FINLAND'S RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, 1940-1952

by

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ABSTRACT

In March 1940, Finland had just completed another life and death struggle with the Soviet Union, the second such struggle since Bolshevik autocracy replaced Tsarist autocracy in Russia in 1917. During the following fifteen months, Soviet diplomacy endeavoured to complete the job which the Red Army had begun. By a unilateral and extremely liberal interpretation of the Peace Treaty of March 12, 1940, the Soviet Union tried to isolate Finland from her other neighbours and to establish a favourable basis for a complete annexation of Finland in the manner of the three Baltic States.

Surrounded by Soviet and German military might, and noticing the increasing friction in the Nazi-Soviet alliance, Finland, in order to save herself from an imminent Soviet invasion, grasped the only straw which seemed to offer some hope: a transit agreement for German troops from Finland's Bothnian coast to Kirkenes in occupied Norway. The resulting presence of German troops in the country did save Finland from becoming the seventeenth
Soviet Socialist Republic in 1940 or 1941, but it also involved her deeply in the Nazi-Soviet conflict which followed. When Germany attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941, Finland tried in vain to have her neutrality respected, and she was attacked by Soviet forces three days after the German aggression.

During the so-called Continuation War, Finland refused to take part in the general German offensive plan, restricting herself to attaining her own strategic goals only, all of them dictated by the requirements for the defence of Finnish territory. Nevertheless, when Finland was finally able to pull out of the war in 1944, she was treated by the Allied Powers as an ally of Germany and subjected to an exceedingly heavy indemnity, payable in goods to the Soviet Union. She also lost more than ten per cent of her territory and had to give the Soviet Union a fifty-years lease on Porkkala, ten miles from the capital. The retreating Germans destroyed ninety per cent of all facilities and resources in North Finland.

Although Finland was not occupied, her government worked under the supervision of an Allied Control Commission installed by the Soviet Union. The government was forced to prosecute hundreds of 'war criminals', including eight of Finland's war-time leaders. However, as long as Finland fulfilled the conditions of the Armistice Agreement, she was allowed to handle her internal affairs in relative
liberty. The Finnish Communists were unable to out-maneuvre the government and were removed from all positions of control after the Peace Treaty had been signed in 1947. Finland was also able to meet the obligations of the war indemnity, although the total cost to Finland was approximately $900,000,000.

The general election of 1948 marked a turning point in that it inaugurated a period during which Finnish democracy managed to reconquer all territory lost to the Communists during the era of the Control Commission. In spite of that, Finnish-Soviet relations grew increasingly better after it had become clear to the Soviet Union that Finland intended to stay aloof from Great Power conflicts in all circumstances. By 1952, it could safely be said that Finland's relations with the Soviet Union were the best since 1917. But Finnish independence was conditional on her own policy of absolute neutrality and the future developments in the East-West conflict.
In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his representative. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of HISTORY

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When this thesis was first begun, its title was "Finland's Relations With the Soviet Union Since the Armistice". However, as the research progressed, it was found that it is impossible to explain satisfactorily Finland's postwar relations with her eastern neighbour without going rather extensively into the preceding war years. Soon it also became inevitable that an introductory survey of Finnish-Soviet relations between the Bolshevik revolution and 1940 must be included, since it is difficult to understand one period in this unique relationship without a general knowledge of the others.

The present thesis, therefore, is perhaps attempting too much in that it endeavours to do justice to two chapters of Finnish-Soviet relations which, strictly speaking, may be two distinct periods, but in reality complement each other. The experiences of 1940-44 were the prerequisites which decisively influenced the conditions governing the Soviet Union’s approach to Finland during
1944-52. And the qualities which sustained the Finnish people during the Winter War of 1939-40, during the ordeal of peace after the Moscow Peace, and during the years of the Continuation War from 1941 to 1944, were the same qualities which enabled them to carry the burden of the heaviest war indemnity obligations successfully discharged by any nation at any time, the same qualities which allowed Finland, as the only country among those which fell under Soviet domination at the end of World War II, to emerge with her principles, her liberty and her democratic institutions intact.

One other major reason why the period of 1940-44 was included in the present thesis was a desire on the part of the author to attempt to dispel some of the popular misconceptions still prevailing about the events which led to Finnish co-belligerency with Germany from 1941 to 1944. As a logical consequence of Great Britain's most reluctant decision to accede to Soviet demands that she declare war upon Finland to bolster the Anglo-Soviet alliance against Germany, the Soviet version of Finnish-Soviet relations gradually seeped into the war propaganda of the Allied Powers. This was made easier by the undeniable presence of German troops on Finnish territory since the fall of 1940, a fact which was magnified beyond all reasonable proportions in Allied propaganda. Since the origin of the transit agreement, which made the presence of German forces in Finland possible, was - and still is - the object of considerable
dispute, postwar writers on the topic have been able to take their choice of which side of the argument they prefer to accept, which has tended to continue the suspicion of Finnish integrity and democracy sown during the war. The most recent example of such writings appeared only last year.

It is hoped that the thesis has managed to cast some new light on the origin of the Continuation War, because it is only when that chapter of Finnish history is understood that one can fully understand the injustice suffered by Finland after World War II for having accidentally been pushed into one belligerent camp rather than the other. Her position differs little in this respect from that of Norway. Norway would undoubtedly have resisted the planned British invasion as she resisted the Germans, but since Germany reached Norway first - Norway accidentally found herself on the winning side in the war. It is true that there are major differences between the cases of Norway and Finland, but a generalized comparison such as the one above is not entirely unjustified.

No reader of the present thesis can fail to notice that it is written by one who has a profound admiration for the Finnish people. As one who hails from Scandinavia, the author has come by that respect honestly and it has not been lessened by the rather extensive research which went into the preparation of this thesis. On the contrary, the evidence of history can only serve to increase one's admiration for the four million Finns and for what they have
accomplished in the face of supreme hardships.

In spite of the presence of this admiration, the author believes that objectivity of treatment has not been sacrificed. All evidence of which he has knowledge has been taken into consideration, and to the best of his knowledge no fact has been 'conveniently forgotten' because it might tend to contradict opinions expressed in this thesis.

The author is deeply indebted to Dean F. H. Soward, whose expert advice has always been given freely, and whose thorough examination of the manuscript has removed at least the worst discrepancies in language and fact. The faults which still remain must be attributed to the natural stubbornness of the author. Acknowledgements are also due to my father, Director Peter Korsby of the Agricultural College of Norway, to my god-father, Head Librarian Arne Johnson of the same institution, and to my sister, cand. theol. Sidsel Krosby of Vollebekk, Norway, for their assistance in searching Scandinavian periodical indexes and preparing a list of periodical writings useful for the present thesis; to the Library of the Nobel Institute in Oslo, Norway, for making photostatic copies of a number of periodical articles; to Dr. Heikki Valvanne, Head of the Institute of Economic Research of the Bank of Finland in Helsinki, for his advice with respect to literature available in Finland; to the Academic Book Store in Helsinki for similar assistance; to Mr. Helge Ekengren, Vice-Consul of Finland in Vancouver, for making available to the author copies of Finnish
periodicals and numerous issues of the Swedish People's Party's newspaper *Hufvudstadsbladet*; to my friend Gunnar Hansen of Grundt Tanum's Book Store in Oslo for keeping me up to date on relevant literature on the Norwegian book market and forwarding a number of useful works; and to Mr. Ronald J. Todd, Reference Librarian at the University of Washington, for his kind and always willing assistance in finding material during four weeks of research in Seattle.

H. P. K.
CHAPTER I

FROM INDEPENDENCE TO THE WINTER WAR

To the people of Finland, the knowledge of Soviet Communism in its most ominous implications is as old as Soviet Communism itself. While it took the experiences of World War II, the revelation of Soviet aims through the publication of Nazi-Germany's documents on foreign policy and the frustrations of the last twelve years to open the eyes of the Western democracies to the fact that the globe alone is the limit of Soviet-Russian designs, Finland possessed this knowledge from the outset of her independent existence as a sovereign state. Even though there are still those in 'the West' who find it difficult to believe the proclamations of Communism from Marx to Lenin and the evidence of the last forty years' history, the Finnish nation has faced the writing on the wall and lived with it since 1917. To the Finns, the imperialism of Soviet Communism was not a discovery made since the Second World War - or during the Winter War of
1939-40. It was an aspect of traditional Russian policy which they had felt bodily first in 1721,\textsuperscript{1} then continuously and increasingly throughout the reign of Tsarist Russia from 1809 to 1917 and during the regime of Communism in Russia from 1917 to the present day. The fact that the Finns have survived as an independent nation state in the face of the tremendous pressure exerted upon them from the East during the last forty years is no less than a miracle in twentieth century history and reflects a measure of courage and devotion to the principles of democratic freedom of which the rest of the free world could, with great benefit, take note.

From the very outset of its existence, the sovereign Finnish state has learned that the ultimate goal of Soviet Communism does not change, that there is not necessarily a corelation between Soviet words and actions. In the wake of the Kerensky revolution in March, 1917, the Finns detached themselves from Russia, and, following the ensuing Bolshevik revolution, the Finnish Parliament, the Riksdag, formally proclaimed the independence of Finland on December 6, 1917. Already at that early date the menace to Finland represented by the Bolsheviks in Russia was realized in Finland. Passing through Petersburg in the middle of

\textsuperscript{1} Following the defeat and death of King Charles XII of Sweden before the Norwegian fortress of Fredriksten, Peter the Great, under the terms of the Treaty of Nystad (Uusikaupunki) of 1721, obtained a frontier with Sweden similar to that subsequently imposed by the U.S.S.R. on Finland by the Peace of Moscow in 1940.
December, 1917, on his way home to Finland from his command on the Eastern front, his last in thirty years of service with the Russian Imperial Army, General Baron Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim expressed his impressions of the revolution in these words: "I soon realized that there was no sign of any attempt to oppose the Soviet power, and that this would quickly consolidate itself and become a deadly menace to the young Finnish State. Finland must prepare to defend herself...."\(^2\)

The Soviet attitude appeared to be not too menacing on the face of it, however. Reporting to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on January 4, 1918, the People's Commissar of Nationality Affairs, J. V. Stalin, asserted that the decision of the Council of People's Commissars on December 31st to recognize the independence of Finland had been arrived at "...in full accord with the principles of the right of nations to self-determination...."\(^3\) The People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, L. D. Trotsky, had expressed himself to the same effect during a press interview two days earlier.\(^4\) There was little else the Soviet of People's Commissars could do under the circumstances. However, for those who knew how to interpret


\(^4\) Ibid., p. 26.
Communist announcements there was ample reason for apprehension. Stalin, in the report quoted, went on to say:

If we look more closely into the picture of the independence received by Finland, we shall see that in fact the Council of People's Commissars has, against its will, given freedom not to the people, not to the representatives of the Finnish proletariat, but to the Finnish bourgeoisie which by a strange coincidence seized power and received independence from the hands of the socialists of Russia. The Finnish workers and Social Democrats found themselves in a situation in which they had to accept freedom not directly from the hands of the Russian socialists, but with the help of the Finnish bourgeoisie. Seeing in this the tragedy of the Finnish proletariat, we cannot refrain from pointing out that it is only because of indecision and an incomprehensible cowardice that the Finnish Social Democrats did not take decisive steps to take power themselves and to wrest their independence from the hands of the Finnish bourgeoisie.

...Let then Finland's independence help forward the cause of the liberation of the Finnish workers and peasants and create a solid basis for the friendship of our peoples.

Stalin's words gave the Finns a fairly good idea of what was the Soviet definition of the word 'people', and they were informed in no uncertain terms that the group to which Finnish independence had been so magnanimously handed did not represent, or even constitute a part of, the 'people'. Finnish independence had been turned over to the bourgeoisie, and the Finnish workers and peasants were challenged to assert the 'right of nations to self-determination'. They alone, in Communist interpretation, were the nation, the people of Finland.

It was quite clear that the formal recognition

extended to Finland by the Soviet of People's Commissars was little more than a regrettable but necessary expedient dictated by the prevailing conditions of the day. The real Soviet designs were already in the process of being organized. There was no rush on the part of the new regime in Petersburg to withdraw Russian troops from the territory of Finland, for instance, as their usefulness had not yet come to an end. Revolutionary ideas had found response in Finland as well as in Russia, and the Social Democratic Party, under the influence of its extreme leftist elements, on October 20, 1917, had urged the workers to organize military formations for the purpose of 'self-defence' and to be prepared 'for all eventualities'. These formations soon came to be known as 'Red Guards'. 'White Guards', consisting mainly of men from the upper and middle classes, including the peasantry, had been formed a few months earlier during the campaign for independence and as a counterweight for the Russian troops in the country. The division in the Finnish nation grew ominously each day.

On January 26, 1918, the Red Guards mobilized, and two days later they struck, taking possession of Helsinki, Tampere, Kuopio and several other major centres in the south. On the 28th the White Guards retaliated, disarming the Russian troops in the Vaasa region and soon liberating the entire Bothnian coast under the generalship

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6 Mannerheim, *op. cit.*, p. 130.
of Mannerheim. The active Red Army support of the Red Guards was continued even after the conclusion of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, in which Russia agreed to withdraw her troops from Finnish territory forthwith. The White Guards remained victorious, however, and the revolt was doomed even before the Germans decided to intervene from the Baltic.

While this cruelly bitter civil war was in progress, however, the Soviet leaders further showed their hand by concluding a 'Treaty of Friendship with the Finnish Socialist Workers' Republic' on March 1st, thus promptly recognizing the 'real independence' of the Finnish 'people' for which they had called at the time of the Petersburg uprisings. This establishment of diplomatic relations with a rebel regime was to become almost a trademark in


8 Stalin actually went to Finland in November, 1917, to attend a conference of the Social Democratic Party, and he urged immediate action in conformity with the revolution in Russia. Lenin in vain implored the Finnish workers to "Rise, rise instantly, and take over the government in the hands of organized labor." Anatole G. Mazour, Finland Between East and West, Princeton, N. J., D. Van Nostrand, 1956, pp. 56-57. Otto W. Kuusinen, one of the foremost leaders of the left wing of the Finnish Social Democratic Party, later explained that the Russian Revolution came as a complete "surprise" to the Finnish Social Democrats. Strong believers in the ideals of Communism, they found themselves hesitant and incapable of action when the hour of revolution finally struck, and they did not recover until the opportunity had been passed up and the bourgeoisie had had time to organize
Finnish-Soviet relations, as the procedure was duplicated by the Soviet Government twenty years later. The recognition extended to independent Finland less than two months earlier was now conveniently overlooked. The Finnish state had experienced its first lesson in the reliability of the new regime in Russia. The Finns had received their first practical demonstration of the fact that the new leaders of Russia were the heirs of Peter the Great.

Not until October 14, 1920, was peace concluded between Finland and the Soviet Union. By the Treaty of Tartu, Finland gained a border with the Soviet Union which roughly paralleled her ancient frontiers. The only notable differences were the cession of the districts of Repola and Porajärvi in Eastern Karelia, while the Petsamo district was gained, giving Finland an ice-free port on the Arctic Ocean.

In spite of the peace treaty, however, relations between Finland and her eastern neighbour between the two world wars could never be described as good. Considerable tension continued. Diplomatic representatives were exchanged, but it was soon found that the Soviet envoy in Helsinki was

its defence. An instant uprising in Finland at the time of the Petersburg revolt would have been the right course. Then there should immediately have been set up an all-powerful and absolutely merciless dictatorship of the proletariat to safeguard the success of the revolution, Kuusinen declared. The immediate result of this self-chastising analysis was the break with the Social Democrats and the formation of the Finnish Communist Party. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-58.
using his position to promote communist agitation within Finland. Of a more serious nature was the dispute which arose in 1921 over the status of Eastern Karelia. In Articles 10 and 11 of the Tartu Treaty, the Soviet Government had undertaken to guarantee the political, economic and cultural autonomy of Eastern Karelia under Russian sovereignty, an undertaking which was further elaborated upon in a unilateral declaration by the Soviet delegation attached to the treaty. From the start, this obligation had been neglected, however, and a popular uprising broke out in November, 1921. The Finnish Government appealed to the League of Nations, which promptly brought a blast from G. V. Chicherin, Commissar for Foreign Affairs, charging Finland's Government with responsibility for the 'raids' on the 'Karelian Labour Commune'. Unless Finland effectively closed the frontier, ceased supporting the organizations aiding the 'bands', liquidated the same organizations and dissolved Russian counter-revolutionary groups operating in Finland - the Soviet Government would be "...compelled to take other steps to secure the real observance by the Finnish Government of the peace treaty it concluded with

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9 Arnold J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs 1920-1923*, London, Oxford University Press, 1924, p. 240. (Issued under the auspices of the British Institute of International Affairs) (Hereafter volumes in this series will be referred to as *Survey 1924*, *Survey 1925*, etc.)

the RSFSR."¹¹ The League of Nations, acting on an opinion of the Permanent Court of International Justice, decided that it could not take any action in a dispute between a Member and a state not a Member without the consent of the latter. Meanwhile, the Soviet Government suppressed the Karelian uprising with the greatest severity, and large number of troops were concentrated near the Finnish frontier. Only the 'prudence of the Finnish Government' prevented any further development of the crisis.¹² But the status of Eastern Karelia remained a bone of contention, a terra irredenta, in the opinion of many Finns and a shameful symbol of injustice to all. It also remained a constant reminder of the value of Soviet promises, however solemnly made.

In the face of these experiences, however, the Communist Party had been given government permission to organize itself in Finland even before the Tartu Treaty had been signed. In the spring of 1920, it called a constituent meeting under the name of Finland's Socialist Workers' Party, and no obstacles were placed in its way. Not even heavily documented representations by the State Police which urged

¹¹ Note from Chicherin to the Finnish Chargé d'Affaires in Moscow on Eastern Karelia of December 5, 1921. Degas, op. cit., pp. 280-282.

¹² Survey 1920-1923, p. 246. In his note of December 5, Chicherin also said that the Soviet Government "...regards the appeal of the Finnish Government to the so-called League of Nations as in all its implications a hostile act and a radical violation of the peace treaty." Degas, op. cit., p. 281.
the dissolution of the party and the institution of criminal proceedings against its leaders succeeded in bringing any action against the Communists. In the Riksdag elections of 1922, the Communists returned twenty-seven deputies to the 200-member assembly, their largest representation until after the Second World War. The eventual trial and conviction of Communist leaders in the summer of 1923, and the dissolution of the party two years later, also failed to put a stop to Communist activity in Finland. Under the name of Finland's Workers' and Smallholders' Party, they were permitted to continue their work until finally banned by the Riksdag in 1930.

In this period, also, began the frustrating chain of Finnish attempts to seek political security in regional agreements. The first such attempt was begun in 1921, resulting in the signature on March 17, 1922, of an agreement among Poland, Finland, Estonia and Latvia providing for unified action in the case of aggression. The Soviet Government immediately protested that this agreement was tantamount to an alliance directed against the Soviet Union. Although Estonia and Latvia nevertheless ratified the accord, Finland bowed to the Soviet objections and rejected the agreement in the summer of 1922. Further conferences during 1923, 1924 and 1925 failed to convince Finland of the wisdom of a Baltic alliance, and she subsequently turned her attentions westward.13

The advent of the Kellogg-Briand Pact for the Renunciation of War provided the Soviet Government with an excellent opportunity to promote its own security programme, and it heralded 'a new era' in Soviet diplomacy. In spite of the caution necessitated by the weak internal position of the country, the Soviet Government had faithfully trumpeted the doctrine of world revolution in the years immediately following the revolution in Russia. It had soon come to realize, however, that the world revolution could not be brought about by merely urging the workers of all countries to unite and rise against their bourgeois oppressors in the fashion demonstrated in Russia. And with this growing realization came the internal struggle between the proponents of immediate world revolution and the proponents of the idea of building a strong and secure base in Russia before again advancing the world-wide revolution. The 'New Economic Policy', instituted by Lenin himself, was a victory, in effect, for the latter faction. The expulsion of Trotsky ended this struggle and spelled the consolidation of the 'Russia first' faction under the leadership of Stalin. The emphasis on world revolution was shelved for the time being, and everything had to serve the goal of establishing the Russian base which would later facilitate the expansion of Communism to the rest of the world. Soviet diplomacy had a major part to play in this new party line, and soon its efforts were directed to a considerable extent towards the campaign to convince the countries of the world that
the menace of world revolution was a thing of the past. Hand in hand with this campaign went the efforts to gain the required respite by a system of non-aggression pacts with neighbours of the Soviet Union, and nothing could have aided this campaign more than the Kellogg-Briand Pact.

On October 4, 1928, the Soviet Government formally adhered to the Treaty for the Renunciation of War which had been signed in Paris less than six weeks earlier. None of the original signatories had ratified the treaty at that time, and neither had any of them done so when Maxim Litvinov, Assistant Commissar for Foreign Affairs, on December 29, 1928, invited Poland to sign with the Soviet Union a protocol which would bring the Kellogg-Briand Pact into force between the two countries at the earliest possible date. Litvinov expressed the desire that other European border states of the Soviet Union should become parties to the protocol as well, and by July 4, 1929, instruments of ratification of the protocol had been deposited in Moscow by the Soviet Union, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Rumania, Lithuania and Danzig, and also by Turkey and Persia. Finland remained the only one of Russia's neighbours in Europe outside the Soviet security system. And yet Russian suspicions made it increasingly more difficult for Finland to harbour any illusions about the virtues of a

policy of isolated neutrality, and westward orientation towards the Scandinavian countries became more marked.

The arrival on the Finnish scene of the so-called Lapua Movement and the banning of organized Communist political activity did not, of course, improve relations with the Soviet Union. This "brief flare-up of an anti-democratic movement" originated in "...a curious native environment of anti-Communist, anti-democratic, and Russophobe sentiment fused into one", to quote Professor Anatole G. Mazour. Starting with a local demonstration against the Young Communist League at Lapua - hence the name - in southern Ostrobothnia in November, 1929, the Lapua Movement soon spanned the entire country and even exerted some influence upon the government. The resignation of Prime Minister Kyösti Kallio, who was succeeded by former President P. E. Svinhufvud, a rightist, on July 1, 1930, further boosted the fortunes of the Lapua Movement. The movement, inspired to a considerable extent by the Lutheran clergy and representing a crusade against all godlessness in Finland, Social Democrats as well as Communists, and for a short initial period enjoyed the tacit support of President L. K. Relander, General Mannerheim and other prominent leaders. Soon, however, the movement whipped itself into a hysteria reminiscent of the simultaneous movement of

National Socialism in Germany, and the responsible leaders of Finland found it necessary to curtail the activities of the Lapua members, who were rapidly becoming as dangerous to Finnish democracy as the Communists they had set out to eliminate. But first, by a one vote majority, the Riksdag had adopted Svinhufvud's program and outlawed the Communist Party from both the Riksdag and the local city and community councils. An abortive military coup early in 1932 led to the arrest of the Lapua leaders, and in March the Riksdag passed legislation which banned all Lapua organizations. Fascism in Finland had been nipped in the bud.

However, the outlawry of Communism in Finland had, as could be expected, been taken very seriously across the border, and it has been claimed that the Soviet Government was making preparations for war during the days of the big Lapua demonstrations in Helsinki in the summer of 1930. Part and parcel of the Lapua controversy had also been the ever-present problem of Eastern Karelia, which had already led to a most serious dispute between the two neighbours only a few years before. The fact that the Lapua Movement proved to be merely a tempest in a tea cup and had merely an insignificant influence on Finnish official policy did not put the Soviet Government at ease. It is difficult to believe that the Russians did not realize the true situation,

and it appears that the bombastic declarations of Lapua leaders about a 'Greater Finland' reaching as far as the Ural Mountains were only too welcome in Moscow as points of departure for new attacks on Finland. The Lapua practice of abducting Finnish Communists, driving them to the Soviet border and then 'expelling' them, only served to keep the Soviet propaganda machine in constant motion, of course.\[^{17}\]

In spite of the threatening attitude of the Soviet Government, Finland did her utmost to build and maintain good relations with her eastern neighbour. The banning of the Lapua Movement was not the only measure taken by the Finnish Government which ought to have produced a calming effect in Moscow. Two months before this action was taken, on January 21, 1932, Finland at long last submitted to the overtures begun by the Soviet Government in 1928 and signed a Treaty of Non-Aggression and Pacific Settlement of Disputes, thereby completing the security system of the Soviet Union with its European neighbours.\[^{18}\] Three months later, this


treaty was followed by a Convention of Conciliation, which determined the procedure to be followed in settling disputes peacefully. On July 22, 1933, Finland acceded to the Convention for the Definition of Aggression concluded among the other members of the Soviet security system earlier that month, and, finally, on April 7, 1934, Finland signed a protocol renewing the Treaty of Non-Aggression until December 31, 1945. Finland had indeed done her utmost to remove any and all suspicions which could possibly be harboured by the leaders of the Soviet Union, but she was soon to find that these efforts were not enough. The first Five-Year Plan had by now begun to have its impact upon the Soviet economy, in spite of the difficulties initially encountered, and the Soviet leaders were beginning to feel more confident in their new strength. The age-old aspect of imperialism in Russian foreign policy, which for obvious and stated reasons had been buried for the time being following the revolution, now reappeared on the eastern horizon.

Early in 1933, Commissar for Foreign Affairs Litvinov made a statement which, for the first time, mentioned the guarantees of the independence and security of

20 Ibid., pp. 31-36.
21 Ibid., pp. 36-37.
the Baltic States which a few years later proved so fateful.22 Towards the end of that same year, there were reports to the effect that the Soviet and Polish Governments had suggested to the governments of the Baltic States and Finland that they accept a joint Soviet-Polish guarantee against aggression by Germany. The proposal apparently met with little response and can hardly have been pressed by Poland in view of the agreement which she concluded with Germany on January 26, 1934. The Soviet Union promptly suggested a joint Soviet-German guarantee of the four Baltic republics, but the idea was rejected by Germany on April 14th.23 The failure of these maneuvers only helped to increase Soviet suspicions, already expressed by Litvinov to a reporter in January, that an anti-Russian alliance existed among Germany, Poland and Finland.24

This suspicion, plus the reappearing element of imperialism in Russian foreign policy which allowed the Soviet Government to speak and act with greater freedom than

22 Wuorinen, op. cit., p. 39.


24 Litvinov claimed that by the terms of this alliance Germany was to get the 'Corridor', Memel, part of Lithuania and exclusive rights in the Donetz Basin. Poland was to get the remainder of Lithuania, White Russia and possibly Estonia and Latvia. Finland was to get part of North-West Russia and Soviet Karelia. Linton Wells, Blood on the Moon, New York, Houghton Mifflin, 1937, pp. 352-353. Quoted in Beloff, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 141.
a decade earlier, gave themselves practical applications in the deportation of a large portion of the indigenous Finnish population from Eastern Karelia and from Ingria in connection with the construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal. This canal had been completed in June, 1933, and it was accompanied by the construction of frontier fortifications. Apparently the Soviet Government did not feel it could safely allow an alien population element to remain in the region under the circumstances. In July, 1935, the Finnish Government requested an explanation of the deportations, which was refused on the ground that it was a purely domestic matter. The provisions of the Tartu Treaty were again conveniently overlooked. In November, the Finnish-born Premier of the Eastern Karelian Republic was dismissed from his post and expelled, and the entire government of the 'autonomous' republic was taken over by trusted Russians.25

Finland's attempts to convince her eastern neighbour of her peaceful intentions and policy of strict neutrality were not exactly successful. In April, 1935, the Prime Minister denied in a speech to the Riksdag that his country had any hostile designs against the Soviet Union, and in July he found it necessary to deny similar allegations again. In view of the more active policy pursued by the Soviet Union since 1933, he also took the opportunity, in

his April speech, to state that Finland would not follow the other Baltic States should they decide to conclude mutual assistance agreements with the Soviet Union.26

The trial in Helsinki during 1936 of a Finn named Antikainen, who was suspected of being one of Comintern's most important agents abroad and was accused of having committed atrocities while fighting in the Soviet Army against the Karelian rebels during 1921-22, did not improve Finnish-Soviet relations.27 The allegations of the Soviet press in August that the commercial airfields being built in eastern Finland were really for military purposes and would be made available to the German Air Force aggravated the situation further, as did a number of minor, but in the Soviet press widely publicized, frontier incidents.28 The most ominous sign of all was seen in a speech held at the Eight Congress of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. on November 29, 1936, by A. A. Zhdanov, then the Commissar of Leningrad:

Watching from the window on to Europe what is happening outside, we can hear, ever more loudly, the howling of the fascist beasts and the snapping of their jaws.

As you know, the Leningrad region marks the Soviet frontier with Finland, Estonia, and Latvia, countries with whose peoples the USSR has normal peaceful relations.


27 Antikainen was condemned to penal servitude for life in May, 1936. For the Communist version of his trial, see Torni, op. cit., pp. 98-101.

28 Beloff, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 80-81; Survey 1936, p. 534.
And if, in some of these little countries, for example Finland, feelings of hostility to the USSR are being kindled by larger and more adventurist countries, and preparations are being made to make their territory available for aggressive action by fascist Powers, in the long run it is these little countries alone which will be the losers. It does not pay for little countries to get entangled in big adventures, and if fascism dares to seek military victories on the northwest frontier of the Soviet Union, then we in Leningrad, placing at the service of defence all the technical strength we can command, shall deal it such a crushing blow that the enemy will never again turn his eyes on Leningrad.

The danger was fully realized in Helsinki, and, in an attempt to clear the air, Foreign Minister Rudolf Holsti accepted a Soviet invitation and went to Moscow on February 8, 1937. He was received in the most friendly manner by the Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Litvinov, and V. M. Molotov, a member of the Politburo but not yet officially connected with the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. Holsti took advantage of the friendly reception by doing his utmost to dispel the suspicions of the Soviet leaders against Finland. In a public statement issued after his return to Helsinki, Holsti, then Acting Prime Minister, said:

I had the opportunity for frank talks in Moscow with the members of the Soviet Cabinet and with Marshal Voroshilov and his colleagues on the General Staff. I wanted to dispel the anxieties felt in Moscow that Finland might have made secret arrangements with a Great Power whereby Finland should be the jumping-off ground for an attack on the Soviet Union. No such secret arrangements exist, and the Finnish Government has no plans for warlike adventures of any kind.


30 Survey 1936, p. 536.
The communique on the visit of the Finnish Foreign Minister, which appeared in Izvestia on February 11th, was equally neutral and non-committal in its careful wording, stating merely that there had been a "friendly and comprehensive exchange of views" and that "The conclusion was reached that the agreements in existence between the USSR and Finland provided the framework for uninterrupted friendly and good-neighbourly relations and that both Governments will continue their efforts to this end." Holsti departed from Moscow in the belief that the foundations had been laid for improved relations between Finland and the Soviet Union in the future. The defeat of President Svinhufvud by former Prime Minister Kallio in the presidential elections the following week was described by Izvestia as depriving Berlin of an important trump card and was interpreted as a further improvement of relations.31

However, the efforts of Dr. Holsti were not as successful as had been hoped, and it was soon made clear that "...Finland remained the most sensitive spot as far as the northern flank of the Soviet Union's European territory was concerned." By July, 1937, only five months after Holsti's peace mission to Moscow, the Soviet press opened

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33 Ibid., p. 82.
the attack on Finland again, and even he admitted defeat. Of course, the activities of former President Svinhufvud and the Finnish Minister in Berlin, Aarne Wuorimaa, were not designed to give Dr. Holsti much support. In private conversations with officials of the German Foreign Office in Berlin, Svinhufvud, eight months after his defeat in the presidential elections, belittled the men who had served him in the Finnish Government and made statements in the name of the Finnish people on matters of foreign policy which ran very much contrary to the neutrality policy pursued by Finland. Mr. Wuorimaa requested a German official to bring the conversation to the attention of his superiors. While still in the office of President, Svinhufvud had launched similar attacks on official Finnish policy and revealed unconstitutional actions on his own part to the German Minister in Finland, Wipert von Blücher.

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34 See Memorandum by the German Foreign Minister von Neurath of conversation with Holsti on October 25, 1937, in Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945, Series D (1937-1945), vol. 5: Poland; The Balkans; Latin America; The Smaller Powers, June 1937-March 1939, Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 1953 (Department of State Publication 4964), pp. 537-538.

35 See Memorandum by the Director of the Press Department of the German Foreign Office, Minister Gottfried Aschmann, of 'exposition' made to him by Svinhufvud at a luncheon given by Minister Wuorimaa on October 21, 1937, in ibid., pp. 535-536.

That the allegations of Finnish-German agreements were entirely unfounded has since been proved beyond doubt by the publication of documents from the German Foreign Office.  

How far-reaching were the Soviet designs against Finland had not been fully appreciated by the Finnish Government until the spring of 1938, however aware they may have been of the danger threatening from the east. On April 14th, Dr. Holsti received a telephone call from Mr. Boris Yartsev, the second secretary of the Soviet Legation in Helsinki, who urgently requested to see Holsti immediately and privately. Although a meeting between the Foreign Minister and a junior official of a foreign legation was strictly irregular according to diplomatic protocol, Dr. Holsti received Yartsev the same day. He was informed that Yartsev had recently been in Moscow, where he had been given exceptional powers to discuss secretly with the Finnish Foreign Minister questions concerning the "...improvement of relations between Finland and Russia."  

Reviewing the political situation in Europe in general, Yartsev came to the point: The Soviet Government was firmly convinced that Germany was preparing for war against

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37 See particularly the memorandum on "Factors which will determine the attitude of Finland in case of war", submitted by Minister von Blücher on August 1, 1938, in Documents on German Foreign Policy (Series D), vol. 5, pp. 589-593.

the Soviet Union, and that these plans called for a left flank invasion of Russia over Finnish territory. The Soviet Government wished to respect Finland's independence and territorial integrity, but it must have safeguards against this planned invasion through Finland. Yartsev said that his government was ready to offer Finland almost any concessions she might wish for in the economic field in return for such safeguards. Asked what such safeguards would involve, Yartsev avoided a direct answer, saying that this could be discussed later.39

No further meetings took place for a couple of months, but it was found that Yartsev had been in touch with certain private persons about the matter, particularly Mr. Arvo Inkila, the secretary of Prime Minister A. K. Cajander, General Aarne Sihvo and Mrs. Hella Murrik Wuolijoki, a Finnish Communist playwright and old friend of Madame Aleksandra Kollontay, the Soviet Minister in Stockholm. Apparently Yartsev had not observed the same secrecy which he had urged upon the Foreign Minister, and, as some of his revelations to these other persons had been more specific than his remarks to Dr. Holsti, Mr. Inkila renewed the contact with Yartsev. Yartsev was received by Prime Minister Cajander at the end of June, and again on July 11th. During this latter conversation, Yartsev was ensured that Finland,

39 For the best account of the discussions with Yartsev between April and December, see Tanner, op. cit., pp. 3-13. See also Mannerheim, op. cit., pp. 292-295; Wuorinen, op. cit., pp. 44-46; Mazour, op. cit., pp. 94-96.
as a matter of course, would defend herself to the utmost limits of her resources against any aggressor, including Germany. Yartsev then mentioned the matter of safeguards, adding that if the Soviet Union were to receive guarantees that Finland would give no bases to the Germans, "...the Russians for their part were prepared to underwrite Finland's inviolability." The hazards involved in such generosity on the part of the Soviet Union did not become apparent until the following October, but the idea of a pact of mutual assistance was in any case incompatible with the policy of strict neutrality pursued by Finland, and Yartsev's proposal did not meet with enthusiasm among Finnish leaders informed of the discussions. Before departing, Yartsev impressed upon Cajander the necessity of keeping the discussions secret, and that no importance should be placed upon anything which the Soviet Minister, Vladimir Derevyanski, might say as Yartsev alone had received his government's authorization to approach the Finnish Government on these matters.

During eight meetings between Yartsev and Finance Minister Väinö Tanner, who was also a member of the foreign affairs committee of the Finnish Cabinet, which took place between July 30th and September 15th, a fairly clear idea of what the Soviet Government was aiming at began to take

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40 Tanner, op. cit., p. 6.
41 Loc. cit.
form. Of particular significance was their meeting on August 18th, when, for the first time, Yartsev was prepared to present the objects of his government in something more than ambiguous sentences. Paraphrased from the notes taken by Tanner, the Soviet proposals were as follows:

1. Provided a political understanding could be arrived at, Moscow would receive a Finnish trade delegation.
2. If Finland was disagreeable to concluding a secret military agreement, Moscow would be satisfied with a written guarantee that Finland ward off German attack and accept Russian aid in such event.
3. Moscow would assent to Finnish fortification of the Aaland Islands if Russia could participate in it and subsequently maintain surveillance over their use in all secrecy.
4. Moscow required the lease of the island of Suursaari as an air and naval base.
5. Moscow would then guarantee Finland's sovereignty and territorial integrity, assist Finland by force of arms if necessary and offer Finland an exceptionally advantageous trade treaty.  

Tanner immediately declared that these proposals could hardly meet with the approval of the Finnish Government, but he would nevertheless bring them to the attention

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42 Tanner, op. cit., pp. 8-9. The Soviet assent to Finnish fortification of the Aaland Islands, which amounted to a demand, reopened an old problem in Finland's foreign relations. This archipelago, separated from Sweden by a mere thirty miles' stretch of water and inhabited by Swedish speaking Finns with strong pro-Swedish sympathies, had been demilitarized by the treaty of Paris in 1856 with the concurrence of Russia and to the great pleasure and relief of Sweden. In the spring and summer of 1919, the League of Nations, called upon to arbitrate the matter, confirmed Finnish sovereignty over the islands with the proviso that the population be assured autonomous rights guaranteed by the League. Their autonomy had been granted by the Finnish Riksdag in May, 1919. The League would arbitrate any conflicts arising. In October, 1921, a special conference called by the League signed a convention which pledged that the islands must remain demilitarized.
of the Prime Minister. Prime Minister Cajander's reply, transmitted to Yartsev on August 29th, while it expressed the Finnish Government's favourable opinion with regard to an increase in trade relations, followed the guiding principles of Finland's neutrality policy:

The proposal tends to violate Finland's sovereignty and is in conflict with the policy of neutrality which Finland follows in common with the nations of Scandinavia.\(^43\)

The reopening of the attacks against Finland in the Soviet press demonstrated amply the disappointment of the Soviet Government, although it is difficult to believe that it could have expected a different reply. The direct conversations with Finnish officials were not resumed until Dr. Holsti's return from the League of Nations meetings in October. In the course of their two conversations that month, Yartsev told Holsti that "Since Finland would be unable to defend itself, it would be well advised to rely upon the military aid promised by the Soviet Union."\(^44\)

The Russian's attitude was also becoming more aggressive and demanding, and relations between the two states became increasingly deteriorated. Trade talks, which half-heartedly took place in Moscow in December, broke down when it became clear that Finland was not going to yield on the

\(^{43}\) Tanner, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 10.

\(^{44}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 12.
political issues which by the Russians were held as pre-requisites for a commercial agreement.

Among the very few Finnish leaders who knew about the discussions with Yartsev, it was realized that Finland was definitely in grave danger. The Finnish Defence Council, headed by General Mannerheim, in October presented a report to the government showing the Finnish armed forces to be "totally unfitted for war". And the report continued:

It is not impossible that we were recently within a hair's-breadth of having this combat value put to the test...
To put it shortly, our country is at the present time not in a position to be defended.
The events of the last few weeks show that our respite may be very short.45

The respite was to be very short indeed. The second phase of the Soviet diplomatic offensive against Finland began on March 5, 1939, when Mr. Yrjö-Koskinen, the Finnish Minister in Moscow, was called to the Kremlin by the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Litvinov, and handed a memorandum requesting that Finland lease to the Soviet Union the islands of Suursaari, Lavansaari, Tytärsaari and Seiskari for thirty years in order to "...create a favorable atmosphere for...satisfactory settlement ..." of the questions of the fortification of the Aaland Islands and commercial relations. If the Finnish Government would agree to this, "...relations

45 Mannerheim, op. cit., pp. 296-297.
would improve in great measure, and this would have a decidedly good effect on commercial relations." The price for peace was going up. Finland's reply was delivered three days later and merely confirmed the principles underlying Cajander's reply of the previous summer. Finland would violate her sovereignty and neutrality if she even undertook to discuss such proposals. A further Soviet proposal suggesting that the islands in question be exchanged for territory in the Soviet Karelian Republic was also rejected on March 13th. Two days earlier, the Soviet Ambassador in Rome, Boris Stein, had arrived in Helsinki to conduct the discussions for his government as a special emissary. Stein had previously been Minister in Helsinki. On March 20th, Yrjö-Koskinen expressed his government's position to Litvinov in the following words:

The Finnish government cannot negotiate a matter which may in one manner or another involve the cession of parts of the territory of the state to another power. This negative reply is not to be understood in the sense that the Foreign Minister would be unwilling to continue an exchange of views with the purpose of reaching a solution to the questions raised by the Soviet Union regarding guarantees to its security.47

The combined efforts of Litvinov and Stein failed to dislodge Mr. Eljas Erkko, Finland's Foreign Minister since


December, 1938, from this position. Leaving Helsinki on April 6, Ambassador Stein warned that the matter was not at an end. He told Erkko that Finland's negative reply could not be accepted, and the Soviet Union refused to abandon its demands upon the islands in the Gulf of Finland.

Defending the attitude taken by the Finnish Government at the time, Tanner stresses that it is hardly fair to criticize Finland's refusal to yield in the light of the far greater demands forced upon Finland in 1944. "There still existed trust in international law and in the binding character of signed and sealed treaties." He also claims that even if the government should have yielded to the Soviet demands, any such agreement would have been turned down by the Riksdag and result in the fall of the government. The government's failure to inform the Riksdag is explained by Tanner as an act of honouring its word to the Russians to keep the conversations entirely confidential and secret.

General Mannerheim was of a different opinion:

I was of the definite opinion that we were bound to meet the Russians in some way if this was likely to lead to improved relations with our mighty neighbour. I discussed Stein's proposal with Foreign Minister Erkko, but could not bring him to share my views. I also visited the President of the Republic and Prime Minister Cajander, to lay my views before them. I said that the islands were of no use to the

48 Tanner, op. cit., p. 15.
country and that we had no means of defending them, as they were neutralized. Nor would Finland's prestige suffer should we agree to the exchange. On the other hand, the islands were of real importance to the Russians, as they commanded the entrance to their naval base at the Bay of Luga, and by leasing them we should draw advantage from one of the few trumps we held.

