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THE CASE
FOR
BESSARABIA

A Collection of Documents
on
THE RUMANIAN OCCUPATION
with a Preface by
Prof. PAUL MILIUKOV

SECOND EDITION (revised and enlarged)

RUSSIAN LIBERATION COMMITTEE
173 FLEET STREET
E.C. 4

PRICE SIXPENCE NET

THE aim of the Liberation Committee is the overthrow of Bolshevism, the restoration of order in and the regeneration of Russia.

If you are interested in the objects please communicate with the Secretary, Russian Liberation Committee, 173 Fleet Street, London, E.C. 4.

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Preface.

By Prof. P. N. Miliukov.

In the second half of November, 1918, I happened to be in Rumania, together with 15 other members of different political organisations in Russia, who had been asked to come to Yassy, the then seat of the Rumanian Government and of the *corps diplomatique*, in order to give the Allied representatives our views as to the present state of affairs in Russia. There was one question which had been excluded in advance from our exchange of opinions with the Ambassadors: it was the question of Bessarabia. It was, indeed, a too delicate question to expatiate upon, as, on the one hand, we were told that it was nearly settled in the sense of the union with Rumania, while on the other, we were warned of the numerous protests on the part of the representatives of the population in Bessarabia, who would try to make use of our presence to make known their sentiments of exasperation produced by that foreshadowed decision. And, indeed, as soon as we were approaching the Rumanian Frontier, in Tiraspol-Bender, I first came in contact with the victims of the Rumanian Imperialism: since that moment, not a day passed on our way there and back through Bessarabia without the people's groans reaching our ears. To these complaints we were not deaf, of course: but we were tied by the conditions of our coming to Yassy, and with the only one exception I had no opportunity of talking with the Rumanian or the Allied politicians and diplomatists on the Bessarabian question. One single exception was due to the initiative of Mr. Bratiano, the prominent Rumanian statesman, who wished me to commit myself to a decision in regard to the "Greater Rumania." By that time I was already in possession of some documents, which are now published in this pamphlet, and my own view on the question was settled. And while I see now that the representatives of the small States—among them Mr. Bratiano—are reporting on their national claims to the "Council of Four" in Paris and being attentively listened to by the leading men of the great Allied Powers, my feeling is that the smallest of all are also worth having a hearing. We have now a Commission sent to Poland, in order to hear and to learn the voice of the masses. But there is no such Commission for Bessarabia, and so far I know none is in view. Some of the people who were providing me with documents concerning Bessarabia were preparing for a journey to Paris. But I never heard of any one of

them having been able to overcome the present difficulties of an official journey to the seat of the Peace Conference. That is why I happen to be the only one in possession of the documents which may serve to accomplish the first condition of a just decision; *audiatus et altera pars*. That is why I feel doubly obliged to give to the press a selection of the most important data pleading the case for Bessarabia; first, because I agree with them, and, secondly, as there is nobody else to plead the cause on the basis of a better knowledge.

The document which I publish first presents a general outline of the case. I am glad to say that the authors of this document belong to the most advanced groups of political opinion in Bessarabia, and they cannot be challenged on the plausible ground of their being "counter-revolutionaries." The second document, under the name of a "Pro-Memoria," handed over to the Ambassadors in Yassy at the very time we were staying there, runs on the same lines, so far as its contents are considered, but it originates from a different political group, representing the centre and the right wing of the Bessarabian political opinion. Thus, taken together, both documents represent a very large front of public opinion in that country. An attentive reader may remark the difference of opinion, *e.g.*, in the characteristics of the chief acting assembly, representing both a tool and a victim of the Rumanian aggression; I mean the "Sfatul Tserex," the National Assembly of Bessarabia. The representatives of the left wing rather shirk the general characteristics of the political rôle of that assembly, while the landed proprietors of the right wing have good reasons of their own to depict it in gloomy colours. So much the more one is impressed with a complete unanimity of both sources of information as to the part which the "Sfatul Tserex" has played in subscribing to the momentous decision of the "Unirea," the Union of Bessarabia to Rumania.

The first two documents are anonymous, and it cannot be otherwise under the conditions as they are revealed to us by these very documents. But the situation is different with such political men as had already fled from Bessarabia and organised a "Bessarabia Liberation League," now acting in Odessa. The composition of the "League" is more or less known, and they started their work with an appeal to the Allied Powers and to the World's Congress, which is to meet and to "put an end to the numerous cases of injustice and realise the hopes and longings which have been cherished for centuries." They have a great idea of the World's Congress, as led by the "great democracies of England,

France and the United States," and it is from them that they "are waiting for them to perform an act of justice towards Bessarabia, their Fatherland, only lately annexed to the Kingdom of Rumania by force." I do not know whether their voice is strong enough to be heard in Paris, but anyhow, I print the Appeal of the Committee in Odessa, as the fifth document in the series.

The sixth one has a particular interest, as it shows that the refugees in Odessa do not at all remain isolated from their native country, which they have been obliged to leave. Those who remained in Bessarabia also raise their voice, somewhat naïvely, in order to tell the world how happy they are to find some compatriots who will have the hearing and will speak out their mind before the Great Tribunal of the Right and the Truth. "It is to your members of the Odessa Committee," they say, "that we look for help, because we are bound hand and foot."* But they strongly believe that with such a committee as theirs in Odessa representing "all political and national trends of thought in Bessarabia, from that of the private soldier to the former high official," and "having received their powers lawfully from the whole population of Bessarabia," it will be "impossible for Rumania to delude the great Allied Powers." I draw particular attention to their conclusion as to the consequences of the wrong policy of Rumania to represent Bessarabia as already Rumanianised (pages 56-57). Working against the feelings, the wishes and the interests of the great bulk of the population, this policy was bound to proceed by stifling all utterings of a free political life in the country. This is practically a best summary to everything which is said and stated in our documents. (See quotation at the end of the Preface.)

Subjoined to these seven reports and declarations are eight appendices which may help the reader to a better understanding of the facts described. Appendix I. gives a very interesting attempt to draw from the very resolutions and decisions of the "Sfatul Tserey" the avowal as to the limited competency it really possessed. This appendix also contains some valuable criticism by the local representative bodies on the composition of the "Sfatul Tserey," and, finally, a detailed description of all the protests raised within this assembly itself against the vote of its majority for the Union with Bessarabia. The Act of Union, passed by the vote

* For that reason I cannot point the signatures. But I certify that I saw them under the original draft, and that many of them can be considered as belonging to men really representative of the country.

of March 27 (April 9) is published *in extenso* as Appendix III., and it becomes particularly telling when confronted with solemn Rumanian (and Allied) promises—not to trespass on Bessarabia's independence—given in the declaration of General Presan, published as Appendix II.

The Appendix IV. reminds us that Rumanian violence did not satisfy itself with political, national, economic and civil life of the population, but extended itself also to the domain of purely spiritual life : Church and Religion. Russian diocesan authorities were simply ordered to go while their flocks, by an administrative Act, without any attempt at any previous agreement with the Holy Synod of Russia, were subjected to the jurisdiction of the Rumanian Church.

Last, but not least, three pieces published as Appendix V. show us under what conditions the last district of Bessarabia, that of Khotin, formerly occupied by the Austrians, was taken by the Rumanian Army in November, 1918. A declaration of November 2, signed by Major Ponesco, is equivalent to an avowal ; it shows what measures of coercion were considered necessary in order to provide against any possible resistance on the part of the population. If compared with grandiloquent promises of General Presan, given only ten months before, it helps us to measure the widening gap and the change of spirit on both sides. The opinion of the oppressed is given in advance, on October 23–28, by the resolution of the Khotin District Zemstvo, elected on the basis of the universal suffrage, and by a report by its chairman entrusted by the assembly to tell their mind to the world.

What is the gist of all these documents which for the first time make their appearance before the Tribunal of the public opinion ? The chief point is, that Rumanian leading Statesmen cannot claim the " self-determination " principle as justifying their pretensions to Bessarabia. The Act of March 27 (April 9, new style), passed by the " Sfatul Tseret," is not at all an expression of the national will of the population of Bessarabia. In the first place, the very origin and the composition of this assembly are far from being equal to the pretention. The story is that a " Local Council " for administering all affairs in *autonomous* Bessarabia " (which later on received the name of " Sfatul Tseret," the Moldavian National Assembly) was—not chosen by the population, but rather *nominated* by a Congress of Moldavian soldiers who were sitting at Kishinev in the first days of November—just at the moment when Lenin and Trotsky seized the Power in Petrograd. Without proceeding to any regular election, they decided that

this "Local Council" was to consist of 120 (later on 150) members, quite a third of whom (44) were at once selected from the members of the Congress. An artificial predominance was given to the Moldavian element (75 out of 120), contrarily to the real number of the Moldavian population, which, according to the more credible data, makes only 47 per cent. of the whole population. The "bourgeois" elements were considered as "undesirable" and thus not admitted. That is why the president of the "Sfatul Tserey," Mr. Inkulets, was right when, in his opening speech on November 21, 1917, he classified the Assembly he was presiding over as "composed of the representatives of *democratic* organisations, organs of self-government, political parties and representatives of nationalities." The regular representation of the whole population of Bessarabia, in the shape of a Bessarabian Constituent Assembly, was yet to be convened, and Mr. Inkulets considered it to be the first and the "urgent duty" of the "Sfatul Tserey." The statement of Mr. Inkulets is still to be corrected in the sense that by "democratic" organisations and by political parties only *revolutionary* ones were meant, while "nationalities" were quite inadequately represented, and "organs of self-government," as a matter of fact, did not at all share in the elections. The District Zemstvo Assembly of Soroki, composed of the most radical and revolutionary elements, openly declared at its meeting of March, 1918, that the revolutionary Institutions which really elected the members of the "Local Council" were no more in existence, and that the persons of the members supposed to be chosen from the Soroki District were known to nobody in that district. That is why the Zemstvo Assembly declared them incapable of representing the district and *revoked* them. All other districts of Bessarabia might do the same with equally good reason.

It is only just to state that the "Council" so irregularly elected did not recognise its own right to decide about the fate of Bessarabia. The most important questions, like agrarian reform or drawing up the constitution, were postponed by its decisions until a Moldavian Constituent Assembly would be convened. Moreover, they did not at all expect even this Constituent Assembly to sever Bessarabia from Russia. They wanted the *all Russian* Constituent Assembly to "*establish for them the principles of federation.*" These are the very expressions used by Mr. Inkulets in his speech of November 21, already referred to (see page 61). On December 2, 1917, the "Sfatul Tserey" declared Bessarabia to be "the Moldavian Democratic Republic": but in its motives it took care to explain that, in doing so, it was forced by urgent

necessity, by a supreme *raison d'état*. "The Russian Republic is in the greatest danger. The absence of authority in the centre, and the anarchy throughout the country, the weakness in the face of the foreign foe, threatened the existence of the (Russian) State. At the present terrible historical moment the *only way of saving the Russian Democratic Republic* is to organise and to *weld together* its peoples on the principle of national-territorial self-determination." The "Sfatul Tseret" does not forget to emphasise that while becoming a "Moldavian Democratic Republic," Bessarabia, "enters as a full member into the United Russian Federative Democratic Republic" (see page 61). At the end of December 1917, the same reading of things is given by an official declaration of the French Consul Mr. Roger Seret, published in the Kishinev newspapers. Says the Consul: "The French Government is in great sympathy with the young Republic, which *has entered*, as a member with equal rights, into the Russian Federative Democratic Republic. The French Government will never and in no case permit of the political liberties won by the Russian Revolution being threatened" (see page 37). Finally when on January 27, 1918, the "Sfatul Tseret" took the last step and proclaimed the "Moldavian Republic" *independent*, it still explained this step as wrong from them by political necessity—*by the declaration of independence of the Ukraine* and as a consequence by the *disruption of Bessarabia* from the republics which had arisen in *Russia* (see page 61).

But here a new series of events sets in which entirely overthrows the original schemes of the "Sfatul Tseret." At this very time—the end of 1917 and beginning of 1918—the "Sfatul Tseret" had to face a new and unexpected menace, not from the "foreign foe," but from the "anarchy throughout the country." Its extreme radicalism—particularly in agrarian question—let loose spirits which it was quite unable to control. A wave of agrarian disturbances, chiefly provoked by the decrees of the "Sfatul Tseret" concerning the handing over of the land owners' estates to peasants, swept over the country, and in a month's time destroyed nearly all well-organised estates. The instincts of robbery were speedily growing among the masses, there appeared regular bands, and leaders, with well-known criminal records like M.M. Perper or Katovsky, put themselves at the head of the government offices. The "Council of General Directors," or ministers of the "Sfatul Tseret," were losing ground and growing powerless. Finally they were overthrown by the Bolshevik organisation of the soldiers on the Rumanian front. It was just the same thing as

twice had happened in the Ukraine, in January 1918, and in January 1919. The Bolsheviks stepped into the shoes of their *amis les ennemis*, a local variation of Simm Feiners. It was also then that—just as it was the case in the Ukraine, a little later, with the Germans—Rumanian forces were asked to come in order to save the country from further chaos and massacres. They entered Bessarabia under the auspices of the allied representatives, and with the tacit consent of the leaders of the “Sfatul Țerei.” As soon as order was restored and Rumanian troops entered the capital of Bessarabia, Kishinev, on January 26, the members of “Sfatul Țerei” reappeared from their holes and corners and have set again to work. It was then that they proclaimed the *independence* of Bessarabia, as a consequence of the Ukrainian example. And indeed, the Bessarabian population, far from asking for intervention of Rumanian forces, grew exceedingly disquieted lest they should remain in their country for ever. Rumanian Generals as well as Allied representatives, in order to prevent open conflicts of the population with the Rumanian soldiers—which had already begun—had to have recourse to declarations, in which they again and again promised not to encroach upon the freedom of Bessarabia. On the very day of his entry into Kishinev, the Commander-in-Chief of the Rumanian armies, General Presan, issued a Proclamation (see Appendix II), mentioning that Rumanian soldiers were asked to cross the Pruth by the “Sfatul Țerei,” through the intermediacy of the Russian Military Command, “in order to re-establish order and quiet in Bessarabian towns and villages, to protect lives and property from the malefactors and to guarantee the transport of supplies to the Russian and Rumanian armies, protecting Bessarabia from invasion by the enemy. All rumours about the ill intentions of the Rumanians were here ascribed to the “malefactors and agents in the pay of enemies.” “These enemies have taken base advantage of your honest hearts,” General Presan said confidently: “they have tried to sow discord between you and us, telling you that the Rumanians are coming to occupy your country in order to take possession of your land and with the sole intention of placing you again under the dominion of your former masters Far be such thoughts from us! Moldavian citizens, do not believe such lies! How can you imagine that the Rumanian soldier, who, thanks to his King and Government, has acquired the land which feeds him, is now coming to the land of his brethren to prevent them from enjoying their rights likewise?” The proclamation wound up with a solemn promise; “as soon as order

and quiet will have been established, and when there is guarantee that pillaging, robbery, and murder will not begin again, the Rumanian soldiers will return to their own country.”

The “Sfatul Tserey,” recalled to life, joined in these assurances in its declaration of January 27 (February 6, new style), and corroborated them by the following statement: “that the Rumanian troops are not threatening our independence is guaranteed by France, in agreement with England and America” (see page 36). And indeed we already quoted a declaration by the French Consul. Still more positive was the assurance given by the French Ambassador, de Saint-Aulaire, in his letter mentioned on page 40.

Just the opposite to what had been thus promised happened. Our documents in glowing colours describe the state of oppression and terrorism which now ensued. This was no more due to anarchy and chaos from which the country was suffering in December, 1917, and in January, 1918. A certain policy has evolved from chaos, and the “Sfatul Tserey” has to bear its part of responsibility for, and of complicity with, this policy. It was given a free hand in regard to its proclivity for social experiments—especially agrarian overthrow. But in its turn it had to help on the Rumanian authorities in every step tending to the Rumanisation of the Bessarabian population and to a corresponding disorganisation and concealment of the real state of public opinion in the province. An unbending and reckless prosecution of persons known to sympathise with Russia, set in at the very beginning of the Rumanian occupation (pages 41–42). And the extreme nationalists of the “Sfatul Tserey” voluntarily aided the Rumanian authorities. “It was enough for the denunciation of one delegate who was understood to defend the Russian cause—and those whom this ‘people’s elected’ found necessary to punish were shot or deported without investigation or preliminary trial” (see page 43). “As early as the first days after the entry of the Rumanian troops in Kishinev, in the centre of the town, in the courtyard of the Theological College, where the Rumanian Kommandatur had taken up its quarters, a torture chamber was established, where anyone who was suspected of being inimical to the customs of the Kingdom of Rumania was tortured, flogged, and shot” (see page 38). Our documents mention some instances of this prosecution, e.g., 17 Moldavian soldiers, who were executed for having refused to swear allegiance to the King of Rumania or an editor of the Russian anti-Bolshevist newspaper—shot for a remark in one of his articles, that the

Rumanian Commander should act in agreement with the Russian General. The population have quickly learnt the lesson and, as our documents state, "tried to keep away from any vestige of the Russian influence." When, at the end of 1918, Rumania's troops were entering the Khotin district they did no more make any secret of their anti-Russian policy. All Russian signboards had to be removed at once, according to the "Order N. 2," issued on November 2: Russian money withdrawn from circulation: all discussion "on the nationality of Rumanians," no matter whether public or private, severely prohibited.*

The population, deprived of their acknowledged leaders and spokesmen, took refuge in the institutions of local self-government, —county councils (zemstvos) and municipalities, as well as to their courts of justice. One must not forget that since the beginning of the Russian Revolution the local self-government institutions were based on universal suffrage and thus were able with much more reason than the "Sfatul Tserey" to claim to represent the real will and opinion of the Bessarabian population. Our documents contain many protests to that effect by the Assemblies of the local zemstvos and municipal councils. But this was also the reason why all these institutions could not be tolerated any longer if the Rumanian policy of oppression was to be carried out. And as soon as the Kishinev municipality asked for convening the provincial Zemstvo Assembly, in order to oppose it to the "Sfatul Tserey," the latter replied by curtailing the competency of the self-government organs and by nominating a commission empowered to dissolve the zemstvos. The Rumanian authorities backed this policy and, in order to enforce it, they placed their armed force at the disposal of the "Sfatul Tserey" (see page 43). Later on, municipalities and zemstvo were dissolved by a Royal decree, as well as the law courts (see page 44). Any allusion to this state of things in the local Press was severely prohibited, and I saw the blank sheets of the Kishinev newspapers testifying to their courageous but unsuccessful attempts to outwit the vigilance of the censor.

