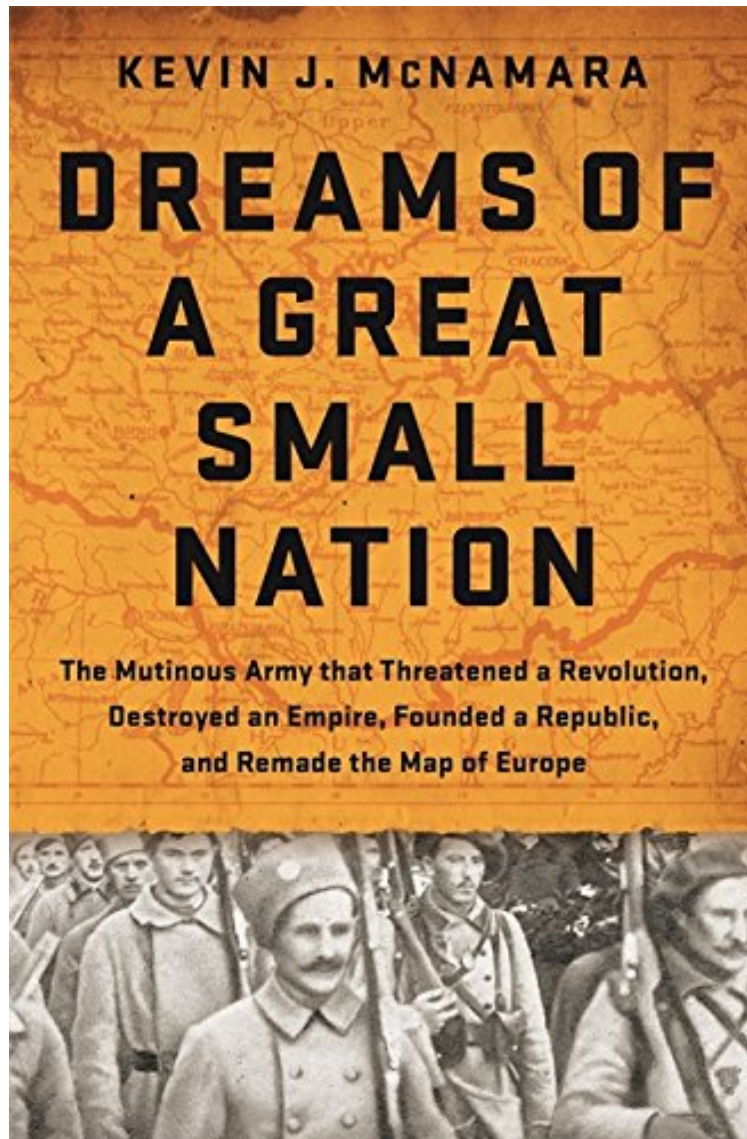


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# Dreams of a Great Small Nation: The Mutinous Army that Threatened a Revolution, Destroyed an Empire, Founded a Republic, and Remade the Map of Europe

*Kevin J McNamara*

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**Kevin J McNamara : Dreams of a Great Small Nation: The Mutinous Army that Threatened a Revolution, Destroyed an Empire, Founded a Republic, and Remade the Map of Europe** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dreams of a Great Small Nation: The Mutinous Army that

## Threatened a Revolution, Destroyed an Empire, Founded a Republic, and Remade the Map of Europe:

23 of 23 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating Story About World War I Secrets and Creating a Nation By R. Louis This is a fascinating story about events during World War I that led to the foundation of the nation of Czechoslovakia. Using primary sources and a wide range of other scholarship, the author has told the story of a legion of Czech and Slovak soldiers who were caught in the crumbling Russian empire and had to fight their way to safety, which was rescue by Allied ships in Vladivostok. Along the way, they fought off continual attacks by Bolshevik armies. Apparently, there was an effort to hide this story on the part of the Russians and others, but here it is, told in a thorough and engrossing fashion by the author. This is a must-read for European history buffs.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An extraordinary historical accomplishment By BookHawk This is a dramatic narrative capturing the quite improbable chain of political and military events that led to the establishment of the nation of Czechoslovakia in the wake of WWI. It's more detailed than necessary and I found myself skimming from time to time. But the scope and scale of the narrative is addictive even to the general serious reader. It captures the collapse of the Hapsburg dynasty illustrating how Czech leaders (Thomas Maserick especially) declared war on Austria Hungary from Prague then created a national political movement to build the nation. The key instrument was the conversion of Czech POW units into an armed force that toward the end of the War controlled all RR transport East the Urals (effectively giving them control over Russian Siberia) and Murmansk on the Arctic approaches to far north Russia. Suffice to say Bolshevik arguments, betrayals, and political imperatives ultimately prevailed This was leverage that led to establishment of a new Czechoslovak nation. The book captures the drama of creating a new government in the midst of huge stresses from the Versailles Treaty obligations imposed on Germany.

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. should be much better known. Well written By Ernest I. Korchak fascinating piece of history, should be much better known. Well written

“The pages of history recall scarcely any parallel episode at once so romantic in character and so extensive in scale.”  
—Winston S. Churchill

In 1917, two empires that had dominated much of Europe and Asia teetered on the edge of the abyss, exhausted by the ruinous cost in blood and treasure of the First World War. As Imperial Russia and Habsburg-ruled Austria-Hungary began to succumb, a small group of Czech and Slovak combat veterans stranded in Siberia saw an opportunity to realize their long-held dream of independence. While their plan was audacious and complex, and involved moving their 50,000-strong army by land and sea across three-quarters of the earth's expanse, their commitment to fight for the Allies on the Western Front riveted the attention of Allied London, Paris, and Washington. On their journey across Siberia, a brawl erupted at a remote Trans-Siberian rail station that sparked a wholesale rebellion. The marauding Czecho-Slovak Legion seized control of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, and with it Siberia. In the end, this small band of POWs and deserters, whose strength was seen by Leon Trotsky as the chief threat to Soviet rule, helped destroy the Austro-Hungarian Empire and found Czecho-Slovakia. British prime minister David Lloyd George called their adventure “one of the greatest epics of history,” and former US president Teddy Roosevelt declared that their accomplishments were “unparalleled, so far as I know, in ancient or modern warfare.”