

SUMMARY

Mária Ormos

**Remarks on the French Intervention in the Ukraine and its Results in
Central Europe: October 1918—April 1919**

The present article is a by-product of a larger work aiming at the study of the French policy towards Central Europe. It makes use nearly exclusively of the sources to be found in the French military archives. The anti-Soviet intervention in Southern Russia is not dealt with in detail, but the remarks made by the author are so significant that they can form the basis even of further interesting investigations.

The first problem the article deals with is the connection between the armistice agreements and the French plan of intervention. There might have been a connection between the fact that the French demand towards the Germans' unconditioned surrender was dropped as demonstrated by Marshal Foch as early as October 8, and the plan of the intervention drafted by the French general staff in the first part of October. In the case of the armistice agreement with the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (or the military convention signed by the Hungarian government) the author proves, however, that in granting the possibility of a free passage across the territory of the Monarchy and the use of its railways — and the occupation of the strategic points by this — the Monarchy may have been influenced by the interventional project accepted in theory already at the end of October. (The author does not speak here of the other reasons of the demands.) Both relationships are presumably based on the idea that troops may be transferred from the Western front to the Ukraine for the purposes of the intervention.

The other problem discussed in the article is the influence of the intervention on the French plans concerning Central Europe. The general statements can be summarized as follows: the intervention in Southern Russia kept about half of the French forces in the zone busy, as a result of which the French leadership could not occupy the threatening storm-centres in Central Europe (the Banat, Transylvania, Slovakia, Teschen, etc.) or even the most important strategic points (Vienna, Budapest, etc.). This fact had far-reaching results as to the post-war rearrangement of the territory. Its most significant result was, however, that the French idea of a „French Central Europe” suffered its first and maybe fatal defeat.

Just like several other historians, the author stresses here the importance of the intended role of Poland and Rumania in the intervention. She thinks it, however, an exaggeration to attribute the transfer of Transylvania to Rumania exclusively or primarily to the interests of the intervention. On the basis of various documents she thinks it an established fact that gaining political and economic hegemony in Rumania was for the French too important to consider the national status of Transylvania either problematic or disputable, even if they did not want to fulfil all the promises of 1916. The fact that the French did not intend to give Rumania all the territories promised in the 1916 secret agreement was expressed in the French suggestion to conclude an armistice on 15 October, 1918, based on the assumption that the armistice agreement would create a final and equally valid demarcation line on all fronts (i.e. also on the eastern one after the new Rumanian entry into war), as it had done on the Italian — Austrian one. The new demarcation line was consequently to be drawn via Temesvár—Nagyvárad—Nagybánya and not via Szeged—Debrecen—Vásárosnamény. Finally the interests of the intervention dictated a border-line via Nagyvárad—Nagybánya—Szatmárnémeti, through which Rumania was to benefit. The aim of this final version was — besides securing the „back” of Rumania — to create a safe connection between Eastern Galicia (Lemberg) and Rumania by the help of the railway network of the territory.

Adám Magda

Danubian Federation or Little Entente

The paper discusses the circumstances of the formation of the Little Entente on the basis of French, Czechoslovakian, Italian and Hungarian archival material relating to foreign policy. It tries to find the answer to the question whether the formation of this system of political alliances was necessary or were there other alternatives as well, and what international and local factors contributed to its birth. This objective made it possible for the author to examine the Danubian policy of France, Paléologue's attempts at a Danubian Confederation, the Franco-Hungarian discussions, their agenda and aim, their influence on various other countries, and their role in the formation of the Little Entente.

The documents studied by the author prove the existence of two confronting concepts on the future of the Danubian region in the 1920's. One of them can be connected to the name of Paléologue, the other to those of Beneš and Barthelot. The former wished to unite all successor states under the leadership of France first economically, then also politically. The latter wanted to combine the forces only of the winners and organize them without and against the loser small successor states. (In the beginning Austria was considered an exception.) The representatives of the above concepts fought against the efforts of each other. Paléologue and Millerand condemned and opposed Beneš' efforts to bring about a narrow system of alliances, saying that it was to divide Central Europe and drive Hungary into the arms of Germany. Beneš on the other hand tried to bring about the Little Entente partly against Paléologue's Danubian policy. Finally it was the concept of Beneš which carried the day of the two. The Franco-Hungarian talks and the willingness of the leaders of French diplomacy to revise the peace treaty in favour of Hungary played a significant role in its victory. This fact and the aim of Paléologue to unite the Danubian states with Hungary in the centre accelerated the process which brought the victorious successor states even closer to one another. Yugoslavia and Romania accepted Beneš' proposal to form an alliance for defence refused earlier, but Romania agreed only in words owing to the defiance of France and her own plans concerning the Little Entente. She signed the contract only a year later, when the French government took sides with the Little Entente, and the threat on the part of the Hungarians became acute once again owing to the attempts of Charles IV to win back his throne.

The author comes to the conclusion that in the victory of Beneš' concept a great part was played by Great Britain, and primarily by Italy. Their activity in the diplomatic arena contributed to the failure of Paléologue's efforts in the Danubian basin and to the realization of the Little Entente concept. Beneš thus seems to have had supporters among the Great Powers. It was, however, not France, as became generally known even among historians, but Great Britain and partly also Italy.

The situation changed fundamentally in the autumn of 1920 after the fall of Paléologue. The Quai d'Orsay revised its former policy in connection with the Little Entente, and the French efforts to create the Little Entente became virtually unified. These problems are dealt with in the second part of the paper.