This was the general state of things under which the vote of the "Sfatul Tserey" for the Union of Bessarabia with Rumania was being carried. Subservient as the "Sfatul Tserey" had been after its reinstalment by the Rumanian troops, still much remained to be done in order to use it as a weapon of the Rumanian imperialism. After having served for terrorising the Bessarabian population

* The Moldavians used to call the Rumanians "Gipsies."

the " Sfatul Tserey " was to be terrorised in its turn. This is what was done. Between January 13 (26), 1918, and March 27, (April 9), 1918, by order of General Braschtenau, commander of the Rumanian troops in Bessarabia, such deputies of the " Sfatul Tserey," as were against the annexation of Bessarabia by Rumania, were shot. The names of these deputies are as follows : Kataros, leader of the peasant group in the S.Ts. and a prominent member in the Moldavian Central Committee, Chumachenko (Assistant Minister of Agriculture), Prakhnitsky (Assistant Minister of War), Pantsyr (a member of the peasant group), Rudyev (a deputy and district commissary of the town of Bieltsy). With the exception of Chumachenko *all the executed Members were Moldavians*. Other deputies who might expect the same fate have fled from Bessarabia. But it would be a mistake to think that after that there remained no opposition in the " Sfatul Tserey " to the union with Rumania. The Rumanians knew that in order to carry the vote a further pressure on the " Sfatul Tserey " was necessary. And, indeed, the voting took place under the following conditions (see page 44). The courtyard of the building where the " Sfatul Tserey " was sitting, as also the neighbouring streets, were swarmed with troops who, among other arms, had machine guns. Under the pretext of placing a guard of honour, an armed force was posted on the premises of the Assembly. Aeroplanes were flying over the palace. The Rumanian military authorities were present when the votes were taken. And, in spite of the protestations of some delegates, secret ballot was not permitted. Each deputy was publicly interrogated and had to give his vote aloud.

In spite of all these exertions, all groups of delegates belonging to the opposition protested against the decision on the ground of the " Sfatul Tserey's " being incompetent to decide on a question which could only be settled by the sovereign will of the people, expressed through a Constituent Assembly. In the name of the *Peasants' Fraction* the deputy Tsyganko declared that they did not consider themselves empowered to settle the question which should be settled by a referendum or by the Constituent Assembly. The representatives of the *professional unions* seconded this notion. Mr. Lesch, who spoke in the name of the *German population* of Bessarabia, said he was not empowered by his constituents to decide upon the question. Mr. Misirkov repeated the same in the name of the *Bulgar-Gagauses*. Mr. Osmolovsky, representing the *Ukrainians*, said " the only mandate given to him was to guard and to strengthen the Young Republic, not to unite it with any

other State. "Mr. Grekulov, the delegate of the *Russian population*, added to it "that such an important question could not be decided in haste at the time of trouble." Only one of the representatives of the National minorities, the *Polish delegate*, Mr. Dutkivich, detached himself from all others and acknowledged the Act of March 27 (April 9) as "natural and lawful." But he had to leave Bessarabia directly after his declaration, which testifies to the state of feeling produced by the vote (see page 63). The result of the vote was as follows: 25 deputies reported "absent" (evidently including such as were killed or had fled), 34 (including 27 peasants, i.e. practically *all* their fraction) abstained from voting, which meant voting in the negative, after Mr. Tsyganko's declaration. Only three courageous deputies ventured to vote against the Union. The majority for the Union was 86. Our document says to possess "documentary and irrefutable proof that a considerable number of them were bribed" (see page 35). Were they simply cowed by prosecution, the result would be the same. The truth is, anyhow, that many of such as had voted for the Union were honest enough to recognise later on that they were cheated or mistaken. Another document tells us that "a numerous group of the "Sfatul Tserey" who had voted for the Union and noticed only too late the abyss into which it had thrown the country, *is about to protest now and to cancel their signatures* given to the Act of March 27." Having left Odessa as early as the beginning of December, 1918, I do not know whether this intention has since been realised. But I know it was meant seriously, and it was in process of being accomplished.

I shall not describe in detail what repression it was found necessary to apply in order to keep down the national excitement, brought about by the Rumanian occupation of Bessarabia. Our documents state it very eloquently (see especially pages 38-40, 45-46, 56-57). I can only add that while passing through Bessarabia in November, 1918, I saw the result of the oppression: the extreme embitterment of the whole population, without distinction of nationality or political party. Just then two new measures were taken by the Rumanian Government, partly to falsify and partly to coax the popular feeling towards Rumania. I mean the new Electoral Law, and the radical Agrarian Reform. The Electoral Law, based on Universal and *obligatory* suffrage, was formally applied only to "Rumanian Subjects," and it was to be proven by the results whether or not the Bessarabian population recognises itself as such by the very fact of its taking part

in the elections. As a punishment was provided for non-voting, and as the great bulk of the Bessarabian peasant population are very illiterate and very much frightened by the Rumanian authorities, it seemed rather difficult to expect that it will stand the cunning test. The more politically developed urban population was rather inclined to boycott the elections. Whatever be the result I am quite sure it cannot be explained as a proof of loyalty of the newly acquired population.

The other measure extending to Bessarabia the Agrarian Reform prepared for Rumania was intended to captivate the rural population and impart to it a certain immunity from the Bolshevik contagion, which had already begun to spread by the hand of Mr. Rakovsky's followers and agents. Rumanian promises were generally disbelieved, not as a result of some Russophil propaganda, but just as an inevitable consequence of the general disaffection against Rumania. The first use which the Rumanian Government made of their promises was to deprive Russian landed proprietors of their estates. I do not know what were the later consequences of the great agrarian promise. But just as I am writing these lines I recollect having read a telegram from Rumania in the London newspapers which may give us an indirect enlightenment. It was a report on some peasant uprising in Pessarabia. The fact may be true or not, but this is just the kind of occurrences which menace Bessarabia in case the Rumanian occupation will last. So far as I can judge from newspapers' Paris communications, Mr. Bratiano had had a hearing on the part of the statesmen of the leading Powers at the Peace Conference, and Bessarabia is mentioned as being included by Mr. Bratiano in the number of territories claimed by Rumania. From personal intercourse with Mr. Bratiano I know this is indeed his view and the aim of his political action. He was even kind enough to warn me that Russia will lose Rumania's friendship if she is going to put obstacles in his way. The prospect seems to me, however, more dangerous to Rumania than to Russia, under normal conditions. Anyhow, by publishing these documents, which certainly interfere with Mr. Bratiano's purposes, I perform my duty as a Russian and strong supporter of a standing settlement for peace under the League of Nations. If new Imperialisms are permitted to be born and to thrive under the pretext of the "self-determination" principles for the "small nations," then, I am afraid, instead of pacifying South-Eastern Europe we will be sowing the wind for the future. In the case of Bessarabians, by all means, nothing else is necessary

but to give them fair play on the basis of the same principle of self-determination. The declarations of the Odessa Committee, supported by the Bessarabians, as well as the resolution of the Khotin District Zemstvo Assembly, do not ask for more than this. I must once more remind the reader that Russian Zemstvos, since the Revolution of March, 1917, are elected by Universal Suffrage, and thus are by far more equal to the task of representing the people's mind and will than the "Sfatul Tseray" has ever been.

The only alternative is—Rumanising Bessarabia. But—let us state it in the words of the Bessarabian act of approval of the "Odessa Committee" activity—"behold, what exertion does that cost! Rumania has to avail herself of the services of local blinded chauvinists and anonymous political adventurers which are far from being disinterested and are backed by no part of the population. To accomplish this aim it was necessary to dissolve and to cancel lawfully convened organs of local self-government and to strengthen and make use of the remnants of a degenerate self-appointed revolutionary institution. But even that could not be convened in its original composition, as even that organ would have found words of condemnation. That is also why it became necessary to close law courts and the whole administrative machinery, as if it were possible at a stroke to deprive a people of the consciousness of their rights. To do this it was necessary to deprive the whole province of free speech by censorship and by the prohibition of the importation of all newspapers from beyond the Dniestr: to injure the soul of children by Rumanising the schools; to punish the people harshly, even going to the length of shooting them; to deport prominent public men. It was necessary to descend to the clumsiest deceit, by forcing the Bessarabians to hold elections to the Rumanian Constituent Assembly—under such circumstances as generally accompany elections in Rumania—as if wishing to show the world that Bessarabians are Rumanians. In short, it was necessary to be prepared for the complete ruin of the country, both cultural and economic, and for all the oppression which has been condemned by the whole course of the World War . . . Even the masses of the people who have hardly absorbed culture have felt this, and with open indignation and distrust they regarded the promises of the allotment of land, which have been made to attract these masses to side with Rumania."

People who wrote and signed this appeal firmly trust that as soon as the "real condition of the country" will be known to

the Allied Democracies, some means will be found to decide their fate according to their genuine will, unmarred with any foreign claim, which they consider unjust and offensive. Let them not be disappointed. Let their demand be complied with by those who decide about the fate of Bessarabia.

P.S.—This pamphlet was written in February, but, owing to the delay in printing, it appears three months later. Meantime I had news from Bessarabia which confirm that a peasant rising against Rumania really took place and that it was severely stifled by the Rumanian authorities. My correspondent tells me that not less than 8,000 people were shot on this occasion, while not less than 20,000 fled to the left bank of the Dniester, *i.e.*, to the side of Podolia. Many villages have been burnt and all the population pillaged. Terrorism continues, and prosecutions are particularly severe against everybody who reminds the new masters of the former Russian regime in Bessarabia. Thus, whole categories of inhabitants, as *e.g.* former officials and school teachers, are put on the black list. Being deprived of their only source of existence, their salaries, they particularly suffer from hunger and privation.

This is the state of things in Bessarabia at the very moment when the Bolshevik Red Army is reported by newspapers to have passed the Dniester, thus causing the retreat of the Rumanian forces from Bessarabia to Rumania. I more than once warned the public opinion in Allied countries that the indiscriminate and exaggerated application of the "self-determination" principle to Russian borderlands may enhance the popularity of the Red Army every time that it will come to the rescue of Russian unity. I have no doubt—although I do not possess any evidence for it—that this is now the case in Bessarabia, and that a certain part of the population looks at the Bolsheviks as liberators of Bessarabia from the Rumanian yoke. I leave it to the leading statesmen of the Entente to decide just how much or how little this result corresponds to the aim of keeping up the prestige of our Allies in Eastern Europe, and whether, in case the answer is in the negative, the whole policy of one-sided protection of borderlands at the expense of Russian unity shall not be reconsidered.

One more word *pro domo mea*. I am informed by my correspondent from Bessarabia that Rumanian newspapers have men-

tioned that I have given my consent to the union of Bessarabia with Rumania. The reader who has perused my preface knows well that it is a lie. The truth is that after having been asked to do so by Mr. Bratiano, I decidedly refused. I am sure that coming events will show that this was the only attitude compatible with right and justice, and the only one which can secure the interest of a lasting peace in this part of Europe.

PAUL MILIUKOV.

April 19, 1919.

Preface to the Second Edition.

SINCE the first edition of this booklet was published some important new data have become known, some new developments have taken place, some criticism has been uttered on the subject of my authorities. I profit by the occasion of this new edition to complete the information and to introduce such corrections as seem advisable.

The Bessarabian delegation, mentioned at the beginning of the first preface, finally succeeded in reaching Paris. It consists of M. Krupensky, the representative of the local Zemstvo, and M. A. Ch. Schmidt, the representative of municipal self-government (the late Mayor of Kishinev). They tried to inform public opinion and influential personalities at the Peace Conference through the channel of the Press and by publishing leaflets; that is why mine does not now stand alone.* They also addressed Memoranda to the Peace Conference on the subject of Rumanian Claims. Without being able to reach the "Big Four" in an official audience, they approached the Russian Political Conference in Paris, and they ascertained for themselves that there was no difference of views between them and the representatives of the Russian Governments of Kolehak, Denikin, and N. Chai-kovsky. On July 2, 1919, the Russian Ambassador in Paris, M. Maklakov, was asked by the Supreme Council of the Peace Conference to defend the Bessarabian cause against the contentions of the Rumanian representatives. The fact was so much the more significant because this was the only occasion on which the voice of Russia was heard at all by the "Big Four." Of course, the event produced a certain sensation among the Rumanians, and M. Bratiano nearly lost his temper on the subject. He vented his rage by immediately departing for Bucharest and leaving behind some explanations to the Press, in order to say that he found it beneath his dignity as a Signatory of the Treaty of Alliance of 1916, the new Prime Minister and the first delegate to the Peace Congress, to stand at the side of a gentleman with no "mandate" at all. M. Bratiano forgot the tone in which he had addressed the Government, which sent M. Maklakov to

* The leaflets published in French by the delegates are also translated into English. I quote the English edition: (1) Summary of the Events in Bessarabia (1917-1918); (2) The Bessarabian "parliament" (1917-1918); (3) Bessarabia and Rumania, and (4) What is the Bessarabian Question? (5) Lettre de Bessarabie reçue par la délégation Bessarabienne à Paris.

Paris. On the other hand, the Rumanian Ambassador in Paris, M. Antonesco, communicated to the *Temps* M. Bratiano's decision "not to take responsibility for the new territorial and political régime which it was desirous to apply to Rumania," because he feels obliged "not to renounce stipulations which he considers to be vital to his country." I was told that this outburst of resentment at the last moment was produced by the attitude taken by the Supreme Council, and particularly by America, towards the stubborn resistance of the Rumanian delegations to the idea of a plebiscite for Bessarabia, should it even take place a year, or two years, five or ten years after the present moment of trouble. I am content to add that in the question of a plebiscite, even the organ of the Socialist Majority, *L'Humanité*, has taken the same point of view as the whole public opinion in Russia and the author of this booklet. "We are happy," the editorial says, on July 5, 1919, "to declare that the solution defended by the Socialists of Bessarabia, asking for a plebiscite, is certainly the best from the Socialist point of view. Our comrade, Vladimir Tsyganko, President of the peasant group at the Bessarabian Diet, has, moreover, confirmed to us that a plebiscite is asked for by the great majority of the agricultural population in Bessarabia." Practically, as the reader of this booklet can see, this is the common demand of all classes and parties of the local population, backed by both official and unofficial Russian public opinion.

After his departure from Paris, M. Bratiano gave the Paris Conference some more specimens of the methods of Levantine diplomacy. As regards Bessarabia, he persists in treating her as an annexed country. The chief issue now under discussion is whether the elections to the *Rumanian* Parliament are or are not to be held in Bessarabia. It was announced by M. Antonesco in the *Temps* of July 13 that these elections were to be held "at the nearest date," and that they must "make out the best kind of plebiscite"! Of course, no democrat can share in that new attempt to misrepresent the real meaning of a purely political step to be taken by the Rumanian annexationists. A protest has been already addressed on this subject to the Peace Conference by the Note of the representatives of the Russian Government in Paris and handed over on July 24, 1919. I include this new document into the present edition as characteristic of the last stage of development of the Bessarabian question (see document N. VII).

M. Antonesco objects to the plebiscite being taken in Bessarabia for the reason that the legal basis for Bessarabia's union with

Rumania had been formed by the vote of a "revolutionary assembly of a like origin and of the same representative value as were similar assemblies in the neighbouring countries whose desires were taken in consideration by the Conference." This brings us back to the question of the legality of the "Sfatul Tserey's" fatal decision. In the first edition I published only the documents throwing light on the initial decision of the "Sfatul Tserey" on the "Unirea" on March 27, 1918. But the final decision, equivalent to an unconditional annexation of Bessarabia, has been taken since I left Rumania on November 28, 1918. In order to fill up the gap I publish in the second edition a few pages from the leaflet of the Bessarabian delegation on "The Bessarabian Parliament," and a protest by some members of the Assembly on the subject of its votes (Nos. III. and IV.). The reader will learn from these documents what was the fate of the two Committees organised by the "Sfatul Tserey" to promote the Agrarian Reform and to work out a Draft of the Bessarabian Constitution on the basis of the wide autonomy provided for by the Act of March 27, since that Act had been published. The Rumanians took measures to influence both Committees to take their point of view. The news about the Agrarian Bill, finally voted by the "Sfatul Tserey," are apparently coloured by the landowners' interest; but I do not possess any better one. The information about the work of the Constitutional Committee is particularly interesting. The Rumanian Government began by removing from the Committee the ablest of its members: then they simply put aside the Draft of a Constitution prepared by the Committee, and on November 28 substituted for it a vote, pure and simple, for an unconditional annexation. The Report of the delegates and the protest of the members of the "Sfatul Tserey" show us how this farce was played. An official announcement was published on November 28, in order both to entice and to cow the peasant members of the "Sfatul Tserey." "This evening at six o'clock," the announcement ran, "the 'Sfatul Tserey' will discuss the Agrarian Reform Bill (this was to entice). All deputies who do not wish to be regarded as *Russian agents provocateurs* (this was to cow) are requested not to leave the sitting." On the same page the menace was repeated in a still less disguised form. "We repeat once more that any deputy who shall be found to have left the sitting, except for reasons of the highest importance, at a moment when the interests of democracy are at stake will, by this mere fact, reveal his treachery. Those who have ears to hear, let them hear!" (See p. 49.)

We know—and the delegates knew—what that meant : deportation or execution. That is why the delegates met in number, apparently to discuss the Agrarian Reform Bill. The Bill was voted without debate. Then, at 2 A.M., instead of the Draft of a new Constitution, a decision was hurriedly put to the vote, the contents being as follows :

“ In consequence of the Union with Rumania, of Transylvania, Bukovina, the Banate and the Hungarian Districts inhabited by Rumanians within the limits of the Danube and the Tissa, the “ Sfatul Tserex ” renounces the conditions stipulated in the Act of Union of March 27, as it is convinced that an essentially democratic régime is assured by Rumania of all united Rumanians.”

Owing to the late hour in the night, the greater part of delegates were tired out, have left the hall, and only a few remained. Seeing what was going to happen, some of these also succeeded in escaping. Forty-six delegates remained (out of the total number of 162 who comprised the “ Sfatul ”). Out of these 46 only 38 voted in a tumult, “ by acclamation,” the above-mentioned text of annexation. The President’s question : “ Who is against ? Who abstains ? ” was not heard among the applause, and he immediately declared that the vote was “ unanimous.” At five o’clock in the morning, immediately after the Act has been voted, General Voitoyanu was “ called up by telephone ” and the “ Sfatul Tserex ” was dissolved. The protest of members against the violence, of which they had become victims, had to be written and signed subsequently outside the precincts of the legal assembly (see page 53). No sooner was the vote taken than over a hundred telegrams arrived at Kishinev from all parts of Bessarabia, expressing the pleasure felt by the population on account of this vote. The greater part of these telegrams was dispatched at the same time as the vote took place. The phrasing of these messages was singularly similar, as all spoke of a Union “ without conditions laid in advance.” The population thus testified to their wish to be robbed of their Autonomy ! Obviously the inspirers of these telegrams had no doubt as to the time and the result of the vote. . . . (See page 50).

