a small piece of Flanders; the rest of the country was occupied by the Germans. King Albert I of the Belgians and his staff remained in this small portion of territory, but the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had relocated itself in St. Andres near Le Havre. In July 1918, Pusta went to St. Andres and met with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Paul Hymans. To the question of recognition, Hymans told Pusta that it would not be appropriate for Belgium to deal with the question at the present time. However, Hymans reassured the Estonian representative that the sympathies of the Belgian government and the Belgian people were with the Estonian people. He recommended for Pusta to continue relations with Belgium through the Foreign Ministry in St. Andres or through the Belgian embassy in Paris. Hymans and Pusta later became close associates when they represented their countries in the League of Nations assembly in Geneva. Hymans would develop a strong interest in Baltic affairs.³²

While Pusta was establishing contact with the Belgian government, Jaan Tõnisson remained in Stockholm with Ferdinand Kull, who was not able to receive a visa to enter the United States. Of all the Allied governments the United States was under the strongest influence of Russian nationalist propaganda. The Provisional Government's ambassador to the United States, Boris Bakhmetev, had a dominating influence over American policy toward Russia.³³ Thus any negotiations between the United States government and the Foreign Delegation were blocked. Against the recommendations of the U.S. ambassador in Stockholm, Ira A. Morris, the State Department refused to give Kull a visa and to open discussions with the Estonians.³⁴

Furthermore, President Woodrow Wilson was influenced by his close friend, the Czech leader Thomas G. Masaryk. Masaryk was an ardent pan-slavist, who dreaded that the Russian Empire was falling

to pieces. Both men felt strongly that democracy would endure in Russia. They believed that encouraging separatist movements would weaken the democratic forces. Besides the influence of Bakhmetev and Masaryk on American policy, other factors also at work. Russia and the United States had a long standing strong friendship. During the Crimean War the United States had taken a favorable attitude towards Russia in her war against Britain and France. During the American Civil War the Tsarist government had supported the federal government by sending a portion of its Baltic Fleet to New York as well as vessels of the Pacific Fleet to California. Furthermore, the U.S. feared an increasingly powerful Japan. A militarily strong Russian Empire was important to American Pacific strategy.

The Estonians had greater success in establishing relations with Italy than with the United States. In May of 1918, Pusta and Virgo traveled to Rome. Upon reaching the Italian capital, they made on Ehrstöm's recommendation contact with Hermann Gummerus, the Finnish representative to Italy, and Liisi Karttunen who worked in the Vatican archives. Gummerus had been an associate of Alexander Keskküla in Stockholm and had been instrumental in the smuggling of young Finns to Germany for military training. Karttunen would later become a coworker in the Estonian consulate in Rome.

Pusta and Virgo met with the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baron Sidney Sonnino, on May 27. Sonnino received them cordially but was skeptical about the *de facto* recognition Estonia had already received from Great Britain and France. He questioned the Estonians about the utility of *de facto* recognition, whether it could be useful in face of the German occupation and whether it would hinder solving the Estonian question by not involving Russia. Pusta and Virgo told Sonnino that recognition was important because it raised the hopes and strengthened the will of the Estonian people to resist the occupational forces. The Foreign Minister told the two Estonians that if *de facto* recognition was that important to them, the Kingdom of Italy could promise the same as France.³⁵

On May 29, Pusta and Virgo received the Italian government's reply to the Estonian requests. Sonnino's note temporarily recognized the Maanõukogu as *de facto* government of Estonia. It went on to state that Estonia's future would be decided at the peace conference on the principles of basic rights and

respect for liberty. It also expressed the desire that the Estonian people would do everything possible to prevent domination by Germany. The note, however, did not make any mention of the request to have Eduard Virgo accepted as Estonian representative to Italy. Thus, Virgo returned to Sweden.³⁶

The Italian reply to the Foreign Delegation was markedly more pessimistically worded than those of France and Great Britain. The Italians left the decision of Estonia's future totally to the peace conference.³⁷ Regardless of this, Italy was to become a strong supporter of the young Estonian republic. She was the first large Western power to start formal diplomatic relations with Estonia on February 18, 1920. Italy would strongly support the *de jure* recognition of Estonia in the Allied Supreme Council as well as in the League of Nations.³⁸ This was much in line with the Italian's conceptionalization of their international role. Italy viewed herself as being the smallest of the large powers and the largest of the small powers. Thus, Italy's policy makers fashioned themselves to be the defenders of the small nations. Italy also had only recently gained independence and wanted to become champion of other nations desiring independence.

Pusta would again travel to Rome in the beginning of 1919, this time to establish diplomatic relations with the Holy See. An audience with the Papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Gasparri was arranged through the sympathetic Monsignor Pucci. When the audience was arranged, the Estonian War of Independence was in its critical turning point moving towards Estonian victory.³⁹ Cardinal Gasparri surprised Pusta by asking detailed questions concerning the situation of the Estonian armed forces. The cardinal was also interested in the Estonian constitution, the future relationship between the church and state, as well as Estonia's future relations with her neighbors. He was particularly interested in the plans for a Baltic League which Pusta and Piip had been formulating. Pusta informed Cardinal Gasparri that Estonia would have total freedom of religion and that nationalistic churches had organized themselves with autonomously elected bishops. Upon hearing this, the cardinal told Pusta that the Vatican was sympathetic to the Estonian cause. He predicted that Russia weakened by war and revolution would offer peace and recognize Estonia's independence. Cardinal Gasparri asked two questions of the Estonian representative: if Pusta knew of a priest who could represent the Catholic Church in Estonia and secondly in what way could

the Catholic Church help lay the foundations for national life in the Estonian republic. To the first question Pusta conceded that he could not come up with a single candidate. To the second question, he told the cardinal that he was unprepared to give a precise answer to such an important question. However, Pusta stated that Estonia was once a Catholic country and then protestant after the reformation; both churches had kept Estonia, in spirit, in the civilization of Western Europe. Now with the nation's emerging independence, the Catholic Church had many opportunities to integrate Estonia into the Western religious and cultural communities.⁴⁰

The Holy See granted Estonia *de facto* recognition on April 11, 1919, and *de jure* recognition on October 10, 1921, under the direction of Cardinal Gasparri. Later the Vatican sent an "apostle delegate," Archbishop Antonio Arata to the Baltic states. He resided in Riga. As for Estonia, Monsignor Profitlich was named bishop for the country.⁴¹

While Pusta and Virgo were establishing contact with Italy, Piip was making contact with the Japanese government. On May 28, Piip visited the Japanese embassy in London and was received by the embassy Consul, Kumataro Honda. Piip's verbal requests as well as a memorandum given to Honda were forwarded to ambassador Viscount Sutemi Chinda who sent it on to the Imperial government in Tokyo. On May 31, Piip received a reply. While the Foreign Minister had not yet officially acted on the request, the Estonian representative was told that Viscount Chinda was willing to accord Estonia the same relations as Britain and France. Soon after, *de facto* recognition was granted by the Japanese.⁴²

The only major power that had not opened relations with the Estonians was the United States. The request to send an Estonian representative to the United States was repeatedly turned down. The best the Estonians could do was to have a delegation of Estonian seamen present their requests to President Woodrow Wilson in Washington, D.C. Finally on September 28, 1918, after repeated visits and notes on the part of Piip to the American embassy in London, the United States granted Estonia *de facto* recognition.⁴³ Of all the great powers, the Estonians had the least cordial relations with the United States whose State Department was strongly under the sway of Bakhmetev.⁴⁴

Shortly after *de facto* recognition was granted by the large Allied powers, Pusta made contact with the White Russians in Paris. A meeting was arranged between Pusta and the Provisional Government's ambassador to France, Vassili Maklakov, by Professor Paul Boyer. Maklakov had previously been an important member of the Cadet party (Cadet - Constitutional democrats) in the Duma.

The meeting between Pusta and Maklakov was for the most part cordial. However, Maklakov did not take the Estonian desire for independence seriously. He wanted to come to an agreement on what the Estonian delegation would request from the peace conference. This was something which Pusta could not do, he could only inform Maklakov of Estonia's desire for independence. To this the Russian ambassador replied that the Provisional Government had given Estonia autonomy and planned diligently to respect the Estonian people's wish for self-determination. However, Pusta reminded him that the Provisional Government, after granting Estonia autonomy on April 12, 1917, had decreed that the official government language of Estonia would be Russian. Furthermore, Maklakov had signed the decree itself. This did not reflect well on the Provisional Government's willingness to respect Estonia's self-determination. Maklakov replied that this was a misunderstanding and that the decree was based on old laws which were no longer valid. Pusta could make no promises to the Russian ambassador. Yet, Maklakov hoped that the Estonians could be dissuaded from demanding independence at the peace conference. He arranged meetings between Pusta and Bakhmetev who was in Paris and Jefremov, the head of the Russian anti-Bolshevik organization in France. The meeting between the Estonian and Jefremov went relatively well but the situation did change.⁴⁵

The meeting with Bakhmetev went far worse; Maklakov introduced him to Pusta as a "Russian federalist and a backer of autonomy for the border nations." To this Bakhmetev replied, "You are wrong, I am not a federalist." He argued that in no terms could the Baltic countries be autonomous because Russia would be cut off from warm water ports.⁴⁶ It is ironic that the government of Woodrow Wilson, who crusaded for the right of self-determination, was so strongly under the influence of a man who totally lacked a democratic spirit. Needless to say, little was accomplished in the meeting between Pusta and Bakhmetev.

Maklakov began to take the Estonian desire for independence seriously. He had believed that the activities of the Foreign Delegation had merely been a pretext to escape from the German occupation and after the defeat of Germans and Bolsheviks, Estonia would return to the Russian Empire. To his great disappointment, he finally realized that the Estonians were serious about independence. After this realization, he became Pusta's enemy.⁴⁷

As the White Russians became more hostile towards Estonian diplomatic activity, Pusta had to work even harder to stress over and over again to the Quai d'Orsay that Estonia's struggle was against German eastern policy. The counter argument used by the Russians was that encouraging Estonian independence was a betrayal of France's ally, Russia. However, this argument became counter productive for the Russians, as it was the case when Maklakov used it against the recognition of Finland. The French Prime Minister, Georges Clemenceau, pointed out that the real treachery was the Brest-Litovsk negotiations and it was the business of the White Russians to return to Russia and stop the Bolshevik treachery.⁴⁸

Pusta also came into contact with Prince Georgi E. Lvov as well as Alexander Kerensky in Paris. He knew Kerensky from the time when he lived in St. Petersburg. Discussions between Prince Lvov and Pusta in Paris re-emphasized the necessity for Estonian's separation from Russia. The Prince's vision of the future was pessimistic; he foresaw Russia falling into a jacquerie in which all cultural institutions would be destroyed.⁴⁹ At the meeting between Prince Lvov and Pusta, where Valdmir Lebedev, a former minister in the Prince's government, was also present as well as Albert Thomas, the question of the Estonian position at the Ufa Conference of August 1918 came up. Lebedev pointed out that the Estonian representatives in Paris and London demanded total independence of Estonia while the Estonian representative at the Ufa conference, which was to coordinate the activities of the Russian anti-Bolshevik forces, had requested that Estonia be autonomous and had assured the Russians that Estonia did not wish to cut ties with Russia. The three Estonian representatives at Ufa had been Bernhard Linde, chairman of the Samara Estonian committee, Aleksei Nõu, a banker, and Aleksander Kaelas who was a linguistics professor at the University of Moscow. These men were not accredited by the Maanõukogu and were not acting as

its representatives; rather they were representing Estonians who lived in Russian areas controlled by the anti-Bolshevik forces. Their task was to represent the interests of these people to the White Russian authorities. Linde and Kaelas had suggested that a representative be named to the Omsk government but because this government did not recognize Estonian independence, one was never appointed. In time, the Omsk government expired and Estonian representation was no longer required.⁵⁰

Pusta's later contacts with the Russian whites included a meeting with the Russian General Lohvitski. General Lohvitski came to see Pusta after the War of Independence had broken out; he offered to lead the young Estonian armed forces in their fight against the Bolsheviks. Pusta asked from whom the General had gotten the idea; he replied that the British had suggested this. Pusta told General Lohvitski that he would forward his offer to the Ministry of War and General Staff. After being told this, the Russian general informed Pusta that he felt the Estonians already had their own military leaders and a trip to Estonia would be useless; thus he had decided to approach the French General Staff and see if he could be of any service in operations in the vicinity of Odessa.⁵¹

During the same period another well-known Russian figure called on Pusta. This was Boris Savinkov, the Social-Revolutionary who master-minded the Yaroslav uprising and was an associate of the British secret agent Sidney Reilly. He had also brought along to the meeting a man named Nikolai V. Chaikovski, whom Savinkov described as the president of the Kandalaksha government.

Piip was also present at the meeting at which Savinkov and Chaikovsky wanted to discuss the formation of a common front against the Bolsheviks. Savinkov was the main speaker; Chaikovsky, who was quite elderly, remained quiet most of the time. Pusta and Piip were told that there was an organization which consisted of 3,000 anti-Bolshevik Russian officers in Finland which could be deployed on the Estonian front. To this the Estonians replied that the Estonian army had its own officers and would fight only for the independence of their own country and not become part of a general crusade against Bolshevism. Savinkov responded that the Russian officers could form their own unit under the overall command of the Estonian commander-in-chief, General Johan Laidoner. Pusta and Piip then inquired of

Savinkov what assurances would prevent the Russian forces from turning on Tallinn after they had captured Petrograd. To this question Chaikovsky, who had been quiet throughout the entire meeting thoughtlessly replied that Tallinn was an important harbor and should remain in Russian hands. The two Estonians thanked Chaikovsky for his honesty; Savinkov protested violently that his companion had given the wrong impression through a crass remark. He asked if the Estonian would be willing to meet with him again if he could come up with more concrete suggestions. Pusta and Piip consented; however, nothing further was heard from Savinkov's organization.⁵²

This was the extent of the Foreign Delegation's contacts with the Russian anti-Bolsheviks. These contacts bore little fruit, because the Russians had little respect for Estonian autonomy and none would grant recognition of Estonian independence.

On the other hand, Estonians also established contact with the Bolshevik government. Julius Seljamaa was the Estonian representative in Petrograd. At times he was forced to go underground to avoid arrest by the CHEKA. In London, Piip made contact with the unofficial Bolshevik representative, Maxim Litvinov. A series of meetings took place between Piip and Litvinov; little was accomplished except for the facilitation of sending currency and letters via courier from the Estonian representatives in Western Europe to the Estonian representative in Russia. While the meetings with Litvinov did not accomplish much, nevertheless unofficial relations were opened between Soviet Russia and Estonia. These relations ended with the Soviet attack on Estonia on November 22, 1918.⁵³

Plans for a Baltic League.

In November of 1918, Pusta and Piip began to develop plans to form a Baltic league. While the two Estonians were not the first to conceive such an idea, their plan was perhaps the most comprehensive and most realistic. While Piip's knowledge of international law was important in its formulation, Pusta was the guiding spirit behind the plan.⁵⁴

Earlier advocates of a Baltic League included Gustav Suits who envisioned a Finnish-Estonian Union and Jaan Tõnisson who had proposed a joint Scandinavian Baltic confederation in 1917.⁵⁵ During the war Alexander Keskküla also had a plan for a Baltic League; he saw a federation of Estonia, Finland, Ingerland, and Karelia allied to Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. In his plans, Russia would be driven out of the Baltic and Petrograd turned into a stone quarry for Estonia's use. Keskküla did not give much consideration to the role of Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.⁵⁶ Yet not only the Estonians had considered ideas of a Baltic League; a resolution of a Lithuanian-American Congress held in Chicago in 1914 demanded that a Lithuanian-Latvian federation be formed. This idea was elaborated upon in the publications of Jonas Sliupas, Count O.V. de Milosz-Milasius, and Stasys Salkauskis. Count de Milosz-Milasius expanded on the idea calling for a Latvian-Lithuanian state that would be closely allied with Estonia. The Latvians were also interested in the idea of federation, and the matter was discussed at the conference of the Latvian Provisional National Council in Valka in December 2, 1917.⁵⁷

The necessity for a Baltic League was clear to Pusta, the World War had broken down the old balance of power and proved its failure. The Baltic League would be a new solution for maintaining peace. He noted that Russia's drive to the east and her access to naval bases on the Pacific had led to the Russo-Japanese War. The same Russian leaders who pursued this aggressive policy in the east, also looked to expansion westward. According to Pusta, they were the inheritors of the political testament of Peter the Great and thus wanted the Russian Empire to reach to the fjords of Norway. Pusta's ideas were perhaps strongly influenced by Holsti who had done extensive study on Russian foreign and military policy towards Northern Europe before the war.⁵⁸

Because of Germany's expansionist policies toward Central and Northern Europe, Pusta believed that the Baltic area was in particular peril. However, he noted that Germany's influence was temporarily weakened by her ensuing defeat in November 1918, but Pusta observed that the Russian menace was invigorated. The Messianic imperialism of Tsarist Russia was replaced by the strong new Messianic imperialism of Bolshevik Russia. It threatened to plunge world civilization into a new dark age. Thus it

was not only in the interest of the Baltic people to form a league which would provide a strong unified defense, but the Baltic League was in the common interest of all the civilized world.⁵⁹ Yet the formation of a Baltic League would not have aggressive aims against any powers. As Pusta noted, the small peoples of Northern Europe are democratically oriented and thus the ideas of imperialism are totally foreign to them. The role of the Baltic League was to "safeguard freedom of the Baltic Sea." The Baltic was not to become a German lake as it was during the Hanseatic era or a Russian lake as it was in the time of Peter the Great. Instead it was to remain open for the intercourse of all peoples. The league was to consist of the small Baltic nations, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Pusta felt that the Norwegians and the Poles who would probably receive a section of the Baltic coast at the peace conference should also join because of a solidarity of interests.⁶⁰

While the league was to encompass all of Northern Europe, it would be formed into three sub-groups according to geographic, historic, and economic rationale. The three sub-groups included Scandinavia, Eastern Baltic, and Southern Baltic. The Scandinavian group would consist of an economic and political union of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. The Eastern Baltic group of Finland, Estonia, and Latvia would span differing economic and cultural grouping. Finland and Estonia would share cultural unity while Latvia and Estonia would share closer economic unity. Estonia and Latvia would have the important role of commercial intermediary between Russia and Western Europe. Both countries possessed excellent year-round ports and Latvia the Daugava, a great navigable waterway to the vast, eastern hinterland.

The Southern Baltic group would consist of Poland and Lithuania. Culturally Lithuania could also be in the union with Latvia. During the time that these plans were being formulated, the relationship between Poland and Lithuania was not yet settled. It should be remembered that before their independence had ended in the eighteenth century, Poland and Lithuania had been in union for a long time. Pusta remained hopeful that the new relationships among the nations could be worked out in an amiable way.⁶¹

As a whole the league would have considerable resources. These resources included Swedish iron, Polish coal, Finnish timber, and wheat, flax, cereal grains, and potatoes from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The actual structure of the league was to be based on treaties, not on a constitution. This was the only way in which such a diverse group of nations could be brought into a union. The league was to have a council consisting of the prime minister and foreign minister of each country. This council would meet twice a year in rotation in the capitals of the various states. As for a common language, each nation would preserve its own domestically while using English and French for league dealings.⁶² One of the roles of the league was to study and establish a common system of defense. Pusta recommended that the common defense system have a unified supreme command, coordination among naval forces as well as the creation of a common home guard organization. Another activity of the league was to coordinate the foreign policies of the various member nations. It would also be the role of the league to encourage commerce on the Baltic and coordinate economic relations between the members as well as organize large projects of common interest, such as improving navigation markers on the Baltic and building canals and railways.⁶³

Before the Baltic League's realization, Pusta saw a number of problems which needed resolution. The solutions of the various problems included a change in the political orientation of Finland, away from German influence, the resolution of the status of Estonia and Latvia by obtaining *de jure* recognition by the great powers, and a solution to the status of Lithuania and Poland, whether the states be in union or independent. Even with the solutions of these problems there was still the preparatory work which would have to be carried out by the representatives of the interested nations.⁶⁴

The Estonian representatives were going to offer the Baltic League plan to the peace conference. They hoped that the Allied governments would support the plan as a new ordering of international relations in Northern Europe. The Estonians hoped that the Baltic League would become a sub-group of the League of Nations which was to be formed out of the peace conference. The international role of the Baltic League was seen by Pusta to be a buffer and stabilization zone separating Germany and Russia, thus preserving the

peace in Western Europe. The conference hoped that the new states rising in Central Europe would also follow the Baltic example and form into a federated system.⁶⁵

The other representatives of the Baltic countries were receptive to the idea for a Baltic League. The Estonians had discussed their ideas with their Finnish and Latvian colleagues in Stockholm, London, and Paris. Thus the input of Meierovics, the Latvian representative in London, the Finns Holsti and Ehrström, and the Polish representative Duke Mauricius Zomoyski was very important.⁶⁶

Pusta familiarized Hjalmar Branting, the Swedish prime minister, with the league plan when he was in Paris. Branting was not only sympathetic to the plan but thought it was also timely. However, the Swedish prime minister told Pusta, that since Sweden was a neutral power, she could not assume responsibility for the Baltic League's organization. He told Pusta that this had to be done by the other Baltic nations with the support of the major Allied powers. In later years Branting would still express regret that a Baltic League did materialize.⁶⁷

The attitude of Great Britain, expressed through the British ambassador in Stockholm, Sir Esmé Howard, in a conversation with Piip, was favorable. However, the British ambassador felt that the first step should be the formation of a defense pact among Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.⁶⁸

The attitude of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the plan was that Estonia and the other states which had formerly been part of the Russian Empire should be in a federated state with a reconstructed non-Bolshevik Russia. However, this attitude began to change and the Quai d'Orsay became more favorable toward the Baltic League plan. Senator Vicomte Conudet informed Pusta that the Baltic question would be discussed in the Chamber of Deputies and he asked for a detailed outline of the plans. Henri Franklin-Bouillon, the chairman of the Chamber of Deputies' Foreign Commission, later told Pusta that his commission was very interested in the formation of a Baltic League. His attitude before being presented the League plans by Pusta was that Estonia should play a major role in "healing" Russia. At one time, Franklin-Bouillon told Pusta that the new Russia should have two capitals, Tallinn and Odessa. The chairman of the Foreign Commission was also interested in the future form of government in Estonia.

When, the Estonian representative informed him that it would definitely be a republic, he told Pusta that he felt this would be risky for a country which had been under a monarchy for such a long time. Franklin-Bouillon recommended that if Estonia was to be a republic, the United States government, with the strong executive branch, should be used as a model. He recommended against adopting Switzerland's very liberal form of parliamentary government.⁶⁹ In general the plan for a Baltic League was received favorably by the various diplomatic representations in Paris with the exception of the pan-Slavist Czechs, the Russian Whites, and the United States government.

NOTES

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3. Tomingas, *Mälestused*, 60.
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7. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 135.
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11. Oiderman, 113; Piip, 140.
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18. *Ibid.*, 315.
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26. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 29.

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29. *Ibid.*, 38.

30. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 242-43; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 31.

31. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 38-39.

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33. Linda Killen, "The Search for a Democratic Russia: Bakhmetev and the United States," *Diplomatic History* 2, no. 3 (Summer, 1978): 237.

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37. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 237.

38. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 31.

39. The War of Independence broke out on November 28, 1918.

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CHAPTER 4

THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

While Pusta was formulating plans for a Baltic League in Paris, dramatic events were taking place in Estonia in November 1918. On November 11, 1918, Germany signed an armistice on Allied terms. After a meeting took place between the German and Allied delegations in a railway carriage in the forest of Compiegne, the great war ended. On November 10, food riots broke out in Tallinn and there were disturbances at the German naval base. With the growing chaos and the armistice, the Maanõukogu was able to surface and resume its activities. Jaan Poska presided in the absence of Konstantin Päts who was still incarcerated by the Germans. On November 20, Päts was able to return and relieve Poska of these duties. Governmental ministries were quickly formed, and the government took over such vital services as the distribution of food. Posters proclaimed to the Estonian people that their own government had assumed power.¹ On the eighteenth of November, the newly formed German Republic formally handed over authority in Estonia to the Maanõukogu by the agreement of the German envoy in the Baltic, August Winnig.

However, in practice the power of the Estonian government was still limited; German troops hindered every action of the government. The organization of national defense was now the most vital task of the Estonian government. In the initial preparations, Pitka's Omakaitse [self-defense league] and Konard Rotschild's officers' organization played a key role. These organizations had continued their activity secretly during the German occupation. On November 11, the Omakaitse emerged in Tallinn to maintain order and make military preparations.² Organizing the nation's defense was a timely task indeed. On November 13, the Bolshevik government denounced the Peace of Brest-Litovsk and began concentrating the forces of the Red Army on Estonia's eastern frontier. In Petrograd, Trotsky, the commander of the Red Army stated, "We must follow at the heels of the Germans and thrust ourself as a wedge to check the developments of the

local governments. Tallinn, Riga, and Libau [Liepaja] must belong to us!"³ Soviet Russia attacked Estonia on November 22, 1918. Bolshevik designs on the Baltic were made clear in *Izvestiia*. On December 25, 1918, the Bolshevik organ stated:

The Baltic Sea and the former occupied territories of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia are in the way of pressure exerted by our revolution upon Western Europe. . . . This separating wall between the workers' revolution in Russia and Germany must be torn down and destroyed. Soviet troops must occupy Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The conquest of the Baltic Sea and its coast will enable Soviet Russia to exert influence upon the Scandinavian countries in the interest of the Socialist Revolution. . . . The Baltic Sea must become a Soviet Sea. All efforts must be directed toward the attainment of this urgent political objective.⁴

The Soviet attack which came at Narva on November 22, consisted of the Sixth Red Army Division, with 2800 men supported by artillery, armored trains and cars, and the warships of the Soviet Baltic Fleet which contributed a naval infantry force of 700 men. The Estonians met this attack with a force of 745 men who lacked the support of artillery and had only four machine guns. The best the hastily organized Estonian forces could do was to stage a delaying action while retreating, buying valuable time for organizing additional forces and allowing time for foreign assistance to arrive.⁵

The Estonian forces were severely handicapped by the lack of war material. The German military authorities did not honor their treaty agreements by which they were required to turn over arms and material to the Estonians. Even worse, in Southern Estonia, where German military forces were strong, the Germans went so far as to disarm some Estonian units and even cooperated with the Bolsheviks. There were frequent clashes between the Estonians and the evacuating Germans. In Northern Estonia, the Germans dumped large stocks of rifles and war material into the sea rather than turning it over to the Estonians. Some of this material was recovered by Estonian navy divers.⁶ The retreat of Estonian forces continued until they formed and held a line at Valkla-Priske-Vetla, the nearest point of which was only forty km. from the capital, Tallinn. On January 2, 1919, this line proved to be the ultimate limit of retreat; on the next day the Estonian forces were able to go on the offensive.⁷

During these tempestuous times in Estonia, the Foreign Delegation did not remain inactive. In fact, their activities entered an important new phase. They were no longer representatives of a government

suppressed by occupying forces but diplomatic representatives responsible to a ministry of foreign affairs. Before November 11, 1918, their activities had centered on familiarizing the Allied governments with the Estonian question and publicizing their cause among the public in Western Europe. After the armistice, their activities centered on gaining the assistance of the Allied powers in three areas: the assurance of evacuation of German forces from Estonia, prevention of an attack by the Red Army, and economic aid for the nation on the verge of famine after looting by the Russians and Germans. In addition to this, the Foreign Delegation had to prepare for the upcoming peace conference.⁸

Permanent Estonian delegations in Stockholm, Paris, and London began appropriate activities at once. Pusta and Piip remained in close contact; this was facilitated by a good postal system and the ease of travel between the Allied capitals. By this period, according to Pusta, Estonia was in the "orbit" of the Allied powers on whom the Estonians depended for support of their quest for independence at the peace conference as well as for military assistance.⁹

Because the Allied powers in their dealing with the Russian problem decided to make the Baltic chiefly a British sphere of action, relations with Britain became the highest priority for the Estonian diplomats. The rebuilding of the Russian Empire in the form of a confederation was no longer of concern to the Allied powers. In the Baltic area, they became more interested in defending it against Bolshevik invasion. The British initially planned to provide men, arms, and equipment through Sweden in conjunction with the dispatch of British naval forces to the Baltic. The Estonian representatives in Stockholm sounded out the Swedish government to see if it was possible for the Swedes to send a peace keeping force to Estonia and furnish arms and war material on the assurance of the Allies. Because of Sweden's poor financial situation and internal political situation this plan proved to be unrealistic.¹⁰

Virgo and Martna returned to London after meeting with General Andres Larka in Copenhagen. The Estonian general informed them of the military situation. He thought that the maximum number of men which could be mobilized in Estonia was 50,000. General Larka initially foresaw the mobilization of 20,000 men of whom 10-15,000 would be sent to the frontier at Narva, the rest would be concentrated in

the provincial centers of government. However, he did not have plans for Estonia's southern frontier. General Larka believed that 15,000 rifles with approximately 78 rounds of ammunition each were hidden during the German occupation. As far as assistance from the Allies, General Larka saw the need for 6,000 men (one or two regiments) and 40,000 rifles with a thousand rounds of ammunition each. He felt that it would be best if the troops were Swedes. Virgo and Martna passed these defense plans on to the British government.¹¹

Requests that the Allied powers send naval forces into the Baltic were made by Kull in Stockholm, Oscar Kallas, the Estonian representative in Finland, and by the Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Otto Strandman. To these requests Professor Simpson informed Piip that supplies and naval forces were possible but ground forces were out of the question. The British Labour Party was strongly against military intervention in the Russian situation. Britain was war weary and disturbances had broken out in the army and navy. Piip, learned that, according to Sir Basil Thompson, the chief of Scotland Yard, not since the time of Cromwell had Britain been nearer to revolution than during this period.¹² After a lengthy discussion between Piip and Edward Hallet Carr of the Foreign Office, they decided that the Estonians should present a formal written request for military assistance. Piip, after discussing this matter with Martna and Virgo, drew up and presented this request to the Foreign Office on November 19, 1918.¹³

On the next day discussion of the details of the note took place between the Estonian representative and the British government. Present on the Estonian side were Piip, Martna, and Virgo. They were received by Lord Robert Cecil, the deputy Foreign Secretary Admiral Sydney R. Freemantle, Vice-Chief of Naval Staff, and Colonel F. H. Kisch, representative of the Imperial General Staff. During the discussions the Estonian representatives stressed that their country had to deal with two enemies at the same time, on the one side the Germans who were interfering with national defense and on the other the Bolsheviks who were preparing to attack in order to destroy Estonia as a barrier to the spread of Bolshevism in Western Europe. Admiral Freemantle and Colonel Kisch asked technical questions in regard to Estonia's defense policy. Piip, Virgo, and Martna answered them the best they could because they did not have much

information. Lord Cecil was interested in political questions, particularly Estonia's relations with Germany and the question of land reform. He told the Estonian representatives that Baltic Germans had sent a delegation led by Baron Carl Schilling and Heinrich Eduard von Stryk to Stockholm to make contact with the Allied governments. They had disregarded the work of the Foreign Delegation and represented themselves as representatives of legal government in the Baltic provinces. Lord Cecil told the Estonians that in accordance with British policy, the British ambassador refused any contact with them. The Estonian representatives answered the Deputy Foreign Secretary's inquiries about land reforms. They stated that a radical reform was necessary as soon as possible. To this Lord Cecil stated that this was totally an Estonian internal affair and that the British government would not interfere.

