

## **White Finland's attempts to conquer East Karelia in 1918**

In 1917 Finland managed to win independence because all contributory factors and preconditions, both internal and external, were simultaneously favourable for it. The former included particularly the fact that Finland had already developed into a nation and a state under the protection of autonomy, and that Finland had a strong will to become independent. Among the latter were the First World War and the general tendency it had produced, i.e. that new European states were emerging and becoming independent.

To become independent as a state was the first and most important step in the process of creating a new Finland. As this succeeded, there emerged in Finland a very powerful tendency to take another step, the step to annex East Karelia to Finland and to create a so-called Greater Finland. This was thought to be of crucial importance to the capability of an independent Finland to survive. In order to realize this objective, Finland embarked upon a military conquest as early as 1918. Its course of events and success were also highly dependent on how the pressure to take action from inside the country found channels to express itself and how this action was supported by external preconditions of great political importance.

The questions that have been posed to clarify the active martial policy developed in 1918 to annex East Karelia to Finland can now be given the following comprehensive answer.

The idea of annexing East Karelia to Finland was not new and strange in the state of affairs that prevailed after the country had won independence. New, however, was the environment in which the idea appeared.

During autonomy the annexation of East Karelia to Finland had already been justified on ethnic grounds. Snellman hoped that Finland's national boundaries would be determined on a linguistic basis. Thinking based on ethnic connection, which was animated by the zeal that the so-called Karelianists felt for Karelia, included the idea that a natural Finland is one comprising the whole of Karelia. In the revolutionary year 1917, the thought of annexing Karelia to Finland manifested itself stronger than ever among the activists, advocates of independence and jaegers as well as among individual East Karelians who had settled down in Finland. The justification for the idea was, above all, that the conditions of Karelians would improve, in addition to which it could serve Finland's interests.

After Finland became independent the German-minded activists among the political leaders of Finland made an attempt to arouse German interest in the annexing of East Karelia to Finland. National, economic and strategic considerations were given as reasons for the project. The affair was not, in fact, closely related to Germany and her interests. Early in 1918, the importance of the annexation of East Karelia to Finland was discussed in many activist circles in different parts of the country, such as the Oulu Club of Independence under the leadership of Yrjö Kemppainen, but there were no possibilities to take action then. At the beginning of 1918 the East Karelians themselves were either in favour of an independent Karelia (Viena; northern East Karelia) or an autonomous Karelia (Olonets; southern East Karelia). In contrast, the East Karelians living in Finland were, after the country had won independence, more than ever inclined to accept the idea that Karelia should be incorporated into Finland.

The war that broke out in Finland at the end of January 1918 demanded, however, the attention of all groups, both official organs and private persons. But when the war began to go well for White Finland, and when Northern and Central

Finland had been "purged" of the Reds towards the end of February, the idea arose in various spheres that advantage should be taken of the chaotic state of Russia also in the aim of conquering East Karelia to Finland. The jaegers and activists in Southern Lapland presented a plan for the conquest of Northern Viena and the Kola Peninsula to the headquarters as early as the beginning of February. This initiative was centrally related to the sabotage tradition of jaegers, and its prime motive was to gain access to food and war materiel supplies in Northern Russia for Lapland where they were short. This plan was still under discussion when the order of the day (23.2.), which the headquarters gave concerning the affair of East Karelia, and the subsequent manifesto concerning the same affair and issued by the régime in Vasa caused the pressure for action to express itself and opened the way for action in the various circles.

The order of the day concerning East Karelia and given in the name of Mannerheim was most obviously an achievement of Quartermaster General Ignatius, former member and chairman of the activists' military committee, who had dreamed about a powerful Greater Finland. It did not directly order Finns to take up arms to conquer East Karelia but, in the first instance, encouraged East Karelians to rise against their oppressors — albeit with the assistance of Finns. The objective was, however, to create a powerful Greater Finland. Also Mannerheim supported the incorporation of East Karelia into Finland. The circles that were in favour of action now had the opportunity to express their opinions and plans concerning how to deal with the East Karelian affair. The activities originated in four different circles:

1) The Kuopio circle, which was the sphere of influence of A.H. Saastamoinen and K.O.A. ("Oki") Larsson as well as lieutenant-colonel C.W. Malm, who had fought in the war of independence in Savo. Later when the action had begun, Toivo Kuisma, first jaeger lieutenant, Toivo Kaukoranta, M.A., Holger Hongisto, manager, Tatu Nissinen, agronomist, K.J. Canth, manager, G.A.K. Hymander (Hyvämäki), Rev., and the Karelianists Ilmari Kianto and Alpo Sailo joined this circle. An important event took place, above all, when the activist circle of Kajaani joined the Kuopio circle under the leadership of the teachers' college headmaster Volter Rihtniemi. The main driving force behind the activity was solely the importance of creating a nationally united great Finland.