What is the state of things in Bessarabia since that culminating act of violence was performed ? A “ letter from Bessarabia,” written apparently in June 1919, and published by the Bessarabian delegates, gives a very illuminating answer to this question. Brought face to face with indecision of the Peace Conference, the Rumanian Government do all they can to hasten the Rumanisa-

tion of Bessarabia. The four decrees which are to serve that aim are :—

1. That on suppression of the organs of local self-government.
2. On obligatory elections to the Rumanian Constituent Assembly.
3. On the Agrarian reform, and
4. On the introduction of the Rumanian criminal code.

Suppression of the communal self-government gives full sway over the peasant class—which forms the greater part of the population—to new organs nominated and subsidised by the Rumanian Government. One can imagine what that means, under the Oriental conditions of electioneering, for carrying out the elections to the Constituent Assembly, if such elections are permitted to take place by the Allies. So far as I know, at least the United States have expressed their disapproval of that kind of “ plebiscite ” imposed on the population by Rumanian gendarmes. The Agrarian Reform is now hurriedly introduced in Bessarabia without even waiting for the sanction of the Constituent Assembly, as is the case in Rumania. Three representatives of the “ Casa Noastra ” (the executive organ for carrying out the Reform), accompanied by a local justice of the peace (nominated by the Government) and a peasant mob, appear before a landowner and proceed to ask him whether he has sworn allegiance to the King of Rumania (an official document concerning this demand is published as Appendix No. VII.). If so, he is given 100 hectares of his estate : the remainder passes to the “ Casa Noastra.” Should the landowner refuse to become a Rumanian subject, all his property is confiscated. “ Most landed proprietors,” the correspondent states, “ are in this case, as until now not one has consented to swear allegiance to the Rumanian King.” The Rumanian criminal code has been already introduced in Bessarabia : the commercial code was to have been introduced in July. The Rumanian army behave themselves as an actual army of occupation. “ Badly fed, the soldier lives exclusively on the resources of the country. He cuts down hay without paying indemnities. Trees—even fruit-trees—are also cut down. Horses and furniture belonging to the peasants are stolen.” Grain sent by the Allies to Rumania is sold by the Government to the “ Director ” of Bessarabia at triple price (1 lei 95 bans for the kilo, instead of 65 bans), and it is sold to the population at six times the original price ! The Delegates’ conclusion to that account is as follows ; “ If the powers of the Entente do not decide to draw attention to the *impasse*

in which Bessarabia finds itself, the Rumanian domination is bound to rouse the country to revolt, anarchy and the worst excesses." An appeal to President Wilson on the subject of this state of things was cabled by the Bessarabian Delegates at Paris on September 29. As it has been published in English newspapers (*Morning Post*, September 26) and does not include much news, I do not reprint it here. In the footnote I quote the only passage which contains new information on physical torture used in Bessarabia*).

The first edition of this booklet, as was to be expected, elicited some criticism in Rumania. Two large articles on "La Bessarabie et M. Milinkov" in *La Roumanie* (June 5 and 12, 1919) have reached me. In spite of the disparaging tone and many pinpricks indulged in by the author, who preferred to remain anonymous, I am very thankful to him. Out of the numerous facts divulged by my authorities, not a single one was refuted by my opponent: moreover, not even an attempt at contesting the evidence adduced has been made by him. His only objections are that (1) the authors of the documents belong to different parties, which he wrongly describes as two extremes of "impenitent revolutionaries" and large landed proprietors equally dissatisfied with Rumania. I have only to repeat what is said on page 6 of the Preface; my authorities represent, indeed, "a very large front of public opinion" in Bessarabia, and some differences in their treatment of this or that particular question only help to emphasise their substantial agreement as to the whole. (2) They omit to mention the past history of Bessarabia. This is quite true, but I hardly think that here, as in many similar cases, any useful practical inference might be drawn from the past to justify the Rumanian claims in the present. However,

* "We have now received from absolutely reliable sources in Bessarabia information that the Rumanian police there are employing the methods of physical torture in vogue in the Middle Ages. We are in possession of evidence that Bessarabians belonging to the intellectual classes who are suspected of Russophile tendencies are being put to actual torture by their Rumanian persecutors. The methods adopted include the tearing out of finger nails and the crushing of finger-ends in door hinges. Other people are being flogged with indiarubber rods; others have had their heads and feet tied together and their hands bound behind their backs and have been left in this condition a whole day, or until they have consented to give information concerning men and women who have become obnoxious to the Rumanian authorities. Full confirmation of many atrocities of this kind has been given to us by a British officer just returned from Rumania. Furthermore, officers belonging to the French Military Mission which has been in South Bessarabia since February 1919 have sent reports to their Government in which they mention a quantity of facts testifying to Rumanian misrule and atrocities in Bessarabia, and confirming our statements." The editor adds the following remark at the end of the protest: "M. Krupensky informs me that he has to-day received, through secret channels, news from Bessarabia to the effect that the Rumanians have issued orders to compel all Bessarabians of military age to be embodied in the Rumanian Army during the present autumn. He insists that he has documentary proof of the assertions he and his fellow-delegate make in their appeal to the American President."

as the Rumanians make a great point of the very well-known fact that Bessarabia " up to 1812 formed an integral part of the *Rumanian State* of Bessarabia." I shall mention the Russian view of it, as formulated by M. Maklakov before the Big Four of the Peace Conference. " In the first place," the Russian Ambassador told that Tribunal, " one must not forget that the Union of Bessarabia with Russia had never been the result of some act of violence on the part of Russia against Rumania. When Bessarabia was united with Russia in 1812 no Rumania was as yet in existence, and Bessarabia constituted a part of the Danubian province of Moldavia, which, on the common title with Vallachia, was possessed by the Turks. Russia had long defended these provinces against Turkish misrule. In 1812 Bessarabia was completely liberated and united with Russia. Far from it being an act of violence against Rumania, it was a liberatory act directed against Turkey. At the Paris Congress of 1856, after Russia's defeat in the Crimean War, she had to get back her towns and territories conquered by the Allies in the Crimea, and in exchange she had to cede a part of Bessarabia adjacent to the Danube. It was only a small part of Bessarabia that was returned by the victorious Allies, partly to Moldavia, then a Turkish vassal State, and partly directly to Turkey. The Berlin Congress wished to blot out the concession extorted from Russia at the Paris Congress. Rumania has been proclaimed an ' Independent State,' but on the condition that she should cede the part of Bessarabia detached from Russia by the Paris Congress in exchange for a much larger territory of Dobroudja, thus giving her an access to the sea. This was accepted by Rumania. One can see that Russia never used force to snatch from Rumania anything whatever." I might add that the very liberatory process which has been for centuries carried on by Russia and which brought into existence so many independent States, both to the North and to the South of the Danube, resulted in the birth of the Rumanian State and the simultaneous passage of the mixed population of Bessarabia to the Russian political organism. If anything like historical justice exists at all it would seem unjust to forget at all this process and Rumania's moral obligation to Russia for the very fact of its existence owing to Russian exertions to free Christian tribes from the Turkish yoke. Russia might be moved by motives of self-defence and self-interest, just as Rumania is being moved now. But it only speaks against renewing historical claims at all, a most dangerous and double-edged weapon.

Is the population of Bessarabia really mixed, and is the present

state of ethnic consciousness by its Moldavian element of kinship to Rumania such as to justify Rumanian claims? This is the whole purport of the question—and this can only be decided by a plebiscite. My opponent in *La Roumanie* pretends to solve it instead by . . . statistics. He seems to be very self-confident in this respect, and he does his utmost to prove that the statistics given by my authorities are not only wrong, but even . . . falsified. He tries to convince me of something which might be termed trickery, and after having thus undermined the claim of my authorities to mere honesty, he contemptuously dismisses the whole subject and takes his thesis as proven. I am afraid the only thing really proven is—my opponent's lack of knowledge on Russian demography.

The author of the first "Report on Bessarabia's Reunion" gives the figure of the whole population of Bessarabia as 2,393,000. He forgets to tell us that this figure represents the number of the population at the beginning of the year 1909, the last available for him (see *N. K. Moghilansky's* book, "Materials for Geography and Statistics of Bessarabia," p. 77). He then proceeds to show the ethnographic composition of the population, and he chooses to quote the only trustworthy figures we have, compiled from the last Russian census of 1897, when the whole population of Bessarabia was 1,935,412. The exact figures of this census are as follows:—(see the first column).

	1897		1909	1917
1. Moldavians ..	920,919	(47.58%)	1,138,589	1,270,000
2. Ukrainians ..	382,169	(19.75%)	472,617	528,600
3. Great Russians ..	155,774	(8.05%)	192,636	213,600
4. Jews ..	228,168	(11.79%)	282,134	314,800
5. Bulgarians ..	103,225	(5.33%)	127,546	142,300
6. Germans ..	60,206	(3.11%)	74,422	83,000
7. Gagauzes ..	57,045	(2.95%)	70,593	78,000
8. Poles ..	11,696	(0.60%)	14,358	18,000
9. Gipsies ..	8,636	(0.45%)	10,768	12,000
10. Greeks ..	2,737	(0.14%)	3,350	3,000
11. Armenians ..	2,080	(0.11%)	2,632	2,900
12. Other nationalities	2,737	(0.14%)	3,350	3,800
	<hr/>		<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,935,392	(100.00)	2,393,000	2,670,000
	<hr/>		<hr/>	<hr/>

The first six figures are given in the "Report" (see page 30). My opponent, by adding them, obtains the (incomplete) figure of 1,850,000 inhabitants (for 1897), which he subtracts from the

figure of 2,393,000 (for 1909), thus finding 543,000 "concealed" by the "Report." He then supposes this half million to be Moldavians, thus getting the fantastic number (920,900 + 543,000) 1,463,900, *i.e.* at least "61 per cent., and not 47 per cent." of the whole population. The right inference would be that between 1897 and 1909 the *whole* population increased by 2,393,000 $1,935,892 = 457,608$. But, of course, as long as we do not know the birth-rate of different nationalities, this increase must be distributed among all nationalities proportionately to the exact figures of the census of 1897, which would give us the *hypothetic* figures of the second column for 1909, and of the third column for 1917. As long as there is no new census of nationalities, every valuation of approximate figures of different nationalities living in Bessarabia must be necessarily based on the proportions (47.58 per cent.) for the Moldavians given by the census of 1897.* That is why the only correction which I found necessary to make in the first lines of the first Report consists in mentioning that the figure of 2,393,000 refers to the year 1909, while the following figures and proportions of different nationalities mentioned are taken from the census of 1897.

I must mention, in connection with this, that the Moldavian element of the Bessarabian population is unequally distributed in the country. Out of eighteen districts of which Bessarabia is composed, there are only *four*, where the absolute majority is Moldavian. In all the others, the Moldavians are in the minority, and in one district, the Northern, the Russian population forms an absolute majority. Thus, it is only in four districts where a plebiscite is necessary in order to ascertain the will of the population regarding the Union with Rumania. This is also the conclusion to which the Note of the Russian Government of July 24, 1919, comes to.

* Curiously enough, Rumanian writers sometimes admit that inference, but they apply the proportions of the census of 1897 only to non-Moldavian nationalities, while at the same time objecting to their use for the Moldavians. *E.g.* Mr. D. Draghicesco, the Rumanian senator, in his little book "La Bessarabie et le Droit des Peuples" (Paris, Alcan, 1918), admits that the Ukrainians form 19.6 per cent., Great Russians 8 per cent., Jews (an arbitrarily diminished figure) 9.6 per cent., Bulgarians 5.3 per cent., Germans, 3 per cent. Taken together, these figures of the 1897 census come to 45.5 per cent. of the *whole* population. But then Mr. Draghicesco tells us that these are 45.5 per cent. of the "non-Rumanian" population, which he declares to be only 707,000 (Russians and Jews alone amounted to more than this in 1897). Who are, one may ask, the remaining 54.5 per cent. of the 707,000? As to Rumanians, M. Draghicesco, on the authority of Mr. Juraseo, gives a fantastic figure of 1,897,800. Other patriotic statisticians go still further, and estimate the number of Rumanians in Bessarabia at 2,000,000, 2,300,000 and even 2,500,000, at the same time lowering the figures of non-Rumanians to much less than their number in 1897. The same author (Mr. M. P. Commencé) gives different figures at different times (2 millions $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions and again 2 millions). The book of Mr. Inorodetz, published at Berne and having served the cause of German propaganda ("La Russie et les Peuples Allogenes," 1918, F. Wyss, Berne) is Mr. Commencé's chief authority, but it gives 2.3 million Moldavians. For more details see the article of Mr. A. Barladean, in "Les Peuples Libres," No. 6, June, 1919.

To people who know the state of affairs in Bessarabia from within, there is not the slightest doubt as to what the result of this plebiscite will be. One of my authorities mentions that even under normal conditions the Bessarabian Moldavians looked down on the Rumanians and nicknamed them the "gipsies." It is characteristic of my opponent that, in order to annihilate me in the opinion of his compatriots, he accuses *me* of calling the Rumanians names. Of course, I never do such things, but I could not help quoting one more proof of the lack of the feeling of kinship among the Bessarabian Moldavians and the Rumanians. Now, owing to the state of extreme oppression obtaining in Bessarabia, they have learnt to hate them. That is why there can be no doubt as to the result of the plebiscite, and the Rumanians know it, because they shirk the plebiscite and try to assure the Peace Conference that it cannot be applied in Bessarabia, not even after ten years or more of their domination, without risk of provoking "anarchy."

There are some minor corrections which I have introduced into the revised text of the new edition, without it being necessary to mention them separately. Among other things I quite agree that "former masters" in General Presan's proclamation of January 26, 1918, does not mean "Rumanians," as I wrongly guessed, but "former landlords." Of course, this does not alter anything in the general meaning of the document. I must also mention a new Appendix VIII, of this edition, which catches the Rumanian commander *in flagrante delicto* of preparing Jewish pogroms by his demagogic appeal to the population.

PAUL MILIUKOV.

September 26, 1919.

I.

Report on Bessarabia's Re-Union with Rumania.

1. BESSARABIA'S PLEA FOR SELF-DETERMINATION.

THE population of Bessarabia was 2,393,000 in 1909. According to the only trustworthy figures of the census of 1897, when the population was 1,935,392, the figures and proportions of different nationalities inhabiting Bessarabia were as follows; 920,900 or 47.6 per cent. Moldavians, 382,000 or 19.75 per cent. were Little Russians, 228,000 or 11.8 per cent. Jews, 155,700 or 8 per cent. were Great Russians, 103,200 Bulgarians, 60,000 Germans, &c.*

Thus, comparatively, the Moldavians are in the majority, but absolutely they form even less than half the total population. They are concentrated principally in the Kishinev, Orgeiev and Soroki districts.

In Bessarabia, the Moldavian national movement has never attained any perceptible extent, nor has there ever been any Moldavian literature, or struggle for the adoption of their language in the schools.

The rural population lived as their grandfathers had lived, taking no interest whatever in politics, while the urban population, completely russified, had interests in common with the rest of Russia, and all social and cultural movements in Russia found an echo in Kishinev.

Still greater was the growth of the economic connection between Bessarabia and the rest of Russia.

Bessarabia is an agricultural country, its principal source of wealth being corn exports, in which Odessa played the most prominent part.

Odessa, moreover, is the central market for exports of fruit, especially from the Dniepr districts of Bessarabia (Akkerman and other districts).

Hardly any fruit is exported from Bessarabia to Rumania.

In general, between Bessarabia and Rumania—both agricultural countries of the same type, the same climatic conditions

* See my Preface to the Second Edition pp. 27-28.

and articles of production—there cannot be any serious interchange of commodities, nor can it be developed in the future.

Manufactured goods of all kinds were imported into Bessarabia likewise from or through Russia.

The shops got their goods from Lodz, Warsaw, Moscow, or directly from abroad.

Bessarabia's imports through Rumania were principally Austrian and German goods, whereas English and American (agricultural machinery) and French goods came through Odessa, which, as regards foreign imports, has no rival among the Black Sea ports.

Were Bessarabia to be cut off from Odessa and Russia in general, her interchange of commodities with the Central European Powers would be increased, while her sea-borne imports from England, France and America would decline. Like Rumania, Bessarabia would become Germany's economic vassal.

In general, the annexation of Bessarabia by Rumania threatens to undermine the trade and economic development of our wealthy province.

The very low cultural and moral level of the bureaucracy, the corruption that prevails throughout all the administrative machinery of Rumania, is a serious retarding factor in the economic development of that country: bribery dogs the steps of the inhabitants: it is the moral consequence of the low remuneration of the numerous bureaucracy and police officials.

The disorderly behaviour, the bribe-taking and brutality of the rural gendarmerie, who are the authorities in immediate contact with the population, has bred an especial hatred among the Bessarabian peasantry. Flogging is a very common punishment in Rumania, and now in Bessarabia.

To these general causes may be added the enmity of the Jews to a country which has deprived them of their elementary political rights: the bitterness of the Russian population evicted from the province which they had been accustomed to regard as an integral part of Russia: the hatred of the Moldavian peasantry, caused by the brutalities committed on them last winter, the distrust with which the peasants regard the Government, the bulk of which is composed of the landed gentry. But even the Bessarabia gentry are mostly antagonistic to Rumania, this being to a considerable extent due to their Russian education and Russian patriotism.

There is not a class of society nor a nationality in Bessarabia that feels drawn to Rumania.

Notwithstanding the nearness between the Moldavian and other Rumanian dialects, the Moldavian peasants look upon themselves as Russians, and proudly call themselves so, in contrast with the "Gipsy Rumanians." At the present time far more Russian is spoken among them, children are taught Russian secretly, and they strongly oppose the use of Rumanian as a medium of instruction in the national schools.

The position is the same as that in Alsace-Lorraine, after its annexation by Germany in 1871, when not only the French, but even the German-speaking inhabitants of these provinces were against annexation, and were straining to get back to their beloved France. France should therefore especially sympathise with our sorrow.

Bessarabia is a striking example of the fact that the consanguinity of language or race does not always afford sufficient grounds for including a given territory in a neighbouring state, if the economic, social and cultural conditions of the territory form a tie with another people and another state.

The great principle of national self-determination pre-supposes a free expression of the will on the part of the population, and not an artificial union on philological or ethnological grounds.

As may be seen from the following, the vote of the "Sfatul Tseret," of March 27, 1918, cannot be regarded as such free self-determination.

A far truer indication of the mood of Bessarabia is to be found in the Zemstvo and Municipal Corporations, and especially the Provincial Zemstvo Council all elected by universal suffrage.