The British officials recommended that Estonia establish its government organs and national defense as quickly as possible. They stressed to Piip, Martna, and Virgo that Britain would help Estonia by sending arms and the Royal Navy to the Baltic but not ground forces. Colonel Kisch explained that as a matter of internal politics, men mobilized to fight against the Germans could not be sent to fight elsewhere. Regarding food and economic assistance, the Estonian representatives were referred to the Inter-Allied Food Council under the chairmanship of Sir John Beal. Soon after Piip made contact with Sir John Beal and a shipload of grain was on the way. This grain was later paid for by the exchange of Estonian flax and timber.¹⁴

On the day of the meeting, two squadrons consisting of thirty ships under the command of Sir Edwyn S. Alexander-Sinclair set out for the Baltic. The task of the squadron was not specifically to assist Estonia and the other Baltic states but to clear mines from the Baltic, supervise the disarmament of the German navy, and repatriate British prisoners of war at the German ports of Kiel and Danzig. On November 28, 1918, this squadron assembled in the harbor of Copenhagen and December 1, elements of the British squadron arrived in the Latvian port of Liepaja.¹⁵

Soon after the meeting of November 20, Virgo left London for Rome. After the Estonian military and economic assistance was procured activities became almost frenzied for Piip in London. For this reason, he called on Pusta to assist him. Pusta made his way from Paris to London on November 25.¹⁶

On December 5, the British squadron left Liepaja for Tallinn. However, at 11:53 P.M., near the island of Saaremaa, the cruiser *Cassandra* struck a mine and began to sink quickly. The destroyer *Vendetta* was able to pull alongside the sinking *Cassandra* and remove most of her men. Yet, seventeen lives were lost. This incident forced the squadron to return to Liepaja. The Estonians were in a desperate situation; the arrival of the squadron in Tallinn was most necessary to deliver badly needed arms and munitions and to boost the morale of the nation.¹⁷ On the next day Piip went to see Professor Simpson at the Foreign Office, who informed the Estonian representative of the events. Piip stressed the gravity of the situation to professor Simpson; if the squadron which was waiting for orders in Liepaja did not continue to Tallinn, Estonia would fall to the Bolsheviks and become a base to spread Bolshevism to Western Europe. This would be a catastrophe for Allied policy. He posed the question to Professor Simpson, "Can Great Britain, because one of the ships perished, change its policy?" To this the Professor replied in an animated fashion, that Britain would not change its policy, but Piip should understand the difficult position of Britain. He advised the Estonians to go see Admiral Freemantle about the situation.¹⁸

Soon after this meeting, Piip and Pusta went to see Admiral Freemantle. The admiral bluntly told them, "You know that we have already lost a cruiser, the entirely new *Cassandra*. We cannot sink our whole fleet in the Baltic Sea!" Piip promised that the Estonians would send mine pilots to Liepaja to assist the British squadron. Piip stressed to Admiral Freemantle that Britain could not easily change policy without damaging her international prestige. After the tense exchange between Piip and Admiral Freemantle, Pusta inquired whether British policy would change. The admiral quickly replied, "No sir, the loss of one ship will not make us change policy; other ships are already on the way."¹⁹

While Admiral Freemantle was hesitant to have the squadron continue to Tallinn, the Foreign Office began to pressure the Admiralty. On December 11, Colonel Johan Laidoner aboard the icebreaker *Reval*

arrived in Liepaja with eight mine pilots. He met with Admiral Alexander Sinclair and stressed the need for timely assistance and the assurance of relatively safe passage of the squadron with the aid of the mine pilots.²⁰

After an exchange of radio messages between the squadron at Liepaja and London, the squadron got under way for Tallinn. With the assistance of the Estonian pilots six British ships arrived safely at Tallinn on December 12. British ships at the roadsteads of Tallinn had the effect of greatly boosting the morale of the Estonians, at the front as well as in the rear area. On the next day, quantities of modern light weapons, rifles, ammunition, and clothing were put ashore for the hard pressed Estonian army. Of particular importance were Lewis light machine guns which provided the Estonian army a great deal of mobile fire power in the field and two naval guns which allowed another armored train to be put in action. On the 26th and 27th of December, the British squadron was able to capture two Bolshevik destroyers, the *Spartak* and the *Avtroil*, which were trying to raid Tallinn. These two ships were turned over to the Estonians and renamed the *Vambola* and *Lennuk*; they became the backbone of the Estonian navy.²¹

Soon after the meeting with Admiral Freemantle, Pusta returned to Paris. On December 19 the French government also dispatched a naval force of five ships to the Baltic. As with the British, the mission of the French naval forces in the Baltic was not specifically to assist the Estonians but to enforce armistice stipulations and assist the British in mine clearance. Nevertheless, greater Allied presence in the Baltic served to boost Estonian morale.²²

Yet, regardless of the presence of the Royal Navy in the Baltic, British support of independent Baltic states was still uncertain. On December 30, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson informed the British that he wanted to disentangle the United States from the Russian problem. The British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, was against British intervention into Russian affairs. On December 31, at a meeting of the Imperial War cabinet, Lloyd George ordered the Admiralty to withdraw the British naval forces from the Baltic. This met with serious objections from some of the cabinet ministers and military and naval experts. Of this decision, Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, the chief of the Imperial General Staff stated,

The Admiralty were told to withdraw our Baltic squadron, which will, of course, result in all the poor Estonians, etc., having their throats cut. This all comes of *no* policy in our Russian theatre, which at this date after all our discussions for months and months is an absolute *disgrace* ²³

The Field Marshal's outlook for 1919 was bleak, he states. "We shall have serious troubles in Ireland and many wars in many parts, and Bolshevism frightens me. The Bolsheviks are approaching Reval, Riga, and Vilna, and will soon get into Poland. I don't like it."²⁴ The Secretary of War, Winston S. Churchill, wanted strong support for the Baltic states, which he saw as having a "peculiarly unhappy situation," because, "they were close neighbors on the East to Petrograd and Kronstadt, the nurseries of Bolshevism; on the West to the birthplace and stamping ground of the Prussian landowners who had proved themselves to be the most rigid element in the German system and one of the most formidable."²⁵ Churchill wanted to grant assistance and grant recognition to the Baltic countries; in exchange they could be part of a unified campaign against Bolshevism. Regardless of Lloyd George's decision to change policy, the Royal Navy remained in the Baltic, although it was more passive for a time. On January 6, Admiral Alexander-Sinclair was relieved by Rear-Admiral Sir Walter Henry Cowan who became the senior British naval officer in the Baltic and later the Baronet of the Baltic. Thus British support of the young Baltic republics continued.²⁶

Estonia also received important assistance from her northern neighbor Finland. Marshal Gustav Mannerheim, the Regent of Finland at this time, saw Finnish assistance as important for humanitarian and strategic reasons. It was important to have the southern shore of the Gulf of Finland in friendly hands. Finland's southern coast was the most vulnerable part of the country to invasion. The sea lanes to the southern ports could be easily threatened. Furthermore, Marshal Mannerheim felt that sending aid would demonstrate that Finland was a stabilizing force in Scandinavia. This would improve relations with Allied powers which were strained due to Finland's close relations to Germany during the war.²⁷ Holsti, in fact, considered the independence of Estonia far more strategically important than the joining of eastern Karelia to Finland.²⁸ Therefore, an Estonian Assistance committee was formed under the leadership of Dr. Lauri

Kettunen. Dr. Oscar Kallas was the Estonian representative to this committee that was strongly supported by Marshal Mannerheim. However, the Finnish Labor Party became victim of rather dull Soviet propaganda and voiced strong objections to Finnish assistance to Estonia. This prompted August Rei, the leader of the Estonian Social-Democratic party to write an appeal to the socialist parties of Finland and Sweden for support. This appeal was warmly received in Sweden; the leader of the socialist party, Hjalmar Branting, sent a telegram pledging support. The party paper condemned the Soviet invasion of Estonia. Rei visited Helsinki and addressed a congress of the Labor Party. He was successful in convincing the Finnish labor leaders that Estonia was defending her national freedom in the face of unjust, unprovoked aggression. The Finnish Labor Party took a benevolent attitude to the Estonian Assistance Committee and desisted from obstructing its efforts.²⁹ Finnish assistance began arriving in Estonia. From Finland, Estonia purchased twenty out-of-date light artillery pieces, 2,000 rifles with ammunition and several machine guns. The Finns granted loans totalling twenty million Finnish marks to the Estonian government.³⁰ On December 30, the first contingent of Finnish volunteers began to arrive. This was Major M. Ekström's battalion of Swedish-Finns. On January 25, 1919, the "Pohjan Pojat" battalion arrived which was commanded by Lt. Colonel Hans Kalm who was of Estonian birth. The Finnish volunteers were under the overall command of Major General Martin Vetter. Marshal Mannerheim also sent a military orchestra which he felt would improve morale in Tallinn. The Finnish troops fought well; their arrival provided an important boost of morale to the Estonian forces.³¹

On December 25, 1918, an Estonian delegation consisting of Otto Strandmann, the Minister of Agriculture, Hans Pohl, the Minister of Swedish minority affairs, and Colonel Viktor Mutt arrived in Stockholm to try to gain Swedish assistance. They were not very successful because the Swedish government's finances were in a very poor shape; it could not afford the expenses of assistance. However, this brought the plight of Estonia to the attention of the Swedish press. This led to a formation of a company of Swedish volunteers. The results, however, were unfortunate, because this company lacked discipline and morale under fire. It was disbanded by Estonian authorities.³²

The results of Danish assistance were far more positive. On April 4, 1919, a volunteer group known as the "Danois Compagnie Borgeilin" arrived in Estonia. It consisted of 225 men under command of Lieutenant Richard Gustav Borgeilin. Although the Danes assisted the Estonians for only a short time, they fought quite well in many important battles. This volunteer group was not formed with the consent of the Danish government, but it was organized and financed by Aage Westerholtz, a Danish industrialist. Although Westerholtz did this to protect his country from the plague of Bolshevism, he was sentenced to three months in prison for violating Danish law. However, the Danish government did assist the Estonians by sending a field hospital formation.³³

On December 6, 1918, the Estonian General Staff and the White Russian representatives signed an agreement which put the Northern Corps, a white Russian force of 3,000 men organized in Pskov, under the command of the Estonian Staff. After Bolsheviks were driven from Estonian soil, this formation was removed from Estonian command and became the North-West Russian Army under the command of General Nikolai Yudenich.³⁴

While Estonians lacked resources, they nevertheless managed to assist their southern neighbors, the Latvians, who were in a far more desperate situation. Most of Latvia was in the hands of the invading Bolsheviks and the remaining portions were dominated by German forces which hindered the organization of a Latvian military force. The Estonians, therefore, assisted in the organization and equipping of Latvian troops on Estonian soil. A treaty signed on January 29, 1919, between Estonian and Latvian representatives initiated this assistance. About 1,500 Latvians were formed into regiments which fought as part of Estonian forces.³⁵ On February 24, 1919, Major General Laidoner was able to announce that the Russian invader had been driven out of Estonia. However, the danger was not yet over; the Soviet forces viciously hurled themselves against the Estonian frontier a number of times between February and May 1919. In May the Estonians were able to secure their southern flank and assist the Latvians in liberating their nation. Although the Estonian Third Division and the Latvian Second Regiment which fought as part of it were successful in driving out the Bolsheviks, they were confronted by a new enemy: a Baltic German

force known as the Landeswehr and a Reich German force known as the "Iron Division." These forces were under the command of General Count Rüdiger von der Goltz, the commander of the German Sixth Reserve Corps. These German units were assembled after the armistice with the consent of the Allied powers. These units were ostensibly to defend Latvia from the Bolsheviks.³⁶

Estonia was spared the unfortunate situation where German forces interfered in the country's internal affairs and hampered efforts to organize a national defense. Yet, during the bleak days of November and December 1918, a number of Estonian political figures had felt that it was desirable that German forces remain in the country. As late as December 27, Konstantin Päts had considered this possibility. General Laidoner was strongly against this. He felt that requests for German assistance would only damage relations with Allied powers and would create a dangerous internal situation.³⁷ On November 29, 1918, a special delegation consisting of Ferdinand Kull, Eduard Laaman, and Joseph Goldarbeiter had arrived in Stockholm. They had met with the British legation's council, Sir Robert Henry Clive, from whom they had inquired about the dispatch of the Royal Navy to the Baltic and had requested that the German forces stay in Estonia. When Piip had learned of this, he had decided, after consultation with Pusta, to ignore the activities of the special delegation because of Allied suspicions of German activity which could lead to the denial of Allied military assistance to Estonia.³⁸

The activities of this delegation caused considerable difficulties for Pusta in Paris. Officials at the Quai d'Orsay told Pusta that a French agent in Stockholm, "R.W.," reported that the Estonian representatives in Stockholm had taken to pro-German leanings. Pusta had a difficult time dispelling these reports. French suspicions were compounded by White Russian and Baltic German intrigues in Scandinavia. At the end of 1919, when Jaan Tõnisson arrived in Paris, Pusta was kept busy in assuring the Minister of Foreign Affairs that Tõnisson was not leaning towards the Germans. Regardless of these incidents, Pusta noted that there was little policy dissention among the Estonian representatives in Stockholm, London, and Paris. In general, the representatives in these capitals emphasized the Estonian people's wish to be free of Russian and German domination.³⁹

NOTES

1. Oiderman, 131; Uustalu, *Estonian People*, 163
2. August Rei, *The Drama of the Baltic Peoples* (Stockholm: Kirjastus Vaba Eesti, 1972), 54; Tomingas, 61-69; Uustalu, *Estonian People*, 164.
3. Oiderman, 131.
4. Albert N. Tarulis, *Soviet Policy Toward the Baltic States, 1918-1940* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1959), 47.
5. Eesti Vabadusvõitlejate Liit, 17; Leontin, "L'Indépendance de l'Estonie," 127; *Journal des Débats*, 25 December 1918.
6. *Journal des Débats*, 8 January 1919; Leontin, "L'Indépendance de l'Estonie," 125; Eric A. Sibul, "The Role of the Estonian Navy in the Landeswehr War," paper presented at the Ninth Conference of Baltic Studies in Scandinavia (Stockholm, June 1987), 2; Uustalu, *Estonian People*, 166.
7. Eesti Vabadusvõitlejate Liit, 19.
8. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 233.
9. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 223; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 42.
10. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 334-36.
11. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 337-38; Evald Uustalu, *Eesti Vabariik 1918-1940* [The Republic of Estonia 1918-1940] (Lund: Eesti Kirjanike Kooperatiiv, 1968), 24; About two weeks later, the Estonian head of State Konstantin Päts, requested that the British government dispatch immediately to Estonia; 20,000 rifles, 3,000 pistols, 20 armored cars as well as artillery shells and small arms ammunition. *Journal des Débats*, 10 January 1919.
12. Piip, "Bolshevism and Estonia," 1, H.H.A.; *Tormine Aasta*, 338.
13. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 339-40; Sibul, "The Role of the Estonian Navy," 4.
14. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 342.
15. Edgar Anderson, "An Undeclared Naval War: The British-Soviet Naval Struggle in the Baltic: 1918-1920," *Journal of Central European Affairs* 22 (April, 1962): 44-45; "British Policy Toward the Baltic States: 1918-1920," *Journal of Central European Affairs*, no. 19 (October, 1959): 278; *F.R.U.S.: Russia 1918*, 2: 864.
16. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 343; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 43.
17. William A. Fletcher, "The British-Soviet Naval Conflict in Eastern Baltic: 1918-1919," (M.A. thesis, San José State University, 1972), 49-50; Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 353; Sibul, "The Role of the Estonian Navy," 5.

18. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 353.
19. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 353; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 432-34.
20. J. Rang, "Kolonel J. Laidoner Liibavis 1918," [Colonel J. Laidoner in Liepaja, 1918] in *Johan Laidoner*, ed. Villem Saarsen (Stockholm: Tryckt hos Tryckcentralen i Örebro, 1953), 44-45.
21. Anderson, "An Undeclared Naval War," 46-48; Eesti Vabadusvõitlejate Liit, 21; *Le Matin*, 7 January 1919; *Journal des Débats*, 3 January 1919; Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 354-55; Rei, *The Drama of the Baltic People*, 55; Sibul, "The Role of the Estonian Navy," 5-9; Tomingas, 76.
22. Anderson, "An Undeclared Naval War," 48; *Le Matin*, 2 January 1919.
23. C.E. Calwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson: His Life and Diaries* (London: Cassell and Company Ltd., 1927), 2i, 159.
24. Ibid.
25. Churchill, *The World Crisis: The Aftermath 1918-1928*, 93.
26. Anderson, "An Undeclared Naval War," 53.
27. Gustav Mannerheim, *The Memoirs of Marshal Mannerheim*, trans. Eric Lewenhaupt (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1954), 207.
28. Kalevi Jacques Holsti, "The Origins of Finnish Foreign Policy, 1918-1922: Rudolf Holsti's Role in the Formulation of Policy," (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1961), 120.
29. Rei, *The Drama of the Baltic Peoples*, 57.
30. Eesti Vabadusvõitlejate Liit, 21; Leontin, "L'Indépendance de l'Estonie," 127.
31. Fletcher, "British-Soviet Naval Conflict in the Eastern Baltic: 1918-1919," 72; *Journal des Débats*, 5 January 1919; Mannerheim, *The Memoirs of Marshal Mannerheim*, 207; *La Matin*, 23 January 1918; Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 359; Sibul, "Role of the Estonian Navy," 9-10; Uustalu, *Eesti Vabariik*, 37.
32. Richard G. Borgelin, *Danneborgi Lipu All: Taani Vabatahtlikud Eesti Vabadussõjas* [Under the Danneborg flag: Danish Volunteers in the Estonian War of Independence] (Stockholm: Välis Eesti & EMP., 1973), 59; Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 340.
33. Borgelin, *Danneborgi Lipu All*, 27-30; *Journal des Débats*, 4 May 1919..
34. Gleb Drujina, "The History of the North-West Army of General Yudenich," (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1950), 12; Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 358; Uustalu, *Estonian People*, 175.
35. Anderson, "Toward the Baltic Entente: The Initial Phase," 43; Piip, "The Liberation of Latvia" (a lecture delivered at the University of California at Los Angeles, July 28, 1932), 5, H.H.A.; Uustalu, *Estonian People*, 174.
36. Eesti Vabadusvõitlejate liit, 31; Uustalu, *Estonian People*, 171-77.
37. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 351.
38. Ibid.
39. Pusta, "Jaan Tõnisson Eesti Välispoliitikuna ja Diplomaadina," 241; *Saadiku Päevik*, 45.

CHAPTER 5

THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE OF 1919

At the end of 1918, a delegation led by the shrewd former Petrograd lawyer Jaan Poska, who had now become Estonia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, left Estonia for Paris. The delegation arrived in London on December 30, 1918, on a merchant ship carrying lumber and flax. This ship, the *Libava*, as well as the *Kajak* (ex-*Gagar*), *Roksana* and others were taken as naval prizes from the Soviets by Admiral Pitka's navy. The departure of this delegation aboard the *Libava* was delayed by a disturbance in Tallinn by Russian harbor workers. However, the *Omakaitse* which began acting as a police force after the outbreak of the War of Independence, effectively dealt with the Russian agitators and the delegation was able to depart after a two-day delay.¹ The *Kajak* itself became an important issue in Estonian foreign relations. The Western-Russian Shipping Association tried to regain possession of the vessel through the British court system. On January 9, 1919, the court case had a favorable result for the Estonians. While Lord Balfour had granted Estonia *de facto* recognition, the British courts recognized Estonia's rights as a sovereign nation and the *Kajak* which was captured as a result of a naval action in time of war, remained in Estonia's possession. The favorable decision strengthened the Estonian position in the eyes of the British public opinion. This was important because as Colonel F.H. Kirsch confided to Piip, British naval and military support for Estonia depended largely on the favorable opinion of the British public. This decision also strengthened Estonia's international legal status.²

The *Libava*'s load of lumber and flax was sold and the payment received for this merchandise provided the working capital for the delegation. In London, the delegation met with Jaan Tõnisson who had arrived in London on December 15. Pusta has emphasized, that this delegation was not specifically sent to represent Estonia at the Peace Conference which would convene on January 18, 1919, "but came to obtain recognition and supplies for its fighting people."³ Thus it was really a general foreign delegation rather

than a peace delegation. The delegation's stop in London was very important, because Britain was the primary source of Allied assistance to Estonia. The tasks of the delegation were to advance Estonia's cause among British public opinion as well as among British social and governmental leaders, establish closer relations with the United States and prepare for the Peace Conference. To further relations with the United States, the Estonians and Latvians undertook joint action. They sent a detailed memorandum on the current situation and the political aspirations of the two nations to President Wilson. They also sent a memorandum to Henry Cabot Lodge, the Chairman of the Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee.⁴ On January 3, 1919, Poska's delegation arrived in Paris. For Pusta, his arrival was timely because the Estonian mission was nearly out of funds. Pusta had spent nearly all of his own personal savings supporting the Estonian representation in Paris.⁵

The members of the delegation besides Poska, the chairman, were Tõnisson, Martna, Nikolai Kostner, Piip, and Pusta. The secretary of the delegation was Rein Eliaser, a lawyer from Tallinn, while Eduard Laaman became press attaché and Joakim Puhk, an industrialist, was the commercial advisor. Puhk and Leo Simsivart had provided important financial support for the Maanõukogu and the Foreign Delegation during the German occupation of Estonia. Menning initially remained in Copenhagen but later came to Paris, while Virgo handled affairs in Rome. In London, Jaan Kopvillem, a specialist in oil shale, took over Piip's duties during the peace conference. Johannes Pitka, Jr. and Alexander Puhk were sent to assist Kopvillem. Also sent to London was a military mission consisting of Lt. William Tomingas representing the navy, Lt. Alfred Sinisov, the army, and Lt. E. Orgusaar, army aviation. Lt. Tomingas felt that the Estonian military were adopting the bad habits of the former Tsarist armed forces; he felt that one military representative was sufficient. In any case, Tomingas as a naval aviator could at least represent the interests of both the navy and Estonia's small air force. A military mission was also sent to France, headed by Colonel Alexander Luik, a cavalry officer. Andres Dido and Raymonde Fontaine were to assist Pusta in Paris.⁶

The Estonian government gave Jaan Poska a very broad and independent authorization for negotiations. His power was far greater than any other diplomatic representative had received before. In essence, the delegation under his leadership could decide the future international status of Estonia in agreement with Allied powers at the Peace Conference. In particular they could decide Estonia's part in the League of Nations and her future relations with Russia. However, neither of these would first require the *de jure* recognition of Estonian independence. Poska considered the steps for *de jure* recognition of an independent Estonia as the foremost goal of the delegation, but *de jure* recognition on a conditional basis could take three other routes: a Finnish-Estonian Union, a Baltic league, and statehood in a Russian federation, which was the least desirable.⁷

Soon after its arrival Poska's delegation set out to work, establishing trade relations in Paris and London. Press bureaus were also established in Paris under Pusta and in London under Eduard Laaman.⁸ On January 29, Pusta and Poska met with Philippe Berthelot, director of the political section of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting dealt mainly with Estonia's future relationship with Russia. When Berthelot inquired if Estonia still desired to become part of a Russian federation, Poska answered, "no." Berthelot informed the two Estonians that it would be highly unlikely that the French government could make a separate decision concerning Estonia, without first resolving the general Russian question as well as the situation of the other border states. Berthelot also informed Poska and Pusta about plans mainly forwarded by the Americans to hold a conference on the Prinkipo Islands in the Sea of Marmara for the warring Russian factions as well as the border states. Poska and Pusta also inquired about the Estonian request for a loan from France; Berthelot told them that they would have to wait and see, as all the loan requests from new nations were being processed by the Foreign Ministry. During this meeting with Berthelot, Piip stated that the British felt that the planned conference at Prinkipo would not take place because the border state representatives would not trust the Russian factions. The British were correct in noting Estonia's suspicions. Before this meeting, Piip had expressed his concern to his Estonian colleagues about the continuing contacts between the White Russians and the Germans. Notably, Kerensky's

representatives in Berne were in contact with the German ambassador there and A. P. Isvoski, the former Provisional Government Minister, continued his intrigues in Berlin.⁹

On the same day as the meeting with Berthelot, Pusta, Kostner, and Joakim Puhk met with Herbert Hoover, the director of the American Relief Administration. Due to the pillaging by the Russian and German forces, the supply of food and forage was extremely low in Estonia. Pusta sent a formal memorandum to Hoover stressing the urgency of the matter. In the memorandum he stated, "No time may be wasted. If help comes too late, the inevitable result will be a catastrophe in our struggle against the Bolsheviks."¹⁰ Hoover informed the Estonian delegation that Estonia was to receive about 10,000 tons of grain through Stockholm. As for the eventual payment for this assistance, Hoover asked if Estonia could pay in dollars as the British did not permit the pound/sterling to be transferred.¹¹

At the time, the Estonian military situation was no longer desperate, but the time of danger had not yet passed. Hoover requested that American destroyers be sent to Baltic waters to provide moral support for the Baltic people and to protect food shipments and the American relief personnel. Regarding the situation as urgent, Hoover vowed to get naval support "with or without the blessing of the Allied higher authority."¹² The U.S. Navy sent the destroyers to the Baltic and the desperately needed assistance reached the hungry Estonian population. Hoover was deeply moved by the bravery, resolve, and national spirit of the Baltic peoples. He found their diplomatic representatives to be sincere in their work toward realistic national goals. The director of the American Relief Administration became a strong supporter of the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Hoover would often plead the case of the Baltic countries during the course of the Peace Conference.¹³

Jaan Tõnisson could not remain in Paris to plead the case of his nation at the peace conference. He planned to return to Estonia in early February at the request of his political party that he do so. This was mainly so that they could prepare for the upcoming elections for the Asutav Kogu [Constituent Assembly]. Before Tõnisson left, however, he drafted a twenty page memorandum in German titled, "Zur Frage der Staatlichen Selbständigkeit und Unabhängigkeit Estlands." Before leaving Tõnisson also recommended

that the delegation consider peace overtures to the Bolsheviks now that the Estonians were in an advantageous military situation. On returning to Estonia, Tõnisson assumed the duties of Minister of Foreign Affairs while Poska remained abroad.¹⁴

Pusta expanded Tõnisson's memorandum and translated it into French. The new document consisted of seventy-eight pages and was entitled "Memoire sur l'indépendance de l'Estonie." The Estonian delegation presented this document to the Baltic Commission of the Peace Conference on April 12, 1919. It was accompanied by supplemental economic information as well as skillful arguments by Piip for *de jure* recognition of Estonia.¹⁵

The Prinkipo Conference

By the beginning of 1919, the chaos in the former Russian Empire had become an ever increasing problem for the Allied powers. Fighting was taking place on a multitude of fronts. Bolshevik forces attacked the newly independent nations and a number of anti-Bolshevik Russian governments and armies were formed and were fighting against the Reds. Before the armistice British, French, American, and Italian troops had landed in North Russia in order to prevent allied supplied war material from falling into German hands and to prevent the use of Murmansk as a submarine base by Germany. In the Far East, Japanese, American, British, French, and Chinese troops were moving towards Siberia also to guard supplies, watch the activities of German and Austrian prisoners of war, and assist in the evacuation of the Czech legion of which Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian soldiers were a part.¹⁶ Only after the armistice did these interventions become anti-Bolshevik in nature. Towards this purpose French troops landed in Odessa and British troops entered Caucasus. It was Woodrow Wilson's policy to keep the American forces neutral in the struggle between the Russian Reds and Whites in Siberia. The role of these forces was to safeguard the trans-Siberian railway for the transport of the Czech legions as well as for transport of humanitarian supplies. However there was an ulterior motive for another policy, mainly to keep watch on the Japanese

forces in Siberia. Thus, Wilson's policy in the Far East was motivated by desire to stem the expansion of Japanese influence rather than to stem the tide of Bolshevism.¹⁷

Woodrow Wilson took steps towards the same policy in early January 1919. On January 8, 1919, Wilson sent William H. Buckler, an American diplomatic agent, to Stockholm to engage Maxim Litvinov, the Bolshevik emissary, in secret talks. Buckler's report on his discussions with Litvinov encouraged Wilson to press for the withdrawal of Allied military forces from Russia, after which he felt that a cease fire could be arranged between the opposing parties. Litvinov had conceded to Buckler that the Bolsheviks were willing to recognize the self-determination of Finland and Poland but made no mention of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.¹⁸

On January 16, 1919, a meeting of the Allied leaders took place at which Lloyd George suggested that representatives of the Bolsheviks and White Russian governments and other states with which they were at war should be invited to Paris to engage in negotiations. This suggestion followed the rejection of the plan by Marshal Ferdinand Foch, the Allied supreme commander, for a full-fledged drive by Allied forces and the armies of the border states against the Bolsheviks.¹⁹ From the beginning Lloyd George's policy met the strong disapproval of Clemenceau and the Quai d'Orsay; nor did it receive support from Lord Balfour, Winston S. Churchill, or Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson who considered this plan a disgraceful state of affairs.²⁰

The "old tiger" Clemenceau could not bear the thought of Bolshevik representatives in Paris. If such an invitation were extended, he would resign. Clemenceau believed the Bolsheviks to be nothing more than terrorists, who along with being thoroughly un reputable had little hope of staying in power. Accordingly, he saw little reason to negotiate with Bolsheviks; their coming to Paris would ferment more chaos.²¹ On January 21, 1919, the Allied Supreme Council met and dealt with the Russian situation. At this meeting, Woodrow Wilson reaffirmed his view that negotiations should be undertaken. Because Clemenceau was so strongly opposed to the presence of Bolshevik representatives in Paris, Wilson suggested the deliberations be held in some other place. Lloyd George suggested the Island of Lemnos in

the Aegean Sea as a possible meeting place. Yet Clemenceau still opposed the idea of a conference. He feared a Bolshevik trap. Baron Sidney Sonnino, the Italian Foreign Minister, was also against negotiations. The French and Italian representatives called for the dispatch of Allied volunteers to fight the Bolsheviks. Finally they yielded to the call for negotiations by Wilson and Lloyd George. The Japanese representative Baron Nobuaki Makino, supported negotiations as well. The Allied leaders compromised in order not to destroy the unity of their nations at the peace conference.²²