Confronted with the government's argument that it would immediately fall if it dared to suggest anything along those lines, Mannerheim replied that "...if there were really no one who was willing to risk his popularity in a matter so vital to the country, I was prepared to place myself at the disposal of the government, convinced as I was that my honest opinion would be understood." He even claimed that it would be to Finland's advantage to have the frontier nearest to Leningrad moved "by five or six miles", against a reasonable compensation. "I insistently warned against Ambassador Stein being allowed to depart with empty hands."49

On the face of it, the advice offered by General Mannerheim would appear to be the more realistic of the solutions put forward in Finnish circles during the crisis. It is difficult to understand fully Tanner's expressed faith in the sanctity of international law and treaties as late as April, 1939. Too much had taken place in the world during the previous decade to leave the leaders of small countries with many of whatever illusions they might have.

49 Mannerheim, op. cit., pp. 300-301.
harboured previously. Manchuria may have been far away, but Austria and Czechoslovakia were not. Ethiopia was overrun while Finland was a witness to the rapid deterioration of international law and order in the assemblies of the League of Nations. The German ultimatum to Lithuania regarding Memel came while Erkko was busy talking with Ambassador Stein, and the Italian invasion of Albania took place only a few hours after Stein departed from Helsinki. On the other hand, the Finnish refusal may have been caused by the very realization of this state of international affairs, although neither Tanner nor Mannerheim give any indication of it. Russian irreliability was a phenomenon frequently appearing in the pages of the case history of Finnish-Russian relations, and in the reigning international climate it could be expected to occur with an increasing rather than diminishing frequency. Hitler's frank statements in his Mein Kampf and the policies he had pursued since his ascendancy to power in Germany pointed towards a gigantic Russo-German conflict, and the Soviet demands upon Finland must have been seen in that light by the Finnish Government in March-April of 1939. Indeed, the Soviet explanations of these demands expressly stated this. Accordingly, the Finnish leaders might have been aware that by acceding to the Soviet demands they would at the same time be inviting further demands. To follow Mannerheim's

50 March 22, 1939.
advice might have established the point that Finland was willing to view the problems realistically and even make reasonable adjustments, but it is not likely that it would have guaranteed Finland's neutrality in the coming conflict or saved her from the encroachments on her territory and economy which eventually came in 1944. In the light of what happened in the Baltic states a few months after the breakdown of the Finnish-Russian negotiations in the early spring of 1939, it is reasonable, rather, to suggest that the course chosen by the government of Finland at the time was the course which experience dictated and the wisest one in terms of long range policy.

The Secret Protocol appended to the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union, signed in Moscow on August 23, 1939, would confirm suspicions that the Soviet demands upon Finland merely represented the first stage in a campaign which would eventually spell the end of Finland's independence. Paragraph 1 of the Secret Protocol read in part:

In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and the U.S.S.R.51

51 Raymond James Sontag and James Stuart Beddie, editors, Nazi-Soviet Relations 1931-1941. Documents from the Archives of The German Foreign Office, Washington, D.C. United States Department of State, 1948 (Department of State Publication 3023), p. 78. (Hereafter referred to as Nazi-Soviet Relations)
Although nothing was definitely known about this protocol at the time, it was soon understood that Ribbentrop and Molotov had not limited their discussions to the matters included in the Non-Aggression Pact. The Pact was ratified by the Soviet Union on August 31st. The very next morning the German armed forces poured across the Polish border. On September 17th, the Red Army crossed the Polish frontier from the east "...to extend a helping hand to our Brother Ukrainians and Brother White Russians who live in Poland."\(^52\) The following day began the diplomatic offensive against the Baltic states. Fearing that the Western Powers might accept Germany's peace offer to them once the Polish campaign was completed, the Soviet Union had to act with great speed, and no time was wasted. Faced with overwhelming pressure, the Estonians signed a pact of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union on September 28th, by which the two contracting parties undertook "...to render each other every assistance, including military assistance, in the event of direct aggression or a threat of aggression...."\(^53\) On October 5th, the Latvians signed a similar agreement under similar circumstances, and the turn of the Lithuanians came five days later. On October 15th, eleven Soviet warships appeared in the harbour of Tallinn and landed Soviet troops


on Estonian territory. On October 30th, the Red Army entered Latvia. Soviet troops had been on Lithuanian territory since the signing of the treaty on October 10th, which granted the Soviet Union the right to maintain armed forces of "strictly limited strength" on Lithuanian territory.

In the midst of these events came the final Soviet diplomatic attack against Finland, and during the mounting crescendo of Soviet demands came the Baltic examples of what mutual assistance pacts with the Soviet Union involved for small and isolated countries. On September 26th, Minister von Blücher related the following in a telegram to Berlin, a telegram which was promptly forwarded to the German Embassy in Moscow:

The Foreign Minister notified me of demands made by Russia on Estonia and observed that Finland was prepared to improve her relations with Russia, but would never accept such demands and would rather let it come to the worst.54

That Finland knew she was next in line is quite obvious. That she also knew, from the experiences of the past few weeks, that there was more to the Russo-German Non-Aggression Pact than was published is also clear. The pattern of developments was all too ominous. On October 2nd, Minister Wuorimaa called on the State Secretary of the German Foreign

54 Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 104.
Office, Ernst Freiherr von Weizsäcker, and requested him to clarify "...the significance of the arrangements of spheres of influence between Germany and Russia; he was particularly interested in knowing what effect the Moscow agreements might have on Finland." Three days later, in the evening of October 5th, Minister Yrjö-Koskinen was called to the Kremlin and asked to request his government to send a plenipotentiary to Moscow for "...an exchange of views...in regard to certain concrete questions of a political character." Finland's hour had struck, and her leaders were well aware that this time it was likely to "come to the worst".

Less than three full days after the first contact had been made in Moscow, the Soviet Minister in Helsinki, Derevyanski, called upon Foreign Minister Errko. Declaring that "...feeling in Moscow was running high because the answer came so late", he complained that Finland had adopted "...quite a different attitude to the invitation than the Baltic States, and this may have an adverse effect on the course of affairs." It was plain that Moscow was in a hurry to get the problem of Finland out of the way, and that

56 Finnish-Soviet Relations, p. 42.
57 See Erkko's notes on the October 8th conversation with Derevyanski in ibid., pp. 43-45.
the Soviet leaders desired - and were going to make sure they obtained - a 'Baltic settlement'. Derevyanski stressed that the international situation was grave and that the Soviet Union wished to establish in the Baltic area "...a state of affairs which would prevent the Soviet Union and her neighbours from becoming the victims of war." He asked that Erkko himself go to Moscow with powers to conclude an agreement binding upon his government. Erkko indicated that Finland's negotiator would be Dr. Juho K. Paasikivi, State Councillor, Minister in Stockholm, former Prime Minister and the Finnish negotiator of the Tartu Treaty. Any agreement that Paasikivi might conclude would, however, as a matter of course, have to be in accordance with the Finnish Constitution and subject to approval by the Finnish Government and the Riksdag. When Erkko expressed the hope that the negotiations in Moscow would proceed "normally and peacefully", Derevyanski said that "The example of the Baltic States show that negotiations can be successfully managed." Since it was exactly such 'management' of the negotiations which the Finnish Government feared, Erkko stated flatly that it was "impossible to conceive" that Finland could approve of arrangements similar to those agreed upon by the Baltic States.

In the evening of October 9th, Minister Paasikivi left for Moscow with instructions which would allow him to concede to an exchange of territory in the event Soviet demands should make this absolutely necessary. However,
he was to refuse discussion on the questions of Soviet bases on the Finnish mainland and the Aaland Islands, cession or lease of Finnish ports and frontier adjustments on the Karelian Isthmus. Discussion of the island of Suursaari should also be avoided, while other islands in the Gulf of Finland might be discussed "as an extreme concession". No treaty of mutual assistance could be accepted by Finland under any circumstances.58

Two meetings took place during this first visit of the Finnish delegation to Moscow. On October 12th, Stalin and Molotov outlined orally what the Soviet Union expected of Finland. Two days later, they submitted a formal memorandum which set forth their demands, including the following main five points:

1. Lease of Hanko for thirty years for the establishment of a naval base.
2. The use of the bay of Lappohja as an anchorage.
3. Cession of the islands of Suursaari, Seiskari, Lavansaari, Tytarsaari and Koivisto, part of the Karelian Isthmus from the village of Lipola to the southern border of the town of Koivisto, and the western parts of the Kalastajasaarento, in all 1,066 square miles, in return for which Finland would get territory in the districts of Repola and Porajärvi amounting to about twice the size of the areas to be ceded.
5. 'Suppression' of the fortified zones on either side of the frontier.59

58 The full instructions are given in Finnish-Soviet Relations, pp. 46-49.
59 Ibid., pp. 49-51.
In his remarks, Stalin elaborated on these demands in a manner which made it clear that they were indeed 'minimum demands', and he refused to concede that acceptance of them might meet with anything but "ninety-nine percent support" in the Finnish Riksdag.° To him and Molotov the whole matter was simple, and Molotov finally cut the discussion short by declaring that "We'll sign the agreement on the twentieth and give you a dinner the next day."°

The lengthy discussions which subsequently took place in Helsinki between the negotiators on the one hand and the Council of State and the Government on the other upset Molotov's timetable a little, and the Moscow talks were not resumed until the return of the Finnish delegation on the 23rd. Finance Minister Tanner had now joined the delegation, and he has given a most interesting account of the proceedings in the Kremlin during the three weeks which followed.°

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60 Tanner, op. cit., p. 30.
61 From the notes of the Finnish interpreter, loc. cit.
62 In addition to Passikivi, the delegation included Minister Yrjö-Koskinen, Colonel Aladar Paasonen and Chief of Bureau Johan Nykopp.
63 Tanner, op. cit., pp. 36-80. The tone of the negotiations was set at the very outset of the first meeting on October 23rd: "At its start I asked whether I might use either German or English, as my Russian was on the weak side. To this Molotov replied dryly with the single word, Nyet."

Ibid., p. 40.
Finland's stand had changed very little since the previous meeting. The only exception of any consequence was that they were now able to offer a frontier adjustment on the Karelian Isthmus which would move the border some eight miles farther away from the city of Leningrad. The offer was immediately rejected by Stalin as falling far short of the Soviet demands which indeed were "rock bottom".

Seemingly astounded by the Finnish proposal, Molotov asked bluntly: "Is it your intention to provoke a conflict?" Paasikivi replied: "We want no such thing, but you seem to."

On leaving the meeting, the Finnish delegates felt that the talks had in effect been broken off, and they prepared to return to Helsinki. One hour later, however, they were requested to attend another meeting immediately. Upon arrival, they were handed a memorandum by Stalin and Molotov stating that the Soviet proposals of October 14th had been "...expressly put forward as minimum terms". A Soviet naval base at Hanko was "...an absolutely essential minimum condition for the safeguarding of the defence of Leningrad", but the Soviet Government was willing to return such leased territory to Finland at the end of the war.

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64 The instructions are given in Finnish-Soviet Relations, pp. 51-54.

65 Tanner, op. cit., p. 42.

66 Loc. cit.

67 The Soviet Government's memorandum is given in Finnish-Soviet Relations, pp. 54-55.
between the Great Powers in Europe rather than insist on a thirty years' lease. With the exception of a small reduction in the area demanded on the Karelian Isthmus, the Soviet demands otherwise remained unaltered.

Again the Finnish delegation returned to Helsinki for fresh instructions. The realization that war might be inevitable was now very clear, and in a series of meetings Finland's stand was reexamined by the Council of State, the government and the party leaders in the Riksdag. All who were appraised of the situation were sworn to secrecy. The result of these talks was that Finland could not offer the Soviet Union much more than had already been suggested to Stalin and Molotov without destroying her own defence possibilities. Although the Soviet concern for the security of Leningrad was understood, the Finnish leaders did not trust Stalin's assertion that this was the Soviet Union's only concern. Contrary to Soviet protestations, it was obvious to all that the three Baltic States had not retained their independence and sovereignty after the conclusion of their treaties with the Soviet Union, and the demands against Finland were very definitely going to render Finland indefensible and dependent upon the whims of the Soviet Government. Accordingly, Finland would have to stand firm when the Moscow negotiations continued. To reverse Stalin's expression -

68 See Tanner's letter of October 26th to the Swedish Prime Minister, Per Albin Hansson, in Tanner, op. cit., pp. 45-47.
the party leaders in the Riksdag had made it plain that there would be at least "ninety-nine percent support" forthcoming for such a stand.

On October 31st, strengthened by the addition of State Councillor Rafael Hakkarainen, the Finnish delegation again set out for Moscow. Arriving in Viipuri early the next morning, they were profoundly shaken by reports in the morning newspapers that Molotov had made public the Soviet demands against Finland in a speech the night before. Molotov had summed up the Soviet position in the following words:

Actually our proposals in the negotiations with Finland are extremely modest, and are confined to that minimum without which it is impossible to guarantee the security of the USSR and to put relations with Finland on a friendly footing.

...In view of all this we do not think that Finland will seek a pretext to frustrate the proposed agreement. This would not be in line with a policy of friendly Soviet-Finnish relations and would, of course, work to the serious detriment of Finland.

Finland was suddenly faced with a fait accompli as a result of this Soviet breach of faith. The Soviet Union had placed itself in a position from which it would now be impossible to back down without making a liar of Molotov. To continue the negotiations seemed pointless. However, the Finnish Cabinet, in an emergency meeting held at 3 o'clock that

69 Extracts from the speech are given in Finnish-Soviet Relations, pp. 56-60, and in Degras, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 388-400.

70 Ibid., pp. 396-397.
morning, had decided to leave the decision of whether to continue on to Moscow or return to Helsinki up to the negotiators themselves. Paasikivi and Tanner felt the former course was the lesser of the two evils, and the delegation arrived in Moscow the next day.71

The first meeting in this third round of negotiations took place on November 3rd. Stalin was not present. Having heard the Finnish declaration, Molotov repeated that the Soviet demands were 'minimal' ones, and the two sides failed to approach any closer to an agreement. The meeting ended on a very ominous note when Molotov said that "We civilians can see no further in the matter; now it is the turn of the military to have their say."72 What he was referring to did not for long remain obscure.

On November 9th, the Finnish and Soviet negotiators met in a last and futile attempt to reach a basis for an agreement. Following this brief meeting, the Finnish delegation informed Helsinki that the negotiations were completely deadlocked and must be considered as having been broken off. Four days later the Finns returned home, leaving with Molotov a letter expressing the hope that "...at some future date the negotiations may bring about a

71 Later, Tanner wrote: "Subsequently, this turned out to be a mistake. We ought, in fact, to have gone back and received broader authority from the government." Op. cit., p. 60.
72 Ibid., pp. 66-67.
result satisfactory to both parties."  

The war of nerves, begun with Molotov's speech on October 31st and rapidly picked up by the Soviet press, was immediately accelerated. The guiding slogan of this war had been coined by Pravda on November 3rd:

"We will continue on our way, wherever it may lead, to safeguard the Soviet Union without regard for anything, breaking down all obstacles of whatever nature they may be for the realization of our aims."  

The entire Soviet propaganda machine concentrated on Finland, and Finnish leaders came in for an uninhibited mud-slinging the like of which had never been encountered in their little corner of the world before. Pravda sank to a new low by calling Prime Minister Cajander "...a scarecrow, a fool, a marionette, a clown pirouetting in the circus ring," etc. Other similar examples of Soviet journalism were not lacking. The Finnish leaders were described as "bandits of capitalism", "rapacious bands of Finnish kulaks, armed by capitalism", and similar imaginative labels.

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74 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 318; Tanner, op. cit., p. 85.

Members of the Swedish Government, who had made presentations in Moscow and in Stockholm on behalf of Finland, were called "lackeys of British and American capitalism". 76

Meanwhile, Soviet planes were observed over Finnish territory with increasing frequency, and concentration of considerable armed forces were reported along the border. Finnish military intelligence reported that roads and railways were being constructed on the Soviet side.

The long expected provocation came on November 26th, when the Soviet Union arranged the frontier incident known as the 'Mainila shots'. Seven artillery shots killed four Russian soldiers and wounded another seven close to the village of Mainila, half a mile from the frontier on the Karelian Isthmus. The Soviet Government immediately accused Finland of having deliberately committed an act of aggression and demanded that Finnish troops be withdrawn approximately 15 miles from the frontier. 77 The Finnish reply rejected the accusation, showing that the shots had been fired from the Soviet side of the border and asking that a joint inquiry be carried out in accordance with the Convention Concerning Frontier Commissioners, concluded on September 24, 1928. 78 Soviet's reaction was an intemperate

76 Langer and Gleason, op. cit., p. 327.
77 Note from Molotov to Yrjö-Koskinen of November 26th. Finnish-Soviet Relations, pp. 70-71.
78 Note from Yrjö-Koskinen to Molotov of November 27th. Ibid., pp. 71-72.
note which declared that Finland's reply was "...a document which reflects the deeprooted hostility of the Finnish Government towards the U.S.S.R. and is the cause of extreme tension in the relations between the two countries." 79 Finland was informed that she had broken the Non-Aggression Treaty concluded in 1932 and extended in 1934, and the Soviet Government considered itself released from the obligations ensuing from the Treaty, "obligations which are being systematically violated by the Finnish Government." The next day saw the final propaganda piece in Soviet's diplomatic campaign against Finland delivered to the Finnish Minister in the form of the following note:

Attacks on Soviet troops by Finnish troops are known to be continuing, not only on the Carelian Isthmus but also at other parts of the frontier between the U.S.S.R. and Finland. The Government of the U.S.S.R. can no longer tolerate such a situation. As a result of the situation thus created, for which the Finnish Government alone is responsible, the Government of the U.S.S.R. can no longer maintain normal relations with Finland and find themselves compelled to recall their political and economic representatives from Finland. 80

On the same day Finnish frontier guards were attacked in Petsamo, and early the next morning, November 30th, regular operations were commenced by Soviet land, sea and air forces along the entire Finnish border.

79 Note from Molotov to Yrjö-Koskinen of November 28th. Finnish-Soviet Relations, pp. 72-74.

80 Note from Molotov to Yrjö-Koskinen of November 29th. Ibid., p. 74.
The opponents in the ensuing war, popularly known as Finland's Winter War, were as unevenly matched as a boxing fight between a professional heavyweight champion and an amateur featherweight. Indeed, the Soviet Government itself expected to crush Finnish resistance in the course of about five days and with the resources of the Leningrad military district only. For good measure it pulled a surprise trump card out of its sleeve which it rather naively trusted would take the trick in short order:

On 1 December this year the representative of the People's Government and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, M. Kuusinen, addressed to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR an official statement on the formation of the People's Government of Finland and a proposal for the establishment of diplomatic relations between that Republic and the Soviet Union. The presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR resolved to recognize the People's Government of Finland and to establish diplomatic relations with the Finnish Democratic Republic.

Otto Kuusinen's government, headed by a man who had been in exile in the Soviet Union ever since the defeat of the Soviet-engineered Finnish Socialist Worker's Government - of which he had been a member - in 1918, had been planned at least as early as the beginning of November. It was

81 Langer and Gleason, Finnish-Soviet Relations, p. 332.


83 Tanner claims that the Secretary-General of the Finnish Communist Party, Arvo Tuominen, had been approached by the Soviet Government through Comintern agents on several occasions between November 13th and 21st with urgent requests that he go to Moscow immediately, presumably to head the Finnish People's Government. Op. cit., pp. 104-105.
clearly based on the assumption that the revolutionary conditions of 1918 still prevailed in Finland, and that the workers would flock to Kuusinen's rebel Terijoki Government. This, of course, did not happen. The Finnish people stood united against the Soviet invasion, and, in spite of being outnumbered nearly sixty to one in terms of population and approximately four to one in terms of troops at the front, the Soviet attack was repelled. For three and a half months Finland weathered the storm alone without any other help than the volunteers and equipment which the frightened Swedish Government dared to allow across the Swedish-Finnish border. A fantastic Anglo-French plan to send a military expedition to Finland by way of Norway and Sweden failed to materialize, for which the two Allied governments were soon to praise their lucky stars. The obvious implication of such an intervention would, of course, have been to force the Soviet Union into military

84 Although it never actually left Moscow, Kuusinen's government was purportedly established in the 'city' of Terijoki, a frontier hamlet evacuated by the Finnish army at the start of the war.

collaboration with Germany, and the outcome of World War II would very likely have been much different from the one now recorded by history. Aside from the Scandinavian volunteers, the only support which Finland received was the world-wide moral condemnation of the Soviet aggression which resulted in the expulsion of the Soviet Union from the League of Nations on December 14th.\textsuperscript{86}

The poor performance of the Soviet forces was embarrassing, to say the least.\textsuperscript{87} To counteract the publicity in the foreign press as well as the surprise at home, the Soviet propaganda machine created the myth of the 'Mannerheim Line', a Finnish defence line across the Karelian Isthmus. This line was claimed to have been constructed according to the latest technique "...under the supervision of foreign experts...on the model of the 'Maginot Line' and the 'Siegfried Line'." Describing the strength of this line in great detail, Molotov said that the line had been considered "...impregnable, that is, such as no army had ever broken through before." The Red Army, he boasted, had "covered itself with glory as the first army to force its way under most difficult conditions through a

\textsuperscript{86} The resolutions of the Assembly and Council of the League of Nations are printed in \textit{Finnish-Soviet Relations}, pp. 94-111.

\textsuperscript{87} "...everyone in Moscow, from Stalin down, thought the Red army would be in Helsinki a week after the attack started. They were so sure that they timed an attack on Bessarabia for December 6, and only called it off at the last minute." William L. Shirer, \textit{Berlin Diary. The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent 1934-1941}, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1941, p. 275.
deep, powerful zone of perfectly modern military fortifications...."88 Marshal Mannerheim, the Finnish Commander in Chief, describes the defence line in somewhat different words:

Nor were the fortifications built up along our frontiers likely to level out any disparity in strength. They were of a very modest nature and with few exceptions situated on the Karelian Isthmus. Here, in a defensive line about eighty-eight miles long, were sixty-six concrete 'nests', out of which forty-four built in the beginning of the twenties were out of date and also faultily constructed and placed. The remainder were modern, but not strong enough to stand heavy gunfire. The recently constructed barbed-wire entanglements and tank-traps were of little value. Time had not permitted the building out of the position in depth, and its foremost line generally merged with the principal defence line. The only fortifications of importance were the coast batteries which guarded the flanks of the principal defence line at the Gulf of Finland and on the Ladoga.89

Evidently, Molotov was unable to find an explanation for the Soviet setbacks north of the Karelian Isthmus, where no fortifications of any kind existed.

Nevertheless, for Finland the war was a hopeless one. Her resources of manpower had been strained to the limit from the beginning of the war, and Mannerheim repeatedly urged the government to seek a renewal of the negotiations with the Soviet Union before Finland's military position collapsed.90 Although the Soviet Union had turned

89 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 325.
90 Ibid., pp. 382, 384, 387.
a deaf ear to all Finnish attempts to reopen negotiations during December, insisting that she recognized no other Finnish government than Kuusinen's, this attitude was changed towards the end of January, 1940. The war against Finland had turned out to be a very expensive affair, and although there was no doubt of the Soviet Union's ability to bring the war to a victorious conclusion - the general situation in Europe required that the Russians free themselves of the burdensome Winter War. The projected plans of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs had been thrown seriously off schedule, but the reports that the Allied Powers were contemplating to intervene in Finland against the Soviet Union and simultaneously bomb the Caucasian oilfields, may have been the deciding factor which made the Soviet leaders receptive to talking peace with the Finns. On January 29th, Finland was given to know by Madame Kollontay, through Sweden's Foreign Minister Christian Günther, that "The USSR has no objection in principle to concluding an agreement with the Ryti-Tanner government."91 On February 20th and 22nd, the Swedish Minister in Moscow was informed by Molotov that the minimum Soviet demands included all of the Hankö peninsula, the Karelian Isthmus with the city of Viipuri, all Finnish territory bordering on Lake Ladoga, and that Finland join the Soviet Union and Estonia in an alliance for the defence of the Gulf of Finland.

91 Tanner, op. cit., p. 125.
This information was transmitted to the Finnish Government on February 23rd. Still desperately hoping that Sweden might decide upon a more active support of the Finnish cause, which, essentially, was Sweden's cause as well, or that Norway and Sweden would at least allow the Anglo-French expedition force to march through, the Finnish Government delayed its answer until it had consulted with Sweden. On February 27th, Tanner was told by the Swedish Prime Minister that Sweden would under no circumstances allow the transit of foreign troops and that an attempt by Britain and France to force their way through would necessarily bring Sweden into the war on the side of Russia. Prime Minister Hansson urged that Finland make peace on the conditions presented to her by Madame Kollontay. Three days later, the Finnish Government informed Madame Kollontay that Finland was anxious to bring about a cessation of hostilities, but that "...since the new frontier contemplated in the proposal is vague, further particulars with regard thereto are requested." The reply was not forwarded to Moscow, however, as it was considered to be altogether unsatisfactory. The Finnish Government was advised, through the Swedish Foreign Minister, to submit a reply accepting negotiations on the terms offered by Moscow. On March 2nd,

92 Tanner, op. cit., p. 172.
93 Ibid., p. 183.
94 Ibid., p. 197.
Molotov was informed, again through the good offices of the Swedish Foreign Ministry, that Finland accepted the demands in principle but wished to leave the cities of Viipuri and Sortavala out of the negotiations. Hanko would be ceded. On March 6th, the Finnish Government was informed that Moscow was ready to start negotiations and that a Finnish delegation would be awaited. There would be no armistice, however, before Viipuri and Viipuri Bay had been evacuated by Finnish forces. The very same night a delegation consisting of Prime Minister Risto Ryti, Juho K. Paasikivi, General Rudolf Walden and Väinö Voionmaa, Chairman of the Riksdag Foreign Relations Committee, left for Moscow by way of Stockholm. The demands which they received on March 9th went far beyond those presented to the Finnish Government as a basis for negotiations and would move the border considerably west of the line established by Peter the Great. It was quite clear that Moscow was not chiefly concerned about the security of Leningrad, but that the intention was to cripple Finland to an extent sufficient to render her incapable of resisting further Soviet advances in the future. The Finnish Government was shocked, and even Sweden agreed that the demands were unacceptable. However, Mannerheim informed the government that the military situation was deteriorating rapidly, that all units were drastically reduced by casualties, and that it was imperative that peace be secured before the front
collapsed. Even if Anglo-French aid should be sent, it would not arrive in time to prevent disaster. On March 12th, the Cabinet issued to the delegation in Moscow authority to sign the treaty dictated to them, and the treaty terminating the Winter War was signed the same night.

It was a harsh peace indeed. Under its terms, Finland ceded to the Soviet Union the whole of the province of Viipuri including the Karelian Isthmus and the cities of Viipuri, Sortavala and Käkisalmi; all the islands in the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland; part of the Kuusamo and Salla districts on the eastern frontier of North Finland; and the western part of the Rybachy peninsula near Petsamo. In addition, the Hanko peninsula and the group of islands surrounding it were leased to the Soviet Union for a period of thirty years. Altogether, the ceded areas amounted to roughly 22,000 square miles, more than the total territory of Estonia.


96 The feelings of the Finnish people on that dark day were expressed in Biblical style by President Kallio who, on signing the credentials authorizing the delegation in Moscow to sign the treaty, said: "May the hand wither, that is forced to sign such a paper as this." Tanner, op. cit., p. 244. (Some months later the President's right arm was paralyzed by a stroke, and he died within a year.)

97 Mazour, op. cit., p. 130. In Canadian terms, Finland, a country the size of the Province of Newfoundland, ceded an area the size of the Province of Nova Scotia.
PROPOSED BORDER ADJUSTMENTS
OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 1939.
BORDER OF MARCH 12, 1940.

--- --- Border of 1939
- - - - Soviet proposal Oct. 1
- - - - Finnish " Oct. 23
++++++ Soviet " Oct. 23
+++++ Finnish " Nov. 3
- - - - Border of 1940
Furthermore, Finland was compelled to undertake construction on her own territory of a railway which would connect Kandalaksha on the Murmansk railway with Kemijärvi, presumably to facilitate faster transit of goods between the Soviet Union and Sweden. However, since Kemijärvi was the northern terminal of the Finnish railway network and connected with the railways in northern Sweden including the Luleå-Kiruna-Narvik line, it is reasonable to assume that strategic considerations played a more important role in this demand than commercial considerations. With an eye on the Norwegian warm-water port of Narvik, Tsarist planners had considered the same project many years before.

The Moscow Peace of March 12, 1939, was the most clear-cut demonstration until that time of the fact that Russia had not changed, at least not for the better, since the days of the Tsars. All the idealism professed by Litvinov in the League of Nations had been revealed to be nothing but windowdressing. The treatment of Finland demonstrated the rank disregard for the rights of small nations which is the chief ingredient of militant imperialism. Even the original pretext of supporting a rebel "peoples' government" was unceremoniously dropped as Kuusinen disappeared from view. Reporting to the Supreme Soviet on March 29th, Molotov commented that after the signing of the peace treaty "...the question arose of the People's
Government dissolving itself, which it did...." The terms forced upon Finland were senseless unless designed to render her politically and economically dependent upon the Soviet Union. She was deprived of her richest agricultural and forest areas and a large proportion of her industrial plant. More than ten per cent of her population had to flee across the new frontier in about one week without permission to take away with them anything but their clothes and some personal belongings. Finland had to return to the Soviet Union or pay for in cash everything which had been removed from or damaged in the ceded areas since 1938, and in the ensuing year the Soviet claims on this account were never-ending.

How acutely aware the Soviet Union was of the impression left by the Moscow Peace is amply shown by the lengths to which Molotov, in his report to the Supreme Soviet on March 29th, felt it necessary to go to justify the policy of the Moscow government. Asserting how the Soviet Union had "unswervingly" adhered to a policy of neutrality, he showed how "incontrovertible facts" proved that "foreign influences" had prepared a "place d'armes" in Finland ready for an attack by third Powers on the Soviet Union. Indeed, Soviet forces had encountered in Finland

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98 Degras, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 444. After editing a small newspaper for a while, Kuusinen reappeared as President of the new Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic.
"...the combined forces of the imperialists of a number of countries...." Consequently, having unearthed this imperialist plot in Finland, it had been found necessary to place the question of the security of Leningrad "...on a more reliable basis." However, the peace treaty was also "...based on the recognition of the principle that Finland is an independent State...." Molotov proved this convincingly with one of his most sublime pieces of logic:

Attempts have been made in the British and French press to depict the Soviet-Finnish treaty...as a 'destruction' of the independence of Finland. This, of course, is absurd and a downright falsehood. Finland still comprises territory nearly four times as large as Hungary, and over eight times as large as Switzerland. If no one has any doubt that Hungary and Switzerland are independent States how can there be any doubt that Finland is independent and sovereign?

In conclusion, Molotov declared that "Confident...in our cause and in our strength, we will continue consistently and unswervingly to pursue our foreign policy."99 Finland was to experience the truth in those words.

99 Extracts from Molotov's speech to the Supreme Soviet on the war with Finland and Soviet foreign policy are printed in Degras, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 436-449.
Unable to withstand the immensely superior armed forces of the Soviet Union, Finland had been dictated a peace settlement which robbed her not only of territory and property but also of the free pursuit of her own best interests in foreign relations. Finland had been compelled to accept a peace which required great sacrifices of her entire population, and in view of this she hoped to be left in peace. Indeed, Molotov had explicitly told Paasikivi during a conversation in the Kremlin on March 21st that "...all questions between ourselves and Finland have been settled once and for all." 1

However, the next fifteen months proved the worthlessness of Molotov's word. The terms of the Peace Treaty were disregarded by the Soviet forces on numerous occasions during the spring and summer of 1940. The time

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1 Finland, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland Reveals Her Secret Documents on Soviet Policy, March 1940-June 1941, New York, Wilfred Funk, 1941, pp. 42-43. (Hereafter referred to as Finnish Blue-White Book.)
limits agreed upon for the Finnish withdrawal and the Soviet advance in the ceded territories were frequently ignored, resulting in the loss of private property which, according to the treaty, should have been removed by the owners. Finnish citizens were overtaken and seized and subsequently detained on grounds of alleged espionage. Arbitrary interpretation of the treaty clause regarding the new frontier line left such important locations as Enso, a center of the woodworking industry in the Vuoksi Valley, on the Soviet side of the line. Along the entire new frontier the floating of timber, chief method of timber transportation, was made either impossible or extremely inconvenient and costly by placing sections of the rivers involved within Soviet territory. Usage of the Saimaa Canal for the passage of merchant vessels was refused by the Soviet Union, which blocked the only exit to the sea available to the entire waterway system of East Finland. Similarly, Finland was refused passage through the waters within the confines of the Hankö lease area, which placed great obstacles in the way of coastal shipping.

The list of legitimate Finnish complaints could be extended almost indefinitely, but the examples mentioned will suffice to make it quite clear that the Soviet Union intended to use the Peace Treaty merely as a stepping stone by which further concessions could be extorted from Finland.

First on the list of Soviet actions based on arbitrary interpretation of the Peace Treaty, and the first
sign of Moscow's intention to supervise Finland's foreign policy, was the prevention of a Northern defensive alliance. The Winter War had, at long last, convinced Finland that it was impossible to live next door to the Soviet Union without good friends. The Moscow Peace had made this clear even to the leaders of the Social Democratic Party, the party which more than any other had been responsible for Finland's failure to take the diplomatic and military precautions which her security required, and to the socialist governments of Norway and Sweden. It was generally felt that the Soviet Union's ambitions would not for long be satisfied with the line established on Finnish territory on March 12th, and that the three Northern countries must join forces if they should hope to prevent further aggression. On March 13th, the day after the signing of the Moscow Peace Treaty, Foreign Minister Christian Günther addressed the Swedish Riksdag in the following words:

We have learned, in a manner we shall never forget, how closely the fates of the peoples of the North are bound to each other. This is the reason why these nations must stand ready, more purposefully than ever before, to direct their policy to vital common questions, and to consider objectively, on the basis of our new experiences, the question of strengthening co-operation among the peoples of the North.  

While still negotiating with the Russians in Moscow, Finland approached Sweden with the suggestion that a Northern

defensive alliance be formed soon after peace had been concluded. Günther's words were representative of the favourable reaction with which this suggestion was met in Sweden and Norway, and on March 15th the press in these three countries carried official news releases which announced that the three governments had reached agreement on the possibility of establishing a pact of joint defence.3

The plan was quickly scuttled by the Soviet Union, however. Norway and Sweden were informed through their Ministers in Moscow that their entry into such a pact would indicate that they were abandoning their traditional policy of neutrality. Paasikivi was told by Molotov during the conversation in the Kremlin on March 21st referred to above that the Soviet Union would interpret Finland's association with a Northern alliance as an expression of a desire for revenge:

Your security is guaranteed by the nonaggression clause included in the Peace Treaty. If you conclude a defensive alliance with Sweden and Norway, we shall conclude that you have broken the Peace Treaty.4

From a security point of view the Soviet Union could have been expected to regard with favour a defensive alliance which would strengthen the safety of Scandinavia and the Baltic, as the projected Northern alliance undoubtedly

4 Ibid., p. 44.
would have done. On the other hand, such an alliance could cause some inconvenience to the Soviet Government should it wish to 'mop up' the rest of Finland at some future date. Also, a Nordic defence pact might tend to remove Finland from Moscow's sphere of influence and weaken its grip on her foreign relations. Viewed in the light of such considerations, Moscow's refusal to allow Finland to strengthen her defensive position becomes understandable, and the Finns rightly interpreted it as an ominous sign of what they could expect from their eastern neighbour.  

Finland nevertheless reopened the question in late September, 1940, and talks took place with the Swedish Government for a number of weeks. Political as well as military cooperation was envisaged on this occasion. Molotov said repeatedly that he opposed the idea, and finally, on December 6th, he found it necessary to deliver a statement to the Finnish Ambassador in Moscow in which it was declared that the agreement contemplated would lead to "...the subordination of Finland's foreign policy to Stockholm, and that henceforth the foreign policy of Finland will not be directed from Helsinki, but from Stockholm." The Soviet Government would regard such an agreement as in effect liquidating the Peace Treaty of March 12th. "The Soviet Government advises Finland to

5 See Wuorinen, *Finland and World War II*, pp. 89-90.
weigh what has been said above, and to consider the consequences which an agreement of this kind...will bring." In the face of this ultimatum all thoughts of a Northern alliance had to be abandoned.

Under Article 6 of the Peace Treaty of March 12th, the Soviet Union was granted the right to establish a consulate in "the Petsamo area". This formulation afforded Moscow another opportunity to interpret the treaty as it suited it best, and it was subsequently demanded that the consulate should function in a vast district comprising "...the entire province of Lapland including the towns of Petsamo, Oulu, Tornio, Kemi, Rovaniemi, Kemijarvi and the Harbor of Liinahamari." Finland had to agree to extend the district of the consulate to the area outlined, but even those limits were abused. Several members of the greatly overstaffed consulate were shown to have engaged in espionage, and there were frequent attempts to travel in restricted areas, even on false papers and assumed names. Soviet disregard for travel restrictions was in fact one of the best examples of the complete disregard for Finland's interests and for the letter of the Peace Treaty itself.

Soviet interference in the domestic affairs of Finland became a part of Finland's political life. On

6 Finnish Blue-White Book, p. 82; and Degras, Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, vol. 3, p. 479.

many occasions pressure was brought to bear on the Finnish Government for the release of Finnish citizens serving sentences for treason or espionage. The Soviet Union also actively supported the treasonable activities of the Society for Peace and Friendship between Finland and the USSR. In fact, Finland was told that "...the development of Finnish-Russian relations would depend on the treatment accorded to the SNS." The procedure was always the same: non-compliance with the wishes expressed by the Soviet Union would be considered a demonstration of Finnish unwillingness to live up to the spirit - or the letter - of the Peace Treaty.

In that fashion pressure was exerted to secure the resignations from the Government of Ministers Väinö Tanner, Ernst von Born and Karl-August Fagerholm. Of a more serious nature was the statement presented to the Finnish Ambassador in Moscow on December 6, 1940:

We do not wish to interfere in the matter, or make any hints with reference to the nominations for a new presidential candidate in Finland, but we are watching closely the preparations for the election. We shall conclude whether Finland desires peace with the USSR, on the basis of who is chosen as President. It is clear that if some such person as Tanner, Kivimäki, Mannerheim, or Svinhufvud is elected President, we shall draw the conclusion that Finland does not wish to observe the Peace Treaty she has concluded with the USSR.

As already indicated, espionage was pursued

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8 Finnish Blue-White Book, p. 15. "SNS" were the Finnish initials of the Society for Peace and Friendship between Finland and the USSR.

9 Degras, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 479; Finnish Blue-White Book, p. 82.
almost openly. At the Petsamo consulate, described above, there were three consular and twenty-one other officials, while the German and British consulates there each had one consul and the one or two other officials needed in such a locality. At the capital of the Aaland Islands, Mariehamn, the Soviet consulate had eight consular and thirty other officials, as compared to Sweden's one consul and one typist. The official duties of the Petsamo and Mariehamn consulates were so insignificant compared to the size of the staffs that there could be no mistake about the real purpose of the Soviet officials.\(^\text{10}\)

Petsamo gave rise to still another serious point of friction between the Finnish and Soviet governments during the fifteen months of 'peace'. The Peace Treaty had confirmed Finland's sovereignty over the area, but soon the Soviet Union began to display an extraordinary interest in it. In June, Molotov requested that Finland cancel the mining concession held by the British-Canadian Mond Nickel Company since 1934. The concession should then be given to the Soviet Union. A proposal that she buy a part of the output of the mines was rejected by the Soviet Union as unsatisfactory, in spite of the fact that such an arrangement would have satisfied her economic interests, allegedly her only interest in the area.\(^\text{11}\) When the holders of the


11 \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 50-51.
concession refused to give it up, Finland was told by her eastern neighbour to simply withdraw the concession and hand it to the Soviet Union. On October 30th, Andrei Vyshinsky, Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, warned that if Finland refused to grant the Soviet demands in the Petsamo area without further delay, the Soviet Government "...would be compelled to take the measures which the situation demanded." Negotiations finally got under way in Moscow in January 1941. While slowly yielding to Soviet demands, Finland nevertheless managed to effectively keep the Russians out of Petsamo until the outbreak of war in June by expertly playing the only trump card she possessed - the Anglo-Canadian and German interest in the nickel mines. Legal difficulties kept cropping up at every important turn, and the negotiations dragged on. Finland agreed to a joint Finnish-Soviet concession for the mines, but another series of legal entanglements quickly appeared in the picture, and Molotov and Vyshinsky seemed unable to get anywhere. Fearing a conflict with Germany, the Soviet Union was reluctant to resort to the usual military threats, and at the time of the last Finnish-Soviet contact about the Petsamo question on May 10th, nothing concrete had come of the negotiations.

The increasingly strained relationship between the Soviet Union and Germany was undoubtedly the only reason

12 Finnish Blue-White Book, p. 73.
why Finland was not compelled to walk the road of the Baltic States. Completing a process which had started with the infamous Soviet ultimatums of June 15th and 16th to the governments of these three unfortunate countries, Estonia, as the last of the three, on August 6th became the sixteenth Soviet Socialist Republic. Soviet comments were ominous for Finland. Reporting on the "applications" of the Baltic States to join the Soviet Union, Molotov told the Supreme Soviet on August 1st: "The successes we have achieved are not inconsiderable but we do not intend to rest satisfied with what has been attained." On August 7th, Pravda had the following comment to make on the decision of the Supreme Soviet to admit Estonia:

The sixth of August is a great historical date - the birth of the 16th Soviet Republic. Only a few days ago there were but twelve republics in the U.S.S.R. To-day there are sixteen. Time works for Socialism. History has not yet closed her account.

And on November 7th, Field Marshal S. K. Timoshenko, Soviet Commissar for Defence, declared: "The Soviet Union has extended its frontiers, but we cannot be contented with what has already been achieved." What further 'achievements'

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14 Loc. cit.

the Defence Commissar had in mind became quite clear a few days later during Molotov's conversations with the German Reich Chancellor, Adolf Hitler, in Berlin.