2) The Joensuu-Sortavala circle. Active in this were Valde Sario, chief of staff in the Joensuu district, and the whole Sortavala military district headquarters. In 1918 it was the only military district which on its own initiative supported the projects to conquer East Karelia. To broaden the operational basis, a special "Karelian Liberation Society" was founded in Sortavala on February 28. This circle contributed to the fact that the leaders of the Karelian Cultural Society also adopted a policy of action. The activity in these spheres was based on ethnic thought and a desire to better the conditions of the Karelians (East Karelians in Finland), but also the financial (businessman Valde Sario) and strategic interests offered by East Karelia to Finnish defence (Finnish Karelians) were firmly in mind.

3) The Oulu circle, which was the sphere of influence of the activists Isak Kaitera, Yrjö A. Kemppainen, Esko Riekkö and O. Wirkkula as well as Samuli Paulaharju, a Karelianist. The prime incentive to the activity was the desire to create an ethnically united Greater Finland. This activity was, however, brought to the fore by the threat that the Reds who had gathered behind the border would attack on Finland.

4) The circle of Southern Lapland, whose members included the activists Hugo Sandberg, Kaleb Savukoski and Juho Hagberg as well as the jaegers K.M. Wallenius, O. Willamo and T. Ilmoniemi. The activity of this circle was least inspired by ethnic ideology. The conquest of Northern Viena, the Kola Peninsula and the Arctic Ocean coast was considered financially important for Lapland, and so were the war materiel and food supplies in Northern Russia. Another important justification for the conquering expedition was to defeat the Reds that had gathered beyond the border.

5) The Jyväskylä circle, which centred round the teachers' college and the news-

paper "Keski-suomalainen". This group was given its final impulse to send an expedition of their own to East Karelia by the Kuopio circle and the recruitment of the Malm expedition.

The Vasa régime, which interpreted the situation of Finland to be one of a country already at war with Soviet Russia, enthusiastically adopted the aggressive policy of aggrandizement at the instigation of the delegations representing the above-mentioned circles during the negotiations 3.—4.3.1918. The régime believed, or tried to convince itself that Germany was behind the project. Information had in fact been recently received from Germany that a military expedition would be sent to Finland. The Finnish Government also gave financial support for the organization of disseminating information aimed at arousing the Karelians' support for the conquest operations which were to be carried out by the Finns.

The men of direct action received also Mannerheim's consent to military operations beyond the eastern frontier on March 4. It had been planned that these operations would take place only in Viena, but Mannerheim extended the plan to affect Olonets as well. He probably thought that this would serve the general military situation, too, for it was thus possible to get troops deep in the flank and rear of the Reds. A still more important factor that contributed to the decision of Mannerheim was that he could thus put a stop to the spreading of Bolshevism to Karelia, and to get a military force in the area north of St. Petersburg, for at that time the Germans were rapidly advancing towards the town. It is of significance, however, that Mannerheim considered as a precondition for the launching of the operations the fact that the Karelians themselves would rise and struggle for freedom. The part that the Finns played in this was to make a voluntary "civil guard expedition" whose duties were restricted to the starting of the battle, the supply of weapons to the Karelians and their organization into military troops. The battle had to be a struggle for freedom based as much as possible on the Karelians' independent initiative, and the Finns were to have a minor role in this battle. Mannerheim took a considerably more prudent attitude to possible operations in East Karelia than the Government, and it is the Government's opinion that has to be regarded as a decisive factor in the launching of the policy of aggrandizement.

At the beginning of March, an overall plan for military action in East Karelia was prepared in the headquarters on the basis of initiatives from various directions. According to this plan, East Karelia was to be divided into three occupied zones organized by the advancing troops. The expeditions were supposed to be in contact with and support each other. The plan shows that in the headquarters the opinion prevailed that the Karelians will easily rise one and all to liberate their country. The intention was that the strongest Finnish forces (1,000 men) would advance to Petrozavodsk and then take up defensive position in the Svir line against the Bolshevik troops. The forces were to be ready to march across the border on March 25 at the latest.