On January 22, an invitation drafted by Woodrow Wilson was dispatched by radio to the various groups concerned. The invitation called for a cease fire and withdrawal of forces from former Russian territories considered autonomous. The various Russian governments and all of the border states, except Finland, were to send three representatives, not to Paris, but to the Prinkipo Islands in the Sea of Marmara by February 15, 1919. There they would meet also with the Allied representatives. Before the war the Prinkipo Islands had been used by the Turkish government to exile the stray dogs of Constantinople; now the Allied powers vainly hoped to solve the Russian problem there.²³

The Bolsheviks wired a favorable response to the proposal on February 4, 1919. The message assured the Allies that the Soviets were willing to make considerable concessions, such as repaying private debts and giving mining concessions. They even expressed willingness to make territorial concessions. These concessions would be granted by the Bolsheviks provided that they "could secure conditions enabling them to work out their social schemes peacefully."²⁴ While it seemed as if the Bolsheviks were making the utmost efforts to come to a peace settlement in Prinkipo, they in actuality refused the invitation by refusing the precondition of coming to a cease fire and withdrawing their forces from territories considered autonomous.²⁵

After discussion took place in the various White Russian governments and within the anti-Bolshevik organizations in Western Europe, their representatives in Paris refused the invitation to Prinkipo with contempt. They feared that the Prinkipo conference would merely allow the Bolsheviks a breathing

spell to organize their forces and consolidate their position and that all agreements would be unscrupulously violated by the Reds.²⁶

The decision not to participate by the White Russians was influenced at least in part by pressure from Clemenceau and the Quai d'Orsay who were strongly against the negotiations. The Quai d'Orsay informed the various White Russian governments as well as the Ukrainian representative that if their representatives would not attend the Prinkipo Conference, they would have less difficulty in receiving assistance from France. However, to Pusta's knowledge no such offer was ever made to the Estonian government.²⁷ Regardless of France's attitude and the reaction of the different Russian factions, Lloyd George and Woodrow Wilson still remained hopeful. On February 7, George D. Herron and William Allen White were appointed the American representatives to Prinkipo while Sir Robert Borden was ready to represent Great Britain.²⁸

The Estonian delegation in Paris stated to the Allied governments that Estonia was willing to participate in the Prinkipo meetings but clearly stated reservations regarding its influence on national independence. For the Estonians it was mainly a route to end the fighting with the Bolshevik forces rather than to decide the future international status of Estonia. Unlike the Estonians, the Georgian government promptly refused the invitation because acceptance would have meant tacit admission that Georgia was part of Russia. It was the American delegates at Paris who encouraged the border states to attend the Prinkipo meetings.²⁹ While the members of the Estonian delegation were in agreement on the need to attend the Prinkipo conference, they did have divergent opinions on who the Estonian representatives should be. Jaan Tõnisson thought that it would be best to send Antonius Piip and Nickolai Kostner who were both social-democrats. Jaan Poska suggested that Piip and Joakim Puhk be sent while Kostner remained in London to handle commercial activity. According to Pusta, he suggested that the two most important members of the delegation, Poska and Piip go together with a secretary because Estonia's situation would not yet be discussed by the Peace Conference; thus, their presence in Paris was not necessary.³⁰

On February 10, 1919, Henri Franklin-Bouillon, the chairman of the Chamber of Deputies Foreign Affairs Commission, received the representatives of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the Ukraine at the Foreign Minister Stephen Pichon's residence. Pusta and Poska represented Estonia at this meeting. The Estonian representatives presented a memorandum which stated the Estonian position on the Prinkipo conference. This was accompanied by the two Estonians' verbal statements stressing the Estonian desire to make peace with the Bolsheviks but not to make any concessions on Estonia's independence at Prinkipo.³¹

The 15th of February passed with no delegates arriving at the Sea of Marmara. During the same time, the two main supporters of the Prinkipo policy, Woodrow Wilson and Lloyd George, found it necessary to leave Paris. Lloyd George had to return to London because of increasing labor problems and the ominous "Horse Guards revolt" in which several hundred soldiers marched on Whitehall. In America, the political situation had changed greatly due to the elections of 1918. The Democrats had lost their majority in Congress and the Republicans did not support Wilson's foreign policy mainly due to his ruthless manipulations of international issues for party politics. Furthermore, there were several strong leftists groups in the United States agitating for American support and cooperation with the Bolsheviks. American banking houses had already made loans to Soviet Russia and there were efforts to arrange for even larger loans. As a result, Winston S. Churchill, the British Secretary of State for War, and Colonel Eduard M. House were left in Paris to deal with the Russian question in the interim.³²

In the absence of Lloyd George and Woodrow Wilson, Churchill pressed for the Allied Supreme Council to issue an ultimatum to the Bolsheviks to stop fighting within ten days after which the representatives of the warring factions would come to Prinkipo. This ultimatum would be delivered with the understanding that if the Bolsheviks refused, the Allied powers would move actively toward overthrowing the Soviets by force of arms. Colonel House stated that he would not support this and that he was against the Prinkipo plan from the beginning. Churchill's suggestion was relayed to Lloyd George and Wilson and drew vehement protests from both men. Neither would support an ultimatum which could

possibly lead to an intensified military effort against Bolshevik Russia. Thus, the ultimatum was not made and Churchill was forced to return to London in frustration.³³

Wilson had also taken another route for negotiations with the Bolsheviks. On February 18, 1919, he dispatched William C. Bullitt, a twenty-eight year old member of the American delegation with liberal views, on a secret, unofficial diplomatic mission to Russia to negotiate with the Bolshevik leadership. In mid March Bullitt met with Lenin, Litvinov, and Georgi Chicherin. The Soviets were interested in Bullitt's proposals to end hostilities with all *de facto* governments set up on the territory of the Russian Empire. With Lenin's approval, Litvinov drafted a written statement in which the Bolshevik government expressed its willingness to enter in an armistice and negotiations with all *de facto* governments. In this statement, the Bolshevik government promised not to attempt to make territorial changes by force if all other governments and the Allied powers agreed with this also. The deadline for an Allied answer to these proposals was set as April 10, 1919.³⁴ The proposal was suitable for Estonia whose territory had been cleared of the Red Army but not for Latvia and Lithuania, much of whose territory was occupied by the Russian Bolsheviks. Unlike the stipulations for the Prinkipo conference, there was no call for withdrawal of armed forces from territories that were considered to be autonomous. In fact there was a call for the withdrawal of Allied military forces and abandonment of Allied military assistance to the governments opposed to the Bolsheviks. This did little to guarantee that Soviets would return occupied territories or would not continue military conquest.³⁵ However April 10 passed and the Allies failed to reply to the Bolshevik peace proposals. The reason for the failure to of reply is not really known, but Wilson at the time of Bullitt's return to Paris was totally engrossed in the German questions and was near nervous and physical collapse.³⁶ Lloyd George, who knew of the Bullitt mission, publicly denied any knowledge of it. He was under pressure from the House of Commons to take a stronger position on the Russian problem. At this time Admiral Aleksandr V. Kolchak was making advances in Siberia. The Allies hoped that the would be able to overthrow the Bolsheviks and provide a solution to the Russian problem.³⁷

When the Japanese government learned of the proposals made to Bullitt, they expressed their support. The Japanese favored Bullitt's proposals as well as the Prinkipo plan because these would have the effect of diffusing Russian power. During the period the Japanese formally reaffirmed their support of the Estonian government.³⁸

Because the Allied powers wanted to solve the Russian problem as a whole, the Estonian delegation found it more effective to approach the Allies in cooperation with other non-Russian nations of the former Tsarist Empire. Thus, the various national representatives decided to collectively approach the French government in mid March. The Quai d'Orsay responded favorably to this and invited representatives of the various nationality groups for an audience with Georges Clemenceau on Sunday morning, March 16, 1919. Estonia was represented by Pusta and Poska, Latvia by Meierovics and Janis Chokste, Lithuania by Augustinas Voldemaras, Azerbaidzhan by Ali Marden Bek Topchibashev, Georgia by Chkheide, Northern Caucasus by A.M. Tsermojev, Byelorussia by A. de Lutskevich and the Ukraine by Gregory Sidorenko and V. Petrushevitch.³⁹ Ironically a foreign ministry official introduced this group to Clemenceau as the "delegation russe."⁴⁰ A few weeks prior to this meeting a lunatic had tried to assassinate Clemenceau on his way to work. The "old tiger" had three bullets removed and a few days later returned to work. When Pusta politely inquired about his health at the beginning of the meeting, Clemenceau gruffly retorted, "And what should be the matter with it?"⁴¹

Meierovics began the actual business by inquiring where, how, and when the question of the border states would be dealt with at the Peace Conference and when they could formally make their demands known. To this Clemenceau answered that the Conference had not yet dealt with these questions and that they would receive attention after the treaty with Germany was settled and the Conference could then concentrate on the Russian problem. Pusta then questioned Clemenceau about the availability of military assistance and credit. To this he replied that it was difficult for France to assist Estonia because the French needed to take care of their own situation after their country had suffered so greatly from the war. He also felt that there was little value in discussing individual cases; assistance to the border nations should be

decided on a broad basis. Meierovics then asked about the French government's position on recognition of the border states. Clemenceau replied that he could not speak at this time for the French government's official position, but he stated that he personally favored *de jure* recognition. In all, the audience lasted about twenty minutes.⁴² Clemenceau had expressed his sympathy toward the cause of the Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Ukrainians and said that he was favorable towards giving their cause French support at the Peace Conference. Other than this, little was accomplished by this meeting.⁴³

Gregory Sidorenko of the Ukraine was not satisfied with Clemenceau's evasive answers during this common audience. Thus, he requested a private audience with the French Prime Minister which was arranged through the chief of cabinet, Georges Mandel. At this second meeting with Clemenceau, Siderenko threatened that if the Ukraine would not receive recognition soon, her government would turn to Germany for assistance. Clemenceau had little tolerance for such a brazen statement; he told Sidorenko to leave the country immediately. Soon after, Sidorenko left Paris and was replaced by Duke Choshevitch, a Ukrainian of Polish ancestry. The Baltic representatives cooperated well with Duke Choshevitch; frequently joint meetings of the border state representatives were held in his spacious apartment in the Etoile section of Paris.⁴⁴ By mid March 1919, the possibility of a common conference with the Bolsheviks was for practical purposes no longer a possibility. This left the Baltic nations for the most part to fend for themselves against the Bolsheviks. There was one final effort by the Allies to have the Bolsheviks brought into a cease fire agreement. This last effort was set into motion when the various Allied heads of state received telegrams in early April from the famous Norwegian Arctic explorer, Fridtjof Nansen, suggesting the establishment of a non-political commission for the purpose of alleviating starvation in the former Russian Empire. Nansen inquired what assistance, such as finance, shipping, and foodstuffs the Allies could provide for this project. The Nansen proposal which envisioned the feeding of the hungry in conjunction with a cease fire was inspired by the director of the American Relief Administration, Herbert Hoover⁴⁵

The Supreme Allied Council discussed the Nansen proposal on April 9, 1919. Woodrow Wilson suggested that the commission be composed of representatives of neutral nations. Lloyd George emphasized that care must be taken to keep the power of distribution out of the hands of the Bolsheviks, who already were using food supply as a political weapon. The council agreed to the proposal and Hoover drafted a reply to Nansen. It stressed that food would be distributed but only after the cession of hostilities and the suspension of movements of troops and materials.⁴⁶

Nansen forwarded the proposals to Lenin who stated that the Bolsheviks were willing to accept food but would not agree to a cease fire. The Bolsheviks radioed this reply to the Allies on May 14. With the failure of the direct overtures to the Bolsheviks, the Allies began to look towards Admiral Kolchak's forces as the only viable alternative to Bolshevism in Russia.⁴⁷

The Baltic Commission

It was the desire of the Allied powers to deal with the German treaty first and then deal with the Russian question. They considered the Baltic problem a part of the Russian question. But events in the Baltic proved to be too fluid to be ignored. Thus on April 16, 1919, on the suggestion of Woodrow Wilson, the Supreme Council moved to establish a Commission on Baltic Affairs to deal with the Baltic question.⁴⁸ British, French, and American missions were already observing the situation in the Baltic and American food distribution had already started there.⁴⁹ Because, with occasional exceptions, the Supreme Allied Council was not directly involved with Baltic questions, Allied policy making in this matter was delegated to the Baltic Commission which consisted of lower echelons of each of the Allied peace delegations. As a result of lacking clear guidance from the top, they were naturally reluctant to make far-reaching decisions. Thus temporized decisions or ad hoc policies were adopted to meet immediate needs.⁵⁰

The Commission, which first met on May 15, 1919, consisted of Sir Esmé Howard as chairman and British representative; Samuel Eliot Morison, a history professor at Harvard, the American

representative; Henri Kammerer, the head of the Russian Bureau in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Marquis Pietro Tamasi della Torretta dei principi di Lampedusa, the former Italian ambassador to Saint Petersburg; and Kentaro Ochai, the Japanese Minister to the Netherlands.⁵¹ Of the members of the commission, Marquis della Torretta had the least favorable attitude toward recognizing the independence of the Baltic states. He had been well connected in society of the Russian capital before the war. Furthermore, he might have been under the influence of his Baltic-German mistress. The Estonians were well acquainted with Sir Esmé Howard with whom they had dealt when he was the British Ambassador in Stockholm. Pusta developed a good working relationship with the American representative. Samuel Eliot Morison would inform Pusta in a friendly manner of proposals and decisions which concerned Estonia.⁵² Morison considered Pusta to be a "gentleman of culture, integrity and patriotism." The American representative felt that Pusta's patriotism was strong but quiet; he did not overstate Estonia's case unlike many other representatives of small states at Paris, nor did he demand territory at the expense of neighbors' lands. Morison stated, "One knew instinctively that he spoke the truth, and that his word could be relied on."⁵³ Pusta was able to convince Morison that Estonia was entitled to full independence. Morison unsuccessfully argued for American recognition of Estonian independence at the Peace Conference.⁵⁴

The Baltic Commission had many matters to deal with other than trying to decide the future international status of the Baltic states. These immediate matters included Finnish border problems, the evacuation of German troops from Latvia and Lithuania, and establishing a suitable frontier arrangement between Lithuania and Poland. The Finnish border problems included the matter of Eastern Karelia, Petsamo, access to the White Sea and the Åland (Ahvenamaa) Islands. The Åland Islands created a serious rift between Sweden and Finland. The Ålands had been part of the Grand Duchy of Finland before the war but were important to Sweden for strategic reasons as well because they were populated by the Swedes. The changing international status of Finland had annulled the agreement of 1856 on the international status of the Åland islands.⁵⁵ Thus there was much work to occupy the Baltic Commission.

In dealing with the Baltic Commission, the Estonians and Latvians continued their close cooperation as was the case during the previous session of the Peace Conference. Cooperation of the Estonians and Latvians with the Lithuanians was somewhat more difficult. Some Lithuanian leaders still cherished the idea of creating a Greater Lithuania. Because of extensive territorial claims, these Lithuanians would become involved in more intrigues.⁵⁶ While Pusta favored cooperation with the other Baltic delegates, he later had doubts about acting as part of a block of border states as in the audience with Clemenceau. He feared that this was more likely to draw Estonia into the grandiose plans to conquer Petrograd and Moscow. It could also dilute the strength of Estonia because as a member of a large block, the Estonians would appear to the Allies merely as one of "all those Russian peoples." However, it must be noted that Pusta came to these conclusions in hindsight. The motive to form a border state block was mainly pressure from the Chamber of Deputies Foreign Commission.⁵⁷

The first meeting of the Baltic Commission took place on May 15, 1919. The French representative, Henri Kammerer, recommended that economic and military assistance be given to the existing *de facto* governments without consideration for their political status. Decidedly the orientation of the Allied representatives was to continue the current fight against the Bolsheviks and prevent the further spread of Bolshevism westward. Kammerer suggested that the Commission deal "with the relations of these states which exist in fact, and with Russia, and, if necessary with the establishment of a federation or of other political combinations."⁵⁸ Although Sir Esmé Howard paid tribute to the military prowess of the Estonian armed forces, he drew a gloomy picture of the political situation in Estonia. He felt that the Estonians were making a brave stand but were nearing the point of exhaustion. The British representative based his plea for greater military assistance and financial support on serious apprehensions about the results of a negotiated peace between Estonia and Soviet Russia.⁵⁹ He stated to the commission:

The Estonian government has asked us if we would object to their concluding peace with the Bolsheviks. Such a peace would be altogether deplorable, for it would mean the Bolshevik invasion of Estonia, and it is probable that Bolshevism would reach clear to Reval [Tallinn] an extremely important point, not only because it is a port of very great value, but because it would be a center of Bolshevik propaganda in the Scandinavian countries.⁶⁰

The Commission agreed to Kammerer's suggestion to study the internal and external situation of each country to determine whether to recognize its full independence, whether to create a federation or alliances among them, or whether merely to consider them autonomous provinces of Russia.⁶¹ The Allied representatives decided to hear at the same session presentations by the Baltic delegates as well as by the White Russians. At the second and third meetings of the Baltic Commission the situation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania was not discussed, rather Finnish problems were dealt with.⁶²

At the fourth meeting of the Baltic Commission, the White Russians were able to express their views on the independence of the Baltic states. The Commission was not willing to receive a Russian delegation but would hear Russians in an individual capacity as other commissions had done.⁶³ Nevertheless, the Russian emigrés in Paris still got their say in the Baltic Commission. Pusta regarded the Russian emigrés to be the next most dangerous enemies to Estonian independence after the Bolsheviks.⁶⁴ Makalov, the Provisional Government's ambassador to France was to present the White Russian case to the Commission. The position Maklakov expressed was simply the orthodox Russian point of view. While Makalov made vague promises of autonomous status, he told the Allied representatives that Russia would not be able to part with the Baltic states. Maklakov used the rather worn argument that Russia could not be deprived of harbors on the Baltic. He also stressed that the independence of the Baltic states threatened the security of the Russian capital Petrograd.⁶⁵ Maklakov promised that there would be guarantees of rights for the Baltic peoples in the Russian federation. However, Morison pointed out that it would be far easier to enforce guarantees in the Baltic states for Russia (access to harbors, naval bases, etc.) than it would be to enforce guarantees for the Baltic people in Russia.⁶⁶ The White Russian attitude toward the Baltic states was clear; during the same period, Constantine Nabokov, a White Russian spokesman stated that "the independence of Baltic provinces would resemble the self-determination of a nursery or a declaration of a negro republic in Texas."⁶⁷ Statements such as this were ironic, because the Russian anti-Bolsheviks were skillful in political intrigue in the Allied capitals but inept in civil administration of territories under their control.

Regardless of the White Russian attitudes, Estonia continued cooperation with non-Bolshevik Russian forces. The Estonian offensive in May 1919 had reached its objectives. The control of the Northern Russian Corps passed to the White Russian general Nikolai Yudenich. At the request of the Allies, the Estonians continued cooperation with the Northern Russian Corps which was renamed the North-West Army, also at Allied request.⁶⁸ The objective of this army was the capture of Petrograd, but its officers did not inspire the trust of the Estonians. Besides lacking competence, they would openly boast that once in Petrograd, they would turn and crush the independence of the Baltic States.⁶⁹

It was not only Allied pressure which influenced the Estonians to cooperate with the North-West Russian Army but desire to assist the Ingerlanders who were kin to the Estonians and Finns. To a certain extent the situation of Estonia and Ingerland, the area between Narva and Petrograd, was contiguous to the situation between Finland and Eastern Karelia. While the Estonians had little chance of gaining actual rule over Ingerland, they hoped that by assisting the White Russians the Ingerlanders would be able to gain some degree of autonomy. A 1500 man unit of Ingerlanders fought as part of the North-West Army. However, when their representatives demanded the independence of Ingerland from the Russian authorities, they were dismissed. This only created greater animosity between the Estonians and Russians. The Estonians were already incensed about the mistreatment of the Ingrian civil population.⁷⁰ The Russians, charging that the Ingrian unit committed atrocities against Bolshevik prisoners after the capture of Krasnia Gorka, disbanded the unit.⁷¹ However, this does not seem to be a valid charge because it was common practice for the Russians both Red and White to execute prisoners. In Pskov, Estonian military authorities had to intervene to prevent the Russian forces from carrying out pogroms against the city's Jewish population.⁷² While the Allies were inclined to listen to the Russians, in the Baltic Commission the Estonians also got their say, albeit after the Russians.

On May 28, 1919, the Estonian representatives were able to make their case for *de jure* recognition to the Baltic Commission. Since Jaan Poska had been recalled to Estonia to help form Otto Strandman's new government, Piip and Pusta presented the Estonian case.⁷³ The two Estonians made their

presentations with dignity and authority. J. Hampden Jackson had stated, "The personality and grip of international law shown by these two men predisposed favorably to the Estonian people the member of the Supreme Council and the Baltic Commission at Paris, most of whom had never set eyes on an Estonian before."⁷⁴

Piip's presentation emphasized the principle of self-determination, which was clearly expressed by the election of the Asutav Kogu which had begun its sessions on April 23, 1919 and May 19, 1919, had passed an elaborate formal declaration of independence. He clearly refuted arguments of the White Russians regarding constitutional legitimacy in state secession. Piip carefully stated that the Russians no longer had any legal rights to Estonia or her people. However, he let it be known that the Estonians were not adverse to granting Russia free access to Baltic ports by free transit or by the creation of free ports or by a transport entente or by the negotiation of specially favorable treaties of commerce. Finally, he stated that the Estonians would offer to pay their portion of Tsarist debts owed mainly to France as well as other Western countries.⁷⁵

Piip's discourse on international law was followed by Pusta's presentation which the American representative considered to be modest but effective.⁷⁶ The appeal of Pusta stressed the rights of small nations. He stressed the necessity of Estonian independence versus autonomy in a Russian federation and drew attention to the way in which the Provisional Government demonstrated bad faith by seeking to withdraw the autonomy conceded in the first week of the February revolution. While Piip stressed that Estonia's role could be as a bridge between east and west for commerce, Pusta stressed that Estonia's role would also be as a barrier against the spread of Bolshevism into Western Europe. Both Pusta and Piip emphasized the desire of Estonia to join the League of Nations.

After the two Estonians were heard, the British, French, and Italian representatives informed them that the assurances given by their various governments would be respected, but without a new Russian government, it would be highly unlikely that there could be any decision on the status of the Baltic states. This rather noncommittal answer immediately drew fire from Estonian representatives who declared that

Estonia was already detached from Russia and no new government in Russia of whatever color could act in the name of Estonia. Pusta declared that if the Estonian delegation did not obtain a definite promise of independence, the Allies would be making "an explicit decision" by disclaiming responsibility for the resulting political, military, and naval situation regarding Estonia. Clearly, while the Allies feared the spread of Bolshevism into Northern and Central Europe of which the Estonians were the main barrier, they were willing to endanger Estonian defenses in the interest of a Russian government which did not yet exist. At this point the Commission requested the Estonian delegation to retire while it continued discussions of Estonia's current and future status. During the ensuing discussions Morison suggested that at the least the Allied Governments recognize the nationality of Estonians to facilitate control of passports and to provide diplomatic protection.⁷⁷

The continuing discussions centered not on whether Estonia should be independent or not but rather what status to grant Estonia. Two options which the Commission debated were a status like the Grand Duchy of Finland in the former Russian Empire or a status like the free city of Danzig.⁷⁸ The questions of diplomatic representation, customs and custom service, naval bases, and an independent merchant navy were also discussed. The Commission also considered that Estonia might assume a status comparable to a British dominion within the Russian federation.⁷⁹ However, while the Allied governments were continuing to be indecisive about Estonia's status, the nation continued to exist; her diplomatic representatives continued their activities and successfully obtained arms and food supplies. The Estonian military continued work with the Allied officers and an Estonian military mission was sent to France. Pusta informed Morison that Estonia was no longer subject to the Allied blockade of Russia, and normal trade relations could begin. The Foreign Delegation opened trade negotiations with the French and British governments. At the beginning of May, Emile Moeller of the Paris Chamber of Commerce organized the Société Maritime Franco-Esthonienne. The French and British were particularly interested in importing Estonian flax.⁸⁰ Thus regardless of the positions of the Allied representatives on the Baltic Commission, Estonia was for all practical purposes already an independent country.

Since the beginning of the Baltic Commission, the situation in the Baltic had grown increasingly turbulent. The source of this new threat to the Baltic countries and the Allied powers was the German forces remaining in Latvia. These German units assembled after the armistice with the consent of the Allied powers. These units ostensibly were to defend Latvia from the Bolsheviks. The situation in Latvia differed greatly from the situation in Estonia. The fighting in 1916-17 between Russian and German forces in Latvia greatly hampered the activities of the Latvian national movement. Yet, even with the nation split by the battlefield and by the ensuing German occupation, the nationalists were able to organize. An assembly called the People's Council of Latvia was established. On November 18, 1918, the People's Council formally declared the independence of Latvia. The People's Council also declared itself to be the bearer of supreme power in Latvia until a constitution would come into effect. Under the Council's direction a provisional government was established; Karlis Ulmanis became prime minister.⁸¹

The provisional government of Latvia could do little to stop the Soviet forces which were overrunning the country. An armed force had to be organized but arms and munitions were in very scarce supply. Whereas most Estonian soldiers and officers stationed near Estonian borders had returned home before the German occupation began in February 1918, the majority of Latvian soldiers and officers who were scattered throughout the Russian Empire remained in Russia after the German occupation began and the frontier between Russia and Latvia closed.⁸² Another 1200 Latvian soldiers were sent to concentration camp by the German occupation forces.⁸³ The Latvian provisional government desperately tried to organize an armed force. General von der Goltz, however, blocked any Latvian general mobilization. His plans were far different from defending Latvia against the Bolsheviks. The Latvians were fortunate to receive military assistance from the Estonians. By May 1919, already 1500 Latvian troops had been trained and equipped and were serving under Estonian command.⁸⁴

The Allied governments had hoped that the German forces under General von der Goltz would assist the young Latvian republic to defend herself. Unfortunately, this was not the case. The German forces became the tool of those among the Baltic Germans who wanted to preserve their favored position in

society and pan-Germanists and Prussian militarists who had fantastic plans of colonization and renewal of war against the Allies. This was the vision of General von der Goltz who fancied himself a "political general."⁸⁵ When Riga and most of the rest of the country was overrun by Bolshevik force, the Latvian nationalist government of Karlis Ulmanis was forced to withdraw to Liepaja where the headquarters of the Sixth German Reserve Corps were located. The German forces held the vicinity of Liepaja and weathered the Red Army offensive there. Latvian National forces which were under the control of General von der Goltz were not able to increase more than a brigade. This allowed elements of the Landeswehr to stage a putsch against the nationalist government on April 16, 1919. Most of the members of the nationalist government of Ulmanis managed to escape to the Latvian steamer *Saratov* in the harbor. The *Saratov* was put under the protection of the guns of all Royal Navy ships at Liepaja. The Germans established a puppet regime under the leadership of Pastor Andrievs Niedra, a reactionary Latvian clergyman. Neither the British nor the Estonians recognized this government as legitimate.⁸⁶ General Sir Hubert Gough, the chief of the British Military Mission to the Baltic States in 1919, has explained why the Allies allowed such a situation to come about, "The Allies, sitting in conference over the terms of the Peace Treaty at Versailles, would never have tolerated this, but they were quite ignorant of Von der Goltz's whereabouts or his ambitions, while he, in his turn thought it a good gamble that they were too busy to bother much about him and that he might succeed in holding this part of the Baltic for the Germans."⁸⁷

On May 22, 1919, the forces under General von der Goltz went on the offensive and captured Riga. Instead of moving eastward to pursue the retreating Bolsheviks, the German forces of General von der Goltz moved northward with the obvious intent to attack Estonia while her armed forces were preoccupied with the Reds in the east.⁸⁸ This created a dangerous situation for the Estonian forces, because the Germans threatened the supply line to the right flank of the Second Estonian Division. On June 3, General Laidoner ordered Estonian armored trains to guard this supply line, the railway between Ieriki and Gulbene. He also requested the Germans to stop their advance.⁸⁹ On June 5, German forces tried to ambush an Estonian armored train south of Cesis (Võnnu, Wenden). On the next day the German forces attacked and captured

Cesis. The Allied Military Mission to the Baltic states tried desperately to avoid the continuation of hostilities between the German forces and the Estonians. The Allied officers convinced the Estonian High Command to postpone a counter attack at Cesis and to conclude an armistice with the Germans on June 10, 1919. The Allied Military Mission also ordered the Germans to withdraw to south of the Ieriki-Gulbene railway, but they did not comply with these orders.⁹⁰

On June 19, the armistice ended when the German Iron Division attacked the positions of the Estonian Third Division and their Latvian allies at Limbasi and Straupe northwest of Cesis. Two days later, the Landeswehr joined the offensive and attacked the Estonians and Latvians at Looe Station north of Cesis.⁹¹ Bitter fighting took place in the vicinity of the railway station. When Estonian reinforcements from the Armored Train Division arrived in the early morning of June 22, the Germans were thrown back. On the next day the Estonian forces retook Cesis, destroying the Landeswehr's base of operations against the Estonian forces. On the same day the Estonians halted the advance of the Iron Division and made a breakthrough against their positions, forcing the Germans to retreat. The Estonian forces vigorously pursued this retreat until the Germans reached defense positions outside Riga. There the Estonian forces prepared for a final assault on Riga.⁹²

On June 22, the Estonian navy began operations in the Gulf of Riga in support of the ground forces. While General Laidoner and Captain Pitka agreed that naval support was necessary and urgent, they disagreed on the necessity of an assault on Riga from the sea. General Laidoner was hesitant; he felt that the Allied powers would disapprove of such action. When hearing of such a plan Vivian Bosenquet, the British representative in Tallinn, voiced his strong disapproval. Nevertheless, the Estonians carried out their naval operations.⁹³ In the Gulf of Riga, by rather daring operations, the Estonian navy supported the advance of ground forces as well as destroyed or captured the German naval defenses that guarded Riga.⁹⁴

