

# The History of the Twentieth Century

## Episode 71

### “Like a Sinking Ship”

#### Transcript

[music: Fanfare]

In 1913, the First Balkan war was over. The map of the Balkans had been redrawn. The Ottoman Empire was all but evicted from Europe. And all this had happened with Austria, supposedly a great power, watching from right next door, but powerless to influence any of these events. Austria-Hungary had instead gotten into internal bickering about the failings of the military and the scandalous treason of Alfred Redl.

And while Austrians fought among themselves, Russian diplomacy, not Austrian, was carrying the day in the Balkans. And things got even worse when, just weeks after the treaty ending the First Balkan War was signed, the Second Balkan War erupted.

Welcome to *The History of the Twentieth Century*.

[music: Opening Theme]

Episode 71. Like a Sinking Ship.

Two weeks ago, you’ll recall, we watched the First Balkan War unfold in episode 69. As the name implies, there’s going to be a Second Balkan War, and it’s coming sooner, rather than later. In fact, in just a few weeks, and in this episode. But first, a moment of review.

The First Balkan War ended with the signing of the Treaty of London on May 30, 1913. London was the site of months of negotiations that led to this agreement. I talked about the Redl spy scandal last week, which came to light at about the same time, and it of course attracted a lot of press and public attention in Austria.

By the end of the war, the only Ottoman territories left in Europe were, in the east, Constantinople and environs, and a little sliver of land on the European side of the Dardanelles. In the west, Ottoman forces had withdrawn into Albania. The great powers at the London conference wanted Albania to remain in the Ottoman Empire technically, while having local autonomy, the same arrangement that Serbia and Montenegro and Bulgaria had had at various times in the past.

As of the signing of the treaty in May, the exact borders of Albania had not yet been decided. The great powers reserved to themselves the right to work out the final borders of Albania, which would take the rest of the year. The thing is, there is no clear line you can draw that would put all ethnic Albanians on one side, and all ethnic Greeks and Serbs on the other, so they just muddled through, coming up in the end with a compromise that pleased no one. As we saw, about 40% of ethnic Albanians were left outside the new borders, while enough ethnic Greeks and Serbs were inside the borders to make those communities unhappy.

This idea of Albania remaining at least notionally under Ottoman sovereignty, by the way, would not survive the outbreak of the Second Balkan War. Albania was physically isolated from the remainder of the Empire and not keen on remaining part of it—recall that there had already been two Albanian revolts against Ottoman rule since 1910—and so, by the end of 1913, Albania would become an internationally recognized fully sovereign state. The Sanjak of Novi Pazar, the strip of Ottoman territory the Austrians had held for years in order to prevent Serbia and Montenegro from sharing a border, was now divided between those two nations, who at last had the common border Austria had tried to prevent them getting.

As for the rest of the European territory surrendered by the Ottomans, it was under occupation by the armies of the newly assertive states of Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria. Not even the Great Powers in London felt up to the task of dividing up multiethnic Macedonia among them, so they chose instead to allow each state to hold on to what it had taken in battle.

How long do you suppose it is going to take before it occurs to one of the members of the Balkan League that additional territory in Macedonia is there for the taking? That all it will cost is the betrayal of the allies who just helped them beat the Ottoman Empire? The answer is, it will take about two and a half weeks, and the country that will first take a bite of the apple will be Bulgaria.

But a couple of other points before we get there. You'll recall that the Greek Navy pretty much had had its own way in the Aegean Sea during the war, enough so that the Ottomans were unable to bring reinforcements into Europe by sea, as the Greeks managed to blockade the Ottoman coast as far south as Egypt. This naval superiority was a key factor in the Balkan League victory. It also enabled the Greeks to take control of the Aegean islands, excepting of course the Dodecanese, which had been seized by Italy just a few months earlier. The government on Crete had already unilaterally declared union with the Kingdom of Greece, but the Great Powers had refused to recognize this. They will, after the Second Balkan War.