The population of East Karelia were themselves fully unaware of Finland's plans to annex East Karelia to herself and particularly of the fact that Finland intended to start carrying out this plan in a military operation. The East Karelians who had lived in Finland had no true idea of the feelings of the Karelians. In March (6.—20.3.) a brief agitation project was organized mainly in Viena, but the results were poor. Only the meeting held in Uhtua on March 17 passed a resolution according to which Viena Karelia should as far as possible be incorporated into Finland. This resolution had, however, been reached under the direction of the Finns, in addition to which it contained strict conditions for the incorporation. Not a single request for help was sent to the Finnish Government from across the border. The Karelians lived in their own peace, they had no reason to ask for help. The attempt to stir up public opinion proved a total failure, but reports on it did not reach as far as the headquarters, and the operations that had been launched on that basis were continued. It is obviously clear that the interests and desires of the Karelians did not carry any weight. The most important thing for Finland was to begin her own armed operations to implement her own ideal schedule.

The threat that the Reds, who had crossed over the border and formed into military contingents, would attack the White Army of Finland in the rear affected the plans of the Whites and the organization of military force, but only on the border with Kuusamo and Kuolajärvi. Because first jaeger lieutenant Wallenius, who had been ordered to advance to Northern Viena failed to gather a sufficient number of volunteers (only about 200 men from Southern Lapland to Kuolajärvi), some 1,000 untrained national servicemen were called to arms in the civil guard district of Oulu and received orders to serve at his command. During the operations that took place 21.3. — 22.4. Wallenius did not manage to push forward to Viena despite many attempts (the first frontier crossing and the conquest of Oulanka took place on March 26) because the Reds stopped the troops. They lacked arms and the troops were too timid and inexperienced for warfare. After the Reds had retreated on orders received from above, the progress of Wallenius was checked by a mutiny among the ranks, and eventually by the refusal of the headquarters on April 23 to allow an advance across the border. One reason for this refusal was the increased presence of the Englishmen in Murmansk — already in April the Reds had received assistance from them, and the English had also acted as their advisers. In the course of the spring the shortage of food and equipment began to affect the operations. The dissemination of information that Wallenius' staff carried out with the aim of making the Karelians sympathetic to the Finns, and to the annexation of Karelia to Finland, concentrated mainly on the villages of Oulanka and Vartiolampi. The ethnic propaganda which Samuli Paulaharju, for instance, took part in was a failure however, since the Karelians feared the retaliation by the Reds and English and food shortages.

The troop in the middle position under the command of Lt. Col. Malm, about 350 men, which was originally ordered to advance in the direction of Rukajärvi, but served later in the Uhtua-Kemi line, consisted mainly of volunteers from Savo and Kainuu. The troops advanced in four wedges from Suomussalmi and Kuhmoniemi to Viena (border crossings on March 21 and March 30). They did not actually meet the enemy but most of the Karelians adopted a chilly attitude towards the Finns. It became clear that the dissemination of information that had been organized in great haste was a fiasco. The Karelians were unfamiliar with the project of annexing East Karelia to Finland, or they repelled it. The armed Finns were not sympathetically received in the peaceful Karelia. The counterpropaganda that the Englishmen who had already come to Murmansk had initiated was partly contributing to the anti-Finnish atmosphere. In this propaganda the Finnish operations were associated with German objectives, and Germany was a hostile country to the Karelians. During the advance not a single Karelian rose in arms to join the Finns. Only when faced with the force of arms and after having been informed of the demands made by Bolsheviks on the Karelians did the people of Uhtua agree to request help. Only in Paanajärvi, where the Bolshevik administration had already spread, did a small group of people openly give their support to the Finns and organize a civil guard.

On March 30, Mannerheim still tried to stop Malm by sending a communication, but in vain. Malm had unshakable faith in success. His experience of victorious battles in Savo obviously prevented him from seeing the hopelessness of the overall situation. Without even waiting for his troops to gather together Malm made an attempt to conquer Russian Kemi on April 10, but could not even reach the town chiefly because of the resistance offered by a force composed of Russian marines. The enemy did not, however, interfere with his retreat to Uhtua, where he stayed to wait for reinforcements and new orders. On April 23 Malm received directions from the headquarters to stay in Uhtua for a possible "future advance".

In a short time 1,300 men were rallied in Sortavala, Salmi and Joensuu for an expedition, which was supposed to advance under the leadership of captain Kuula to Olonets. But since men were badly needed on the Karelian front, Mannerheim called off the expedition on March 23 and gave at the same time Malm and Wallenius an order to refrain from crossing the border. Malm had, however, reached as far as Uhtua, whereupon Mannerheim gave also Wallenius the permission to advance behind the frontier so that the troops would be supported by each



other. As the expedition to Olonets did not materialize, the military operations in 1918 East Karelia were directed mainly at Viena. The expedition policy came, it is true, to include also Repola, which was part of Olonets.