However, a final assault on German forces in Riga by sea and land did not come about. The Allied representatives in the Baltic wanted to halt the Estonian advance and have the Germans withdraw from Riga. In anticipation of the final assault on Riga, the Allied representatives took steps to start armistice

negotiations between the Estonian command and that of the German forces. This was to prevent a battle which would cause great hardships on the civilian population and to save the German forces from total destruction in the hope that they could be used against the Bolsheviks in the future.⁹⁵ When the Allied representatives agreed to the Estonian demand that German forces would withdraw from the city, negotiations between the German command, Allied representatives, and Estonian military authorities were able to begin. Lt. Colonel Stephen George Tallents of Great Britain presided over these negotiations in the Riga suburb of Strazdumuiza. The negotiations were difficult. They were discontinued twice, but resumed again by the pressure of Lt. Colonel Tallents.⁹⁶

An armistice was finally signed at 3:00 A.M. on July 3, 1919. According to the terms, all of the Reich Germans of the "Iron Division" were to be evacuated from Riga by July 6 and were to leave Latvian soil as soon as possible. The Landeswehr was allowed to remain in Latvia; however, all German citizens were removed from its ranks. The Landeswehr was sent to fight the Bolsheviks under the leadership of Lt. Colonel Harold Alexander of the British army.⁹⁷ The officers and soldiers of the Estonian and Latvian forces who fought against General von der Goltz's army did not receive the armistice well. They felt that the German forces were a dangerous enemy who had to be driven from Latvia. They greatly resented the Allied powers who pressured the Estonians to sign the armistice with the Germans. The French military representative, Colonel Emanuel du Parquet, was fired on and nearly killed as he passed across the Estonian-German lines with a French tricolor and white flag. When he reached the Estonians, he was treated rudely by all except General Ernst Pödder, commander of the Third Division, who merely expressed surprise that the officer even reached him.⁹⁸

The Estonian and Latvian governments were deeply disturbed by the activities of the Germans who were slow to evacuate Kurzeme. On July 21, Estonia signed a treaty of cooperation and promised joint action if the German forces tried to re-cross the Daugava River. The treaty also gave the Estonian Third Division the temporary responsibility of defending the eastern Latvian frontier against the Bolsheviks between Lake Luban and Luksne.⁹⁹ The treaty also dealt with possible action against White Russian

troops. The Estonians and the Latvians both strongly distrusted the White Russians after the disarmament of the Ingrian unit by the North-West Russian Army. They also agreed that the Estonians had "made great sacrifices and spent certain sums of money for the the liberation of Latvia and that the Latvians would have to repay their debt in the future." There was even consideration on the part of the Estonians to ask the Latvians to pay an indemnity for districts ruined by the Red Latvian Rifle men. Needless to say, this left bad feelings on the part of the Latvians. It was perhaps the bitter reality of a small nation facing so many enemies and having her resources stretched so thin for the Estonians to resort to such harsh diplomacy.¹⁰⁰

The misgivings of the Estonians and Latvians regarding the evacuation of the Germans were fully justified. On October 8, 1919, forces of von der Goltz under the guise of the Western Russian Army of "Prince" Bermond-Avalov moved from Kurzeme and assaulted Riga. The advance of the force was halted after fierce fighting by Latvian troops, two Estonian armored trains, and French and British warships. The Russo-German force was driven back into Kurzeme. At this time the Allied Supreme Council took action; they pressured Germany to end her support of von der Goltz's forces in Kurzeme and to facilitate their speedy evacuation.¹⁰¹

The Landeswehr War, of which the battle of Cesis (Võnnu, Wenden) was the key turning point, was far more than the security of Estonia's southern flank; it was a great symbolic victory. It brought great satisfaction for the Estonians because the vicinity of Võnnu was an area where Estonian forces had suffered defeats at the hands of the German knights 700 years earlier.¹⁰² The conflict had come on the heels of the Asutav Kogu's decision to enact radical land reforms which would disestablish the Baltic German rural elite. Furthermore, the Estonian victory in the south was won through superior leadership and the high élan of the common soldiers and seamen. In sum, Georg von Rauch has stated:

Major General Ernst Põdder commanded the Estonian troops, who fought with immense courage and élan. They were, of course, inspired both by feelings of social antagonism and by a sense of patriotism. This brief but extremely violent engagement was later to be described as an initiation ceremony in which the Estonian people finally asserted themselves as an independent nation.¹⁰³

This was the backdrop for the Baltic Commission hearing of Baron Alexander von Meyendorff, the representative of the Baltic Germans, on June 12, 1919. The Baltic Germans were the only minority from the Baltic states that was allowed an audience before the Baltic Commission. Sir Esmé Howard was against allowing the Baltic Germans to make a presentation, but he gave in to Baron della Torretta's insistence that they be given the opportunity to do so.¹⁰⁴ Baron von Meyendorff was an astute representative of the Baltic German cause. He had been the vice-president of the Duma and the Kerensky government had designated him to be ambassador to Great Britain in 1917. The Baltic Germans had a high regard for Baron von Meyendorff's ability and thus issued to him only vague instructions.¹⁰⁵ Before the Baltic Commission, Baron von Meyendorff was in a difficult position. The putsch against the Ulmanis government had just taken place and fighting had broken out between the Estonians and Germans. The Allied representatives were very distrustful of Baltic German activities and German motives in the Baltic. Thus, Baron von Meyendorff did not even take up the idea of a restored Livonian state which had been the project of the Baltic Germans.

He feared that the idea of a united Baltic state coupled with the activities of General von der Goltz would doom any sympathy towards the Baltic Germans on the part of the Baltic Commission. He argued that German troops were only deployed to defend themselves against the Bolsheviks. The Baltic German representative also stated that the majority of the Baltic Germans had been pro-Russian throughout the war and would not object to the Baltic provinces re-entering a Russian federation. He did not press for a restoration of Baltic German privileges, but he did press for the protection of the German and Russian minorities in Estonia and Latvia. He requested that private property be protected.¹⁰⁶ The presentation failed to have much influence on the members of the Baltic Commission. Although they were not very favorable to independent Baltic states, they had even less enthusiasm for the schemes of the Baltic Germans. Yet the Allied powers pressured the Baltic governments to respect the rights of the German minority. While these rights included the retention of large estates in the face of land reform, Baron von Meyendorff's presentation was a considerable change from previous Baltic German positions. He did not request rule or

joint rule of Estonia and Latvia by the Baltic Germans; rather, Baron von Meyendorff requested merely assistance in minority protection. He indicated to the Baltic Commission that the Baltic Germans would coexist in the framework of national governments. The inability of the peace conference to settle the Russian question and the defeat of von der Goltz's forces forced the traditional leadership of Baltic Germans into bankruptcy.¹⁰⁷

The presentation of Baron von Meyendorff was followed by one of Colonel Warwick Greene of the U.S. Army Air Service, chief of the American military mission to the Baltic provinces. Colonel Greene who came from a wealthy New England family considered the Estonians to be simple peasants who were making a courageous stand against the Bolsheviks but were incapable of ruling themselves. He saw the Baltic Germans as bearers of civilization in the region. Colonel Greene compared the situation in the Baltic to what would have happened if after the Spanish-American War the United States would have left Cuba and the Philippines "as if what followed in the islands was none of our concern."¹⁰⁸ Colonel Greene stressed the paramount importance of the anti-Bolshevik struggle and his total disgust with the Landeswehr War. He was appalled by the Estonian military action against the Landeswehr and recommended that all support, including foodstuff, be withheld from the Estonians.¹⁰⁹ Colonel Greene presented to the American delegation at the Peace Conference a bold plan to rid the Baltic area of both Bolsheviks and Reich German forces. According to this plan the United States and Great Britain would accept mandates over the Baltic states and the British Military Mission would assume command of local, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Baltic German forces, and Russian and other volunteers. The United States would supply food and cooperate with Britain to supply munitions and credits.¹¹⁰ This plan found no real converts; the American government itself was coming increasingly under the sway of isolationism.

The American attitude towards the recognition of Estonia remained the same. The Estonian delegation decided that they should again try to send a representative to the United States, possibly even a private citizen. An Estonian representative could provide Wilson's political opponents with ammunition to attack the American president's Russian policy. On June 20, 1919, Piip together with Congressman Walter

M. Chandler of New York who was supportive of Estonian independence, met with members of the American delegation in Paris. The State Department informed Piip and Chandler that the acceptance of an Estonian trade representative to the United States was fairly certain but a diplomatic representative was questionable.¹¹¹

While it seemed that there was little chance the Baltic states would receive recognition as independent states in the near future, Pusta tried a new tack in a diplomatic note which he sent to Sir Esmé Howard. In this note Pusta suggested to the Baltic Commission that if the Peace Conference was unable to make a final decision on Estonia's recognition, to prevent misunderstandings the Peace Conference should wash its hands of the matter and turn the decision over to the League of Nations or some other international body. In the meantime, Estonia should be granted *de facto* recognition as an independent state. Such recognition would give Estonia sole sovereignty over her territory, full rights of internal legislation and administration, and the right of concluding treaties.¹¹²

The British representative entered this note into the deliberations of the Baltic Commission. He also introduced a British solution in form of an official memorandum. Kammerer, the French representative, responded favorably to Pusta's note. Howard's own proposal stressed that it was in the interest of the anti-Bolshevik Russians as well as of Europe that the Baltic States be protected from Bolshevism. It was equally important that the Baltic countries not become German colonies nor fall under German influence. As the Baltic harbors were a strategic necessity for any operation against Petrograd and later Moscow, it was necessary that stable, organized governments should exist in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The Allied governments needed to make definite assurances to the Baltic peoples. Sir Esmé Howard recognized that the Estonian representatives feared that they would be used merely to fight the Bolsheviks thus, "when the negro has done his work, he is sent back to his former master."¹¹³ Accordingly, Sir Esmé Howard proposed that the Baltic Commission should present to the Allied Supreme Council a resolution which would recognize the importance of stable governments in the Baltic as a barrier against Bolshevism on the one side and German influence on the other. It was therefore necessary for the

establishment of close cooperation between the Baltic and Allied governments, which would be possible only after the Allies gained the confidence of the Baltic peoples, that the Allies would protect their liberties in the event that a strong central government was restored in Russia. The Allies were to extend *de facto* recognition of the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and for the first time, Lithuania. Since there could be no final solution without the consent of the Russians, the Allies would reserve the right to enter negotiations directly or through the League of Nations to obtain a solution which would be both satisfactory to the Baltic nations and Russia. Until then, the Allies would assist the Baltic States with their defense and establishment of permanent administrations. To give full effect to the pronouncement, Sir Esmé Howard proposed that a copy of the declaration be sent to Admiral Kolchak and the Conference Politique Russe in Paris, informing them that it was necessary to obtain the cooperation of the Baltic states for the future operations against Petrograd and Moscow.¹¹⁴

The new American representative, Major R. Tyler, thwarted whatever chance of approval the British representative's resolution had.¹¹⁵ He declared that the United States government would not permit him to support the *de facto* recognition of Estonian independence. Kammerer, the French representative, stated that the declaration was necessary and stressed that discussion had to continue. However, for the time being, the *de facto* recognition of Estonia was killed by American intransigence.¹¹⁶

The chairman then proposed that the status of Estonia be based on the model used for the free city of Danzig. Kammerer thought this form might be acceptable to the Estonians. He informed the Commission that the French delegation was preparing an alternative statute. His discussion was deferred by the Commission until July 4. On that day, Kammerer stated that France had accepted the British resolution on *de facto* status with the exception that the word "independent" be deleted from the memorandum. Howard noted, however, that this resolution dealt with the *de facto* independent government and not independent nation. Baron della Torretta suggested also that *de facto* government be used. The Japanese representative Otchiai stated that the Japanese government had given *de facto* recognition to Estonia and Latvia but he could not extend this to Lithuania whose status with Poland was not yet clear. Unlike the Japanese, the

American representative stated that the United States had not recognized any of the Baltic governments and did not intend to do so. However, Baron della Torretta pointed out that in an exchange of telegrams with Admiral Kolchak's government, the Americans had already recognized these governments *de facto*. The American representative replied that according to his instructions he could not sign any declaration granting *de facto* recognition. The Japanese representative changed his position and was willing to accord recognition to all three governments. However, Major Tyler made no changes but promised to show the memorandum to Robert Lansing, the Secretary of State.¹¹⁷

Lansing did not support anything that would come close to independence for Estonia. While this went against the American public diplomacy of support for the right of self-determination, Lansing thought this principle should have been "discarded as misleading because it cannot be practically applied." Its real purpose was to create internal turmoil in Empires of the enemies during the war.¹¹⁸

The discussion on the various forms of Estonian autonomy continued in the Commission's meeting. The British representative definitely wanted Estonia to be a free state like Danzig. Kammerer also supported Danzig as a model but wanted Estonia to be an autonomous state as part of Russia, guaranteed by the League of Nations. According to this plan, the Estonians would draw up their own constitution, would be within Russian custom borders, and Russia would have the right to defend Estonia by military and naval means. However, the Russians could not mobilize Estonian citizens. Like the Grand Duchy of Finland Estonia would make monetary contributions towards Russian military expenses. Also, Russia would receive free transit rights through Estonia and assume control over autonomous Estonian railways and postal, telegraph, and telephone systems. The Russians would also have the right to develop and maintain these systems within Estonia. Russian citizens would receive the same rights as Estonians while foreign affairs would be conducted solely by Russia. Yet, the provision was made that there could be Estonian agents in the more important Russian consulates. Of high importance to the French was the provision that Estonia would assume her part of the Russian debt. According to the French representative's plan there would be a Russian-Estonian monetary union as well. If any problems should arise with these

arrangements, the League of Nations would be asked by the Allied powers to grant guarantees. The difficulties which could arise in the conventions between Estonia and Russia could be settled by the International Court. Kammerer assumed that the same plan would be also adopted in the case of Latvia and Lithuania.¹¹⁹ According to Kammerer's plan Estonia was to be an autonomous state forming a part of Russia. This went against Sir Esmé Howard's concept of a free state. Kammerer, however, argued there was a difference between Estonia and Danzig. The French delegate modified his suggestion to Estonia becoming an "autonomous state attached to Russia," but he was against the chairman's suggestion that she be a nation "under the suzerainty of Russia." This could characterize Estonia a free state like Danzig. Kammerer pointed out that in the case of Danzig, Poland needed access to the sea but the Allies recognized that Danzig was a German city. Thus sovereignty was taken away from both Poland and Germany and the city was placed under an inter-Allied Commission. This could not be done in Estonia. Kammerer noted that this could imply a Russian high commissioner in Tallinn. Baron della Torretta proposed that Estonia be an "autonomous unit" within the Russian state as such a formula was adopted for Galicia in Poland and Ruthenia in Czechoslovakia. The chairman then proposed that the question be tabled.¹²⁰

The Commission then proceeded to debate all aspects of the French proposal. All thought that a monetary union with Russia was necessary. The question of Russian naval bases in Estonia would be left to the naval experts to discuss. The Commission decided to place the Estonian merchant navy under dual Estonian and Russian flags. They also agreed that Estonia could maintain a local police force and a home guard and that during peace time there would be no Russian forces in Estonia. The British representative noted, however, that since Latvia and Lithuania would be frontier areas, Russian garrisons would have to be maintained there. Baron della Torretta interjected that the matter of garrisons be postponed, since it was a delicate issue. Also postponed was the matter of tariffs and special trade agreements. There was also debate on the administration of Estonian railways. Sir Esmé Howard thought the Russians were given too much influence in this matter. Kammerer and Baron della Torretta opposed him stating that it was necessary to prevent the Estonians from not receiving Russian traffic. The delegates compromised by giving all control

of the railways to Russia but leaving the actual administration to the Estonians.¹²¹ Finally when these matters were settled, the Italian representative again brought up the matter of what exactly Estonia's autonomous status would be. Baron della Torretta still pressed for Estonia to be an "autonomous unit." Kammerer also supported this status. Sir Esmé Howard opposed this, and he still preferred the status of free state. Finally, however, the British representative conceded with a great show of magnanimity that a designation based on autonomy while forming part of the Russian state was as near to consensus as the three delegates could reach.¹²²

The discussion of Estonia's status ended at the next meeting of the Baltic Commission on July 7, 1919. The chairman announced that after much deliberation, the Commission should not make a decision on the final status of Estonia. To this, the Italian representative replied that he had come to this conclusion at the first meeting of the Baltic Commission. De Celigny, who had replaced Kammerer as the French representative, stated that after the Supreme Council pledged its support to Admiral Kolchak's government which claimed sovereignty of all Russia, the Baltic Commission had nothing more to say. The British representative then ended the discussion with the formula that the question was to be settled by Admiral Kolchak and the Baltic governments in collaboration with the League of Nations. For the Baltic Commission, it was just not yet time to solve the Baltic problem.¹²³

On July 8, Professor James Young Simpson informed Poska that the Estonian matter would not be decided but that the Baltic Commission would remain in existence, though its activities would be limited. He also felt that the British were prolonging the matter on purpose.¹²⁴ After the last discussion on the status of Estonia, Sir Esmé Howard retired as chairman and became the British ambassador to Spain.

There was also good news on that day for the Estonians. The Allied reluctance to furnish supplies to the Estonians became less acute. General Sir Hubert Gough, chief of the British military mission to the Baltic states had sent a telegram stating that the Estonian army needed 100,000 pairs of boots. The War Office replied that all that was possible would be done to help supply the Estonians.¹²⁵

On July 9, the members of the Estonian Foreign Delegation met to discuss the implications of the Baltic Commission's policy or rather its lack of policy. Piip thought little else positive was coming out of the Commission since it would do nothing but wait and see what happened in Russia. Poska recommended that the Estonians put pressure on the western governments through their elected assemblies but also that the activities of the Foreign Delegation be liquidated by September 1. Piip and Pusta were against the disbanding of the Foreign Delegation. Pusta argued that it would not serve any purpose to change Estonian policy before the Allies decided the Russian question. He thought that it would be bad for the morale of a fighting nation to regard the situation as hopeless. In support of this argument Piip noted that Estonia's situation had come a long way and that this was the result of a consistent foreign policy. However, Poska stated, "I think that new roads should be taken. I personally can not make these changes. But I can not continue the current policies since I have lost faith in them."¹²⁶ The road which Poska spoke about was one wrought with danger. It was becoming increasingly clear that no alternative course was possible but to enter in peace negotiations with the Bolshevik government.

On July 11, the Baltic Commission met again. Baron della Torretta had become chairman, E.H. Carr was the new British representative, Vigon had replaced de Celigny, and Colonel Warwick Greene was the new American representative. Since minor changes were made on the memorandum of July 7, Colonel Greene stated that he personally supported the memorandum in its current form, but he still needed the approval of his delegation. On July 15, Colonel Greene presented the memorandum to the Commission. However, on July 29, the Supreme Allied Council informed the Baltic Commission that this memorandum was superfluous. The Supreme Allied Council had decided that no decision on the status of the Baltic states would be made at the Peace Conference. The matter was left for the League of Nations to deal with at a later time. For the time being the Baltic states would formally remain in the Russian Empire in the views of the Allied powers.¹²⁷

The Estonian representatives in Paris could not understand what motivated Allied policy towards Estonia and the Russian question as a whole. At this time Poska speculated that perhaps Kolchak had

promised greater concessions to the Allies in the reestablished Russia than the small nations could offer. He thought also that the Allies might fear that the governments of the new small states were too socialistically oriented. A third possibility might be that the granting of White Russian demands, might improve the morale of the anti-Bolshevik forces in the eyes of the Allied powers. However, Poska thought that Estonia should look for new ways to proceed; formation of the Baltic League and peace negotiations with the Bolsheviks. These were the ideas that he passed on to the government when he returned to Tallinn.¹²⁸

On expressing his thoughts on Allied policy to the other members of the Foreign Delegation, Piip did not agree with Poska. He thought that the Allies really had no master plan. According to Piip, it was not in the interest of Great Britain to rebuild a unified Russia. Britain feared Russian encroachment into India and the Far East. Piip pointed out that on the one hand Britain supported the forces of General Anton Denikin, but on the other hand Britain did not allow Petrograd to be taken by the Estonians and Finns. He thought that the British had taken their foreign policy formula for Europe and applied it to Russia to achieve a balance of power in Russia. Piip felt that the situation was not that pessimistic and that Estonians should cooperate closely with Poland and the other Baltic states. However, he noted that this would be initially difficult.¹²⁹

Poska disagreed with Piip; he did not believe that the Allies were knowingly supporting the ferment which meant that they had no economic interest in Russia. Piip replied that British policy was not that simple. The British did not have the ability at the time to destroy the Bolsheviks, and secondly, they did not trust the White Russians who would be inclined to enter into an alliance with Germany after their power was established in Petrograd and Moscow. Pusta agreed with Piip's view. The only common aspect of the Allied Nations' Russian policy was their fear of Bolshevism. He added that the Estonian democracy was little known in the Allied countries and that the Allies were looking for a strong pro-Allied group in the Russian chaos. Therefore, Pusta said it was important that a Baltic league be formed which would influence the British to adopt a different policy towards Estonia. Piip added that the situation had changed

after March when Denikin's and Kolchak's armies had appeared, because then the Allies had become less supportive of Baltic independence and had adopted a policy of wait and see. Poska added that the Allies were also reluctant to support Baltic independence because of growing strife between the Lithuanians and Poles.

On July 16, Jaan Poska left Paris for Tallinn. On the way back to Estonia he stopped in London and met with members of parliament. No change in British policy resulted from these meetings.¹³⁰ As Professor Simpson stated, "The trouble about ourselves [the British] was that we had no policy and were, indeed, occasionally pursuing quite contradictory policies at one and the same time."¹³¹ Clearly the British government, concerned with Indian security, was uneasy about any strong Russian government. However, for the United States a strong Russia was an important counter force to Japan in the Pacific.¹³² The Japanese were primarily concerned with the security of Korea and the Home Islands and thus did not favor a strong Russia. France, on the other hand, was still looking for a strong ally against Germany and wanted repayment of Tsarist debts. Thus none of the Allied powers was particularly happy with the Peace Conference's policy and none provided much ground for consensus. Nor were the Estonians happy with the prospect of dealing with Admiral Kolchak's government. His government was already mistreating the inhabitants of Estonian settlements under its control.¹³³ Regardless of the policy adopted by the Allies, the Estonian diplomats in Paris performed admirably. J. Hampden Jackson has stated:

Ants Piip and K.R. Pusta, who, with Poska, piloted the unchartered Estonian ship of state through the squalls and cross-currents of the Paris Peace Conference. The personality and grip of international law shown by these two men predisposed favorably to the Estonian people the members of the Supreme Council and of the Baltic Commission at Paris, most of whom had never set eyes on Estonia before. What Eduard Benes did for Czechoslovakia, Poska, Piip, and Pusta did for Estonia and not only for Estonia but for the other Baltic states as well.¹³⁴

NOTES

1. Tomingas, 77-79.
2. Herbert W. Briggs, ed., *The Law of Nations: Cases, Documents and Notes*, 2d. ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1966), 139-42; Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 254, 381; Vööbus, 6: 23.
3. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 49.
4. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 385; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 49.
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6. Olavi Arens, "Eduard Laaman as a Historian," 218; Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 386; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 49; Tomingas, 101.
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8. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 52.
9. Ibid., 53-54.
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12. Anderson, "An Undeclared Naval War," 53; Herbert Clark Hoover, *The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: Years of Adventure: 1874-1920* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), 364.
13. Herbert Hoover, *An American Epic: Famine in Forty-Five Nations: The Battle on the Front Line 1914-1923* (Chicago: Henry Regency Company, 1961), 3, 41-61; *The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover*, 369-78; *The Ordeal of Woodrow Wilson* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1958), 123-24.
14. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 54.
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16. Sibul, "Les Soldates Baltes en France, 1916-1918," 8, 13-14.
17. Seth P. Tillman, *Anglo-American Relations at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 135.
18. Tarulis, *American-Baltic Relations, 1918-1922*, 146-47.
19. Churchill, *The Aftermath*, 172; Graham, *Diplomatic Recognition*, vol. 2, *Estonia*, 257.
20. Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, 2: 166-67; Graham, *Diplomatic Recognition* vol. 2, *Estonia*, 257; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 58.

21. Jackson, J. Hampden, *Clemenceau and the Third Republic* (London: The English Universities Press, Ltd., 1965), 213-14; Frank Owen, *Tempestuous Journey, Lloyd George, His Life and Times* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955), 509.

22. George Frost Kennan, "Russia and the Peace Conference," in N. Gordon Levin, ed., *Woodrow Wilson and the Paris Peace Conference* (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1972), 140; Leonid I. Strakhovsky, *Intervention at Archangel: The Story of Allied Intervention and Russian Counter-Revolution in North Russia: 1918-1920* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944), 142; Tillman, *Anglo-American Relations at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919*, 138.

23. Churchill, *The Aftermath*, 173. Winston Churchill writes of the Prinkipo Islands, "the Young Turks before the war had exiled all the pariah dogs which had formerly infested the streets of Constantinople. These dogs, shipped there in tens of thousands, were left to devour one another and ultimately starve. I saw them with my own eyes, gathered in troops upon the rocky shores, when I visited Turkey in 1909 in a friend's yacht. The bones of these dogs still whitened the inhospitable islands, and their memory noisomely pervaded the neighborhood. To Bolshevik sympathizers the place seemed oddly chosen for a peace conference. To their opponents it seemed not altogether unsuitable."; Firuz Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia: 1917-1921* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951), 273; *Journal des Débats*, 25 January 1919; Eduard Laaman, "Liitriikide kavatsusi: Eesti tulevase statuudist Vabadussõja aegu," [Allied Policy: Estonia's Developing Status During the Time of the War of Independence], *Sõdur*, no. 45/46, 1297; Strakhovksy, *Intervention at Archangel*, 142; Tarulis, *American Baltic Relations, 1918-1922*, 148-49.

24. Timothy Andrew Taracouzio, *War and Peace in Soviet Diplomacy* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1940), 90.

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26. Churchill, *The Aftermath*, 172; Strakhovksy, *Intervention at Archangel*, 143-46; Tillmann, *Anglo-American Relations at the Paris Peace Conference*, 139.

27. Kennan, "Russia and the Peace Conference," 142; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 58.

28. Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, 2: 166; Tarulis, *American-Baltic Relations, 1918-1922*, 152.

29. Graham, *Diplomatic Recognition*, vol. 2, *Estonia*, 257; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917-1921*, 273.

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34. Graham, *Diplomatic Recognition*, vol. 2, *Estonia*, 258; Kennan, "Russia at the Peace Conference," 145; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 57; Taracouzio, *War and Peace in Soviet Diplomacy*, 91; Tarulis, *American-Baltic Relations, 1918-1922*, 157-58; Tillman, *Anglo-American Relations at the Paris Peace Conference*, 142.

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113. Laaman, *Eesti Iseseisvuse Süüd*, 509.
114. *Commission Des Affaires Baltique*, Session 12:3-4. Graham, *Diplomatic Recognition*, vol. 2, *Estonia*, 278; Laaman, *Eesti Iseseisvuse Süüd*, 509-10.
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117. *Commission Des Affaires Baltiques*; Session 12:2-3; Laaman, *Eesti Iseseisvuse Süüd*, 510.
118. Robert Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations. A Personal Narrative* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1921), 99-105.
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123. *Commission Des Affaires Baltiques*; Session 13:9; Graham. *Diplomatic Recognition*, vol. 2, *Estonia*, 279; Laaman, *Iseseisvuse Süüd*, 512.

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125. *Ibid.*

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131. J.Y. Simpson, "Great Britain and the Baltic States," *The Nineteenth Century and After* 94, no. 560 (October, 1923): 616.

132. *Oiderman*, 163.

133. Bernhard Linde, "Koltchak and the Russian Border People," *The Esthonian Review* (August 1919): 63-64.

134. Jackson, *Estonia*, 151. The effectiveness of Estonia's delegation at the Paris Peace Conference becomes clearer in comparison to the efforts of other delegations from small countries and peoples with national aspirations present in Paris in 1919. The problems of sending a Finnish delegation are discussed in Holsti, "The Origins of Finnish Foreign Policy, 1918-1922: Rudolf Holsti's Role in the Formulation of Policy," 63-80. The Finns had trouble finding suitable delegates with whom the Allied powers would deal. Many of Finland's political figures were tainted in the eyes of Allied statesmen because of their collaboration with Germany during the war. The Finnish delegation was headed by Marshal Karl Gustav Mannerheim because of his international prestige. Rudolf Holsti, who was Finland's foremost representative to the Allied powers, was recalled to Finland during the peace conference to assume the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs. The other members of the Finnish delegation under Marshal Mannerheim were competent but not outstanding. Finland had little trouble receiving *de jure* recognition from the Allied powers. Because of Finland's special position in the former Russian Empire and the campaign against Russification in the early twentieth century which enjoyed widespread support among the statesmen and intellectuals of Western Europe, Finnish national aspirations were well known and widely respected. On May 3, 1919, Finland received *de facto* recognition from the United States, Great Britain, France, and Japan. On May 26, 1919, the Allied powers demanded that Admiral Kolchak's government grant full recognition of Finnish independence and agree to submit any frontier disputes to the League of Nations for settlement. The White Russians had little choice but to concede to this demand. Soon after, Finland received *de jure* recognition from the large Allied powers. Accounts of Finland's struggle for diplomatic recognition includes: Malbone Watson Graham, *The Diplomatic Recognition of the Border States*, vol. 1, *Finland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1939); Clarence Jay Smith, *Finland and the Russian Revolution, 1917-1922* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1958), 127-59. The latter work, has an account of political activity in Eastern Karelia as well. A Karelian government was formed in Viipuri and

elected a delegation to the peace conference. However, this delegation never arrived in Paris. The Karelians never had a chance to request autonomy from the Allied powers. Sparsely populated Eastern Karelia was retaken by the Bolsheviks. Armed resistance to Russian rule ended in 1922. Smith, *Finland and the Russian Revolution, 1917-1922*, 40-41.

The activities of the Latvian delegation in Paris and the Latvian struggle for diplomatic recognition are covered in Malbone Watson Graham, *The Diplomatic Recognition of the Border States*, vol. 3, *Latvia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1941). A very detailed account of Latvian diplomatic activities in Paris, notable the diplomacy of Zigfrids Anna Meierovics is found in Janis J. Samts, "The Origins of Latvian Diplomacy, 1917-1925: The Role of Zigfrids Anna Meierovics in the Formulation of Latvian Foreign Policy" (M.S. thesis, San José State University, May 1975), 54-101. While diplomacy in Paris was much lauded by Allied statesmen and by Latvian contemporary sources, the Latvian delegation seems to lack depth in its membership. The very able diplomat, Meierovics played a predominating role in the Latvian effort in Paris.