Germany had been a passive bystander during the Winter War because of her Non-Aggression pact with the Soviet Union. On December 2, 1939, following the Soviet attack upon Finland, German missions abroad were told to "...please avoid any anti-Russian note" in conversations regarding the Finnish-Russian conflict. It was to be explained as a result of the "...inescapable course of events in the revision of the treaties following the last Great War." The security of Leningrad should also be employed as an argument in defense of the Soviet action, and the fact that Finland had rejected a German offer for a non-aggression pact was to be utilized. It should be pointed out that Foreign Minister Rudolf Holsti was hostile to Germany, and that most of the Finnish press "...is outspokenly unfriendly to us."16 A further directive, dated December 6th, supplemented these instructions and went a step further: "In conversations, sympathy is to be expressed for the Russian point of view. Please refrain from expressing any sympathy for the Finnish position."17 However, the severe Soviet diplomatic campaign against Finland was watched with mixed feelings in Berlin, and a change in Germany's attitude

16 Nazi-Soviet Relations, pp. 127-128.
17 Ibid., pp. 129-130.
toward Finland was discernible in the summer of 1940. Germany's concern was expressed by her Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, when on August 14th he asked the Soviet Ambassador, Alexander Shkvartsev, "...what truth there was to press reports of a stiffening in Russo-Finnish relations." During the same month Germany released the Finnish arms shipment confiscated by her in Norway during the April invasion, which was nothing short of a slight to her Russian partner. The German action was obviously in the nature of a retaliation, however. In July, the Soviet Union had demanded that Finland allow Soviet troops to be transported by Finnish railways to and from the Hanko lease territory, a request which flagrantly violated Finland's neutrality according to international law. Eventually Finland had to yield, and the transit agreement was signed on September 6th. In spite of the secrecy of the negotiations which preceded the agreement, Germany soon learned about them and saw in them a further step toward complete Soviet domination of the Baltic. Her reaction was swift. On August 17th, a Lieutenant-Colonel Veltjens, presumable representing the firm of 'Veltjens & Aschpurvis, Waffen und Munition', appeared at the Headquarters of the Finnish Army carrying a communication from Reich Marshal Hermann Göring. He asked whether Finland, like Sweden, would permit

18 Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 177.
"...the transit of materials and men on leave, and sick, to and from Kirkenes." He also stated that it would now be possible for Finland to obtain war material in Germany.19 On the instructions of Prime Minister Risto Ryti, who was at the time also acting President, Mannerheim informed Veltjens on the following day that Finland's reply with regard to the transit was in the affirmative.20 Representatives of the Ministry of Defence were dispatched to Germany immediately for the purchase of materials, and transit negotiations also got under way without delay. A technical agreement on the details of the transit traffic was reached between the military authorities of Finland and Germany on September 12th, and a political agreement was signed ten days later. Moscow was informed of the transit agreement by the German Embassy on the very eve of its signature.21 The agreement, formulated by the German Foreign Office, permitted Germany to transport "...material and necessary personnel from northern Baltic ports, through Rovaniemi, along the Arctic road to Kirkenes in northern

19 Mannerheim, Memoirs., p. 399. See also German Foreign Office memorandum by Minister Karl Schnurre of August 19, 1940, and entries from the diary of General Franz Halder in Documents on German Foreign Policy (Series D), vol. 10, pp. 511-512. Halder wrote on August 31st: "The Führer wants to equip Finland with supplies richly and generously. Speedily!"

20 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 400.

21 Nazi-Soviet Relations, pp. 188-189. In a memorandum concerning a meeting held on August 30th, General Georg Thomas, Head of the War Economy and Armaments Office, wrote: "The fact that Germany is giving assistance to Finland is to be made known to the Russians, since the Führer believes that then the Russians will shrink from further steps." Documents on German Foreign Policy (Series D), vol. 10, p. 512.
It also marked the beginning of German infiltration in Finland.

Since the Finnish-German transit agreement was to come in for particularly severe criticism from Allied quarters, both at the time and, particularly, when Finland's "separate war" claim was rejected by the Allied Powers at the end of World War II, it is necessary to point out at this stage that Finland actually had no choice but to act as she did. No one has a right to condemn her for grasping the only straw held out to her at a time when sovietization appeared to be imminent. Great Britain, who was to cause so much harm to Finland through the 'made-to-suit-Russia' propaganda against her - propaganda which still lingers on in its effects, was certainly in no position to offer Finland any assistance worthy of the name. Sweden's position was too precarious to allow her to give Finland any support other than encouraging words. Norway was under German occupation from Svinesund in the south to Kirkenes in the north, leaving Finland in a sack the only opening of which was at Petsamo, a few miles of land between Kirkenes and the Soviet-occupied Rybachy peninsula. Finland was a 'sitting duck' for her colossal eastern neighbour, and time was running out. She seemed to be the most likely candidate to become the seventeenth Soviet Socialist Republic. Molotov's

22 Wuorinen, op. cit., p. 93.
speech on August 1st pointed in that direction, as did the comments of the Soviet press. The demonstrations organized in Helsinki on July 29th, August 2nd and August 7th by the Society for Peace and Friendship between Finland and the U.S.S.R. were not only timed to coincide with this diplomatic pressure brought to bear on Finland by the Soviet Government, but they were directed against the Finnish Government and in favour of the Soviet Union. Molotov openly supported the society in his speech on August 1st, threatening "certain elements in ruling Finnish circles" with grave reprisals if the activities of "...those classes of the Finnish population which are endeavoring to strengthen good-neighborly relations with the U.S.S.R...." were suppressed.²³ Paasikivi, Finnish envoy in Moscow, was so alarmed by the tone of the Moscow newspapers that he hurried to Helsinki to report. Throughout the Scandinavian countries rumours had it that a new military conflict was about to break out between Finland and the Soviet Union.

Accordingly an agreement with Germany was welcomed in Finland. Germany represented the last and only hope of escaping the fate of the three small nations across the Gulf of Finland. With the transit agreement coming into operation, Finland's fate might no longer be entirely dependent upon the greedy desires of the Soviet Government but rather on

²³ Dallin, Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy 1939-1942, pp. 289-290.
the development of German-Soviet relations. The result of the former condition was a foregone conclusion, while the latter held out some hope. Finland had truly become a pawn in the political chess game of the Great Powers, and she had to make the best of a very unpleasant situation. In the final analysis, the Soviet Union itself was responsible for driving Finland into eventual cobelligerency with Germany, a dilemma from which the Finns were unable to extricate themselves until the late summer of 1944.

The saving straw held out to Finland by Germany proved increasingly firmer. Germany had become strongly interested in the Petsamo nickel mines demanded by the Soviet Union, and in the Foreign Office in Berlin it was soon suggested that it would be necessary to "...strengthen the Finnish will to resist." 24 The encouragement consequently given Finland also extended to increased deliveries of arms, while the promised arms deliveries to the Soviet Union failed to materialize. 25 The conversations between Hitler and Molotov in Berlin on November 12th and 13th demonstrated clearly what this new active German interest meant for Finland. While Hitler avoided the problems of the day and urged that they be postponed for the duration of the war, Molotov insisted "...that all these great issues of tomorrow


25 On November 2nd, the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Trade, Anastas I. Mikoyan, complained about this to Dr. Karl Schnurre, Counselor of the German Legation in Moscow, "in a tone of obvious annoyance." Ibid., p. 217.
could not be separated from the issues of today and the fulfillment of existing agreements. The things that were started must first be completed before they proceed to new tasks."  

Uppermost in Molotov's mind was the question of Finland, to which he returned time and time again during the conversations. He reminded Hitler that the secret agreement of August 23, 1939, had been executed satisfactorily with the single exception of Finland. All the other territories placed within the Soviet Union's sphere of influence by the Secret Protocol had now been incorporated into the Soviet Union, and it was time the question of Finland was settled as well. Molotov declared that "...he imagined this settlement on the same scale as in Bessarabia and in the adjacent countries," and he could not understand "...why Russia should postpone the realization of her wishes for six months or a year."  

Given a completely free hand, the Soviet Union could insure peace in the Baltic region "absolutely". Hitler, perhaps realizing that Molotov had him cornered, claimed that further conflict in the Baltic would probably not only bring Sweden into the war but also result in Finnish air bases being turned over to England and the United States. This would force Germany to intervene, which she had no desire to do. Germany wanted peace in the Baltic,


27 Ibid., p. 240. Bessarabia had been occupied by Soviet forces on July 28th, and was subsequently incorporated into the Ukrainian S.S.R. The "adjacent countries" had been incorporated into the Soviet Union as the Byelo-Russian S.S.R. and the Moldavian S.S.R.
and any Soviet action against Finland at the present time was likely to disturb this state of affairs. After the war had been successfully ended, the Soviet Union could have "...everything that in her opinion was due to her." In summarizing this part of the conversation, Ribbentrop stated:

There was actually no reason at all for making an issue of the Finnish question. Perhaps it was a misunderstanding only. Strategically, all of Russia's wishes had been satisfied by her peace treaty with Finland.

Hitler added that both sides agreed "in principle" that Finland belonged to the Russian sphere of influence, and that they should turn to "more important problems" rather than discuss "a purely theoretical" matter.

In the light of the Hitler-Molotov conversations it should be crystal clear that Finland's position in the autumn of 1940 would have been desperate without the moral backing of Germany. The German motives do not matter in this connection, but it is a slanderous misrepresentation to allege that Finland's involvement with Nazi Germany was based - at least originally - on anything but extreme national emergency. A man about to drown does not question the intentions of the only person able and willing to come

28 Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 240.
29 Ibid., p. 242.
30 A very interesting first-hand account of the Hitler-Molotov conversations is given by the German interpreter Dr. Paul Schmidt, Statist auf Diplomatischer Bühne 1923-45, Bonn, Athenäum-Verlag, 1949, Chapter XXI.
to the rescue - he grabs the outstretched hand. And he also hangs on to that hand as long as it is necessary for saving himself. Many have said that Finland hung on too long, but nobody has been able to suggest a different course which Finland might have followed with less disastrous consequences than the one she chose to travel between 1941 and 1944. As early as October, 1939, Stalin had told the Finnish negotiators in Moscow that their desire to remain outside the conflicts of the Great Powers was unrealistic, the Great Powers simply would not allow it. By the autumn of 1940 these words had been demonstrated to Finland in a way which left her with no such illusions any more. She had to make a choice. Her efforts to win effective support from the Allied Powers and the United States had been unsuccessful. Now Denmark and Norway were under German occupation, and aid from the West was an absolute impossibility. Meanwhile, the pressure from the East had once again become unbearable, and the annihilation of Finland as a free, sovereign state was imminent. Finland could not be expected to turn down the help offered by Germany, allow herself to be absorbed by the Soviet Union, and wait for Allied victory and a peace conference which might or might not restore to her her former territory and sovereignty. No nation could place such trust in the fair words of advice coming to Finland from France and Great Britain during 1940 and 1941, particularly not with the sell-out by these same Powers of Czechoslovakia still fresh
in its memory. Besides, until the entry into the war of the United States, more than five months after Germany's attack on the Soviet Union, Allied victory appeared to be little more than a forlorn hope. Whatever might be the German plans for post-war Finland, they could not, by any stretch of the imagination, present a future more terrible than a soviet Finland. This was Finland's dilemma, and these are the premises on which her actions during 1940-45 must be judged. Her choice was not for or against the Allied Powers at any stage of the developments, it was simply a question of her survival. Until the Soviet Union accidentally became an ally of Great Britain and France, these two Powers appreciated Finland's predicament, but from then on they allowed themselves, for reasons of 'harmony' and military expediency, to have their policy toward Finland dictated to them from Moscow.

The German Foreign Office memorandum of October 8th, suggesting that Finland's will to resist must be strengthened, was not solely a result of concern about the Petsamo nickel mines, of course. Even before the conclusion of the transit agreement with Finland Hitler had tentatively decided to launch an attack against the Soviet Union in the spring of 1941. Finland was to be one of the avenues of the offensive,

31 See above, p. 74, n. 24.

32 The general plan for such an offensive was recorded as early as July 22nd in the diary of General Franz Halder, German Chief of Staff. Hitler declared himself in favour of the plan on July 31st. See Lundin, Finland in the Second World War, p. 88.
and she could therefore neither be allowed to fall under Soviet domination, nor to pursue a policy which might render difficult the execution of the German attack on the Soviet Union in the Finnish sector. Undoubtedly the decision to inform Finland of the Soviet Union's demands with respect to Finland, expressed by Molotov during the Berlin conversations, was in line with this policy.\textsuperscript{33} How complete was this German revelation of Soviet aims is uncertain, but an indication may be seen in the optimistic remarks of the Finnish Minister in Berlin on the occasion of his New Year's visit to the Foreign Office. According to the memorandum written by State Secretary Weizsäcker after his conversation with the Minister, Wuorimaa stated that "...in his homeland people were now reassured, because they thought they knew that in a future conflict with Russia they would not stand alone."\textsuperscript{34} However, Weizsäcker adds that "In my reply I used the formula that the Russian Government certainly realized that Germany did not desire any

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\textsuperscript{33} Ribbentrop, testifying before the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg on April 1, 1946, implied that Finland had been fully informed immediately after the conversations. The Trial of German Major War Criminals. Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal sitting at Nuremberg Germany. Part 10: 23 March-3 April 1946. Taken from the Official Transcript, London, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1947, p. 212. (Hereafter referred to as \textit{Nuremberg Trials}) Mannerheim, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 402 and 406, claims that the Finnish Government was not fully informed until the end of May 1941, and that even "fragmentary reports" did not reach Finland until "several months later". He cites this as "...good evidence that there was no confidential co-operation between Finland and Germany."

\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Nazi-Soviet Relations}, p. 264.
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new unrest in the North," a procedure which should have been entirely unnecessary had the Finns already been confidentially informed of the Hitler-Molotov discussions at that time. It is more reasonable to assume that Minister Wuorimaa's remark, in view of the recent developments in Finnish-German relations, was in the nature of a feeler, an invitation to the German Foreign Office to state more explicitly how far Germany was prepared to go in her obvious desire to keep the Soviet Union from further encroaching upon the territory and sovereignty of Finland. The implication may also be drawn from the Minister's remark that Finland would welcome such support from Germany. Indeed Finland could look for support from no other quarter. The fall of France had upset the balance of power in Europe, and England could hope to reestablish it only with the help of the Soviet Union. In November the Finnish Minister in London had been told by a high official in the British Foreign Office that Great Britain could not risk any complications that might solidify the Soviet-German alliance, and accordingly she could do nothing to assist or encourage Finland. The United States, her hopes of remaining outside the conflict vanishing quickly and consequently careful not to offend a potential ally, also showed signs of cooling.

35 Nazi-Soviet Relations, p. 264.
36 Wuorinen, op. cit., p. 88.
off in her attitude to Finland. Small wonder, therefore, that the Finns were seeking in Berlin the reassurances of a support which at the end of 1940 they only "thought they knew" might be forthcoming in a future conflict with the Soviet Union.

The reassurances were soon to be indicated. On December 18, 1940, Hitler issued his famous 'Directive No. 21' concerning 'Operation Barbarossa'. The directive ordered the armed forces of Germany to prepare for an attack on the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, an attack which should crush Russia swiftly and render her completely harmless. Discussing the question of probable allies and their tasks, the directive stated:

1. On the flanks of our operation we can count on the active participation of Rumania and Finland....

3. Finland will cover the concentration of the redeployed German North Group (parts of the XXI Group) coming from Norway and will operate jointly with it. Besides, Finland will be assigned the task of eliminating Hangö....

The main body of the Finnish Army will be assigned the task, in coordination with the advance of the German northern flank, of pinning down strong Russian forces by attacking west of or on both sides of Lake Ladoga and of seizing Hangö.37

This crucial decision involving Finland was made without the knowledge of the Finnish Government, and no hint of it was given the Finns for more than one month. At the time of the

37 Nazi-Soviet Relations, pp. 261-262.
Nuremberg trials of the major German war criminals in 1946, the Russians made the most of it, however. General Rudenko, speaking for the Soviet prosecution, quotes a written statement made by the German General Erich Buschenhagen in which Buschenhagen claims that he, then Colonel and Chief of Staff of the German forces in Norway, participated in a conference near Berlin at the end of December 1940, where 'Operation Barbarossa' was mentioned by General Franz Halder, Chief of the German General Staff. The statement continues: "Present at Zossen, at the time of the meeting, was the Chief of the General Staff of the Finnish Army, General Heinriks [sic], who was conferring with General Halder..."38 On the basis of 'Directive No. 21' and General Buschenhagen's testimony, General Rudenko considered it to be "...incontestable that the Hitlerite Government at this time had already secured the assent of the Roumanian and Finnish Governments for the participation of these countries, together with Germany, in the aggression against the U.S.S.R."39 The loser of the battle of Stalingrad, Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus, also testified that General Heinrichs had visited Zossen in December 1940 to make a speech about the Winter War before the General Staff officers. Paulus points out that the speech coincided with the issue of 'Directive No. 21', and that it was significant also

38 *Nuremberg Trials*, vol. 6, p. 176.
39 *Loc. cit*. 
because it "...gave an insight into the value of the Finnish troops as possible future partners in the war."40

The Soviet prosecution had even more damaging evidence available. Colonel Kitschmann, Military Attaché in the German Embassy in Helsinki from October 1, 1941, testified that he had learned from an aide of his predecessor's that Major-General Talvela's visit to Berlin in September 1940 had resulted in an agreement between the German and Finnish General Staffs "...for joint preparations for a war of aggression, and its execution, against the Soviet Union."41

The Soviet prosecution based its case chiefly on the testimony of General Buschenhagen, however, who proved himself a most cooperative witness. He related how, in February of 1941, he conferred with General Heinrichs and two of his aides in Helsinki concerning the possibilities for operations against the Soviet Union from middle and northern Finland.

"These conferences led to an agreement," Buschenhagen stated.42 He then travelled, according to his testimony, along the eastern border of middle and northern Finland to determine the possibilities for deployment, supply and operations from that sector. This survey was followed by a conference with Finnish staff officers, on the basis of which the German High Command worked out detailed plans for

40 Nuremberg Trials, vol. 6, p. 243.
41 Ibid., p. 288.
42 Ibid., p. 277.
'Operation Blue Fox'. The basic plans for German-Finnish military cooperation were worked out at Salzburg in late May of 1941 during a conference between General Heinrichs, Field Marshal Keitel and General Jodl, Buschenhagen claims. He then went to Helsinki for a further conference with the Finnish General Staff on June 2nd, at which time "...the details were worked out, such as the time-table, the schedule, and measures of secrecy as to the Finnish mobilisation." Buschenhagen summed up his testimony as follows:

All agreements between the O.K.W. /Oberkommando der Wehrmacht/ and the Finnish General Staff had as their sole purpose, from the very beginning, the participation of the Finnish Army and the German troops on Finnish territory in the aggressive war against the Soviet Union. There was no doubt about that.

If the Finnish General Staff, to the outside world, always pointed out that all these measures had only the character of defence measures, that was just camouflage. There was, from the very beginning, no doubt among the Finnish General Staff that all these preparations would serve only in the attack against the Soviet Union, for all the preparations that we made pointed in the same direction — namely, the plans for mobilisation, and above all, the objectives for the attack. Nobody ever reckoned with the possibility of a Russian attack on Finland.

Since for cogent reasons the operations for attack from Finnish territory could only start eight to ten days after the beginning of the attack against Russia, certain security measures were taken during and after the attack, but the whole formation and lining-up of the troops was for offensive and not defensive purposes. I believe you can see clearly from that, the aggressive character of all these preparations.

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43 Nuremberg Trials, vol. 6, p. 277.
44 Loc. cit.
45 Ibid., p. 278.
Although other observers might still have their doubts, the Soviet prosecution did not profess to have any. Major-General Zorya declared before the Tribunal that "Buschenhagen's testimony disposes of all attempts to assert that the war waged by Finland was a separate war and was dissociated from the war aims of Fascist Germany. Finland's entry into the war had been envisaged in the war plans of the Fascist conspirators and agreed with the aggressive intentions of the Finnish rulers."\(^{46}\)

The language used by Generals Rudenko and Zorya sounds a very familiar note. It is the kind of language employed by the Soviet press when denouncing adversaries of the Soviet system; the kind of language employed in speeches by Soviet leaders for the same purpose; the kind of language with which Finland had become familiar between 1939 and 1941. It is the language used to perfection by Hitler when presenting the 'Big Lie'. And the same kind of language is found in the statement of Buschenhagen's and in his and Paulus' testimony. It is well warranted to keep in mind that both Field Marshal Paulus and General Buschenhagen, the chief witnesses of the Soviet prosecution on matters relating to Finland, had spent a good deal of time in the Soviet Union as prisoners of war, and that they had both become converts to Communism. It is inconceivable that they should have said anything before the Military Tribunal.

\(^{46}\) Nuremberg Trials, vol. 6, pp. 288-289.
which would have made the slightest dent in the official Soviet version of Finland's attitude between 1939 and 1941. Had the Soviet prosecution feared that these two important witnesses might have turned 'independent' once they arrived in the American occupation zone in Germany to present their testimony, Paulus and Buschenhagen would never have been produced as witnesses. If Buschenhagen did indeed write the statement credited to him, it was certainly an inspired piece of evidence. Central in this statement is the assertion that General Heinrichs was informed of 'Operation Barbarossa' during his 'conference' with General Halder at Zossen in December 1940, and that there was full military cooperation between the General Staffs of Germany and Finland from that point on. However, Buschenhagen was not present during any such 'conference' between Heinrichs and Halder in December 1940. All other available sources claim that the first visit of General Heinrichs to the German Headquarters at Zossen took place in late January 1941. Furthermore, this visit was undertaken for the purpose of giving a lecture on the Winter War, as Paulus also states. Neither Paulus nor Buschenhagen state flatly that German-Finnish military cooperation in a war against the Soviet Union was discussed at that time, although the Soviet prosecution preferred to read their testimony to that effect. On the contrary, under

47 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 405; Mazour, op. cit., p. 140; Lundin, op. cit., p. 95.
cross-examination General Buschenhagen was forced to admit that "...I assume that they were concerned with possible co-operation between the Finnish and German troops in the case of a conflict between Germany and the Soviet Union." 48

A different matter is the fact that the German High Command might have wished to reach a military understanding with Finland at this early point. Marshal Mannerheim says that during General Heinrichs' visit to Zossen General Halder "...casually suggested that some day Finland and Germany, as in 1918, might fight side by side, and that then the natural task of the Finnish Army would be to march on Leningrad." And Mannerheim continues:

The suggestion was firmly rejected by General Heinrichs, who declared himself convinced that neither the government nor the Commander-in-Chief would agree to such an operation, the more so as the Russians were always asserting that Finland threatened the security of Leningrad. It should be emphasized that neither the so-called Barbarossa Plan nor any other plan was shown to General Heinrichs. 49

General Waldemar Erfurth, who later became German liaison officer at the Finnish Headquarters, supports Mannerheim's contention flatly. 50 There is no reliable evidence, therefore, to show that Finland was informed of German plans to attack the Soviet Union at this early stage of developments,

48 Nuremberg Trials, vol. 6, p. 276.

49 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 405.

nor that she had signified any inclination to join with the German forces in such an attack. The fact that both Paulus and Buschenhagen make the same error in the timing of General Heinrichs' visit to Zossen, and that only these two Soviet witnesses make that error, might be taken as a further indication that their testimony was inspired by the same source. And there are other assertions made by these two witnesses in which they find themselves contradicting all other sources to a greater or lesser degree, excepting the Soviet sources from which they never deviate.

Buschenhagen did go to Finland in February 1941. His visit was of a different nature than that outlined in his testimony at Nuremberg, however. As Chief of Staff of the German forces in Norway he was concerned with the problems connected with the transit of German troops from Finland's Baltic coast to Kirkenes under the provisions of the Transit Agreement. Ostensibly these problems were the reason for his visit to Finland in February, although it can reasonably be assumed that he was interested in securing information which would be helpful in planning the successful execution of 'Operation Barbarossa' on the Finnish sector. This latter purpose was not therefore necessarily agreeable to his Finnish colleagues, however. Having completed his official business in Helsinki, Buschenhagen indicated his desire to learn about the Finnish operative plans for Lapland and to discuss questions relating to traffic and communications in the north. He also indicated that Finland could expect
German help were she to be attacked by the Soviet Union. The Finnish reaction was negative. Mannerheim says:

I absolutely declined to give him any information about our operative plans, and also refused to discuss an eventual German-Finnish military collaboration. But there was no objection to discussing the system of communications of Lapland within the framework of the Treaty of Transit.  

Accordingly, Buschenhagen, when visiting Rovaniemi, was taken on a brief tour of Lapland, a trip which may have yielded some information useful in the preparation of 'Operation Blue Fox'. However, again supporting Mannerheim's story, General Erfurth declares that "...no negotiations or conversations about a possible later cooperation between Germans and Finns were held in Helsinki or anywhere else on the occasion of Buschenhagen's visit."  

There was no further contact between Finnish and German authorities until May 20th, when Hitler sent Minister Karl Schnurre to see President Risto Ryti in Helsinki. During their conversation Schnurre revealed for the first time that Molotov, during his talks with Hitler in Berlin the previous November, had demanded a free hand in Finland, but that he had been turned down by Hitler. The relations between Germany and the Soviet Union were now very strained, Schnurre confided. This would not necessarily lead to war, he said, but such a possibility could not be entirely

51 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 405.
excluded either. For that reason Hitler had suggested that one or more Finnish military experts go to Germany to receive information "regarding the alarming world situation." Ryti was also assured that Germany would regard a Soviet attack on Finland as *casus belli*, which was the first official confirmation the Finns had of the hope voiced by Minister Wuorima in Berlin at the time of his New Year's visit to the German Foreign Office some five months earlier. Now the Finns not merely "thought they knew", now they knew that they would not stand alone in a future conflict with the Soviet Union.

However, it does not necessarily follow that they wanted such a conflict, although there could be no doubt among the Finns on which side they preferred to stand should they be forced into a Russo-German conflict. And as things were there was no possibility that Finland would be allowed to remain a neutral bystander. The unanimous decision of President Ryti, the Cabinet and Marshal Mannerheim was that the German offer should be accepted. On May 25th, three days after Schnurre's visit to Helsinki, a delegation headed by General Heinrichs was received in Salzburg by Field Marshal Keitel and General Jodl. They were informed that the situation was 'not acute', but that it was a German custom to 'prepare everything thoroughly and in good time in order

to act quickly when the hour strikes'.\textsuperscript{54} If the hour were to strike, Germany would want Finland to hold down the Russian troops on her frontiers. It was also possible that the Finns might be asked to take part in an offensive against Leningrad and to assist in operations against Murmansk and Salla. The Finnish delegation listened 'with interest', but General Heinrichs stressed that he had no authority to negotiate about political and military matters. If Finland were attacked by Soviet forces she would defend herself, but even in such a case the delegation could not make any commitments. Heinrichs took the same position in a conversation with General Halder the following day.\textsuperscript{55} He agreed to receive a German emissary in Helsinki on June 3rd for further exchange of information, but for some unexplained reason this emissary never arrived.\textsuperscript{56} From General Buschenhagen's testimony one may get the impression that he was this emissary; he claims that he arrived in Helsinki on June 2nd for a conference with the Finnish General Staff.\textsuperscript{57} However, it seems that again his timing conflicts with that of other sources,\textsuperscript{58} and nobody corroborates his statement that during his conference with the

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{54} Mannerheim, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 407.
\item\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., pp. 407-408; Wuorinen, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 99; Mazour, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 141.
\item\textsuperscript{56} Mannerheim, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 408; Wuorinen, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 99.
\item\textsuperscript{57} See above, p. 84.
\item\textsuperscript{58} Mannerheim says he arrived in Helsinki "About June 10th". \textit{Op. cit.}, p. 410.
\end{itemize}
Finnish General Staff the details of the joint German-Finnish operative plans against the Soviet Union were worked out. Only Professor C. Leonard Lundin repeats Buschenhagen's testimony as if he places any credence in it, but not even he, who throughout his book willingly accepts any evidence damaging to Finland while casting doubts upon the sworn testimony of most Finnish political and military leaders, finds it possible to establish a case in support of Buschenhagen's version of this particular conference and therefore prefers not to comment upon it. About Buschenhagen's visit in June, Marshal Mannerheim has this to say:

From his remarks to the General Staff it appeared that his visit this time was concerned with a discussion of practical details in connection with eventual co-operation in the north if Finland were attacked by the Soviet Union, and also with obtaining guarantees for Finland participating in the war as Germany's ally. After I had reported to the President of the Republic and he had confirmed that he adhered to his earlier standpoint, I had Colonel Buschenhagen informed that a guarantee for Finnish participation in the war could not be given. Finland was determined to remain neutral provided she were not exposed to aggression. 60

During the trial of Finnish 'war responsible' in Helsinki in 1945 General Heinrichs stated categorically that no "...written or oral commitments or agreements, binding for Finland's government or military leadership", were given to

60 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 140.
Buschenhagen or anyone else at any time.61

It has been claimed that Finland must have been fully aware of the approaching conflict, that it was impossible after all the conversations between Finnish and German military leaders that Finland should not realize what was about to happen, and that the official Finnish avoidance of binding commitments was merely "...the thinnest and shabbiest of coverings for preparations for a war of retribution, and perhaps...of conquest."62 Such a claim is understandable. The situation in Finland in 1941 was one of great confusion, as was to be expected when a little state finds itself drawn into the maelstrom of conflicting Great Power interests. A number of facts, as well as a number of informants, also appear to support such a claim. However, to go along with those who condemn Finland's behaviour in 1941 one has to close one's eyes to another body of evidence. It is easy to say today, with the knowledge of what did happen, that Finland must have known the war was unavoidable. Indeed most Finnish leaders at the time feared that it was. However, they had never been told explicitly by the Germans that the decision to attack had been made. On the contrary, they were repeatedly told that the Germans wanted to be prepared for any eventuality because of a deterioration in German-Soviet relations, but

61 Quoted in Lundin, op. cit., p. 103. Lundin adds that sworn testimony by such a distinguished man "cannot be lightly dismissed", whereupon he dismisses it by saying that it is "extraordinarily difficult to believe literally".

62 Ibid., p. 112.
that war was not unavoidable. Rumours were plentiful in the early summer of 1941, and some of them claimed that Germany and the Soviet Union were about to patch up their differences. On May 30th, believing that a new German-Soviet agreement was entirely possible, the Finnish Government instructed its Minister in Berlin to do what was in his power to ensure that such a settlement would not be made, as in August 1939, at Finland’s expense. The Finnish Minister visited the German Foreign Office with such requests on May 31st and June 2nd, and on June 10th he was able to inform his Government that a satisfactory preliminary reply had been received. The German Foreign Office kept him under the impression that their negotiations with the Soviet Government were progressing normally, which presumably meant satisfactorily.63

Of course, if the Finns had any hopes of keeping out of war, they did not really believe in them. In spite of the optimistic reports from the Minister in Berlin, there were other reports which appeared to correspond more closely with the actual situation. Most of them came from the Finnish Minister in Bucharest. On April 6th, he reported that partial mobilization was going on in Rumania; on April 27th: border regions were being evacuated by the civilian population and German forces moved up to the

frontier of Bessarabia; May 9th: the Russians evacuated Bessarabia; June 3rd: further mobilization; June 19th: large concentrations of Russian forces on the border; June 21st: that decisive events could be expected within the next few days or hours. In view of these reports the Tass denial on June 13th of all rumours of war, and the repetition of this denial by Minister Orlov in Helsinki on June 20th, were taken with a grain of salt in Finnish government circles. And there is no reason why one cannot also see the gradual mobilization of the Finnish Army in the light of these reports, although some prefer to view this mobilization as proof of a military understanding between the German and Finnish forces prior to the outbreak of war. On June 9th, presumably on the basis of the reports received from Bucharest, President Ryti informed the Cabinet that he considered it possible that war might break out within two weeks. On the same day a partial mobilization was begun. Following reports of "...considerable preparations for war on the eastern frontier, and lively activity ...in the Gulf of Finland and on the Peninsula of Hanko", the whole Finnish field army was called up on June 17th.

The transit traffic of German troops through Finnish Lapland had assumed unforeseen proportions during

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64 Wuorinen, op. cit., p. 99.
65 Loc. cit.; Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 411.
66 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 411.
the late spring of 1941. If the Finns viewed this development with misgivings, they did not present any objections to it, and it is obvious why they should not do so. The presence of any number of German troops on Finnish territory, be it very small or large, would be a welcome excuse for Soviet forces to overrun Finland should a Soviet-German conflict break out. They would overrun Finland with or without such an excuse, but an excuse was, of course, to be preferred. Finland had given Germany transit rights in the hope that the presence of German forces would act as a deterrent to the Soviet Union, and in that respect the Transit Treaty had served its purpose well. With a Soviet-German conflict appearing to be imminent, and having no chance of remaining neutral anyway, why should the Finns object to an increase in the German forces along the Kemikirkenes route. They had no desire to share the fate of Belgium and Holland, and they were not very alarmed, therefore, when, on June 6th, approximately 1,500 German personnel, an increase of about 50 per cent over the previous contingent, were stationed in Finland to handle the growing numbers of German units being transported via the Finnish route. Then numerous German ships arrived in northern Finnish ports, and a fully equipped division disembarked and began marching north. At the same time an SS division stationed in Norway began marching south. After the Finnish mobilization had begun the demand on the inadequate railway communications became so heavy that serious holdups resulted. "In order to
introduce some order into the situation," Marshal Mannerheim came to an agreement with the Germans that they should become responsible for the provisioning of the Third Army Corps stationed in Lapland. On June 15th this corps was placed under the German Commander-in-Chief on the express understanding that it was not to be subject to German operative orders should such be given. Meanwhile, Minister Schnurre was on a special mission to Stockholm where he was exerting pressure on the Swedish Government to permit a German division to be moved from Norway to Finland by rail. This permission was granted on June 25th, but the ensuing transport turned out to be so extensive and last so long that the Swedes jokingly called it not a division but a multiplication.

At any rate, on June 22nd, the day when Germany attacked the Soviet Union, there were at least two fully equipped German divisions in northern Finland, and others were probably disembarking from the ships which had arrived within the last one or two weeks. It was inconceivable that the Finns should protest these movements under the circumstances. They knew what had happened to Yugoslavia, and since they had to choose sides they might as well keep

67 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 411.

on good terms with the only Great Power that could keep the Russians out of Finland. How the German troops came to be within their boundaries in such impressive numbers in June 1941 does not really matter too much. The version presented by Professor Wuorinen, supported by Marshal Mannerheim and almost all other Finnish sources is certainly more acceptable than the one implied by Professor Lundin, who prefers to suspect a sinister motive in most Finnish diplomatic and military activities during the 1940-41 period. Based on what he calls a "formidable array of evidence", Professor Lundin, obviously aware that his evidence is inconclusive, nevertheless implies that a full-scale military and political understanding existed between Finland and Germany long before June 1941, and that the events of that month all unfolded according to a joint prearranged plan.

Whatever the truth of the matter is, it may never be possible to prove it to the satisfaction of critical historians. Perhaps the second volume of General Heinrichs' biography of Marshal Mannerheim will shed some further light on it when it is completed, although it cannot be expected that his story will differ much from the testimony he gave at the trials in Helsinki.

In the evening of June 21st the Finnish authorities

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69 Wuorinen, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-105, gives the most complete outline of the German troop movements preceding the outbreak of war.

70 Lundin, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-112.

71 The first volume, *Mannerheimgestalten: Den vite generalen 1918-1919*, was published in Helsinki late in 1957.
were informed that Germany was about to commence hostilities against the Soviet Union the following morning. At 4:00 a.m. on June 22nd the Germans crossed into the Soviet Union all along the European demarcation line. No border-crossings took place from Finnish territory, however. Two hours later Hitler proclaimed his crusade against Bolshevism by a radio speech which involved Finland:

Side by side with their Finnish comrades stand the victorious fighters of Narvik on the shores of the Arctic. German divisions, commanded by the conqueror of Norway, together with the heroes of Finnish independence, led by their Marshal, guard Finnish soil.

Five minutes later the first Soviet bombs were dropped by planes flying in from bases in Estonia. At 7:55 a.m. Soviet batteries opened fire from Hanko. A Finnish ship was shelled in Petsamo, and gunfire was opened from the Soviet side of the border in the south. In a broadcast speech the same day Molotov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, declared that air raids and artillery shelling had taken place from Finnish territory. This accusation was later taken up by the allied propaganda, although painstaking Finnish investigations revealed that no German plane had taken off from a Finnish airport for

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73 Wuorinen, *op. cit.*, p. 100.
75 Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War, Documents and Materials, London, Hutchinson, 1946, vol. 1, p. 75.
the Soviet Union during the first days of the war. Not until the 26th did two German planes, returning from a raid undertaken from a base in East Prussia, land in Finland. 76

In spite of the confusion created by Hitler's announcement Finland, between the 22nd and the 25th, tried desperately to remain neutral. On the day of the German attack all Finnish legations abroad were informed that Finland was neutral and would remain so as long as possible. Germany was informed of this as well, and as a result, on a German radio broadcast on the 24th explaining the stand of the different countries in the war against Russia, Finland was not grouped with Germany's other co-belligerents. The British Foreign Office also regarded Finland as a neutral state. However, Finnish representations in Moscow had no effect, and the Russians cut the lines of communication on the 23rd. On the morning of the 25th Finland still maintained her position of neutrality, and Premier Rangell had prepared a statement to the Riksdag for that day along the same lines. However, that same morning witnessed such large-scale air attacks against Finland, accompanied by heavy artillery fire along the border, that all hopes of

76 Wuorinen, op. cit., p. 108. Dallinn, op. cit., pp. 378-379, accepts this Soviet allegation: "On June 23, without waiting for a formal declaration of war on the part of Finland, German bombers took off from Finnish territory and bombed the Kronstadt area. This was followed by infantry action on the 24th." It should be remembered, however, that Dallinn wrote in 1942, and that he had no access to the pertinent documents. His sources were chiefly newspaper reports, and, Russia being an ally of the 'West', such reports were not likely to favour Finland - let alone Germany.
staying neutral disappeared. When the Riksdag convened, the Premier stated that Finland, having been attacked, had begun to offer resistance and was, therefore, at war. There was nothing more Finland could do. Stalin had told the Finns in October 1939 that the Great Powers would not allow Finland to remain neutral, and he had been right. In the twenty months which had passed since the Soviet-Finnish negotiations preceding the Winter War Finland had truly come to realize that she was but a pawn in the ruthless game played by her Great Power neighbours. There was very little she could do about it. Having heard the Prime Minister's report, therefore, the Riksdag unanimously sanctioned the course of action followed by the Government.77 Once again, for the third time in twenty-three years and for the second time in a little more than fifteen months, Finland was at war with the Soviet Union.

77 Wuorinen, op. cit., p. 109; Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 413.
CHAPTER III

THE CONTINUATION WAR, JUNE 1941 - SEPTEMBER 1944

The news that they were at war again did not come as a surprise to many Finnish citizens. War is seldom good news to anyone, but to the Finns in June 1941 it was not entirely bad news either. It takes more than fifteen months to forget the kind of settlement forced upon Finland by the Soviet Union in March 1940, and the Finns had not forgotten. According to President Ryti's diary he had the following to say to the Cabinet on June 9th in connection with the increasing strain in German-Soviet relations:

If war breaks out between Russia and Germany it may be to the advantage of the whole world. Germany is the only state which at the present time can beat Russia or at least weaken it appreciably, and it would do no harm, even if Germany, too, were weakened in the game. But the greatest possible weakening of Russia is the condition of our deliverance.¹

¹ The Finnish-Soviet war between 1941-44 is now commonly referred to as the 'Continuation War'.

¹ Quoted in Lundin, Finland in the Second World War, pp. 111-112.
This sentiment was not at all limited to Finland, of course. From various motives a Soviet-German conflict was desired by many nations, not least by Great Britain. The Scandinavian peoples, all of whom had taken a personal interest in Finland's Winter War, and two of whom were at the time suffering under German occupation, greeted the new turn of events with grim satisfaction, seeing in it the beginning of the end for Germany, the most deserved weakening and perhaps destruction of Bolshevist Russia, and hope for the Finns. All nations opposing Germany in the war welcomed this new front as corresponding to their own best interests, because the condition of their deliverance was 'the greatest possible weakening' of Germany. Up until June 22, 1941, there had been no love lost between this camp of Allied nations and the Soviet Union. Their sympathy had been on the side of Finland, and they had nothing but contempt for the methods employed by the Soviet Union in dealing with Finland. They were the very nations who had expelled the Soviet Union from the League of Nations on those grounds. But the violent events of June 1941 drew a new line of demarcation between the nations of Europe, and Finland, by a brutal accident of history, which had been recognized by all up until then, suddenly found herself irrevocably on

2 Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill wrote: "That Germany should at this stage, and before clearing the Balkan scene, open another major war with Russia seemed to me too good to be true." The Grand Alliance, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1951, p. 354.

3 This was the definite impression of the author, who lived in Norway during the Second World War.
the wrong side of the line. In the evening of June 22nd, those Finns who had their radio receivers tuned in on the British Broadcasting Corporation heard this new demarcation line being drawn by Prime Minister Winston Churchill:

Any man or state who fights on against Nazidom will have our aid. Any man or state who marches with Hitler is our foe... That is our policy and that is our declaration.

Three days later Finland marched with Hitler, at least as far as the Allied nations were concerned. It was to little avail that President Ryti protested in his broadcast to the nation on June 26th that "The world must understand that Finland is fighting this war only against Russia; we are not parties in the big European struggle."

Yet, as has been stated above, the outbreak of war was not entirely bad news to the Finns. In the words of President Ryti in his broadcast on June 26th, "...after all that has occurred, who would expect us to go into mourning if M. Molotov, and with him the circles responsible for Russia's policy, now have fallen victims to their own policy, which has been the policy of scavengers?" Indeed, there was no feeling of mourning in Finland on the morning of the Continuation War. The only exceptions, perhaps,

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would have to be sought among those whose political leanings were towards the extreme left, including such persons as the writer Olavi Paavolainen, whose diary Professor Lundin quotes at length as proof that at least a minority of Finland's population kept its head cool. The rest of the population was, to a greater or lesser degree, caught up in the excitement of the new war and the prospect that Finland might now, after all, obtain the justice which had been denied her by the Soviet Union. In a sense, therefore, those who claim that Finland, in entering the war against her eastern neighbour, was motivated by a feeling of revenge will find a wealth of material to support their contention. The Allied propaganda machine, primarily in the Soviet Union and in Great Britain, certainly made good use of that theme. The activities of the Lapua and the Akademic Karelia Society during the 1930's were also recalled and used in the anti-Finnish propaganda. The Akademic Karelia Society, an ultra-nationalistic student movement at Helsinki University, had nurtured the dream of a Greater Finland which would include all of Karelia and the Kola Peninsula, and some elements within the movement even dreamed of a day when Finland's eastern boundary would be the Ural Mountains. However, this movement, although strong among the students, commanded no following among responsible Finnish authorities.