The government of Austria-Hungary, meanwhile, was still dealing with the fallout from the Redl scandal. It had become clear to the government that Redl had sold Plan B and Plan R to the Russians, the mobilization plans that the Austrian military had drawn up against the possibilities of war with Serbia and Russia, respectively. These mobilization plans are complex documents, as they lay out how the army is to be mobilized and delivered to the front down to every soldier on

every train. Now that it was known that these plans were in Russian hands, it would become necessary to revise them. But you can't rewrite plans this detailed overnight, and those of you who have read ahead know that the Great War is now less than fifteen months away. Dedicated, professional military planners working long hours might have been able to revamp the plans in that amount of time, but, hey, we're talking Austria here. Austrian military planners are more likely to be foppish, aristocratic, go-along-to-get-along timeservers, who, of course, did not know that the Great War is less than fifteen months away and were feeling no particular urgency about getting the job done.

So, taking all that into account, we can ask the question, is Austria-Hungary's coming disastrous performance on the battlefield against Serbia and Russia attributable to Colonel Redl's espionage? It surely had something to do with it, and may have been the most important factor.

None of this was known publicly, but what was known publicly, or was becoming known in June and July of 1913, was that Colonel Redl had been living the good life, spending crowns like water, with a flat in Prague, a motorcar, fine clothes, the works. He was worth about two million crowns when he died, or about US\$10,000,000, in today's money. All this in spite of the fact that he came from a poor provincial family and had had no known income apart from his military pay, and he was a member of one of the most poorly-paid militaries in Europe. And everyone, including the parliaments and newspapers in Vienna and Budapest were demanding to know how Redl, whose freespending ways were no secret, could possibly have lived this double life for so long without anyone asking any questions.

And then there was the matter of his suicide. General Conrad, the Chief of Staff, had given the order to permit Redl's suicide in exchange for a confession, but the fact that Redl was not extensively interrogated meant he took many of his secrets to the grave with him, and it seemed awfully suspicious that Conrad didn't want a fuller investigation. And devout Catholic traditionalists, including the Emperor, Franz Josef, and the crown prince, Archduke Ferdinand, were as appalled that Conrad would encourage a suicide as they were by Redl's homosexuality and treason.

And the timing of all this was horrendous for the Austrian military. In light of the fighting in the Balkans, Conrad was asking for more money with which to expand Austria's army. But the army has no credibility now, and the Dual Monarchy's parliaments were unwilling to spend more money on a military that seemed so incompetent.

The Emperor, Franz Josef, now 82 years old, had been in personal command of the military for the past 15 years. Now, in light of these dispiriting revelations, he turned over control of the military to the heir, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Now, the Austrian military held exercises every summer, and it was customary for Imperials and Archdukes to attend. Until recently, in fact, these summer exercises were more like entertainments put on for the enjoyment of the aristocracy than they were genuine training exercises. To his credit—and there aren't many

occasions when I'm going to want to give Conrad credit for anything, so let's make the most of this—Conrad changed all this when he became Chief of Staff. He made Austrian military exercises into genuine training exercises. But this year, in 1913, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand attended, along with his family. The first exercise was a simulated maneuver and battle between two armies, one commanded by General Moritz von Auffenberg, who, you'll recall from last week, had had to resign as War Minister just last year, following the Plan U revelations. Auffenberg was leading his army to a crushing victory in the simulated battle, when the Archduke, perhaps unwilling to let a general who had previously embarrassed him enjoy even a simulated victory and simulated glory, called off the battle before it was done, and ordered Conrad to replace it with the kind of showy and stylized exercises that would put on a good show for his wife and kids, but did little to, you know, train soldiers.

Conrad tendered his resignation after that little incident, but the Emperor refused to accept it. On a more cooperative note, the Archduke told Conrad that in 1914, he wanted to hold *two* sets of training exercises: the usual summer exercises, which were held in Galicia and were meant to simulate a war with Russia, plus an additional exercise to be held in the spring, in Bosnia, expressly for the purpose of sending a message to nearby Serbia. And he wanted the exercise held on or about June 28, which was a national holiday in Serbia, commemorating the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, just to make sure the Serbs got the point. Conrad agreed. Cue dramatic music.

[dramatic music]

Yes, we'll definitely have to check in on those training exercises in the Balkans in June 1914 to see how all that works out. But for now, let's turn our attention to the Second Balkan War, which is breaking out even as the Archduke and Conrad are arguing over the 1913 training exercise.

I mentioned that even the Great Powers had thrown up their hands and declined to draw the new boundaries for Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria in Macedonia. Serbia and Bulgaria had done a secret deal to divide these lands before the war started, but when all was said and done, Serbian troops were far over the line into what was supposed to be Bulgarian territory. Part of the reason for this was that the Serbs were planning to annex what became Albania as part of their share, but the Great Powers, particularly Austria and Italy, wouldn't stand for that, so the Serbian Army moved east instead of west.