The Lithuanian effort in Paris is carefully covered in Alfred Erich Senn, *The Emergence of Lithuania* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 88-97. The Lithuanians did not fare as well as the Latvians did. The first Lithuanian political figure to arrive in Paris in December 1918, was the former German agent and political adventurer Juozas Gabrys. In January 1919, the Lithuania government dispatched father Konstantinas Olsauskis to Paris. He began to work with Gabrys. Soon after, a Lithuanian-American delegation under Balys Mastauskis arrived in Paris. They began also to work with Gabrys. The Lithuanian government denounced these delegates working with Gabrys as German spies. An official delegation was then sent with Augustinas Voldemaras as its head. Olsauskis and Mastauskas recognized his authority and Gabrys was left in the cold. A problem then arose with Voldemaras' authority in Lithuania. He refused to recognize that he was replaced as Premier by Mykolas Slezevicius when he departed for France. It was unclear who had authorized Voldemaras' diplomatic activity. Another Lithuanian political figure, Antanas Smetona, acted as arbitrator; the situation was clarified and Voldemaras was forced to step down. The Lithuanians had difficulties presenting their case to the Allies. Because some Lithuanian leaders still cherished the idea of creating a greater Lithuania, excessive territorial demands were presented to the Allied powers. Because Lithuanian and Polish nationalists had imperialist aspirations the policies of the two nations' delegations came into conflict at the peace conference.

CHAPTER 6

REPATRIATION OF ESTONIAN SOLDIERS AND THE PRESS CAMPAIGN DURING THE PEACE CONFERENCE

While the Allied representatives on the Baltic Commission debated Estonia's status, the small nation remained at war on two fronts. Thus, an important task of the Estonian delegation in Paris was to secure the return of Estonian soldiers serving with Allied forces in North Russia and those who served in the Russian Expeditionary Force on the Western front. The Russian Expeditionary Force, sent to France in 1916, contained a considerable number of Estonians in its ranks. This force fought valiantly on the Champagne section of the Western front. It took many losses, being subjected to poison gas attacks without having any means of gas defense. The expeditionary force was highly decorated by the French, yet by January 1917, their morale and discipline was low. Left-wing Russian émigrés in Paris who had fled the regime fueled this demoralization. The 1917 February Revolution and the disastrous French offensive of April 1917, in which the Russian forces participated, were the fatal blows to the morale and discipline of this force. The French withdrew the expeditionary force from the front and quartered it at La Courtine, an extensive camp located in the center of France. Soon after their arrival at La Courtine, the First Russian Brigade which consisted mostly of Moscovite factory workers staged a violent mutiny. Other members of the expeditionary force did not involve themselves in the mutiny and marched to another camp at Felletin. These included the Estonian soldiers.

A special French-Russian force put down the mutiny at La Courtine with a minimum of bloodshed. However, the French General Staff was greatly alarmed by the events at La Courtine. During the spring of 1917 there had been a break down of discipline throughout much of the French army. Thus the Russian Expeditionary Force was disbanded. Most of the trouble makers were sent to prison camps, others in the

force were sent to labor duties throughout France, Italy and North Africa, while others were formed into the Russian Legion which served gallantly in the final battles on the Western front.¹

While there were Estonian soldiers on the Western front, there were also Estonians in North Russia. After the first sizeable contingent of Allied troops had landed at Murmansk and Arkhangelsk after the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, a Slav-British Allied Legion (SBAL) was formed. Most of the Estonian soldiers in North Russia were part of this force. Unlike the Poles, Finns, and Karelians, the Estonians did not form a separate unit of the SBAL.

The idea of forming an Estonian unit in North Russia was envisioned by the Estonians at the time the Imperial Russian Army was collapsing and the Bolshevik putsch had occurred in Petrograd. However, the plan was not realized until late 1918. The goal of the local Estonian leaders in North Russia, the organization of an Estonian unit, was to prevent Estonian soldiers from being put under the command of White Russian forces and fighting in the Russian civil war. Along the same line of thought, organization of a unit would facilitate quicker return to Estonia where forces were needed for defense of their own country. The first step toward this goal was the issue of "Nationality Certificates" by the unofficial Estonian diplomatic representative, Ernst C. Vebermann, to all Estonians in North Russia. The North Russian government of Nikolai Chaikovsky consented. This gave the Estonian representative control of the movement of Estonians in and out of North Russia, and the White Russian authorities could be sure that undesirable elements would not enter North Russia in the name of Estonians. The real importance of the "Nationality Certificates" was that it freed Estonians in Arkhangelsk and Murmansk from being conscripted into the White Russian forces.² The British military authorities in North Russia agreed in principle to the founding of an Estonian Legion but the British did not take active steps towards its founding. The initial activity was limited to the registration of Estonian soldiers. The unofficial Estonian representatives and the British staff carried out the registration in a cooperative effort. The matter of forming an Estonian Legion in North Russia was left in limbo by the British authorities. It depended on the Allied relationship with the North Russian government which was against its formation as well as the

military situation which hinged on whether Estonians in the SBAL on the front line could be pulled to the rear to facilitate organization.³

The registration continued and the Estonians hoped that the Legion and its reserves would be organized soon. However, in late November 1918, the British Staff made an important change in its policy in North Russia. Namely, all units consisting of persons not under British rule but part of the British forces were to be liquidated. This change in policy by the British came after a mutiny in a Russian unit of the SBAL. Thus, the SBAL was dissolved; British subjects were transferred to other British units while all others were placed in the White Russian forces. This decision precluded the formation of an Estonian unit as part of the British forces. The Estonian representative took the matter to General Edward Ironside, the Senior British officer in North Russia, but he did not consent to the organization of a British-Estonian unit. Further complications developed with the British authorities who now assumed an uncooperative attitude. Upon the release of Estonian officers and men from British service, they were to return their uniforms and winter supplies or pay cash for them, thus stripping the soldiers of valuable supplies. Furthermore, the soldiers were to assume all travel costs back to Estonia.⁴

With the hopes of forming an Estonian unit as part of the SBAL gone, the only available recourse for the Estonians in North Russia was to turn to the French for assistance.⁵ Coming into contact with Joseph Noulens, the French representative in North Russia, the Estonians found the French sympathetic. Pusta effectively had established cordial relations with the French government in Paris in May 1918.⁶ Noulens and the French military attaché, Colonel Henri de Vertemont, supported the formation of the Estonian Legion as part of French Colonial forces in North Russia. The French military would assume the expenses of the venture. After the training and organization of the Estonian Legion, it would be sent as a unit to the Estonian front under an Estonian commander. Until transport could be arranged, the Estonian Legion would relieve other French units in North Russia.⁷ The French military authorities greatly admired the Estonian Legion for their brilliant military ability, their bravery under fire, and their patience.⁸

Estonians also served under French command in the Far East but due to their small number did not form their own unit.

These troops, as well as those gathering in France, eventually returned to Estonia. The Estonian soldiers who were gathering in France were coming from three sources: the remnants of the Russian Expeditionary Force to France, the French Foreign Legion (colonial troops), and those who had been prisoners of war in Germany and Austria-Hungary.

The problem of the Estonian soldiers played an important part in the formulation of French policy towards Estonia. The French had two conflicting considerations. On one hand, the Bolsheviks had to be stopped and Estonia was doing an effective job of fighting the Reds. France could not do this with her own troops at the time. On the other hand, French banks and industrial concerns had invested millions of francs in Imperial Russia. The best way to get these debts would be through a restored Great Russia. This financial loss was something that the French could not easily forget after a very costly war. This meant support for the fractured and often inept White Russian forces. French policy towards Estonia had to resolve a conflicting tradition. On the one hand, France traditionally championed the cause of liberty while on the other hand Imperial Russia had been an ally of France since 1894.

The Estonians were not the only ones who were gathering soldiers in France. The Poles had done it before and the White Russians were trying to organize soldiers also. The Poles provided an important precedent for the Estonian effort in France. In the summer of 1918, a ceremony took place at the Polish military camp in France at which French President Raymond Poincare was present. During the ceremony a Polish flag was hoisted along side the French tricolor. This was considered the first indication of France's recognition of Polish independence.⁹ Soon after, the Allies recognized the Polish army in France as a co-belligerent army in the Allied cause. This was a very important advantage to Polish diplomacy after the conclusion of the war. To a certain extent the gathering of Estonian soldiers in France as well as the formation of the Estonian Legion would have the same effect.¹⁰

Faced with the task of negotiating and gathering the Estonian soldiers, the Estonian delegation in Paris could consider it fortunate that at least the Estonian Legion was prepared to return to Estonia. The French General Staff informed Pusta that the Estonians in Arkhangelsk were released from their Foreign Legion commitments and were being dispatched to Estonia as soon as possible. However, this would take several months due to a lack of resources in North Russia. The French also released the Estonians who served as part of the Russian Legion on the Western front as well as those in different formations from the Foreign Legion. Some of these men returned to Estonia by their own means while others joined the rest of the Estonians gathering in France.¹¹ The preliminary work to gather the soldiers was started by the Estonian diplomatic representatives and was continued by the nation's military representative Lt. William Tomingas, the naval attache to Great Britain, who was involved in this as well as in a technical mission to establish direct daily radio transmission between Paris and Tallinn.¹² Colonel Alexander Luik headed the Estonian Military Mission to France. The duties of the mission were to provide a liaison with the French General Staff, arrange military assistance, and organize the transport effort. To assist the Estonians in the repatriation, the French General Staff appointed Adjutant Friedrich Jaeger from the Russian base in Laval. Lt. Orgusaar came from London to assist in the effort; Lt. Alfred Sinisov and Captain I. J. Lepp were also involved. Verdun and Bordeaux became the collection bases for the Estonians.¹³

While the organizing effort was going well by all accounts, trouble arose over the future disposition of the Estonian troops as well as the remains of the Russian Expeditionary Force in France. White Russian politicians in Paris wanted to send the Estonian battalion which was forming in Verdun and Bordeaux to the forces of General Anton Denikin. The White Russian efforts failed; Pusta was able to secure a pledge from the French government that no Estonians would be sent on any account to General Anton I. Denikin's forces. Later, concern arose on the part of the Estonian delegation that remains of the Russian Expeditionary Force would be sent to Estonia to reinforce the North-West Army of General Nikolai Yudenich.

On January 28, 1919, the Russian hospital ship *Russ* arrived from France at Copenhagen. Rumors were that this ship would soon proceed to Tallinn. This alarmed the Estonian government; the Estonian Red Cross and Army Medical Service were already overworked and short of supplies. The French government, however, reassured the Estonians that they were not sending these unfortunate Russians to be put off in Tallinn. Rather, some Russian soldiers on the ship whom the Bolsheviks had an interest in (most likely leaders of the 1917 mutiny at La Courtine) would be exchanged for French hostages held by the Reds. After this task was completed, the hospital ship would leave northern waters and take the remaining troops to French colonies.¹⁴ Yet, there still remained trouble over the disposition of the rest of the Russian forces in France. In accordance with Marshall Ferdinand Foch's desire to build a unified front against the Bolsheviks, the French government considered it necessary to send Russian forces to reinforce the Estonian front. The Quai d'Orsay stressed to the Estonians' representatives that cooperation was necessary to "fight the common enemy Bolshevism."¹⁵ "The Estonian government, however, felt that it could not deal effectively with the movement of a large mass of Russian troops through the country to the front. Furthermore, with good reason, the Estonian authorities did not trust the intentions of White Russian forces, especially since the Russian politicians in Paris vehemently refused to recognize Estonian independence. In March 1919, the Estonian delegation informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that Estonia would agree to allow these Russian forces to go to Estonia if the French government would grant their nation *de jure* recognition. The Quai d'Orsay responded that this was a matter for the Peace Conference; thus the matter was dropped by the French, for the time being. France did not send these Russian troops to Estonia.¹⁶ While the Baltic Commission did not settle the matter of recognition, the Estonian delegation did manage to get the Supreme Council to assure that Estonian and other Baltic prisoners of war in Germany would be repatriated rather than be pressed into the service of the White Russians.¹⁷ This supported the Estonian gathering efforts in France.

The soldiers who gathered at Bordeaux were put under the command of Lt. E. Orgusaar and Captain I.J. Lepp. These men went to work in Bordeaux loading arms and munitions that were purchased through

the Revalis trading company for the Estonian government. They loaded these supplies onto three steamers. After they loaded the steamers, the men embarked on them for the voyage back to Estonia.¹⁸ However, most of the Estonian soldiers remained in France until more transport could be provided. The French government provided more arms and munitions to the Estonians; however, these supplies were slow in coming and Estonian needs were immediate. This was not due to any conflicting interests between Estonia and France, but because the French Ministry of War was trying to coordinate its efforts with the British War Office so that duplicate or useless material was not sent. As with any two government bureaucracies coordination efforts were complex, time consuming matters. The slow and careful effort to send supplies was perhaps wise; on more than one occasion, British and American shipments of supplies to the Baltic countries turned out to be totally useless upon arrival. The effort perhaps could have been carried out far more rapidly.¹⁹

The remaining Estonian soldiers in France, who numbered 431 men, were sent to Brest at the end of April 1919 for disembarkment. They were to proceed to Estonia on the Estonian steamer *Lembit*.

On May 29, 1919, Pusta and Colonel Luik went from Paris to Brest to send off the troops. On that day the Estonian soldiers departed Brest for Tallinn where they were met with appropriate ceremony. The bulk of the Estonians had now left France; however, some still remained in France and in French territories. In the summer of 1919 more Estonians were able to leave Russian formations in France and the General Staff was still continuing to release Estonians who were in North Africa. Eventually most of these men were repatriated to their homeland. A few Estonians elected not to return to Estonia for one reason or another. They were demobilized and found employment in France.²⁰

Because Verdun had become symbolic in France's defense of her liberty, the Estonian Provisional government decided to salute French bravery and love of freedom by awarding the Estonian Freedom Cross [Vabadusrist] to the city of Verdun. The Freedom Cross was Estonia's highest decoration. The Asutav Kogu approved this action by a vote of 119 out of 121. This was first announced by the Estonian government on February 24, 1919, but it was not until May 14, 1920, that a ceremony took place.²¹ That

day an Estonian delegation which included Pusta and Colonel Luik was taken from Paris to Verdun in General Staff cars and was met at the city hall by the mayor of Verdun, Robin, and General Boichut as well as a great number of other officers and city councillors. In the courtyard of the city hall the ceremony took place in which General Boichut, Pusta, and Colonel Luik made speeches. The next day the delegation visited the military cemetery and the battlefield, after which they were escorted to the railway station by General Boichut and members of the municipal council.²²

Throughout the Estonian Independence War and the effort to gather Estonian soldiers in France, Pusta and the Estonian military representatives maintained strong relations with the French General Staff. From the beginning they were in close contact with the staff of the commander-in-chief of the French armed forces, Marchal Ferdinand Foch. When approaching Foch's staff, Pusta worked mainly through Colonel Joseph Georges and the chief of staff General Maxime Weygand. When dealing directly with Marchal Foch, the former professor at the École de Guerre, the Estonians knew his manner to be simple and honorable. He was known for his sparse words; the conversations between Pusta, Colonel Luik, and the Marchal were short but decisive. Marchal Foch strove for the formation of a unified front against the Bolsheviks but expressed total sympathy for the Estonians in their fight for independence. In later years he and General Georges would personally pay their respects at the Estonian embassy on Estonian Independence Day.²³

The good will of Marchal Foch and his staff was vital for diplomatic and material support of Estonian independence. This was largely earned by the brave and disciplined Estonian soldiers in the great battles of the Western front and in the engagements in North Russia. However, it was the straight-forward and persistent diplomacy, mainly by Pusta, which prevented the heavy sacrifices of a small people not to be in vain.

The Estonian Press Campaign

Of particular importance for the Foreign Delegation were the efforts to affect Western public opinion to influence their governments to support Estonian independence. During the Independence War,

the Delegation especially had to encourage the Allies to pressure the Germans to withdraw from Latvia and so that the Estonian forces would not be used as a "strike force" against the Bolsheviks, and Estonia would not become a "place d'armes" to restore the former Tsarist regime.²⁴ An active press and information campaign took place from the beginning of the German occupation of Estonia to the signing of the Treaty of Tartu on February 2, 1920, which ended the war between Estonia and Soviet Russia.

Soon after Poska's delegation had arrived in Paris in early 1919, Pusta hired a French journalist named Gaston Gaillard. Pusta's experience as a journalist was an important asset for the foreign delegation, and he and Gaillard began to publish the monthly *Bulletin de l'Esthonie*. Nineteen issues were published between May 1919, and September 1919, and an additional issue on Estonian transportation appeared in May 1923.²⁵ Gaston Gaillard became the secretary of the Estonian legation in Paris. He wrote several works on the Estonian situation including *L'Allemagne et le Balticum* and *Le Mouvement Panrusse et les Allogenes*. Gaillard was also responsible for translating Mihkel Martna's important work *Estland und die Estnische Frage* into French as well as Tõnisson's memorandum to the Peace Conference.²⁶ Along with the *Bulletin de l'Esthonie* published in Paris, *The Estonian Review* also appeared between August 1919 and June 1920, published in London and Tallinn. It was succeeded by *The Baltic Review*. In both journals articles by well-known foreign authors appeared.²⁷ The Estonian Navy published *The Bulletin of the Esthonian Naval Staff* in Tallinn in 1919. It was mainly for the benefit of the personnel of the British Squadron in the Baltic.

In a joint effort with the Latvians, the *Review Baltique* started publication in late 1918. Its goal was to popularize the idea of the Baltic League. Pusta published his plan for the league in one of its first issues. *The Review Baltique* was published for several years with Arthur Tupins, a Latvian journalist, as editor. This publication received financial support from a protestant social organization, *Affranch*.²⁸

In addition to printing their own publications, Pusta and Laaman, who handled the press relations of the Estonian delegation, were highly successful gaining exposure in Western newspapers for Estonia's position. Pusta was able to make many important contacts in the French press. One of those was Philippe

Bureau-Varilla, the owner and editor-in-chief of *Le Matin*, who was friendly to the Estonian cause. Henri de Jouvenel, publisher of the *Journal des Débats*, was another sympathetic newspaperman of importance. The same could be said of Senator Georges Reynald and Eugene Ballero who were the editors of the weekly *Correspondence Universelle*. These two men visited Estonia, worked for the establishment of the Institute Francais in Tartu, and organized trips for Estonian students to France. The Estonians also had access to the columns of *L'information* through their supporter Albert Thomas as well as to *L'Echo de Paris* through Michel Cote. The publisher of the French Communist newspaper *L'Humanite*, Marcel Cachin, told Pusta that he could not publicly support the Estonians for ideological reasons, but Cachin assured him that nothing would be published in his paper in opposition to the Estonians. Through the journalist, Jessen, the Estonians were able to get their information into the columns of the influential newspaper, *Le Temps*. The publisher of *Le Temps* felt that the Estonians should have paid 80,000 francs a year for all the publicity they provided. Pusta considered this a fair price since the Polish delegation was paying 250,000 francs a year. However, the Estonians did not pay, but their news items continued to appear in the paper. The Estonian delegation did pay 250 pound/sterling for four months' expenses to Professor William Goode, correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, to visit Estonia in April 1919.²⁹

While not only making payments to correspondents, the Estonian delegation actually published a daily newspaper for three months. This situation developed after Pusta was approached by editors of a very aggressive but somewhat yellow press, the newspaper *Dernieres Nouvelles du Midi*. The Estonians could publish all of their information in this newspaper for 2000 francs a month. Upon reading the newspaper, Pusta noticed a number of derogatory articles about a large department store in Paris. When Pusta asked one of the editors about this, he replied that while the other stores were advertising in the paper, this store was not. To make the store come around, he had published the derogatory articles and had some boys distribute the paper free of charge in front of the store. Pusta objected to this and wanted to break their contract. The editor convinced him not to do this, yet stating that there would be a printers' strike the next day and there would be one common newspaper in which the *Dernieres Nouvelles du Midi* would be given

space. If this single daily paper would give ten lines of space to the Estonians, they would receive the widest exposure possible for their information. The editor promised to attend the general meeting of the newspaper publishers the following day; if the *Dernieres Nouvelles du Midi* would not receive any space in the common newspaper, he would print his own on a hand operated press and distribute copies throughout the city. On the following day, he was able to obtain ten lines in the *Presse de Paris*, the only French daily, during the printers' strike of December 1919. Estonian information appeared quite visibly in the *Presse de Paris* which had a circulation of several million during the strike. After the printers' strike, the Estonian delegation discontinued publishing in the *Dernieres Nouvelles du Midi*. Pusta and the rather enterprising editor parted as friends but never met again.³⁰

While the printers' strike was truly a coup, the Estonian representatives worked steadily for three years from the time of their arrival in Stockholm in early 1918 to achieve recognition of Estonia by the League of Nations in 1921 and to provide Western government officials as well as the general public with information on Estonia. As a result numerous articles, memoranda, brochures, books, and even maps were published in French, English, and German during this period. Pusta noted that "the gentlemen at the Paris Peace Conference could not complain that they had insufficient material about the Estonian question."³¹ However, it was another matter entirely whether or not it was possible for them to read all the mountains of papers produced by the representatives of the various nations and political factions which had demands on the Peace Conference. As an example, Ignatius J. Paderevski, the Polish Prime Minister, sent Woodrow Wilson a short memorandum on the Polish situation to read on his voyage between La Havre and New York which consisted only of seventy pages. However, Estonian demands in their press effort were simple and truthful. Simply, the Estonians asked for the support of their independence.³² To sum up the Estonian press campaign, Jules Cambon stated: "A nation which had been erased from Europe's political map--lives on and now demands the right to live, whether the old diplomatic conventions be for or against it."³³

Pusta's and Laaman's effort made an important contribution to Estonia's diplomacy. In Paris, public opinion on the Russian question was strongly influenced by the White Russian émigrés. Much was done by Pusta to enlighten the public about the Estonian struggle for independence. He countered White Russian claims against the Estonians and provided clear justification for Estonia's separation from Russia. Public awareness and sympathy for Estonia's plight greatly enhanced the ability of Estonian representatives to deal with the Allied governments.³⁴

NOTES

1. Sibul, "Les Soldats Baltes en France," 5-7.
2. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 200-202.
3. Ibid., 201.
4. Ibid., 203-4.
5. Ibid., 204.
6. Joseph Noulens, *Mon Ambassade en Russie Soviétique, 1917-1920* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1933), 268.
7. Piip, *Tormine Aasta*, 204.
8. Noulens, *Mon Ambassade en Russie Soviétique*, 169; Kaarel Robert Pusta, "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Service des Affaires Russes to Pusta," December 26, 1919. Papers, Box 2, H.H.A.
9. *Journal des Débats*, 25 June 1918. *Le Matin*, 25 June 1918.
10. Titus Komarnicki, *Rebirth of the Polish Republic: A Study in the Diplomatic History of Europe, 1914-1920* (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1957), 167-72; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 63.
11. Pusta, "Ministère de la Guerre: État-Major de l'Armée, Bureau Slave to Pusta," March 2 and 15, 1919; "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Direction des Affaires Politiques et Commerciales, Service Russe to Pusta," March 31, 1919, Box 2, H.H.A.; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 63.
12. The Estonians were given transmitting facilities from atop the Eiffel Tower.
13. Pusta, "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères to Pusta," March 31, 1919, "Ministère de la Guerre to Pusta," March 15, 1919, Box 2, H.H.A.; Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 63.
14. Pusta, "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères to Pusta," March 26, 1919, Box 2, H.H.A.
15. Pusta, "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères to Pusta," March 26, 1919, Box 2, H.H.A.
16. Pusta, "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères to Pusta," February 6 and March 26, 1919, Box 2, H.H.A.
17. Malbone W. Graham, Papers of Box 6, H.H.A.; Miller, *My Diary at the Conference of Paris with Documents*, vol. 18, 412; Pusta, "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères to Pusta," April 9, 1919, Box 2, H.H.A.
18. "Repatriement des Soldats Estoniens," 18-19; Tomingas, 117.
19. Pusta, "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères to Pusta," March 31, 1919, Box 2, H.H.A.

20. Pusta, "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères to Pusta," July 15, 191; *Saadiku Päevik*, 63, Box 2, H.H.A.

21. Pusta, "Ministère des Affaires Étrangères to Pusta," December 26, 1919, Box 2, H.H.A.; *Saadiku Päevik*, 63.

22. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 64-66.

23. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 39.

24. Ibid., 66.

25. Ibid.

26. Pusta, "Eesti Iseseisvus de Facto ja de Jure," 154.

27. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 70

28. Pusta, "Eesti Iseseisvus de Facto ja de Jure," 154; *Saadiku Päevik*, 70.

29. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 68-70.

30. Pusta, "Eesti Iseseisvus de Facto ja de Jure," 154; *Saadiku Päevik*, 68-69.

31. Pusta, "Eesti Iseseisvus de Facto ja de Jure," 155.

32. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 70.

33. Pusta, "Eesti Iseseisvus de Facto ja de Jure," 155.

34. Vabadussõja Ajaloo Komitee, 1: 150.

CHAPTER 7

TREATY OF TARTU

After the Allied powers' failure to grant Estonia de jure recognition in Paris, Estonia's leaders clearly saw that they had little choice but to take a course independent of Allied policy. Estonia could not fight Soviet Russia indefinitely and there was little reason to believe that an anti-Bolshevik government in Russia would be in Estonia's better interest. Therefore, the Estonian government entered into peace talks with the Soviets. The conclusion of these talks was the Treaty of Tartu.

The Treaty of Tartu which established peace between Soviet Russia and Estonia was a truly significant event in European history. The treaty concluded on February 2, 1920, was hailed by Lenin as the opening of a new era in Soviet diplomacy.¹ Georgi Chicherin, the Commissar of Foreign Affairs, described it as being "the first experiment in peaceful co-existence with bourgeois states."² For the Estonians it was also a bold initiative in their diplomacy. Entering into peace negotiations and normalizing relations with Soviet Russia without Allied support was indeed a very daring step. It created a solid foundation for Estonian diplomacy which allowed the free development and reconstruction of their country.³ Despite the claims of great diplomatic triumphs by both sides, the peace was actually decided by a Soviet military defeat, namely the inability of the Soviet Seventh and Fifteenth Armies to break through Estonian defenses.⁴ Both of these units were elite troops commanded by able officers. They were not the mobs of so-called workers' militia which quickly defected to the North-West Russian Army upon its advance.⁵ The destruction of the Fifteenth and Seventh Armies was a serious blow to Soviet military power, especially when forces were desperately needed for operations against Poland. The Peace of Tartu would not have been possible if Soviet Russia had been able to exert her overwhelming military superiority. After conclusion of the Treaty of Tartu, Bolshevik propagandists turned their military defeat into a propaganda victory.

Yet this is not to say that Estonia did not need peace. The Estonian armed forces bore the brunt of fighting both the Germans and the Bolsheviks in the Baltic area. Besides having to defend their own territory, they had to assist the North-West Russian Army and defend Latvia until Latvian defenses could be organized.⁶ This was a difficult task for a nation with a small population and an internal economy that was in disarray due to five years of war and revolution. Estonia fought a defensive war; her territory was now free from invading armies. The Estonian government could no longer rightfully ask their people to make more great sacrifices. The best guarantee against further invasions would have been the downfall of Bolshevik rule in Russia and its replacement by a democratic government which would recognize Estonia's independence. However, the White Russian movement with the exception of the North-West Russian government, organized through the efforts of General Hubert Gough, chief of British Military Mission to the Baltic States and Finland, was strongly in opposition to the recognition of Estonian independence. The White Russians led by Admiral Kolchak were supported by the Allies to be the future non-Bolshevik government in Russia. Thus Estonian independence was in peril whether there be a White or Red government in Russia. Furthermore, the Allies decided to cease supplying material assistance to the Estonian military in September 1919, and the French and American governments demanded cash or payment in kind for equipment and munitions. Without *de jure* recognition by the Allied powers, the Estonian governments could not receive loans. Thus, without supplies and equipment for the armed forces and *de jure* recognition from the Allied powers, Estonia had little choice but to conclude a peace treaty with the Soviets. While the Allied governments disapproved of peace negotiations, they on the other hand did not provide Estonia with means to continue her struggle against the Bolsheviks. The Estonian government clearly stated this position to Great Britain in September 1919.⁷

Clearly Estonia could expect nothing from the Allied heads of government at Paris, and so Estonia had to solve the problem of her relations with Russia without any help from the statesmen of the Allied countries. This need was reinforced by the diplomatic vacillation of the Allies, the incompetence of General Yudenich's staff, the retreat of Admiral Kolchak's forces, and the defeat of General Denikin's forces.⁸

Estonia therefore consented to reply to Commissar of Foreign Affairs Chicherin's formal offer for peace negotiations which has made by a radiogram on August 31, 1919. The first meeting between Estonian and Soviet delegates took place at Pskov on September 17, 1919.⁹

Efforts to Formulate a Common Peace Policy

This was not the first attempt to open peace talks between Estonia and Soviet Russia. Jaan Tõnisson and other Estonian politicians had considered the possibility of peace talks since early February 1919. However, any contacts with Soviets had been strongly discouraged by the Allied governments. The Estonians had expressed willingness to participate in the Prinkipo conference but this came to nought. Also, the head of the short lived Hungarian Bolshevik government, Bela Kun, had offered his services as a mediator between Estonia and Bolshevik Russia. Again, nothing came of it. The Soviets made the first direct offers of peace talks in radio broadcasts on April 27 and 28.¹⁰ In the summer of 1919, British liberal journalists, Arthur Ransome of the *London Daily News* and William T. Goode of the *Manchester Guardian* went to Moscow and probed the possibility of ending the war with Chicherin and Lenin. They received favorable replies.¹¹ Arthur Ransome was engaged privately by the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in this task, while William T. Goode was probably engaged by the British Secret Intelligence Service.¹² At the discussions that took place in Pskov on September 17 to 19, 1919, the Bolshevik delegation consisted of Leonid Krassin, the Commissar for Industry and Communications, Maxim Litvinov of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, and D. Bogolievov of the Commissariat of Finance. Adu Birk headed the Estonian delegation which consisted of members of the Asutav Kogu. Because of difficulties in concluding an isolated peace in the Baltic, the Estonian delegation proposed that the peace proposals should also be given to Latvia, Lithuania, and Finland. After this common discussion could be opened with the Bolsheviks. This was laid down as a condition for further talks. The Soviet delegation reluctantly gave their consent to this; the talks were discontinued until preliminary joint discussion could be held.¹³

The first conference of representatives of the Baltic countries to formulate a common policy took place in Riga on September 10-12, 1919. Because of transportation difficulties, the Finns and Lithuanians could not attend. Only the Estonian and Latvian representatives were present. They decided that Latgale would be rejoined to Latvia as a condition to negotiations. The Estonians promised to support the Latvian demand for the return of their eastern province.¹⁴

The next conference took place September 14-15, 1919, in Tallinn. Estonia was represented by Prime Minister Otto Strandman and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jaan Poska. Prime Minister Karl J. Ståhlberg and the Foreign Minister Holsti represented Finland. Latvia was also represented by her Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Karlis Ulmanis and Zigfrid Anna Meierovics. Lithuania sent only the Minister of Foreign Trade, J. Shimkus. M.S. Margulies represented the Russian North-West government. Poland also sent observers. The Estonians informed the other Baltic representatives of their plan to conclude a peace with the Bolsheviks. The White Russian representative pleaded for Estonia to wait until the North-West Army could open its offensive against Petrograd. The participants realized that for the Baltic countries the continuation of hostilities with the Bolsheviks would only further the interests of Admiral Kolchak's government which was openly hostile to Baltic independence. On the other hand, the Baltic countries did not want to alienate themselves from the Allied powers who were against peace negotiations. The Estonians strongly pushed for common peace negotiations with the Soviets. The Latvians hesitated and the Finns and Lithuanians were against negotiations for the time being. On September 15, however, the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian delegates agreed on a common policy to negotiate with the Bolsheviks. The Latvian also pushed for a conclusion of a military alliance as soon as possible. It was proposed to demand that the Soviets withdraw their troops to the line of Petrograd-Dno-Welikiji and the Luki-Witebsk-Orsha line and that the Bolshevik Baltic fleet be interned in neutral ports. The decision to enter peace talks met with an immediate, unfavorable response from Great Britain, France, and the United States. The Finnish press was also for the most part hostile to the decision. This was

probably the reason for Latvian and Lithuanian representatives not appearing at preliminary Estonian-Soviet talks at Pskov from September 17 - 19, 1919.¹⁵

A third conference took place at Tartu on September 29 - October 1. The prime ministers of Finland, Estonia, and Latvia, and the deputy prime minister of Latvia were present. Again the Estonians pressed to enter negotiations with the Bolsheviks. The Finns were still hesitant. The delegates reached an agreement to begin peace negotiations with the Soviets at Tartu on October 25, 1919. They drafted a common program of action and agreed to demand Soviet Russia grant *de jure* recognition to all the Baltic countries and agitation cease against the Baltic governments. There were also pledges to support special requests of the various countries. Again, the delegates discussed the matter of creating a Baltic Alliance. By this time conflict between Lithuania and Poland over the city of Vilnius and the surrounding area had begun, hampering any attempt to form an alliance. As it turned out, this conference had few practical results; Estonia was obliged to start peace negotiations alone.¹⁶ On November 9 and 10, the Baltic representatives met again at Tartu to continue discussions on the upcoming peace talks. As it would turn out, the only common peace talks between the Baltic countries and Soviet Russia were the discussions with Litvinov on the exchange of hostages on November 17 in Tartu. On the next day, the Estonians decided to go ahead alone into peace negotiations.¹⁷ The Baltic countries, however, moved closer to a military alliance.