6 Lundin, *op. cit.*, pp. 127, 130, 131, 132, 139, etc.
Even among the latter group, however, a desire to see East Karelia once again returned to Finland was not entirely foreign. The Soviet Union, during the 1939 negotiations, had even offered to give this region to Finland in exchange for the Karelian Isthmus, a proposal which the Finns could not possibly accept. Once the Continuation War was a reality, all these aspirations were naturally revived. Officially, Finland's war aims were strictly to regain the territory lost in the Winter War and to take up defensive positions along the old border. Where the old border did not offer suitable conditions for a strong defence, the Finnish forces were to seek such positions on Soviet territory, but the war was not to be one of conquest. In the excitement of the early weeks of the war the strong Finnish sentiments with respect to East Karelia were not to be suppressed, however. On July 7th, Marshal Mannerheim proclaimed this goal for his army:

We promise the Karelians that our sword will not rest until Karelia has been liberated. The provinces of Viena and Aunus have waited twenty-three years for the fulfillment of this promise, and since the winter campaign of 1939-40 Karelia has waited for the dawn of the day that is to bring her freedom.7

It was a rather bombastic Order of the Day, one which was eminently well suited to raise the morale of the troops, but also one which caused embarrassment to the Finnish

7 Lundin, _op. cit._, p. 127.
political leadership. Mannerheim does not mention this Order of the Day in his memoirs, which is one of the counts on which Professor Lundin pronounces him something less than a "truthful man". Whatever the motive for the Order of the Day of July 7th may have been, Mannerheim does not say. He says, rather, that the object of the occupation of East Karelia was "...to prevent the enemy from making use of his preparations there to bring the war on to Finnish territory." There can be no doubt that this contention is a valid one from a strategic point of view, and the military brilliance of Marshal Mannerheim has never been questioned. That the occupation served its purpose in this respect is also well known. To make bombastic proclamations for the benefit of the uninformed masses was certainly not a practice of which the Finnish military leadership could claim a monopoly. It is common practice in any war, and Allied Powers employed it whenever they found it advantageous in both world wars. It should be kept in mind, however, that the Finns have a most highly developed sense of justice, and that to them the Continuation War represented the correction of the most flagrant injustice suffered by them at the hands of the Soviet Union a little

8 Lundin, *op. cit.*, p. 255 and *passim*.


10 The most commonly known example of this is, perhaps, the fact that Finland, after all other nations defaulted, continued to pay her World War I debt to the United States, even during World War II.
more than a year before. Under the circumstances it is
certainly understandable, and even excusable, that the
prospect of regaining the territory stolen from then and
seeing the perennial threat from the east destroyed should
cause some initial elation and ill considered statements
before more sober thoughts could emerge. In spite of what
some writers claim, this elation was generally shared by
Finland's population in the early months of the Continuation
War.\footnote{11 Carl Olof Frietsch, formerly a member of the Riksdag
for the Swedish People's Party and whose book \textit{Finlands
"odes"r 1939-1943} is one of the principal sources used by
Professor Lundin, is praised by Lundin as "deeply concerned
with the values of liberal Western civilization" (the
highest praise Lundin knows of) and as the foremost example
of those who were not carried away by the initial elation
about the prospect of restoring the 1939 frontier and
gaining East Karelia. Frietsch, one of the only two of
all Lundin's sources characterized as being of truly "great
stature", had this to say when he spoke at Porvoo (east of
Helsinki) on November 11, 1941, five months after the war
started: "When our heroic army - to which our thoughts
always go - fights over there in the dark of the wild
Karelian forests, it does so in order to secure for our
country a frontier which reflects more fully than any
frontier we have ever had the demand for strategic security.
We can but sincerely hope that the idea of a more secure
existence behind a sounder and more just eastern frontier
will prove correct." Quoted in Torsten G. Aminoff,
"Opinionerna under forts"attningskriget. Ett utkast," \textit{Appell},
vol. 13, no. 28 (September 5, 1957), p. 8. There is no
indication in Frietsch's book that he ever held such views.
Apparently he must have fallen for the sin of convenient
forgetfulness of which Professor Lundin accuses all other
memoir writers from Generals Erfurth and Rendulic to Manner-
heim and Vaino Tanner. It is regrettable that Lundin has
accepted the version of the role of the 'peace opposition'
so capably, but not entirely truthfully, presented by
Frietsch. By accepting the testimony of Frietsch as the
truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, Professor
Lundin has given an inverted picture of Finland's position}
particularly after the battle of Stalingrad, and even then there were no basic differences in outlook between the 'peace opposition' and the responsible political and military leadership. They differed only on the all-important question of timing. While the 'peace opposition', not faced with the responsibility of making decisions, irresponsibly demanded that Finland quit the war regardless of the consequences, the authorities had to take the existing circumstances into full consideration and await the moment when a departure from the war could be effected in a way which gave Finland a reasonable chance to retain her independence.

However, at the outbreak of the Continuation War the Finns were united in support of the government. On the Finnish sector the war was going well. While the German troops attacking from Norway over Petsamo towards the Murmansk railway were stalled and held by the Russians for the duration of the war, the Finnish forces in the south, having been regrouped for an offensive, enjoyed a series of spectacular successes. Ignoring the repeatedly expressed desire of Germany that the Finns march on Leningrad, the

Finns commenced operations on July 10th in the direction of the old border northeast of Lake Ladoga. Eleven days later they stood on the 1939 border, having reoccupied the town of Salmi. The city of Sortavala fell to them on August 16th. Meanwhile, on July 31st, another attack was commenced on the northern section of the Karelian Isthmus, culminating in the occupation of Käkisalmi on August 21st.

The main operations on the Isthmus got under way between August 20th and 22nd with such force that it assumed the character of a pursuit rather than a battle. The railway connection between Viipuri and Leningrad was cut on the 25th, leaving the three Russian divisions in this area in a surrounded pocket which was cleaned up within a week.

On the 29th, the Finnish flag again flew over the ancient castle in Viipuri, marking the reconquest of the capital of Karelia. Two days later the triumphant Finnish Army reached the 1939 frontier at Mainila, the spot where the Soviet Union had arranged the infamous incident which started the Winter War. The immediate war aims of Finland had been fulfilled. In less than eight weeks her armed forces had regained all the territory lost by the Peace of Moscow with the exception of Hanko, which the Russians evacuated on December 3rd, and the Petsamo area, which had been recovered by German arms.\(^{12}\)

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12 For an account of these operations, see Mannerheim, *op. cit.*, pp. 415-427.
For the time being the advance was halted as the political and military authorities debated whether or not the Finnish Army should cross the old frontier into Soviet territory. The question was an important one. Finland's claim that she was waging a separate war and was not a party in the struggle between the Great Powers was still appreciated to some extent among the Western Allies, and there was considerable reluctance about undertaking operations which might appear to indicate the abandonment of this claim and the beginning of a war of aggression and conquest. On the other hand there was the constant pressure from the Germans that Finland coordinate her military operations with the grand German strategy. Since Finland, even at this early stage, was rapidly becoming economically dependent upon Germany, such pressure was very difficult to resist. Nevertheless, when in late August Mannerheim received a letter from Field Marshal Keitel requesting that his army attack Leningrad simultaneously with a German attack from the south and east, he replied in the negative after consultation with President Ryti. A request that the Finnish offensive east of Lake Ladoga should be extended across the Svir River was also rejected. A second urging

13 Mannerheim, op. cit., pp. 426-427. Mannerheim asserts that "...from the beginning I had informed the President of the Republic and the government that under no circumstances would I lead an offensive against the great city on the Neva." Ibid., p. 416.
by Keitel a few days later met with the same response, and on September 4th Keitel dispatched his right-hand man, General Jodl, to Mannerheim's Headquarters to convince the Finnish Commander-in-Chief of the necessity of Finnish participation in the assault on Leningrad. "My attitude had not changed," says Mannerheim, "and General Jodl, who had evidently been given firm orders, finally exclaimed: 'Can't you then do anything to show yourself co-operative?'" 14 Mannerheim explains his personal determination not to take part in an attack against Leningrad in the following terms:

It was because of political reasons, which in my opinion outweighed military ones, that I opposed our participation in an attack on Leningrad. In their desire to violate Finnish territory, the usual argument of the Russians was that an independent Finland constituted a threat to the second capital of the Soviet Union. It would therefore be better not to place a weapon in the hands of our adversaries for use in a dispute which would not end with the war. 15

It may also be noted that Mannerheim had issued a categorical prohibition to the Finnish Air Force of flights over Leningrad, a rule which remained in force throughout the war. 16

There were probably other reasons why Finland was reluctant to become as irrevocably involved in the German-Soviet war as an attack by her forces against Leningrad.

14 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 427.
15 Ibid., p. 428.
16 Ibid., p. 413.
would entail. The Finnish political and military leadership could not be completely certain that Germany was going to win the war, and consequently their plans would have to consider what would be the consequences of their military actions should Finland be on the wrong side of the table when peace came to be made. Accordingly there could not be any serious contradictions between her war measures and her claim to fighting a separate war. However, although a Finnish thrust against Leningrad could not be reconciled with Finland's official war aims, an advance into East Karelia would seem logical from a strategic point of view. Except on the Karelian Isthmus, the 1939 border provided no natural line of defence for Finland. Such a line would have to be sought on the isthmus separating Lake Ladoga and Lake Onega and in similarly advantageous terrain north of Lake Onega. The Germans had requested that the Finnish Army advance to the Svir River, and it seemed possible to the Finns that this request could be agreed to to a limited extent without compromising Finland's position too much in the eyes of the Allied Powers. It was Mannerheim's opinion that in East Karelia "...we neither threatened Leningrad, nor...the Murmansk railway." 17

17 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 428. General Erfurth, the German liaison officer at Mannerheim's Headquarters, claims that the Germans had requested that the Finns support the German attack on Leningrad by directing their main attack north of Ladoga against Lodeinoe Pole on the Svir, while the Germans would thrust northward from their positions southeast of Leningrad and join with the Finns on the Svir
On August 27th, the Finnish Army received orders to continue its eastward march through East Karelia in the direction of the Svir River and the city of Petrozavodsk, capital of the Karelian Soviet Socialist Republic. Advanced units reached the Svir as early as September 7th, and the great railway bridge over the river was taken the next day, cutting the Leningrad-Murmansk railway connection. Via a newly built loop-line along the White Sea from Belomorsk to Obozerskaya on the Arkhangelsk-Vologda line, Murmansk still had railway connection with unoccupied Soviet territory, however, and Murmansk remained a vital terminus for Allied convoys to the end of the war. A few days later the Finnish Army reached Voznesene, where the Svir flows out of Lake Onega. Petrozavodsk fell on October 1st after two weeks of severe fighting, and six days later Marshal Mannerheim issued orders that the offensive should be halted as soon as Medvezhegorsk at the northern tip of Lake Onega had been captured.18 On November 6th, the army corps on the Karelian Isthmus was ordered to produce plans for a defensive line running from Vammelsuu on the Gulf of Finland to Taipale on Lake Ladoga. Five days later the forces between Lake Ladoga and Lake Onega were given

in a surrounding operation. The Germans would then starve Leningrad into surrender. The Finnish advance in East Karelia was presumably in accordance with these plans. At his post-war trial, President Ryti presented an explanation of this operation which fully supports Mannerheim's version, however. Lundin, op. cit., pp. 150-151.

18 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 433. The East Karelian campaign is described in ibid., pp. 430-434.
similar orders, and the troops north of Lake Ladoga received theirs in the beginning of 1942. On December 6th, Finland's Day of Independence, Mannerheim's Order of the Day stated:

"Our operations having attained Karhumäki and the Maanselka station, I order that the offensive operation be ended and defensive measures initiated."

Finland had attained her strategic objectives, and, with minor exceptions, the front held by her forces remained static from then on until the great Russian counter-attacks in the early summer of 1944.

In spite of the obvious moderation shown by Finland in the military prosecution of the war, difficulties soon developed with the Allied Powers, particularly with Great Britain. British public opinion, so favourable to Finland during the Winter War and still favourable at the outbreak of the Continuation War, was changing as a result of Great Britain's sudden liaison with the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union's war was now Great Britain's war, and

19 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 440.

20 Wuorinen, Finland and World War II, p. 126. 'Maanselka' should be 'Maaselkä', a railway station on the Leningrad-Murmansk line south of Lake Seg. The Maaselkä Isthmus separates Lake Seg and Lake Onega.

21 At the Teheran Conference in December 1943, Prime Minister Churchill said to Stalin "...that in the days of the Russo-Finnish War I had been sympathetic to Finland, but I had turned against her when she came into the war against the Soviets." He also talked about "the harm the Finns did to Russia by their improper attack". Winston S. Churchill, Closing the Ring, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1951, p. 398.
MAXIMUM ADVANCE BY FINNISH ARMY INTO SOVIET TERRITORY DURING WORLD WAR II

- Maximum advance
- Murmansk railway
- Border of 1939
- Border of 1940
- Arctic highway used by German forces in transit
Finland was the former's enemy. The requirements of cementing the new alliance superseded the impractical demands of traditional British sympathies and moral principles. Guilty or innocent, Finland was on the wrong side. The Soviet Union, having drawn Finland into the war by its attack on June 25th, soon began to put pressure on Great Britain to sever relations with Finland. Germany also began to put pressure on Finland, demanding that British-Finnish relations be 'clarified' and that British consular representation in Finland be ended.22 Following a personal letter from Hitler to President Ryti on July 19th, this pressure increased, and the intelligence activities of British representatives in Finland did not improve the situation. For several reasons, therefore Foreign Minister Rolf Witting was instructed by the government to suggest to the British Minister in Helsinki the possibility of considerably reducing or closing the commercial and military sections of his Legation. Overstepping his authority, the Foreign Minister on July 28th presented to the British Minister a memorandum declaring that in view of existing circumstances"regular diplomatic relations between the two countries can scarcely be maintained without difficulty." As a "logical consequence of the course of events", Finland would therefore discontinue the functions of her Legation.

22 Wuorinen, op. cit., p. 130.
in London, and the British Government was invited to take similar measures with regard to its Legation in Helsinki.23

Meanwhile the Soviet Union and Great Britain had enough to do smoothing over ill-feelings of long standing and working out the various aspects of their unexpected alliance. An initial 'Agreement between the Governments of the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain for Joint Action in the War Against Germany' was signed by Ambassador Sir Stafford Cripps and Molotov in Moscow on July 12th.24 It was followed by a busy period of Soviet diplomatic activity, including the signing of similar agreements with Czechoslovakia on July 18th and Poland on July 30th, the restoration of diplomatic relations with Norway on August 5th and Belgium on August 7th, a military agreement with Poland on August 14th, visits to Stalin on July 30th by Harry Hopkins, President Roosevelt's personal representative, and on August 15th by Laurence Steinhhardt, the American Ambassador. A further agreement was also concluded with Great Britain on August 16th for exchange of commodities, credit and clearing.25 Having launched the process of warming up to each other, the Soviet

23 Wuorinen, op. cit., pp. 130-132. Two days later the London Daily Herald wrote that Great Britain would have broken off relations with Finland herself and at an earlier date had her Legation in Helsinki not served as an exceptionally valuable observation post. Ibid., p. 132.

24 Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War, vol. 1, pp. 77-78.

25 Ibid., pp. 79-88.
Union raised the question of breaking off relations with Finland. In an interview with Prime Minister Churchill on September 4th, Ambassador Ivan Maisky made the first move in the matter and was assured that Great Britain would be prepared to make it plain to the Finns that she would declare war upon them if they advanced beyond their '1918 frontiers'. Mr. Churchill gave this assertion in spite of the fact that he realized how necessary East Karelia was for the security of the Finns; "...the history of the previous two years lent strength to their view," he admits. However, he also knew that "...this was a subject on which the Russians felt strongly." That same evening Churchill repeated his assertion in a message to Stalin:

We are willing to put any pressure upon Finland in our power, including immediate notification that we will declare war upon her should she continue beyond the old frontiers. We are asking the United States to take all possible steps to influence Finland.

On September 28th, the Norwegian Minister in Helsinki delivered to the Finnish Government a British note dated September 22nd. The note warned Finland that if she continued the advance into "purely Russian" territory, Great Britain would be forced to consider her as "...an open

27 Ibid., p. 526.
28 Ibid., p. 460.
enemy, not only while the war lasts, but also when the peace is made." Finland was requested to end her war against the Soviet Union and withdraw her forces behind the 1939 frontier as a first condition for the restoration of normal diplomatic relations. A neutral observer, the Stockholm newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, commented on this note in its issue of October 8th:

If the British demands were acceded to, the Finnish armed forces, after having thrown their adversaries back to the east of it, would have to withdraw to a frontier which was in 1939 violated by the Soviet Army. From a political point of view this could be conceived under certain conditions, but strategically and militarily it is absolutely impossible, and in a situation such as the one in which Finland finds herself strategic considerations doubtless take precedence over political ones, even if the two should not be in complete accord.

In her rejection of the British note, published on October 8th, Finland stressed this very same point: "An effective defense, to which no one can deny Finland's right, is possible only by establishing the defense in those very areas." Churchill, feeling that a declaration of war was not the correct way of dealing with the situation and hoping that Finland might be agreeable to "fair and reasonable peace terms", wrote Stalin on November 4th, asking him to reconsider "whether it is really good business" that Great Britain

30 Quoted in Mannerheim, *op. cit.*, p. 432.
31 Wuorinen, *op. cit.*, p. 133.
should take such a drastic step. Stalin was adamant. In his reply, dated November 8th, he declared that "...an intolerable situation has been created in the question of the declaration of war by Great Britain on Finland...."

He complained of the wide publicity the matter had received in the press and implied that the negative British attitude demonstrated a lack of unity between the two allies. When Churchill demonstratively failed to answer Stalin's ill-tempered letter, Stalin presented his apology through Ambassador Maisky in London. He reiterated his stand with regard to Finland, however, and again in a letter to Churchill of November 23rd. "As a result of Stalin's pressing appeal," Churchill says, the British Government decided to go ahead with arrangements to present an ultimatum to Finland. That this decision was taken with great reluctance is shown by the memorandum Churchill sent to his Foreign Secretary, Mr. Anthony Eden, on the 29th:

Finland and Company. I don't want to be pinched for time if there is a chance of Finland pulling out of the big war.... Procedure therefore should be as follows. If we have not heard by the 5th that the Finns are not going to pull out, or have heard that they are contumacious, we then telegraph to Stalin saying that "if he still wishes it" we will declare war forthwith. The Rumanian and Hungarian declarations will follow, also in accordance with whatever he may desire.

33 Ibid., p. 529.
34 Ibid., pp. 530-532.
This, it might be kept in mind, was written four days after Finland had formally joined the Anti-Comintern Pact, her first political agreement with Germany, which indicates that Great Britain was viewing this event realistically and not as a sign of Finnish political subordination to Germany. The existence of this pact had not appeared to be a stumbling block when the Soviet Union signed the Non-Aggression Pact with Germany in August 1939. 36

Churchill, seeking another way out of his dilemma, dispatched through the American Minister in Helsinki a personal message to Mannerheim which was received on December 1st. He expressed his deep grief "...at what I see coming, namely, that we shall be forced in a few days, out of loyalty to our ally Russia, to declare war upon Finland," and he implored Mannerheim to "...simply leave off fighting and cease military operations, for which the severe winter affords every reason, and make a de facto exit from the war." 37 The British ultimatum had been received on November 28th. It did not demand the withdrawal of the Finnish Army to the 1939 frontier, but it did request the cessation of military operations before December 5th. It also placed Finland in a most tragic position in as much as her operations were actually halted on December 6th,

36 On Finland's reasons for joining the Anti-Comintern Pact and official Finnish statements in that connection, see Wuorinen, op. cit., pp. 118-119.

but for obvious reasons she was prevented from divulging this to Prime Minister Churchill. As Mannerheim points out, to reveal to the Soviet Union's ally that Finland intended to cease operations would have enabled the Red Army to release troops for new offensives and probably have brought drastic German counter-measures. Accordingly the Finnish Government was unable to give a wholly satisfactory answer to the British ultimatum, and on December 6th, simultaneously with the news of the capture of Medvezhegorsk, and in the midst of the Independence Day celebrations, the announcement was made that Great Britain had declared war upon Finland. Stalin had achieved another of his objectives; Finland was now to be regarded as an ally of Germany in the conflict between the Great Powers. The view expressed by the Soviet Commissariat for Foreign Affairs in a statement issued on November 11th was now to be the basis of Allied policy towards Finland:

The present Finnish rulers are helping the bloody Hitler to carry on a war of conquest against the peoples of Europe and the U.S.S.R. Carrying on this war of conquest against the U.S.S.R., they are helping the Hitlerite gang to rivet the Hitlerite tyranny on the peoples of Europe. There will be nothing surprising in the peoples of Europe and the U.S.S.R. treating these gentry just as they intend to treat the clique of Hitler. It was a bitter blow to the Finns, who saw in it

39 Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War, vol. 1, p. 108.
a further sign "...that morality no longer had any meaning in high politics," to quote the reaction of Mannerheim. 40 This reaction was not without foundation, although the fact that a Great Power, faced with a struggle for its existence, compromises on its principles of morality should not have been surprising to the Finns. During the second half of 1941, Great Britain still feared that the Soviet Union might make peace with Germany, and it seemed to be one of the prerequisites of victory that the Anglo-Soviet alliance be firmly established. If this involved a break with Finland, the break would have to be effected in spite of any moral qualms. To the British the break had a distinct advantage, therefore, and the failure of Finland to comply with the 'reasonable' demand of the British Government had even made it appear that she preferred Berlin to London. This, in turn, made Finland a fair target for British propaganda and allowed it to echo the distortions fabricated in the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs in Moscow. To the United States, who found herself at war the very next morning as Japanese planes bombed Pearl Harbor, the Anglo-Finnish break "...lowered one of the hurdles confronting the Administration program of aiding the Soviet Union." 41 Both these Powers, however, were aware of the

40 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 438.

fact that Finland had had no real choice in the matter, and it should have been particularly clear to the British. In 1939 they had witnessed the break-down of the Anglo-French negotiations for an alliance with the Soviet Union over the refusal of Rumania and Poland to allow the transit of Russian troops. The Poles had declared that "With the Germans we risk losing our liberty; with the Russians our soul." The history of Finland, both before and after 1917, recorded sufficient evidence to confirm the validity of this contention.

The British declaration of war was a triumph for the Soviet Union, but the Soviet leaders were not yet satisfied. Arriving in Moscow in the middle of December for discussions with Stalin and Molotov, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden was confronted with demands that Great Britain, as a prerequisite for an expansion of the agreement of July 12th, recognize the borders of the Soviet Union as they had been established subsequent to the German-Soviet secret agreement of August 1939. Stalin and Molotov wanted Eden to sign a secret treaty which would confirm the notorious Secret Protocol in its fullest implications. This, of course, would include recognition of the 1940 frontier with Finland and the inclusion of Finland in a Soviet sphere of interest. Informed of the demands, Prime Minister

Churchill "reacted violently", as demonstrates a telegram of December 20th:

Stalin's demand about Finland, Baltic States and Rumania are directly contrary to the first, second, and third articles of the Atlantic Charter, to which Stalin has subscribed. There can be no question whatever of our making such an agreement, secret or public, direct or implied....

The demand was shelved for the time being, but not for long. Within three months the British position on this issue was already in the process of crumbling, as the physical pressures of the war again overcame the principles of morality. On March 7th, 1942, Churchill apologetically wrote President F. D. Roosevelt that "The increasing gravity of the war has led me to feel that the principles of the Atlantic Charter ought not to be construed so as to deny Russia the frontiers she occupied when Germany attacked her." On May 20th, Molotov arrived in London for further talks regarding an Anglo-Soviet treaty and at once repeated the demands of the previous December. During the last few months American pressure had been brought to bear upon the Soviet Union, however, and when, after two days of futile negotiations, Eden suggested a general and public treaty of alliance for twenty years, Molotov agreed to ask Stalin for further instructions. On the 24th, he received per-

mission to negotiate on the basis of Eden's suggestion, and the Treaty of Alliance, without any territorial provisions, was signed on the 26th. As a concession to the Soviet Union in return for her cooperation in this matter, the United States cancelled her consular representation in Finland in July.\(^45\)

It is impossible within the limited scope of this work to discuss in detail the military activities of Finland from the time she reached her strategic goals until the day of her surrender to the Soviet Union. These actions had little or no bearing on the development of Finnish-Soviet relations from 1942 to the present day. It is important, however, to discuss in some detail the diplomatic activities which eventually resulted in the conclusion of an armistice between Finland and her Anglo-Soviet adversaries in September 1944. At the mercy of the Soviet Union during the 1940-41 period of uneasy peace, Finland had been drawn closer to Germany. By the provocation of the Soviet Union, she had become involved in the war between the Soviet Union and Germany. Now at the mercy of Germany, getting out of the war was an extremely difficult and delicate problem. While the Continuation War was still in its early stages, a number of rumours were circulated to the effect that the

\(^{45}\) Hull, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 1177. For accounts of the Soviet demands and the developments prior to the agreement of May 26th, see ibid., pp. 1166-1167 and 1171-1173; Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, pp. 332-336. Text of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of Alliance is printed in Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War, pp. 158-160.
Soviet Union was willing to conclude peace with Finland on the basis of the 1939 borders. None of these rumours could be substantiated, however. The only one which appeared to have something to it was a feeler presented through the American Under Secretary of State, Sumner Welles, to the Finnish Minister in Washington on August 18, 1941. Minister Mjalmar Procopé was informed that the Soviet Government might be willing to discuss a new peace treaty with Finland which would include Soviet territorial concessions. The indefinite nature of the information received was such that the Finnish Government was unable to place trust in the authenticity of the feeler. A communication issued in Moscow on September 4th indicated that any initiative with respect to peace negotiations would have to come from Finland, as she alone was in need of peace. A report from the Kuibyshev correspondent of The New York Times on November 12th quoted Litvinov and A. Losovsky, the Soviet press chief, as saying that no action had been initiated by the Soviet Union for a separate peace with Finland. After the Finnish Government had formally rejected the feeler presented by Mr. Welles, the Soviet Government hastened to declare that the Under Secretary of State had

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47 Wuorinen, op. cit., p. 146.
48 Ibid., p. 148.
acted "on entirely correct assumptions",49 and subsequently Soviet leaders were fond of telling foreign correspondents how, in the early fall of 1941, they had been most willing to give Finland back not only all the territory she had lost in 1940, but also a part of East Karelia.50 That this display of generosity was nothing but free advertising, suitable for American consumption, is rather obvious, however, judging from past performance and the relentless demands on Finland pressed by the Soviet Union in conferences with her allies all through the war. The 'peace feeler' communicated through the Swedish Foreign Minister on December 24th was hardly any more genuine than its predecessor, particularly when viewed in the light of the demands presented to Mr. Eden by Stalin and Molotov only a few days previously.51

There can be no doubt that the responsible Finnish authorities wanted peace, provided they could obtain it on just terms and without getting involved in hostilities with the Germans, which would, as a matter of course, be suicidal. As long as the Allied Powers were unable to give Finland guarantees against Germany, the conclusion of a separate peace was an absolute impossibility. Also in-

49 Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War, vol. 1, p. 108.

50 Wuorinen, op. cit., pp. 148-149.

51 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 443.
fluencing the Finnish political and military leadership was the already budding realization that Germany might not win the war. Mannerheim had begun to doubt the ability of Germany to carry the war against the Soviet Union to a successful conclusion as early as late 1941, and he informed President Ryti of this in January 1942. But the existing situation ruled out any hopes of disengaging Finland from the war at that time, and, furthermore, the year 1942 was remarkably quiet on the diplomatic front as far as Finnish-Soviet peace feelers were concerned. The only event worthy of note occurred at the end of October, when it was learned in Helsinki that Yartsev, then posted to Stockholm, had indicated that the Soviet Union might be willing to discuss peace on the basis of the 1939 frontier. There could be no bargaining about Hanko, however, and Ryti and Tanner would have to be removed before talks could begin. As received in Helsinki, the report seemed unreliable in every respect and was never seriously considered. Furthermore, as a result of informal inquiries in Berlin it was found that peace talks of any kind with the Soviet Union were likely to lead to serious consequences for Finland.

The surrender at Stalingrad on February 3, 1943, of Field Marshal Paulus and his army was the catastrophe which for the first time convinced the Finnish public that

52 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 433.
53 Wuorinen, op. cit., pp. 149-150.
peace was not only desirable but necessary. The following day President Ryti, Prime Minister Rangell, Foreign Minister Witting, Defence Minister Walden and Supply Minister Tanner called on Marshal Mannerheim at Headquarters to obtain his view on the military situation. The Commander-in-Chief's review was not encouraging. It was agreed that a turning-point in the war had been reached, and that Finland must get out of the war as soon as a possibility presented itself. How this should be achieved they did not know, but they felt that it would have to be attempted through an agreement with Germany in order to avoid a wholesale destruction of the country by German troops. The conquered territory should be held for the time being as a trump card which could be used in negotiations with the Russians. Six days later the Riksdag met in secret session to hear a review of the military and political situation by Colonel Paasonen, the Head of the Intelligence Department at Headquarters. The commotion caused by this frank and complete report, which concluded by warning the members that they must prepare themselves for another Peace of Moscow, was such that it was found necessary to repeat the review two days later, this time by the Chief of the General Staff, General Heinrichs. The public was beginning to wake up


to the fact that Finland was once more fighting a losing battle, and the 'peace opposition' began to assume proportions. On February 15th, the executive committee of the Social Democratic party adopted a resolution reflecting the new mood:

Finland's present war, a continuation of the Winter War, is a defensive war, into which our people were forced against their will. Its purpose is solely to safeguard the freedom and independence of our country. It is, therefore, a separate war; we have no part in the war between the great Powers and are not fighting for the objectives of either group of great Powers. The fact that Finland and Germany are fighting the same enemy, Russia, does not alter this fact. Finland is, therefore, free to decide on withdrawing from the war whenever a favorable moment appears and her freedom and independence are guaranteed.

This expressed the feelings of Finland's leaders as well as the feelings of the 'peace opposition'. However, the crux of the matter was the definition of what constituted a favourable moment.

On March 5th, Rangell's government was succeeded by that of Professor Edwin Linkomies. Perhaps because of his Scottish name and his good connections in Great Britain, Dr. Henrik Ramsay became Foreign Minister. Two weeks after the new government took office, it received a memorandum from the American Chargé d'Affaires in Helsinki, Mr. McClintock, offering the good offices of the United States

if Finland wished to explore the possibilities of disengaging herself from the war. It was stressed that the offer would probably not be repeated. The Government's Foreign Affairs Committee, in discussing the American offer, came to the conclusion that acceptance would in effect mean that relations with Germany would be broken, leaving Finland at the mercy of both Germany and the Soviet Union without any chance of being aided by the United States. German approval, therefore, should be obtained before replying to the American memorandum. Accordingly, Foreign Minister Ramsay flew to Berlin and saw Ribbentrop on the 26th. The German Foreign Minister was furious and refused to listen to Dr. Ramsay. He stated that Germany would draw "extreme conclusions" should Finland accept the American offer and demanded that it be rejected. Instead, Finland should sign a treaty with Germany to the effect that neither party would make separate peace. After having been informed by Mr. McClintock that he was not prepared to give any details regarding the Soviet peace terms, and that the United States could not give Finland any guarantees, the Finnish Government drafted and forwarded a reply rejecting the American offer.57

It has been implied that Dr. Ramsay's trip to Berlin to consult his German colleague ridiculed any claims

that Finland was fighting her own war.\textsuperscript{58} The Foreign Affairs Committee's reason for sending him there was not without validity, however. There can be no doubt that German intelligence would learn about the American contact sooner or later anyway, and such a discovery would not bring pleasant consequences for Finland. Finland was fighting her own war, but she was also entirely dependent upon Germany for her supplies of food. Until somebody else could undertake to guarantee Finland against the military might of Germany and supply the necessary goods, Finland would be unable to break with Germany. Germany utilized this trump card in pressing the demand made by Ribbentrop for a political treaty. The German Minister visited Dr. Ramsay almost daily to press the matter. The government refused to yield on this vital point, however, in spite of the interruption of food deliveries from Germany. The disastrous German defeat in Tunisia soon gave Berlin other things to worry about than a treaty with Finland, and the matter was dropped with no other reprisals than a reduction in the food shipments.\textsuperscript{59}

There was another incident which may have influenced the Finnish Government in its decision that the American offer of establishing contact with the Soviet


\textsuperscript{59} Mannerheim, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 464-466; Lundin, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 186-188; Wuorinen, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 154-155.
Government was not very safe to accept. On March 10th, five days after Linkomies' government took office and ten days before the contact with Mr. McClintock, the London Times had editorially given vent to opinions which were well suited to fill Finnish hearts with cold apprehension. Professing that there could be no security in Western Europe unless there was also security in Eastern Europe, and that security in Eastern Europe was unattainable "...unless it is buttressed by the military power of Russia," the Times editorial proclaimed:

Russia will, at the moment of a victory so largely due to her outstanding effort, enjoy the same right as her Allies to judge for herself of the conditions which she deems necessary for the security of her frontiers.60

In other words, the Times, a newspaper close to the government of Great Britain, was indicating that in its opinion the British would regard as justifiable a Soviet claim to a free hand in the post-war settlement of her frontier. It could not be expected that Finland would place her fate unquestioningly in the hands of the Soviet Union under the circumstances without firm guarantees from the British Government, and no such guarantees were offered. On the contrary, indications were that Great Britain had abandoned Finland into the Soviet sphere of interest.

The next indirect contact with the Soviet Government occurred in July, when the Belgian Minister in Stockholm confided that he had been informed by a Soviet official that the Soviet Government was prepared to negotiate a peace settlement with Finland, provided that Finland state her views in writing to the Soviet Union. Finland replied within a week, not in writing but orally to the Belgian Minister, that she was willing to negotiate on the basis of the proposals made by Stalin and Molotov in 1939, involving the cession by Finland of the Gulf of Finland islands and territory on the Karelian Isthmus, to be compensated for with territory in East Karelia. Remembering the breach of faith on the part of the Soviet Union in failing to keep secret the 1939 negotiations, Finland was not prepared to commit her proposals to paper, of course. In due course she was informed by the Belgian Minister that the Soviet contact man had found the reply unsatisfactory and refused to transmit it to Moscow.  

Beginning in November, 1943, a regular peace offensive was opened up by the Soviet Government. On the 20th of that month, Madame Kollontay, through Mr. Boheman in the Swedish Foreign Office, let the Finns know that they were welcome to send a representative to Moscow to discuss peace. First they would have to submit a statement of

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61 Wuorinen, op. cit., p. 156; Lundin, op. cit., p. 191; Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 467; Mazour, op. cit., p. 160.
their "observations and proposals", however, and if Moscow found them agreeable, "the peace itself can be worked out later." Madame Kollontay added that "Moscow has no intention of making Finland a province or of violating Finnish independence, unless forced to do so by future Finnish policy." Since this approach seemed the most promising one to date, the Government's Committee on Foreign Affairs decided to do what was possible to find out whether it could be developed to the stage of official discussions. When Finland reported to Madame Kollontay, through Mr. Boheman, that she thought the 1939 frontier, with possible adjustments, should be the basis of negotiations, Madame Kollontay replied that in any case the Moscow Peace of 1940 would be the basis and that "other matters" could be discussed later. The conversations came to an end in early January, 1944, after a few more fruitless exchanges. What those "other matters" were was revealed confidentially by Stalin at the Teheran Conference of the 'Big Three' on December 1st. Stalin declared that he could not diverge from the following six conditions:

"(1) Restoration of the 1940 treaty. (2) Hangö or Petsamo. (Here he added that Hangö was leased to Soviet Union, but he would propose to take Petsamo.) (3) Compensation in kind as to 50 per cent for damage. Quantities could be discussed


later. (4) A breach with Germany. (5) The expulsion of all Germans. (6) Demobilization.\textsuperscript{64} Neither President Roosevelt, nor Prime Minister Churchill made any serious attempt to thwart these Soviet claims. The following example from Churchill's account of the Teheran discussions is very descriptive:

The conversation then turned to territorial detail - Viborg ("Nothing doing about Viborg," said Stalin), the Karelian Isthmus, Hangö. "If the cession of Hangö presents a difficulty," said Stalin, "I am willing to take Petsamo instead." "A fair exchange," said Roosevelt.\textsuperscript{65}

On January 30, 1944, Mr. McClintock again presented a request from the American Government that Finland take steps to initiate peace negotiations with the Soviet Union. That Finland wished to get out of the war was well known by this time. According to reports from Stockholm, the Lahti radio had stated that "Finland wants peace and is willing to make peace," but that the Soviet terms would have to be known first. The Stockholm Aftonbladet quoted Lahti radio as saying that "...since the Teheran conference, Finland has been willing to discuss peace and has tried to get the Russian peace terms. Finland wants the terms of capitulation but has been unable to get them and Finland won't discuss peace without them."\textsuperscript{66} When a secret

\textsuperscript{64} Churchill, Closing the Ring, p. 400.

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., p. 399.

\textsuperscript{66} The New York Times, January 9, 1944, p. 33.
session of the Riksdag was scheduled for January 22nd, it was reported that Dr. Paasikivi had offered to go to Moscow at any time if such a trip could be arranged. It was also reported that the Linkomies Government had escaped defeat on the 22nd by a margin of only two votes, and that the Opposition had asked that Dr. Paasikivi be appointed either Prime Minister or Foreign Minister. The only thing which saved the government, the reports said, was the reading by the Speaker of clippings from British newspapers asking that Finland surrender unconditionally. The new American approach, therefore, was well timed. While it was being considered by the government, the Soviet and Allied press campaign against Finland was stepped up. Helsinki was teeming with rumours that the Soviet Union had given Finland an ultimatum granting her six weeks to get out of the war. On February 6th, Helsinki was bombed by more than 100 planes, and thousands of civilians fled the capital. There were two more alerts the next day, but no bombs were dropped, leaving the impression that the Soviet Union merely wished to scare the Finns. It was felt that the Russians would hesitate to start a major bombing offensive against major Finnish cities, since such attacks might drive the Opposition, now a potential asset for Moscow, back into the fold. The

68 Ibid., January 26, 1944, p. 6.
Soviet successes at Leningrad and subsequent drive into Estonia were also suited to make the Finns inclined towards peace.

On February 7th, the official Soviet news agency, Tass, stated that reports to the effect that the Soviet Union was carrying on negotiations for peace with Finland did "not in the least correspond with facts".\(^6^9\) The following day, however, the United States Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, made public the American approach to Helsinki, again warning that the United States could not help Finland in the future were the offer rejected.\(^7^0\) Simultaneously, the newspaper *Izvestia* said that the Russian bombers had merely given Finland a taste of what was to come and asserted that the Soviet Union had forces to spare for a full-scale attack on Finland.\(^7^1\) The Moscow correspondent of *The New York Times* reported that there was much bitterness in the Soviet Union against Finland, and that a separate peace, or even unconditional surrender, was not deemed enough retribution. The least the Russians expected out of the defeat of Finland, James Aldridge reported, was the destruction of the Finnish White Army and the Mannerheim-Ryti regime.\(^7^2\) This point of view was underlined by an article

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\(^7^0\) *The New York Times*, February 9, 1944, p. 1.

\(^7^1\) Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 3.

\(^7^2\) *Ibid.*, February 10, 1944, p. 3.
in the Red Army newspaper Red Star, which listed a series of Soviet complaints against Finland. "It will be the Red Army," the paper said, "that will settle the question of Finnish frontiers and the Red Army is capable of maintaining that viewpoint in Helsinki itself."73

On February 12th, the Finnish Government decided to send Dr. Paasikivi to Stockholm to see Madame Kollontay. The terms which he brought with him when he returned on the 23rd were harsh. As a prerequisite to peace negotiations, Finland would have to sever all relations with Germany and expel or intern the German troops within her borders, either alone or with the help of Soviet arms; she would have to accept the restoration of the 1940 eastern frontier and withdraw to that line; and she must return Soviet prisoners of war immediately. The peace negotiations would then discuss the questions of partial or total demobilization, reparations for damage caused by Finnish military operations, and Petsamo.74 The immediate reaction of the Finnish Government was that the internment of the almost 200,000 Germans in Finland was physically impossible without Soviet aid, and nobody was prepared to invite the Red Army into Finland. The Riksdag was informed of the Soviet proposals on the 29th


74 The official text, issued over the Moscow radio on February 28th, is given in ibid., March 1, 1944, p. 5; Current History, vol. 6, no. 32 (April 1944), pp. 351-352; Wuorinen, op. cit., pp. 163-164, and Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War, vol. 2, pp. 56-57.
and upheld the government's decision to continue the discussions with the Russians by a clear majority. On March 8th, the Finnish reply was delivered to Madame Kollontay. It pointed out the difficulties involved in the ejection or internment of the German forces and asked that Finland be allowed to present her views on the proposed armistice terms. Two days later the Finns were informed that their reply was completely unsatisfactory, that the Soviet terms were minimum terms, and that they would have to be approved by the 18th if Finland desired a continuation of the talks. The Riksdag was informed of the developments in another secret session, held on the 14th, and again the government was given a vote of confidence. With this backing, the government presented the Finnish reply to the Soviet Union on the 17th. It was regretted that the Soviet Union would not allow Finland to present her views. She was anxious to begin negotiations, but it was not possible to accept in advance terms which had not been clearly defined. The Soviet Government then invited the Finns to "...send one or two delegates to obtain from the Soviet Union an explanation of the armistice terms proposed by Russia." On the 25th, Dr. Paasikivi and Minister Carl Enckell left for Moscow, where, on the 27th and 29th, they were received by Molotov. As it turned out, the armistice terms, not peace terms, were even more severe.

75 Wuorinen, _op. cit._, p. 165.
than Madame Kollontay's communications had indicated. The Finnish withdrawal to the 1940 frontier must be completed during the month of April; the Finns were to return to the Soviet Union all Soviet citizens held in Finland without promise of having their own prisoners-of-war returned from the Soviet Union; the Germans must be ousted or interned by the end of April at the latest, while at the same time the Finnish Army should be reduced; the entire Petsamo region must be ceded to the Soviet Union; and Finland must pay reparations amounting to $600,000,000 in five years. In return for all this, the Soviet Union might consider it possible to relinquish her lease of Hankö "without any compensation". 76

On the return of the delegation to Helsinki on April 1st, the Finnish Government at once requested the opinion of both Finnish and Swedish experts on finance and national economy, and the unanimous advice was that the demanded indemnity far exceeded the economic capacity of Finland. Military experts asserted that it was physically impossible to redeploy the necessary forces in time to drive the Germans out by the end of April. On April 12th, Prime Minister Linkomies submitted the Soviet terms and the analysis of their implications to a secret session of the Riksdag. He also asked for a vote of confidence on the

Cabinet's decision to reject the terms on the grounds that it was physically impossible for Finland to carry them out. The vote was a unanimous endorsement of the Government's stand, and the Finnish reply was presented to the Soviet Union on the 18th, explaining fully the reasons for the rejection. Four days later the Soviet Government announced that the armistice negotiations had been broken off, and on the 24th, Finland made public the demands of the Soviet Union. While the impact of the severity of the Soviet demands sufficed to reduce opposition to the government within Finland, foreign commentators, on the whole, failed to realize what the proposed terms would mean to Finland. One commentator opined that the terms "...seemed reasonable and even generous.... There was no threat to Finnish independence." The Russians would generously help Finland to expel General Edward Dietl's divisions and then, as a matter of course, at once withdraw from Finland. 'Leading UN diplomats' in Moscow generally took the view that the terms were generous and the best the Finns could hope to get. The London Times felt the terms were "surprisingly lenient" and published a vicious editorial attack on some


leading members of the Finnish Government. Similar surprise was expressed by *Time*, which said that the terms, "... to everybody but the Finns ... had seemed surprisingly mild." One of the few to strike a more sober note was Mr. Gunnar Leistikow, a political commentator with long experience in Scandinavian and Finnish affairs, who wrote a letter to the editor of *The New York Times* explaining the reluctance of the Finns to throw themselves at the mercy of the Soviet Union. On the basis of past experiences, he showed why the Finns had reason to fear that the Soviet terms were "... not so much the end of a bad war as the beginning of a worse peace."