The Provincial Zemstvo Council has a good social record to its credit, and during several decades has been the most important institution in the economic administration of the province, and the satisfaction of all cultural requirements of the local population, without distinction of nationality.

Reflecting the general discontent of the country, all these institutions have shown themselves definitely anti-Rumanian, and therefore the Bessarabian Provincial Zemstvo Council and the Kishinev Municipality have been illegally dissolved by the Rumanian authorities.

If the Entente Powers want to know the real view of the province, they should require *Romania to withdraw her troops from Bessarabia*, and replace them by Allied troops, and to renew the activity of the dissolved organs of democratic self-government.

Then our Allies would perceive clearly where the sympathies of the Bessarabians lie.

Should this proof be insufficient, the Allied Powers should then have recourse to the mode of elucidating the will of the population which they may find most convenient.

Let all the inhabitants of Bessarabia be interrogated, the freedom of voting being guaranteed, *i.e.*, by the withdrawal of the Rumanian troops, gendarmerie and spies, and then we do not doubt that the result of the ballot will be in favour of Russia.

The races of Bessarabia only want justice and the application to them of the principle of self-determination.

2. THE COMPOSITION OF THE "SFATUL TSEREY."

The local Diet of the former Moldavian Republic "Sfatul Tserrey" was organised at the end of November 1917.

Even in the intention of its inspirers and organisers this institution was to be of a temporary character, until the Bessarabian Constituent Assembly was convened by direct, secret and equal elections.

The "Sfatul Tserrey" could not be anything but a temporary organ, as the races of Bessarabia could not, and would not, entrust the fate of the old territory, and, moreover, at such a momentous and anxious time, to an institution formed artificially, and by the whim of unknown men, who had never taken part in public life.

The idea of founding the "Sfatul Tserrey" was proclaimed in October 1917, at the congress of the Moldavian military organisation at Kishinev.

The Moldavian soldiers who attended the congress, without having any authority from the two and a half millions of the inhabitants of Bessarabia, decided that a local organ must be established, and in such a manner that the predominant part should be played by the military deputies (Moldavians), who, together with certain groups of the Moldavian population, would be assured of a majority of two thirds of the total number of delegates in the local organ.

In organising the proposed "Sfatul Tserrey," the representation of the various nationalities of Bessarabia was quite arbitrarily determined on the basis of *false* statistical data.

The founders of the "Sfatul Tserrey," demanded that the Moldavian representation should have two-thirds of the seats (75 delegates out of a total of 120), while disclaiming the statistical data showing that the actual number of Moldavians in Bessarabia amounted only to the 47²/₁₀₀ per cent. of the total population, as taken from Russian statistics. Now, these are the only correct data.

Just as arbitrarily was the number of representatives of other nationalities fixed (Ukrainians, Jews, Bulgarians, etc.)

More than this. Desirous at any cost of securing a majority in the "Sfatul Tserey" for certain sections of the Moldavian population, the founders of this institution ordered one public organisation or another beforehand to elect deputies of a given nationality.

The representation of the districts of the province was determined by the same arbitrary means, no account whatever being taken of the real number of a given nationality.

Only the Moldavians were allowed to have representatives of cultural institutions, no other nationality being allowed this privilege. It was the same with co-operative institutions.

And it was quite arbitrarily that the Moldavian military congress—the organisers of the "Sfatul Tserey"—fixed the number of their own members as forty-four.

Thus, according to a ready-made plan and with the number of deputies determined beforehand, the total number of the deputies of the "Sfatul Tserey" was to, and indeed did, consist of 120, with a predominance of deputies of Moldavian origin, and, moreover, of the Moldavians themselves it was only certain groups that were represented.

Such a "*packed*" set of Deputies has, moreover, guaranteed the Moldavian military committee the future composition of the Government, which only the nominees and minions of the group of Praetorians could enter.

And this was what actually did happen.

The highly responsible posts of ministers of a whole territory at that time completely disconnected with the central Government, were filled by men totally unaccustomed to public life and ignorant of its traditions, unknown either in Bessarabia or outside, but men who were the humble and blind executors of the will of the military organisations.

3. THE ACT OF ANNEXATION OF Bessarabia, MARCH 27, 1918.

On March 27, 1918, the "Sfatul Tserey" proclaimed the annexation of Bessarabia by Rumania.

The Rumania Government announced that this act of March 27, 1918, was the result of the free expression of the will of the inhabitants of Bessarabia, as it was issued by the "national representatives," by the "Parliament," representing all the races inhabiting Bessarabia, and, moreover, without any extraneous pressure having been put upon them.

Such a declaration on the part of the Rumanian Government, desirous of deceiving the public opinion of the Allied Powers, is not at all in accordance with the true state of affairs.

On the contrary, the Act of March, 27, 1918, was the result of the most shameful lawlessness, and of a pressure brought to bear on the free expression of the will of delegates, such as is unknown in the annals of any other parliament.

I. Between January 13, 1918—the day that the Rumanian troops entered Bessarabia—and March 27, 1918, by order of General Brashtenau, Commander of the Rumanian troops in Bessarabia, such deputies of the “ Sfatul Tseret ” as were against the annexation of Bessarabia by Rumania were shot. The names of these deputies are as follows : KATAROS (leader of the Peasant Group in the “ Sfatul Tseret,” and a prominent member of the Moldavian Central Committee), CHUMACHENKO (Assistant Minister of Agriculture), PRAKHNITSKY (Assistant Minister of War), PANTSUR (a member of the Peasant Group), RUDYEV (a deputy and district commissary of the town of Bieltsy). With the exception of Chumachenko, all the executed members were Moldavians.

Fearing inevitable execution, all the deputies belonging to socialistic parties, with a very few exceptions, had to leave Bessarabia.

Thus, all the prominent deputies who were against the annexation of Bessarabia by Rumania were absent at the meeting held on March 27, 1918.

II. Armed Rumanian soldiers were brought into the premises of the “ Sfatul Tseret ” on March 27, 1918.

III. There is documentary and irrefutable proof that a considerable number of the members of the “ Sfatul Tseret ” had been bribed by the Rumanian Government.

IV. The press, which knew no censorship until the coming of the Rumanians, got orders not to print anything expressing an unfavourable attitude towards the proposed occupation of Bessarabia.

All the foregoing shows without any doubt that there can be no question of any “ free expression of will ” by the national representatives. The majority was formed partly of bribed deputies, and partly of those who had been terrorised by the execution of their colleagues and by the Rumanian rifles and machine-guns pointed at the meeting of national representatives at the moment when the fate of the province was to be decided.

But even the resolutions of this “ Sfatul Tseret,” which can in no wise be regarded as an assembly of real national represen-

tatives, but as being formed according to a plan worked out by higher authorities and without any elections of deputies— even the resolutions of this institution were of a quite different kind, when passed under other conditions, when there was as yet no threat of executions, and when public opinion still sternly denounced all kinds of deeds, unworthy from the public point of view, such as bribery, for instance.

Thus, on January 24, 1918, a few days after the entry of the Rumanian troops into Bessarabia, in view of the alarm among the inhabitants, who feared the introduction of Rumanian feudal customs into Bessarabia, the " Sfatul Tsercy," in a declaration entitled " The Declaration of the Supreme Council of the Moldavian People's Republic," solemnly declared :

" The sole object of the Rumanian troops was to guard the railways and stores of corn for the Front. The Rumanian troops had no other object in entering the territory of the Moldavian Republic. All rumours of their having come to conquer our country and establish their own government therein, are false, and are spread by the enemies of our Republic."

" That the Rumanian troops are not threatening our independence, our rights and liberty, won by the Revolution, is guaranteed by France, in agreement with England and America, as well as by the declaration of the representatives of Rumania."

" Moldavians, and all brother-peoples of the Moldavian Republic ! Conscious of the inviolability of the free organisation of our life and the safety of our independence and all our liberties won by the Revolution, we call upon all of you to union, peaceful labour and calmness, for the good and welfare of the peoples of the Moldavian Republic, HENCEFORTH AND FOR EVER INDEPENDENT."

The resolution of the " Sfatul Tsercy," passed on January 24, 1918, is in full accordance with :

I. The official declaration of the representatives of the Allied Powers, who announced that the Rumanian troops had entered Bessarabia merely to establish order, and in no case WOULD THEY INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE FREE MOLDAVIAN REPUBLIC.

II. The similar and repeated official declarations of the Rumanian Government itself, especially before the entry of the Rumanian troops into Bessarabia. Thus, on January 12, 1918, at an extraordinary meeting of the Kishinev Municipal Corporation, at the suggestion of the president of the " Sfatul Tsercy," who had

been to meet the Rumanian troops, the Mayor, A. K. Schmidt, was able to announce the following :

“ The Rumanian commander has declared that the Rumanian troops that have entered the territory of Bessarabia do not propose to interfere with the civil life and mutual legal relations of the population and have come to Bessarabia EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROTECTING THEIR REAR.”

The whole population of Bessarabia, without any distinction of nationality, had every reason to trust the official declarations of the representatives of the Allied Powers, and the official declarations of the Rumanian Government, which could not but have to reckon with the authoritative assurances of the Allied representatives.

The population of Bessarabia, who had greeted the first declaration of the “ Sfatul Tseret ” of December 2, 1917, calling upon them to decide the question of war and peace in close unity with the Allied Powers, while remaining true to all the obligations which the Russian Provisional Government had taken upon itself—did not doubt that, in view of the authoritative declaration of all the Allied Governments, the Government of Ferdinand King of Rumania would not venture to infringe on the sovereign rights of the Moldavian People’s Republic, and the free expression of the will of the millions of inhabitants of Bessarabia.

Even in view of the Rumanian troops and the harshness of the Rumanian Command, the population of Bessarabia, through its representatives in the provincial and district Zemstvos, and in all municipalities, still expressed its real will, viz. : THAT THE ACT OF MARCH 27, 1918, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS AN ACT OF BRUTAL OPPRESSION AND OUTRAGEOUS LAWLESSNESS.

4. THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE RUMANIAN ARMY OF OCCUPATION AND THE DISCONTENT OF THE POPULATION OF Bessarabia.

In January 1918, the Royal Rumanian troops entered Bessarabia.

According to the official declaration and the official assurance of the Allied Governments, the Rumanian troops entered Bessarabia with one sole object, viz., to establish order in the province, to secure the immediate rear of Rumania, then still at war on the side of the Allies.

In the end of December 1917, the representative of the French Republican Government at Kishinev, the consul Roger Seret, officially announced in the Kishinev press ; “ The French Government is in great sympathy with the young Republic, which has

entered, as a member with equal rights, into the Russian Federative Democratic Republic. France guaranteed that the actions of the troops introduced into Bessarabia will not be of a political character, and the French Government will never, and in no case, permit of the political liberties won by the Russian Revolution being threatened, or, equally, that they should threaten the Moldavian Republic."

In January 1918, already after the entry of the Rumanian troops into Bessarabia, the population of Bessarabia was again assured from still more authoritative sources, in the name of the ambassadors of all the Allied Powers accredited to the Rumanian Government, that the sovereign rights of the Moldavian People's Republic would be preserved, and that no infringement of the free expression of the will of the peoples of Bessarabia would be tolerated.

Such were likewise the assurances of the Rumanian Government,

All these pacifying assurances of the representatives of the Allied Governments were a result of the alarm felt by the people of Bessarabia.

Bessarabia had every reason to believe that the official declarations and the official assurances of the representatives of the Government of the most democratic countries in the world—Great Britain, France and the United States—were the best guarantee of the security of the liberties won by the peoples of Russia at the cost of incalculable sacrifices and many years of suffering and struggle.

But, with the coming of the Rumanian troops, the reality was harsher than could have been expected, and justified the gloomiest forebodings of the alarmed and anxious peoples of Bessarabia.

It was not even slowly, and gradually, but by one stroke, that all her liberties, all the rights of men and citizens that had been won, were severed from the living body of free Bessarabia.

With fire and sword did the Rumanian troops pass from one end of Bessarabia to the other, everywhere inaugurating the order of the gloomy Middle Ages, the order of their own enslaved country.

As early as the first days after the entry of the Rumanian troops into Kishinev, the capital of the Moldavian Republic, in the centre of the town, in the courtyard of the Theological College where the Rumanian Kommendatur had taken up its quarters, a torture chamber was established, where anyone who was suspected of being inimical to the customs of the Kingdom of Rumania was tortured, flogged and shot. On the report of the spies with

whom Bessarabia was flooded, people were beaten, examined under torture and executed, frequently on the spot, in view of the people. This was the case with seventeen soldiers of the Moldavian regiment which had refused to swear allegiance to the King of Rumania. A great number (still not known exactly) of persons dissatisfied with the order introduced by Rumania found death in the waters of the river Dniestr.

Persons who were, officially, only to be deported from Bessarabia were secretly shot by the Rumanian troops, under cover of the night on the bridge at Bender, and their bodies, first tied with wire, were thrown into the river Dniestr. And among those thus executed there were even persons who had received a protective passport from M. Roger Serette, the French Consul at Kishinev.

No less ruthlessly did the Rumanian troops establish "order" in the villages where the number of persons shot cannot even be calculated.

But amid these innumerable executions and shooting, one, which took place in the little borough of Yedintsi, was especially remarkable for its brutality. There, without any cause, merely by the whim of the Rumanian Commandant during the Jewish Passover, thirteen Jews were arrested. Some of these were shot in the presence of the rest, whom the soldiers forced to dig graves for the victims. The higher Rumanian authorities only removed this commandant, announcing that he was not in his right mind, and was therefore exempt from punishment.

Executions without trial are still taking place, between requisitions, unspeakably ruinous to the populations, armed robbery and brutal flogging at the slightest displeasure of the authorities.

Hand-in-hand with these brutalities is the dissolution of all the democratic self-governing institutions all over Bessarabia. The Bessarabian Provincial Zemstvo and the Kishinev Municipal Corporation have been dispersed. The magistrates, hitherto irremovable, have been discharged, and the Kishinev Circuit Court has had to be closed. The schools, both primary and secondary, have been forcibly Rumanised.

In all the former Russian Government institutions, all those who refused to swear allegiance to the King of Rumania have been dismissed.

By means of the knout, shooting and famine, the Rumanian Government wants to eradicate from amid the peoples of Bessarabia their natural connection with Russian culture, their love of freedom and of independent action.

Where are the solemn assurances of non-intervention in the internal life of the now non-existent Moldavian People's Republic? Where are the equally solemn promises to preserve untouched all that the Russian Revolution had won?

All the peoples of Bessarabia now have every cause to declare to the world: "We have been deceived."

The rights of man and citizen have been swept away by the armed hand of the Rumanian Government, which has established the peace of the churchyard and the order of an Asiatic Satrapy in erstwhile flourishing, but now unhappy Bessarabia.

And all the inhabitants of Bessarabia repay in hatred their debt to the armed aliens. The predominant race, the Moldavians form no exception to the rule. All Bessarabia has declared the Rumanian Government to be its enemy.

This has been lately expressed in words of sincere anger and honest truthfulness by M. Alexandri, a prominent Bessarabian Rumanophile, the oldest member of the "Sfatul Tserey."

"The whole country is groaning: lawlessness, insults, mockery such as have never yet been seen for ages, are on the order of the day. The days of Tsarist absolutism seem almost a paradise in comparison."

II.

PRO MEMORIA

Presented on the 8-10th November, 1918, to the Ambassadors and the military attaches of the Allied Powers at Jassy.

In the month of January 1918 several detachments of the Rumanian Army entered Bessarabia, being entrusted by the Great Allied Powers with the maintenance of order and safeguarding the food depots. On this occasion General Presan, as well as Monsieur de Saint-Aulaire the French Minister, assured the Bessarabian Council of Ministers that the entry of the Rumanian troops would have no influence on the future destiny of the country. It clearly follows, both from General Presan's order of the day, and the French Minister's letter, that the Allied Powers recognise that Bessarabia is incontestably a part of the territory of Russia, nevertheless, the very supposition that the

entry of the Rumanians may mean the possibility of the annexation of Bessarabia by Rumania, has already caused trouble among the population, and persuasive measures have had to be taken for the maintenance of peace and order.

The Rumanians did not satisfy themselves with fulfilling their mission entrusted to them by the allies. The land was infested with Anarchy and Bolshevism: this state of mind above all gathered force and took root among the soldiers and peasantry: But during the first month of the Rumanian occupation, the arrests concerned only those persons who, without concealment, loudly proclaimed themselves for the Russian Orientation, while the Anarchist and Bolshevist agents, who professed to hold to Rumania were not interfered with. Several of the latter are still in Bessarabia, and are there playing a prominent part in politics. The population very quickly grasped the fact as to who was being persecuted, and tried to keep away from any vestige of Russian influence: this apprehension grew particularly strong in the minds of the population after Monsieur Covsan, the editor of the anti-Bolshevik Russian journal "Russian Thought," was shot without trial. He was found guilty of an article in which he tried to prove that the commander-in-chief of the Rumanian Army in Bessarabia should have worked in agreement with a Russian general. Every day life furnishes further proofs of the same kind.

In country towns and villages the Rumanians began to thrash and otherwise ill-treat those who went on expressing their sympathy for Russia and the Allies, and who persisted in considering the Rumanians as their bitterest enemies. This cruel and pitiless Rumanisation is producing a regular panic, and has for ever alienated from Rumania the hearts of the "conquered population."

The number of arrests increased daily, the prisons were overflowing with persons who were ill-treated in order to make them become Rumanians. The press was muzzled by an arbitrary censorship. Russian advocates were no longer allowed to plead. The Zemstvos (County Councils) and Municipalities still vegetated side by side with the "Sfatul Tseret," a kind of quasi-representative organ which had assumed power without any right to it, without having been elected by the population, profiting by a time of general disorder and anarchy. All parties, both revolutionary and anti-revolutionary, refused to take part in this illegal assembly, the bulk of which was composed of people who had nothing in common with the country and its interests. The vital centre of the "Sfatul Tseret" was formed by a Moldavian military assembly

(the Russian Army never had any purely Moldavian regiments), and this conglomerate of Moldavian soldiers and officers had received no mandate for representation: they had all been nominated by the organisers of this hirsute assembly. The "Sfatul Tserey" is nothing more than a Council of soldiers' and workmen's delegates—a soviet, into which the delegates of peasant organisations had been afterwards admitted. The bourgeoisie, the landed gentry, and liberal professions are not represented in it: the number of delegates is not in proportion to the number and importance of the groups which they are supposed to represent. Thus constituted, on the model of Bolshevik organisations, this institution bears the very decided mark of Maximalism, and worked in a similar manner; an essential principle being that delegates may be recalled arbitrarily (the Bolsheviks have used this stratagem in the case of refractory delegates, and have introduced this principle in all their representative organisations).