Although the Olonets expedition was called off at the beginning of April, the project was kept alive partly due to the fact that Valde Sario came to the headquarters as a special representative for East Karelian affairs, and that the Government made the position of the East Karelian Committee official. The pressure to take action, which had not manifested itself in Olonets in the spring of 1918, then brought about operations focused on Repola, which resulted in the incorporation of Repola into Finland.

Mannerheim and Ignatius were very disappointed with the Karelians' cold reaction to the Finns and adopted a reserved attitude to the expansion of military activities in East Karelia in the middle of April. The sharp reactions of England, the threat of declaration of war and the refusal to recognize the country's independence also brought the headquarters and even the Government to maintain military feelings low in mid-April. The Government had counted considerably on Germany, but it became evident that the operations on the other side of the border did not lie in Germany's interests, neither those of her own nor Finland's, her ally.

At the beginning of April it became clear that all external factors contributing to the military solution of the East Karelian affair were unfavourable to the possible positive progress in the affair from Finland's point of view. In addition, there were the viewpoints of England and Germany, and also those of Soviet Russia and the Karelians. But from below, the pressure for military activity in the activist and kinship-spirited circles was so strong that the line of action could not be abandoned. The Government welcomed this attitude. In the negotiations carried out at the end of April it agreed to give its support to the large-scale military plan to conquer and occupy East Karelia and to annex it to Finland. Even Mannerheim approved of the plan, at least as one alternative post-war solution to the problem of the eastern boundary. At the headquarters Lt.Col. Peyron began after mid-April to prepare a plan for operations with a view to a full attack to be made on East Karelia. In April, preparations were begun to incorporate Repola into Finland as a separate project under the command of second lieutenant Sario, chief of staff in the Joensuu district.

As the war had ended in Finland in early May 1918, several quarters expected large operations to begin in East Karelia, the most keen supposedly being the staff of Wallenius in Kuolajärvi and the staff of Malm in Uhtua. Lt.Col. Peyron's plan and schedule of operations for the conquest of East Karelia was completed on May 11. Immediately, Mannerheim gave the first orders to draw up detailed reports on Olonets and Kantalahti for the purpose of advance. What happened next, however, was that Mannerheim's resignation caused a crisis in which one of the most central components clearly was that Germany could not agree to Mannerheim's taking the armed Finnish forces to East Karelia on the Finns' conditions alone in summer 1918. In the execution of the plan, Mannerheim would have given no role whatsoever to the Germans so that the breaking off of relations with England would be avoided. At the same time, the question was thus connected to Finland's political attitude to England and with the organization and employment of the Finnish forces. Svinhufvud and the Government were undoubtedly for Mannerheim's East Karelia plan, but they could not afford a breach with Germany. This is why the question of Mannerheim's resignation was so hard for Svinhufvud, among others.

In the summer of 1918 the German officers took, it is true, a great military interest in the area beyond the Finnish frontier with Russia, but it focused mainly on Northern Viena and the areas of Murmansk, and was directed against the English. Reconnaissance missions were carried out, preparations were made for an English attack on Northern Finland and plans also for the country's own operations were drawn up. Finland's own military activity, based as it was on its own objectives, was only a waste of resources as far as the German plans and interests were concerned.

At the same time the Finns concentrated on promoting the East Karelian affair

at the political level, "with the assistance of the King and the military alliance with Germany", and with the help of Germany in the peace negotiations with Russia. But just in case this policy would not lead to any results, the line of military action was also under consideration all the time. At the end of June 1918, the advocates of independence, activists and jaegers tacitly brought up the plan prepared in the headquarters for the conquest of East Karelia, and began to take measures to carry it through, if not with the assistance of the regular then the voluntary troops. Svinhufvud, regent of Finland, and a great number of senators participated privately in the project; also Prime Minister Paasikivi supported voluntary military activity in East Karelia. The Senate provided the capital for it. In connection with Department Ie of the general staff, an organization by the name of "Finnish Volunteer Force" was formed for the recruitment of volunteers. Recruiting agents were provided all over the country. At the same time, propaganda was spread in support of the monarchy. The military high command of Finland — Procopé, chief of general staff, and Thesleff, minister of war — took, however, a negative stand towards all military activities behind the border thinking that it would lead to war with entente, involvement in the world war and loss of independence. Finnish military resources were regarded as too small considering the scope of the venture, and the risk of failure was considered too great. In July, the Germans adopted at first a negative attitude to the recruitment that had begun, but it changed towards the end of the month when The Oberste Heeresleitung turned its eyes on St. Petersburg.