The fact that the Russians have won the Allies' trust has not made the Finns less suspicious, and the high-handed manner in which the Soviet Union seems to handle its relations with Poland, which after all is an ally, gives the Finns the jitters about what fate a former enemy may have to expect.

As a result of the negative outcome of the Soviet-Finnish contact, the mood in Finland was one of depression, a mood which the catastrophic setbacks suffered by the German forces everywhere did not help to improve. In his May Day address, Stalin indicated, furthermore, that the Soviet Union was no longer willing to deal with the present

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80 Quoted in *The New York Times*, March 6, 1944, p. 3.
81 "No Hurry in Helsinki," *Time*, vol. 43, no. 17 (April 24, 1944), p. 34.
Finnish Government, and this was confirmed three weeks later when the Finns attempted to reestablish contact with the Soviet Legation in Stockholm.

On June 9th, the long expected Soviet attack materialized on the Karelian Isthmus in the wake of an aerial and artillery bombardment which could be heard in Helsinki, 170 miles away. Within a week the Finnish military position had been profoundly shaken. On June 20th came the attack in East Karelia. On the Isthmus, Viipuri fell the next day, and the Finnish Army was compelled to retreat to the so-called V.K.T. line (Viipuri-Kuparsaari-Taipale). Here the defence held firm, and it was to remain firm against all attacks until the end of the war. In East Karelia the Finnish forces were ordered to draw back to the so-called U. line running from Pitkäranta to Loimolanjärvi, where they repelled all attacks by the enemy. The Red Army had once again been stopped by the Finns.

However, the Finnish forces were dependent upon Germany for their supply of munitions and anti-tank weapons as well as for food. Urgent requests for supplies were submitted when the Soviet attack was launched, and the Germans agreed to comply - but for a price. On June 21st,

84 Wuorinen, op. cit., pp. 170-171.
85 For an account of these operations, see Mannerheim, op. cit., pp. 475-487.
the day after the fall of Viipuri, the German Foreign Minister made a surprise appearance in Helsinki. Germany was willing to help Finland, he told President Ryti and Foreign Minister Ramsay, but a prerequisite for such help was that Finland took a "clearly defined attitude" on the side of Germany. This would entail a public declaration promising that Finland would fight on the side of Germany to the end of the war. At the same time Finland was confronted with a Soviet demand, delivered on the 23rd, that she surrender and ask for peace. "The choice," says Mannerheim, "was between unconditional surrender and the signing of a treaty which increased the chances of creating conditions for obtaining an acceptable peace." The government saw it in the same light, and the Soviet communication was left unanswered. Instead President Ryti, on his own responsibility and without consulting the Riksdag, but with the concurrence of the Cabinet and the Commander-in-Chief, signed a document giving the assurances demanded by Ribbentrop:

...I declare as President of the Republic of Finland that I will not make peace with the Soviet Union otherwise than by agreement with the German Reich and will not allow any government of Finland appointed by me or any person at all to initiate conversations concerning an armistice or a peace or negotiations serving these ends otherwise than by agreement with the Government of the German Reich. 87

86 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 482.

A stranger to the ways of a democratic system of government, Ribbentrop had stumbled into a trap he was unable to see. In totalitarian Germany an agreement signed by Hitler would be legally valid, but in democratic Finland the Head of State was powerless to conclude binding agreements without the consent of the Riksdag. President Ryti and his advisers were aware that the guarantee signed by him was not in keeping with Finnish constitutional law and could be declared invalid at any time by the elected representatives of the people. Nevertheless, having assured Ribbentrop that the Riksdag would never sanction such a treaty as he demanded, and having been assured by Ribbentrop that he would be perfectly satisfied with a declaration by President Ryti to the same effect, the government decided to let Ribbentrop have his way. The so-called Ryti-Ribbentrop agreement was signed on the 26th, and as a result Finland soon received vital supplies of ammunition, anti-tank weapons and food. The front could be stabilized, and the road could be cleared for further talks with the Russians simply by replacing Ryti as President.

This masterful trick played on the German Foreign Minister by the Finnish leadership was in stark contrast to the ideals of honesty and good faith always practised by Finland in her dealings with other states, as Professor Lundin does not fail to point out in most sarcastic terms. But the difficulties with which the decision to sign the

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agreement was reached by the Cabinet, and the violent reaction expressed against it in the Riksdag on primarily ethical grounds, well demonstrate how the Finns felt about using deceit in their international dealings, even when the very existence of their nation appeared to depend on it. The fact that everybody regarded the resignation of Ryti from his office as President as an obvious prerequisite for the repudiation of the Ryti-Ribbentrop agreement also demonstrates the basic honesty of the Finnish character. The Finns had been faithful to their high principles in all their dealings with the Russians, even during the most trying period of 1939-41, and in spite of the constant trickery and deceit employed by the Russians whenever they found it expedient. The Finns had remained faithful to these high principles in all their dealings with the Germans since 1940-41, in spite of the growing realization that Germany was only using them to her own advantage and without any genuine regard for Finnish interests. Dr. Urho Kekkonen, the present President of Finland, well expressed the Finnish attitude when, in an article in the periodical Suomen Kuvalehti on August 4, 1943, he wrote these bitter words:

But the last three or four years have opened our eyes to the fact that a nation cannot always afford to operate with ideas. We have seen how the big and mighty have broken their word when the interests of power politics demanded it; we have ourselves been used as small change in the transactions
of power politics. And we have become hardened and selfish.  

Seven months later Kekkonen's ideas had developed further along those lines, and, in an article in the same publication on March 3, 1944, he had this to say:

But the continued existence and welfare of a nation may require that one follow, for instance, other conceptions of honour than those of the individual citizen. One ought to strive to secure a possibility for the nation to survive under all circumstances. A man may die a hero's death, but a man who leads his nation to its death in obedience to his own conceptions of heroism has not shown responsibility for his nation. 

That similar ideas had developed within Finland's responsible leadership is clear and understandable, and, with nothing less than the existence of the Finnish nation at stake, the Cabinet can hardly be blamed for having advised Ryti to sign the agreement presented by Ribbentrop - or for having failed to enlighten the German Foreign Minister with regard to the processes of Finnish constitutional law. Indeed, at the time of the trials of Finnish "war responsibles" in Helsinki during the winter of 1945-46, Mannerheim, then President of Finland, submitted a deposition to the investigation committee which was read into court on November 16, 1945, and in which he described Ryti's action

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90 Ibid., p. 66.
as "... a patriotic action that offered the country new possibilities." And Mannerheim continued proudly: "I always defended, and will always defend the Ryti-Ribbentrop agreement."\(^91\)

One serious consequence of the Ryti-Ribbentrop agreement came on June 30th when the United States severed diplomatic relations with Finland.\(^92\) The road to peace still appeared to be open, however, as demonstrated an article in Pravda on July 2nd. The article declared that Finland did not have to accept "complete capitulation" as a basis for negotiations. "Such rumours have no foundation. These rumours are circulated by the Germans to force the Finns to continue the war."\(^93\) When the German air force was withdrawn from Finland after the middle of July and a withdrawal of German infantry units began at the end of the month, the Finns thus considered the time suitable to prepare for peace negotiations. The Ryti-Ribbentrop agreement had fulfilled its purpose. On August 1st, President Ryti resigned, and four days later the Riksdag unanimously enacted a law making possible succession to the presidency of the only man who could save Finland - Marshal Mannerheim. He took the oath of office a few days later.

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hours later. For the second time since their independence, the Finns had turned to the Marshal of Finland to lead them out of a desperate situation. On the 7th, a new government was formed under the Premiership of Mr. Antti V. Hackzell, a former Foreign Minister and Minister to Moscow. The new Foreign Minister was Mr. Carl Enckell, who had travelled to Moscow with Dr. Paasikivi the previous March. Also included in the government as Minister Without Portfolio was Mr. Eero Vuori, who had been a Bolshevist in 1918 and had served many terms in prison for Communist activities prior to the Winter War. Obviously the new government would be acceptable to the Soviet Union. In order to prepare the Finnish population for what was to come, the newspapers began to carry extensive reports on Allied advances in Estonia and France.

The sudden developments in Finland hit Berlin like a bomb. Not until the 17th, however, did the Germans find time to do anything about the new situation. On that day Field Marshal Keitel arrived at Mannerheim's headquarters, ostensibly to convey the congratulations of Hitler upon the Marshal's election as President, but also to find out what effect Ryti's resignation might have on German-Finnish relations. Mannerheim told him in plain words: because of "compelling circumstances" Ryti had not been able to retain his freedom of action, and his resignation made it possible for the Finns "to act according to their own best interests". Keitel correctly interpreted Mannerheim's words
to mean that Finland intended to disengage herself from the war.\(^{94}\) No German reprisals were taken at that point, however, and the German forces were reported to continue their withdrawal northward.\(^{95}\)

The expected Finnish request for an armistice came on August 25th, when Madame Kollontay was handed a communication which asked whether the Soviet Union would receive a Finnish delegation for the purpose. On the same day Finland served official notice in Berlin that she no longer regarded herself bound by the Ryti-Ribbentrop agreement. The Soviet reply, received on the 29th, told Finland to sever relations with Germany and get the German troops out of Finland or intern them by September 15th. If Finland agreed to take such action, the Soviet Government would be agreeable to receive in Moscow a Finnish delegation for negotiations "on an armistice or on peace, or on both together".\(^{96}\) The British Government had agreed with this reply, Finland was informed. Helsinki was shocked by these demands, which would force her to break with Germany without even knowing whether the Russians were going to grant an armistice or not. The time limit for

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96 Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War, vol. 2, pp. 106-107.
expelling the German forces was even shorter and more impossible than previously. However, the time had come for Finland to make her final decision. The Soviet Union had it in her power to crush the Finnish Army whenever sufficient forces could be released from other fronts to do so. It was most unlikely that a more favourable situation would develop in the future, and Finland had not been occupied, at least not yet. Consequently the Riksdag was summoned for a secret session on September 2nd to decide the crucial issue. Of the 155 members present, 108 voted in favour of the government's decision that the preliminary conditions be accepted to clear the way for armistice or peace negotiations. The Soviet Union was informed immediately, and Mannerheim proposed to Stalin that an early date be set for the discontinuation of hostilities in order that unnecessary bloodshed might be avoided. On the 4th, Stalin replied that the Russians would cease hostilities at 7:00 a.m. the following morning provided the Finns agreed. Orders to that effect were issued to all Finnish forces, and no shots were fired from the western side of the demarcation line after the appointed hour. The Russians, however, continued a one-sided shooting for another twenty-five hours, causing considerable losses among the Finns. No explanation or apology was ever offered for this behaviour, but the incident was faithfully recorded in Article 1 of the Armistice Agreement signed
on September 19th.\textsuperscript{97}

The people of Finland learned of their country’s withdrawal from the war immediately after the Riksdag meeting on September 2nd. In his radio message to the nation, outlining the course of events since August 25th, Prime Minister Hackzell concluded with the following urgent appeal:

> Our task consists in the necessity of maintaining complete unity amongst ourselves. We must rally firmly around our President and the movement for peace, with the object of safeguarding the future of the Finnish people.\textsuperscript{98}

The Continuation War was at an end. The Finns had no way of knowing whether they would be allowed to live in independence or whether the future would bring to them the sufferings of their neighbours across the Gulf of Finland. They had burned their bridges behind them, however. On September 3rd, strong forces were withdrawn from the Karelian front line and sent north in anticipation of trouble developing with the German troops after the 15th.\textsuperscript{99} By this action, further effective resistance against the Soviet Union was rendered impossible, and the Finns could only hope that the Russians would not make use of this tempting opportunity to destroy independent Finland.

\textsuperscript{97} For accounts of the events between August 25th and September 5th, see Mannerheim, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 493-497; Lundin, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 224-228; Wuorinen, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 178. The relevant documents are given in \textit{Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War}, vol. 2, pp. 106-107.

\textsuperscript{98} Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War, vol. 2, pp. 206-207.

\textsuperscript{99} Mannerheim, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 497.
CHAPTER IV

THE PRICE OF PEACE

The Finnish negotiators flew to Moscow on September 6th. Headed by Prime Minister Hackzell, the fourteen-man delegation included Defence Minister Walden, the Chief of the General Staff, General Heinrichs, the Foreign Minister's brother, Lieut.-General Oscar Enckell, who represented the largest industrial concern in southeastern Finland, and a number of economic and juridical experts. The composition of the delegation clearly suggested that the Finnish Government was preparing itself for a thorough round of negotiations.

The Russians were in no hurry, however. For a full week, the Finnish negotiators waited nervously while the Soviet Government attended to more important business. Not until the 14th were they presented with the Soviet Union's armistice conditions, which turned out to be harsher than anything that had been expected. Generally, the armistice conditions, which were in effect preliminary
peace conditions rather than a basis for a cease-fire agreement, restored the situation imposed by the peace treaty of March 12, 1940. But there were serious additional demands. Finland must cede the entire area of Petsamo, thereby losing her only access to the Arctic Sea. She must, in exchange for Hankö, lease Point Porkkala and the surrounding area, including a stretch of the Helsinki-Turku railway line, to the Soviet Union for a period of fifty years, which would mean giving the Soviet Union a fortified strong-hold within artillery reach of Helsinki as well as the severance of Finland's economically most important line of transportation. An indemnity amounting to U.S. $300,000,000 must be paid to the Soviet Union within a period of six years, in commodities. All German property and other assets in Finland must be turned over to the Soviet Union, and all valuables and materials removed from Soviet territory, including the Karelian Isthmus, must be returned in good condition or replaced. The entire Finnish merchant marine - what was left of it - must be placed at the disposal of the Soviet Union, and all airfields in southern and southwestern Finland must be made available for Soviet aircraft for as long as the war against Germany made it necessary. Finnish citizens accused of war crimes must be apprehended and tried. All Finnish troops must be withdrawn behind the 1940 frontier at once, and the army must be placed on a peace footing within two and a half months. At the same time, Finland must disarm and hand over to the Russians all German forces which remained in Finland after September 15th.
Prime Minister Hackzell suffered a paralytic stroke on the very same day that these Soviet armistice terms were presented. Foreign Minister Enckell arrived in Moscow to take his place as head of the delegation two days later, and on the 18th he saw Molotov in an attempt to gain sufficient time to allow the Riksdag to discuss the proposals as required by Finland's constitution. Molotov flew into a rage. After a scathing denunciation of the "bloody, criminal" government in Helsinki, he told Enckell to sign the document by noon the following day or face immediate occupation of Finland by the Red Army. Faced with this ultimatum, and with all hopes of regular negotiations shattered, Enckell telegraphed his government for authorization to accept the Soviet demands. The Riksdag gathered for an emergency session at six o'clock the following morning and, realizing that further resistance was tantamount to national suicide, voted that the demands be accepted.\(^1\) The Armistice Agreement was signed before noon on September 19th by Foreign Minister Carl Enckell, Defence Minister Walden, General Heinrichs and General Oscar Enckell for Finland, and by General Zhdanov, commander of the Leningrad military district and political commissar in the Red Army, for the Soviet Union and Great Britain.

The news were broadcast to the Finnish people a

\(^1\) Lundin, Finland in the Second World War, pp. 229-230.
few hours later, and it struck them like thunder. In the homes and in public gathering places people wept openly as they listened to the speech of the Acting Prime Minister, Justice Minister Ernst von Born:

Citizens! The nineteenth of September 1944 will be recorded in our history as the day of heavy trials for our nation. As deeply as Finland's people has longed for peace during these difficult years, equally deeply has it been disturbed to the core at the thought of the moment when it should find itself before the necessity of considering its possibilities for continued national life in the face of the terms of peace. That moment has now come.²

Commenting on the severity of the terms, von Born said reflectively that "In these times opinions differ as to what is just and what is not," adding that it was the unavoidable destiny of the Finns to live forever as neighbours of the Soviet Union; they might as well get used to it and make the best of it. He openly questioned whether the nation could survive, but added in conclusion: "Time heals all wounds - the Lord does not reject, He only tests." Then a band played "A Mighty Fortress is Our God", the national anthem and Sibelius' "Finlandia".³ The shooting war was definitively over, but the Finns did not yet know whether they would be able to survive the coming battle for a peaceful future of their own making. The obstacles confronting them appeared almost insurmountable.

² Kai Brunila, Porkala är vårt. En återblick i ord och bild, Borgå, Holger Schildt, 1955, p. 35.
The first obstacle was the obligation to disarm and intern all German forces still on Finnish territory. By the stipulations of Article 2 of the Armistice Agreement, Finland could request the Soviet Union to assist her in this task. The Finns were determined to avail themselves of that possibility only as a last resort, however. They feared that once the Red Army had entered Finnish territory, its presence there might tend to become rather permanent. How basic and complete that fear was is demonstrated by the fact that the Finns, rather than request Soviet assistance, were prepared to face more than a quarter of a million German troops with an army which, by Article 4 of the Armistice Agreement, would have to be reduced to "peace footing" by December 5th. The term "peace footing" was not defined in the Armistice Agreement, but it was subsequently determined to mean 37,000 men.

Although it was known to be technically impossible to evacuate all German forces by September 15th, there was some reason to believe that there would not be too much trouble. Even before the Finnish armistice delegation had left Helsinki for Moscow, the Berlin correspondent of Stockholms-Tidningen reported that German troops would be withdrawn from Finland to Norway "as soon as possible". A Reuter dispatch claimed to have learned that the German commander in Finland, General Lothar Rendulic, had agreed to leave by the 15th.4 Events in southern Finland appeared

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to confirm this rumour. German troops in this area were picked up as fast as transportation ships, former transatlantic liners, could travel back and forth between Helsinki, Turku and Estonian ports.\(^5\) By the 13th, southern Finland was virtually cleared of Germans.\(^6\)

In northern Finland the situation was not so promising, however. As early as September 2nd, immediately after the Finnish Government had announced its decision to accept the preliminary Soviet conditions for a cease-fire, General Rendulic visited Mannerheim to warn him that a clash between German and Finnish troops, "the best in the world", was likely to develop into "a cruel and bloody war".\(^7\)

On his return to his headquarters in Rovaniemi, Rendulic received orders from Berlin to hold central and northern Lapland. On the 5th, he informed Mannerheim that his army had begun its evacuation of Lapland, but all he was evacuating was his supplies. His troops were 'digging in'. In spite of Rendulic's misleading reports to Mannerheim, the Finns were only too well aware of the actual situation, and the 144,000 inhabitants of Lapland were ordered evacuated to the south or to Sweden. 104,000 were able to get out in time. Meanwhile Mannerheim moved an extra division from the Karelian


\(^7\) Lundin, *op. cit.*, p. 237.
Isthmus north to Kajaani, a brigade almost to Oulu, and a battalion to the vicinity of Kemi. Facing his few and tired troops were more than 200,000 Germans.

The uneasy truce was shattered on the night of the 14th, hours before the deadline, but not in the north. Waves of German invaders were landed on the strategic island of Suursaari in the Finnish Gulf, but they were thrown back into the sea the following morning by the Finnish garrison with the aid of Soviet planes. Simultaneously it was discovered that airfields which had been at the disposal of the Germans had been mined before being evacuated, and shipping lanes along the coast were also blocked by mines. Soon Finnish artillery positions on the Aaland Islands were firing on German shipping. It was not until the 28th, however, that the Finns were able to go after the Germans in the north. Although hopelessly outnumbered, the Finnish soldiers again proved their capacity for overcoming a numerically superior enemy. On October 1st, they carried out a spectacular landing behind the German lines at the town of Tornio, on the Swedish border, and the town of Kemi was taken eight days later in an equally spectacular surprise operation. Two of Lapland's three major towns had been saved from the complete destruction

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the Germans were planning for them. Tornio was only one per cent destroyed and Kemi only five per cent. Rovaniemi could not be reached in time, however, and the retreating Germans saw to it that not a single house was left standing. The same treatment was given to the rest of Lapland's widely scattered communities as Germans slowly withdrew toward the Norwegian border. The Germans were methodically thorough. Each day reports of further destruction reached General Siilasvuo's headquarters. One report, dated October 13th, said:

Our air reconnaissance discovered that there were conflagrations in the town of Rovaniemi. The barracks at Ounasvaara were burning. The fuel depot at Saarenkylä was afire. On the roads from Kemijärvi to Salla and Pelkosenniemi to Savukoski all the bridges were blown up. Kemijärvi was a vast sea of fire. The view from the air was sad - the destruction of Lapland was continuing purposefully according to plan.

This report was typical, and it was being repeated every day. Only occasionally were the Finns able to surprise the Germans and save some centers of population from the torch.

In spite of the Soviet-imposed difficulties facing the Finnish Army in its efforts to drive the Germans out, the Soviet Union professed great dissatisfaction. In a

9 On these operations, see Lundin, op. cit., pp. 243-244; Sigyn Alenius, Finland efter vapenstilleståndet 1944. En kort översikt, Helsingfors, Söderström, 1947, pp. 9-10.

10 Lundin, op. cit., p. 244.

11 Quoted in ibid., p. 245.
statement released by the news agency 'Tass' on October 15th, the Soviet Government praised Finland for the way in which most of the armistice conditions had been carried out, adding, however, that:

At the same time the Finns are not yet satisfactorily fulfilling their most important obligations to disarm the German forces in Finland. Finland has dragged out the disarmament of the German armed forces in her territory. The Finns began military operations against the German troops in the north of Finland only on 1 October, and using only an insignificant part of their army.12

Considering the destruction being wrought by the Germans in Finnish Lapland, it must have been quite clear to anyone that the Finns had every reason to give top priority to the speedy execution of Article 2 of the Armistice Agreement. There is no evidence to show that they were holding back as alleged by the 'Tass' statement. That it should eventually take them 224 days to clear Lapland of German troops was certainly no fault of the Finns'. Their reason for not requesting support from the Red Army has been explained, and no such support was forthcoming except in the ceded area of Petsamo where the Germans were thrown back into Norway by an irresistible Soviet attack.

Most of Lapland had been cleared of Germans by December, but with her forces reduced to a total of 37,000 by the 5th of that month, the Finns were unable to force

12 Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War, vol. 2, p. 158.
the German retreat any further and had to satisfy them­selves with moving only as fast as the Germans withdrew. Not until April 27, 1945, did Finnish forces reach the Norwegian border at all points, thus bringing Finland's participation in the Second World War to an effective close.

Article 2 of the Armistice Agreement had proved to be a most expensive obligation. From the River Oulujoki northward approximately ninety per cent of the settlements had been destroyed.13 If one includes the towns of Tornio and Kemi, the two largest population centers in Lapland, which were left almost undamaged, the percentage is reduced to thirty-six, or 41,306 destroyed buildings out of a total of 113,531.14 But the Germans had not confined their destruction to public and private buildings. The Kolosjoki nickel mine, which had been Hitler's primary reason for wishing to hold Lapland,15 was thoroughly wrecked. The power station at Jäniskoski was blown up. Practically all highway bridges were destroyed, including most of the culverts and the roadside telephone poles. Among the destroyed buildings were 125 schools, 165 churches and other congregational buildings, and 130 were damaged. All


14 Lundin, op. cit., p. 245.

15 Ibid., p. 238.
railroads and landing grounds were wrecked, the forests were set afire and the harvest of the year was burned in the fields. It has been estimated that over 38,000 head of livestock were killed and more than 30,000 pieces of farm machinery were wrecked. In addition, the Germans planted hundreds of thousands of mines. By 1947, 7,000 mines and 250,000 shells used as mines had been disarmed at the cost of about 125 lives. The losses of the Finnish Army amounted to 737 killed, twenty-seven frozen to death, 254 missing in action, and 2,808 wounded. The total property damage has been estimated to amount to approximately $300,000,000 - or equal to the amount demanded by the Soviet Union in reparation payments.

While the losses suffered by Finland under Article 2 of the Armistice Agreement could, in time, be repaired, with the exception of the losses in human life, the damage caused by Articles 6 and 7 was permanent. By the provisions of Article 6, the territorial losses imposed on Finland by the Moscow Peace of 1940 were confirmed.

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Karelia was lost, and the cities of Viipuri, Käkisalmi and Sortavala were now within the boundaries of the Soviet Union. By Article 7, the Petsamo region, with the towns of Petsamo and Liinahamari, were 'returned' to the Russians. Furthermore, by Article 8, the idyllic Porkkala area with its five parishes, hundreds of farms and holiday cottages sprawled on 148 square miles of land and surrounded to the east, west and south by the water of the Gulf of Finland, was turned over to the Soviet Union for a period of fifty years to serve as a naval base. The total area thus ceded to the Soviet Union, exclusive of the Porkkala naval lease, amounted to 17,640 square miles, of which 16,576 square miles were land and 1,064 square miles were water. In addition, by the treaty of peace signed in 1947, Finland was obliged to give up a small area adjacent to the Petsamo region containing the Jäniskoski power plant and the Niskakoski dam.

By the Armistice Agreement, Finland lost approximately thirteen per cent of her territory. With this territory went nearly one third of her hydroelectric power and 432 industrial plants. These plants had been responsible for about ten per cent of her total industrial production and had employed some 25,000 persons, or almost ten per cent

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18 Burnett Anderson, ed., The Northern Countries, Uppsala, Almquist & Wiksell, 1951, p. 33. (Issued under the auspices of the Foreign Ministries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.)
of her industrial population. Before the war, these factories had manufactured goods mainly for home consumption, and the loss of them was serious enough in itself. Among them were the only plant in the country producing artificial fibers, one of the two sugar mills, and thirty-one per cent of all flour and grain-grinding mills. Even more serious, however, was the blow to the manufacture of wood products, which had always dominated Finland's export trade. Among the wood working plants in the ceded area were sixty-five sawmills and planing mills, which in 1938 had produced twelve per cent of Finland's total output; five sulphite and two sulphate pulpmills, which had produced twenty-five per cent of all chemical pulp; four plywood mills, which had been responsible for fourteen per cent of the output; as well as mills which had produced fourteen per cent of the mechanical pulp and five per cent of the paper. All that remained to Finland of this industrial capacity were the evacuated workers and their skills.\(^{19}\)

Most of this industrial capacity was concentrated in Karelia. The ceded area here amounted to 10.4 per cent of the whole area of the country, with a population of 460,000 before the war. The cultivated area of Karelia, about 11.5 per cent of the whole cultivated area of Finland, before the war produced twelve per cent of the cereal crop,

fourteen per cent of the potato crop, fourteen per cent of
the hay, eleven per cent of the oats, nine per cent of the
milk and twelve per cent of the total Finnish meat production.
Especially regrettable was the loss of the Karelian water
power. The Vuoksi River, along which was located more than
half of the entire built up water power of the country,
supplied electric power not only to Karelia but also to
extensive outside areas. The Imatra Rapids were left on the
Finnish side of the new frontier, as were the manufacturing
towns along Saimaa Lake, but the entire waterway system of
southeastern Finland was disrupted by the severance of the
Saimaa Canal and the cession of Viipuri, whereby an area of
more than 25,000 square miles lost its only direct com-
munication with the sea. Compared to Karelia, therefore,
the other ceded areas represented a much less significant
loss to the national economy. The Petsamo area contained
about three per cent of Finland's land area, but it was
sparsely populated and unsuitable for agriculture. Its
chief economic importance was represented by the ice-free
port of Liinahamari, the remunerative fishing in the Barents
Sea, and the controversial Kolosjoki nickel mine.20 The
Porkkala area, although small, was one of the most
prosperous productive centres in the country where agriculture,

20 In an interview with the Stockholms-Tidning en correspondent
in Helsinki in February 1944, Väinö Tanner, then Minister of
Finance, said that he was sorry Finland possessed the nickel
mines. It was a calamity for a small power, he said, to possess
metals that Great Powers coveted because of their importance
cattle breeding and horticulture had attained a high
standard. In addition, the lease area cut the important
railway between Helsinki and Turku, thereby seriously
impeding traffic in South Finland. 21

Losses of territory thus weakened Finland's
national economy very considerably. They also brought
about other direct burdens affecting the economy, most
important of which was the resettlement of the refugees
from the ceded areas. To place nearly half a million persons
in productive work and compensate them, to a degree, for
the property they had been forced to leave behind, would
have been colossal tasks in the best of circumstances. To
do so within the reduced territory of Finland in the fall of
1944, with a major portion of the country completely destroyed
by the Germans, with the entire merchant marine lost, with
50,000 war invalids to take care of, and with a crushing war
indemnity to pay off, seemed an impossibility. One in nearly
every eight citizens was a refugee, penniless and propertyless
as a rule and in need of immediate relief and accommodation
as well as permanent establishment in a suitable occupation.
One reason why this resettlement was carried out as quickly
and effectively as it was, was the fact that the situation

21 On the effects of the territorial losses on Finland's
national economy, see K. O. Alho, "The Present Economic
Position in Finland," Bank of Finland Monthly Bulletin,
vol. 20, nos. 1-3 (January-March 1946), pp. 24-29.
FINNISH-SOViet BORDER
OF SEPTEMBER 19, 1944
AND FEBRUARY 10, 1947

--- --- Border of 1939
++ ++ Border of 1940
++++++ Border of 1944 and 1947

U.S.S.R.
was not altogether new. Following the Winter War, the population of Karelia had also left their homes, fleeing before the advancing Red Army, and extensive legislation had been enacted by the Riksdag subdividing the larger existing farms to provide soil for the expelled Karelian farmers. A loan programme enabling others to carve new farms out of the wilderness was also enacted. Altogether, 5,879 cultivation contracts were signed under the Evacuees Emergency Settlement Act of June 28, 1940. Between the outbreak of war in June 1941, and the armistice in September 1944, all but one thousand of those contracts had been rescinded as most of the Karelians returned to their pre-war homes, but the foundation and the experience to handle the refugees existed when the emergency arose again following the armistice. Only six weeks after the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement, the Riksdag enacted a law authorizing the expropriation of neglected farms for purposes of settling refugees. To further ensure the supply of land for refugees, war invalids, ex-servicemen with families, war widows and orphans and certain other groups of persons, the Land Procuration Act was passed on May 5, 1945. Under the terms of that Act, land was utilized to provide farms, fishermen's and cottage owners' holdings, building plots, common forest and grazing areas, and to increase the size of insufficiently large holdings. Fairly heavy expropriation measures were imposed on private landowners.22

22 Finland Yearbook 1947, pp. 148-150.
Only with respect to industrial workers was the resettlement problem simpler than in 1940, owing to the demand for industrial reparations presented by the Soviet Union and the resulting expansion of Finland's industrial capacity.

Altogether, there were some 478,000 refugees from the ceded territories for whom dwelling space and opportunities for making a living had to be provided. By the end of 1952, this task had entailed the draining of 170,000 hectares of new land to serve 30,000 holdings; the building of more than 7,000 miles of new roads to serve 43,000 farms, of which 26,456 were new farms, and the building of 9,748 other dwelling sites, such as homesteads. About 85,000 hectares of new fields had been cleared, and 56,000 families had been supplied with newly constructed homes. Almost every Karelian farmer who had left his native home had found a new farm. What a tremendous social upheaval had been carried out can be seen by comparing the distribution of farms according to cultivated land area in 1941 and in 1950:

23 J. Hampden Jackson, "Resettlement of Karelian Refugees," *The World Today*, vol. 9, no. 6 (June 1953), pp. 251-252.

24 Mazour, *Finland Between East and West*, p. 183.

25 The figures for 1941, taken from *Finland Yearbook 1947*, p. 144, refer to a period when the Moscow Peace of 1940 had not yet had much affect on the distribution of farm land. Only 5,881 so-called emergency-settlement farms established in 1940-41 are included. The figures for 1950 are taken from Mazour, *op. cit.*, p. 184.
Had the Armistice Agreement imposed no further hardships than those already outlined, the Finns would have had reason to wonder about the existence of international justice and to worry about the future. But the burdens imposed on them went very much beyond the obligation to expel the Germans and the territorial losses with their many inherent effects on the national economy. The war indemnity, relatively heavier than any demands for reparations made after World War I, turned out to be very considerably heavier in terms of actual expenditures than the sum of $300,000,000 written into the Armistice Agreement.

26 The remaining 1.4 per cent is accounted for by 108,900 'farms' which had a total of 35,000 hectares of cultivated land, or, as a rule, less than 0.25 hectares each. Hugo E. Pipping, *Finlands närlingsliv efter andra världskriget*, Helsingfors, Söderström, 1954, p. 41.
And the political obligations assumed by Finland were to affect the development of her postwar policies and to colour her everyday political life to such an extent that the story of those obligations cannot be divorced from the story of Finland's postwar history in general.

In spite of the forebodings expressed by Acting Premier von Born in his radio message on September 19th, and in spite of the feeling, generally shared by public servants and private citizens alike, that Finland had been pushed almost to the point where recovery would have become impossible, the full impact of the terms imposed upon Finland was not appreciated at the time. Many years were to pass before the Finns could realize fully what the Soviet-German political intrigues had cost them.
The reparations demanded of Germany following World War I proved to be as expensive for the victors as for the vanquished. Eventually, more money was pumped into the German economy by her former enemies than was paid by her in reparations. The collection of reparation payments from Germany turned out to be something less than a salutary experience for both France and Britain. As their collections from Germany became linked with their debts to the United States, the whole question came to have a dangerous influence on the prosperity of the world and on the development of international relations. Thus, as World War II got under way, the Western Allies took it for granted that at least no cash reparations would be requested of the Axis powers and their satellites after the war.

The Soviet Union had different ideas on the subject, however. At the 'Big Three' meeting at Teheran in 1943, Stalin presented a list of six demands against Finland from
which he "could not diverge", the third of them being "Compensation in kind as to 50 per cent for damage".\(^1\)
Churchill and Roosevelt protested only tamely against this demand, the former saying that he "... did not think it useful to ask for indemnities. The Finns might cut down a few trees, but that would not do much good."\(^2\) Stalin was determined to teach the Finns a "lesson", however, and he would not consider relinquishing his demand for compensation.
Neither Churchill nor Roosevelt appeared to be too concerned, and their protests seemed to have been made 'for the record' rather than anything else. The conversation moved on to "much bigger things".\(^3\)

How much damage the Finns were supposed to have done to the Soviet Union became known the following March, when Dr. Paasikivi and Mr. Enckell went to Moscow to obtain the Soviet conditions for peace.\(^4\) The claim for reparations amounted to \$600,000,000 - an amount which was, after thorough investigations by Finnish and Swedish economists, declared to be beyond the capacity of Finland's resources. Subsequently the claim contained in the Armistice Agreement of September 19,

\(^1\) Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, p. 400.
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 398.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 400. See also above, pp. 137-138.
\(^4\) See above, pp. 142-144.
1944, amounted to $300,000,000 - the same amount which was
demanded of Rumania and Hungary. Even this amount was
regarded by most experts and informed observers as exceeding
the limits of what Finland could possibly pay. One writer
commented:

The amount is enormous.... Some idea of what it means
to Finland can be given by saying that it is equal to
two and a half times the annual harvest, or to the
value of all the ships, rail trucks, engines, lorries
and livestock in Finland, or to the value of six million
standards of timber. It represents the payment of
one-fifth of the total national income in the first
two years and of one-tenth in the later years. The
reparations imposed on Germany after the 1914-18 war
were never more than 4 per cent of the German national
income.  

However, the Armistice Agreement contained only a vague
description of what the Finnish war reparation deliveries
were to be. Article 11 read:

Losses caused by Finland to the Soviet Union by
military operations and the occupation of Soviet
territory will be indemnified by Finland to the
Soviet Union to the amount of three hundred million
dollars payable over six years, in commodities
(timber products, paper, cellulose, sea-going and
river craft, sundry machinery).

The "precise nomenclature and varieties of commodities"
to be delivered were to be defined in a special agreement
to be negotiated at a future date, but, judging by the order

5 J. Hampden Jackson, "Russian Control in Finland,"
in which the general classifications were listed in the Armistice Agreement, it would seem that the commodities to be delivered would come from Finland's traditional export industries with some exceptions. The pricing of the items to be delivered was also left vague, since the Armistice Agreement merely stipulated the measuring unit, the gold content of the United States dollar (1 oz. gold = $35). On the basis of the Armistice Agreement, therefore, the full impact of the indemnity could not be foreseen.

Finnish-Soviet negotiations concerning the special agreement on deliveries were not commenced until the middle of October, when a Soviet war reparation commission arrived in Helsinki. During the negotiations which ensued it became evident that the Soviet Union was interested primarily in the products of the woodworking industries. With respect to the pricing question, the Soviet delegates explained that the world market prices that prevailed in 1938 were the only basis that could be considered in fixing the prices of the individual products. Finnish efforts to have the world market prices prevailing in 1944, or the current prices during the delivery period, accepted as a pricing basis were rejected. The final settlement was reached on November 29th, when Finland had to accept the price level of 1938 as the basis.

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for her reparation deliveries, with the modification that these prices were to be increased by fifteen per cent with respect to capital goods and by ten per cent with respect to consumer goods. The prices of ships taken from the Finnish merchant marine, although being classified as capital goods, were to be increased by ten per cent only.

The basic agreement on the schedule of deliveries was signed on December 17th. It defined the "precise nomenclature and varieties of commodities" to be delivered roughly as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Machines, installations and factory equipment</td>
<td>$100,876,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New sea-going and river craft</td>
<td>60,172,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing craft from Finland's merchant marine</td>
<td>13,952,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper industry products</td>
<td>59,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodworking industry products</td>
<td>41,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable products</td>
<td>25,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$300,000,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What a tremendous revolution this schedule entailed for Finland's industries will be appreciated when one realizes that the products of the shipbuilding and metal industries between 1929 and 1938 accounted for only 2.3 per cent of Finland's exports, while they constituted 62 per cent of the scheduled reparation deliveries, exclusive of the deliveries out of existing ships in the merchant marine. The paper and woodworking industries, which during the same prewar period

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7 See detailed list of delivery and price schedules, covering some 199 different commodities, in Aufer, op. cit., pp. 262-271.
had accounted for 83.5 per cent of Finland's export trade, were to contribute only 33.4 per cent of the reparation deliveries. The schedule of the basic agreement had been so drafted, however, as to allow Finland to deliver only about 27 per cent of the first delivery year's total in products of the shipbuilding and metal industries, increasing this to about 61 per cent in the second delivery year, and reaching the peak of 71 per cent in the third year. By this arrangement Finland was able to meet the most urgent requirements for expansion of the production capacities in her metal industries and shipyards.

As had been the case with the Armistice Agreement, the basic agreement of December 17th was not a negotiated agreement but a dictated one. Very little consideration was given to the wishes or circumstances of Finland, as the schedule of reparation deliveries quite clearly had been so composed that it would fit into the overall schedule of the Soviet five year plans. In other words, through the provisions of the basic agreement the Finnish economy was to be geared to the planned economy of the Soviet Union. Professor Nils Meinander, Member of the Riksdag for the Swedish People's party and later Assistant Minister of Finance in Dr. Kekkonen's first government, declares flatly that the commodities

8 Auer, op. cit., p. 26. See also Platt, Finland and Its Geography, p. 169.
9 Auer, op. cit., p. 28.
... were selected to fill holes in Russian production. Deliveries were probably planned in approximately the following manner: first the experts worked out a list of desiderata and then it was adjusted with a view to what Finland might possibly be thought able to deliver. The burden was not so placed, however, that it would rest as naturally as possible on the country's economy. On the contrary, it imposes a most unreasonable load on the economy. Their experience with a planned economy's achievements led the Russians to force upon Finland a plan which presupposes an extensive expansion of the industrial capacity.10

It seemed impossible to effect the necessary industrial expansion in time to meet the early deliveries, but if Finland did not wish to fall into perpetual economic servitude to the Soviet Union it would have to be done. The Russians had inserted an 'incentive' into the basic agreement in order to safeguard their own interests: if any commodity was delayed Finland was to pay a fine of five per cent per month from the agreed date of delivery. At such a rate a fine would grow very rapidly and would amount to about 80 per cent of the original article should the delay extend to one full year. In view of the condition of Finland's productive machinery and the difficulties involved in obtaining vital raw materials on the world market, such delays, it would seem, were bound to occur. Furthermore, the deliveries would have to be complete, which meant that a complete set of machines for a factory would be considered delayed if a single machine or a part of a

machine had not been delivered by the due date. Whether the reasons for a delay were beyond the control of Finland or not would in no way affect the calculation of the fine. The Soviet war reparation commission also had the right to supervise the production of reparation commodities at all stages, and it was entitled to present claims for compensation if commodities were declared faulty after their delivery.\textsuperscript{11} The Russians, could, of course, reject any item on any conceivable pretext, and they could alter the specifications for any item at any time during production. As it turned out, the following example was to be all too typical of Russian procedure:

What happens is that a Finnish shipbuilder, for instance, who has been sent blue-prints and full specifications for the construction of vessels for Russia and has started work to fulfill the order, finds the blue-prints cancelled and the specifications altered week by week, so that his work is disorganised, his engineers distracted and his costs infinitely increased. One iron-framed barge valued at 2.5 million Finnish marks will now cost 20 million, thanks to these changes; but the sum credited as reparations on the delivery of this barge will still be only 2.5 million marks. The Finns cannot believe that this is Russian inefficiency; they are convinced that it is part of a policy aimed at their ruin.\textsuperscript{12}

There were ninety such barges to be built according to the basic agreement, each of them priced at $15,000, but actually costing $180,000.\textsuperscript{13} The total expenditure on this item alone,

\textsuperscript{11} Auer, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 316.
\textsuperscript{12} Jackson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 71.
therefore, surpassed sixteen million dollars, whereas only $1,350,000 were credited Finland on the reparation deliveries account. In addition, it was necessary to establish entirely new shipyards to build these barges, since that branch of Finnish industry had been discontinued several decades earlier.14

Thus there was considerable anxiety in Finland during the early period of reparation deliveries. The Finns were never really certain about Soviet motives. They lived with a constant fear that the Russians were going to use the basic agreement as a means to ruin Finland economically, and that they would then use the resultant failure of Finland to meet the deliveries as an excuse for taking political measures leading to the elimination of Finland as a free and independent nation. Their apprehensions may have been exaggerated, but they were not going to leave anything to chance. They made up their minds that they would honour the basic agreement on reparation deliveries as they had honoured all their international agreements in the past, whether they had been imposed upon them or not. In spite of the resignation of the chief of the economic planning committee in early 1945 - he quit because he considered the task to be an impossible one15 - the Finns were going to at least give it a try. With


thirteen per cent of the prewar national wealth lost, with seven per cent of the prewar able-bodied manpower dead or permanently crippled, and with a tremendous rebuilding job to do within their own borders, the Finns set to work to pay off the heaviest war indemnity load in history.