All the acts emanating from the "Sfatul Tserey" have borne the stamp of anarchy, and have been entirely hostile to the principle of property and the rights of man, and soon led to the complete disorganisation of the country and the demoralisation of its inhabitants. Thus the "Sfatul Tserey" placed at the head of the local garrison a well-known robber, Catareu, the assassin of the Bishop of Zagreb. In the country they say that this murderer is a Rumanian agent. The result of this criminal appointment soon made itself felt. Thefts and murders were committed in towns and villages: goods were stopped on the highways, and were seized as booty by the "Catareu Army." Individuals and even institutions were robbed by soldiers in possession of warrants signed "Catareu" as the head of the garrison who was promoted from a private to the rank of colonel by the "Director" of War Office, an official responsible to the "Sfatul Tserey." Agricultural estates are again being sacked: the number of estates belonging to the landed gentry which have been pillaged and destroyed is so great that at present in Bessarabia there are no more than ten estates at the most that have not suffered from agrarian disorders. These disorders were countenanced by a decree prohibiting all looting that was not of the character of agrarian disorders.

The judicial authorities attempted to prosecute the perpetrators of these anarchistic acts, but when they wanted to start legal proceedings a decree of the "Sfatul Tserey" "socialised" all the real and personal estate of the landed gentry. Some

delegates of the Moldavian " bloc " found it necessary to demand besides the " socialisation " of urban real estate. Anyone will understand that such destructive, anti-social and anti-governmental principles, when put into practice, could only encourage an anarchy which would overwhelm everything. The absence of foodstuffs began to be felt, and famine threatened the country. The municipality of Kishinev therefore demanded the recall of Catareu : in the Food Supply Committee they wanted to discuss this openly. But the Director-General, Mr. Pelivan, who is now Director of Justice in Bessarabia, very energetically opposed this, and declared that he would leave the meeting if this question were raised. The general breakdown called for heroic measures. Only the establishment of a new authority, with members elected by the population, could avert the threatened catastrophe, brought on by the Bolshevik management of the " Sfatul Tseret." The Municipality of Kishinev wanted to convene the County and Municipal Councils, as well as the General Zemstvo Assembly, which enjoyed special prestige, its members having been elected by the County Councils, which, in their turn, had been elected by universal vote. The " Sfatul Tseret " replied to this scheme by nominating a commission empowered to dissolve the Zemstvo institutions which were first despoiled of a large sum of money belonging to them. At the same time they curtailed the competency of the Zemstvos, depriving them of their functions regarding public education and the protection of property and personal safety of the inhabitants (thus the Militia was no longer under the control of the Zemstvo).

To the universal astonishment, the Rumanian authorities took to the side of the " Sfatul Tseret." Not only was the convocation of the General Zemstvo Assembly forbidden, but even a private meeting of some of the representatives. They went so far as to place the armed force at the disposal of the " Sfatul Tseret." Repressive measures were going on *crescendo* : it was enough for the denunciation of one delegate who was understood to defend the Rumanian cause—and those whom this " people's elected " found necessary to punish were shot or deported without investigation or preliminary trial. The independence of Bessarabia was voted three weeks after the arrival of the Rumanian troops, under a regime of general oppression. None of the Powers recognised the act. On March 27, the " union " was passed by 83 votes against 3, with 34 abstainers (24 of these belonging to the rural section), 25 delegates being on the " absent " list (the " Sfatul Tseret " consists of 150 delegates). The question of this union

had never been publicly debated. The press were forbidden to discuss this act. The voting took place under the following conditions: the courtyard of the building where the "Sfatul Tserey" was sitting, as also the neighbouring streets, were swarming with troops who, among other arms, had machine guns. Under pretext of placing a guard of honour, an armed force was posted on the premises of the Assembly, aeroplanes were flying over the palace where Bessarabia was to be "freely" united to her Motherland! One incredible detail—the Rumanian military authorities were present when the votes were taken! In so grave a matter, in spite of the protestations of some delegates, secret ballot was not permitted. This, of course, deprived the voting of the last guarantee that a secret ballot could give to those who wished to give their vote freely, according to their conscience and without pressure. Each deputy was publicly interrogated, and had to give his vote aloud. The motion was passed under pressure and undue influence of every kind.

How far they were hampered by the Rumanian authorities may be seen from the fact that four delegates out of the six composing the peasant delegation chosen to lodge a complaint with the representatives of the Allies were shot without trial.

The act of union was never recognised nor approved of in the country; in fact the Municipality of Kishinev, ignoring the threats of Professor Stere, president of the "Sfatul Tserey," a known Germanophile and editor of the newspaper *Lumina*, at Bucharest, unanimously voted for the following order of the day. "The Municipal Council of Kishinev, deprived of the possibility of expressing themselves freely on the question of the Union, asks the people to remain quiet and resigned. They never doubt that the International Conference, which will take place after universal peace has been signed, will give Bessarabia the possibility of expressing their will by means of a plebiscite." This order of the day opened an era of systematic persecutions. The Rumanian press started a campaign against the Municipality. Insurmountable difficulties were created in the matter of supplies. The General Commissary of Bessarabia, the general of the new Army Corps, Voitoianu, had the nerve to announce that he would personally deal with the matter of mineral oils, that he would deprive the inhabitants of them, considering, he said, this measure as a powerful weapon in his hands against the Municipality. They finished by dissolving the Municipal Council, which was substituted by a Provisional Committee. This was the first case of a Municipal Council ever being appointed instead

of elected. The protests, however, did not stop at that. Finally the Zemstvo met: they openly blamed the acts of the "Sfatul Tserey" and pointed out to the disorder which the Rumanian administration was steadily increasing. Discontent was general. As a consequence, the Zemstvo was hastily dissolved by a royal decree: all its functions and its property, amounting to several millions, were entrusted to the "Sfatul Tserey" and the General Commissariat.

Following immediately on this, the law-courts which could have pronounced themselves with regard to these illegal acts, were abolished by a new royal decree.

At the present moment there is no longer any question of liberty of the press: all meetings are prohibited, private property does not exist any more, there are no law-courts, people are arrested and deported without trial. It was deemed necessary to deport Mr. Kossovitch, President of the Council for Supplies, Mr. Stanevitch, Vice-president of the Law-courts and delegate to the "Sfatul Tserey," likewise the following delegates: Messrs. Savenko, lawyer, Osmolovsky and Ponomarev, professors: Kourdinovsky, Starenki, Krivoroukov, Missirkov, Faressov, editor of the local paper—*Free Thought*. The Russian orientation of all these persons is known to everyone in the country. Our children are condemned to remain illiterate. The Rumanian reform of primary and secondary education causes unanimous discontent. Parents refuse to send their children to school. Taxes have grown to fabulous proportions: nobody knows where the money collected goes to: Bessarabia has no Budget. All the elementary political rights which the population had enjoyed for sixty years and which were guaranteed to them by the Act of March 27, are now abolished. Rumania, while basing her domination on the act of union, failed to fulfil any of its clauses: the inviolability of assemblies which have been dissolved and which legally and historically represent the electoral power of the country, are particularly mentioned in it. Moreover all these measures created endless misery among the families of employés and officials who found themselves suddenly completely destitute, almost doomed to beggary.

A numerous group of the "Sfatul Tserey" who had voted for the union and noticed only too late the abyss into which it had drawn its country, is about to protest now and to cancel their signatures given to the Act of March 27.

In addition to all the above, here are some other facts; the agrarian anarchy is artificially supported by conflicting circulars

which flatter the aspiration of the illiterate masses : post-office, telegraph and telephone employés, besides a number of other officials, have been discharged : the only official language is Rumanian. All documents drawn up in Russian are refused, and yet the Bessarabian population, as also the National Minorities, can only read and write in Russian. The Church is entirely Rumanised : without the canonical laws being taken into consideration, they have shamefully and brutally expelled our three bishops, who have been replaced by Rumanians.* The venality of the Rumanian officials exceeds all limits. They have even gone so far as to compel the papers to describe the travels of General Vaitoianu over the country, according to the reports drawn up by his general staff : several towns saw themselves forced to raise up triumphal arches in honour of the General Commissary.

Moreover, the Rumanian occupation created a complete economic disorganisation—the reasons for this may be found in the measures taken by the Rumanians, who consider Bessarabia as an exporting colony. Here are some instances : the agricultural products are requisitioned at low prices not only in the Northern districts, but exactly in a similar way in the Southern ones. Under the pretext of customs and octroy, barriers have been erected on all the roads, where the gendarmes and other agents levy customs duties on exports and imports, without taking into consideration whether the goods are taxed or not. The sums levied in this way without any control or system, greatly increase the price of foodstuffs. The economic committee, founded by the General Commissariat, is not yet in working order : the members of this Committee are obliged to speak Rumanian. The flagrant incompetence in agricultural matters, and the continuous interference of agronomists in the question of agriculture, resulted in the fields remaining mostly untilled. The district of Khotin alone is an exception, because the Rumanians did not administer it. There have been few autumn sowings done in the districts of Akkermann, Bender and Ismail. As to those of Kishinev, Beltsi and Orghiev, no field work has ever been begun. The exploitation of railways is in a pitiful state, there is no fuel : the managing staff failed to see that they are supplied in time and restricts itself to requisitioning wood in the towns.

A royal decree authorised the Rumanians to requisition 100,000 poods of tobacco at the rate one-third of its actual price :

* See Appendix V.

this latter measure causes the complete ruin of this important industry which could have anyhow kept on in spite of the enormous cost of labour.

The whole of the above tends to explain why just now, more than at any time before, Bessarabia feels absolutely Russian. She adheres to Russia, and Russia only, in spirit and civilisation she wishes to be one in body with a Russia regenerated by the Allies. Should, however, the Powers find it necessary to verify the political and national aspirations of 85 per cent. of her population who ask for nothing else but to share Russia's fate—such as it will be decided at the time of the International Conference—and who are at present prevented from expressing their minds freely, it would seem but fair to *replace the administrating body and the Rumanian army by those of the Allies*. It would be a guarantee to Bessarabia that her appeal for an impartial decision will be heard and taken into account by those who are called to draw up an act of justice for tortured and blood-stained Russia.

III.

The Last Stroke.*

The "Sfatul Tserey" continued the task it had undertaken before the act of the 27th of March: the agrarian reform and the drafting of the scheme of the Bessarabian constitution.

The solution of these two problems, in accordance with the proclamations of the military congress and of the "Sfatul Tserey" itself, should have been left to the Bessarabian Constituent Assembly.

But the "Sfatul Tserey" had always acted as if the latter were never going to be called. And after the 27th of March the question concerning it was no longer even raised. The "Sfatul Tserey" definitely took charge of the drafting of the two laws, the constitutional commission, contenting itself with defining the status of the Bessarabian autonomy in the bosom of the "Great Rumania." The Rumanian Government and its agents took it upon themselves, moreover, to rob the commissions of their independence or to frustrate their efforts.

It was easy to do so with the agrarian commission. The commission was mainly composed of incompetent and uneducated peasants, under the superintendence of several agrarian specialists

* Translated from the leaflet on "The Bessarabian Parliament" published by the Bessarabian Delegates to the Peace Conference (appeared since in English).

sent by the Rumanian Government to direct the work of the commission in a manner favourable to the political interests of Rumania. Those interests chiefly required the maintenance of order and anarchy throughout the country in order to justify the presence of her troops and also her subsequent actions.

Several of the more highly educated members of the commission found themselves compelled to abandon it on account of the anarchic bent assumed by that commission (Tzyganko). However, the bill finally passed by the "Sfatul Tseret" in its last sitting: but it never was, nor ever can be, carried into effect, for not only is it absolutely contrary to every juridical conception, but is completely opposed to simple common sense.

As to the Constitution Commission, it numbered among its members several well-educated men of pro-Russian orientation, who concluded the task and towards the end of October 1918, drew up the draft of a constitution, guaranteeing the liberties and autonomy of Bessarabia upon the basis established by the Act of March 27.

But the Rumanian Government had not the slightest intention of allowing this draft constitution to be put to the vote, nor of guaranteeing the autonomy of Bessarabia.

As a matter of fact, and in spite of its formal promises made on March 27 and 29, the Rumanian Government has annulled this autonomy, overthrown all democratic and really popular institutions in Bessarabia (provincial Zemstvo and municipal councils which were too independent, such as that of Kishinev), without the "Sfatul Tseret," which had proclaimed itself the guardian of Bessarabian liberties, raising so much as a protest.

If the Rumanian Government acted in such a manner, it had obviously no intention of allowing the adoption of the constitution commission's report.

Therefore, in the earliest days of November it got rid of the leaders of the commission by exiling them, and those of the deputies who were suspected of pro-Russian sympathies or considered sufficiently courageous to defend Bessarabian autonomy, Stanevich, vice-president of the tribunal, Prof. Ponomareff, Starenky, the agricultural specialist, and others.

Then, all of a sudden, on November 28, after the "Sfatul" had passed the agrarian bill, the Rumanian Government, aided by the President, who deliberately set aside the draft of the constitution commission, compelled it to vote for the re-union, pure and simple, with Rumania.

The whole farce was played in the following way: The Rumanian Government, determined to obtain the vote of an unconditional union, wished to attract the greatest possible number of peasant delegates to the sitting of November 28. In order to do so, the following announcement was ordered to be printed in large type in the copy of the official paper "Sfatul Tserey" on November 28: "To-day at 6 P.M. the 'Sfatul Tserey' will debate on the agrarian reform bill. All delegates who are not desirous of being taken for Russian 'agents provocateurs' are requested not to quit the assembly."

The same copy of the same paper contained an extremely vigorous leading article, addressed "to the delegates of the 'Sfatul Tserey,' including the following lines: ". . . We repeat again that any delegate who quits the assembly without the gravest reason for doing so, at a moment when the interests of democracy are hanging in the balance, will by this very act prove himself a traitor. Let those who have ears hearken!"

Full well the delegates knew the significance of these words. They knew that the Rumanian Government would not shrink either from deportation or shooting in order to gain its own ends.

Therefore, a large number of deputies assembled in the meeting-hall to vote on the agrarian bill. It was then that the President began the manœuvres and illegal proceedings we mentioned above.

A certain number of deputies succeeded in escaping, in spite of the soldiers posted round the "Sfatul Tserey," some of whom with fixed bayonets had penetrated into the hall.

However, 46 deputies remained, of whom only 38 (out of the 162 which composed the "Sfatul") voted "by acclamation" the Act of November 28, the text of which is as follow:—

"After the union of Transylvania, the Bukovina, the Banate and the Hungarian provinces inhabited by Rumanians within the borders of the Danube and the Tissa, the 'Sfatul Tserey' declares that Bessarabia renounces the conditions stipulated in the Act of Union of March 27, being convinced that an essentially democratic regime is assured to the Rumania of all re-united Rumanians. Without waiting for the convocation of the Rumanian Constituent Assembly elected by universal suffrage, and having settled the agrarian problem in accordance with the needs and desires of the people, the 'Sfatul Tserey' annuls all the conditions of the Act of March 27 and proclaims Bessarabia to be unconditionally united to Great Rumania."

As soon as the vote was carried, more than one hundred telegrams were received at Kishinev from all parts of Bessarabia, testifying to the joy of the population. And the strange thing about these telegrams was that they were dispatched almost at the very hour when the voting took place. Moreover, their text was extremely characteristic: all spoke of a union "without preliminary conditions." Obviously, the agents of the Rumanian Government had ordered these telegrams to be sent in advance at a given date and even hour, as if they knew beforehand that the Act should be voted without fail by the "Sfatul Tserey."

However, the persons who had been compelled to submit to the exigencies of the Rumanian Government assembled later to draw up and sign a report in which they protested against the violence to which they had been subjected and sent the above to the delegates of the opposition.

But no sooner was the vote carried than the Rumanian Government, in order to stifle any protest which might arise in the midst of the "Sfatul Tserey" itself, dispatched its Commissioner General, Voitoiano, at five o'clock in the morning to announce the dissolution of the "Sfatul Tserey."

Nevertheless, before dissolving, before voting on the Act of November 28, the "Sfatul Tserey," which, a few months ago, professed republican and anti-monarchical sentiments, found time to send a telegram to the King of Rumania, of which we produce the following extracts:—

"The 'Sfatul Tserey' . . . begins by directing its thoughts towards Your Majesty, King of all the Rumanians, and lays at the foot of the throne the expression of its sentiments of loyalty and love and unalterable devotion.

Long live His Majesty the King!
Long live Her Majesty the Queen!
Long live the Rumanian dynasty!

This telegram needs no comments. With an assembly such as the 'Sfatul Tserey,' no delicacy was needed. After having made use of this tool the Bucharest Government got rid of it as soon as it was no longer required.

On the other hand, the Rumanian Government had no wish that the Allied armies should see this Bolshevist body at work—this gang which it had made use of to create a state of affairs necessary for the achievement of its own ends, a gang which it had used to stifle the voice of the population, to prevent the

meeting of a Constituent Assembly or the carrying out of a plebiscite, and finally to abuse the credulity of the Allies in the most rude manner by making them believe that Bessarabia had given herself to Rumania by the vote of freely-elected representatives.

Signed—DELEGATES OF BESSARABIA—
“ALEXANDER NICHOLAS KRUPENSKY,
“ALEXANDER SCHMIDT.”

IV.

The Protest against the resolutions of the “Sfatul Tserey” by a group of Delegates.

We, the undersigned delegates of the “Sfatul Tserey,” for the purpose of exposing the unallowable political jobbery, violence and falsification, have drawn up the following declaration :—

“On the initiative of the ‘Moldavian Bloc,’ and without any due announcement in the newspapers or delivery of notices, the opening of the session of the ‘Sfatul Tserey’ was fixed for November 25, 1918, only a group of delegates of the ‘Moldavian Bloc’ being informed of this.

“The true intentions of the ‘Moldavian Bloc’ were disguised by a notice published in the semi-official paper of the Council of Directors, the ‘Sfatul Tserey’ Rumanian edition (N. 189 for November 26, published in the evening of the 25th), where it was stated that the ‘Sfatul Tserey’ would be convened ‘to-morrow’ or the ‘day after to-morrow.’ Thus, all the other parliamentary groups got absolutely no notice of the beginning of the session. Of the leaders of the other parties, only Mr. V. V. Tsyganko was privately notified, and that only two hours before the meeting, in consequence of which Mr. Tsyganko could not inform the members of the Peasants’ Fraction, as well as those in touch with the latter.”

In consequence of the above, the “Sfatul Tserey” was opened in the presence of only the “Moldavian Bloc,” and individual delegates of other parties who happened to be on the premises of the Parliament.