Attitude of the Allied Powers Toward Peace Negotiations

After the Bolshevik government made its formal offer for peace negotiations to the Estonians on August 31, 1919, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Jaan Poska as well as Piip and Pusta approached the Allied governments to learn their attitudes towards negotiations. The Estonians found the attitude of the Allied governments to be either outright hostile or disapproving. The French government voiced its strong opposition to negotiations to Pusta. French policy did not allow for Estonia to break the common front against Soviet Russia. They warned the Estonians that if a peace settlement took place signalling a radical

change in Estonian orientation, it would "undoubtedly be followed by an adequate alteration of Franco-Estonian relations."¹⁸ One of possible, consequent actions the Quai d'Orsay warned would be to extend the Allied blockade against the Soviets to Estonia as well.¹⁹ The Americans responded that the United States had no intention of opening negotiations with Soviet Russia and the State Department instructed its diplomatic agents as well as military representatives to keep aloof of any such activity. When Bakhmetev, Kerensky's ambassador to the United States, learned of Estonia's plan to enter negotiations, he voiced strong protests to acting Secretary of State, William Phillips. The State Department feared that American supplied food would fall into Bolshevik hands.²⁰ On September 16, Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Lord President of the Foreign Office, instructed Colonel Harry P. Gordon in Tallinn to inform the Estonian government to "take no action in the direction of peace." Britain instructed the Estonians as well as the Latvians to remain in concert with Allied policy; any individual action would be deplored.²¹ However, Great Britain soon changed her policy. On September 25, 1919, Lord Curzon instructed the British diplomatic agent in Tallinn to inform Estonia that the British government would no longer continue to supply military material and stores to Estonia or assume financial responsibility. However, in view of this decision, the British government recognized that it could not justifiably interfere with the conclusion of a peace treaty between Soviet Russia and Estonia. This pronouncement was more a disclaimer of responsibility than an approval of Estonian policy.²² Although the British stated they would have no objections to the Estonians entering peace negotiations, they reserved the right in case of an unfavorable outcome to punitive measures against the Estonians. As William Tomingas stated, the British policy on the peace negotiations "was a masterful work of ambiguity and hypocrisy."²³ While not tying Britain to Estonia's breaking with the policies of the other Allied governments, she was still able to reap the benefits from the peace negotiations. Clearly the reciprocal military guarantees, notably the internment of the Soviet Baltic fleet in neutral ports, would serve British interests well.²⁴ The Estonian opening of talks with the Soviets also allowed Britain an easy way to break with French policy. France favored continuing the active struggle against Bolshevism but Great Britain, disappointed in the negative results of intervention and support of the White Russians,

wanted to end the struggle and lift the blockade of Soviet Russia. They wanted to resume normal commercial relations as soon as possible.²⁵

In view of the divergent attitudes of the Allied powers towards Estonia's beginning negotiations, the Estonians found it prudent to explain their position to Clemenceau, the chairman of the Allied Supreme Council. On September 29, Pusta submitted to him a well-prepared 2500 word memorandum setting forth the reasons for the necessity to enter peace talks with the Bolsheviks.²⁶ The memorandum stressed that since the very inception of Estonian independence, Estonia tried her utmost to act in accord with Allied policy. The Estonians promised not to make any decisions in the future without informing the Allies. The memorandum stressed that the Estonians took the initiative to enter negotiations with the Bolsheviks because the Estonian army was the largest fighting force in the Baltic area. The point was made that Estonia was a small country with limited resources. The Estonian army had faced a superior enemy continuously for ten months. The memorandum further pointed out that the Estonians also had to deal with a German threat in the south. It stated:

To meet those two dangers, the menace of the Germans from the south and that of the Bolsheviks from the east, the Estonian army although animated with a good spirit and well disciplined, had insufficient munitions to carry on wider and prolonged operations, because since the month of May, in spite of reiterated requests, the Estonian government had received no war materials from the Allies.²⁷

Since the Allies had refused *de jure* recognition to Estonia, the memorandum contended that the country could not negotiate loans. In conclusion the memorandum stated:

Esthonia, which has turned to the Allies with entire confidence ever since the beginning, now in such a critical moment still needs to be supported by their advice and to have the collaboration of their military and diplomatic representatives. The Esthonian government still believes that the Allied and Associated powers will not refuse to contribute to the strengthening of the Esthonian Army which whether the armistice is signed or not, will always remain on guard against any new attack of the Bolsheviks.²⁸

To influence public opinion in the Allied countries, Pusta publicized in the Western press the position outlined in the memorandum.²⁹ While the clear statement of the Estonian position did not lead to an immediate change in the policies of the Allied governments, it did reassure the Allies against the fear

that the Baltic states would go Bolshevik after peace was concluded. In line with British policy, Lord Balfour, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, recommended to the Allied Supreme Council that the British government should not recommend that Estonia enter peace negotiations "unless we could give them support and assistance. If we have to surround Russia, as it were, with a barbed wire fence, could we leave so big a gap as lay between Poland and Finland. This would be to cut off Finland and to give the Bolsheviks access to the sea. If we acquiesce in their making peace with the Bolsheviks, what steps were we to take."³⁰ The British Prime Minister did not agree with his foreign secretary; he pointed out that "the population of these states are very formidable people." Lloyd George felt that it was necessary for Estonia to conclude an armistice. He did not see the Baltic states going Bolshevik in this event. However, because of political pressures he could not consent to the Estonian negotiations.³¹ The Allied plans continued to be negative.

The Final Offensive of the North-West Russian Army

The North-West Army of General Yudenich began a final, desperate offensive against Petrograd on September 28, and the forces of "Prince" Bermond-Avalov attacked Riga on October 8. At the outset of Yudenich's offensive the prospects of a speedy capture of Petrograd seemed quite bright. On October 11, the main body of the North-West Army broke through the Bolshevik line and pushed forward to the suburbs of Petrograd. However, due to incompetent leadership, the Petrograd-Moscow railway was not cut and the Bolsheviks were able to bring in reinforcements of elite troops. The Bolsheviks launched a counter offensive on October 21 and the North-West Army was forced into a quick retreat.³² In accordance with an agreement made between the Estonian General Staff and the British military mission in Riga, the Estonian armed forces were obliged to conduct operations in support of the offensive against Petrograd. A part of these operations was an Estonian amphibious landing against the fortress of Krasnaya Gorka with support from the Royal Navy. The landing operations began on October 14 and continued until October 26, after which the Estonian forces were withdrawn. The operations against Krasnaya Gorka were undertaken by the

Estonians with the mental reservation that they might secure themselves a forward defense position against White Russian treachery after the capture of Petrograd.³³ Clearly the Estonians saw the capture of Petrograd by General Yudenich as a grave threat to their national security.³⁴ While the Estonians never had to face such a problem they had to deal with a dangerous situation created by the retreat of the North-West Army. General Yudenich requested that his forces be allowed to cross behind Estonian lines to reorganize their disordered formations. In view of this imminent danger created by an undisciplined army behind their front lines under leaders of whom many were hostile to the Estonian republic, the Estonian government decided to disarm all the North-West Army units on November 11, 1919. The British, French, and American governments vigorously protested this action.³⁵

Litvinov's Trip Through Estonia

The end of General Yudenich's campaign against Petrograd again opened possibilities for negotiations with Soviet Russia. The first direct meeting took place between Baltic delegates and a Bolshevik official representative between November 16 and 19 at Tartu. This Bolshevik representative, the deputy Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Maxim Litvinov, passed through Estonia enroute to Copenhagen to negotiate a hostage exchange with the British. It was with some difficulty that the Estonians could get Litvinov to come to Tartu for talks; the British government wanted him to proceed directly to Tallinn and board a Royal Navy transport without talking to anyone.³⁶ At Tartu, the acting Estonian Foreign Minister, Piip, the Latvian representative Augusts Friedenburg, and the Lithuanian representative Jonas Sliupas negotiated an exchange of hostages between the Baltic countries and Soviet Russia. It was also decided to open active peace talks at Tartu within a week. The Finns and Poles took no active part in this meeting.³⁷ Litvinov, a stocky, round-faced man continually smoked cigars at a time when they were all but unknown in Estonia.³⁸ Talking rather freely with William Tomingas, who was secretary to the Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs, he stated that Soviet Russia was willing to negotiate peace with Estonia and recognize her independence. According to Litvinov, Lenin wanted a direct window to Europe, a

direct connection through Estonia, not via Germany. Litvinov warned Tomingas that Estonia's international position as an independent state would be very difficult. According to the Deputy Commissar of Foreign Affairs, fate had given Estonia a hard position between two great powers, Germany and Russia. Germany would always look upon her as a lost "colony" and Russia since the time of Ivan the Terrible looked on Estonia as the most direct route to the Baltic Sea. Litvinov felt that Estonian foreign policy would require intelligence, competent statesmen, and neutral orientation. He warned Tomingas that Russia could give up Estonia for the time being but in the future it was likely that the Russians would try to reconquer their lost territory.³⁹

Tomingas accompanied Litvinov to Tallinn where he boarded the Royal Navy transport *Princess Margaret*. Before Litvinov's departure for Copenhagen, he revealed to Tomingas that Latvia and Soviet Russia had come to a secret peace arrangement.⁴⁰ The peace arrangement had been concluded in Moscow by Latvian representatives under the guise of a Red Cross mission.⁴¹ According to this arrangement there was to be no activity on the Latvian front, except for exchange of fire between reconnaissance parties. In this way, the Latvians had made peace with the Soviets but had avoided the wrath of the Allied governments for doing so.⁴² The Deputy Foreign Commissar informed Tomingas that it was possible for Estonians to conclude such an agreement before he departed for Copenhagen. A hasty meeting was arranged between Litvinov and Jaan Tõnisson who had become Prime Minister. They reached an agreement for a temporary ceasefire on the Latvian model and Litvinov informed the Bolshevik government in Moscow of this. On the same day, November 22, Litvinov departed for Copenhagen.⁴³ Unfortunately, the Soviets did not abide by the ceasefire agreement. Later the Bolshevik delegates claimed at the subsequent peace negotiations that Litvinov did not have the proper authorization to conclude such an agreement.⁴⁴ This was the state of affairs when Estonia and Soviet Russia entered into formal peace negotiations.

Negotiation at Tartu

Estonia faced the Bolsheviks alone in the fierce fighting which was taking place on the Narva River at the end of November 1919; the Finns, Latvians, or Poles gave no active support. While Estonia continued to fight alone, she entered peace talks the same way. The Finns did not need an immediate peace; they were not involved in active fighting with the Bolsheviks except for limited guerrilla activity in Eastern Karelia and military support of the Ingrians and Estonians. The Latvians had a ceasefire with the Bolsheviks and were planning to retake the province of Latgale with the assistance of the Poles. This would be done through "Operation Winter" which lasted from January 3, 1920, to February 20, 1920. In this campaign 10,000 Latvian and 30,000 Polish troops participated.⁴⁵ Only after the successful completion of "Operation Winter" did Latvia enter into formal peace negotiations with Soviet Russia. The Lithuanians were willing to join the Estonians in the negotiations at Tartu but were unable to, because Poland had taken a menacing attitude toward them and could have made this a pretext for an invasion.⁴⁶

The peace conference convened in Tartu on December 5, 1919. The Estonian delegation was presided over by Jaan Poska of the People's Party; his Bolshevik opposite number was Leonid Krassin, a late convert to Bolshevism who formerly represented the German firm of Schuchardt & Schutte in Petrograd and was now the Commissar for Industry and Communications. The other members of the Estonian delegation were members of the Asutav Kogu: Mait Puuman (Socialist Party), Julius Seljamaa ("Liberal" Worker's Party) and the socialists Karl Ast and Alexander Oinas. Antonius Piip was also present as well as Major General Jaan Soots, chief-of staff to General Laidoner, Colonel Mutt, chief of the Third Division Staff, and Colonel Viktor Puskar of the Second Division. Rein Eliaser of the People's Party served as the delegation's chief-of-staff and William Tomingas as its secretary. The other principal delegates of the Soviet delegation at beginning were Adolf Joffe, the former Soviet representative in Berlin, and General Feodor Kostiaiev, who had been a general in the Tsarist army before the Bolsheviks seized power. Later the Soviet delegation was joined by Karl Radek, Juri Gukovski, Commissar of Finance, and Count Benkendorff as naval expert.⁴⁷ While the negotiations were an Estonian-Russian affair, the British Admiralty sent an unofficial

representative, Lt. Augustus Agar, to inform the Bolsheviks of mine clearing activity in the Baltic and the willingness of the Royal Navy to continue to support the Estonians. The Admiralty proposed to the Estonian delegation that when the Bolsheviks demanded military guarantees, namely the liquidation of Yudenich's forces on Estonian territory, the Estonians should demand reciprocal concessions. Accordingly the British suggested that the Estonians demand the scuttling of the Soviet Baltic fleet as a guarantee against future aggression. Clearly with the German navy disarmed, this scuttling would greatly serve British interests in Northern Europe. Lt. Agar also took up the question of exchanging British and Soviet prisoners.⁴⁸

While the British took advantage of the peace negotiations for their own purpose, the Bolsheviks hoped to take advantage of their presence in Tartu for espionage and subversion against Estonia. A clever counter-intelligence operation by the Estonian Military Intelligence Service foiled these plans. Krassin complained to Poska that the Estonians provided no service personnel for the Bolshevik delegation. Krassin hoped that agents could be brought in from Soviet Russia under the guise of service personnel. The Estonians told Krassin that it was not possible to bring in service people, but perhaps the necessary personnel could be found among the jobless through the labor bureau in Tartu. The personnel which the Soviet delegation hired from this bureau displayed leftist views and were willing to conduct espionage for the Soviets upon being interviewed. Thus, the Soviets proceeded to establish an espionage network with those men. Little did the Soviets know that these men were actually Estonian counter intelligence agents.⁴⁹

Espionage was not the only activity which the Soviets engaged in against Estonia during the Tartu conference. On December 7, the Reds launched a mass offensive against the Estonian lines between Lake Peipsi and the Gulf of Narva. This was done in conjunction with the negotiations at Tartu. The Soviets hoped to force upon the Estonians a peace on Soviet terms within a period of 24 to 72 hours after the beginning of the offensive.⁵⁰ The mass attacks were continuous between December 7 - 20. Such intense fighting had been unknown during the Russian civil war. According to foreign correspondents in the

country, this fighting resembled the hell which had taken place on the western front during the Great War. Narva was being dubbed by the world press as the "Estonian Verdun."⁵¹ The Estonian lines were heavily fortified. The mass assaults had little effect except to inflict staggering casualties on the attacking units. Mountains of corpses continued to pile up in front of the Estonian fortifications. The Bolsheviks made one more desperate final effort to break through the Estonian defenses. Between December 28 and 30 the Red Army launched a continuous series of mass assaults on the Estonian lines. On New Year's eve of 1919 the Soviet commander on the Estonian front reported to his superiors that the Soviet Seventh Army was totally destroyed and the condition of the Fifteenth Army was hardly better.⁵² On the following day the Soviet delegation at Tartu agreed to an armistice.

An armistice was the first objective of the negotiations at Tartu which were taking place during these final Soviet offensives. The Bolsheviks insisted in the first place on certain military guarantees and disbandment of North-West Russian Army which for practical purposes had ceased to exist. The Estonians maintained, however, that first an agreement had to be reached on substantial issues, namely the question of frontier. They stressed that military guarantees had to be mutual and could be arranged at a later time. The Estonians also pointed out that the Bolsheviks should not be the ones demanding guarantees, because they had launched an unprovoked attack against Estonia.⁵³ The Bolshevik delegation presented the first proposal on the question of frontiers on December 8, which coincided closely with the offensive the Red Army had launched the day before. This proposal was a ridiculous push for strategic frontiers totally favorable to the Soviets and with complete disregard of ethnographic frontiers. According to the proposal Rakvere as well as all of Petserimaa would be Soviet territory. The Estonians countered by demanding a frontier much farther to the East.⁵⁴ To settle the frontier question a boundary commission consisting of Major General Jaan Soots and General Feodor Kostjaev met separately. This commission made little progress; General Kostjaev was intent on gaining the most militarily advantageous border possible. Major General Soots countered many of his arguments by stating that, "the borders of a nation are not like an accordion which can be pulled back and forth depending on the mood."⁵⁵ The Red Army General tried to justify the frontier

to encompass much of Estonian territory by claiming historical precedent. He said that this frontier was established by the brothers Princes Rurik, Ineus and Truvor. Major General Soots countered that these three brothers who were asked to rule Russia were Varangian Estonians, thus Novgograd and Moscow belonged to Estonia. Soots continued that since the Estonians were magnanimous they would allow the Russians to keep Moscow and Novgorod. After being informed of this Kostjaev stormed out of the room cursing.⁵⁶ Clearly the Soviets were trying to see if the continued attacks on Estonia's eastern frontier would give them major gains in the frontier issue. As it became clear that no military breakthrough was possible, the Bolshevik delegation became proportionally more amenable to a settlement. Yet Poska saw that the negotiations could become deadlocked on the frontier question, he asked the Soviets for an adjournment for a few days. Krassin agreed and said he would go to Moscow to consult with his government. When the conference reopened on December 16, Krassin did not return. Joffe became the new head of the Bolshevik delegation.⁵⁷

Little progress was made on settling the frontier issue. On December 23, Poska made the suggestion that it would be fruitful if he and Joffe rather than the two generals would try to delineate the borders. Joffe agreed and the two met that evening. They finally reached agreement in the early hours of the morning. The head of the Soviet delegation agreed to the Estonian frontier proposal with the exception of the village of Kobelakas which Joffe demanded to be behind the Soviet frontier. According to Poska, "Joffe hung on to Kobelakas as if there was a gold mine there."⁵⁸ According to Major General Soots the village was on high ground, thus being a favorable position for artillery. Nevertheless the Estonian delegation agreed to this frontier. To Poska one village was not a reason to continue the war.⁵⁹

With the Estonian army holding firm at the front, agreement for a tentative armistice was reached on Christmas Eve, 1919. The Estonian delegation hoped that a ceasefire could go into effect on Christmas day. Yet at this juncture the Bolsheviks still had not given up hope of defeating the Estonians militarily. In a surprise move, Joffe demanded that there be additional military guarantees, namely a ten verst (about seven miles) demilitarized zone on both sides of the frontier. From a defensive view point this was totally

unacceptable for the Estonians. Furthermore, there was no sound basis for this according to international law. This was simply a Soviet delaying tactic. They hoped to delay an armistice as long as possible in the hope that Estonian defenses could be crushed in their fierce new offensive.⁶⁰ The mass attacks continued along the Narva River; thousands of Soviet soldiers died needlessly. The Estonians were learning a hard lesson about negotiations with the Soviets: the delegations at Tartu represented two very different ideals. The Estonian delegation, the representatives of a democratic government, were trying to advance and protect the desires of the Estonian people; on the other hand the Soviet delegation represented the revolutionary elite Bolshevik party. Continuing the war against Estonia had nothing to do with the interests of the Russian people but the advancement of the Bolshevik cause towards world revolution.

The Estonian lines held firm as did the Estonian peace delegation under the steely, cool leadership of Poska. With the failure of the Soviet offensive, the demand for the ten verst strip was dropped and an armistice was signed on December 30. The ceasefire came into effect at 10:30 A.M. Tallinn time. (12:00 P.M. Moscow time) on January 3, 1920.⁶¹ The war was finally over; for fifteen months Estonia had thwarted invading Soviet forces as well as German and White Russian plots. The Estonians had faced the elite of the Red Army, that included red Latvian, Finnish, and Hungarian units as well as "Chinese punishment troops."⁶² While the ceasefire began on January 3, the negotiations required more than a month to work out the text of the peace treaty in its final form. The Estonians and the Bolsheviks finally concluded the treaty on February 2, 1920.⁶³ In the final treaty what was paramount for the Estonians was that Soviet Russia recognized the full independence of the Estonian state *de jure* and renounced forever all rights of sovereignty over the land and people of Estonia. All international treaties signed by the former Russian state in regard to the status of Estonia were made invalid in the future.⁶⁴ Through the clever bargaining of Poska Estonia did not have to grant Soviet Russia *de jure* recognition in return.⁶⁵ Rather, Estonian diplomatic and consular relations with Russia were instituted by special arrangements which followed Allied policy toward Russia.⁶⁶

As far as military guarantees went it was agreed that Yudenich's forces would remain disarmed as long as they were on Estonian soil. Soviet Russia promised in reciprocal terms that no foreign forces hostile to Estonia could be organized on Soviet soil. While Estonia did not agree to a permanent ten verst demilitarized zone, a temporary one was established for a period of two years on the right bank of the Narva River and along the southeast Estonian frontier in Petserimaa and in Soviet territory between the Velikaia River and the Estonian frontier. In the event of the international neutralization of the Gulf of Finland both parties agreed to support this and in the case of international recognition of Estonian neutrality, similar to Belgium before 1914, Soviet Russia would be a granting party to this neutrality.⁶⁷ Along the lines of the Rush-Bagot agreement of 1818 in relation to the American Great Lakes, lakes Peipsi and Pihkva were permanently neutralized, allowing only the maintenance of patrol boats with limited armaments.⁶⁸ A clause of the treaty which was up to this time unknown in international relations, was that all Estonians living under Soviet rule were given the right to opt for Estonian citizenship in a period of one year. Russians in Estonia were given the similar right. About 70,000 Estonians returned from Estonian colonies within the former Russian empire.⁶⁹ During the year of 1920, this option created enormous problems for the Estonian missions in Petrograd and Moscow. Thousands of Russian workers wishing to escape the "worker's paradise" mobbed those offices in hope that they could gain permission to enter Estonia. Enormous sums of wealth were offered daily for Estonian passports.⁷⁰

Of great importance was the clause that Soviet Russia assumed the total responsibility for all liabilities of the Tsarist government including those concerning Estonia. The Soviet government also agreed to pay fifteen million gold rubles in compensation for the Russian banknotes in the possession of Estonian citizens which had now lost all value. The gold was transferred in two shipments during 1920. In regard to Estonian property which was evacuated into Russia during the war, the Bolsheviks agreed to return all archives and libraries belonging to Tartu University and certain types of stocks and bonds held by Estonians.⁷¹ The treaty also dealt with the problem of Russian access to Baltic ports. This was important indeed, as it was the main argument always presented by Russian nationalists against the independence of

Estonia, that Russia's "window to Europe" would be closed.⁷² Soviet Russia was granted passage of goods through Estonia, free of customs and transit duties. Furthermore, special zones were established in Estonian ports for the trans-shipment, warehousing, and repacking of Russian goods. Other trade between Estonia and Soviet Russia was based on the most-favored-nation principle. In additional economic clauses in the treaty, Estonia accorded Soviet Russia the right to generate electric power from the rapids of the Narva River. Soviet Russia granted concessions to Estonia for the construction of a direct railway between Tallinn and Moscow; Tallinn was the harbor nearest to Moscow which remained open most of the year. In addition, Estonia was granted concessions to cut timber in 1,050,000 dessiatines (about 2,835,000 acres) of woodland in Northern European Russia. However, these concessions were never honored by Soviet Russia.⁷⁴ These economic concessions brought little gain to Estonia. Trade developed with Western Europe and the Western hemisphere; Soviet Russia's trade had an insignificant role in Estonia's economy.⁷⁵ This situation developed after the Allied governments ended their economic blockade of Soviet Russia on January 16, 1920. The Bolsheviks became reluctant to make concessions after this and honored none which they had granted.⁷⁶

Allied Policy and the Treaty of Tartu

On December 1, 1919, Pusta met with Philippe Berthelot, the French Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, to inform him of the opening of the Tartu Conference. This news was received very coolly by the Assistant Foreign Minister. On the same day, the Finnish representative, Erik Ehrström, met with Berthelot's aide, Kammerer, who stressed that France's position in respect to the future of both Estonia and Finland relied on those countries' support of the White Russian movement. The best situation for the Baltic countries in a restored, non-Bolshevik Russia was that of internal autonomy, according to the French. While support of the White Russian movement would guarantee French support of Finnish and Estonian autonomy within the future Russian system, such a course of action was not supported by the government and the people of the two border states.⁷⁷

On December 17, Berthelot sent a note to Pusta which contained a strong warning against continuing negotiations with Soviet Russia. The note stated that the Allies would not support Estonia because a peace treaty would result in the recognition of the Bolshevik government. A peace between Estonia and "the areas controlled by the Soviets" would give the Bolsheviks access to Europe by access to Estonian ports and use of their territory. The Allies would move to prevent this with strong action, Berthelot warned. Berthelot hinted in unmistakable words that if negotiations resulted in a peace treaty with recognition of Soviet Russia, Estonia would be put under blockade. The Estonians, however, had gained trustworthy information that there was little danger of the British government bringing pressure to bear on Estonia should she conclude peace with Bolshevik Russia. There was reason to believe that the blockade which the French threatened also was little more than a half-hearted bluff.⁷⁸

On December 22, Pusta replied to the note. He expressed the Estonian concern that the Estonians were receiving only negative comments about Estonian policy but they were not receiving any clear statement of Allied policy towards Russia, particularly in regard to the future of the Estonian republic. Pusta again explained at length the situation which forced the Estonians to enter negotiations with the Bolsheviks. He requested that the French provide a positive plan to resolve the situation.⁷⁹

However, like the British, the French soon changed their position. This was expressed in a note sent by the French Foreign Minister, Stephen Pichon, to Pusta on December 26, 1919. The note expressed sympathy for Estonia's difficult situation. Pichon stated "that in consideration of the situation, the French and British governments will employ all means available to assist your country and her regional policies." He also expressed the need for Estonia to further exchange views with the Allied government to make clear the legitimate concerns of the Estonian people and government.⁸⁰ After the Treaty of Tartu was signed, Berthelot congratulated Pusta and informed him that in regard to Estonia's action, any government had to act with the interest of its own nation foremost.⁸¹

France accepted the new situation and began her policy of forming a "cordon sanitaire" of the border states against the plague of Bolshevism. However, in certain sections of the Quai d'Orsay there was

considerable anger at the Estonians for the clause in the Treaty of Tartu which freed Estonia from all the Russian Empire's pre-war financial obligations. It was felt that the recognition of Estonian independence should be based on the express stipulation that Estonia would bear her share of the pre-war Russian debt.⁸² Regardless of this, the French made a "volte face" and considered the conclusion of the Treaty of Tartu to be a successful move by the Estonians. The conclusion of the treaty was now described as being done under French patronage. What was previously considered a dangerous move by Estonia was now considered a move towards establishing stability for Europe's frontiers. The British and Italian policy makers made similar adjustments.⁸³ The British in particular were glad to see the timely end to the North-West Russian Army and the speedy normalization of the situation in the Baltic. After a long and costly war they were anxious to reopen trade; furthermore, they were afraid that certain financial arrangements with General Yudenich might if disclosed bring embarrassment to the British government. American military intelligence believed that Winston Churchill and a British trade group arranged the giving of a large sum of money to General Yudenich in return for valuable Siberian concessions and other economic privileges once a non-Bolshevik government was restored in Russia. Thus, the British were happy to see the White Russian adventurers fade as quickly as possible.⁸⁴

The American attitude differed from those of the Allied powers. The American military representative in Estonia, Colonel Warwick Greene, stated before the signing of the Peace Treaty of Tartu, "At present they [the Estonians] appear to be a real rampart against the spread of Bolshevism westward. But as they are comparatively few in number, they are a thin rampart and one that must have outside help if it is to endure."⁸⁵ Colonel Greene felt that it was inevitable that the Estonians would come to some type of settlement with the Bolsheviks since they were not receiving assistance. However, the realistic view of the matter was not shared by the Department of State and Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, who were still under the influence of White Russians. In their opposition to the signing of peace, the State Department hoped to influence the British and French not to recognize the independence of the Baltic states. In February 1920, Lansing sent diplomatic notes to the Baltic governments, urging them to subordinate themselves to