The first stage of the reparation deliveries, which included the full first year and three and a half months of the second year, was by far the most difficult period experienced by the Finns since the war. Furthermore, the preliminary negotiations reduced the first delivery year to nine months, during which Finland was obliged to pay the heaviest annual quota of the total period of deliveries. One reason why she was able to fulfill this obligation was that the quota included 119 ships of her merchant marine and a floating dock, all of which were immediately available. Several of these were rejected by the Soviet inspectors, however, with the result that the number of ships surrendered was reduced to 105, while several valuable ships which originally had not been demanded by the Soviet Union were delivered as replacement for the rejected units. The reduction in numbers, therefore, actually represented an increase in value and thus a heavier burden. In addition to the ships of the merchant marine, Finland had to deliver goods for a total value of about $46,100,000 during the first stage of the reparation period. Of this amount products of the woodworking industry accounted for about 65 per cent and
metal industry products for about 35 per cent. Amazingly enough the amount of goods stipulated by the delivery schedule was exceeded during all quarters of this stage, except for late 1944, and the impression might easily be gained that the burden of the war indemnity had been overrated. A closer examination reveals that there was ample reason for anxiety, however. The metal industry had found the demands placed on it to be beyond its capacity in some respects, and substantial deficits had occurred in the production of machines. Soviet tardiness in supplying the necessary specifications and a five-months metal industry strike in Sweden, from where a part of the machines for three mills to produce prefabricated wooden houses had been ordered, further aggravated the situation, and the mills were delayed seven months. The substantial fine which resulted was payable in supplementary deliveries, of course. The delivery of cable products was also continually in arrears during the first stage, while the delivery quota of new ships was met through the surrender of certain tug boats and freighters which were under construction at the end of the war. Advance deliveries of new ships largely counterbalanced the deficits experienced in other groups, and the woodworking industries kept well ahead of the delivery schedule. Although advance deliveries more than balanced the deficits, they were not taken into account when the delay fines were worked out, and since the fines were accumulating and certain branches
of the metal industry showed little promise of being able to catch up, Finland's position did not look too hopeful as the second year of reparation deliveries commenced on September 19, 1945.

There were encouraging developments as well, however. Before the conclusion of the first year of reparation deliveries the war between the Great Powers ended, first in Europe and then in the Far East. The external pressure on the Soviet Union was off and much of her resources and manpower could be diverted to the tasks of reconstruction. At the same time the first serious differences between the Soviet Union and her war-time allies began to appear. What immediate influence, if any, these developments had on Soviet-Finnish relations cannot be determined, but there may be some significance in the fact that less than two months after the surrender of Japan the Soviet Union announced that she had decided to prolong the period of war reparation deliveries by Finland. A revised basic agreement was signed on December 31, 1945, and, although it did not reduce the total bill, it did signify an important alleviation of the war reparation burden by increasing the delivery period from six years to eight. As a result, the remaining annual schedules were reduced from $50,000,000 to $35,500,000 each, which meant a reduction of about 29 per

16 The most accurate account of the period discussed in the preceding paragraph is found in Auer, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-68 & 317-320.
There may have been another reason for this unexpected Soviet move. One does not usually kill the goose which lays the golden eggs, and the Soviet Union may have decided that it would be more profitable to keep the eggs coming than to discourage further efforts on the part of the goose. Finland had already reached the critical point. In addition to the extremely heavy reparation deliveries during the first stage, Finland had also been carrying other economic burdens of a similar nature. Under the terms of Article 14 of the Armistice Agreement, Finland was obliged to return to the Soviet Union "... in complete good order all valuables and materials removed from Soviet territory...."

The term 'Soviet territory' included, of course, the Karelian Isthmus and all other areas annexed by the Soviet Union in March 1940 and subsequently recaptured by Finland during the Continuation War, and property to be 'returned' included the personal possessions carried away by Karelians who had left their homes following the Armistice Agreement. Up to August 1945, goods valued at $28,100,000 had been delivered on this account, and by an agreement concluded in September the remaining obligation was fixed as $22,000,000.18 By the following May, approximately half of this amount had been paid off when, as a result of representations in Moscow

17 Auer, op. cit., pp. 72 & 321.
18 Finland Yearbook 1947, p. 881.
by the pro-Communist Prime Minister of Finland, Mr. Mauno Pekkala, the Soviet Government released Finland from any further payments under Article 14.\textsuperscript{19}

The surrender of war booty also constituted an extra burden on the Finnish economy during the first stage of the reparation deliveries. All war material of Germany and her satellites located on Finnish territory was to be transferred to the frontier of the Soviet Union, and the cost of collection, transport etc. reached about $12,000,000.\textsuperscript{20} And substantial claims were to follow later in connection with German assets in Finland.

In other words, if the Soviet Union seriously wanted Finland to be able to continue to meet the obligations of the basic agreement of December 17, 1944, an extension of the total delivery period was essential. That such an extension was not a new thought with the Soviet Government is shown by Stalin's statement at the Teheran Conference when he suggested that the Finns might be given "five to eight years" to pay.\textsuperscript{21} How urgently an alleviation was required as the second year of reparation deliveries got under way was underlined by the devaluation, on October 16, 1945, of the Finnish mark, the third devaluation in four months.\textsuperscript{22} Since Finland's reparations industries were

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{19} See Meinander, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 31-34.
\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Finland Yearbook 1947}, p. 89.
\textsuperscript{21} Churchill, \textit{Closing the Ring}, p. 400.
\textsuperscript{22} \textit{The New York Times}, October 17, 1945, p. 25.
\end{quote}
dependent upon foreign imports, and since such imports could only be paid for by exports of forest products, it was essential that such products be so priced that they could compete on the world market. Even with the reduction in the annual quotas as a result of the two-year extension, there were serious doubts in 'official circles' in Helsinki as to the chances of fulfilling the obligations to the Soviet Union. On October 24th, officials were reported to have said that only a $50,000,000 loan from abroad could tide Finland over.23 A month later Prime Minister Paasikivi told C. L. Sulzberger of The New York Times that Finland was seeking a $150,000,000 loan from the United States in the form of a long-term credit to assist her in recovering from the war and the heavy drain of reparations.24

The revised basic agreement opened the second stage of the Finnish reparation deliveries, a stage which was to last until June 30, 1948, or thirty months. During this stage Finland was to deliver about $64,200,000 worth of metal industry products and about $33,100,000 worth of forest products.25 The list of commodities to be delivered included 186 different items, 147 of which were machines and complete factory installations. Largely because of the predominance of metal industry products on the list the

24 Ibid., November 26, 1945, p. 11.
reduction of the annual load did not necessarily mean a smooth flow of deliveries. Shortages in industrial plant and skilled labour still resulted in delays, and delivery deficits within the machinery group became chronic.\textsuperscript{26} Deliveries of forest products were strikingly ahead of schedule during the entire second stage period, however, in a deliberate attempt to appease the Russians and in the hope that they might not request full payment of the rather substantial fines incurred by the metal industry. These hopes were also partly realized, as about one half of the fines accumulated by the beginning of February 1947 - $266,000 - were remitted by the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{27}

Attempts by Finland to have the Paris Peace Conference reduce the total amount of reparations were unsuccessful, however. The Finnish delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Carl Enckell, may have taken their cue from Molotov's speech at the plenary meeting on August 13, 1946, when he attacked Mr. De Gasperi of Italy for having concentrated on the territorial clauses of the Italian draft treaty rather than on the economic clauses, "although it is precisely these clauses that may affect the position of every worker, every peasant, every citizen of the Italian Republic and influence the entire future existence of the

\textsuperscript{26} See Auer, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 103 (chart 17).
\textsuperscript{27} Alenius, \textit{Finland efter vapenstilleståndet 1944}, pp. 39-40.
When Mr. Enckell addressed the conference two days later he said very little about the territorial clauses of the proposed treaty. In what was reported as "the mildest speech" made before the conference by a delegate of a former enemy state, he suggested that "it would be well" if his country's reparations bill could be reduced by one third. Although he went to great pains to compliment Stalin, the Soviet Union and Great Britain for the "great generosity" extended to Finland after the war, he also showed the cost of two wars to Finland and listed the inconveniences caused by the loss of territory to transportation and economic life as a whole. He also stated that Finland would have been unable to pay the reparations had it not been for credit extended by the United States, Sweden and other countries. Mr. Enckell's approach, although it appeared to follow Molotov's advice to the Italian Foreign Minister, met with no more success than that of Mr. De Gasperi. In an angry retort, which included a lecture on Finland's aggressive designs and actions against the Soviet Union since 1918, Molotov declared that "... in the matter of reparations the Soviet Union has met Finland's wishes to the utmost."

Guided by the desire to pursue a policy of goodwill towards a democratic Finland, and realizing that old


tsarist Russia had committed many a sin against little Finland, the Soviet Government restricted itself to laying the minimum reparations upon her, which compensate for only a small part of the enormous damage she caused.30 Nobody of any consequence cared to champion Finland's cause. On August 29th, the Peace Conference set a speed record when the Finnish Political and Territorial Commission approved the preamble and eleven of the twelve treaty clauses assigned to it in about three hours. The majority of the delegates were reported to have spent their time "reading newspapers or polishing their fingernails".31 The rest of the treaty, including the economic clauses, was approved in similar fashion. American protests were disregarded because the United States had not been at war with Finland. This ineffective American stand came in for a sharp attack by former president Herbert Hoover who, in a public statement, declared that the treatment accorded Finland was wholly unjustified and that the reparations claim against her, in proportion to her national wealth, "... would be equal in size to an indemnity of $200,000,000,000 upon the United States."32 Great Britain was not heard from, and the Australian delegation, the only one to make concrete proposals for an alleviation of the burden placed on Finland, came in for particularly violent and repeated attacks by

32 Ibid., October 14, 1946, p. 3.
Molotov. With the exception of Foreign Minister Enckell, the entire Finnish delegation, made up chiefly of left wing members of the Riksdag, returned home. In the words of Yrjö Leino, the Communist Minister of the Interior: "What is the use of staying? The Finland treaty is as good as passed by the conference." It was suggested in some quarters, however, that the Soviet Union might be prepared to scale down the amount of reparations should Finland be willing to make certain "political concessions". The future was to prove that these predictions were not far off the mark.

Finland laboured on under the unaltered burden imposed by the revised basic agreement of December 31, 1945. When the national budget for 1948 was brought down, the extraordinary items of reparations, resettlement of refugees and installment payments and interest on loans obtained to offset the worst effects of those two items, accounted for 53 per cent of all state expenditures. Only 47 per cent of the budget was allotted to so-called normal purposes. But the burden was soon to become substantially lighter. On June 3, 1948, the Soviet Minister in Helsinki, Lieut.-Gen. G. M. Savonenkov, informed Prime Minister Mauno Pekkala that

34 Ibid., November 13, 1946, p. 6.
the Soviet Union had decided to cancel half of the remaining reparations as of July 1st. In addition, the Soviet Union would grant Finland a loan of $5,000,000 which she could spend in whatever market she chose for the acquiring of needed raw materials. In a broadcast the same night, Moscow radio said that this step had been taken as a result of representations made the previous month by three Communist members of the Finnish Government. The timing of this important announcement suggests that the Soviet Government had not merely suddenly decided that the Finns deserved a pat on the back and a reward for a job so far well done. There were sound political reasons for the move. Six months earlier, the Finnish Communists had suffered a severe setback in nation-wide municipal elections. Out of more than ten thousand seats at stake, the Communist party had won less than two thousand, which signified a drastic decline in its popular backing. This was followed, in February 1948, by a personal request from Stalin that Finland and the Soviet Union conclude a treaty of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance, and such a treaty was signed on April 6th. However, the desired results did not ensue on the Finnish political scene. On the contrary, on May 19th the Riksdag passed a vote of non-confidence in the Communist Minister of the Interior, Mr. Leino, on the grounds that he had extradited a number of Finnish and foreign citizens to Russia, in 1945

without Cabinet authorization. When Leino failed to resign after the censure vote, he was dismissed by President Paasikivi on May 22nd. The Communists immediately ordered nation-wide strikes, but the action was an almost complete failure. With a Riksdag election coming up on July 1st and 2nd, the Communists had little reason to expect good results. The Soviet announcement of June 3rd would appear to be the most effective publicity they could have received, and it is difficult to imagine that the Soviet Government reached its generous decision entirely independent of the political situation in Finland. It is actually tempting to say that the decision was a $73,500,000 election bet that failed to pay off. When the ballots had been counted, the Communists and their sympathizers discovered that they had lost twelve seats to finish a poor third in the party standings.\(^{37}\)

The figures involved in the Soviet decision to reduce reparation deliveries were as follows:\(^{38}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliveries remaining June 30'48</th>
<th>Reduction %</th>
<th>Remaining after reduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Machines, installations etc.</td>
<td>$62,400,000</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New vessels</td>
<td>39,300,000</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable products</td>
<td>11,000,000</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper industry products</td>
<td>18,200,000</td>
<td>96.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodworking industry products</td>
<td>15,100,000</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other deliveries</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$147,000,000</strong></td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{37}\) Details of the political developments outlined in the preceding paragraph are given in chapter 6.

It is noteworthy that no alleviation was granted in the deliveries of new ships, and also that the deliveries of the engineering industries were reduced by less than one half. These two groups, which had been the main sources of difficulties to the Finns in meeting reparation payments, now, in the third stage of deliveries, were to account for almost 99 per cent of the total. However, the almost complete abolition of deliveries within the categories supplied by the forest industries did have an indirect effect on the production of goods still to be delivered in that Finland's surplus output of forest products could now be sold on the open world market. The extra foreign currency thus earned could be used to supply Finland's hard pressed engineering works with sufficient raw materials to meet the demands placed upon them without expensive delays. The results of this were obvious as the value of Finland's free exports during 1948 exceeded the previous year's by about 25 per cent.\footnote{See Pipping, Finlands näringsliv efter andra världskriget, p. 150. The term 'free exports' was used to distinguish the goods freely sold on the world market from those delivered to the Soviet Union as war reparations.} Another problem had to be coped with, however. During the first two stages of the reparation deliveries the quantitative fulfilment of the obligation had been the chief difficulty. During the third and last stage the quality aspect became the most serious problem. The Soviet inspectors now devoted particular attention to such matters as "... the
technical documents of the delivered commodities, their
designs, explanatory material, installation instructions,
analyse [sic7] certificates of the raw materials, the packaging
and related matters." Nevertheless, during the third
stage of deliveries Finland failed to meet the schedule
within the machinery group only once, and other delays were
rare and insignificant. Communist-led strikes during the
summer of 1949 and a two-months strike in the early fall of
1950 which completely paralyzed the production of machines
and steel ships seriously threatened the schedule, but ad­
vance deliveries prior to the strikes sufficed to fill the
gap. The fines which were incurred were remitted by the
Soviet Union. In fact, the Soviet Union had been consistently
lenient with respect to fines. The fines accumulated during
the first year of deliveries were paid in full by Finland.
During the second, third and fourth years the Soviet Union
cancelled most of the fines, and no fines were collected at
all during the last three delivery years. The total amount
paid in delay fines by Finland was only $800,000. Although
advance deliveries always exceeded delayed deliveries in
value, the fact remains that the Soviet Union, by the terms
of the various delivery agreements, was entitled to collect
the stipulated fines on all delayed deliveries regardless of
whether they were balanced by other deliveries or not.

40 Auer, op. cit., p. 325.
41 Ibid., p. 328.
With the treaty of peace signed and ratified and with the burden of reparations lightened considerably in 1948, the Finns were relieved of the terrible pressure of uncertainty and apprehension under which they had worked during the early postwar period. It was no longer a matter of whether they could pay the reparations or not, only a matter of time. The danger of economic servitude was a thing of the past. When the "golden schooner" was surrendered to the Soviet Union on September 19, 1952, to end the reparation deliveries, this was what Finland had turned over to her eastern neighbour as penalty for having lost the war:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New vessels</td>
<td>$66,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vessels from the merchant marine of 1944</td>
<td>14,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various machines and equipment</td>
<td>70,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable products</td>
<td>12,900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper industry products</td>
<td>34,900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodworking industry products</td>
<td>28,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$226,500,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total amount, a little more than a quarter of a billion dollars, may not seem very impressive. One must remember, however, that the currency in question can in no way be called American dollars. In reality it is an imaginary currency which is commonly referred to as "war indemnity dollars", generally regarded as corresponding to 2.5 American dollars in purchasing value. On that basis the Finnish reparation deliveries would slightly exceed three quarters of a billion American dollars, or approximately $185 for every

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Finnish man, woman and child. Professor Br. Suviranta of the Department of Economics at Helsinki University has calculated the value of the deliveries to be about $740,000,000 on the basis of the accountancy figures concerning government expenditure on the war indemnity. He believes, however, that the Finnish mark was probably overrated during the eight delivery years and that the actual book-keeping cost should have been about $570,000,000. This very conservative estimate was subsequently cited without comment by the secretary-general of SOTEVA, Mr. Olavi Lounasmeri. Professor John H. Wuorinen has claimed that "... there is reason for concluding that the sum will ultimately approximate $900,000,000 to $1,000,000,000. This estimate has undoubtedly taken into account many of the factors which would not appear on the books, such as the cost of establishing new industries to produce commodities for which there might be no market after the termination of the delivery period, etc. It might also include the


44 SOTEVA was the abbreviated and commonly used name for the coordinating body which administered the industries working on reparation orders.

45 Lounasmeri, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

'indirect reparations' such as the restoration of goods removed from Soviet territory, the collection and transportation costs in connection with the war booty claim, and the transfer of German property and other assets to the Soviet Union. In connection with the last case, it might be mentioned that Finland never received settlement for $122,000,000 worth of Finnish property and assets in Germany.

In 1944 the opinion prevailed that the war indemnity would be beyond Finland's capacity to pay. In September 1952 it seemed like a miracle that the task had been accomplished. Finland had delivered goods that would fill a freight train stretching from Pittsburgh to San Francisco. But, as Professor Suviranta has pointed out, "miracles do not occur in economic life, all phenomena having a natural explanation." The indemnity payments are no different. Professor Suviranta lists four factors among which the key to success should be sought: (1) the contribution of production, (2) favourable export conditions, (3) foreign capital and (4) alleviation of the indemnity plan. Labour peace prevailed almost without interruption during the entire period of deliveries. The workers, the technical staff and the employers all went to work immediately after the assignment had been given, refusing to give in to

48 Suviranta, op. cit., p. 4.
discouragement, and they all performed their tasks with distinction. The whole production effort was organized in an excellent manner by SOTEVA, which employed a staff of 520 at its peak in 1948. Exports were at a very low level at the end of the war and the terms of trade were exceptionally adverse, but after 1946 they were consistently better than they had been shortly before World War II. The following figures will illustrate the postwar development:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Volume of commercial exports 1935 = 100</th>
<th>Terms of trade 1935 = 100</th>
<th>Percentage ratio of war indemnity to total exports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>97</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thanks to these favourable export conditions Finland was able, by the end of 1951, to reduce her indebtedness to an amount less than that which she carried at the outset of the indemnity period. In other words, the foreign loans which had kept her alive during the first difficult stage of the reparation deliveries had been made up for by her own production; all liabilities forced on her as a result

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50 Lounasmeri, op. cit., p. 23.

51 Compiled from Pipping, op. cit., p. 150; Suviranta, op. cit., p. 4; Auer, op. cit., p. 243.

52 Suviranta, op. cit., p. 5.
of the war had been discharged. But an appalling amount of wealth had been drained out of the country to accomplish that stupendous task. Prime Minister Urho Kekkonen undoubtedly had this in mind when, in a message on the occasion of the completion of the reparation deliveries, he used the following rather reserved words: "We have good reason to be morally satisfied. We now have better possibilities than before to satisfy our domestic needs." Foreign Minister Sakari Tuomioja said pointedly that he hoped the fulfilment of the debt obligations would appear "... even in the Soviet's eyes as convincing proof of our will to live up to our agreements."53

Finland had again managed to do the 'impossible'. The question now was whether the Soviet Union intended to continue as a major customer of the Finnish export industry - but as a paying one. A great deal depended on the answer to that question.

CHAPTER VI

THE STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL, 1944-1947

Nobody in Finland had expected that peace could be purchased cheaply. The Finns had experience in buying peace for themselves at Soviet prices. Yet they were taken aback completely as the real impact of the 1944 Armistice Agreement began to make itself felt during the last months of that eventful year. One might have thought that the economic burdens resulting from the cession of vital territories, the destruction of Lapland and the war indemnity claim would have been regarded as sufficient punishment even by the Soviet Union. But this was not the case. During the period of uncertainty between the armistice and the signing of the final peace treaty the political burden weighed almost as heavily on the Finns as did the economic obligations. One observer called the political obligations assumed by Finland "... the most formidable problem of all."¹

Basically, that obligation can be summed up very briefly: the establishment of good relations with the Soviet Union. Such an obligation may not appear to be a very difficult one to meet; it may even seem to be one which the Finns should be only too happy to honour, since the establishment of good relations with their neighbours to the east had always been the basic problem in Finnish foreign policy. However, the Finns had not forgotten that in the past the expenses connected with such a state of affairs had regularly been charged to them. In the fall of 1939 they had been informed that they could improve Finnish-Soviet relations by handing over a strip of land on the Karelian Isthmus and some islands in the Gulf of Finland. In March 1940 the price for the same commodity had risen sharply. During the 1940-41 interval a never-ending stream of installments were asked of them on the 'good relations' account, including the granting of diplomatic immunity and free movement to Soviet consular personnel who subsequently engaged in espionage, the acceptance of Soviet instructions as to who must not run for public office, and a long list of other items. What the Soviet Union would demand of them now that there was no possibility of outside intervention in their behalf, the Finns could only guess, and they had no reason to believe that the demands would be any more favourable than they had been in the past.

Good relations with the Soviet Union had now become an absolute prerequisite for continued Finnish
independence. As Dr. Kekkonen put it in an urgent radio appeal on September 25th, less than one week after the conclusion of the Armistice Agreement:

A person who has not yet come to realize what political requirements our new position presupposes, and who has not been able to free himself of the effects of inherited views, will surely say ... that we have no possibilities of winning the trust of the Soviet Union. To that one must answer that the winning of that trust and the creation of neighbourly relations are still the only way which can safeguard our independence. There is no question of two or more alternatives but only of one.  

To free themselves of "inherited views" which had been strengthened by two catastrophic wars in five years was certainly no easy assignment for the Finns, and yet it was clearly of paramount importance that they at least act as if their opinions on the Soviet Union had been suddenly and drastically changed, as if the bitter experiences of generations had been entirely forgotten, as if Soviet policies and demands were perfectly suitable and just. They would have to carry this new attitude with them even into the polling booths, because it was essential that Finland had a government which would be friendly to the Soviet Union and accepted as such by Moscow. And at the same time, if the efforts of the past quarter of a century were not to be wasted, it was essential that the appeasement of Moscow should not be carried so far that Finland might

inadvertently cross the fine and not too clearly drawn line that separated her from sharing the fate of her small neighbours across the gulf to the south. It was no accident that Finland gradually came to be likened to a tightrope artist.\textsuperscript{3}

One of the first consequences of the armistice was the appearance in Helsinki of Soviet police, which caused a near panic. Fantastic sums were paid for passage to Sweden, and a number of suicides were reported as rumours had it that "... anyone who had ever spoken to a German would be purged."\textsuperscript{4} The hysteria soon died down, but it had served as an indication of how basic was the Finnish fear of the Soviet Union and how touchy was the problem facing the Finnish Government with respect to the establishment of friendly relations with Moscow. This was also demonstrated by the initial difficulty in finding a man to take over as Prime Minister from the incapacitated Hackzell. The President of the Supreme Administrative Court, Mr. Urho J. Castren, accepted the task on September 21st but named no Communists as members of his government. Seven weeks later he was forced to resign when the two most powerful Social Democrats in his government left, claiming that the


cabinet was incapable of solving the burning problems of the day. Out of this crisis came the political stability - as far as political stability could be achieved - that Finland was in such dire need of. On November 17th a new cabinet was announced, headed by the man who more than anyone else could hope to command both the loyalty of his own people and the confidence and cooperation of the Soviet Union, Dr. Juho Paasikivi. His list of Ministers included, for the first time in Finnish history, members of the Communist party. Together the Social Democrats and the Communists held seven of the portfolios, seven were held by representatives of the parties of the right and two by 'expert' Ministers. The primary objective of his government, said Dr. Paasikivi, would be "... to work in mutual understanding with the Soviet Union and meticulously to fulfill the armistice terms." He added, however, that "... Finland will uphold her democratic Constitution which is based on her sovereignty and her right to self-government," and he warned that "... the Communist party, like other parties, will act in accordance with prevailing laws." 

The line had been drawn, and it was made very clear that no deviation could be allowed. In an Independence Day speech on December 6, 1944, Prime Minister Paasikivi stressed the point again when he declared that if

5 Alenius, Finland efter vapenstilleståndet 1944, p. 14.
Finland were to build a peaceful and happy future for herself, her foreign policy must never be allowed to cross the path of the Soviet Union. This exhortation was repeated by President Mannerheim who, in his year-end message, emphasized that Finland faced an extremely difficult period and that "unity and self-discipline" were essential if the Finns wished to "... survive the storms and guarantee the existence and future of our independent State." This policy, which soon became popularly known as the 'Paasikivi line' and which has been defined as "against no state, under certain circumstances for the Soviet Union, Scandinavia in a special position," was generally accepted by the vast majority of Finland's population as a sine qua non, and its success was so conspicuous that a foreign observer could write only a few weeks after its proclamation that:

Since the Premiership of Finland was taken over on Nov. 17 by Juho K. Paasikivi, Finland's more or less professional arbiter with the Russians, relations between Helsinki and Moscow have become extraordinarily smooth. The Soviet press has not only stopped thundering against the former enemy but has actually paid tribute on several occasions to the sincerity with which Finland is fulfilling the armistice conditions.

One might question whether a foreigner, visiting Finland

7 Alenius, op. cit., p. 16.
only briefly in order to get material for a story, could correctly gauge the Finnish political climate. Undoubtedly the above description was correct as a surface analysis only. The political scene was definitely remarkably quiet, but it was the kind of quiet which may be followed by a storm. The basic Finnish distrust of anything Russian had not disappeared overnight in spite of the decidedly correct attitude displayed by members of the Allied (Soviet) Control Commission. But under the Armistice Agreement the Control Commission nevertheless held wide powers over Finnish internal affairs, and it was only by carrying out the wishes expressed by the Control Commission that the Finnish Government could avoid direct Soviet interference. The whip was always there, and it might be employed against the Finns any time the Soviet Union so desired. With those reservations in mind, Finnish-Soviet relations might well be described as "extraordinarily smooth".

The most immediate problem confronting Paasikivi's government was that of election to the Riksdag. The sitting Riksdag, which had been compromised in Russian eyes because of the support it had given the government during the war, would as a matter of course have to be replaced, and it was essential that the new Riksdag be so composed that it meet with Soviet approval. The Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe, signed by the 'Big Three' on February 11, 1945, and issued on February 12th, said in part:
The establishment of order in Europe and the rebuilding of national economic life must be achieved by processes which will enable the liberated peoples to destroy the last vestiges of Nazism and Fascism and to create democratic institutions of their own choice.11

The victors also reserved the right to take the necessary steps to achieve such order if the liberated or former Nazi satellite states failed to do it on their own. The Finns, knowing from experience how such phrases as "Nazism", "Fascism" and "democratic institutions" were defined in Moscow, feared the "processes" which the Russians might institute by authority of the Yalta Declaration. As an American historian wrote twelve years later:

> It is hard to judge whether either Soviet or British governments shared the sense of the American formulators that its principles might govern events. Its loose net of phrases allowed easy passage to any determined purpose. ... What would happen if the people of one of the countries on Soviet frontiers elected a government actively opposed to the Soviet Union?12

The Finns were asking themselves the same question in the winter of 1944-45, and they thought they had a fairly good idea of what the answer would be. In a broadcast speech entitled "After the Yalta Conference", held two weeks before the election, Mr. Eero A. Vuori, labour leader and Social

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Democratic Minister of Communications, called attention to the Yalta Declaration and drew some pertinent conclusions from it. "According to the Yalta Conference definition, Finland is an ex-Nazi satellite," he pointed out, and he called for Finns who "held responsible positions in directing cooperation with the Nazis" to "draw aside" from the political scene even if "they are not tried as war guilty".\textsuperscript{13} Vuori's speech was regarded as Moscow-inspired by foreign observers,\textsuperscript{14} but that was hardly true in the usual sense. Since the entire political situation in Finland could be described as "Moscow-inspired", Vuori's warning was merely a logical derivative and probably inspired by Paasikivi if by anyone at all. Whatever the source of inspiration, Vuori's speech was underlined a few days later when Pravda, discussing the imminent election, asked whether the complete victory "... of the principles adopted at the Crimea Conference" would result. It added that "... the present elections are not to be considered an internal affair of the Finns" and concluded by saying that "some leaders must understand that friendship with the Soviet Union is the main guarantee of Finnish independence."\textsuperscript{15} It would have been difficult to state more clearly what was at stake in the election, but Izvestia nevertheless tried. On the very eve

\textsuperscript{14} See Ibid., March 4, 1945, p. 19.  
\textsuperscript{15} Quoted in Ibid., March 13, 1945, p. 8.
of the election, it impressed upon the Finns once more the necessity of making a clean break with their "anti-Soviet past and promote cooperation with the Soviet Union":

The results of the election will show whether Finland is determined to eradicate all traces of fascism from their midst and thereby gain the right to readmission in the family of peace-loving peoples.

As a pointed piece of information for the Finnish voters, Izvestia added that the Democratic Union of the Finnish People was the "nucleus of progressive democratic thought in the country". And as if all this was not enough, Prime Minister Paasikivi in a stirring broadcast speech the same day warned his people that the election would be their supreme and, by implication, last chance to put matters right with the Soviet Union. Seldom has a nation had a comparably crucial issue facing it on an election day.

The party lineup before the election showed two changes since the 1939 election. The ultra-conservative I.K.L. party, an offshoot of the Lapua movement, which had contested elections in the 1930's without much success, was banned in accordance with Article 21 of the Armistice Agreement as a "pro-Hitlerite organization", while organized Communism reappeared after a fifteen years' imposed absence from the political scene. The program and the name of the

17 Loc. cit.
new Communist party differed from its revolutionary pre­
decessor. Communism had now assumed an aura of respectability
and the Communist party, on the background of the 'Paasikivi
line' policy, a sense of responsibility. However, it did
not feel strong enough to appeal to the voters under its
own label, and it contested the election under the banner
of the Democratic Union of the Finnish People (S.K.D.L.),
a combination which included a number of fellow-travellers
and a group which had split with the Social Democratic Party
and formed the Socialist Unity Party. Prominent in this
latter group were the members of the so-called Group of Six
who had been arrested during the Continuation War because
of their articulate opposition to the government. The leader
of this group was Mauno Pekkala, who later was to succeed
Paasikivi as Prime Minister.

Otherwise the election was contested by the trad­
itional Finnish political parties: the Social Democratic
Party, the Agrarian Party, the National Unity Party, the
Of these, all but the Social Democratic Party could be des­
cribed as center or conservative parties. Their repre­
sentation in the Riksdag after the 1939 election had been
85, 56, 25, 6 and 18 respectively, while other parties had
held 10 seats. 18

18 Göran von Bonsdorff, Våra politiska partier, Helsingfors,
Söderström, 1951, p. 45.
On March 17th and 18th the Finns cast their ballots. When the final results had been tabulated, the conservative elements in the country still held a parliamentary majority but by the slightest of margins. Between them, the Agrarian Party (49), the National Unity Party (28), the Swedish People's Party (14) and the National Progressive Party (9) had 101 seats to 99 for the Social Democratic Party (50) and the Democratic Union of the Finnish People (49). The conservative parties had polled 51.4 per cent of the popular vote. The Social Democratic Party, from which had come some of the strongest opposition to the Soviet Union and to Finnish Communist elements in the past, had been supported by 25.1 per cent of the electorate, while the Communists and their sympathizers could only account for 23.5 per cent of the total vote, or less than one in four. However, this still represented a remarkable advance for the extreme left since the Communists had never polled more than 14.8 per cent of the vote during the 1920's when they were still enjoying full political rights.

Since all the compromised war-time leaders had been prevented from standing for election, and since the conservative parties had seen to it that their candidates were acceptable in Russian eyes, the outcome of the election

19 Bonsdorff, Våra politiska partier, p. 34.
20 That result was achieved in the 1922 election. Loc. cit.
was tacitly approved by the Soviet Union and its Control Commission in Helsinki. Furthermore, on April 13th the Social Democratic, People's Democratic (the Democratic Union of the Finnish People was commonly referred to as the People's Democratic Party) and the Agrarian Riksdag groups issued a joint declaration proclaiming their intention to work together within the framework of a stated program, the basis of which was that Finland's foreign policy be based on the declarations of the Allied Powers in order that peace and independence of the country might be preserved. Finland's relations with all democratic states, and particularly with the Soviet Union, must be placed on a frank basis, marked by mutual confidence and friendship, the three-party proclamation continued, and it called for a close cultural and commercial relationship with the same contacts, first of all with the Soviet Union and Scandinavia. The proclaimed goals of this 'red-green bloc', as the new political grouping came to be known, with respect to domestic policies were also of a nature which were designed to placate the Soviet Union. As if further assurances were needed, President Mannerheim told the new Riksdag as it was convened on April 7th that Finland's task was to "... create lasting friendly relations, founded on common interests and mutual

21 The so-called 'Allied (Soviet) Control Commission' was so exclusively under Soviet control that the word 'Allied' might as well have been left out.

22 Alenius, op. cit., pp. 18-20.
confidence, with the Soviet Union."\(^{23}\) Prime Minister Paasikivi told the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter that "... in the future, Finnish policy will never again run counter to the interests of the Soviet Union. The Finnish people will incline even further in the direction of the Soviet Union in their political orientation."\(^{24}\)

Paasikivi's second government was formed on April 17th. Of the eighteen portfolios, six were held by People's Democrats, including three declared Communists; the Social Democrats and Agrarians held four portfolios each and the National Progressives one, while two 'expert' Ministers were included. Paasikivi himself had relinquished his ties with the National Unity Party, which he once led, and professed no party connections. By a strange coincidence the National Unity Party, when the Swedish People's Party shortly after joined the government, became the only party formally in opposition.\(^{25}\) The People's Democrats thus had the strongest representation in Finland's government in spite of their position in the party standings in the Riksdag, a situation which forestalled any possible criticism on that point. Furthermore, among the Ministries controlled by


\(^{24}\) As quoted in a Finnish radio broadcast and reported in ibid., March 21, 1945, p. 3.

\(^{25}\) A complete list of Finnish ministries from Paasikivi's second government of April 17, 1945, to Kekkonen's third government of September 20, 1951, is given in Valros, Finland efter år 1946, pp. 79-84.
them was the Ministry of the Interior, which was headed by Communist Yrjö Leino, the husband of Otto Kuusinen's daughter, Hertta Kuusinen. Since the Ministry of the Interior had come to be regarded as a most suitable springboard for the preparation of revolts because of its control of the police and internal security, the news of Leino's appointment was received with apprehension both in Finland and abroad.

The appointment of Aino Altona, Chairman of the Finnish Communist Party, to the position of assistant chief of the political police, did not help matters. Moscow-trained, Mr. Altona had entered Finland on a forged passport in 1934, was caught and sentenced for high treason and remained in prison until the armistice in 1944. The appointments of Leino and Altona were particularly ominous when viewed in connection with Article 13 of the Armistice Agreement which obligated Finland to "... collaborate with the Allied powers in the apprehension of persons accused of war crimes and in their trial." In an election speech Mr. Vuori, who was to hold four different positions in Paasikivi's new government, had declared that three main tasks would face the government, and the first two of them were the clean-up of fascist elements and the question of war criminals. With Leino and Altona guiding the execution of these tasks nobody needed to doubt that the Soviet Union would be satisfied.

The weeding out of organizations and other elements in Finnish life which the Control Commission labeled as fascist was started soon after the armistice had been concluded. In fulfillment of the agreement, the Riksdag promptly enacted a law authorizing the government to dissolve all "pro-Hitlerite" organizations, and by October 15th the Soviet news agency Tass could announce that about 400 such organizations had been dissolved. On November 5th the Home Defence Corps was disbanded for the same reason, and the Comrades in Arms, Finland's veterans' organization with a membership of close to half a million former soldiers, was ordered dissolved before the March election.

Having done away with 'fascist' organizations, attention was concentrated on individuals, particularly on officers of the Finnish army. On October 24th, the Control Commission ordered the arrest of twenty officers on war crimes charges, and some "startling seizures" were reported to have been made. Two days later a list of sixty 'war criminals' was submitted to the Finnish authorities by the Control Commission. Heading the list were Major-General Pajari, who had just successfully completed the extremely daring Finnish landing at Tornio behind the German lines.

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29 Ibid., January 1, 1945, p. 3.
30 Ibid., October 25, 1944, p. 5.
which saved the cities of Tornio and Kemi from the
devastation which was meted out to the rest of northern
Finland, and Major-General Palojärvi, former Finnish military
attaché in Stockholm. Colonel Palohéimo, who had been a
member of Hackzell's 'peace government' and who was a
personal friend of Mannerheim, was also on the list along
with other prominent men. Yet this was only a small
beginning. The purge did not really get under way until
Yrjö Leino took control of the Ministry of the Interior.
Early in May a secret arms cache was discovered near Oulu,
and a thorough search subsequently unearthed hidden weapons
all over the country. Investigations revealed that the
concealment of these arms had been organized by high-ranking
officers of the General Staff, and a large number of officers
were quickly rounded up and detained by Leino's police.
The affair caused a sensation when Leino announced it in
the Riksdag on July 4th. Arrests continued throughout 1945
and 1946 until more than 6,000 persons had been examined
and 1,450 of them detained for a longer or shorter period.
All the chiefs of the Finnish General Staff since the
armistice were among those arrested. President Mannerheim,
who had remained as Commander-in-Chief of the Army until
December 31, 1944, and General Heinrichs, who had succeeded
him, were both cleared of any connection with the affair,

32 Alenius, op. cit., p. 29.
but the latter nevertheless had to resign his post as a result of it. Not until March 28, 1947, was the military plot brought before the courts as the trial of twenty-two staff officers opened on charges of having formed a secret army to fight the Soviet Union "... if war broke out between her and the western powers." The trials dragged on for the rest of the year, and it was not until April 1948 that the case was closed with the conviction of most of the officers, some of them generals. Another top officer who went to prison during the regime of Leino was Lieut.-General Karl Lennart Oesch, who had been Chief of the General Staff from 1939 to 1940 and Commander-in-Chief of the powerful Karelian Army during the Continuation War. As a result of the latter circumstance, he was ordered arrested by the Control Commission as a war criminal and, in July 1946, convicted and sentenced to twelve years at hard labour on charges of having ordered harsh treatment of Russian prisoners of war. In May 1947 his sentence was reduced to three years.

In spite of the sensationalism surrounding the arms concealment affair and the general purge of army officers, the most serious purge was on another level.

The Soviet interpretation of the phrase "persons accused of war crimes", contained in Article 13 of the Armistice Agreement, defined such persons as (1) those accused of crimes committed during the conduct of the war and (2) those responsible for leading Finland into the war against the Soviet Union. The obligation to purge these two groups was repugnant to any self-respecting Finn, and for a time it was hoped that at least the task of prosecuting the war-time leaders might be avoided. As early as January 31, 1945, Prime Minister Paasikivi had appealed to "... those persons who, during the last few years, have held leading positions in political life or in a more prominent way have influenced that policy which led to a fateful result and was contrary to the interests of the country...", asking them to withdraw from political activity.36 Most of the persons to whom this appeal was directed quietly relinquished their political connections, although some of them waited as long as five or six months, and it might have been theirs and Paasikivi's hope that by so removing themselves the Control Commission would leave them alone and not compel the government to prosecute them. The question of war responsibility was handed over to a committee for investigation on February 4th in the hope that it might be cleared up without too many difficulties. The committee, headed by a very well known figure in Finnish public life, the historian Eirik Hornborg, submitted a lengthy report at the end of July. It criticized

the manner in which the Germans had been allowed into Finland in 1940, reprimanded those who had called for the annexation of East Karelia, and condemned the Ryti-Ribbentrop agreement as unconstitutional, but no individual was singled out as having acted contrary to Finnish law. The document was historical in its approach and did not go into the legal aspect of the question at all. On this the opinion was asked of former President Ståhlberg, Finland's foremost consultant on constitutional law, who stated that anyone who had made lawful decisions regarding law and peace in accordance with the Finnish Constitution could not be charged with them. This meant that Finland's war-time leaders could not be prosecuted unless the Riksdag passed legislation with retroactive powers, a thing which would be repugnant to all principles of Finnish jurisprudence.37

The question was not allowed to rest, however. The respite afforded by the concentration on "pro-Hitlerite" organizations during the last months of 1944 and by the election in March 1945 had only been a postponement. Finland's Communists were clamouring for the establishment of people's tribunals empowered to deal out summary justice,38 and the delaying tactics of the government was becoming conspicuous. It did not pacify the Communists that former Prime Minister Linkomies defended his war-time policy in an


article in the newspaper *Uusi Suomi* on July 5th,\(^{39}\) or that the news leaked out on July 17th that the Hornborg Committee had cleared Tanner of any guilt for Finland's policy.\(^{40}\) On July 14th, the Chairman of the Control Commission, General Zhdanov, returned to Helsinki from a two weeks' stay in Moscow and immediately requested Paasikivi to call on him. Five days later it was made known that Finland was speeding up preparations for trying her "war responsibles".\(^{41}\) In the world press speculations mounted as to who would be charged, what the charges would be, and how the accused would be tried. There was no possibility of instituting proceedings under existing Finnish laws, just as it would have been impossible to institute proceedings under the laws of any democratic country. But proceedings had to be instituted. After Zhdanov's démarche of July 14th, Paasikivi had been forced to abandon all hopes of avoiding the prosecution of Finland's former leaders, and he decided that the national interest required speed and vigour in carrying out the distasteful task.

The only solution to the legal problem was to create a new court invested with the powers necessary to try the "war responsibles". The Constitutional Committee of the Riksdag was consequently given the job of formulating a


\(^{40}\) Ibid., July 18, 1945, p. 15.