The delegate, V. V. Tsyganko, in the name of the Peasants’ Fraction, the Minority Fraction and part of the “Moldavian Bloc,” lodged a protest with the President of the “Sfatul Tserey,” P. N. Khalippa, against opening the “Sfatul Tserey” in the absence of these fractions, and declared that, if circumstances

make it absolutely necessary to open it on November 25, then, in any case, the election of the praesidium should not take place on that day. The session was opened on November 25, and, notwithstanding V. V. Tsyganko's protest the elections took place without a quorum (48 delegates voted, the quorum being 54, or one-third of the 162 delegates forming the "Sfatul Tserey").

On November 26, before the opening of the meeting of the "Sfatul Tserey," the agenda of which contained only a Debate on the agrarian question, a group of delegates who had not taken part in electing the praesidium nor entrusted the management of the parliamentary affairs to the latter, discussed the question of the meeting of November 25, and empowered one of the delegates, Mr. Genzula, to make the following declaration in their names before the meeting was opened: "A group of delegates who took no part in yesterday's meeting, in consequence of the praesidium not having sent out official notices of the same, declares that the elections took place in the absence of a quorum and with an infringement of the regulations, and therefore they cannot recognise the present praesidium and demands its re-election. Until this is done, the above group of delegates will take no part in the plenary sittings."

The substance of the President's reply to this declaration was as follows: "At the opening of the 'Sfatul Tserey,' the number of delegates in the hall was sufficient to form a quorum, and at the election to the praesidium, more than half the delegates of those who had come to this meeting were present, and therefore the elections of the praesidium are considered to be quite regular and therefore the praesidium will not be re-elected."

After this, the group that had protested against the election of the praesidium demonstratively left the hall, accompanied by the ironical cheers and cries of the remaining delegates of the "Moldavian Bloc," and even of the president himself. Part of the delegates at once left the premises of the "Sfatul Tserey," while the rest gathered together to discuss the situation, and, not wishing to be provoked into refusing to take part in the labours of the Parliament, as regards the examination of the agrarian bill, passed a resolution empowering delegate V. V. Tsyganko to make the following declaration at the plenary meeting, in the name of the group of delegates who had left the hall.

"The group of delegates who left the meeting, thereby expressed their protest against the irregular election of the praesidium, which took place in the absence of a quorum, with an obvious breach of the regulations and with violence inadmissible in

parliamentary procedure—declare their want of confidence to the praesidium and announce that it is only owing to their consciousness of the necessity for elaborating the Agrarian Bill, which is acceptable to them in principle in the form drawn up by the Agrarian Commission, and are ready in future to take part in the work of examining this Bill, while firmly declining to acknowledge the praesidium as at present elected, not considering it as the responsible director of the ‘Sfatul Tserey.’”

After an adjournment, P. N. Khalippa, the President, allowed V. V. Tsyganko, the representative of the delegates who had left the meeting, to speak. V. V. Tsyganko then announced that the aforesaid protest had been lodged with the praesidium, and that he, V. Tsyganko, declines to make it public, as he personally would consider M. Khalippa’s promise satisfactory, but that, at the demand of the delegates now absent, the protest might be made public at the next meeting.

The remaining small group of delegates, who had returned with M. Tsyganko, joined in the debate on the Agrarian Bill with the others. As the meeting* had begun about 8 P.M., by 1 A.M. the greater part of the delegates were tired out, owing to which their numbers kept diminishing. At 2.30 A.M., after the reading of the Bill was over, without any warning, the President Khalippa read a resolution to the effect that the unconditional annexation of Bessarabia by Rumania and the repeal of Bessarabian autonomy were desirable. When counted, only 46 delegates were found to be present in the hall. Some of them began to applaud, so that no one could hear the President’s question; “Who is against? Who abstains from voting?”

“Unanimously accepted,” announced the President Khalippa. The representatives of part of the Peasants’ Fraction delegates protested, demanding the right of making a declaration. The President did not permit them to speak, and a deed of enormous state importance was considered as settled, though there was nothing like a quorum (*i.e.*, 46 delegates, part of whom, with Buchushkan at the head, protested). Then the General Commissary General Voitoyanu, called up by telephone, read the Royal decree of the prorogation of the “Sfatul Tserey.” This took place at 5.30 A.M.

Certifying the truth of the foregoing, the undersigned delegates of the “Sfatul Tserey,” empowered by various parliamentary groups to draw up the present Act, consider that, in view of the

* Obviously it is the meeting of November 28 that is referred to here.

infringements of rights permitted, which are akin to fraud, all the resolutions of the "Sfatul Tserey," passed at the meetings of November 25 and 26, 1918, are null and void, and hereby energetically protest against the repeal of autonomy, as an act of violence against the will of the peoples inhabiting Bessarabia.*

V.

Declaration of the Odessa Committee of the "Bessarabia Liberation League," addressed to the Diplomatic Representatives of the Allied Powers.

The victory of the Allied Powers over Germany and her Allies has opened out great and favourable prospects to Europe and all mankind. The free self-determination of nations will henceforth become the problem and great watchword of all nations that have hitherto only experienced the national artificial subjection to other, more powerful nations.

The approaching World Congress will put an end to the numerous cases of injustice and will realise the hopes and longings which have been cherished for centuries. Among many other nationalities, all the nationalities of Bessarabia put all their hopes on the great democracies of England, France, and the United States of North America, and are waiting for them to perform an act of justice towards Bessarabia, their fatherland, only lately annexed to the Kingdom of Rumania by force.

This forcible annexation of Bessarabia by the neighbouring State has caused a general protest of all the inhabitants, without distinction of race or language.

The Odessa Committee of the "Bessarabia Liberation League," whose aim is to struggle against the oppression to which this small territory has been subjected, appeals to the Diplomatic Representatives of the Allied Powers, and through them to the great free nations, asking them to apply to our country, now in misfortune, the principles of President Wilson's declaration, and not to pre-decide the question until the World Congress, allowing the population of Bessarabia to express its real will.

* The Protest is signed by ten delegates. Not knowing whether they all are outside Bessarabia, I do not publish their signatures.

VI.

To the Odessa Committee of the "Bessarabia Liberation League," from the Bessarabians.

A great joy filled the hearts of all of us Bessarabians, without distinction of religion, race, or social position, when from the Trans-Dniester newspapers we knew of your first steps.

The composition of your members, who have received their powers lawfully from the whole population of Bessarabia, and represent all political and national trends of thought in Bessarabia, from that of the private soldier to the former high official—is undoubtedly significant of the united front presented by Bessarabia,

All those who formerly opposed one another have now united, stand shoulder to shoulder in order to free our native country from seizure by the alien Kingdom of Rumania. This union in your persons of all of us will make it impossible for Rumania to delude the Great Allied Powers.

It is not right that, with the blessing of German militarism, a country should be occupied and terrorised, and then, on the arrival of the Allied troops, the act of oppression should be cloaked by a series of State acts which bear the obvious stamp of falseness. At a time when oppression is defeated and the sun of truth and right is rising over the tottering world, it is impossible, we repeat, hastily to commit an act of violence on the will of a large piece of territory, by claiming the right of national consanguinity with part of the population of this territory. . . . According to statistics, the Moldavians in Bessarabia form only 47.58 per cent., or less than half the population. We Bessarabians oppose this claim, based on a forgotten national consanguinity of less than half the population, which has lost its importance more than a century ago, by a counter-claim of spiritual brotherhood of the whole Bessarabian population with that of Great Russia, and assert that community of spiritual and material interests is a real basis of life within a State. Such interests do not always proceed from nationality, the most striking examples being America and Switzerland.

We, Bessarabians, during a century of common life with Great Russia, have participated in her cultural advantages. Russian genius has raised us to the heights of world problems as seen by Russia, and it would be the greatest crime against

the spirit of humanity to force us to descend to the obscure valleys of Balkan-Rumanian cultural advantages, with their narrow chauvinism. . . . But, alas, Rumania in all the blindness of her chauvinism, does not understand what she is attempting to do.

They feel that, before the Great Powers, it is impossible to base all their claims on national consanguinity alone: that is why Rumania is trying to give Bessarabia her own Rumanian national tinge, and is resorting for that aim to a miserable falsification of the whole life of the province. But, behold, what exertion does this cost! Rumania has to avail herself of the services of local blinded chauvinists and anonymous political adventurers which are far from being disinterested, and are backed by no part of the population. To accomplish this aim it was necessary to dissolve and cancel lawfully convened organs of local self-government, and to strengthen and make use of the remnants of a degenerate self-appointed revolutionary institution, but even that could not be convened in its original composition, as even that organ would have found the words of condemnation: that is why also it became necessary to abrogate law courts and the whole administrative machinery, as if it were possible at a stroke to deprive a people of the consciousness of their rights. To do this, it was necessary to deprive the whole province of free speech, by censorship and by the prohibition of the importation of all newspapers from beyond the river Dniester: to injure the souls of children by Rumanising the schools: to punish the people harshly, even going to the length of shooting them: to deport prominent public men: it was necessary to descend to the clumsiest deceit, by forcing the Bessarabians to hold elections to the Rumanian Constituent Assembly—under such circumstances as generally accompany elections in Rumania, as if wishing to show the world that Bessarabians are Rumanians: in short, it was necessary to be prepared for the complete ruin of the country, both cultural and economic, and for all the oppression which has been condemned by the whole course of the World War, not understanding that in her greedy chauvinistic impulse, Rumania was filling up the most shameful page in the history of our days: even the masses of the people who have hardly absorbed culture, have felt this, and with open indignation and distrust they regarded the promises of the allotment of land which have been made to attract these masses to side with Rumania.

Thus, wherever one turns one's eyes in our country, everywhere one finds deceit and oppression.

It is to you, members of the Odessa Committee, that we look for help, because we are bound hand and foot. We beg of you to show the Allies the real condition of our country: we ask you to remember that we wish to cast our lot with Russia.

We believe in her regeneration, and ask you to join your forces to those which are now working for her restoration, because if there is no Russia, there is no Bessarabia.

Let our appeal to you serve as a sign of that support which you have the right to reckon on from us, and which you in particular need in our common cause.

And so, be courageous. Right and Truth are on our side.

VII.

The Note of the Representatives of the Russian Government in Paris to the Peace Conference.

HANDED OVER ON JULY 24, 1919.

In a memorandum presented to the Peace Conference on March 22, 1919, the undersigned had the honour of expressing the Russian views on the subject of Bessarabia. They believe they have proved that in common justice no definite decision concerning the destiny of Bessarabia can be adopted until the Russian democracy are in a state to participate in the solution of this problem.

At the same time they have established the general principles of a future revision of the international status of this province in case of the eventual establishment of a provisional regime in Bessarabia corresponding to the necessities of the moment.

In the representation made on July 2, 1919, to the Supreme Council of the Peace Conference, the Russian Ambassador, Mr. V. Maklakov, indicated the only equitable solution of the question, viz. the organisation of a plebiscite in the four districts (uyezds) of Bessarabia where the majority of the population are Moldavians. From news received from Bessarabia, however, it appears that the Rumanian Government, without even waiting for the decision of the Peace Conference, was already treating Bessarabia as an annexed country. These news are, moreover, confirmed by the official representative of Rumania at Paris, who has declared

lately in the " Temps," that " general elections by direct, secret and universal suffrage must take place in Bessarabia as in all parts of Rumania at a very near date. These will form the best of plebiscites." The undersigned find themselves obliged to protest formally against such a conduct of the Rumanian Government.

The votes of the " Sfatul Tsercy," upon which Rumania bases her claims, are null and void, not only because of the arbitrary composition of the Assembly, but also because the votes of every Assembly, whether revolutionary or not, in order to be of any political value, must have guarantees of their genuineness and independence. But no such guarantees were in existence at the time the votes were taken by the " Sfatul Tsercy " on the Union of Bessarabia with Rumania. As a matter of fact, on December 2, 1917, this Assembly had first declared Bessarabia to be a " democratic Moldavian Republic, forming part of the united Federative Democratic Russian Republic." It has subsequently, on January 27, 1918, a few days after the entry of the Rumanian troops, proclaimed a " Moldavian People's Republic free and independent," leaving, however, to a Constituent Assembly the final settlement of Bessarabia's relations to other countries. It is only some months later, under manifest violence, that the " Sfatul Tsercy " voted in favour of Bessarabia's union with Rumania upon the basis of a broad autonomy (on March 27, 1919), finally it renounced even that autonomy (on November 28, 1919).

The Rumanian Government, aware of the sentiments of the Moldavian population hostile to annexation, had established in Bessarabia a veritable Reign of Terror. All the existing institutions, such as elective municipalities and Zemstvos, tribunals, &c., were abolished and replaced by Rumanian institutions: all Russian partisans persecuted. During the supplementary by-elections to the " Sfatul Tsercy " in January 1918, four delegates, elected by the peasants' assembly with a mandate to protest against the violence of the Russian officials, were shot without any form of trial (Pantzir, Vranoff, Chumachenko, Mme. Grinfield). The Act of March 27, proclaiming the union of autonomous Bessarabia to Rumania, was voted in the presence of Rumanian military authority, the building of the " Sfatul Tsercy " being surrounded by Rumanian troops. Similar pressure was exercised at the time of the second vote, which proclaimed the union pure and simple.

This Act of annexation was voted by 38 deputies out of the

162 members composing the "Sfatul Tserey," and of whom only 46 were present: Rumanian soldiers with fixed bayonets having entered the hall of the Assembly.

It is obvious that the annexation of Bessarabia declared by the "Sfatul Tserey" is not only illegal from the standpoint of international law, but, from political point of view equally, a vote obtained under similar conditions cannot be of any value except to those who imposed it by force.

Consequently the Rumanian parliamentary elections, could not be extended to Bessarabia without violating the very substance of the people's right of free self-determination. This violation assumes still graver forms because of the participation in the election being declared *compulsory*. It is evident that this enforced participation, far from being "the best plebiscite," will only serve to attain a triple violation of the rights of Bessarabia, which is deprived of her right to self-determination: of those of Russia, whose consent has not been asked: and finally, of those of the Peace Conference, whose decisions were prejudiced by an act both arbitrary and one-sided.

Accordingly, the undersigned respectfully draw the attention of the Peace Conference to the state of affairs as explained above and insist on the necessity of a plebiscite limited to the four Moldavian districts of Bessarabia, and organised under conditions of perfect good faith as soon as order is re-established in Russia. Until then, a provisional regime should be established in Bessarabia under the auspices of the Peace Conference, including the annulment of all decrees and all measures of the Rumanian Government tending to modify the situation in favour of Rumania, and first of all the decrees ordering the population of Bessarabia to take part in the elections to the Rumanian Parliament, the decree abolishing the Zemstvo and municipalities, the decree declaring all the inhabitants of Bessarabia to be Rumanian subjects, the decree of expropriation of the lands belonging to those who have not accepted Rumanian nationality, &c. A Mission, nominated by the Conference should be sent without delay to Bessarabia to ensure the functioning of this provisional régime, and to control in the future the impartial application of plebiscite in the four districts with a majority of Moldavian population.

Signed: PRINCE LVOFF,
SAZONOV,
N. W. CHAIKOVSKY,
MAKLAKOV.

The "Sfatul Tserey": The limits of its competence.

From October 20 to 27, 1917, the First All-Russian Military Moldavian Congress was held at Kishinev, and among other resolutions the following was passed:

"Concerning the local Soviet.—A local Council shall immediately be formed for the management of all the affairs of autonomous Bessarabia. The local Soviet will be composed of 120 members, in the following manner: 44 representatives of the Military Congress, to be chosen at once; 30 representatives of the Moldavian peasantry; 10 representatives of Moldavian parties and organisations, and 36 of all other nationalities of Bessarabia, reckoning 70 per cent. of Moldavians and 30 per cent. of other nationalities. Moreover, 10 seats, over and above the 120, shall be assigned to the Trans-Dniestrovian Moldavians, should they desire to fill them. Coalition with capitalists is to be considered as undesirable. The local Soviet shall be considered as *provisional until the Bessarabian Constituent Assembly is convened* on the basis of universal, direct, equal and secret suffrage. All the administrative Zemstvo and other institutions and establishments in Bessarabia shall be placed in the jurisdiction of the local Soviet. From the moment the local Soviet is formed, all the committees within the territory of Bessarabia shall acquire a purely professional character."

This is the resolution which laid the foundation of the "Sfatul Tserey," defined the procedure of its formation, and by a show of hands on the part of the military deputies solemnised the ratio of nationalities inhabiting Bessarabia; a ratio very essentially differing from that of statistical data.

Subsequently, the number of deputies was slightly increased, but the distorted and unequal ratio of nationalities remained.

This same resolution likewise clearly shows that the members of the First All-Russian Military Moldavian Congress did not consider the local Soviet as then established by them as an authoritative organ, reflecting the will of the inhabitants of Bessarabia. They resolved that: It shall be considered "provisional until the Bessarabian Constituent Assembly be convened on the basis of a universal, direct, equal and secret suffrage."

That the members of the Congress had a very definite idea that the local Soviet they were establishing was not to have full powers, is clearly to be seen from the resolution of the Congress: "On the Land Question and Colonisation," in which, after enunciating certain principles of the future agrarian reform in Bessarabia, they did not entrust the execution of this reform—which was at that time the most urgent and fundamental problem—to this local Soviet, but resolved that:

"The distribution of land among the tillers of the soil shall be entrusted to the Bessarabian Constituent Assembly."

Such was the attitude of the Congress in regard to the powers of the "Sfatul Tserey," the nucleus of which, *i.e.*, about one-third of the delegates, had been elected from among the members of the Congress.

The next large group of delegates in the "Sfatul Tserey" was elected by the Third Local Congress of Peasant Delegates, in January, 1918. The views of this Peasants' Congress on the "Sfatul Tserey" may be seen from the "Nakaz" (Mandate) drawn up by the Congress for the delegates elected by the latter.

The first clause was as follows: "The Constituent Assembly of the Moldavian Republic shall be convened within a short time."

The third clause of the "Nakaz" shows the views of the Peasants' Congress on the aims of the Constituent Assembly: "In view of the dispersal of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly by the Bolsheviks, the local Constituent Assembly must be considered as the sole and complete master of the Moldavian Republic. The Assembly will draw up a final constitution, form of government in the Republic, and fundamental laws."

Thus, in the opinion of the Peasants' Congress, the drawing up of the fundamental laws of the Republic did not enter into the functions of the "Sfatul Tserey."

More than that, the Peasants' Congress passed the following resolution:

"It is necessary and obligatory that, at the Fourth Peasants' Congress, the reorganisation of the future representation in the 'Sfatul Tserey' should be undertaken." (The Fourth Peasants' Congress was to have been convened for the purpose of nominating candidates for the Bessarabian Constituent Assembly.) Obviously, the Peasants' Congress considered that, even for temporary work, until the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, which was to be convened "within a short time," the composition of the members of the "Sfatul Tserey," as established by the First All-Russian Military Moldavian Congress, was not satisfactory, and did not represent the will of the inhabitants of Bessarabia.