Admiral Kolchak and work out their differences with the White Russians in a conference. In regard to these notes, an Estonian commentator remarked sarcastically, "As Kolchak by that time had already been shot by the Bolsheviks, the negotiations between the border peoples and the "Supreme Ruler" of Russia, as suggested by Mr. Lansing could not be carried out on this earth."⁸⁶ American policy did not change after Bainbridge Colby replaced Lansing as Secretary of State on February 25, 1920. Unfortunately, Colby a distinguished lawyer and member of the U.S. Shipping Board, had little experience in foreign affairs.⁸⁷ Malbone W. Graham describes Colby as a

sinister figure...who turned out to be one of the most unfortunately reactionary Secretaries of State in America's history. When Colby who was no expert in foreign affairs, sought guidance as to how he would meet the problem of relations with Russia, he checked into records and came out with the most extreme legitimist doctrines regarding new states. Colby was a Progressive who had gone sour in the process.⁸⁸

The Japanese, it seems, used the negotiations at Tartu for their own purposes. Katsuji Fuse, a correspondent of the liberal Japanese newspapers *Osaka Mainichi* and *Tokyo Nichi Nichi* had spent a considerable amount of time in Estonia during 1919. He was most likely a colonel on the Imperial General Staff, attached to the Kempei Tai [Japanese Secret Service]. During the course of the Tartu Conference he established close contact with Adolf Joffe most likely through the Estonian General Staff. On April 4, 1920, Fuse received authorization to go to Moscow and left in a Soviet courier car. In Moscow, the CHEKA fearing anti-Bolshevik plots nearly arrested him. However, he was able to form cordial relations with Bolshevik officials and left six weeks later for Tokyo, via Siberia, personally carrying a projected peace treaty between the Soviets and the Japanese in the Far East.⁸⁹

The Tsar's Cognac

In another incident relating to the Treaty of Tartu, the White Russians unwittingly assisted the negotiations. In the Spring of 1919, the morganatic wife of Tsar Alexander II, the Duchess Jurjevskaja, died in Paris. Pusta bought from Duke Kotshubei, who was in charge of liquidating her possessions, some cherry liqueur, cognac from the age of Napoleon, and other assorted exotic liqueurs to serve visitors at the

Estonian representation in Paris. He and Poska sampled the spirits; the cherry liqueur had soured but the cognac was unbeatable. When Poska returned to Estonia, he took along an assortment of the purchase. During the Tartu negotiations foreign journalists were supplied with liberal amounts of pre-war vodka and the Paris liqueurs. To calm his nerves during the tense negotiations, Poska drank large amounts of the excellent cognac. He would have two glasses before the opening of the daily sessions. William Tomingas found the cognac to be incomparable in aroma and smoothness. During the difficult frontier negotiations, Poska served the cognac to Joffe. Like Poska, Joffe was a connoisseur; he greatly valued the bottle of cognac on his departure. He sent Poska a box of Russian "Zefiir" cigarettes in appreciation.⁹⁰

The Helsinki Conference

While the Estonian peace negotiations were proceeding in December, the next step toward establishing stability in Northern Europe was taken by the Estonians; Oscar Kallas, the Estonian representative in Helsinki, informed the Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Holsti, that the Estonian government desired to hold a formal Baltic Conference, preferably in Helsinki. He stated to Holsti that there should be no predetermined agenda, although the conference would provide the opportunity to lay the groundwork for a Baltic alliance. Kallas informed Holsti that the governments of Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland would gladly welcome an official invitation from the Finnish government to attend such a conference. The Prime Minister of Finland, K.J. Ståhlberg and his cabinet approved the plan. The British Ambassador to Finland, Lord Acton, expressed his strong support as well. The Finnish government readied an ice-breaker to bring the delegates to Helsinki. Unlike the Estonian plan of a border state alliance which was based on Pusta's concept centered in Northern Europe, Holsti wanted to bring in Czechoslovakia and Romania. Holsti wanted to bring these countries into the conference deliberations in Helsinki.⁹¹ Before the diplomatic representatives of the Baltic countries met at Helsinki, the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian General Staffs met at Valga on January 6, 1920, and agreed on the establishment of periodical meetings and

the exchange of information. A military alliance was proposed; elaboration of this alliance was left up to the political leaders.⁹²

Some Estonian political commentators believed that Estonia should move towards an alliance with Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland but avoid Finland. They saw close association with Finland as dangerous because of Finnish desire for the return of Eastern Karelia and because of Finnish association with Germany during the war and Finnish non participation in General Yudenich's campaign against Petrograd. Thus the Finns were not in the best favor with the Allied powers.⁹³ Nevertheless the first so-called Baltic Conference was held in Helsinki from January 15 to 23. It was a general political conference as planned with five powers participating: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.⁹⁴

The Estonian delegates to the Helsinki Conference were the head of state, Jaan Tõnisson, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Adu Birk, and Major General Jaan Soots. The Estonian representative in Finland, Oscar Kallas, as well as Erika Saler, the Foreign Minister's secretary, and William Tomingas were also present. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Latvia and Lithuania represented their nations at the conference. Holsti and Prime Minister J.H. Vennola were Finland's principal delegates.⁹⁵

The Helsinki Conference opened with Vennola stating Finland's opposition to Estonian peace negotiations with the Bolshevik government, because the negotiations were not in accord with Allied policy towards Russia. The Latvian Foreign Minister, Meierovics, voiced support of Vennola's statement and expressed the hope that Estonia would go no further than the armistice which had been concluded. Tõnisson stated that trying to keep in accord with Allied policy seemed to tie the hands of Finland and Latvia in making any independent policy decisions. He questioned if it was better for other Baltic countries to wait to normalize their relations with Russia in case the Bolsheviks were overthrown, because the new government would most likely be even more hostile to border states. Tõnisson added that the Baltic countries should not be concerned with current Allied policy towards Russia because it was soon likely to change. He was quickly vindicated when on January 16, the Supreme Allied Council announced that the Allied blockade of Russia would be lifted.

After Tõnisson addressed the conference, Major General Soots delivered a rather blunt speech. He criticized the Finnish and Latvian positions. Soots stated that it was easy for the Finns to give advice not to make peace because Finland was not actively engaged in war with Soviet Russia. The Estonians fought alone and had to make peace alone. Major General Soots stated:

Estonia's situation is entirely different--you our brothers do not have trouble, but we do. The other good advice givers are our southern neighbors, the Latvians. At their eastern front against the Russians there has been for the longest time a black magic show--rifles are fired but so that neither the Russians or Latvians get hurt. It is not surprising that in such a situation, where there is a "circus" at the front, and no real war, the Latvians can wait as long as the Finns to make peace, i.e. forever. Like Finland, Latvia has no concerns about peace in its current situation, which is radically different from that of Estonia.⁹⁶

Thus, the Finnish and Latvian objections did not deter Estonia from continuing her own peace policy. Regardless of the disagreement on this matter with the other Baltic countries, the Estonians pressed ahead at the conference with the plan to form a Baltic alliance. On January 16, Jaan Tõnisson submitted a project for a military alliance for defense against Russia and Germany. However, because of strong pressure exerted on the Finnish government by powerful pro-German groups in Finland, Holsti had to reject the Estonian proposal.⁹⁷ However, the military committee of the conference did accept a plan for a five nation alliance to defend Eastern frontiers. The military committee planned to establish a permanent, central bureau in Riga for liaison and exchange of military information among the general staffs of the border states. The Estonian delegate, however, added the reservation that such a convention would apply in the future but not to the current situation.⁹⁸ On January 21, Vennola introduced the question of the neutralization of the Gulf of Finland which could later be extended to the whole Baltic Sea. Vennola decided to discuss this with other nations in preparation for a future international conference on the planned neutralization. This was of great importance to Finland and Estonia because the Bolsheviks were planning to build a fortress on the island of Hogland which would command the whole Gulf of Finland. This was also important to the other Baltic States in order to avoid the necessity of maintaining large naval establishments.⁹⁹ Another proposal which the delegates accepted was one forwarded by the Latvian Saeima [Parliament] representative Voldemars Zamuels that Denmark, Sweden and Norway be invited to participate

in the next Baltic Conference. The plan for the Baltic alliance which Pusta had formulated in Paris, in the autumn of 1918, was now on the way to implementation. Yet, the plan for a military alliance was not yet finalized; the situation in the Baltic was too chaotic to form a basis for practical achievements. Estonia was currently engaged in bilateral peace negotiations with the Bolsheviks. Finland and Latvia were still formally at a state of war with Soviet Russia.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, Finland was in a bitter conflict with Sweden over the Åland Islands.¹⁰¹

Yet overshadowing all of this was the dispute over the Vilnius area. The Helsinki Conference to a certain extent became stranded on the Polish-Lithuanian rock.¹⁰² The other nations at the conference hoped that the dispute would be settled amicably. Toward this end, it was suggested that the other border states would form a committee to investigate the situation and provide a basis for its solution. The Lithuanian delegation did not accept this. On January 20, 1920, Lithuania's delegate stated to the conference that Polish forces were in illegal occupation of Lithuanian soil; they had taken possession of the regions of Alunta and Pakalne which were thirty kilometers west of the line of demarcation established by the Allied powers between Lithuania and Poland. Furthermore, the Lithuanian delegate stated that the Poles had violated Lithuanian territory in the region of Vievis as well. The Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Augustinas Voldemaras stated, "The Lithuanian delegation considers it impossible to continue active participation in this conference as long as Poland is a participant at the conference of the Baltic states, and as long as the basic differences between the two nations shall not have been resolved."¹⁰³ The territorial dispute between Lithuania and Poland became a great impasse towards the formation of a Baltic alliance.¹⁰⁴ Despite her conflict with Lithuania, Poland remained interested in a Baltic alliance. The Poles hoped to construct an alliance system with Poland as the principal state. Regardless of Poland's conflict with Lithuania and suspicion of Polish motives and fear of her preponderance in the proposed federation by the other Baltic countries, all nations represented at the conference realized that it was in their best interest to form an alliance.¹⁰⁵ Despite many difficulties, the Conference did lay the groundwork for the actual formation of a Baltic alliance. The delegates decided to hold another conference among the Baltic countries

at Bulduri near Riga on August 6, 1920.¹⁰⁶ Thus, the main role of the Helsinki Conference was to bring the various states into closer contact and open the way for further negotiations for more solid progress.¹⁰⁷ Despite the conflicts, the conference seemed to indicate the Baltic countries were moving toward the envisioned confederation which would provide security in the future to the nations of Northern Europe.

The Situation After the Conclusion of Peace

At the beginning 1920 however, many Allied officials had doubts that the Russo-Estonian peace would last because of the continuing Bolshevik military activity, espionage, and subversion.¹⁰⁸ Estonian diplomacy, to be sure, was guided by a realistic appraisal of Bolshevik intentions. In a speech to the Asutav Kogu on February 10, 1920, Jaan Poska advised that the "Bolsheviks do not keep treaties because of judicial actions, 'pacta servata sunt' but on the principle of self-interest--'sacro egoismo.'"¹⁰⁹ His advice to the Asutav Kogu was to ratify the treaty but warned that "we can enjoy peace but, we must remain on guard."¹¹⁰

Estonia's leaders heeded Poska's advice. Although the military pressure on Estonia receded, the activities of the Bolshevik Secret Service were relentless. Soviet espionage in Estonia was not aimed against Estonia, but the Bolsheviks "Reval Center" became the base for espionage and agitation against Western Europe and North and South America. In close cooperation with the Finnish, Latvian and Allied secret services, Estonian counter-intelligence authorities were able to stem these activities. Bolshevik codes were broken and organizations infiltrated. Through these broken codes Bolshevik agents in the United States were rounded up and dispatched to federal penitentiaries or deported. Because of the vigilant efforts of Estonian military intelligence and police authorities, the Soviet attempt to destabilize the Estonian republic was unsuccessful.¹¹¹

In the spring of 1920, the Estonians were faced with a new dangerous threat to their country, the spread of typhus. Because of the poor sanitary conditions typhus broke out in the internment camp of the former North-West Army. Hundreds of these Russian soldiers interned in Estonia and Russian refugees

were stricken, and the disease began to spread to the Estonian population. The Estonians quickly mobilized forces. Through effective efforts by the Estonian Red Cross, American Red Cross, and Estonian army medical service, the typhus outbreak was contained. The former soldiers of the North-West Army as well as Russian refugees could move on to other countries for resettlement.¹¹² After the normalization of relations with Soviet Russia, the Estonians were able to construct their national life.

With the way opened by the Estonians, other countries began to normalize their relations with Soviet Russia.¹¹³ Certainly the Treaty of Tartu was an event of great significance in European history.¹¹⁴ During the negotiations of the Treaty of Tartu, the French journalist Emile Terquem stated in regard to Estonia's international role, "The caprice of fate has awakened this little nation from its obscurity and has called upon it to play a decisive part in the future of the world."¹¹⁵

The Death of Jaan Poska.

On March 9, 1920, Jaan Poska, the principal force behind the successful peace negotiations, died in bed at his Tallinn home. This was only five weeks after the successful conclusion of the Tartu Peace Treaty. Poska was only fifty-four years old; however, he appeared to be much older. The Estonian people were stunned by his sudden death.¹¹⁶

The Estonian government gave Jaan Poska the first state funeral in the nation's history. Foreign heads of state, diplomatic and political figures sent letters of sympathy and telegrams expressing condolences to the Estonian government in Tallinn as well as to Estonian representatives in foreign countries. Because of his skillful negotiations at Tartu as well as his dignified performance as head of the Estonian Foreign Delegation in Paris, he had become a respected statesman throughout Europe. He had been widely respected in pre-war Russian society as well. Poska and Voldemar Lender were perhaps the only two Estonians who were accepted in Russian aristocratic and Baltic German social circles.¹¹⁷

Poska was friends with such influential people as Glasunov, the Mayor of St. Petersburg, and Prince Georgi E. Lvov, who became head of the Russian Provisional Government. From 1913-1917,

Poska had served as Mayor of Tallinn. After the February revolution he had become the Commissar of the Province of Estonia. After the Bolsheviks staged their putsch in Petrograd and the Estonian Maanõukogu was disbanded, Poska had gone to Petrograd to consult with the former members of the Provisional Government as well as the heads of the Russian political parties. When he returned to Estonia he had met with members of the Vanematekogu at Karl Saarel's apartment. He had told them, "We have nothing to hope from the Russians. Estonia must declare independence and a confederation of Baltic nations must be formed."¹¹⁸

Poska had become the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Konstantin Päts' Provisional Government and in Otto Strandman's government. He also had served as chairman of the Estonian delegation in Paris and chairman of the Estonian delegation at the Tartu negotiations. Poska was a consummate realist. After the signing of the treaty of Tartu, he had expressed the hope to Adolf Jürgenstein that the Estonians would be allowed ten years before the Soviets attacked again, so that the nation could get her economy in order and strengthen her defenses.¹¹⁹ The death of Jaan Poska on March 9, 1920, was a great loss for Estonian diplomacy, but men like Pusta and Piip continued the work in which Poska had such an important role in the beginning.

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115. N.G., "A French View of Esthonia," *The Esthonian Review* 1, no. 8 (February 25, 1920): 275.
116. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 88; Struggle of the Baltic States for Independence," 92; Tomingas, 269-70.
117. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 88; Tomingas, 270.
118. Pusta, *Saadiku Päevik*, 88; Tomingas, 253-54.
119. O. Greiffenhagen, "Jaan Poska, ein Baumeister des Heutigen," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 2 (1937): 81, cited in Vööbus, 6: 91.

CHAPTER 8

THE SEARCH FOR RECOGNITION AND SECURITY

As the Tartu negotiations began, Estonia's neighbors began to open formal relations with her. Sweden hastily granted *de facto* recognition of Estonian independence on September 11, 1919. This was soon followed by *de facto* recognition by Norway and Denmark. On October 6, 1919, Paderevski sent a radiogram to the Estonian government stating that Poland granted *de facto* recognition and that a Polish military mission was on its way to Estonia. Finland presented her *de facto* recognition on August 16, 1919. The *de jure* recognition of Estonian independence by Finland came almost a year later, on June 8, 1920, shortly after Estonia adopted her permanent constitution. It also coincided with the opening of Finno-Soviet peace negotiations at Tartu.¹ On August 26, 1919, Estonia was accepted into the International Postal Union.

On February 19, 1920, Italy established official relations with Estonia. Pusta traveled from Paris to Rome where he presented his credentials as Estonian Chargé d'Affaires to the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vittorio Scialoja. The Italian government soon after sent Signor Agostino Depretis as Chargé d'Affaires to Tallinn. He later became the Italian minister/ambassador to Estonia. Depretis arrived in Tallinn in April 1920, almost at the same time as the Polish ambassador, Leon Vasilevski, and the official Japanese representative.² Pusta also opened official relations with the Netherlands; he presented a memorandum to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jonkeer Herman van Karnebeek. On the same mission Pusta also met with the Belgian Foreign Minister Paul Hymans. Both of the low countries opened official relations with Estonia. On June 16, 1920, Karnebeek sent a written reply to Pusta in Paris stating that the Dutch government wished to begin and develop cordial relations with Estonia. The first Dutch representative in Tallinn was consul Hans van der de Jongh.³

The Allied powers still continued to debate on what policy they should take in regard to the Russian question. The Allied Supreme Council held a conference at San Remo, Italy from April 19 to 26, 1920, whose agenda included the revival of economic relations with Soviet Russia. The delegates were David Lloyd George of Great Britain, Prime Minister Francesco Saverio Nitti of Italy, Alexandre Millerand from France, and Keishiro Matsui represented Japan. The Americans sent only an observer.⁴ On the eve of the San Remo conference Pusta presented French Prime Minister Alexandre Millerand with a note which stated that Estonia had the legal rights to her territory due to the recognition by the Soviet government. With Kolchak's demise there seemed to be no successor to the anti-Bolshevik government which could decide the fate of the Estonian republic.⁵ Regarding the Russian question, the San Remo conference led to no definite change in Allied policy. Nitti favored the resumption of trade in general terms, but each nation had to be free to take the steps she deemed expedient. France was cool to the idea, but it received Lloyd George's support. Soon after the conference, the British and Italians opened trade negotiations with the Bolsheviks.⁶ The opening of trade implied the Allied acceptance of the status quo; thus they were moving closer to recognition of Estonian independence.

Soon after his meeting with Millerand, Pusta returned to Estonia and began to work on preparations for the next Baltic Conference at Bulduri, Latvia, scheduled for the end of August and beginning of September 1920. The very liberal parliamentary system adopted by Estonia, where ruling coalitions could be brought down without new elections, had proved unstable. Ruling coalitions frequently changed. In the summer of 1920 there was a crises in Jaan Tõnisson's government because the Social Democrats had withdrawn from Tõnisson's coalition. On July 28, 1920, Adu Birk announced that he would be forming a new, liberal coalition government and requested that Pusta join his cabinet as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Pusta, who was not a member of any political party, wanted to remain aloof from politics and continue his diplomatic work. He declined Birk's offer, but Pusta's refusal did not deter Birk. However, Pusta did not become Foreign Minister as Tõnisson's government did not fall but remained in power until October 26, 1920, after which it would be Antonius Piip's turn to form a cabinet. In Piip's government the duties of

Foreign Minister were assumed by Otto Strandman. While Pusta was preparing for the Bulduri Conference at which he was to be his country's representative, Piip had assumed his duties in Paris.⁷

While Piip was in Paris, the Allied powers were opening trade with the Bolsheviks and moving closer to *de jure* recognition of the Baltic states. To resist this the U.S. Secretary of State Colby, still under the strong influence of the White Russians, sent diplomatic notes to the British, French, Italian, and Polish governments on August 2, 1920, "for information and confidential guidance" on Russian policy.⁸ The note stated, "Because the [State] Department thinks that a real solution of the actual problem will be delayed and complicated by the dismemberment of Russia, it has been persistent in refusing to recognize the Baltic States as independent states apart from Russia."⁹ While the contents of this note were not made public, a note by Colby sent to the Italian ambassador in Washington, Camilo Avezzana, received wide publicity. The note urged the Allied powers to do as the United States and not to recognize the independence of any former parts of the Russian Empire with the exception of Finland proper, ethnic Poland, and the Armenian state.¹⁰ Count Carlo Storza quickly sent a note on behalf of the Italian government in reply to Colby. Storza's note disavowed the rather foolish and arbitrary policy. He stated Italy was fully justified in this matter, "to equally recognize the existence of the Baltic States."¹¹

On August 26, 1920, Piip sent a note to Millerand expressing Estonia's disappointment if France would revert to the policies of the United States. Piip's note to Millerand was "exceptionally skillful" as it made the point that based on historical evidence the situation of Estonia was analogous to that of Finland, Poland, and Armenia. Thus not recognizing Estonia made little sense.¹² Moreover, Piip stressed that American policy disregarded Wilson's support for constitutionalism because Estonia had a regularly elected democratic constituent assembly which judicially mandated independence. He further stressed that Russian internal strength would not be increased by the inclusion of Estonia into a restored non-Bolshevik Russia.¹³ The main function of Piip's note was to discredit Colby's policy in the eyes of the Allied chancelleries. While it did not appear to have influenced the Americans to change their policies, it was not

really necessary as time was working in favor of Estonia and time was running out for Bakhmetev and his cronies. The nations of the world were moving towards the *de jure* recognition of Estonian independence.

The Bulduri Conference

As planned at the Helsinki Conference, the five border nations sent representatives to Latvia to meet between August 6, and September 6, 1920. The conference first met in Riga but later moved to the Riga suburb and beach-resort of Bulduri. Hence this meeting became known as the Bulduri Conference. It was the longest and most elaborate Baltic Conference and the last where Lithuania and Poland were both officially represented.¹⁴ The Scandinavian countries were also invited to send delegates but declined to do so or even to send observers. However, without an invitation, the Byelorussians and Ukrainians sent delegates. The Ukrainian delegates were finally admitted to the talks on August 20, but the Byelorussians were denied admission out of concern that Soviet Russia might be offended.¹⁵ The Estonian delegation was led by Pusta. Other delegates included Rein Elias, as the legal counsel, Colonel Paul Lill of the General Staff, Rein Eliaser and Karl Ipsberg of the national railway administration, and Dr. Alfred Mõttus of the public health services; Joakim Puhk acted as advisor on commercial affairs, and Karl Kirp was the delegation secretary.¹⁵ The sessions of the conference were under the chairmanship of Karlis Ulmanis, the Prime Minister of Latvia, while the actual organization and driving spirit behind the conference was Meierovics, the Latvian Foreign Minister.¹⁷

The chief Polish delegates were Leon Vasilevski, the Polish Chargé D'Affaires in Tallinn, and Vitold Kamicniecki. Representing Lithuania was Jurgis Saulys, Vladislovas J. Notkeicius, and Dovas Zauolis, the Lithuanian Chargé D'Affaires in Riga. The head of the Finnish delegation was Leonhard Astom, the director of the Finnish foreign ministry's commercial section Erikki Reionen, the Finnish representative in Estonia was also present. Rudolf Holsti, the Finnish Foreign Minister who was a strong advocate of Finnish cooperation with the Baltic countries, wanted to attend personally but was prevented

from doing so by his responsibility at the on going Finno-Soviet peace negotiations taking place in Tartu.¹⁸

At the opening of the conference there was a very positive feeling that a Baltic federation would be formed as a result of the conference. At the time the diplomatic influence and military strength of the Baltic states were strong in Northern Europe. It was important that the Baltic countries give to the world an appearance of strength because this would strengthen their case for *de jure* recognition from the Allied powers. Furthermore, Finland and Latvia were amidst peace negotiations with the Soviets; thus, Baltic solidarity would strengthen their negotiating positions. Poland, however, was at war with the Soviets and Bolshevik forces of Marshal M.N. Tukhachevskii were dangerously close to Warsaw. During the course of the Bulduri Conference these forces were outflanked and forced to retreat. But at the opening of the conference the prospects that the Bolsheviks would attack the Baltic states again seemed to be real.¹⁹ The plans for union among the five powers were extensive. The proposed agreements and projects included: development of a unified monetary system and customs union, establishment of a central railway bureau, protection agreement for the protection of literary and artistic works, a permanent arbitration tribunal, cooperation in disease control, and a political league and defensive military alliance.²⁰

On August 7, the conference broke down into three working groups: economic, political and judicial, and cultural-social and sanitation. Pusta and Eliaser were representatives on the political - judicial working group. The Conference did not meet for a general session until August 20.²¹ Progress was slow on the various projects and agreements. They did not reach the necessary unanimous vote because of abstentions on the part of Finland and Lithuania. Finland, with *de jure* recognition from the major powers and its geographically isolated position, was non-committal. Lithuania's abstentions were due to renewed border tensions with Poland as a result of the changing military situation. The Vilnius territory still remained in dispute.²² While the Bulduri Conference was in session the Polish delegation approached Pusta and Meierovics and asked that they help resolve the Vilnius question by having the Estonians and Latvians act as arbitrators. Meierovics approached the Lithuanian delegate Saulys with this proposal.

Saulys told Meierovics that he would forward the request to the Lithuanian government in Kaunas. He received the reply that Vilnius was a Lithuanian city and there could be no discussion about it. Pusta was not very sympathetic to this position. He understood that Vilnius was historically a Lithuanian city, but he felt the self-determination of the people should not be violated. Along these lines, Pusta felt that a plebiscite should be held to determine whether the city should be part of Poland or Lithuania. The results would not be likely to favor Lithuania since the majority of the population was not Lithuanian.²³

On August 21, Pusta addressed the conference on behalf of the Estonian delegation. He reminded conferees that they had been discussing economic and cultural relations for two weeks. The primary goal of the conference was not postal, telegraph, artistic, and railway agreements but to harmonize political orientation and to form a unified diplomatic and military front. Furthermore, he stressed that a unified front was something which they should be able to present to their own people and friendly nations as well as enemies. Pusta further stressed that before they authorized the economic, legal, and cultural agreements, they should agree to jointly protect their very existence. On August 31, the Polish delegation also urged the necessity of forming a Baltic Union as a guarantee of peace in Eastern Europe.²⁴ On August 30, 1920, the political committee started drafting the political agreement for union. On August 31, all nations including the Ukraine signed the ten Articles of agreement. This segment provided for the settlement of disputes between the signatory nations by arbitration, forbade the formation and passage of armed forces on their territories hostile to any of the signatory nations, and stated agreement to draw up without delay a defensive military convention. Other articles guaranteed the rights of minorities and allowed for free transit rights. The deadline set for ratification of the treaty by the various states was set as December 15, 1920. As a result of the Lithuanian objections, the Finnish delegation made the suggestion that the existence of the political agreement be kept secret until the governments of the participating nations had a clear position on the matter at which time they communicate it to the other participants.²⁵

Despite the signing of the political agreement on August 31, the Polish-Lithuanian dispute cast a shadow over the work of the Bulduri Conference. Bad went to worse in the Vilnius situation. On October

8, the Polish General Lucjan Zeligowski, supposedly at the head of a freebooting army formed of allegedly rebellious Polish divisions, invaded the Vilnius territory and forced the scant Lithuanian forces to evacuate the city. General Zeligowski proclaimed the city and the surrounding territories to be the state of "Central Lithuania." The new Polish head of state, Marshal Josef Pilsudski, disavowed official Polish government responsibility for the action of General Zeligowski. However, Marshal Pilsudski later admitted that General Zeligowski acted under his orders.²⁶ In 1922, General Zeligowski's government organized the election of representatives of the Vilna Sejm which then voted for Vilnius' incorporation into the Polish state. Lithuania refused to recognize this act. The Lithuanians had expected the support of the League of Nations which was not forthcoming. In fact the Conference of Ambassadors in 1923 recognized the Polish claims on Vilnius.²⁷ The Lithuanians refused to recognize Vilnius as part of Poland regardless that the conflict had been resolved by international agency in favor of Poland. The truly damaging effect of the Polish annexation of Vilnius was that the Lithuanians would refuse to participate in the Baltic Conferences in which Poland was represented, thus blocking the efforts to form a Baltic union. Because of the Vilnius conflict the political agreement of the Bulduri Conference was doomed. Finland and Poland failed to ratify the agreement within the stipulated time period.²⁸

The Vilnius dispute was not the only border problem which threatened the work of the Bulduri Conference. The Estonian-Latvian conflict over the border city of Valga also threatened to flare-up. The population of Valga had in the nineteenth century a larger percentage of Latvians than Estonians. However, by the turn of the century the number of Estonians in Valga began to exceed the Latvians. The city became an important railway center for Estonia. Valga was liberated by the Estonians from the Bolsheviks in February 1919. The city became an important center of operations for Estonian forces operating against the Bolshevik and German forces in Latvia. Valga was important for the Latvians because they saw it as part of historic Latvia and because it was an important market center for Latvian farmers in the surrounding region. The Estonians and Latvians tried to mediate a settlement but failed.²⁹ Colonel Stephen Tallents stepped in and offered to arbitrate the dispute. The Estonians and Latvians both accepted this on January

20,1920.³⁰ Colonel Tallents worked with a joint commission of Estonians and Latvians; as President of the commission he could cast the deciding vote. The decision reached on July 1 granted most of the town and the most important railway facilities to the Estonians.³¹ The Latvians resented this and tore up sections of the railway track and placed barbed wire entanglements throughout the city.³²

During the course of the Bulduri Conference, there were still bitter feelings among the Latvians about the Valga settlement. At a reception in honor of the delegates which was held on the farm of the Latvian Prime Minister Karlis Ulmanis, Ulmanis delivered a speech. While his speech was to deal with the conference, it mainly dealt with the Valga situation. Karl Kirp of the Estonian delegation understood Latvian and translated Ulmanis' speech word for word to Pusta. Ulmanis stated that Valga was a Latvian city and would remain so, if not by peaceful means then by force. At the end of the reception Pusta approached Meierovics and asked him how he planned to resolve this incident as Pusta would have to inform his government of this matter. Meierovics spoke to Ulmanis; it appeared to the Estonians that they had a heated discussion. Pusta immediately contacted the Estonian Prime Minister, Jaan Tõnisson, and informed him of the incident. Tõnisson became angry at this and told Pusta that the whole Estonian delegation should leave Bulduri if Ulmanis did not officially apologize. Pusta told Tõnisson that this would not be a good idea. According to Pusta, Estonia would not be able to conduct any diplomacy in Paris, if the Estonian representatives walked out whenever a foreign head of state insulted the nation. Tõnisson agreed and told Pusta to solve the problem in his own way. Thus the calm diplomacy of Pusta and Meierovics won out. The two statesmen agreed to end the incident immediately. A formal statement was made by Ulmanis in which he apologized for erroneous statements made at the reception.³³ Soon after this incident, the Valga matter became a minor issue in Latvia. While cabinet ministers had resigned their posts in protest to Tallent's decision, they soon resumed their offices. The Latvian Saeima came to support the decision of Colonel Tallents.³⁴

While the dispute over Valga was resolved without much consequence, the Vilnus dispute remained a formidable obstacle to any sort of Baltic confederation. This conflict ruined the opportunity to lay the

groundwork for a large scale Baltic confederation as envisioned by Pusta in the autumn of 1918. Because of the failure of the Bulduri Conference almost a year would lapse until Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Poland would again meet in Helsinki between July 25-28, 1921. The main accomplishment was the signing of an agreement to hold periodic meetings of Baltic foreign ministers.³⁵ The four powers met again in Warsaw March 13-17, 1922. An agreement was signed which was almost an alliance. However, the Finnish Diet deemed that the commitments made were too extensive and by the Diet's non-ratification nothing came of the plan.³⁶ The only alliance which emerged was the Estonian-Latvian alliance that resulted from a conference between the two nations held in Tallinn October 25-November 2.³⁷ Georg von Rauch stated of this alliance, "Admittedly, it was more a marriage of convenience than one of love, and it had its fair share of misunderstandings. But by and large the agreement of 1923 proved viable, not least because it was made by two neighboring territories with strong historical associations."³⁸ The building of a greater federation in the Baltic remained an elusive dream. Without the federation there was no real guarantee of security in Northern Europe during the years following the First World War.