\(^{41}\) Ibid., July 20, 1945, p. 7.
bill which would meet the situation. The Committee went to its task with its hands practically tied, and the bill almost precipitated a government crisis when it was submitted to the Riksdag on August 23rd after two postponements. President Mannerheim, whose signature was required on the bill before it could be submitted, writes in his memoirs that "My first impulse, when the proposition was produced for my signature, was to refuse to submit it to Parliament.... After careful consideration I decided that all I could do was to introduce a few alterations, which made the proposed stipulations slightly less repugnant." Paragraph 1 of the proposed act provided for imprisonment with hard labour for "... individuals who had in a decisive way contributed to Finland joining with Germany in the war of 1941 against the Socialist Soviet Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and who, during the course of the war, had prevented the conclusion of peace." As altered by Mannerheim, the act would apply only to those who had been guilty of such crimes as members of the government; prosecution could only be ordered by the Attorney-General; and the general rules regarding the Presidential prerogative of pardon should apply. The President's sharp

42 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 508.
43 As quoted in loc. cit.
44 Loc. cit. According to the report received by The New York Times, August 22, 1945, p. 10, this was the first time that a Finnish President had changed a formulation presented to him by the government.
reaction was typical of Finnish reaction in general. In the Riksdag, thirty members took part in the impassioned debate, seeking other ways out of the dilemma. But, as one member of the Cabinet stated, only two ways were available: (1) to have the "war responsibles" tried and punished immediately, or (2) leave the matter up to the Soviet Union. The government was not prepared to take the consequences of the second alternative, and the passage of the bill was made a matter of confidence in the Cabinet in spite of the fact that constitutional changes required a five-sixths majority.

Although the Riksdag debate was a long and impassioned one, the great majority of the deputies realized that the Soviet Union must not be provoked. The speech of Mr. Österholm of the Swedish People's Party may be described as an epitome of most of the speeches delivered during the debate:

It is an occurrence which can have dangerous consequences for the future, and it does not place our country and its legal system in an advantageous light. But in spite of all this and the many other objections and doubts which could be applied against the Bill, it is not possible to place oneself in opposition to it. It expresses a political necessity brought about by Finland's present position, a direct result of the Armistice Agreement, and in general is connected with what is taking place in other countries in the same or similar position as Finland after the war. The Government and the Riksdag are in this case forced to hand down an inheritance of the war, one of its many difficult and heavy bills. It is not a simplification of the problem to say that fundamentally the choice is between two alternatives. One is the measure
proposed in the Bill. The other involves complications of wide consequence in foreign relations. These complications are of such a nature that they submerge the reluctancies. The choice is a heavy one, but it has to be made.\(^{45}\)

During the debate, Paasikivi stressed that his government would do everything it could to make the list of "war responsibles" as short as possible and the sentences as light as possible. Asked its opinion on the proposed measure, the Supreme Court stated that the bill contained "... so many basic deviations from our form of government and from universally recognized principles of law that the Bill, from a juridical point of view, cannot be considered reconcilable with the customs of our State."\(^{46}\)

This opinion drew a strong objection from the Control Commission which had a statement published in the newspapers on September 6th, saying in part:

> The Control Commission consider the opinions incorrect both in form and in point of view. In form these opinions are contrary to law, in so far as neither the Supreme Court, nor the Constitutional Committee of the Riksdag are entitled to interpret Article 13 of the agreement any more than the other articles of the Armistice Agreement.

The statement went on to say that "Article 13 of the agreement gives Finland the right and full possibility to arrest and sentence the persons charged with war crimes...", which was clearly a thinly veiled warning that this right

\(^{45}\) Jan-Magnus Jansson, Grundlagsutskottets funktioner vid Riksdagarna 1939-1952, Helsingfors, Centraltryckeriet, 1954, pp. 139-140.

\(^{46}\) Ibid., p. 141.
was a privilege which could be taken away unless duly exercised.\textsuperscript{47} After this intervention by the Control Commission the outcome of the Riksdag debate was a foregone conclusion, and the bill was passed on September 11th by a vote of 129 to 12.\textsuperscript{48} Fifty-nine members did not cast their votes at all. The passage of the bill paved the way for the creation of a Special Court of fifteen, which included the president of the Supreme Court, the president of the Administrative Court, a representative of the Faculty of Law of Helsinki University, and twelve members elected by the Riksdag.\textsuperscript{49}

The trial opened in Helsinki on November 16th in the presence of members of the Control Commission, who were to attend faithfully throughout. The defendants were former President Ryti, former Prime Ministers Rangell and Linkomies, former Finance Ministers Tanner and Reinikka, former Foreign Minister Ramsay, former Education Minister Kukkonen, and former Minister in Berlin Kivimäki. Outside the courtroom, a student demonstration in favour of the accused developed, and police had to clear Helsinki's main square of thousands of people.\textsuperscript{50} Inside, Ryti's

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{47} Jansson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 145.
\item \textsuperscript{48} \textit{The New York Times}, September 12, 1945, p. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{49} Alenius, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 28.
\item \textsuperscript{50} \textit{The New York Times}, November 16, 1945, p. 9.
\end{itemize}
defence attorney, former Minister in Washington Hjalmar Procope, declared that he considered it to be his "holy duty" to defend Ryti, because he considered himself and the whole Finnish people just as 'guilty' as the former President.\textsuperscript{51} The main points in the charges were that the defendants had maintained Finland in a virtual state of war during the period between the Winter War and the Continuation War and that President Ryti had signed the Ryti-Ribbentrop agreement.

The first stage of the trial lasted only three days, the time required for the prosecution to present the charges. On November 17th, after hours of deliberation, the Court decided that evidence so far produced did not provide sufficient grounds for keeping some of the defendants in jail, and Tanner, Reinikka, Kukkonen and Kivimäki were consequently released until the trial resumed on December 10th. Tanner was reported to look "extremely cheerful" as he listened to the prosecutor accusing him of having used his leading position within the Social Democratic Party to influence the working class and public opinion generally.\textsuperscript{52} His fighting spirit lasted as long as the trial did, and capacity audiences always attended when he was scheduled to speak. On December 17th, he charged that the charges against him were tantamount to a drive against the Social Democratic Party inspired by party

\textsuperscript{51} The New York Times, November 17, 1945, p. 6.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., December 11, 1945, p. 10.
politics - a remark meant for the dissident Social Democrats and Communists who sat on the Court, and he asserted that the Finnish people neither wanted nor needed the trial which was being influenced "from outside". "I have always been a red rag both to Moscow and Berlin," he shouted. Ryti also used heavy artillery. His defence speech took three days, and it pulled no punches in reiterating the claim that Finland had been attacked by the Soviet Union in June 1941 and that she had waged a separate war. Police visited all Helsinki editorial offices after the first day of his speech to make certain that no word of it was printed, and the prosecutor asked the Court to rule that the speech jeopardized Finland's relations with a foreign power, a demand which was turned down after two hours' deliberation. The presiding judge, holding a copy of the speech, interrupted Ryti frequently, however, ordering him to omit a number of points that evidently were deemed too dangerous.

The trial ended on February 2, 1946. The judgment, announced on February 21st, found all eight defendants guilty. Ryti was sentenced to ten years at hard labour, Rangell to six years imprisonment, Tanner and Linkomies to five and a half years, Kivimäki to five years, Ramsay to two and a half years, and Reinikka and Kukkonen to two years. Newspapers were warned not to carry commentaries on the

54 Ibid., December 13, 1945, p. 13.
trial and its outcome that might jeopardize relations with the Soviet Union, and the result was that only the leftist press had editorials. Procope claimed that the possibility for defence was limited because Finnish-Soviet relations were involved. The political nature of the trial was beyond doubt, and the comparatively mild sentences represented nothing but a compromise, since conviction was inescapable. In the words of one foreign editorial writer: "Their crime consisted in waging war against Russia and losing it."

Less than two weeks later President Mannerheim resigned for reasons of health. He had turned the duties of his office over to Prime Minister Paasikivi on October 19th and left shortly after for a rest cure in Sweden and Portugal. As his absence from the country coincided with the "war responsibles" trial, some commentators preferred to see a sinister connection between the two events, particularly since some of the charges presented by the prosecution involved him. His illness was real enough, however, and when he had a relapse after his return to Finland he decided that he would not be able to resume the full burden of the presidency. In his letter of resignation he also pointed out that "... I considered that the task which had induced me to accept the position of Head of State had,

56 Ibid., p. 24.
so far as concerned me, been accomplished, as now even
the trial of those accused of responsibility for the war
had ended."

Five days later, on March 9th, Paasikivi was elected President to complete the unexpired term of Mannerheim.

The resignation of Mannerheim signalled a further swing to the left in Finland's political tightrope act. The 'red-green bloc' remained operative as the new government was formed, headed by a People's Democrat, Mauno Pekkala, whose party held seven portfolios to five each for the Social Democrats and Agrarians and one for the Swedish People's Party. The post of Foreign Minister was retained by Carl Enckell, who belonged to no party. The real power in the country was still Paasikivi, however, and it was by his intuition and skill that the continued struggle for independence succeeded. The pressure was by no means off. The burden of war reparations was eased on December 31, 1945, but the Soviet claim to German property and assets more than offset that. The refugee resettlement problem was still very acute, and there was the reconstruction of Lapland to accomplish. And there were the actions of the Control Commission and of Leino, who remained as Minister of the Interior in Pekkala's government. Next to Zhdanov, he was probably the most dangerous threat to Finland's

57 Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 512.
independence on the Finnish political scene. His powers had been increased by virtue of a decree of January 1946 which stated in part:

A person exercising, or about whom there is sound reason to believe he intends to exercise, activity harmful to the country's defense or its relations with foreign powers can be ordered from his place of residence, to take up residence at another specified locality or reside at a specified locality, there to be submitted to special surveillance or, if these measures prove insufficient, taken into protective custody. Such measures may not be appealed against. 58

An all-out drive against all rightist organizations was started by the Ministry of the Interior. One of the victims was the conservative student club at Helsinki University which was ordered dissolved and some of its members seized - they were released after questioning - following the heckling of the May Day parade in 1946. 59 Action frequently followed 'spontaneous' demonstrations by Communist crowds, demanding a more thorough purge of 'anti-democratic elements'. Leino was only too pleased to accommodate them. His feats did not go entirely unnoticed. In November 1946 a heated 24-hour debate and a vote of confidence followed demands in the Riksdag for an explanation of methods employed by the secret political police. The vote was won by 93 to 72 as 35 members refrained from voting. 60

59 Ibid., May 18, 1946, p. 6.
60 Ibid., November 6, 1946, p. 17.
Leino was still a rather dangerous business, even though it was clear to most people that his police was becoming more and more a tool of the Communist Party. Nevertheless, direct Soviet pressure was becoming less severe. By July 1946 the right to criticize appeared to have been partly restored to the Finnish press, and foreign correspondents had less troubles with censorship. Another kind of censorship was introduced, however, as all references uncomplimentary to the Russians, past and present, were ordered removed from public monuments. In December, following the appearance of certain articles critical of the Soviet Union, Prime Minister Pekkala called a meeting of newspaper editors and warned them that his government could not guarantee the continued freedom of the press but was obliged to follow the directives of the Control Commission. A weekly newspaper was banned permanently the next day, and the large daily Helsingin Sanomat received a warning.

The political picture was not entirely gloomy, however. Each day widened the distance from the armistice day and brought closer the day when the armistice obligations

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61 The New York Times, December 7, 1946, p. 6. One monument commemorating the victory of Field Marshal Johan August Sandels over the Russians at the village of Pukkila in 1808, bore the following inscription: "Here Sandels With His Men Defeated the Russian Devils." The last two words were removed and the word "Russians" substituted.

62 Ibid., December 23, 1946, p. 2.

63 Ibid., December 24, 1946, p. 8.
would be completed. In August 1945 hope was renewed that that day would still find Finland independent. Article 10 of the Potsdam Declaration, issued on August 2nd by Prime Minister Attlee of Britain, President Truman of the United States, and Stalin, said that their three governments considered it "... desirable that the present anomalous position of Italy, Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary and Rumania should be terminated by the conclusion of peace treaties," and charged the Council of Foreign Ministers with the task of preparing such treaties. An immediate result of this decision was the resumption by the Allied Powers of diplomatic relations with Finland - the Soviet Union resumed relations on August 6th, and the easing of the restrictions placed on Finnish air and sea traffic by the Armistice Agreement. The following month the Council of Foreign Ministers, after a two days' discussion, accepted a Soviet draft as the basis for discussion of a peace treaty with Finland. 64 The contents of that draft were not known, but few Finns expected any major deviation from the basic provisions of the Armistice Agreement. This was partly confirmed by Stalin on April 18, 1946, when he received a Finnish Government delegation, headed by Pekkala, in Moscow. Pekkala later reported to a mass meeting in Helsinki that Stalin had told the delegation that the Soviet-Finnish boundaries as

drawn under the Armistice Agreement were "definite". As twenty-one nations sent their representatives to Paris to begin the task of peace-making on July 29th, Pekkala again warned his countrymen not to expect too much and reminded them that the Soviet Union was and always would be their closest neighbour. "... the sooner we realize Russia is our biggest neighbour and we were on the wrong side in the war, the better," he said.

The futile trip of a Finnish delegation to Paris has been described above, as has Molotov's violent reaction to Foreign Minister Enckell's timid request for a lightening of the reparations burden. In private conversations with leaders of the delegation Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Vyshinsky expressed disapproval and indicated that Soviet-Finnish relations had taken a turn for the worse. Arriving home, Pekkala and other members of the delegation were met with Communist outcries against the "reactionary demands" they had put forward in Paris, and even Paasikivi came in for attacks because of "anti-democratic actions". On October 14th the Peace Conference adopted the Finnish draft treaty without any significant alterations and confirming in full the territorial and economic obligations

66 Ibid., August 1, 1946, p. 5.
67 See above, pp. 191-194.
imposed by the Armistice Agreement. How insignificant were the changes was perhaps most succinctly summarized by the commentator who, in a 12-page article on the treaties with the Balkan states and Finland, confined himself to the following one-sentence discussion of the Finnish treaty: "Little comment is required on the treaty with Finland, since it is generally recognized that Finland's ties with the Soviet Union must become close." 70

The Peace Treaty made no changes in the territorial, political and economic provisions embodied in the Armistice Agreement, although it contained thirteen additional clauses. These extra clauses, however, were inserted merely to define in detail what types of war material Finland could and could not possess or manufacture, to determine a clear basis for future commercial relations between Finland and the Allied and Associated Powers, and to ensure Finnish acceptance of the principles of the United Nations and of human rights. The latter provision was regarded by all who knew the Finns as more superfluous than 'carrying coal to Newcastle'. Finland's armed forces were limited to a land army of 34,400, which included anti-aircraft artillery forces, a navy of 10,000 tons


and 4,500 men, and an airforce of 60 aircraft and 3,000 men. The strengths included "combat, service and overhead personnel". There was no provision for the continued existence of the Control Commission, and the Heads of the British and Soviet missions in Helsinki were charged with the task of supervising the execution of the treaty obligations. Two potentially dangerous loopholes were left, however, whereby the Soviet Union could in the future continue to interfere in Finnish domestic affairs if she so desired. Article 8, recalling that Finland by the Armistice Agreement had taken measures to dissolve "all organizations of a Fascist type on Finnish territory, whether political, military or paramilitary, as well as other organisations conducting propaganda hostile to the Soviet Union", ordered Finland not to permit in the future "the existence and activities of organisations of that nature which have as their aim denial to the people of their democratic rights." And Article 15 stated that "Personnel not included in the Finnish Army, Navy or Airforce shall not receive any form of military training, naval training or military air training." One instance of such interference came in 1948, after the fall of Pekkala's government, when the Soviet Minister in Helsinki called on Foreign Minister Enckell to request the dissolution of Finnish rifle clubs on the grounds that they violated the Peace Treaty by engaging in target shooting.71

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However, even though the treaty made it possible for the Soviet Union to continue to assert a decisive influence on the political development in Finland, the fact that peace had been concluded was a tremendous relief to the hard-pressed nation. The first important milestone in the struggle to create the conditions for ruling themselves had been passed. On January 27th the Riksdag authorized the government to sign the Peace Treaty, and the solemn ceremony took place in Paris on February 10th. The treaty was ratified by the Soviet Union on August 29th, and the instruments of ratification were deposited in Moscow in a 15-minute ceremony at 6 p.m. on September 15, 1947. Finland was officially at peace with the Soviet Union. On September 26th, President Paasikivi announced a decree ending the state of war in Finland, and the members of the Control Commission departed by plane for Moscow. Before they drove to the airport, under a heavy police escort, Prime Minister Pekkala expressed the hope that they would take with them many happy memories of their stay.72

Finnish memories were not happy, but the future held out some promise of better things. Asked for a statement in connection with the Soviet ratification of the Peace Treaty, Dr. Kekkonen wrote:

The ratification of the Peace Treaty, which now has taken place quite unexpectedly, concludes a period in our country's history, an unhappy period which was

introduced on Anders' Day in 1939. The ratification of the Peace Treaty also signals the beginning of an era, a heavy period, which will be marked by the heritage left to us by the war. The Finnish people, whom history has not spoiled with riches or with a peaceful life behind somebody's broad back, receives the peace which has been dictated with peace and quiet in its mind. It will fulfill the hard conditions of peace with the certainty and determination of a man who keeps his word. But at the same time it hopes that the political freedom which is guaranteed Finland in the Peace Treaty may be retained in such a way that we can freely manage our own political and economic affairs in accordance with the will of the majority of the people and as our Nordic democracy shows us. We know our position as a neighbour of the great Soviet Union and we keep this in mind in our activities as we try to win the confidence of the Soviet Union, because we know that the good relations which are so essential for us can only come about through mutual confidence. In the same way as we respect the efforts of our eastern neighbour to raise the prosperity of its peoples, we ask for respect from that quarter and all other quarters for the Finnish way of life which is typical for us. To this our way of living belongs as an integral part the political and economic liberty of our citizens. May the Peace Treaty correspond to this our ideal of freedom.73

73 Kekkonen, op. cit., pp. 72-73.
CHAPTER VII

DEMOCRATIC RECONSTRUCTION, 1948-1952

The Finnish nation had won the first and most crucial round of its struggle for survival as the Peace Treaty was ratified, but the struggle was by no means over. Another five years of war reparation deliveries lay ahead, and the Finnish Government was still in the hands of the Communists and their sympathizers by virtue of their control of the strategic Ministries. This control was becoming more and more nominal rather than factual, however. By the Finnish Constitution, executive power is divided between the President and the Cabinet. The President is not merely a figure head. If he wishes, he can assert considerable influence over his Ministers and even, as a last resort, dismiss them. A politician as wise and thoroughly familiar with every aspect of the Finnish machinery of state as Dr. Paasikivi was always able to prevent the Communists from damaging that machinery to such an extent that Finland's basic democratic processes ceased to function. Although far-reaching concessions to the left were impossible to avoid
because of the threat of direct Soviet interference in Finland's political life, those concessions never went so far that there was no return. It was a bitter experience to have to allow the arrest and deportation to the Soviet Union of 'Soviet citizens' from Estonia who had fled to Finland in 1940 and, as frequently was the case, had fought in the Finnish army during the Continuation War. It was bitter to have to stand by while Leino and his specially recruited state police, called Stapo for short, arrested army heroes for alleged war crimes and other assorted wrongdoings. It was bitter to allow the war-time leaders to go to jail for having done their best to safeguard Finland's independence. But that was the price which had to be paid for the elusive commodity called freedom. Because that price was paid Communism was no further ahead in Finland by the end of 1947 than it was at the time of the 1945 election. In fact, as was soon to be demonstrated, it had declined. The Communists had failed to take over or infiltrate the army and the ordinary police, and even the trade unions had failed to succumb in spite of the strong and persistent play made by the Communists to gain full control of them. After three years of favoured existence, Finland's Communists were totally incapable of taking full control of the country without the active assistance of the Red Army. More than that, they were faced with the probability of losing the bastions of control which they had occupied under the protection of the Soviet-dominated Control Commission.
The first sign of governmental unrest came early in 1947, shortly after the signing of the Peace Treaty but while Finland was still warily awaiting its ratification. On April 11th, Prime Minister Pekkala was forced to submit the resignation of his government as a result of a split in the 'red-green bloc' on economic policy. The ensuing crisis, which even featured an unsuccessful attempt by Leino to form a new cabinet, revealed such a basic political division that it could not be solved, and on May 20th Pekkala agreed to continue in office until Paasikivi decreed new elections. This unhappy solution was probably a result of external considerations as well as domestic, since the Control Commission was still in Helsinki and Zhdanov had declared that the Soviet Union "... certainly would not welcome a change in the Finnish Cabinet."\(^1\)

Simultaneously, relations between Finns and Russians appeared to assume an unusual degree of irritability. The Supreme Soviet failed to acknowledge an invitation extended by the Finnish Government to attend the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Riksdag. A delegation of Helsinki city councillors cancelled a scheduled visit to Moscow. The trip, which was to have been a return of a visit to Helsinki by Moscow municipal officials, was called off as the Soviet Union reduced the number of promised visas to thirteen and then to five, then said that it would have to

be postponed for unexplained reasons. A Finnish Government delegation, in Moscow to discuss arrangements whereby the Finns might make use of the railway through the Perkkala enclave and of the Saimaa Canal, found itself negotiating for months without gaining any worthwhile concessions. On the other side of the ledger, a bomb was thrown into the Soviet legation building in Helsinki in early May, damaging one room. Of forty-eight movies showing in Helsinki, only one was Russian, while forty were produced in the United States. One premiere of a Russian movie was reported to have attracted two patrons. When it was announced, on May 28th, that Leino's secret police had unmasked a full-fledged underground movement, organized along the lines of the French maquis and directed against the Soviet Union, it did not make much of an impression. The Finns had come to expect such announcements from the Ministry of the Interior, and very few believed in the most recent exposé.

Whether these snubs and countersnubs grew out of Finnish-Soviet relations alone is difficult to say. It is possible that the general world situation could be blamed for them. The gulf between the East and the West had grown very wide during the two years which had passed since the Yalta Conference, and there had been a number of sharp clashes during the Paris Peace Conference. The political and economic condition of most of Europe was one of turmoil,

and while the United States was considering ways and means of stabilizing the European scene, the Soviet Union was interested in aggravating it. As the American Secretary of State George Marshall told President Harry Truman when he returned from the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers on April 26, 1947: "The Russians...were coldly determined to exploit the helpless condition of Europe to further Communism rather than cooperate with the rest of the world." Truman himself, in a policy speech on March 12th, had warned that the United States was prepared to back up her political policies with economic measures and that she was already busy working out practical ways to strengthen international cooperation in economic matters. In other words, the Russians had been served notice that their hopes to dominate Europe through economic chaos might not materialize. This was confirmed on June 5th, when Secretary of State Marshall outlined a programme for European economic recovery and invited Europe to take steps towards implementing it. The enthusiasm with which the plan was received in Europe showed how real the need for economic assistance was, and the reaction of the Soviet Union showed what a tremendous blow the plan was to her designs.

When the British and French Foreign Ministers, Ernest Bevin and Georges Bidault, invited Molotov to meet with them in Paris to discuss the American proposal, Molotov

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accepted, and the three-power conference opened on June 27th. It broke down after one week, however, as Molotov insisted that an Anglo-French proposal to establish a committee which would survey the resources of the European countries and submit a European recovery plan would be to meddle in the internal affairs of sovereign states. Molotov proposed instead that the United States be asked to specify the exact amount of help she was prepared to grant, a proposal which was unacceptable as long as the basic economic needs of Europe were not known, and that each country make its own survey and estimates. When agreement proved to be impossible, Molotov withdrew. Czechoslovakia, which had accepted an Anglo-French invitation to attend a conference of European countries starting in Paris on July 16th, withdrew her acceptance after a visit to Moscow by Premier Klement Gottwald and Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk. Poland, which had signified her intention to accept the invitation, also recanted. 4

Finland also received an invitation to take part in the Paris conference to discuss European economic recovery, and there was a majority in the Foreign Relations Committee of the Riksdag for accepting it. However, as the government was discussing the invitation on July 8th, a messenger arrived from the Control Commission with a summons for Prime Minister Pekkala to appear there at once. He

returned to inform his colleagues that the Russians had demanded that Finland decline the invitation. In spite of this demand, the Cabinet continued to discuss the invitation throughout the following day, and it was not rejected until President Paasikivi, on July 10th, intervened to point out that to disobey the wishes of the Control Commission was still a most hazardous thing to do and that Finnish-Soviet relations must be regarded as an important consideration in reaching a decision.\(^5\) In her reply to the invitation, Finland pointed out that her political position had not yet been stabilized by a definite peace treaty and that she wished to remain outside international conflicts.\(^6\)

The Control Commission interfered again in August. Having suffered heavy losses in union elections during the summer, the Communists opened a campaign to undermine the position of the unions. The culmination of this campaign was to be a strike of transport workers, but the strike order was withdrawn when the government threatened to use its legal power to draft the strikers. The Control Commission immediately notified the government that it would regard the threatened government measure as "part mobilization", which was prohibited by the Armistice Agreement. The road was thus cleared for the strike, but no serious work stoppages resulted. Perhaps the source of Communist strength had been too

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\(^6\) Valros, Finland efter år 1946, p. 14.
blatantly revealed.

There was still another episode which indicated the direction in which Finland would be pulling once she was free of the Control Commission. As negotiations continued in an effort to secure transit concessions through the Porkkala enclave, it became clear that the fees to be charged by the Russians for letting the Finns use the railway would come to very much more than the five million Finnmarks paid in rent by the Soviet Union for the naval lease. The Soviet Union was also demanding that trains using the line be sealed, their windows covered completely, and other safeguards which would reduce the time saved by using the line to minutes rather than hours. Angered by this, a Helsinki newspaperman and city councillor, Professor Ernesti Hentunen, asked in his periodical *Totuuden Torvi*: "Are Finns to be treated as cattle? Let us boycott the arrangement by not using that line."

He was promptly placed in 'protective custody' in an insane asylum, but his plight was not allowed to be forgotten. All over the country Finns rushed to his aid as newspapers of all political creeds except the extreme left expressed open or implied sympathy for the "martyr of the free press".

On December 4th and 5th, after the Peace Treaty had been ratified, the trend toward the fuller application of traditional Finnish democracy was given concrete expression as elections for municipal councils were held all over the

country. The real losers of the election were the People's Democrats, whose total number of municipal councillors was reduced by nearly six hundred. Of the more than 10,000 places at stake, the center and conservative parties captured almost 6,200, while the Social Democrats won about 2,200 and the People's Democrats less than 1,800. The total pro-Communist vote had not been reduced, however, but because of the greater participation in the elections it was relatively much smaller.

The real test came early in the new year. On February 22, 1948, Stalin addressed the following letter to President Paasikivi:

As should be known to you, of the three countries bordering on the U.S.S.R. which waged war against the U.S.S.R. on the side of Germany, two - Hungary and Rumania - have signed with the U.S.S.R. treaties of mutual assistance against possible German aggression. It also is known that both our countries greatly suffered from this aggression and it is the two of us who will be responsible before our peoples if we permit a repetition of such aggression.

I assume that Finland, not less than Rumania and Hungary, is interested in a pact of mutual assistance with the U.S.S.R. against possible German aggression. In view of these considerations, and wishing to establish conditions for a radical improvement in the relations between our countries with the aim of strengthening peace and security, the Soviet Government proposes the conclusion of a Soviet-Finnish pact of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance similar to the Hungarian-Soviet and Rumanian-Soviet pacts.

If there is no objection on the part of Finland, I would propose that a Finnish delegation be sent to the U.S.S.R. for the conclusion of such a pact. If you consider it more convenient to carry on negotiations for the conclusion of a pact in Finland, the Soviet Government is prepared to send its delegation to Helsinki.8

The only surprising thing about the letter was the signature. The letter itself had been expected. The treaties with Rumania and Hungary, copies of which were enclosed in the letter to Paasikivi, had been signed on February 4th and 18th respectively and served to confirm the development toward Communist rule under Soviet auspices which had taken place during 1947. On February 19th, Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister Zorin arrived in Prague, ostensibly to supervise the delivery of supplies of Russian wheat, a job one could hardly describe as one of his regular duties. The following day eleven Czech Ministers tendered their resignation. On the 21st, police units converged on the capital from outlying areas, Communist action committees went into action, and Parliament was adjourned. During the night of the 22nd, a wave of arrests occurred.\textsuperscript{9} With two treaties already signed, and in the midst of the Czech crisis, Stalin's letter was delivered in Helsinki.

The signs were foreboding. And there had been other signs as well. When a Finnish Government delegation headed by Pekkala returned from the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution in Moscow in November 1947, the Finnish Foreign Ministry had found it necessary to deny reports that a Finnish-Soviet defence agreement had been concluded during the delegation's visit.\textsuperscript{10}


Towards the end of January 1948, Lieut.-General Savonenkov suddenly returned to Helsinki as Soviet Minister. The recall of his predecessor because of illness, which appeared to come as a surprise to the 'sick' man himself, was interpreted as an indication that Moscow considered it necessary to have as its envoy in Helsinki a man of action who was familiar with Finnish affairs. As Zhdanov's deputy on the Control Commission, Savonenkov had become known to the Finns as a stern military commander, and his arrival coincided with reports from 'informed circles' in Helsinki that Finland's turn had come to join the Soviet Union's system of military security pacts. It was believed that Moscow's terms included the establishment of a permanent Soviet military mission with the Finnish army, standard equipment for both armies, repair facilities in Finnish ports for ships of the Soviet navy, training courses for Finnish officers in the Soviet Union; etc. Government officials were said to be "loath" to discuss the matter. 11 One observer claimed that it was Savonenkov's mission to induce the Finns to ask for such a treaty. 12 If it was, he failed. It seemed to be too much of a coincidence, however, that a number of hard-core Finnish Communists who had fled to the Soviet Union after the 1918 Civil War began to trek across the border into Finland. Among them were three former 'Ministers' in


Kuusinen's Terijoki government, including Ture Lehen, veteran of the Spanish Civil War, general in the Red Army, and expert on street fighting, and Inkeri Lehtinen, who, with Kuusinen, had been Finland's representative on the Comintern Presidium. On the background of all these developments it was not surprising on February 8th to read in both Pravda and Izvestia that the United States was restoring German militarism, was forming a bloc of western countries including Germany, and was trying to draw Finland into its imperialistic web. In articles and editorials both papers stated that the Finnish right wing elements were aiding the American imperialists and "sharply resisting" nationalization and the country's reconstruction "on healthy democratic foundations". It seemed like the familiar build-up to prepare the ground for drastic action, and with the receipt of Stalin's letter that action appeared to have been initiated.

In spite of the build-up, the news of the Soviet demand came as a dreadful shock to the Finnish public when it became known on February 27th. All efforts to win their independence seemed to have been in vain. Foreign reactions were not encouraging. London was reported to be very pessimistic about the outcome of the negotiations demanded by Stalin: "The only two questions remaining now are - who will be next after Finland and where will it stop." The New York

The New York Times said editorially that the swallowing up of Finland by the Soviet Union was inevitable: "While the world watches and waits, one more small country is preparing to go to its doom." Helsinki was the first to recover from the shock, however. Most newspapers stressed that the enormous majority of Finns opposed a military pact and wished to stay outside international conflicts. Interviewed in Stockholm, the Speaker of the Riksdag, Karl-August Fagerholm, said Finland did not want to see in the Soviet proposal "... an overture of events of the kind now occurring in some other countries who have closed agreements with the Soviet Union."

Meanwhile, on the 28th, President Paasikivi informed General Savonenkov of the steps being taken by the government to produce a definite reply to Stalin's letter. The following day he met with top political and military leaders in a secret session to discuss the proposed pact. By March 5th, a majority had been assured in the Riksdag in favour of negotiations, as only the National Unity Party and the Agrarians remained opposed. Four days later Paasikivi forwarded his reply to Stalin, saying in part:

Seeing that conclusion of the treaty in question, according to the Finnish Constitution, requires the approval of Parliament, the Government has submitted the proposal included in your letter to preparatory examination by parliamentary groups.

When the matter was considered by the aforementioned

16 Ibid., p. 2.
groups, doubts were expressed by parliamentary quarters in regard to conclusion of a military agreement. Especially after the hardships endured during the past wars, the Finnish people hope to be able to remain outside of international conflicts and, conscientiously fulfilling the clauses of the peace treaty, to maintain and develop friendly relations between Finland and the Soviet Union.

In wishing by all available means to promote and develop good and confident neighbourly relations between Finland and the Soviet Union, the Government accepts the proposal to enter into said negotiations. The Government presupposes that the factual contents of the agreement in all respects will be freely considered and decided upon during the negotiations.\footnote{The New York Times, March 16, 1948, p. 14.}

In view of the events in Hungary and Rumania, the coup in Prague which by then was a matter of history, and Finland's precarious position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union in general, the letter demonstrated an amazing degree of courage in the face of the Soviet demand. It reiterated Finland's ambition to work for the further development of good relations with the Soviet Union; it all but rejected the idea of a military pact; and it stressed the parliamentary procedure to which any kind of agreement would have to be subjected. It was not the sort of letter which a people's democracy was supposed to address to the Soviet Union. The selection of the Finnish negotiating delegation further emphasized Finland's determination to resist Soviet demands if such demands should prove to be contrary to the most vital national interests of the country. Headed by Pekkala, it included Leino and one other left wing politician, one representative each of the Swedish People's Party, the Social Democratic Party and
the Agrarian Party, and Foreign Minister Enckell. The three leftists were unequivocally in favour of a treaty. The three other party representatives opposed any military clauses in such a treaty. The vote of the wise, old Foreign Minister would be decisive, and one could rest assured that his policy would not differ from that of Paasikivi himself. In a broadcast to the nation on March 13th, Pekkala promised that the government would sign no pact that infringed on the Paris Peace Treaty or on Finland's Constitution or sovereignty. The negotiations were not dangerous, he said, nothing out of the ordinary.18

Events in Helsinki belied Pekkala's optimistic words. On March 9th, flying squads of Communists entered the editorial offices of all Helsinki's daily newspapers and warned that "anti-Soviet propaganda" must forthwith disappear from the news and editorial columns "or else". The Riksdag building was visited by other groups who demanded to see the leaders of the parties that had opposed the negotiations. When the politicians in question refused to see the Communists, notes were sent in to them warning that next time they would have to face the groups whether they wished it or not.19 At a rally in Helsinki in late March, Hertta Kuusinen declared that "The road

19 Ibid., March 10, 1948, pp. 1 & 13.
of Czechoslovakia is the road for us." Since she and her husband, Leino, had recently returned from an unofficial visit to Moscow, it was assumed that her words were not without foundation as far as Soviet desires were concerned.

As far as the vast majority of Finns were concerned, however, there was no intention of following in the tragic footsteps of the Czechs. The instructions given the negotiating delegation by Paasikivi before its departure for Moscow on March 20th were so limited that it would be virtually impossible for it to commit Finland to a military alliance. The instructions were reported to include all the reservations made by the various parties against military ties, while approving the principle of a treaty of friendship. On the 22nd, three days before the Moscow negotiations got under way, Paasikivi declared confidently that the elections scheduled for July 1st and 2nd would be completely free and express the will of the people. At the same time steps were taken to forestall a possible Communist coup. Weapons were issued to the army and units were guarding official buildings in Helsinki. Army munitions and stores were placed under heavy guard. On April 4th, General

23 Ibid., April 1, 1948, pp. 1 & 14.
Aarne Sihvo, Commander-in-Chief of the Finnish Army, announced that all leaves had been suspended after consultation with the Social Democratic Minister of Defence, Yrjö Kallinen. Officially, the reason was that there was a lack of recruits to fill the gaps in the armed forces. According to Sihvo, the extra guards around the military stores had been placed there to prevent "burglaries and damage by spring fires". The regular police force, which had played such a vital part in the execution of the Communist coup in Prague, was not reliable from a Communist point of view in Finland. Indeed, it was expected that any drastic action by Leino's faithful motorized mobile guard, reported to number between one and three thousand men, and his State Police would meet with opposition from the regular police throughout the country. The only real threat inside Finland's borders were the approximately 20,000 Soviet troops stationed only ten miles from Helsinki within the confines of the Porkkala naval lease area, but not even in Czechoslovakia had Soviet troops openly assisted the domestic Communists on Czech territory.

A puzzling change was evident, however, as negotiations finally started on March 25th. Stalin's letter had projected an alliance similar in nature to the ones concluded between the Soviet Union and Hungary and the Soviet Union and Rumania. Copies of those treaties had even been enclosed with the letter for Paasikivi's information. When,

during the first meeting with Foreign Minister Molotov, the Finnish negotiators started to explain the objections of the Riksdag to a military treaty, Molotov replied that he fully appreciated that attitude. Before the Finns could recover from the surprise, he added that since the Russians had no special proposals to make, perhaps the Finns would wish to submit a draft treaty as a basis for discussion. At the end of the very brief and friendly meeting, Molotov was given a copy of a draft which had been drawn up by Paasikivi as a guide for the delegation. The second meeting took place on March 30th and only lasted one hour. Molotov went through the Finnish draft point by point, suggesting amendments to only two of them: there was no time limit specified in the draft, and the Soviet Union would be happy to extend more military aid to Finland than the draft envisaged. Two of the delegates, Dr. Kekkonen and Johan Söderhjelm, were sent to Helsinki to consult with Paasikivi and returned to Moscow on March 4th with instructions not to accept the amendment concerning increased military aid suggested by Molotov. Their return to Moscow coincided with the suspension of leaves in the Finnish Army, as the only moment of tension experienced during the period of negotiations arose. There was no need to be nervous, however. At the final and crucial meeting, held the following day, Molotov listened patiently to Kekkonen's and Söderhjelm's explanations of Paasikivi's views, and then he not only accepted them but waived the slight concessions which were offered. Since
"this was peace time", the Finnish draft as originally presented was the most suitable.25

The Finnish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, signed in Moscow on April 6, 1948, in the presence of Stalin, was a curious document in view of the events which had taken place during the preceding two months in all of the Soviet Union's European neighbour states. There was no trace in the Finnish treaty of the military clauses which had made Hungarian and Rumanian independence a matter of illusion. In his speech at the signing ceremony, Molotov did not express the same "profound satisfaction" that he had spoken of in connection with the signing of the Hungarian and Rumanian treaties.26 While he had repeatedly talked about "democratic Hungary" and "democratic Rumania", he used no such phrase to describe Finland. All he could say was that the treaty constituted "an important stage in the development of Soviet-Finnish relations", and he expressed the hope that it would "contribute to broad and amicable cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and Finland."27 The "radical improvement" in Finnish-Soviet relations which Stalin had looked to in proposing the treaty

25 The fullest account of the negotiations is given in Simmons, op. cit., p. 428.

26 See Molotov, Problems of Foreign Policy, pp. 556-560.

27 Ibid., pp. 563-564.
to Paasikivi had clearly failed to come about to the degree it had been hoped for. Prime Minister Pekkala had good reason to express his delegation's gratitude to the Soviet Union "... for the benevolent attitude accorded our country and its Government during the negotiations, thanks to which it has been possible to achieve results conducive to our particular conditions...."28

The all-important provision of the treaty was contained in Article 1:

In the eventuality of Finland, or the Soviet Union through Finnish territory, becoming the object of an armed attack by Germany or any State allied with the latter, Finland will, true to its obligations as an independent State, fight to repel the attack. Finland will in such cases use all its available forces for defending its territorial integrity by land, sea and air, and will do so within the frontiers of Finland in accordance with obligations defined in the present Agreement and, if necessary, with the assistance of, or jointly with, the Soviet Union.

In the cases aforementioned the Soviet Union will give Finland the help required, the giving of which will be subject to mutual agreement between the Contracting Parties.

By Article 2, it was agreed that the two countries should confer with each other if it was established that the threat of an armed attack as described in Article 1 was present. Article 3 of the 1940 Peace Treaty, which had pledged either of the contracting parties to refrain from joining any alliance or coalition directed against the other, and which had been reaffirmed in the Peace Treaty of 1947,

was again confirmed. The Contracting parties also agreed to respect each other's sovereignty and integrity and not to interfere in each other's internal affairs. Assurances were given of their decision to act "... in a spirit of co-operation and friendship towards the further development and consolidation of economic and cultural relations...."
The agreement was to remain in force for ten years rather than the twenty years which had been suggested by Molotov.

Thus the treaty contained nothing new. Not even the provisions of Article 1 were really new. In connection with the signing of the Peace Treaty in 1947, President Paasikivi had asserted that Finland would fight with all resources at her disposal against any aggressor seeking to strike at the Soviet Union across Finnish territory. All that the new agreement did was to put that assertion down on paper. No new devices for controlling Finland's affairs were afforded the Soviet Union, which she could not already employ on the basis of suitable interpretations of existing agreements. It is indeed unlikely that that this is all Stalin had intended to obtain when he wrote the Finnish President on February 22nd. Something must clearly have intervened to produce a drastic change of plans. It is possible that this "something" may have been the reaction to Stalin's letter in Finland. Firstly, it was shown beyond doubt that a coup like the one carried out so smoothly in Prague could not be effected in Helsinki, and, secondly,

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the Finnish executive and legislative authorities demonstrated that their desire to maintain peaceful and friendly but correct relations with the Soviet Union was genuine and reliable. It would be more convenient to have the Finns cooperate with the Russians of their own volition and under their freely chosen leaders than to impose upon them a minority rule and take the unpleasant consequences of their lasting enmity. These considerations alone, however, would hardly have sufficed to halt the Russians if they were determined to pull Finland in behind the 'Iron Curtain'. It is more likely that the world reaction to the Prague events was the factor which forced a change in Soviet plans. If the Prague coup was effected comparatively easily, and if that coup could bring about the commotion abroad which it did - what would be the reaction to the subjection of the Finns, which certainly could not be brought about without the active and massive intervention by Soviet troops and widespread bloodshed? Pondering the answer to that question, Moscow may have decided that the price was too high in the case of Finland. Stalin's letter had been delivered in Helsinki before the reaction to the Prague coup had manifested itself, however, and it would at least be necessary to go through the motions of negotiating with the Finns. A show of magnanimity towards Finland would appear to be the best way of counteracting the effects of the events in Czechoslovakia, and since no demands at all would be regarded as a major concession, there was nothing to be lost.
It may never be known what caused the Soviet change of heart between February 19th and March 25th. The reasons suggested above would, however, seem to be sensible, and they do indeed make sense when viewed against the terms of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance.

The only indication that the Soviet Union might have considered Finland a special case from the outset was the fact that the letter inviting the Finns to negotiate was signed by Stalin himself, a procedure which one may assume was chosen in deference to Paasikivi personally rather than for any mysterious other reason.