The attitude of other organisations, political, social and professional, in regard to the formation of the "Sfatul Tserey" was affected by the conditions then prevalent in Russia. This was the time of the overthrow of the Provisional Government, the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks, a time of lawlessness and anarchy. Trusting to the local Soviet as an

institution which would take up the struggle against anarchy, and from this point of view welcoming its foundation, all local organisations express very definite disapproval of the method of its formation, based on completely distorted national principles.

On November 21, 1917, the "Sfatul Tsercy" held its first meeting. I. K. Inkulets was unanimously elected president. In his first speech he gave a fully defined and official view, evidently taken by the majority of delegates, of the duties and powers of the "Sfatul Tsercy" as then elected.

Among other things he said :

"Until the Bessarabian Constituent Assembly is convened, and until the principles of the Federation are established by the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, the Supreme Authority in Bessarabia must be the 'Sfatul Tsercy,' composed of the representatives of democratic organisations, organs of self-government, political parties and representatives of nationalities."

"It shall be the urgent duty of the 'Sfatul Tsercy' to prepare for and convene the Bessarabian Constituent Assembly, elected on the principle of universal, direct, equal and secret ballot."

The same consciousness of its lack of authority to decide fundamental questions of political life is likewise reflected in the declarations of the "Sfatul Tsercy" of December 2, 1917, and January 24, 1918.

On December 2, 1917, the "Sfatul Tsercy" declared Bessarabia to be "The Moldavian Democratic Republic."

This declaration was explained as being made, not because the "Sfatul Tsercy" had the right to do so, but because of the *raison d'état*!

"The Russian Republic is in the greatest danger. The absence of authority in the centre, and the anarchy throughout the country, the weakness in the face of the foreign foe, threaten the existence of the State. At the present terrible historical moment the only way of saving the Russian Democratic Republic is to organise and weld together its peoples on the principle of national territorial self-determination. On the basis of this principle, for the purpose of establishing order in the State, and in order to consolidate the conquests of the Revolution, Bessarabia, on the strength of her historic past, is declared from henceforth to be the Moldavian Democratic Republic, entering as a full member into the United Russian Federative Democratic Republic."

The same declaration points out: "Until the National Assembly of the Moldavian Republic is convened, after being elected on the principle of universal, direct, equal and secret ballot on the system of proportionate representation, the Supreme Authority in the Moldavian Democratic Republic is the 'Sfatul Tsercy,' composed of the representatives of all the organised groups of revolutionary democracy, separate nationalities and organs of self-government."

In the enumeration of the aims which the "Sfatul Tsercy" has before it, we find in the first place :

"The convening, as soon as possible, of the National Assembly of the Moldavian Republic, elected on the principle of universal, equal, direct and secret ballot on the system of proportional representation."

The Declaration of the "Sfatul Tsercy" of January 24, 1918, declares Bessarabia to be an Independent Free Moldavian National Republic.

And this decision is explained in the declaration of political necessity—by the declaration of the independence of the Ukraine, and as a consequence by the disruption of Bessarabia from the republics which had arisen in Russia.

"The declaration of independence is conditional on the political expediency of the moment, as at the present time the Moldavian Republic cannot look anywhere for help in organising its life."

But even in this declaration, which proclaims the complete independence of Bessarabia, there are signs that the "Sfatul Tsercy," in its present composition, is conscious of not possessing full powers.

"The special aim of the 'Sfatul Tsercy' and of the Council of Ministers" says the declaration, "shall be the immediate convening of the National Constituent Assembly of the Moldavian Republic, on the principle of universal suffrage, which will finally establish the Constitution of the country and its allied relations with other states, should this be required by the welfare of the peoples of our republic."

Thus, on January 24, the "Sfatul Tsercy" did not consider itself competent to decide the fate of Bessarabia, to establish the constitution "finally," and to make treaties of alliance with its neighbours.

* * * * *

An unfavourable attitude—not to the idea of a representative institution for Bessarabia, but to the present method of composing the "Sfatul Tsercy"—is also taken by various organisations and institutions, not only during its formation, but even after.

On March 21, 1918, several days before the "Act" of March 27, the District Zemstvo Assembly of the Orgheyev district passed the following resolution unanimously :

"That the 'Sfatul Tserey' Government be requested, in the name of the Zemstvo Assembly—which is a real representative of the inhabitants of the Orghyev district, as having been elected under the law on the new Zemstvo, on the basis of the fourfold formula (*i.e.*, universal, equal, direct and secret)—to take measures that the Constituent Assembly of the Moldavian Republic be immediately convened."

This resolution was carried out by means of the following telegram :

"Kishinev, 'Sfatul Tserey.' The First Democratic Orghyev District Zemstvo Assembly, elected by universal, equal, direct and secret ballot, greeting its supreme local organ, the 'Sfatul Tserey,' and heartily thanking the same for the onerous labours, considers it its duty to inform the 'Sfatul Tserey,' that the success of the fruitful Zemstvo activity is invariably connected with the establishment of a firm and stable constitution, and the removal of all abnormalities caused by the anxious and transitory period, owing to which, in the name of the welfare and salvation of our beloved Fatherland, the Assembly unanimously and insistently petitions that the Constituent Assembly of the Moldavian Republic be shortly convened.

This telegram clearly shows that the "Sfatul Tserey," as then constituted, was one of the "abnormalities caused by the anxious and transitory period" which, for the success of Zemstvo activity and the welfare and salvation of the Fatherland, must be replaced as soon as possible by a properly elected Constituent Assembly.

Practically, this telegram from the Zemstvo Assembly, elected by all the population of a whole district, establishes the fact that the "Sfatul Tserey," in its actual composition, is not an institution that can voice the will of the whole population of Bessarabia.

Highly interesting are the views of the Soroki district Zemstvo Assembly on the "Sfatul Tserey." It is necessary to remark that at this meeting the *masters of the situation were the representatives of that very group of "Sfatul Tserey" delegates which passed the Act of March 27.* Their aim at the meeting of March 13-17, 1918, at Soroki was to re-elect representatives of the Soroki district to the "Sfatul Tserey," to replace the delegates whom they were dissatisfied with by their own partisans.

The minutes of the Zemstvo Assembly (March 13, evening meeting) contain the following :
". . . The Zemstvo Assembly debated the question of the composition of the representatives of the Soroki district in the local organ 'Sfatul Tserey.'"

The debate on this question elucidated the following :

1. That the present Soroki district delegates in the "Sfatul Tserey" are persons *elected by various revolutionary organisations, congresses, soviets, etc., which now no longer exist.*
2. That the names of the Soroki district delegates in the "Sfatul Tserey" are *unknown either to the mass of the population or to the Zemstvo Assembly.*
3. That, in view of the closure of the organisations which had elected their own delegate of the Soroki district to the "Sfatul Tserey," these delegates, having lost touch with their organisations, are not representatives of the whole population of the district.
4. That the Zemstvo Assembly, elected on the basis of universal, direct, equal and secret ballot, is the sole representative of the interests of all classes of the population of the district, and is able to elect representatives of the Soroki district to the "Sfatul Tserey."

In consideration of the above, the Zemstvo Assembly has unanimously resolved to *recall* all the representatives of the Soroki district who are at present members of the "Sfatul Tserey," and to elect new representatives to the same.

The above resolutions, passed by the Soroki District Zemstvo Assembly, characterise the composition and method of forming the "Sfatul Tserey" with sufficient clearness. The fact that these resolutions were passed by the Zemstvo Assembly, where the masters of the situation (aided and supported by the Rumanian troops) were the present masters of the situation in the "Sfatul Tserey" (the chairman of the Assembly being V. U. Birka, a member of the "Sfatul Tserey") only increases the significance of the proceeding.

It is true that in the resolution above mentioned, mention is made only of the delegates of the Soroki district, but as the procedure of "electing" delegates was the same in all districts, it is obvious that all that was said in regard to the Soroki delegates refers equally to the rest of the members of the "Sfatul Tserey."

If the masters of the situation in the present "Sfatul Tserey" were logical and consistent they would be forced to admit that an enormous majority of them ought to be re-elected, as having been elected by organisations at present non-existing, and that the Provincial Zemstvo Assembly should be considered as the institution expressing the will of the whole population of Bessarabia, as it is composed of delegates of all districts, properly elected, and not selected at haphazard, like those in the present "Sfatul Tserey."

* * * * *

On March 27, 1918, when the declaration on the union with Rumania was put to the vote, in spite of the conditions of this voting, the consciousness of their not being empowered to settle such a question appeared, and found expression in the declarations made by a whole series of delegates in the "Sfatul Tserey."

The Peasants' Fraction (represented by V. V. Tsyganko) declared that it was *not empowered to settle the question and* "considers it necessary that the question should be settled either by a referendum or by the Constituent Assembly, as the expression of the sole sovereign will of the people."

This motion was seconded by the *representatives of professional unions*.

"As a representative of all the Germans of the Moldavian Republic (over 75,000)," said the delegate, F. Lesch, "I announce, in the name of my party, that the *German population of the Republic*, in electing us to represent the interests of the Germans, *did not empower us to decide the question of the union of the Moldavian Republic with any country whatever.*"

The delegate Misirkoff read the declaration of his party: "The *Fraction of the Bulgaro-Gaguases* has empowered me to declare that *in no case will it consider itself competent, without being specially empowered for that purpose* by the Bulgarian and Gaguas population of Bessarabia—to examine and decide the question of the union of Bessarabia with any neighbouring State whatever. And the question of agreement with foreign States, by which the political rights and the independence of Bessarabia are restricted, may be examined and decided, in the opinion of the Fraction, only by a Constituent Assembly of the Moldavian Republic, freely elected by the whole people."

In the name of the *Ukrainian party*, the delegate *Osmolovsky* announced: "When the Ukrainians sent us to the 'Sfatul Tserey' they gave us a mandate, as faithful sons of our young Republic, to guard and strengthen it, the question of its union with any State whatever was not even raised, and therefore we, *having no powers in this respect, do not consider that we have any right to decide this highly important question*; in our opinion, it can be decided only by the will of the whole people of the Moldavian Republic, as expressed through the Constituent Assembly."

The delegate of the *Russian population*, Grekulov, also announced that the *question of the union of Bessarabia with Rumania could not be settled in haste at that time*, and could be decided only by properly elected Constituent Assembly.

Only one of the representatives of the national minorities, the *Polish delegate Dutkevitch*, acknowledged the Act of 27 March as "natural and lawful." By the way, this representative of the Poles in the "Sfatul Tserey" left Bessarabia for good immediately after his declaration.

Why was it that on March 27 this consciousness of their lack of power—the consciousness that the "Sfatul Tserey" did not express the will of the population—did not show itself in the majority of the members?

There were 86 votes for the Declaration, 3 against it, and 38 delegates abstained from voting.

Was not it affected by the environment? "Along the Golenistchev-Kutuzov Street, leading to the Parliament, and along the Sadovaya Street, in which the House of Parliament stands, troops and gendarmes were posted, while near the entrance to Parliament there was a guard of honour." Thus the staging is described by the *official organ* of the "Sfatul Tserey" in the number for March 29, 1918.

APPENDIX II.

Entry of Rumanian Troops into Kishinev.

The Rumanian troops, invited into Bessarabia by the Moldavian Republic, entered Kishinev on January 26, at 6 p.m.

The Bolshevik agitators who were in the town fled in the direction of Bender.

General Presan, Commander-in-Chief of the Rumanian Armies, issued the following proclamation, addressed to the population of Bessarabia:

"Citizens of the Moldavian Republic!

"You and your country, as we and our country, are passing through a critical and decisive time.

"On every hand a great number of people are telling you all kinds of lies, which upset you, obscure your minds and prevent you distinguishing good from evil.

"In these times of hard trial and transition the 'Sfatul Tserey' of Bessarabia has thought of us, and has asked us, through the Russian military command, to cross the River Pruth:

"1. To re-establish order and quiet in your towns and villages, and to protect the lives and property of all the people against malefactors;

"2. To guarantee the transport of the necessary supplies to the Russian and Rumanian Armies who guard our frontiers and thereby protect the frontiers of your country.

"The arrival of the Rumanian troops in Bessarabia has greatly displeased the malefactors and agents in the pay of your enemies, who are likewise ours—agents who have found such a safe refuge in your territory, because they know that henceforth they cannot rob in your country except in the forest.

"These enemies have taken base advantage of your honest hearts, so good and confidings and have tried to sow discord between you and us, telling you that the Rumanians are, coming to occupy your country in order to take possession of your land, and with the sole intention of placing you again under the dominion of your former masters, and depriving you of your national and political right, won by the Revolution.

"Far be such thoughts from you! Moldavian citizens! Do not believe such lies!

"How can you imagine that the Rumanian soldier, who, thanks to his King and Government, has acquired the land which feeds him, is now coming to the land of his brethren to prevent them from enjoying their rights likewise?

"I tell you plainly that the Rumanian Army has no other wish than to enable you, by the order and quiet which it brings you, to gain and to improve your autonomy and your liberties as you think fit.

"The Rumanian Army will not trouble any inhabitant of the Republic, whatever his nationality or religion may be.

"As soon as order and quiet have been established, and when there is a guarantee that pillaging, robbery and murder will not begin again, the Rumanian soldiers will return to their own country."

APPENDIX III.

Declaration of the "Sfatul Tsercy" of the Democratic Moldavian Republic of March 27, 1918.

In the name of the people of Bessarabia the "Sfatul Tsercy" declares:

The Democratic Moldavian Republic (Bessarabia), bordered by the Pruth, the Dniestr, the Danube, the Black Sea and the ancient Austrian frontier, torn by Russia more than a century ago from the body of ancient Moldavia, strong in its historic right as well as its right of parentage, basing itself on the principle that peoples have the right of deciding their own fate—is from henceforth and for ever reunited to its Mother, Rumania.

This reunion is based on the following grounds:

1. The present "Sfatul Tsercy" retains its powers principally for the solution and realisation of the agrarian reform in accordance with the requirements and wishes of the people: its decisions will be recognised by the Rumanian Government.

2. Bessarabia is guaranteed provincial autonomy, having her own local council, the "Sfatul Tsercy" (Diet), which will henceforth be elected by universal, equal, direct and secret ballot, with her own executive organ, and her own administration.

3. The "Sfatul Tsercy" shall be empowered to:

(a) Vote the local budget.

(b) Control all Zemstvo and municipal organs.

(c) Appoint, through its executive organ, all local administrative officials, with the proviso that the appointment of the principal officials shall be confirmed by the Rumanian Government.

4. The army shall be recruited on the territorial principle.

5. The existing laws and local organisations (Zemstvo and municipalities) shall remain in force, and cannot be altered by the Rumanian Parliament unless the representatives of Bessarabia take part in the work.

6. The rights of the minorities in Bessarabia shall be respected.

7. Two representatives of Bessarabia shall be members of the Rumanian Council of Ministers. They shall be at present elected from among the members of the "Sfatul Tsercy," but in the future they shall be chosen from among the representatives of Bessarabia in the Rumanian Parliament.

8. Bessarabia shall send to the Rumanian Parliament a number of representatives proportionate to her population, elected by means of a universal, equal, direct and secret ballot.

9. All the volost, village, municipal, Zemstvo, and Parliamentary elections in Bessarabia shall be made by universal, equal, direct and secret ballot.

10. The liberty of the person, the liberty of the press, of speech, of religion, of meeting, and all public liberties shall be guaranteed by the Constitution.

11. All breaches of the law, and crimes committed from political motives during, or prior to, the time of the disorders, shall be annulled.

As Bessarabia is being united to Rumania, like a daughter to her mother, the Rumanian Parliament orders the immediate convocation of a Constituent Assembly, which shall be composed of representatives of Bessarabia, in numbers proportionate to the population,

elected by universal, equal, direct and secret ballot, for the purpose of drawing up, by common consent, a Constitution inspired by the principles of the foregoing guarantees.

The union of Bessarabia with Rumania shall be sealed for all time.

Voted by the "Sfatul Tseret," the 27th day of March, 1918, at Kishinev.

President of the "Sfatul Tseret,"

Secretary of the "Sfatul Tseret,"

I. INCOULETZ.

J. BOUZDOUGANE.

APPENDIX IV.

To the Holy Synod of the Rumanian Church.

TIKHON THE HUMBLE.

BY THE GRACE OF GOD PATRIARCH
OF MOSCOVIA AND ALL RUSSIA.

In April of the current year, 1918, His Eminence Pimen, Metropolitan of Moldavia and Scotchava, at that time head of the Rumanian Church, informed us by telegram that, owing to the political union of Bessarabia to Rumania, the Orthodox population inhabiting the aforesaid province is canonically subject to the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Church of the Kingdom of Rumania.

In answer to this communication we sent His Eminence a special epistle, in which we fraternally requested the Rumanian Holy Synod to discuss this disputable ecclesiastical question which has newly arisen, by means of proper canonical communication between the Russian and the Rumanian Church, the clergy and churchmen of the Kishinev diocese taking part in the same.

To our profound sorrow, our fraternal appeal to the heads of the Rumanian Church found no echo of sympathy among the latter. His Eminence the Metropolitan Pimen and the Holy Synod of the Rumanian Church preferring to break off all further communication with us immediately, and to demand from Anastasius, Archbishop of Kishinev and Khotin, as also to the suffragans of the Kishinev diocese, Gabriel, Bishop of Akkerman, temporarily in charge of that diocese, owing to the Archbishop Anastasius being at the Church Council at Moscow, and Dionysius, Bishop of Izmail, that they and their flock should immediately submit to the jurisdiction of the Rumanian Church. But as Archbishop Anastasius and his suffragans could not fulfil this unlawful order, the former was deprived of his see by the Rumanian Synod, while the latter, giving way to force, were obliged to resign their posts and leave Bessarabia. At the same time the diocese of Kishinev was entrusted to Nicodemus Bishop of Hushi, who took possession of the Kishinev See, which he still holds. Such is the course of events which gradually led up to the present abnormal and difficult position of the Bessarabian Church.

Having debated the matter carefully and with all impartiality, we have come to the following conclusions, based not on our personal convictions, but on the canonical conscience of the hierarchs of the whole Russian Orthodox Church.