Also during the summer of 1918, the main mission of the captain Wallenius' troops, which had suffered badly through famine, Spanish influenza and shortage of clothing, was to guard the frontier north of Kuusamo. But as there was a continuous threat of aerial attack — Wallenius himself participated in the negotiations in Helsinki — men also patrolled across the border, and Oulanka was kept occupied. It was quiet in the enemy territory, and even the people of Karelia began to show slight signs of being won over. Time ran out, however. The new enemy, the Murmansk legion, reorganized from the older red Finnish troops by England, appeared in the villages on the other side of the border in mid-July. Thus England thwarted Wallenius' plans for advance across the border. Because of the pressure caused by the enemy presence, even the occupation of Oulanka had to be abandoned at the beginning of August.

— The troops of Malm and their reinforcement had a prominent position in Mannerheim's East Karelian plan, but as the plan could not be implemented, the troops in Uhtua began to show signs of breaking up. In the occupied area, mainly Uhtua and a few villages in Vuokkiniemi, the Karelians had to some extent begun to become more favourably disposed towards the Finns, and even a few civil guards had been formed. By August, some fifteen of them had been organized, but the members remained few in number. It was chiefly from Uhtua and Vuokkiniemi that the participants were also in the great ethnic celebration which had been arranged for propagandistic purposes by the Karelian Cultural Society and the East Karelian Committee in Uhtua in July 1918. Only now did the Society make an official decision to go on to support the annexation of East Karelia to Finland. Its executive committee and leaders had been organizing the project since March.

The expansion of the Finnish-minded territory did not succeed for the author Ilmari Kianto, either, who made agitatorial trips to Kiestinki and Jyskjärvi in July 1918, and neither did it succeed for the other users of intellectual weapons. Kianto's success was hindered chiefly by the questions concerning food and security, the latter especially after information started to spread about the raising of a Karelian army, and after the "Red Karelians" took a bloody revenge on the members of the Paanajärvi civil guard for their pro-Finnish attitude. The position of Finns in East Karelia was decisively based on military power, of which there was never enough to inspire the Karelians with confidence in the Finns' capability to answer for their security, or to make it possible to spread the Finnish influence at least over the whole of that territory which subsequently was considered to belong to the official area of the East Karelian Department of Senate, nor, finally, was it sufficient to make it possible to successfully defend the territory against the

enemy, who had taken the offensive in the late summer.

The old troops in Uhtua had to be furloughed. As replacements came only slowly, the troops of Malm went to Uhtua with a strength of only a few dozen men in June 1918. The replacement and reorganization of the troops were completed by the new commander, jaeger captain Toivo Kuisma, whom general Wilkman on July 24 appointed as commander of the Viena Karelian forces to take the place of lieutenant colonel Malm, who had resigned owing to illness. The first replacements continued to be sent by the orders of Mannerheim, but the majority came enlisted by the "Finnish Volunteer Force" during the period from July to September. The replacements more or less covered the losses experienced due to deserters and those killed in action, and the number of men varied between 200 and 250 from August to October. After the replacements the force became younger, more urbanized, and its social structure became very heterogeneous. The men's motives for coming to Viena varied, but most of them were probably genuinely enthusiastic, however. Nevertheless, the internal cohesion of the troops was weak. It was mainly jaegers that were employed as officers, and the gulf between the officers and the young ranks, mostly unpractised in fighting and heavy exertion, must have been considerable. Poor discipline culminated in the mutiny in Enonsuu, for which two death sentences were passed.

The attitude of Germany to the policy of East Karelia expeditions became positive when the supreme command of Germany seriously included the so-called operation Schlußstein in its schedule in early August. The Ostsee-Division in Finland was fully linked to the preparations of this operation; its commander-in-chief, General von der Goltz, was an earnest supporter of this St. Petersburg offensive and subjugator of Bolshevism. The Finnish forces on the eastern frontier were given the important mission of securing the flank, and nothing was to stop them from advancing across the border, if they could do it. This meant active frontier defence echeloned in depth. The intention was to provide considerable reinforcements for the troops of Wallenius. Troops could not, however, be moved to the frontier on account of poor transport and food supply conditions. Battalions of light infantry were nevertheless transferred to Oulu and Rovaniemi in August 1918.