The Bulgarian Army, meanwhile, under the leadership of the Tsar Ferdinand, the man who dreamed of becoming a twentieth century Byzantine Emperor, gambled on seizing control of Constantinople. It was a roll of the dice, and if it had succeeded, we might today been marveling at the audacious genius of Emperor Ferdinand I, but it didn't. Instead, Bulgaria, the Balkan nation with the largest army, expended its blood and treasure on a failed assault on Constantinople rather than trying to maximize territorial gains in Macedonia, and so they ended up weary and bloodied and looking at Serbian soldiers occupying towns that were supposed to be Bulgarian now.

And then there was Greece, which had surprised Ferdinand and the Bulgarians by snatching the Aegean port city of Salonika—ancient Thessalonica—just 24 hours before the Bulgarians were planning to take it. The Bulgarians did manage to grab hold of some Aegean coastline, meaning Bulgaria now has direct access to the Mediterranean, but the real prize would have been Salonika, the best port in the region, but it is now in Greek hands.

The Bulgarians were not shy about voicing their dissatisfaction with the outcome of the First Balkan War, and when I say “not shy,” I mean, they kept their army mobilized and ready for more war. The cynics who had found it hard to believe that the four Balkan League members were ready to set aside their differences to take on the Ottomans, were soon to get a measure of vindication, as the Balkan League is about to fall apart.

It was just two days after the signing of the Treaty of London that Serbia and Greece came to their own understanding: a secret treaty in which they agreed between the two of them to accept the ceasefire line between them as their common border. They also agreed to come to each other’s assistance in the event either of them was attacked by Bulgaria.

The Balkan League had been a masterstroke for Russian diplomacy, and the Russian government was determined to do whatever it could to hold it all together. The Russian Emperor, Nikolai II, sent identical offers to King Peter of Serbia and Tsar Ferdinand of Bulgaria, offering to mediate their differences peacefully. Serbia said, “Sure thing.”

The government of Bulgaria, on the other hand, was poised for war and did not want to demobilize. But keeping the Bulgarian Army mobilized was straining the government treasury and the Bulgarian economy. All this meant that the last thing Bulgaria could afford to do is get bogged down in a lengthy negotiation in St. Petersburg. So, the Bulgarian response to the Russian offer was, “Fine, we’ll agree to negotiate, provided Russia can come up with a plan everyone can agree to within, oh, let’s say eight days. Does that work for you?”

Sazonov, the Russian foreign minister, was furious with this Bulgarian response. To him, it sounded an awful lot like Bulgaria laying down an ultimatum, and where does a punk-ass little country like Bulgaria get off handing out deadlines to the mighty Russian Empire? Sazonov leapt to the conclusion that Austrian meddling must be behind all this. The Austrians had gotten to the Bulgarians somehow, and were using them to throw a monkey wrench into Russian diplomacy. This was perhaps not an entirely crazy thing to think, but it was entirely untrue. Unfortunately for Bulgaria—and in view of how all this is going to turn out, unfortunately for all of Europe—this is what the Russian government believed, and they responded by informing Bulgaria that its defense treaty with Russia was now terminated.

With war appearing imminent, Montenegro announced on June 27 that it, too, would back Serbia, meaning that the other three members of the Balkan League were now united against any possible attack from Bulgaria. Undeterred, Bulgaria launched the Second Balkan War on June 29, less than a month after the end of the First Balkan War.

Bulgaria still had the largest army among the Balkan League states, and it launched offensives against both Serbian and Greek forces in the now former Ottoman territories. The Bulgarians saw some modest success against the Serbians, but the push against the Greeks quickly stalled out. Then the Greeks, aided by their navy's operations in the Aegean, began pushing the Bulgarian army back.

The Bulgarians were forced to strip their occupation force in Thrace, that is, the troops guarding the Ottoman front, to send them to the collapsing Serbian and Greek fronts. Six days into the war, on July 5, Romania mobilized its army. Romanians are, as you know, a non-Slavic ethnic group, wedged in between Slavic Russia and Slavic Bulgaria, and they have territorial claims against both of them. Germany and Austria for some time now have been trying to woo Romania into an alliance aimed at hemming in Russia, and earlier this year, they succeeded, in spite of the fact that Romania also has territorial claims against Hungary. The Romanians agreed to set those aside, and were now aligned, more or less, with Germany and Austria.