1. The Rumanian Church, by its PARTIAL DECISION, TAKEN WITHOUT ANY AGREEMENT WITH THE RUSSIAN CHURCH, had no right to determine the fate of the diocese of Kishinev, as regards the subjection of the latter to the power of the former after Orthodox Bessarabia had, for a hundred years, been an integral part of the body of Russian Church: such conduct on the part of the Rumanian Holy Synod is contrary both to the spirit of Christian charity, ancient canonical directions, and the sacred customs of Orthodox Churches. The plea, that political union always entails ecclesiastical union, can in this case be no extenuation for the Rumanian Church authorities (1) because it is itself not borne out by history, and (2) because such a point of view is based on a confusion of ecclesiastical with political life, which are different in their very essence. The sword of State, as we know, cannot by itself determine the boundaries of local Churches: the limits of jurisdiction over the latter are always established by certain canonical standards, special definitions by Councils, or by mutual agreement between individual Churches. In the present case not one of these conditions was present. Moreover, the very act of the union of Bessarabia to the Kingdom of Rumania, as we have already affirmed, is far from being universally acknowledged from an international point of view, and may be subjected to revision at the final liquidation of the results of the World War.

2. In forcibly cutting off the diocese of Kishinev from the Russian Church, as part of its dominions, the Rumanian ecclesiastical authorities have not only committed a breach of old-established ecclesiastical order and procedure but have likewise brought confusion and temptation into the life and conscience of the Bessarabian clergy and flock, who in their

conscience cannot but feel bound to canonical obedience to the Russian hierarchical authorities, and yet practically have to be under the jurisdiction of Rumanian bishops, who are supported in their claims to a Bessarabian Church by the military and civil authorities of Rumania.

3. The demand made by the Rumanian Holy Synod, that Archbishop Anastasius and Bishops Gabriel and Dionysius, together with their flocks should secede from the Russian Church and submit to the jurisdiction of the Rumanian Church—is anti-canonical in its essence, and is, at the same time, an attempt to infringe the liberty of their episcopal consciences, which cannot allow them to be false to the oath taken by them on ordination. The very circumstances under which Bishops Gabriel and Dionysius left Bessarabia, show that they were expelled from the diocese, as they were given an extremely short time to wind up their official and private business, and were not even permitted to take leave of their flocks.

4. The accusation made in regard to Archbishop Anastasius, viz., that he had ignored two canonical summons to appear before the Rumanian Synod, cannot be held valid FROM THE RUMANIAN POINT OF VIEW, as both the summons were sent by wire to Kishinev, whereas he was at that time attending the All-Russian Holy Council in Moscow, communication with which from Bessarabia was exceedingly difficult, and frequently quite impossible, and the heads of the Rumanian Church were duly informed of this. Therefore the conclusions drawn therefrom, viz., that Archbishop Anastasius LEFT THE DIOCESE OF HIS OWN FREE WILL, are incorrect both in substance and form, as the aforesaid Archbishop had given no notice of leaving the diocese entrusted to him either to the Russian or the Rumanian Church authorities, and therefore he must be considered as having preserved his powers in regard to the Kishinev See, and in no case can he be deprived of such powers without the consent of the Russian Church authorities, from whom he had received his canonical powers.

5. And if this be so, then the assumption of the management of the Kishinev diocese by Nicodemus, Bishop of Hush, as one "coming into another city not under his jurisdiction," and "subjecting the diocese by force," one which had not been under him before—must be considered as illegal and cannot but be liable to condemnation according to the sense of the Holy Canons of the Orthodox Church. (Ap. 35, III. Œcum. 8, Antioch 21, 22.)

Presenting the foregoing to the attention of pious bishops of our sister, the Rumanian Church, we trust that, as men of wisdom, they will receive without bitterness what our sacred canonical duty requires of us to say, and will make haste to forsake the dangerous path on which they now stand in regard to the Bessarabian Church, and which may lead to difficult and lamentable complications in the relations between the Russian and Rumanian Orthodox Churches. Should they not do so, should the Rumanian Church, notwithstanding the protest made by us, try to confirm by force the position now taken up by it in Bessarabia, then with sorrow we shall be obliged to break off every brotherly and canonical communication with the Rumanian Synod, and take the present case up for judgment to the other Orthodox Churches.

September (October) 1918.

APPENDIX V.

1. Decision of Khotin District Zemstvo Board. October 23, 1918

Owing to circumstances not under control, the Khotin district is at present completely isolated, as it is not included in the territory of any of the neighbouring States (Austria-Hungary, Rumania, Ukraine).

Occupied since February, 1918, by the troops of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy, the Khotin district, which used to form part of the province of Bessarabia, is completely deprived of all its former imperial institutions, which causes the inhabitants endless and multifarious difficulties in every sphere of life.

At the present time, in view of the approach of universal peace and of conditions enabling the most inconsiderable territorial unit to express its national and political desires with perfect freedom, the Khotin District Zemstvo Board, which, by virtue of its position, has the right to express the opinions and moods of the whole population of the district considers it most timely to take the necessary steps in order to inform all whom it may concern both of the existence of the Khotin district, torn from its fatherland—Russia, and not attached to any country, owing to its not wishing to be false to its native country and to secede from Russia, and likewise of the national desires of its population, in the hope that the approaching conference of nations will take into consideration the natural desire of the least of territorial units, and will not permit any violence to be done to them

in the form of their annexation by some power or other, without the freely expressed desire of the population itself, and bearing in mind that the population of the Khotin district has repeatedly, categorically, and definitely expressed its desire to preserve an inviolate connection with united Russia, IT IS RESOLVED: that the President of the Khotin District Zemstvo Board, N. M. Krupensky, be empowered to send information of the real desires of the population of the Khotin district to the Spanish Ambassador, who was at one time in charge of the interests of Russian subjects in Austria-Hungary, the Russian Ambassador in Rumania, the President of the United States of America, as also all leagues of the regeneration of Russia, and all organisations whose object it is to restore one and undivided Russia.

Copy correct,

President of the Board (*Signature*).

Compared and found correct, Secretary (*Signature*).

REFERENCES.

The election of volost and district Zemstvo members, as also the election of officials in Zemstvo institutions, take place under the following regulations, resolutions and orders of the Provisional Government: the Resolution of May 21, 1917, of the Provisional Government concerning the procedure of electing members of the provincial and district Zemstvos; the Resolution of June 17, 1917, of the Provisional Government concerning the volost Zemstvo boards; supplementary regulations of May 31, 1917, appended to Section I. of the resolution of the Provisional Government passed July 26, 1917.

The above-mentioned resolutions and orders concerning the elections based on universal, equal, secret and direct ballot.

Secretary. (*Signature*).

Extract from the Journal of the Khotin District Zemstvo Extraordinary Assembly.

On hearing Report No. 1 on the political situation in the Khotin district, after the evacuation of the Khotin district by the Hungarian troops, the Zemstvo Assembly RESOLVED to corroborate the desire of the district to be reunited with one Great Russia; to express approval of the action of the Board; to make an assignment to the amount of Rs. 50,000, for increasing the militia, and to influence the population for the preservation of law and order.

Copy correct,

President of the Board. (*Signature*).

Compared and found correct, Secretary. (*Secretary*).

Report No. 1.

On the political situation in the Khotin district, in consequence of the evacuation of the district by the Austria-Hungarian troops.

On the evacuation of the district by the Austria-Hungarian Army of Occupation raises the question of the farther fate of our district. Having decided to call a meeting of the Zemstvo Assembly as soon as possible, for the purpose of settling questions connected with current events, the Board has taken all measures in its power to preserve law and order, and insure the safety of the population. For this purpose the Board, as the only authoritative organ of government, has taken upon itself the administration of the whole district, a special notice having been issued to that effect on the 23rd inst. In taking upon itself the rights and duties of administration, the Board was fully assured that the population of the district would accept the changed conditions calmly and reasonably, and that no anarchistic movements might be expected. In consideration of this the Board took the view that, in order to preserve law and order, no alien intervention is needed. It is quite sufficient to increase the militia required to check the dangerous elements. By means of communicating with all the volost Zemstvos the Board has tried to get this view accepted, and to convince the population of the necessity of preserving order and of keeping calm. But unfortunately the Board did not quite succeed in doing this, and in various localities of the district anarchy is again arising, and dark forces have become active.

The question of farther measures would have had to be examined by Assembly, but at the present time conditions have altered, the situation in the district has again become still more unsettled; the *Povitovy Starosta* (headman) of the Ukrainian State has arrived in Khotin, and announced the annexation of the Khotin district to the Ukrainian State; at the same time, at Bitchany, the commander of the First Rumanian Cavalry Division announces the annexation of the district by Rumania. One way or another, but apparently the district will not be isolated any longer, and in either case all the administrative functions of the Zemstvo will lapse, and the Board will return to the management of its purely Zemstvo affairs.

Presuming that the final decision on the question of the disposal of the Khotin territory can be made only by the resolution of an international conference, and considering the present situation to be temporary and transitional, the Board presents all the foregoing to the Assembly for consideration, and requests :

(1) The approval of the action of the board, (2) the confirmation of the desire of the district for re-union with one Great Russia, (3) the assignment of a grant for increasing the militia to the amount of Rs. 50,000, and (4) the exertion of influence over the population for the preservation of law and order.

Copy correct :

President of the Board (*Signature*).

Acting Secretary (*Signature*).

2. Report of the President of the Khotin District Zemstvo Executive Board.

On October 28, 1918, the Khotin district of the province of Bessarabia was occupied by Rumanian troops, who announced the annexation of the district by Rumania.

Hitherto the life of the Khotin district has been based on other principles, and Russian traditions and ideas were carefully cherished in the hearts of the population.

Being all the time in the fighting area, and having experienced all the horrors of the demobilisation of the Army by Bolshevism and anarchy, the District fortunately escaped the jurisdiction of the "Statul Tseret."

In February, 1918, the Khotin district was occupied by the Austria-Hungarian troops, and the commanders of the army of occupation acknowledged and confirmed the fact that the district belonged to the Russian State, and left the existing Russian laws and all existing institutions, both Government and local, in force in the district.

In view of the district being cut off from centres of administration, the executive power was entrusted to the local Zemstvo, in whose hands the administrative functions had been concentrated after the abolition of the post of the Provisional Government Commissary. This state of affairs continued until October 28 of the current year. Although the Austrian authorities did try not to interfere in the internal relations of the population, restricting themselves to the preservation of order for the purpose of the more successful exportations of foodstuffs and other commodities, nevertheless the foreign occupation was no light burden on the population, who waited impatiently for the end of the war and the regeneration of a united great Russia, so as to be reunited to her; every opportunity was taken to emphasise this desire, and this was undoubtedly reflected by the economic life and customs of the population.

On October 28, after the departure of the Austrian troops, the inhabitants of the district breathed freely in expectation of their speedy reunion with Russia, whose boundaries were beginning to appear, in connection with the world victory of the Allies; but this expectation was unfortunately not fulfilled, as the Rumanian troops, having occupied the district, announced that it was annexed to Rumania, in accordance with the resolution passed by the "Statul Tseret" on March 27, of the current year.

Like all Bessarabia, not acknowledging the "Statul Tseret," to whose jurisdiction the district had never been subject, the population can in no way consider itself bound by the decision of such a legally incapable organ.

The appended resolution of the Zemstvo Assembly of October 28, as well as the decision of the Board on October 23, confirming the desire of the district to remain within the Russian State, are a proof of this.

The entry of the Rumanian troops was accompanied by measures for immediate Rumanisation, which were not at all acceptable to the population, of whom no more than 30 per cent. were Moldavians, and the Zemstvo had to use all its authority to counteract the attempts that were going to be made for armed resistance, which was very possible in view of the considerable quantity of arms hidden by the population.

Reporting the foregoing, as empowered by the whole population of the Khotin district, and heartily joining in the desire expressed by the representatives of the rest of Bessarabia, I trust that the desires and aims of the Khotin district will not be unattended to in the final decision of so important a matter as the existence of Bessarabia—a matter which must undoubtedly be discussed at the International Conference; until then it is highly desirable to put a stop to the forcible Rumanisation of the district which is just beginning, and which is accompanied by a disorganisation of all the accepted standards of the population.

(Signed) President of the Khotin District Zemstvo Board.

N. KRUPENSKY,

3. *After the entry of Rumania into the Khotin District, the following order was issued:*

ORDER NO. 2.

1.—It is forbidden to deliver any products in exchange for receipts or voucher other than those coming from qualified agents of commanders of units, squadrons and batteries, and which have to be vised by the chiefs of the garrison and bear the seal of the commanders board. Only such receipts will be considered valid and will be paid. All transactions made on the grounds of any other documents will be considered invalid.

2.—"Surrender of arms" means the surrender to the Commandant's Board of all classes of arms, such as: sporting rifles, Russian and Austrian carbines, pistols, revolvers of all types, sabres, swords, daggers, stiletos, cartridges, powder, bombs, rockets, etc., and all appurtenances thereof, and not only Austrian carbines, as the population of Khotin and the surrounding district have hitherto understood it to be.

3.—It is hereby announced to all whom it may concern that, prior to November 15, all Russian signboards are to be replaced by the same in Rumanian. After the promulgation of this Order, all Russian signboards are to be removed.

4.—Previous to the arrival of administrative and private Rumanian institutions, all service in the police and militia is to be suspended, and all other institutions have no right to issue any orders without the approval of the Commandant's Board. Agents of the Zemstvos have no right to enter into any contracts or agreements with anyone without the sanction to that effect from the Commander of the Board. For this purpose Rumanian officers will be appointed, who will be called to settle various questions. All matters concerning juridical and administrative authorities will only be decided by the Rumanian authorities.

5.—Austrian kroner have no value at all, likewise Odessa and Ukraine money; also paper money issued by the Provisional Government and by Kerensky is to be withdrawn from circulation. Only Romanoff money and the Rumanian leys are legal tender, the rate of one ley being, on the average, equal to one Russian rouble.

6.—All card games are entirely prohibited.

7.—The publication of any documents or papers without the authorisation thereto from Rumanian authorities is prohibited, except anything concerning theatres and business papers of operating bodies.

8.—For the interest of all it is suggested that everyone should pay their dues and taxes in proper time, not only to the town and district, but also to the communal Zemstvos.

9.—Nobody is entitled to say anything against the Rumanian troops either at home or in the streets, in restaurants, cafés, any public institutions or schools, and in general to speak of anything dealing with the nationality of the Rumanians. [Note: Under this clause it is probably meant to forbid the use of the nickname "Gipsies," based on the supposition that Rumanians draw their origin from Tsiganes (Gipsies).]

10.—Everybody must render homage and pay due respect to the Rumanian troops, and particularly to officers, seeing that the Rumanian forces have come here to keep up order and quiet, and that they have not come in against the people's will.

11.—All persons guilty of a breach of this order will be liable for the sake of public peace and quiet to arrest from five days to three months, or will be fined from 100 to 2,000 leys. Should it be proved that anyone has been keeping arms for offering resistance to Rumanian authorities or the troops, he will be subject to capital punishment by shooting.

Commandant of the town of Khotin,

(Major) G. PONESKO.

KHOTIN,

November 2, 1918.

APPENDIX VI.

Decree of the Dissolution of the Rumanian Parliament.

FERDINAND I.

BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE NATION'S WILL

KING OF RUMANIA.

Gentlemen: greeting to those present and those to come.

On the report of the President of our Ministers' Council, No. 2,005.

Considering articles 57 and 67 of the constitutional law of July 19 and the act of the Union with Bessarabia of March 27, 1918.

We have decreed and decree :

Art. 1. Legislative Assemblies are and will remain dissolved.

Art. 2. Electoral bodies of all Rumanian citizens of age from the old country and Bessarabia are convoked the 3rd, 4th and 5th of January, 1919, to appoint in electoral districts—"by universal equal, direct and *obligatory* votes and secret ballot, on the basis of proportional representation" the number of deputies for the assembly according to an ulterior law.

Art. 3. Electorates for appointing senators in the old country and Bessarabia will be summoned on or after January 9, 1919, according to an ulterior law.

Art. 4. The new legislative Constituent Assemblies will be convoked for an ordinary sitting the 24th of January, 1919.

Art. 5. The President of our Ministers' Council is appointed to execute this decree. Jassy, November 5, 1918.

FERDINAND.

*President of Ministers' Council,
General of Army Corps.*

COANDA.

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APPENDIX VII.

TO: PAUL NIKOLAEVITCH KRUPENSKI, LAND OWNER.

Conforming with a telegram from the Chief of the Khotin district—based upon the telegram from the Director of Home Affairs, Sub. No. 5793, the District Administration orders you to forward us within ten days, a declaration indicating your willingness to become a Rumanian subject, failing this the whole of your property and land will be expropriated.

This 25th of January, 1919, No. 427, for the President of the Zemstvo Administration.

Sipeani district.

Signature Illegible.

Secretary: ZUBAL.

APPENDIX VIII.

Commander of the troops of the Sekuriany-Byrnovo Region. No. 12.

January 16, 1919, *Sekuriany.*

TO THE PRIESTS, HEADMEN OF VILLAGES, SCHOOLMASTERS AND ALL THE CONSCIOUS POPULATION OF THE MOLODOVO-NASLAVCHA REGION

DEAR BROTHER CHRISTIANS !

I hereby inform all whom it may concern, that the Headquarters of the Rumanian and French Troops at Odessa have received authentic information that the Bolsheviki are organised, subsidised and governed by Jews under the firm of the *Committee for the Liberation of Bessarabia*. (The object of the committee is that the Jews should take possession of and rule Bessarabia).

The distinctive mark worn by the Bolsheviki is two red triangles superimposed and peculiar to the Hebrew Mosaic law as worn by Jews on their forehead at prayers and bearing the name of "Sion."

Shape of the Sign :



The Jews have brought civil war and disorder, have destroyed the Russian Army and Russia herself, and murdered the Russian Tsar by means of their agitators Trotsky, Lenin, Kerensky and other Judophiles. They have deceived the people by unrealisable and impossible promises and thereby upset peace, order and respect for the property of others, and have also trampled upon all the laws of the country and the laws of the Orthodox religion.

Now all the Orthodox people have really seen the Crucifixion of Christ, reddened with the blood of an innocent people.

Dear Brother-Christians, arise as one man before the Crucifix and wash the Holy Rood with the tears of innocent widows and orphans. Orthodox Christians, pray unto the Lord God and wash the Cross polluted and spat upon by Judas (the Jews) and his traitors.

Do not forget THE SON OF GOD JESUS CHRIST, before Whom our ancestors knelt for centuries, teach the same to your children, defend and respect the laws, and love the sacred land of your birth, do not fraternise with the Jews, and wash the Holy Rood.

When, like wolves, the enemies wished to enter the holy land of Bessarabia, the RUMANIAN CHRIST-LOVING ARMY overthrew them and hurled all these enemies into the Dniester. HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE EMPEROR FERDINAND I. having learnt this, immediately moved his troops to the defence of his flock (the people) and the annihilation of the foe, who intended to sack and rob the peaceful population.

CHRISTIANS !

I beg all of you, all, believe in God and obey your EMPEROR.

Signed: The Commander of the Troops of the
Sekuriany-Byrnovo region.

Captain KITSULESKU.

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