The general staff, which was under German command, ordered Wallenius to reoccupy Oulanka and Vartiolampi, and he kept them occupied in spite of immense psychological and material difficulties till the beginning of October. The activities behind the border occasioned several encounters with a legion under English command. The purpose of these activities was to attract the attention of the English and get their forces tied down in case of an attack taking place in the south. By order of The Oberste Heeresleitung, the Finnish general staff planned a sabotage operation directed at destroying the entire Murmansk railway line and to be carried out from Finland. The plan did not completely materialize, but the most important far-patrol operations, which started in August from Kuolajärvi to the direction of Kantalahti, depended on the detachment of Wallenius. In September and October, there were no more chances for Wallenius to advance across the frontier, but he probably did not even consider it seriously any more.

In mid-August captain Kuisma still maintained a strong position in Uhtua. His military power was strengthening all the time, and he had the support of large civilian and military circles, including that of regent Svinhufvud, for his activities. The problem of getting the regular army to Uhtua was nevertheless unsolved due to the opposition of Thesleff the minister of war. The German officers would not have opposed it any more, but there was nothing to be done about the matter without the Senate's decree. An official decision in the matter could not be made because of the threatening attitude of England. In any case, Kuisma looked forward to the future with confidence and made plans to organize civil guards and local administration, and to launch offensive operations to take possession of the White Sea coast. There was no information about the enemy, either, nor did the authorities go to a lot of trouble to get any. As for the Karelians, nobody could have foreseen their negative stance.

As early as the beginning of August the enemy had, however, started to move

forward towards Uhtua to push the Finns back away from Karelia. Fairly soon after the Finns had invaded Karelia the Karelian men, who were mainly from Vuokkiniemi and Kontok, and officers who had fought against the Germans in the Russian army, had begun to raise a Karelian unit to fight against the Finns. The opinion prevailed that the Finns, supported by the Germans, were robbing Karelia for themselves. The unit was animated by a sort of Karelian national spirit, the view that "Karelia belongs to the Karelians". With the people from Vuokkiniemi as their leaders, the Karelians came to an agreement with the English in late June on the recruiting, equipping and training of a Karelian unit. Both parties had undoubtedly plenty of initiative for cooperation. By the beginning of August, there was a unit with 200—300 men. The executive commander of this "Karelian Regiment", or Karelian "otrjad", was Grigori Lesojeff from Vuokkiniemi; the Allies had the highest authority, though. The majority of men were from parishes bordering on Finland. As the troop continued to be pushed forward towards the Finnish border, more men were recruited to it so that eventually the total strength amounted probably to well over 400. The men were entirely Karelian, there were no Finnish Reds or Russians among them.

The attack of the enemy came as a total surprise to Kuisma. Kuisma chose delay tactics when starting to retreat from Uhtua. Standing out against the enemy and the many patrolling missions, during which men were exposed to raids, claimed a heavy toll: 83 killed in action or about 30 per cent of the full complement of the troops. The rainy autumn made the operations especially hard; it rained incessantly for almost three weeks. Kuisma put off the retreat from Vuokkiniemi to the side of Finland to the very last minute; the final information that Kuisma was not to receive auxiliary troops did not leave the general staff until September 23, arriving in Vuokkiniemi on September 30. On October 1, the same day that the troops were supposed to leave, the enemy attacked with great force. Complete envelopment and annihilation were near, but the unit was saved partly due to the failure of the enemy to concentrate its forces, partly due to their own clever tactics. About 195 men arrived in Hyry in Finland on October 2.

By so doing Kuisma gave the political and military leaders of Finland about a month's time to consider whether or not to render assistance, when retreating from Uhtua to Vuokkiniemi, but decisive assistance was not given. To have firmly refused help and also to have informed Kuisma of the fact would at least have let him know where he stood. Consequently, it can be said that unnecessary suffering was caused. In the issuing and taking of orders and responsibility, the relations between Kuisma and the political and military leaders were incomprehensively vague. Regent Svinhufvud and a great majority of the Senate were in favour of his activities, but it was thought that decisive help from the regular troops could not be rendered because of the opposition of the Minister of War. The general staff, particularly its German chief of staff, Colonel von Redern, would have wanted to give help, but could not do it, since he had no authorization from the Senate. All kinds of explanations seem to serve no purpose because the Senate did not distinguish between Kuisma's area of operation and Repola, which was an administrative district subordinate to the East Karelian Department of Senate, and because immediately after Kuisma had lost Vuokkiniemi a decree was passed concerning the sending of forces to Repola so that it would not be lost. On the other hand, the situation differed in that Repola had declared its incorporation into Finland.

Only his strong belief in the Karelian affair can account for the fact that Kuisma, supported by the activists for Karelia, directly began to plan a new expedition to Viena. Because the intention was to get as many as possible of the Russian Karelians who already lived in Finland or who had fled to Finland, and whose right to their territory could not be denied, to form the cadre of the expedition, it was given the grand name of the "Viena Guards". The Government decided to give the undertaking material support, but the recruiting of Viena Karelians caused great difficulties. The Viena Guards project was in the end buried under the Olonets expedition.