Now that the entire Bulgarian army is moving west and south, with its backs to Romania and bogged down in difficult fighting with Serbia and Greece, and with Russia now repudiating its defense alliance with Bulgaria, Bulgaria looks uniquely vulnerable, especially if you are looking at her from a Romanian point of view. Opportunities like this don't come along every day, so on July 10, 1913, Romania declared war on Bulgaria. Romanian forces encountered no resistance. They quickly overran the Bulgarian territory they claimed, called Southern Dobruja, and began marching on Sofia, the Bulgarian capital.

With Bulgaria's situation looking hopeless, the Ottoman Empire declared war on July 12. Ottoman forces advanced from Constantinople back into the Thracian territories the Bulgarians had won from them just weeks before. Most humiliating of all was the fall of Adrianople to the Ottomans on July 23. You'll recall that the capture of Adrianople had been Bulgaria's most conspicuous victory, and the Ottomans' most humiliating defeat, just four months ago in the previous war. You may also recall that the loss of Adrianople triggered a coup in Constantinople; now, the new Ottoman war minister, Enver Pasha, could claim a prestigious victory. The city had been taken without firing a shot, as only a skeleton Bulgarian garrison remained, and they fled when Ottoman soldiers arrived. Ottoman forces continued to advance to the old Bulgarian border, and continued on into undisputed Bulgarian territory.

On July 20, the Serbian government invited the Bulgarians to a peace conference. With Romanian troops closing in on Sofia, and no Bulgarian forces available to oppose them, the Bulgarians agreed, and also invited Romania to the talks. Romania agreed, and offered to host the talks in the Romanian capital, Bucharest. And so, the five combatants: Greece, Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania declared an armistice and began negotiating on July 30. The Romanians refused to invite the Ottomans to the peace conference, forcing Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire to negotiate a bilateral agreement separately.

On August 10, a treaty was signed. Greece picked up some extra territory along the Aegean at Bulgaria's expense, while Serbia, under diplomatic pressure from both Austria and Russia, made a couple token territorial concessions to Bulgaria. And Bulgaria ceded Southern Dobruja to Romania. Romania's total combat casualties in this war were zero.

The Ottoman Empire negotiated a separate treaty with Bulgaria, signed in September, which returned Adrianople and a significant chunk of Thrace to Ottoman rule. The Ottoman Empire's total combat casualties in this war were also zero.

That's got to be some kind of record.

[music: Serb folk music]

In November 1913, Greece and the Ottoman Empire would sign a formal peace treaty, and finally, in March 1914, Serbia and the Empire would agree to a treaty and restore normal diplomatic relations. Montenegro and the Ottoman Empire never did formally end their conflict before the Great War would pit them against one another once again.

After the two Balkan Wars, Greece was a much-enlarged nation, with one and a half million new citizens, looking on the map much more like the Greece we know today. Montenegro, having divided the Sanjak of Novi Pazar with Serbia, was also larger now, and had a common border with Serbia.

Bulgaria, on the other hand, the country with the largest army in the Balkan League, and the country that had paid the highest price in blood and treasure, had frittered away those sacrifices, and ended the war with some modest gains along the Aegean Sea, and the loss of Southern Dobruja. The result was deep resentment in Sofia, and while the Bulgarian government officially agreed to the new borders, it began plotting at once to take its revenge against its former allies, Greece, Serbia, and Russia, and began secret talks on a new alliance with, believe it or not, its recent enemy, the Ottoman Empire.

But the biggest winner was Serbia. Serbia almost doubled in land area and had increased its population fifty percent. Serb nationalists were ecstatic. Serbia seemed well on its way now toward fulfilling its destiny, becoming the nucleus of a unified South Slav state, in the same way that Prussia had been the nucleus around which Imperial Germany had come into being, or Piedmont-Sardinia had been the nucleus for the Kingdom of Italy. The Serbian government now looked northward, toward its brother Serbs in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. And the Croats, whom, Serbian leaders like Prime Minister Pašić, now generously included in their definition of "Serb," whether the Croats liked it or not. They'll come around. For that matter, even the Slovenians, the next Slavic ethnic group north of Bosnia and Croatia, well, it was only a matter of time before they, too, realized they were really "Serbs."