De Jure Recognition of Estonia

With the conclusion of the Bulduri Conference Pusta made his way back to Paris to his position as Estonian diplomatic representative in France. The journey was a difficult one due to a railway strike in Poland. He stopped in Warsaw and had two lengthy discussions with Duke Sapieha, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Poles held a banquet in Pusta's honor; Vincent Witos, the Polish Prime Minister attended. Pusta also met with his old friend Albert Thomas who was in Warsaw at the time.³⁹

In mid-November 1920, Pusta went to Geneva for the first Assembly of the League of Nations. It became the goal of Estonian diplomacy to convince the Assembly of the justice of Estonia's claim to full independence and full membership in the League.⁴⁰ Pusta proposed to the Baltic Commission of the Versailles Conference that the Allied countries should give Estonia *de facto* recognition and that *de jure* recognition could be given by the new League of Nations. However, the Allied Powers did not adopt this

logical plan.⁴¹ At Geneva Pusta was accompanied by a delegation consisting of General Johan Laidoner, Jaan Kopvillem, and Gaston Gaillard. Pusta noted that they all had high hopes for Estonia's admittance.

Estonia was one of fourteen other states requesting admittance. The Fifth Committee of the League Assembly was to decide on the candidacy of the new applicants. Subcommittees were appointed, and subcommittee number one dealt with applications of the Baltic States. Each of the subcommittees was to examine (1) if the candidate state's application was in order, (2) if the government of the state had been recognized *de jure* or *de facto* by what other states, (3) if the state's frontiers were clearly settled, (4) if it was self-governing, (5) if its conduct had adhered to international obligations, (6) and if the state would follow the prescriptions of the League in regard to armaments.⁴² Estonia and Latvia had strong positions on these conditions; Lithuania, however, lacked a settled frontier due to the Vilnius dispute.

Pusta approached Lord Robert Cecil, the British representative, and Sir George Foster, the Canadian representative, both of whom were members of the Fifth Committee. From his short conversation with Lord Cecil, Pusta obtained the impression that he favored acceptance of Estonia with certain reservations. General Laidoner and Pusta called on Sir George Foster at his hotel. The Canadian representative told the two Estonians in a frank manner that they would receive a completely affirmative answer at the first Assembly of the League. According to Pusta, Sir George Foster told him and General Laidoner, "The Estonian republic is like a new corporation whose ability to pay is yet to be determined. We will see in a year what the condition of your country is in international affairs."⁴³ The business-like reply from the Canadian representative was clearer than Pusta received in his conversation with René Raphael Viviane, the French representative of the Fifth Committee. The French representative informed Pusta that since Estonia was an independent country with a representative government and was able successfully to stabilize her relations with Soviet Russia, France's support was obviously with Estonia. However, Viviani later warned the Fifth Committee that if Estonia was accepted into the League, the other members under Article X of the League of Nations charter would be obligated to defend her independence and territorial integrity.⁴⁴

After the Fifth Committee completed discussions, they presented their findings to the League Assembly on December 16, 1920. It was clearly shown that Estonia and Latvia had met all the requirements set forth for admission. In regard to Estonia, she had a stable government and clearly defined frontiers; ninety one percent of her population was Estonian; the government had a responsible attitude toward international obligations; she had her own army of 15,000 men, a navy and air force; Estonia received *de jure* recognition from Finland and Soviet Russia and *de facto* recognition from Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Japan, Poland, Sweden, and the Netherlands.⁴⁵ However, the Fifth Committee recommended to the General Assembly that the admission of the Baltic states as well as Georgia be delayed but permission should be granted for these states to participate in the League's technical organizations and the International Labour Office.⁴⁶ After the Fifth Committee submitted its report, the League of Nations General Assembly voted whether to accept Estonia's request for admission. The request was rejected by a vote of twenty four to five with one abstention. Latvia's request was rejected by the same ratio. The votes which supported Estonia's admission came from Colombia, Italy, Portugal, Paraguay, and Persia.⁴⁷

The representatives of Italy, Colombia, and Portugal made statements of support for the admission of Estonia and the two other Baltic countries into the League.⁴⁸ Particularly disappointing to the Estonian representatives at Geneva was the abstention of Poland. Ignatius J. Paderevski, the Polish representative, confided to Pusta that in his heart he supported Estonia's admission but the Poles could not go against the wishes of Britain and France.⁴⁹ Remarkably, with the defeat of the White Russian forces and the signing of peace treaties between the border states and Soviet Russia, the two great Allied powers still clung to the hope of restoring Great Russia.

Argentina followed suit with her Latin American sisters; the Argentinian delegation walked out of the General Assembly in protest of the non-acceptance of the new states into the League. Argentina quickly provided Estonia with *de jure* recognition on January 10, 1921.⁵⁰ To be sure, the South American

countries were small republics which often were threatened by the large powers and felt a certain amount of solidarity with the Baltic countries.

The failure to gain admission to the League of Nations caused a certain amount of disillusionment at home. The Bolshevik secret service took advantage of the situation by distributing leaflets in Estonia which stated that the League of Nations had denied the bourgeois Estonian republic the rights which were accorded the colonies and dominions of Great Britain.⁵¹ However, positive results did come from the denial at Geneva. Following the League's rejection, much information began to appear in the Western press concerning the recognition of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The strong support of Italy for the Baltic countries at the League of Nations Assembly had a certain influence on Britain and France. Count Sforza had become an eloquent advocate of the Baltic cause.⁵²

The Allies were definitely moving towards the *de jure* recognition of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. On January 12, 1921, Aristide Briand became the Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs of France. He was eager to carry out the task of European pacification. Briand was known to be an advocate of the independence and survival of small states in Europe. Pusta and his Latvian counterpart, Meierovics, called on the new French premier on January 21, 1921. Pusta presented Briand with a long diplomatic note requesting *de jure* recognition of Estonia.⁵³

On January 26, 1921, the Supreme Allied Council held a meeting. The announced agenda was problems in German disarmament, the reparation situation, and the crisis in the Near East. However, without previous warning, the Allied heads decided to discuss the matter of recognizing the Baltic states.⁵⁴ Briand represented France, Lloyd George and Lord Curzon Great Britain, and the strong friend of the Baltic people, Count Sforza represented Italy. On the eve of their *de jure* recognition by the Allied powers, Count Sforza said of the Baltic countries' diplomacy, "For my part, being then a member of the Supreme Council, I was agreeably impressed by the air of serious competency, modest but assured of men such as Meierovics, the Latvian or Pusta, the Estonian, the latter of whom was later on to develop a course of action, so meritorious and so well carried out in the cause of the Baltic League."⁵⁵

The Italian representative made an energetic presentation in support of *de jure* recognition of the Baltic states. Lord Curzon also gave his opinion on the matter. With his solemn Victorian eloquence he spent half an hour expounding why it was unwise to recognize the Baltic States. He still advocated a wait-and-see attitude. Lord Curzon had great sympathy for Georgia because of sojourns of his youth in that country; yet despite his distrust of all Russians, he had little sympathy for the plight of the Baltic people. The clever Italian Foreign Minister played on Lord Curzon's affection for Georgia. He pointed out that the Soviet government had granted *de jure* recognition to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Georgia, and that like the Georgians, the Baltic peoples were of different race, language, and mental outlook from the Russians. Count Sforza reversed Lord Curzon's arguments and recommended that the Baltic states be recognized but that recognition of Georgia should be deferred. Count Sforza stated, "The Baltic peoples had already proved themselves worthy of their independence at a grave crisis. It was right that the Great Powers should show confidence in them."⁵⁶ Briand voiced his support for Count Sforza's position. Lloyd George who worked to end Britain's Russian involvement also voiced support for Count Sforza's position. Needless to say, Lord Curzon was shocked. He engaged in a great deal of phrasing and hemming to make it clear that he was not opposed in principle but merely on grounds of expediency.

A formal vote was taken and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were recognized *de jure* by Great Britain, France, and Italy on January 26, 1921.⁵⁷ Peretti de la Rocca, the Director of Political Affairs at the Quai d'Orsay, immediately informed Pusta of this decision. Soon after he also received a formal note from Briand of France's recognition.⁵⁸

Other recognitions soon followed. On March 8, 1921, the Japanese representative in France, Viscount Kikujiro Ishii, sent a note to Otto Strandman, the Estonian Foreign Minister, informing him of *de jure* recognition by Japan. Recognition quickly came from the other states of Europe: from the Netherlands on March 5, from Spain on March 8, from Hungary on March 23, from Switzerland on April 22, from Austria on July 5, and from the German republic on July 9, 1921.⁵⁹

In early September of 1921, Pusta and Piip went to Geneva to attend the Second Assembly of the League of Nations. On September 22, 1921 the General Assembly voted on the request of admittance by Estonia. Estonia was accepted as a full member of the League of Nations. Thirty six nations cast affirmative votes while twelve members were absent and two, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia abstained.⁶⁰

The two nations which abstained had generally a pan-slavic outlook. The Yugoslavian representative, Miroslav Spalaikovics, who had been the Serbian ambassador to Petrograd, later explained to Pusta that it was simply out of loyalty to the former Russian Empire that he abstained. In 1926 when it was more than clear the Russian Empire was gone forever, Yugoslavia did grant recognition. Czechoslovakia regularized relations with Estonia in 1921.⁶¹

By the end of 1921, the United States remained the last of the large Allied powers not to grant the Baltic states *de jure* recognition. Many in the State Department still believed that it was in American interests that a strong, unified Russia re-emerge. It was their concern that if the Baltic states were recognized as independent, the Japanese would be encouraged to retain control over the Russian maritime provinces which Japanese troops still occupied. However, the Far Eastern Affairs Division did not see this as a problem. This division informed the new Secretary of State, Charles Evan Hughes, that "it would seem to be no logical reason why the status of Russia's Far Eastern possessions should be affected by a recognition of the Baltic states."⁶² This became less of a justification by the supporters of an "indivisible Russia" when on June 23, 1922, the newly formed Cabinet of Admiral Komei Kato in Japan announced that the Japanese army of occupation would be withdrawn from the maritime provinces.⁶³ Within the Department of State, the influence of Bakhmetev remained strong. There were also a number of "old Russia hands" who had served as American representatives in Saint Petersburg and Moscow. They resisted any attempt to recognize the Baltic states. Loy W. Henderson, a young foreign service officer at the time, noted that these "old Russian hands" mingled with the Baltic German and Polish, aristocrats in Saint Petersburg and thus looked at the Baltic nationalists with disdain. Their knowledge of the actual condition of the Baltic

states could not be great, because according to Loy Henderson's knowledge none had ever visited Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania.⁶⁴

On the other hand the American commissioner to the Baltic provinces, Evan E. Young strongly advocated the recognition of the Baltic countries. To the argument that recognition would lead to a balkanization of Eastern Europe, Young stated:

In the conduct of their foreign relations they have met with no less measure of success. The old petty jealousies and bickerings which existed in the early days of their statehood no longer prevail. The Vilna controversy is the one outstanding adverse factor. The leaders in these states fully realize that the strength of one lies in the strength of all. That this spirit and feeling now underlies their relations with each other was clearly evidenced at the recent conference at Warsaw.⁶⁵

Young recommended that the Baltic states be recognized *de jure* but conceded that they might become once again an integral part of a Russian system.⁶⁶

An important obstacle was removed for American recognition when on April 28, 1922, Bakhmetev announced his decision to resign as Russian ambassador to the United States. On April 30, 1922, he terminated his official diplomatic functions in Washington. No longer would he cast his influence on the Division of Russian Affairs in the State Department.⁶⁷ With recognition of the Baltic countries by almost all other countries the State Department came to the conclusion that continued non-recognition of the Baltic countries made little sense. Secretary of State Hughes sent a note to President Harding recommending recognition of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. President Harding agreed, perhaps both for foreign policy considerations as well as consideration of the Lithuanian-American electorate.⁶⁸ The Secretary of State advised Evan E. Young to inform the foreign ministers of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the morning of July 28, 1922, that the United States would extend *de jure* recognition to their nations.⁶⁹

The recognition of Estonia and the other Baltic states signalled a dramatic change in American policy towards Eastern Europe. The Division of Russian Affairs' name was changed to that of Eastern European Affairs, and its head De Witt C. Poole, who was a staunch advocate of an integral Great Russia, was replaced by Evan E. Young. Young brought into the department experienced men who had served in the Baltic states.⁷⁰ While there was not much direct contact by Estonian diplomats with the Department of

State in Washington, Young and the American representative in Tallinn, Charles C. Albrecht, could readily observe the competence of Estonian diplomacy.

The effective foreign policy of Estonia went far in convincing the Americans to recognize the Baltic countries *de jure*. With *de jure* recognition from all the major powers, Estonia was now a full-fledged member of the community of nations. The Estonian diplomatic service had now completed the premier task assigned to them by Maanõukogu in January 1918.⁷¹ On the occasion of the recognition of Estonia by the large Western powers in 1921, the Russian Social Revolutionary paper in Tallinn, *Narodnoje Dielo*, paid an eloquent tribute on January 29, 1921:

It is almost unique in history of the world that a small nation trampled on by its greater neighbors for hundreds of years and only able to exist with difficulty to preserve its national feeling and language should, amidst the rattle of arms, declare itself independent in the course of two years, and almost empty handed drive hostile hordes out of the country; should create, under a hail of bullets, an army out of nothing; and then energetically set to work to build its own state, this again out of nothing and without experience, a state recognized within the course of two years by the European powers.⁷²

Admission of Estonia into the League of Nations as a full member and *de jure* recognition of Estonia by all the major powers and almost all other nations was the successful culmination of the Estonian diplomatic campaign in the struggle for national independence. The Estonian diplomats after *de jure* recognition settled into the more regular work of a functioning diplomatic service. Here again Pusta assumed the role of an effective, professional diplomat who represented Estonia in Paris, at the League of Nations, and at several important international conferences.

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CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSIONS

After the Great powers granted *de jure* recognition, Estonia's first diplomats could now rest assured that their young republic was on stable footing and had assumed a place in the community of nations. While this strengthened Estonia's ability to remain independent, Estonia's diplomats continued to work for greater security through cooperation with the other border states. In their search for security, regardless of the impasse created by the Vilnius dispute, they continued their efforts to create a Baltic federation. Furthermore, Estonia played an active role in the League of Nations. Pusta continued to hope to form a Baltic commonwealth as a sub-group of the League. Estonia's continued search for security during the 1920s and 30s is a worthy topic of further research; however, this study culminates with the diplomatic recognition of Estonia. The achievement of recognition can logically be considered the end of a phase of Estonian diplomacy in which Estonian foreign policy became established.

Of Estonia's first diplomats each made unique contributions to the effort to secure independence for their country. None played a dominant role in the formulation of Estonian foreign policy. This is quite different from the situation of Latvia where Zigfrids Anna Meierovics dominated Latvian foreign policy between 1917-1925. The situation of Estonian diplomats also different from the situation of Rudolf Holsti in Finnish foreign policy. Estonian diplomats carried out policies that were supported by broad political consensus in Estonia. This was even true at times when regular contact with the government they served was impossible. Holsti, who had an Allied orientation, often ran afoul of pro-German political factions in Finland. As evidenced by the terrible civil war that took place in that country, there was far less consensus on the political destiny of Finland than there was in Estonia.

Estonia's diplomats worked strongly as a team; each made unique contributions to the collective effort towards independence. Jaan Poska made his most valuable contribution to Estonian diplomacy

through his role as chairman of the Estonian delegation to negotiate peace with Soviet Russia in the latter half of 1919. He performed his duties skillfully. His experience in Russian politics and as a St. Petersburg lawyer gave him the ability to shrewdly negotiate with the Soviet Russian representatives. Furthermore, because of his respected position in pre-war Russian society, his Bolshevik counterparts no doubt had an underlying respect for him. However, while Poska carried out his duties as the head of the Estonian delegation in Paris in 1919 with dignity and in a straight forward manner, he was probably not as comfortable dealing with the British, French, and Americans as were Piip and Pusta. Clearly, Poska did not have the same intimate knowledge of British and French politics and society as he had of the former Russian Empire. He knew far more about what motivated the Bolshevik leadership than the motivation behind Allied policy. Only two months after the signing of the treaty of Tartu, Jaan Poska died on March 9, 1920, of natural causes. He was only fifty-four; his death was a great loss for the Estonian people.

Antonius Piip also made valuable contributions to the Estonian diplomatic effort. His thorough knowledge of international law helped relations with the Allied powers and protected Estonia from the machinations of the Baltic Germans and White Russians. Allied statesmen received notes from the Estonian representative which were clear, concise, and based on solid legal grounds. This went far in establishing the legitimacy of Estonian aspirations in the eyes of the Western powers. Piip was particularly successful in relations with the British. British statesmen often distrusted the representatives of new Eastern European states and often regarded the policies of these representatives as reckless and grasping. However, Piip's able diplomacy in London developed British trust and respect for Estonia. Without British trust and respect Estonia would not have been able to develop a strong, independent foreign policy. Soon after the United States granted *de jure* recognition to Estonia, Piip became the Estonian ambassador to Washington. Within two years he returned to Estonia and continued to have a brilliant public life. He went on to serve multiple terms as Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. When not in government service, Piip assumed the position of Professor of International Law at the University of Tartu.

In July 1940 he was arrested and deported to Russia after the Soviet Union occupied and forcefully annexed Estonia as a result of the secret agreement between the U.S.S.R. and Nazi Germany on August 23, 1939

Kaarel Robert Pusta, like his colleague Antonius Piip, won the respect of Allied statesmen. He was described in the *Whitehall Gazette* as one of the statesmen, "who have particularly difficult tasks set for them, and who excite our respect and admiration by the courage they show in facing the difficulties that beset them." The article concluded that Pusta was a man of great "tact and resourcefulness."¹ An American journalist, Valente Thomson, had an extensive interview with Pusta in France in 1923. He stated:

With that very modern diplomat, Mr. K.R. Pusta who represents Esthonia in France and Belgium I had long discussions about his country and the whole surrounding region. For this Esthonian, animated by the modern European spirit, does not limit his interest to his compatriots. He feels how important it is for new countries to join forces. He realizes that individually they have but limited possibilities in the future and clearly senses how important they might become in a federation which would stand like an advance guard at the boundaries of the Soviet Empire.

As I was speaking with Mr. Pusta, I thought what a new type he represented in himself as well as in his homeland. Though he spoke French like a Frenchman, I felt in him influences of the most remote races. A slav who has lived in Russia for years, he was never Russian. Clear indeed he belongs to the post-war statesmen separated by a vast chasm from the pre-war prototype. Distinguished in appearance he has the air of the Nordic, with a hint of the slav in his slanted eyes. Cold and logical in his reasoning and his opinions, he is nevertheless cordial in his conversation. Though direct and frank, he is discreet and tactful.²

To be sure Pusta was a practitioner of what was described as "New Diplomacy" which strived for "a better and more peaceful world."³ Pusta's international outlook was successfully combined with fierce patriotism and service to his country. His idealistic spirit was much the product of the intellectual basis of the Estonian national awakening which began in the mid-nineteenth century and the Estonian independence movement at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the beginning of Estonian diplomacy his role in relations with the French was of crucial importance. Because of his knowledge of French society and experience as a journalist he quickly made important contacts in government and political circles and influenced French public opinion through highly successful publicity of the Estonian cause. For an "amateur" diplomat surrounded by diplomats of the old school as well as a multitude of chauvinistic national spokesmen, Pusta's straight forward, sober diplomacy made a strong impression on Allied statesmen. In his interview with Valentine Thomson, Pusta stated, "Though jealous of their independence,

the Estonians are nevertheless eager to work in cooperation with the other countries of Europe."⁴ This was very much a reflection of Pusta's personal views. In order to preserve Estonian independence as well as to create a stable and peaceful Europe, Pusta in association with Antonius Piip developed the visionary plan for a large scale federation of democratic states in Northern Europe. This Baltic Union would also extend considerable influence to the situation in Central-Eastern Europe. Halford J. Mackinder, the famous British political geographer, observed in his book *Democratic Ideals and Reality* written in 1919 that "who rules East Europe commands the Heartland, who rules the Heartland commands the World Island, who rules the World Island rules the world."⁵ Mackinder foresaw the struggle that would take place again in the near future between the two aggressive nations in Europe, Germany and Russia, for the control of Eastern Europe. He saw that the only way of maintaining peace in Europe was to form a federation of small democratic states between the two great powers.⁶ This was much of Pusta's vision. Perhaps European history would have been different if such a Baltic confederation had been created. Estonia might not have found herself weak and isolated in the autumn of 1939 if such a plan had been enacted.

Pusta went on to become Minister of Foreign Affairs between 1924-1925, after which he went abroad to serve his country as envoy to France, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia and the three Scandinavian countries. He represented Estonia in the League of Nations and served as the chairman of the International Passport Conference in Geneva in 1927. Although he fell out of grace with the Püts regime in Estonia in the 1930's, he was sent on a special mission to Paris in 1940. When France was occupied by the Germans, he made his way to the United States where he was accredited diplomatic status. Pusta remained in the United States until his death in 1964.

While Pusta and Estonia's other early diplomats undertook their tasks with great resolve and competence, the results of their diplomacy were mixed. While they obtained valuable assistance from the Allied powers in 1918-19, they did not obtain *de jure* recognition from the Allies at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Furthermore, the continuation of Allied support in 1919-20 was not a certainty. To a great extent Estonian independence was gained by the success of the Estonian armed forces on the

battlefield. The fighting in the final days of 1919 was the most dramatic example of this; the outnumbered Estonian forces were able to hold their positions along the Narva River and the Soviet offensive was an utter failure. By the strength of their military position, the Estonians gained their diplomatic triumph, the negotiations of the Treaty of Tartu which ended the war between the Estonian republic and Soviet Russia. Estonian independence would not have been possible if it were not for the courage and the sacrifice of the Estonian people. J. Hampden Jackson stated, "Foreigners might well doubt whether any benefit which independent nationhood could bring would be worth such sacrifices."⁷ Yet these sacrifices could all have been in vain if it was not for diplomatic representatives who fought for Estonian interests in the Allied capitals in the face of great adversity and in the negotiations with the nation's adversaries.

After the conclusion of the Treaty of Tartu in 1920, the primary goals of Estonian diplomacy became the building of a regional security system and economic union and receiving full diplomatic recognition from the large Western powers. Once this recognition was received the struggle to normalize Estonia's position in international affairs was over.

The overall success of the Estonian diplomatic effort can be attributed to a strong consensus on goals among a group of diplomats who made unique contributions towards Estonian independence. They were able to make their way in a world which was largely hostile to them. Over seemingly overwhelming odds the Estonian people were able to triumph and gain their independence.

Estonia lost her independence in 1940, after she was occupied and forcefully annexed by the Soviet Union in accordance with the Secret Protocol of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact of August 23, 1939. In 1941 Estonia was occupied by Germany and in 1944 Estonia was again occupied by the U.S.S.R. While to many, the spirit of the Estonian people seemed to be crushed in the face of overwhelming odds, recent events where Estonians again are struggling against Russian domination to regain some semblance of autonomy pay tribute to the unbending spirit of the Estonians in their desire for independence. The study of diplomacy between 1917 and 1922 reveals this same spirit in the Estonian people. The strong common

desire for independence shared by the broad base of the population allowed able leaders to rise and fulfill their destiny. This is very much relevant to the present situation in the Baltic region.

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APPENDIX 1
ORGANIZATION OF THE ESTONIAN MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS 1921

Annual Budget - 23 million Estonian marks

Personnel in Tallinn - twenty-nine persons, 1921; reduced from forty-six 1920.

Reorganization in 1921

Political Section - Eastern and Western European Section combined into a General Political Section; Russian Section remained independent.

Information Section - responsibilities in press relations and intelligence.

Administrative Section - former budget section under Administrative section as a bureau.

Passport Bureau

Change in Rank

Assistant Ministers became known as General Secretaries or Under Secretaries.

Representatives and Representatives Abroad

Estonia exchanged representatives on a basis of corresponding representation ranks with the other nations.

Categories of Estonian Representatives

1. Ministers
2. Consuls-General in charge
3. Consuls in charge
4. Secretaries who at the same time were Vice-Consuls.

5. Military attache's and Secretary officers in London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Moscow,
Warsaw, Helsinki, Riga, Kaunas, and Constantinople.

Representations

Legations	Consulates General	Consulates	Vice-Consulates
London	Copenhagen	Budapest	Liepaja
Rome	Petrograd	Dairen (Lüda)	Valka
Paris	Christianna (Oslo)	Danzig	Pskov
Moscow	Constantinople	Düsseldorf	
Warsaw		Harbin	
Helsinki		Hamburg	
Riga		Montreal	
Kaunas		New York	
Stockholm		San Francisco	
Berlin		Hull	
Prague		Shanghai	
		Tbilisi	
		Vienna	

Source; N.A.R.G. 84. D. R. ".700 Tallinn, January 11, 1921."

APPENDIX 2

ESTONIAN GOVERNMENTS 1918-1922

February 24, 1918

Prime Minister and Minister of Interior - Konstantin Päts
 Deputy Prime Minister - Jüri Vilms
 Minister of Foreign Affairs - Jaan Poska
 Finance - Juhan Kukk
 War - Lt. General Andres Larka
 Agriculture and Food - Jaan Raamot
 Communication - Ferdinand Peterson
 Education - Peeter Pöld
 Labor and Welfare - Villem Maasik

November 12, 1918

Prime Minister and Minister of Interior - Konstantin Päts
 Deputy Prime Minister - Jaan Poska
 Interior and Finance - Juhan Kukk
 Minister of Foreign Affairs - Otto Strandman
 War - Lt. General Andres Larka
 Communications - Ferdinand Peterson
 Agriculture and Food - Jaan Raamot
 Commerce - Nikolai Köstner
 Education - Peeter Pöld
 Minister without Portfolio - Jaan Tönnison

November 16, 1918

Prime Minister - Jaan Poska
 Minister of Foreign Affairs - Otto Strandman
 Interior and Finance - Juhan Kukk
 War - Lt. General Andres Larka
 Communications - Ferdinand Peterson
 Agriculture - Jaan Raamot
 Education - Peeter Pöld
 Commerce - Nikolai Köstner
 Labor and Welfare - A. Tulp
 Minister without Portfolio - Jaan Tönnison

November 26, 1918

Prime Minister and Minister of War - Konstantin Päts
 Minister of Foreign Affairs - Jaan Poska
 Interior - A. Peet
 Agriculture - Otto Strandman
 Communication - E. Säkk
 Labor and Welfare - August Rei

Commerce and Industry - Nikolai Kõstner
 Finance - Juhan Kukk
 Education - K. Lüts

May 9, 1919

Prime Minister - Jaan Tõnisson
 Minister of Foreign Affairs - Adu Birk
 War - A. Hanko
 Interior - Alexander Hellat
 Commerce and Industry - Nikolai Kõstner
 Labor and Welfare - A. Palvadre
 Agriculture - Theodor Pool
 Food - J. Kriisa
 Education - Hugo Treffner
 Communications - E. Säkk
 Justice - Jüri Jaakson

May 30, 1920

Prime Minister - Jaan Tõnisson
 Minister of Foreign Affairs - Adu Birk
 Interior - Karl Einbund
 War- Major-General Alexander Tõnisson
 Finance - T. Vares
 Commerce and Industry - O. Virkhaus
 Agriculture - A. Kerem
 Food - J. Kriisa
 Communications - A. Bürger
 Justice - Jüri Jaakson
 Labor and Welfare - A. Bachmann
 Education - F. Sauer

October 26, 1920

Prime Minister and Minister of War - Antonius Piip
 Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice - Otto Strandman
 Labor and Welfare, and Interior - L. Olesk
 Commerce and Industry and Communications - Juhan Kukk
 Finance - T. Baars
 Education - J. Annusson
 Agriculture - Theodor Pool
 Food - P. Johanson

January 25, 1921

Premier - Konstantin Päts
Minister of Foreign Affairs - Antonius Piip
War - Major General Jaan Soots
Interior - Karl Einbund
Commerce and Industry - Juhan Kukk
Education - H. Bauer
Agriculture - B. Rostfeld
Justice - J. Reichman
Finance - Georgi Vestel
Communications - Karl Ipsberg
Labor and Welfare - Charles Kaarna

November 21, 1922

Premier - Juhan Kukk
Minister of Foreign Affairs - Alexander Hellat
War - Major General Jaan Soots
Interior - Karl Einbund
Finance, and Commerce and Industry - Georgi Vestel
Communications - Karl Ipsberg
Agriculture - B. Rostfeld
Justice - J. Reichmann
Labor and Welfare - Charles Kaarna
Education - A. Veidermann

Source: "Eesti Valitsused" [Estonian Governments] *Kaitse Kodu!*, no. 3 (August 1928): 213-15.

APPENDIX 3
MAPS

Estonia, 1796-1917.

The War of Liberation.

Russian Civil War fronts in November 1918 (.....) and February 1919 (- - - - -).

Estonia, 1918-1941.

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Box 6 - Estonia

Box 8 - Lithuania

Box 11 - Finland

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Estonia	760 I	I860 I
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Latvia	760 P	860 P
--------	-------	-------

Lithuania	760 M	860 N
Baltic Provinces	760 N	860 N
Embassies and Consulates:		
U.S. Legation Riga		1922-1940
U.S. Consulate Tallinn		1919-1940
U.S. Consulate Kaunas		1919-1940

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Roll	
1	800i.00/1-100
2	860i.00/101-145

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Roll	
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