The spontaneous requests for help which the Finnish Government was expecting from Viena, began arriving in great numbers from across the border in spring



and during the summer of 1918, not from Viena, but from Olonets. They were a result of the burdens imposed by the Bolshevik administration, which led to a downright revolt. Finland's assistance to Olonets was confined to arms and to the counsel that Olonets should declare itself independent and be incorporated into Finland. It is possible to speculate and state that Finland's military operations behind the frontier in 1918 were aimed at a totally wrong area, because they had been aimed at Viena and not Olonets, where it would have been possible to take advantage of the combat between revolution and counterrevolution. Mannerheim's plan was more abreast of the times, since its emphasis of military activity was on Olonets. It may be that events would have taken a different cause, if Mannerheim and the request for help by the Olonets people and the uprising there had coincided with each other.

There was, however, one part of Olonets which Finland in 1918 treated in a special way: the parish of Repola in the northern part of Olonets. Contributory factors were particularly the interests of one man, second lieutenant Valde Sario, also a businessman, who showed private interest in the matter (forests, wife's family from Repola). These coincided in a favourable way with the interests of some Repola-born people in Finland, and with the interest of Finnish political and military leaders in Karelia.

The year 1918 was a year of complete crop failure in Repola as elsewhere. The possibility of obtaining grain supplies dictated for the most part who Repola would turn to politically: English, Bolsheviks or Finns. The lot of 10,000 kilos of grain that Svinhufvud on Sario's advice sent to Repola (for purchase) in July was of crucial importance to the fact that on August 2-3 the Repola parish meeting passed the resolution to join Finland on the basis of the national declaration of the Bolsheviks, provided that Finland agreed to the conditions the people of Repola set for the incorporation. Repola could afford to make hard conditions, which in fact meant self-government, because Finland was the initiator in the affair. Sario, Svinhufvud and the Senate intended to make Repola a "bridgehead" for the rapid expansion of occupied territory into the neighbouring parishes, first to Rukajärvi and then to other parishes.

When Finland accepted the conditions put down by the inhabitants of Repola, the parish made the final decision on August 31, 1918, to withdraw from Russia and be incorporated into Finland. At the same time the decision meant a revolution; the old organs and officials were overthrown and replaced by Finnish municipal and ecclesiastical organs. The so-called Repola Expedition composed of voluntary border guards was marched to secure the occupation of Repola, and a so-called Repola staff commanded by second lieutenant Sario was formed to take charge of the military administration in Repola. After Viena Karelia had been lost, Repola alone remained the territory of the East Karelian Department of Senate. The operations suffered from material difficulties and mutinies among the ranks. Under the circumstances Sario paid the wages for his staff out of his own funds till November; only in March 1919 did the State repay him for them. At the beginning of October over a hundred men from the standing Finnish army were marched to Repola, and they stayed there till 1919. At about the same time reconnaissance was practised in Rukajärvi for the purpose of possible occupation.

In 1918, three civil guards were successfully organized in Repola, though not in the parish village itself where the firm Russo-Bolshevist spirits had remained unchanged. Against the background of increasingly critical food shortages, "counterrevolutionary" agitation broke out in November which grew threatening to Finland's position. It did not cause any harm, however, thanks to the rapid action of the municipal council. Finland helped by sending grain, but the beginning of relief work was put off till 1919. The danger caused by the Bolsheviks from the direction of Porajärvi was not so menacing any more at the end of the year, but on the other hand, England and the Karelian Regiment posed a threat from the direction of Rukajärvi.

Repola was thus the only East Karelian area which had been incorporated into Finland by the end of the year 1918. The matter had been "handled" using quite a different technique from that which had been applied in Viena. Therefore Finland

could also officially carry out a more daring policy towards it. But even in Repola, there were continuously great difficulties, both internal and external, to maintain the position.

Whereas Finland had won its independence as the result of a favourable and well-timed coincidence of internal and external factors, the country was not nearly as fortunate in its attempts to incorporate the Karelian irredenta in 1918. Almost all factors of great political effect, which contributed to the position of Finland, were against the project. On the other hand, the German military command — not the political leaders — adopted in August 1918 a favourable attitude towards military action behind the border due to the plan for the conquest of St. Petersburg, but with the onset of German military decline, it was to be a trend of short duration without any practical significance. Of the external factors, the hardest and most difficult for the Finns to accept, both from the military point of view and psychologically, was the fact that the Karelians rose in arms against the Finns.