For the Russians, their diplomacy in the Balkans had gone from triumph to disaster in a matter of weeks. Hardly anyone could have imagined in 1912, that the quarrelsome Balkan states could be prodded into an alliance. Russian diplomacy had pulled that off, but the alliance was doomed to disintegrate. Before all was said and done, Russia had had to walk away from its treaty with Bulgaria, a country that was now in no mood to make nice with St. Petersburg. All that was left for Russian diplomats was to work on building ties to Romania, in an effort to pry that country on the Russian border away from Germany and Austria.

But there was also Serbia. Serbia was, for the moment, Russia's only remaining diplomatic asset in the Balkans, and the Russians were determined to keep that relationship strong. You may recall that the Russian ambassador in Belgrade, Nikolai Hartwig, was an ardent pan-Slavist, believing in the fundamental unity of all Slavic people. He was more of a Serbian nationalist than many Serbians, despised Austria, and was continually urging Serbia to challenge her neighbor to the north. And the French, at Russian behest, were granting Serbia generous loans, helping to keep her on her feet in spite of the expensive wars she'd just been through.

Serbia's new lands, the former Ottoman province of Kosovo and a part of Macedonia, were territories the Serbian government claimed for historical reasons, but in the twentieth century, the inhabitants are mostly not people who identify as Serbs. In Kosovo, they were ethnic Albanians, mostly, and Muslim, mostly, and resentful for having been left out of the new Albanian state, absolutely, and not at all happy about being included in Serbia. There was a revolt, which the Serbian government suppressed without mercy. Residents of the new lands were not granted the rights guaranteed under the Serbian constitution, which the Serbian government justified by pointing to the unrest and claiming that the people of these regions were too backward to participate in modern democratic government. The anger and resentment of Kosovars and Macedonians would simmer for the rest of the twentieth century.

As for Albania itself, the Great Powers had given up on the idea of an Albania still nominally part of the Ottoman Empire, and were now ready to concede full independence. But even before the borders of the new Albanian state had been formalized, Serbian troops were already violating them. In September 1913, Austria demanded Serbian troops withdraw from Albanian territory, echoing the confrontation over the siege of Scutari just a few months earlier. Serbia responded by increasing its troop strength in Albania, and claiming the soldiers were needed to protect ethnic Serbs from persecution by Albanians.

The Austrians saw themselves as the greatest losers in the Balkan conflicts. In his memoirs, the Austrian foreign minister, Berchtold, would say that the two Balkan Wars had "emasculated" Austria. (That's his word.) Events in the Balkans were unfolding without any influence from Vienna. Austrian diplomacy was ineffective. The only time Serbia paid any attention to Austria was when she threatened war. It was the clearest sign of Austria's lack of influence that this was the only diplomatic tool left in her toolbox. And even then, as long as Serbia had Russia backing her up, Austrian threats only carried weight so long as Germany was willing to back her up.

Serbian Prime Minister Pašić traveled to Vienna in early October to discuss the latest crisis in Austrian-Serbian relations, and although he was polite and friendly during the visit, he offered no concessions. General Conrad, as usual, recommended that Austria annex Serbia and be done with it. On October 18, Austria gave Serbia a formal ultimatum: remove your troops from Albania by October 25, or it will be war. In Leipzig that same day, Conrad met with the German Kaiser, Wilhelm II. Wilhelm promised Conrad Germany's full support, saying, "*Ich gehe mit Euch,*" "I go with you."

The only Great Powers that had been given any prior warning of the Austrian ultimatum were Austria's Triple Alliance partners, Italy and Germany. And here we see a sign of the old Concert of Europe breaking down. Austria is now consulting only with her allies in her own alliance bloc, leaving the other Great Powers in the dark.

On October 25, Serbia—and Russia—backed down and Serbia agreed to withdraw from Albania. Albanian independence was now a fact.

István Tisza, the Prime Minister of Hungary, had been floating ideas within Austro-Hungarian government circles for doing a deal with Russia to persuade Serbia to give up control of the non-Serb territories it had just won. Aside from the fact that it seemed unlikely Russia would be in any mood to work with Austria on anything right now, it seemed even more unlikely that Serbia could be persuaded to do anything peacefully. General Conrad was no longer the only voice in Austrian government calling for war with Serbia. Most of the military now agreed. Serbia had demonstrated conclusively that she respects nothing but brute force.

Even the Austro-Hungarian Finance Minister, Leon von Biliński, was now on board. Austria had the stingiest military budget among the Great Powers and the government was heavily in debt, and every time troops needed to be mobilized to pressure Serbia, it cost more money. Even a partial mobilization could easily cost more than a new dreadnought battleship, something else Austria needed more of. Biliński grudgingly came to the conclusion that an all out war to crush Serbia once and for all would be more economical than calling up the troops every few months and then demobilizing them again.

And so, by the close of 1913, the leadership of Austria-Hungary were convinced that a war against Serbia, and possibly Russia as well, was now inevitable. The one figure who still held out hope for a peaceful resolution was the Crown Prince, Archduke Franz Ferdinand.

In Berlin, Kaiser Wilhelm was pleased, telling the Austrian military attaché, "Austria has shown her teeth; I hope she will continue to do so."

And I'd like to pause here for a moment to recognize Wilhelm's repeated efforts to egg Austria on into a war that will be an utter disaster for her, for Germany, and for all of Europe by awarding this week's Kaiser Wilhelm II Award for Making an Ass out of Yourself to Kaiser Wilhelm II.

[sound effects: bell and cheers.]

Anyway, if that was the quality of Imperial leadership in Berlin, it was still a notch above the Imperial leadership in Vienna. The Austrian Kaiser, Franz Josef, now 83 years old, visited the British embassy in Vienna during the October crisis, and gave a rambling speech on the situation in the Balkans, in which he concluded with the observation that “on the whole, the Turks are the best element there,” apparently having forgotten that the Turks were no longer there.

The Kaiser was so far gone by now that whenever the Crown Prince traveled, a special train was kept on standby to whisk him back to Vienna at the first word of the Kaiser’s demise. And since it was an open secret that the Archduke was looking for ways to rein in the power of Hungary and restore the primacy of the Imperial government, observers couldn’t help but wonder if the end of the elderly Emperor would spell the end of the Dual Monarchy.

By December 1913, the awful reality of Austria’s position was sinking in. Foreign Minister Berchtold had ordered his ministry to prepare a paper on Austria’s diplomatic position. When it was submitted, the paper’s conclusions were grim. An increasingly radical Serbia, where the army was flush with victory and radical groups like the Black Hand were pressuring the Serbian civilian government into further confrontation with Austria, could not be cowed by anything short of military defeat. The Serbians were confident of Russian support, and they had good reason. In Russia, the military and the Slav nationalists staunchly supported Serbia. Even if the Russian Emperor, Nikolai II, personally had doubts about going to war over Serbia, he could hardly afford to alienate the military and the Slav nationalists, since they are by now virtually the only support he’s got left. Besides Serbia, the Russians are wooing Romania, and, who knows, a new Russian alliance with Bulgaria or even the Ottoman Empire are not out of the question.

The military position was not much better. Serbia’s army had grown so large that Austria could not hope to defeat it and hold off the Russians at the same time. To deploy a force large enough to conquer Serbia would require stripping the Russian border to a dangerously weak defensive line. The best chance would be to throw everything Austria had into that battle, and leave only a small screening force to keep the Serbian Army in check. And even then, Austria would need help from Germany. She had no hope of defeating Russia on her own.

On Christmas Eve, 1913, Conrad, the man who has been urging war with Serbia for years now, wrote, “I believe more and more that our purpose will merely be to go under honorably, like a sinking ship.”

We’ll have to stop there for today. Thanks for listening. Next weekend is Easter, in Western Christianity, and hey, what do you know, it’s Easter in Eastern Christianity, too. So that’s two reasons to take the weekend off, not to mention relatives. So there will be no new episode next week, but I hope you’ll join me in two weeks’ time as we turn our attention to the United Kingdom in 1914. After 26 years of argument, it looks like Irish Home Rule is here at last, but we’ll see. That’s in two weeks, on *The History of the Twentieth Century*.

Oh, and one more thing. When the Albanian flag was raised over newly independent Albania in 1912, the Albanian national anthem, “Hymn to the Flag,” was played. It remains the national anthem of Albania to this day.

[music: “Himni i Flamurit”]