Both the military and political operations to annex East Karelia (Viena) to Finland were maintained by internal action, the activity of the citizens themselves. Initiative and continuity were for the most part found in private, root-level circles. Even the political leaders agreed on the importance of incorporation of East Karelia to Finland and also on the necessity to apply political methods to achieve this goal. The effectiveness of military operations was, however, much undermined by differences of opinion as to whether or not to resort to them, and how violent they should be. In addition to unfavourable external factors, internal unanimity and effective means were lacking. In March 1918 the military and political leaders were relatively unanimous in their decision to assume the policy of aggrandizement, and an agreement would undoubtedly have been reached as early as May after the war in Finland had ended, if an external factor, Germany, had not prevented it. Actual disagreement came about during the new government, however, for it was not any more bound by the activities of the previous government. The regent was in favour of strong military action whereas the minister of war opposed it. Opinions of the other ministers varied. Internal incoherence prevented the development of a strong pressure for action. This was mainly caused by another external factor, fear of England declaring war, but also by insufficient military resources. For the state to be involved in failure could prove disastrous.

The pressure for military achievement found its only channel in voluntariness in the summer of 1918. Even those in official posts were able to back it up privately. This meant that influential persons were in a position to grant "allowances" for the activity also out of public funds and needs. Various parts of official organizations could "recalcitrate" and internally agree on buttressing this kind of activity (Department Ie of general staff). In addition there was an official organization the duties of which included participation in the operations: initially the East Karelian Committee, later the East Karelian Department of Senate. The failure of voluntary action was not as bad as the failure of the State's own enterprise, but the danger lay in the possibility that affairs would not be well attended to and that nobody would take responsibility. This was the fate of the Kuisma expedition and partly the reason for the difficulties of Wallenius' troops. The general prerequisites for successful activity in the chaotic post-war conditions full of privation were unfulfilled. It can be said that the voluntary action organized by Finland came up against that organized by England in Viena in the autumn of 1918. England won because she had the desire to win, and also because she had the necessary skill and material to win.

The original plan outlined in March 1918 to conquer East Karelia remained a torso from the very beginning, since only the part concerning Viena was implemented. Even for Viena the goals remained totally unachieved, that is to say, the attempts ended in a defeat. The resistance organized by England bore the brunt of the defeats. To break this resistance, military resources of quite a different kind would have been needed; these were available, but using them meant a risk in international politics. The military high command of Finland did not particularly dare to take that risk in 1918. Svinhufvud, supported by his activist friends, would

have been nevertheless prepared to take Finnish forces to East Karelia even at the risk that England would declare war. It was calculated that if Finland were to be in distress, then Germany would have to come to help. The military descent of Germany had not yet begun in June and July. After it had, in August, and when the trend in the German-based foreign policy was collapsing, the thought of military conquest of East Karelia could have no foundation.

## Lyhenteet

AA	Auswärtiges Amt
EA	Etelä-Aunus Heimosota-arkistossa
FO	Foreign Office
HSA	Heimosota-arkisto
IKKA	Itä-Karjalan komitean arkisto
IKSA	Itä-Karjalan Siviiliviranomaisten arkistot
IKTA	Itä-Karjalan toimikunnan arkisto
IKTkA	Itä-Karjalan toimituskunnan arkisto
K	Kuisman retki Heimosota-arkistossa
KR	Koillisrintama Heimosota-arkistossa
KSA	Karjalan Sotilaspiirin arkisto
KSkA	Kuusamon suojeluskunnan arkisto
KSSA	Karjalan Sivistysseuran arkisto
LR	Lapin rajavartioston arkisto
M	Malmin retki Heimosota-arkistossa
OHL	Oberste Heeresleitung
OMA	Oulun Maakunta-arkisto
Pk	Pikkukokoelma
pky	päiväkäsky
PM	Päämaja
PRO	Public Record Office
PSkA	Pohjolan Suojeluskuntapiirin arkisto
pvk	päiväkirja
RSA	Rovaniemen suojeluskunnan arkisto
SA	Sota-arkisto
Sar	Sarion kokoelma
Sk	Suojeluskunnat 1918
SKS	Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran kirjallisuusarkisto
SKY	Suojeluskuntien yliesikunta
SVIA	Suomen vapaussodan itsenäisyysarkisto
UA	Ulkoministeriön arkisto
VA	Valtionarkisto
VSA	Vapaussota-arkisto Sota-arkistossa
VSHKA	Vapaussodan historiakomitean arkisto
VpSA	Vapaussodan arkisto Valtionarkistossa
YE	Yleisesikunta