On April 28th, the Riksdag ratified the treaty by a vote of 157 to 11. A Communist-sponsored amendment which would have expanded the interpretation of the treaty's military assistance clause was defeated. So was any possibility of a Communist coup at that time as General Sihvo, acting on Paasikivi's orders, confiscated all automatic weapons in the possession of Leino's mobile guards and placed them in guarded bomb shelters under Helsinki's Great Church while the Riksdag debate lasted. On May 11th, the treaty was ratified by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.


Meanwhile, the next crisis in Finland's democratic reconstruction was already approaching its climax. It had its origin in an incident which occurred in April 1945, when twenty persons were arrested on Leino's orders at the request of the Control Commission. Ten of them were Finnish citizens and ten were White Ukrainian refugees living on Nansen passports. All were named as war criminals, and they were subsequently turned over to the Soviet Union. For two years the case received no effective attention. Then, in January and March 1947, the Constitutional Committee of the Riksdag discussed it. It was found that Leino, as Minister of the Interior, had acted without prior consultation with his colleagues in the Cabinet, although the government was the only liaison between the Control Commission and Finnish authorities under the Armistice Agreement. The Committee held that Leino had acted "...wrongly and in a manner which did not correspond with Finland's basic laws." Normal procedure would have prescribed that action be recommended, but this was not done because of Finland's international position at the time. Criticism also came the way of certain government and State Police officials as well as officials of the intelligence bureau of the Ministry of the Interior. They were accused of "... criminal actions, mistreatment and undesirable methods." When the Committee's report was placed on the floor of the

32 Eleven of them are reported to have returned to Finland, while six are dead and the rest unaccounted for. See Appell, vol. 14, no. 3 (January 17, 1958), pp. 5-6.

33 Jansson, op. cit., p. 296.
Riksdag on June 16, 1947, Prime Minister Pekkala immediately rose to demand that the Riksdag alter it as regarded the references to Leino. In an unexpected move, the report was returned to the Committee, however, which gave the Attorney-General an opportunity to give an opinion on it. This he did on December 9th, when he held that Leino, by making a decision which by law belonged to the full Cabinet, had overstepped his authority.  

On the basis of this opinion, the Constitutional Committee proceeded with its deliberations, deciding, on February 25, 1948, that the case warranted a full investigation. Leino testified in vain before the Committee on March 10th, and on April 13th his action was declared illegal by the Committee. Its final report was submitted to the Riksdag on April 27th. Included in the report was the request that Finland demand the return of the Finnish citizens turned over to the Soviet Union by Leino. The Committee also asked that a committee be appointed as soon as possible, consisting of disinterested persons, to investigate "... both the State Police and the Ministry of the Interior Intelligence organizations and the activities of the officials employed by them and thereupon implement the measures which such an investigation will show to be necessary." 

On May 19th, a

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34 Jansson, op. cit., p. 299.

35 Ibid., p. 322.

36 Ibid., pp. 299-300. On March 22nd, the four right-wing parties had filed an "informative address" to the government complaining that only Communists had been recruited in the mobile police force and that the police had failed "outrageously" to protect citizens from "disturbances by Russian-like elements". The New York Times, March 23, 1948, p. 7.
full-scale debate ensued in the Riksdag, but in spite of the facts presented by the Committee, and in spite of all the criticism levelled at Leino, the question of State Court action against him was dropped, obviously because it was politically much too potent. However, in a surprise maneuver the leader of the National Unity Party moved non-confidence in Leino, and the motion was passed by 81 votes to 61. The Democratic Union of the Finnish People promptly issued a declaration to the effect that the attack on Leino was "... contrary to all parliamentary practice" and directed not only against Leino but the whole government, including Paasikivi's 1945 government. Leino ignored the vote of censure and made no move to resign his government post as required by the Constitution, but on May 22nd he was dismissed by President Paasikivi.

This dramatic action precipitated the second trial of strength between the Communists and their political adversaries since the ratification of the Peace Treaty, and the Communists were determined to fight with all the means at their disposal. Since they no longer controlled the Ministry of the Interior and its State Police, they resorted to their rank and file organizations. The Communist-dominated stevedores union ordered an immediate strike as a protest against Leino's ouster, and the action threatened to spread to the country's entire transport and communications system. Such a communications breakdown would severely

37 Jansson, op. cit., p. 300.
hamper the rural voters, most of them non-Communist, from getting to the polling stations in the election which was only six weeks away, and it would mean hardships for the Finnish economy and perhaps affect the war reparation deliveries to the Soviet Union as well. The situation was regarded as serious, but there was no drawing back for Paasikivi or the Riksdag. On May 24th, dock workers in nearly every Finnish port struck, and about twenty per cent of the country's steel workers were reported to have walked off their jobs. Their demand was that the post of Minister of the Interior be given to a Communist, if not necessarily Leino. On the same day, "action committees" were formed. The total number of workers on strike was estimated to be only between 3,000 and 5,000, however, and there were already signs that the whole movement was about to crumble for lack of Social Democratic support.  

Nowhere was it reported to be fully effective, but it was loud. The Communist newspaper Vapaa Sana warned, on the 23rd that the reactionaries better reconsider their follies before they go on down the road of Czechoslovakia. On the 26th, it was announced that the demand for the position of Minister of the Interior was a minimum demand which might be increased the next day.  

Even as that issue reached the news stands, the Communists were ready for a compromise, however, which would not give


them the coveted post. Appointed to succeed Leino was Eino Kilpi, who had just deserted the Social Democratic Party to join the fellow-travelling Socialist Unity Party of Pekkala and sit in the Riksdag for the Democratic Union of the Finnish People. While Kilpi thus belonged to the People's Democrats, he was not a Communist in the sense that Leino was, and Communist control of the Ministry of the Interior had come to an end. His appointment came at a most opportune time for the Communist unions, however, as it afforded them an excuse to call off the strike which was already threatening to become a miserable failure. They also did their best to capitalize on the appointment of Hertta Kuusinen to the Cabinet as Minister Without Portfolio, a position which gave her no civil servants to control but which allowed *Vapaa Sana* to assure its readers that their victory was complete: "Without Portfolio" actually meant that next to the Prime Minister she was the most important member of the government!  

The Leino incident had been a serious blow to Communism in Finland. After having successfully asserted her rights as a sovereign state in the case of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, Finland had now asserted her ability to exercise her constitutional processes as well, even when those processes interfered with the designs of her Communists.

Another such process was about to be exercised

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40 Montgomery, *op. cit.*, p. 158.
as Finland prepared for the first Riksdag election to take place since the ratification of the Peace Treaty. The experience was a salutary one indeed, as 78.2 per cent of Finland's eligible voters went to the polls in the heaviest election turnout since 1906. When the two-day's election ended in the evening of July 2nd, the People's Democrats discovered that their popular vote had been reduced by 5.7 per cent in spite of the increased participation. The Agrarians and the National Unity Party had both increased their popular votes by more than 25 per cent, and the Social Democrats polled 16.1 per cent more votes than in the 1945 election. The result of the election meant a loss of eleven seats for the People's Democrats. While, in 1945, they had been equal with the Agrarians in total number of seats won and only one seat behind the Social Democrats, in the new Riksdag they found themselves trailing the Agrarians by eighteen seats and the Social Democrats by sixteen. The Finnish people had elected as their representatives 56 Agrarians, 54 Social Democrats, 38 People's Democrats, 33 of the National Unity Party, 14 of the Swedish People's Party and 5 of the National Progressive Party. Of the People's Democrats, 33 were Communists and 5 were of the Socialist Unity Party.

Pekkala submitted the resignation of his government on July 22nd. Two days later the task of forming the new government was given to Fagerholm, the Social Democratic

41 Valros, op. cit., p. 25.
leader, who had been Speaker in the previous Riksdag. He offered the People's Democrats five portfolios, but in spite of their heavy losses at the polls they insisted on retaining the same number as they had held in Pekkala's government, including the Ministry of the Interior. Hertta Kuusinen even declared that any other arrangement would be contrary to the Peace Treaty. The Communists had again overrated their strength, however, and the result of their refusal to compromise was that Fagerholm, on July 29th, announced the formation of an all-Social Democratic government. The only exception was Mr. Enckell, who remained as Foreign Minister. A Social Democratic spokesman said that the main point in the new government's program was "independence of the Finnish courts in conformity with the Western traditions."

Fagerholm's move was a daring one, considering that the Soviet Union might at any time apply economic, political and even military pressure to force the Finns into submission. Pressure was also immediately applied, but the Soviet Union did not seem to be prepared to employ sufficiently strong measures. The first indication of a change in the Finnish-Soviet diplomatic weather came through an article which appeared in Literaturnaya gazeta on August 11th. It assailed the Finnish Government as being made up of "the people of 1939" who had led Finland into war against the Soviet Union.

43 Ibid., July 30, 1948, p. 5.
Fagerholm himself was branded as "Tanner's man". The article added that the formation of Fagerholm's government "... cannot but arouse fears in wide circles of Finnish society." This attack did not deter the new government, however. On August 17th, it made public the report of the committee which had been investigating the State Police. The report showed that about seventy per cent of the officials were Communists and that twenty per cent of them had criminal records. It was also shown that the State Police had used illegal methods in its work. Moreover, it was made known that the report had been received by Pekkala's government, which had failed to inform the Riksdag of its contents. The publication of this report inaugurated a policy of police reform which all but eliminated the State Police. The reform was so complete that Pravda, on January 6, 1949, printed a story headlined "Purge of Democratic Elements from Finnish Police".

As the contest between Fagerholm and the Finnish Communists continued, it increased steadily in intensity and Moscow became more and more involved. Moscow radio accused Fagerholm of having committed himself too much to the West and of having weakened Finland's relations with the Soviet Union. Fagerholm replied that Finnish foreign policy was

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45 See The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 1, no. 2 (February 8, 1949), p. 35. (This publication will hereafter be referred to as C.D.S.P.)
still based on good relations with the Soviet Union, but that the Finnish Communists were doing their utmost to manufacture trouble between the two countries to further their own political ends.  

Tension was stressed further with the release from prison of former Minister in Berlin Kivimäki on August 21st. According to Finnish law, a prisoner could be released for good behaviour after he had served one half of his sentence, and it had made little impression when Ramsay, Reinikka and Kukkonen were released on that basis during the period of Pekkala's government. The release of Kivimäki was blown up into a big issue, however, in an attempt to embarrass Fagerholm's government. The Communists seemed to have scored a point when Moscow demanded an official explanation of their charge that a number of rifle clubs in the country were camouflaged military organizations, and it was reported that Minister Savonenkov had demanded the dissolution of such clubs on the grounds that they were violating the Peace Treaty by engaging in target shooting.  

Another showdown seemed to be at hand, and a series of wild-cat strikes which had hampered shipping and industry threatened to develop into a general strike. Fagerholm was still not deterred. On October 12th, he commented on the tactics of the Communists in the following words:

I've no illusions about them. Although most of the strikes they've started recently have been settled,

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47 Ibid., September 26, 1948, p. 6 and October 4, p. 4.
I expect new ones any time, and also that they'll continue to denounce us to the Kremlin as reactionaries and enemies of true democracy. So far we've weathered the storm, though. 48

On October 16th, Fagerholm himself attacked. His Social Democratic government banned the State Police outright and came out for open union shop in strikes engineered by the Communists. The Central Federation of Trade Unions delivered an opinion condemning the Communist-inspired strikes and asserting that workers defying Communist strike orders were not strike breakers. 49 The Communist reaction to these measures was to call a general strike, but by October 26th it was already clear that the challenge to Fagerholm's government was again a failure, in spite of the increasingly strong support it was receiving in Soviet radio and press. Minister Savonenkov had even made a point of consistently ignoring the government since its formation in July, and he had stayed away from all functions where he might meet Fagerholm. 51

The Scandinavian discussions concerning a proposed defence pact, which had been going on since the spring of 1948, also had an important effect on Finnish-Soviet relations. Developments in Czechoslovakia in particular, and in Eastern Europe in general, had made the Swedish Government ready to depart from the tradition of neutrality

49 Ibid., October 17, 1948, p. 13.
50 Ibid., October 27, 1948, p. 2.
51 Ibid., October 30, 1948, p. 3.
and to enter into a formal defence alliance with Norway and Denmark. Sweden would not join an alliance which might involve her beyond the territorial limits of Scandinavia, however, and this limitation did not satisfy the Norwegian Government, which insisted that any Scandinavian defence alliance must look westwards. The negotiations broke down in early January 1949, and Norway joined the preliminary discussions in Washington about a North Atlantic alliance. Denmark soon took the same step. Even before the breakdown in the Scandinavian defence negotiations, Moscow showed signs of nervousness. In the beginning of December 1948, a Moscow magazine alleged that Finland had entertained an American proposal for bases on Finnish territory. Fagerholm dismissed the charge as "trivial", adding that it showed how careful Finland had to be. He subsequently let it be known that Finland would "become estranged from her Nordic neighbors" if Sweden abandoned her traditional neutrality and Scandinavia became involved in an anti-Soviet bloc. In February 5th, Norway received a Soviet note offering her a non-aggression pact. The note charged that the proposed North Atlantic alliance was aimed at the Soviet Union and said that Norwegian participation was viewed with particular scepticism in view of the common Norwegian-Soviet border. The conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the two countries would remove all doubts of

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any aggressive designs, the note said. The proposal was roundly condemned by the Oslo press as another example of the type of non-aggression pact campaigns which had become so familiar during Hitler's days, and it was subsequently rejected by the Norwegian Government on March 4th. In Stockholm it was feared that the Soviet Union might invoke Article 2 of the Finnish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance on the pretext that Norwegian and Danish membership in the Atlantic alliance constituted a threat to the peace. There was no doubt that the Soviet Union would be able to think of a way to link the proposed alliance with Germany, which would be necessary if the treaty were to be invoked.

That Finland was in the zone of danger was quite clear. On February 8th, the noted Russian commentator Sergei Maximov wrote in Trud that Fagerholm was attempting to lead his country into a "northern bloc" inspired by Norway and protected by American "militarists". According to Maximov, Fagerholm's program was to turn Finland "... to the side of the aggressive circles of Western powers, employing for that purpose the self-proclaimed northern or 'Nordic' orientation." Maximov continued:

Norwegian Foreign Minister Lange, who developed the thesis of 'Northern Union' under the protection of


54 Text of Norway's reply is given in ibid., March 5, 1949, p. 3.
American militarists, considered it necessary to declare that 'under certain conditions' he intends to draw Finland into that union.

Finland's popular public opinion, cherishing the country's independence, is intensifying resistance to attempts by reaction to consolidate its political and economic domination and turn Finland's foreign policy on the dangerous road of a direct or roundabout deal with American expansionists.55

The Finnish Communists took heart from such support, and a mass meeting was called on February 11th in Helsinki's largest hall under the Communist slogan for 1949: "The policy of the country must be changed!" The main speaker was Ville Pessi, the Secretary-General of the Communist Party, who said in part:

The error of the Fagerholm government's foreign policy is clearly apparent from the fact that for the last six months we have come nearer to the aggressive policies of the Western imperialist powers and the crisis in the capitalist countries, which have alienated us at this very time from a peaceful policy - from the crisis-free economy of the Soviet Union, and the countries lined up with it. If we wish to go forward, the policy of our country must be changed.56

The Finns were not unduly worried by Pessi's speech-making, however, and on March 21st, the Leningrad Pravda came to the rescue. It charged that Finland had violated Articles 8, 13 and 15 of the Peace Treaty and listed as specific complaints the release from prison of Linkomies,


Rangell and Tanner, the toleration of secret rearming, and camouflaged military training. It concluded that "the further consolidation" of Finland's state sovereignty, acquired from the hands of Lenin and Stalin, was possible "... only by carrying out a democratic line inside the country and, externally, by a policy of sincere friendship with the Soviet Union."\(^57\) In Helsinki, Finnish officials said that they were not disturbed by the Leningrad Pravda's outburst,\(^58\) whereupon The New Times in Moscow repeated the accusations and declared that "... the longer the Fagerholm Government remains in power the worse becomes the situation in Finland."\(^59\) Finland still refused to be coerced into giving in to the demands of her Communists - so much so that less than two months later the last of the "war respon-sibles" still in jail, former President Risto Ryti, was released because of failing health after having served less than one third of his sentence.\(^60\) The following month, on June 22nd, one of Finland's leading women Communists, Mrs. Hella Wuolijoki, was dismissed from her post as head of the state radio. Her policy to allow Communist propaganda in radio programs had been irritating the Finns for a long time, and when the government appointed a managing committee

\(^58\) Ibid., March 23, 1949, p. 19.
\(^59\) Quoted in ibid., March 24, 1949, p. 17.
\(^60\) Ryti was pardoned by President Paasikivi on May 19th. Ibid., May 20, 1949, p. 6.
for radio the first action of that committee was to vote Mrs. Wuolijoki out of office. The Communists were not prepared to go beyond verbal and written denunciations of the government move at the time, since they could not afford a repetition of the failure of the previous fall's strike attempt.

An opportunity for Communist action soon presented itself, however. On July 6, 1949, the government was compelled to further devalue the Finnish mark in order to facilitate the continuation of foreign trade. One result of this drastic measure was a certain amount of unrest on the labour front, accompanied by demands for higher wages. Soon the situation had deteriorated to a point where the Communists considered it ripe for action, and when a labour conflict broke out in the port of Kemi on July 20th it was seized upon as the signal for a full-scale attack. A cut in wages had brought the timber floaters in the area out on strike, and when demands for higher wages put forward by various unions were rejected on August 10th notice was served that the transport workers, the forestry workers and the woodworkers would walk out on the 18th. Two days before the deadline the executive committee of the Central Federation of Trade Unions, dominated by the Social Democrats, decided that the demands put forward by the Communist unions in Kemi had been improperly advanced and threatened the unions

with disciplinary action unless the demands were withdrawn. The threat was ignored, but about one hundred workers returned to work on the 17th under police protection to try to break up the biggest log jam in Finnish history before the Kemi River froze. The following day violence broke out as some 1,500 strikers broke through the police cordon and attacked the volunteer workers. Warning shots were fired, and the strikers retaliated with pistol shots. When the fight had been ended by troops, one striker was dead and nine persons, including three policemen, were injured.\(^{62}\)

The government was not standing idly by during these dangerous developments. On August 15th, it was announced that all necessary steps had been taken to safeguard the normal functioning of the community during the strike. Unto Varjonen, Minister Without Portfolio, who headed the government board chosen to deal with the situation, said:

> If the Communists wish to pit force against force, let them try. We shall see which is stronger: the Finnish community or the fanatic Communist crowd. There is no doubt the Communists will lose the fight, and we shall make their defeat as crushing as possible.\(^{63}\)

On the 17th, the strike was declared illegal. Following the shooting in Kemi the following day the strike spread as the stevedores struck again in twenty-three ports. Hangö was at once declared an open port, and troops were ordered to handle

\(^{63}\) Ibid., August 16, 1949, p. 8.
cargoes as all shipping was diverted there. On the 19th, Finnish army units were put on a continuous alert to prevent a Communist attempt to turn the strike into a political coup. The headquarters of the Communist Party in Kemi was raided and the leaders present, including the mayor of Kemi, were arrested. The following day the executive committee of the Central Federation of Trade Unions voted to expel the four striking unions and all other unions which joined in the strike unless the strike was called off by the 23rd. The number of volunteer workers trying to break up the log jam at Kemi was reported to have increased to five hundred.64

The violence at Kemi and the ultimatum issued by the Central Federation of Trade Unions marked a turning point in the crisis. While the Communists had expected that the death of the Kemi striker would be the spark that should ignite the barrel of gunpowder, the barrel turned out to contain less powder than was required to set off a serious explosion. On the 20th, Associated Press reported that the strike appeared to have reached its climax and that workers in many areas had begun to return to work.65 Sensing the oncoming failure, the Communist Party issued a frantic call for nation-wide anti-government rallies and implied that the Soviet Union might intervene if the government continued to fight the strike. Communist newspapers called for demon-

65 Ibid., August 21, 1949, p. 3.
strations to protest against the "terror, violence and murders instigated by the Government" against the workers. Moscow radio read the Communist Party statement word for word, while the Soviet press continued to call the government's action a "bloody suppression of Finnish workers".66 There were no signs that the Soviet Union intended to give the Finnish Communists any effective assistance, however. The leading Communist daily, Työväensanomat, cried that the government's measures against the strikers were aimed at preparing for war against the Soviet Union,67 but this startling piece of information apparently failed to alarm Moscow.

Although wild-cat strikes continued for weeks, the strike had been broken. A representative of the World Federation of Trade Unions visited Helsinki and publicly endorsed the strike, but the only result of this interference in Finnish affairs was that he received a warning from the government and the Central Federation of Trade Unions withdrew from the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions the following spring.68 The unions which defied the order to call off the strike were expelled, but all but two of them had thought better of it, mended their

67 Ibid., August 22, 1949, p. 2.
ways and been readmitted within half a year. When the employers added up their tallies, it was found that no more than 45,000 workers had joined the strike movement during its critical week, whereas the Communists had expected to be able to pull more than 100,000 workers off their jobs. Their grand designs came to an end on September 7th when leaders of the 13,200 Finnish lumberjacks announced that they surrendered unconditionally and were ready to return to work without receiving compensation for lost time. 70

Remaining work stoppages were all minor and short-lived, and on the 8th Fagerholm announced that the Communist strike offensive had been converted into "a complete and first-class failure" which "plainly and distinctly should demonstrate how feeble the Communist party is". "... the attack itself has lost its meaning," he told the Riksdag, adding that the Communists could "record a complete defeat". 71 The next day the Minister of Justice, Tauno Suontausta, instituted legal proceedings against Helsinki's three Communist or pro-Communist newspapers on charges of "gross distortion of facts during the strike", of having abused the freedom of the press, and of having conducted inflammatory attacks on "Finland's legal Government". 72 The Soviet press

70 Ibid., September 8, 1949, p. 9.
71 Ibid., September 9, 1949, p. 12.
72 Ibid., September 10, 1949, p. 4.
also came under attack from the Finnish government. While the strike was still in progress. Prime Minister Fagerholm criticized the Soviet news agency 'Tass' for its "remarkable" presentation of the riots in Kemi.\textsuperscript{73} After the strike had ended, Fagerholm charged the Soviet press and radio in general with lying about conditions in Finland. He directed the blame to the Finnish Communists, however, accusing them of deliberately making up the lies and passing them on to Moscow for dissemination.\textsuperscript{74}

The most dangerous assault on law and order since the ratification of the Peace Treaty had been crushed. November happened to be a 'Finnish-Russian Friendship Month' in Helsinki, and a truce seemed to be in effect between Fagerholm and the Soviet press while it lasted. The friendship came to an end with the last toast, however, and when Fagerholm on Independence Day, December 6th, paid tribute to "those who fell for the Fatherland" during the Winter War, \textit{Pravda} accused him of violating "the spirit and letter" of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance and of dragging Finland down the same "dangerous and disastrous road" that twice during the last ten years had led to war:

The purposes of the propaganda campaign that was started so improperly in connection with Independence

\textsuperscript{73} \textit{The New York Times}, August 26, 1949, p. 6.

Day are quite clear. Having substituted for the independence date the date of the beginning of the winter war, the militarists and revengist elements of Finland have freed themselves of the necessity of saying a single word concerning the fact that Finland in 1917 received her independence from the hands of the Soviet power in Russia thanks to the Leninist-Stalinist national policy of the Bolshevik party.75

The Finnish Government promptly issued an official reply to all newspapers, expressing its "surprise" over the Pravda editorial and stating dryly that it would be recalled by everybody who had heard or read Fagerholm's speech that he had "... made no proposal to change Finland's Independence Day from the traditional Dec. 6 to any other date."76

As Finland's church bells chimed out the old year, a more serious Finnish-Soviet conflict developed on the governmental level. On December 31st, Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko presented to the Finnish Minister in Moscow a note demanding the surrender of three hundred Soviet war criminals whom Finland was alleged to be harbouring. According to 'Tass', the Soviet Government had information to the effect that Finnish authorities were "... supplying certain of the above-mentioned criminals with faked documents and false family names which enable the criminals to hide and continue their activity hostile to the Soviet Government."77

The note listed only fifty-six of the "war criminals" by

77 Ibid., January 1, 1950, p. 2.
name, and on January 21, 1950, the Finnish Government delivered its reply, which gave full details concerning each of the fifty-six. Only four of them had been arrested and were being investigated by the Finnish authorities, while the remaining fifty-two were accounted for in detail. The accusations contained in the Soviet note were refuted as groundless. On February 28th, the Finnish reply was rejected by the Soviet Government as unsatisfactory and as violating the Peace Treaty and the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance by "evading in essence" the Soviet demand for extradition of war criminals. Eventually two of the four persons arrested were turned over to the Soviet Union in April, after the resignation of Fagerholm's government.

The extent to which Finnish-Soviet relations had deteriorated was demonstrated by the fact that during the Presidential election campaign in the early weeks of 1950 even President Paasikivi became a target for Soviet press attacks. One commentator had this to say about "the candidate of big capital":

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80 A United Press report from Helsinki on April 20th claimed to know that three persons whose extradition was demanded by the Soviet Union had been handed over to Soviet authorities, including two of the "war criminals" listed in the Soviet note of December 31, 1949. Ibid., April 21, 1950, p. 14.
The reactionary camp wishes to have in the "President-inlinna" palace a candidate who would further intensify the policies of police arbitrariness, the encouragement of military revanchism, the campaign against the living standards and democratic rights of working people; a candidate who would continue the foreign policy which imperils and injures the country - consequently a candidate who would enjoy the trust of Wall Street and the City. 81

Other commentators ridiculed the so-called 'Paasikivi line', claiming that it was nothing but a smoke screen kept alive by a host of corrupt scribblers and lying radio announcers, former and present war criminals, etc. 82 The attacks certainly did not impair Paasikivi's chances of being reelected, as on February 15th he again won the Presidency with 171 votes on the first ballot in the electoral college of 300 members. No ranking Soviet diplomats were in the galleries, while all major Western Ministers attended. 83 The Finnish Communist newspapers, taking their cue from the Soviet press and joining the attack on Paasikivi with an avalanche of abuse, were again taken to task by the Minister of Justice and warned that further "abuse of the freedom of the press" would result in legal action being taken against them. 84

Finnish-Soviet relations took a turn for the better when Fagerholm, in accordance with parliamentary


84 Ibid., February 18, 1950, p. 4.
practice, submitted the resignation of his government to President Paasikivi after his election, and Paasikivi called on Dr. Urho Kekkonen, leader of the Agrarian Party, to form a new government. Kekkonen, who had not compromised himself in Russian eyes during the war, and who was a political opponent of the hated Social Democrats, fulfilled the basic prerequisites for getting along with the Russians even though he led a conservative party. One of the first actions of his newly formed government was to extend recognition to the Communist government of China, which did not hurt Kekkonen's standing in Moscow.

The first concrete evidence of the Soviet Union's satisfaction at the departure of Fagerholm's government was the resumption of the trade negotiations which had been going on without success since the previous November. On June 13, 1950, two trade treaties were signed in Moscow, one providing for exchanges of goods during 1950, and the other providing for exchanges to run concurrently with the Soviet Five Year Plan of 1951-55. The total value of the trade between Finland and the Soviet Union during the period covered by the agreements would be approximately $350,000,000. As indemnity deliveries were reduced, the share of the shipbuilding yards and engineering works in Finland's exports under the agreements was to increase progressively. 85 Thus

the agreements would bring at least a temporary relief to those industries, established for the purposes of meeting certain war indemnity deliveries, which otherwise might find themselves without a market for their products once the delivery period ended.

The last crisis to occur in Finnish-Soviet relations during the period under review concerned the Aaland Islands. The international status of these islands had not been altered after World War II, and the only stipulation about them included in the Peace Treaty of 1947 was that they should remain demilitarized in accordance with the Convention Relating to the Non-Fortification and Neutralization of the Aaland Islands signed at Geneva on October 20, 1921, and the Law of Guarantee, commonly referred to as the Aaland Islands Statute, enacted by Finland on August 11, 1922. The islanders had asked to be united with Sweden in 1945, and they had in vain requested the representatives at the Paris Peace Conference in 1946 to consider their demand. A major reason for the islanders' unrest was the fact that their special position had been guaranteed by the League of Nations, an organization which no longer existed. To obtain suggestions for new guarantees that would satisfy the islanders, the Finnish Government appointed two committees, one in November 1946 and the other in August 1948. The proposals submitted by the latter committee had not been acted upon by

86 A brief outline of Aaland's international position is given above, p. 26, n. 42.
the time of the 1948 election, however. A proposal to the effect that Finland should seek additional international guarantees of the islands' position was frowned upon by the Soviet Union as contrary to the provisions of the Armistice Agreement, and when the Fagerholm government submitted its proposal the controversial paragraph had been replaced by the old League guarantee paragraph. In this form the proposals for revision of the Aaland Islands Statute were presented to the Riksdag in the summer of 1950. The underlying purpose of the proposed revision was to conciliate the islanders by granting them a greater degree of self-government.

At this point the Soviet Union intervened. Minister Savonenkov at the end of August informed Foreign Minister Åke Gartz that his government would regard the retention of the League guarantee clause as an infringement of Finnish sovereignty over the islands as well as a loophole for international intervention in the islands in violation of the Peace Treaty. The issue was a potentially very dangerous one, and the Finnish Government could not afford to thwart the Soviet Union over it. Consultations with Aaland Islands representatives started on October 16th, and although the government pointed out that the League guarantee had lost its practical meaning, the islanders felt that it did at least give them a claim to international protection, however slender. On October 19th, Sweden presented a note to Finland

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reminding her of her treaty obligations to safeguard Swedish language and culture and local traditions in the islands. Finland's reply asserted that none of these guarantees would be modified, and that the only revision would be the omission of the League guarantee. On October 24th, the government made public its decision to press for a revision of the Aaland Islands Statute along those lines, and a bill to that effect was introduced in the Riksdag later in the year. Not until after the 1951 election did the Riksdag make its decision, however, but the vote was then overwhelmingly in favour of the government's proposal. Most of the thirty-seven votes cast against the bill came from the Communists, which was explained by the special position vis-à-vis Sweden which was retained by the islands. Pravda wrote on October 13, 1951, the day after the measure was passed by the Riksdag, that:

In spite of the fact that under pressure from the peace-loving strata of the Finnish people paragraph six was removed from the bill - the so-called "guarantees law" which limited the sovereignty of Finland and violated the peace treaty - nevertheless points have remained in the bill which violate Finnish sovereignty and create a threat to Finnish independence.

To everybody's surprise the representative council of the

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89 Valros, op. cit., p. 68.
Aaland Islands on December 1st accepted the revisions by a majority of 17 to 10.91

It was characteristic of the improved relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union since Kekkonen came to power that the Aaland Islands question never deteriorated to a point where one could call it a crisis. The mild condemnation which appeared in Pravda after the Finnish authorities had made their decision could not in any way be compared with the blasts which were levelled at Fagerholm's government. Indeed, as Soviet journalism goes, the Pravda article was nothing unusual at all. Attacks of the Soviet radio and press were no longer directed against the Finnish Government, but rather against the political activities of the Social Democratic Party, the hated "Tannerites", the designs of "foreign imperialists" against Finland's independence, etc. Soviet diplomats in Helsinki were reported to have "suddenly turned on the charm", and it was noted that the Soviet Government had lodged no complaints there for a long time.92 An article in Izvestia in connection with the third anniversary of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance was a model of moderation and full of praise for the treaty, even though the usual thrust at the "Tannerites" was of course included.93 Not even an attempt by the


Finnish Communists to disturb the anniversary celebrations by introducing an interpellation regarding alleged Finnish military preparation along the eastern border managed to draw the hoped-for fire in the Soviet press. The text of the interpellation was merely printed on inside pages without any angry commentaries. At the same time, the presence of General Savonenkov was no longer regarded as necessary, and he was replaced as Soviet Minister in Helsinki by Victor Z. Lebedev, the former Soviet Ambassador in Poland. On his departure, Savonenkov was decorated with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Finnish Lion, the first Finnish decoration to be accepted by a Soviet official.

How complete was this new-found friendship was demonstrated by a thorough-going purge in the Finnish Communist Party. The most prominent victim was Yrjö Leino, who only ten months previously had been divorced by Hertta Kuusinen because of "internal clashes" and his "lively desire for alcohol". The Communist press began to denounce him as an "enemy agent" and a "capitalist lackey". Other persons who had previously enjoyed first-rank positions during the Pekkala regime also found themselves lining up at the employment agencies, and Pekkala and five Riksdag

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95 The New York Times, April 15, 1951, p. 16.
96 Ibid., June 10, 1951, p. 31.
deputies were reported to be in the danger zone.\textsuperscript{97} Whether the purge was responsible for the ability of the Democratic Union of the Finnish Peoples to maintain their position among the voters in the Riksdag election of July 2 and 3, 1951, is difficult to say. The economic situation of Finland, which was in a critical state at the time, may have been partly responsible. The total pro-Communist vote remained approximately the same as in 1948, but because of a smaller election turnout, the People's Democrats increased their representation in the Riksdag from 38 seats to 43 and received 21.5 per cent of the total vote cast.\textsuperscript{98} They were not included as Kekkonen formed his third government on September 20th, however, in spite of Pravda's assertion that the election had shown that "... the progressive forces in Finland have the people's solid support."\textsuperscript{99}

Not even the Korean War managed to upset the cordial relationship which had been created between Finland and the Soviet Union. The Finnish Communists pushed the contention that Finland was now in a danger zone, and the Cominform took the line that the United States was after military bases in Finland and Northern Norway, but there was no indication that Moscow intended to invoke Article 2 of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance.\textsuperscript{100}

\textsuperscript{98} Bonsdorff, Våra politiska partier, pp. 34 & 45.
\textsuperscript{100} See The New York Times, July 8, 1951, p. 7.
Not even when Ville Pessi informed the government during a sitting of the Riksdag that "... people in our country are engaged in recruiting Finnish citizens in order to send them to the U.S.A. and Canada so that they may be used for military and espionage purposes against Finland, and that Finns are being used in the American intervention in Korea", did the Soviet Government find it necessary to take any action.101 The Soviet press launched a violent attack against the first Army Day parade held in Finland since 1939 when 2,200 men marched through Helsinki on the anniversary of the death of Marshal Mannerheim on June 4, 1952, seeing in it an indication of a new rise of fascism in Finland.102 There were no serious repercussions, however, and the Soviet diplomatic charm campaign continued unabated.

The celebrations in Helsinki in connection with the termination of the war reparation deliveries to the Soviet Union on September 19, 1952, were therefore free of any incidents detrimental to Finnish nerves. The Soviet Minister for Foreign Trade, P. N. Kumykin, who attended the ceremonies, was pleased to express the appreciation of his government of the "... considerable efforts in successfully making these deliveries", and he added that Finland's fulfillment of her obligations under the Peace Treaty was, "in our opinion, one indication of strengthened friendly

relations between our countries and also a prerequisite for the further strengthening of these relations."  

The indemnity had been paid in full. Once again Finland had kept her word, but, what was more important, she had also kept her soul. The terrible burden placed on the shoulders of Finland's people in 1944 had been carried honourably and had been discharged without the loss of faith and fundamental principles. To the surprise of everybody but the Finns - and perhaps the Russians - the Finnish spirit emerged in 1952 unchanged from what it had been in 1939. But the Finns had learned a lesson which they could never afford to forget: they could not change the facts of geography. As Prime Minister Kekkonen said on September 23, 1952, in connection with the completion of the reparation deliveries:

It must be pointed out that an event such as the completion of the war indemnity will of course in no way affect Finland's foreign policy. It is a vital prerequisite for our country - this is the general opinion of our people - that a policy of friendship between Finland and the Soviet Union be unconditionally preserved along the lines drawn up by the Peace Treaty, the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, and the five-years trade agreement....

... The relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union fulfills a burning hope in Finnish hearts, because it safeguards the peace, the cornerstone of prosperity and happiness for our people.  

Thus Finnish-Soviet friendship was not a matter of free choice, but a result of compelling circumstances. The only


104 Kekkonen, För fosterlandet, pp. 79-80.
change in Finnish policy was that, while in 1939 Finland had still desperately hoped that justice would prevail since she herself was just, in 1952 she had learned - and learned in the hardest possible way - that justice was an expendable commodity in power politics. She had learned that there was a high price on freedom in her particular corner of the world, and she had learned to pay it. But the really remarkable thing about tough, little Finland was that she had come through her inhuman ordeal in such a way that she had earned the unqualified respect not only of those who were her traditional friends but also of her powerful neighbour and traditional arch enemy - the Soviet Union.
In the almost six years which have passed since the end of the period reviewed in the preceding chapters there has been no major change in Finnish-Soviet relations. The democratic reconstruction carried out during Fagerholm's Prime Ministership and consolidated by the governments of Dr. Kekkonen has proved to be durable in the present world situation. Finland's Communists have found that the Soviet Government has been progressively more willing to ignore them and deal with the elected government of Finland as the real representative of the people. Official and unofficial Soviet critics of events in Finland no longer addressed their criticism to the 'rulers', as distinct from the 'people', but to the 'right-wing Socialists'.

Attacks of that nature were numerous during 1953, but then even they began to decrease, if not disappear. Pravda’s inevitable reference to Finnish 'reactionary circles' in connection with the fifth anniversary of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance was the mildest to date, saying merely that those circles were "displaying a certain amount of activity" and "trying to stir up distrust of the Soviet Union among the Finns".  

Further indications of the Soviet Union's growing good-will toward Finland could be seen in the official apology made to the Finnish Government after three Soviet jet aircraft flew over the Helsinki area, and the presentation to President Paasikivi of the Order of Lenin on the tenth anniversary of the Armistice Agreement in recognition of his "outstanding contribution to the cause of developing friendly relations between the Soviet Union and Finland".

In spite of this favourable development, Finland was never able to disregard her special position between East and West and remained extremely sensitive to all fluctuations in the general international picture. But only once during the last five or six years has she felt seriously threatened. When the West, after years of futile negot-

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iations with the Soviet Union over the future of Germany, in 1954 came up with a solution which would create a sovereign West German state aligned with the West in the 'cold war', the Soviet Union was faced with a situation which might very easily be interpreted as a military threat. Since Germany was involved, the Finns feared that the Soviet Union would invoke the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance if the Paris agreements for the rearming of Germany were ratified by Norway. One Finnish politician said: "We have a land frontier with Norway, hundreds of miles long, and if this frontier were to be lined with 'European army' soldiers and tanks, the Russians might well invoke security reasons for using Finnish territory for counter measures."  

In an attempt to forestall ratification of the Paris agreements, the Soviet Union on November 13, 1954, invited the twenty-three European countries with which she had diplomatic relations to take part in an all-European security conference to be held either in Paris or in Moscow on November 29th. The invitation put Finland in a very difficult position, as a negative answer was likely to be considered an unfriendly act, while an affirmative answer would probably draw Finland into the East European security system which she had managed to stay clear of at the time of

the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.
The Finnish Government, in less than one week, had hit
upon an answer which was neither negative nor affirmative;
she would be happy to attend the proposed conference if all
the other invited states did likewise. A few days later,
on November 26th, Mr. Mikoyan, the Soviet Minister of Trade
and Deputy Prime Minister, arrived on a visit to Helsinki
for trade discussions. On the conclusion of his visit,
however, it became clear that he had not confined himself
to trade talks. The communique issued on December 1st,
summarizing the discussions held between Mikoyan and Finnish
leaders contained the following information:

There was also an exchange of opinions on general
questions regarding the international situation. There
was agreement that it is now more important than ever to
unite the forces of all countries, large and small and
without regard to their political systems, in the work
to create a general European security system and to
strengthen the peace in Europe. One discussed, therefore,
again what the Finnish and the Soviet-Russian governments
could do to participate in the united efforts of the
European countries in order to attain this high goal
in harmony with the intentions and principles of the
United Nations.  

The communique was well received in Helsinki, where it was
taken as a sign that the Soviet Government had accepted
Finland's reply to the note about the European security
conference. This was confirmed on December 17th, when a

7 See N.F.B., "The Political Scene in Finland," The World
Soviet note was received in Helsinki expressing the Soviet Government's regret that Finland was unable to participate. Finland still watched the progress of the ratification of the Paris agreements with concern, particularly after Molotov's speech on February 8th, immediately after the removal of Malenkov as Soviet Premier. Molotov said in part:

To us it is clear that in the case of the ratification of the Paris agreements Western Germany will follow the road of restoring militarism and in fact will find itself in the hands of the German revenge seekers. ... a new situation will arise in Europe, because after this the threat of a new war will increase very much.\(^9\)

However, in spite of Finnish fears, no further pressure was applied by the Soviet Union to force Finland into the East European security pact, and the 'sun and charm campaign' continued unabated. Finland had obviously become more valuable to the Soviet Union as an example of peaceful coexistence in practice than she could ever be as a satellite. The changed conditions of warfare resulting from the development of new weapons also meant that the Soviet Union could afford to maintain such a show-piece on her western border. How well she could afford it, was demonstrated in the late summer of 1955, when a Finnish delegation flew to Moscow to discuss the strengthening of Finnish-Soviet friendship and cooperation. Invited by

President Kliment Voroshilov and headed by President Paasikivi, the Finnish delegation appeared to be on a most important errand, and there were speculations that the question of the Porkkala naval lease might be discussed.\textsuperscript{10} Concessions like the one which actually resulted from the talks nevertheless came as a complete surprise on the Finns: the Soviet Union was giving up her naval base at Porkkala and restoring the lease area to Finland. Signed on September 20, 1955, the agreement provided for the withdrawal of all Russian forces within three months after the ratification instruments had been exchanged, and all Soviet transit rights on Finnish territory were renounced.\textsuperscript{11} On the same occasion was signed a protocol extending the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance for another twenty years.\textsuperscript{12} At 1 p.m. on January 26, 1956, Porkkala officially became free Finnish territory again.

Another important development took place parallel with the return of Porkkala. When the Nordic Council was formed in 1951, Finland remained outside by choice. It was felt that the Soviet Union, in view of her strong opposition to Finnish participation in Scandinavian cooperation in the past, would not favour Finnish participation in the Nordic

\textsuperscript{10} Aftenposten, morning edition, September 8, 1955, p. 6.

\textsuperscript{11} Text of the agreement is given in \textit{C.D.S.P.}, vol. 7, no. 38 (November 2, 1955), pp. 18-19.

\textsuperscript{12} Text of the protocol is given in \textit{ibid.}, p. 18.
Council. It was later discovered that such participation would have been approved by the Soviet Union, but by the time Finland decided she wanted to join - in the winter of 1953-54 - the Soviet Union had had a change of heart. By December 1954, there were indications that Finnish membership in the Nordic Council might again meet with Russian favour, and this appeared to be confirmed by an article in Izvestia in July 1955. Soon this attitude was openly declared, and on January 27, 1956, the day after Finland regained Porkkala, she attended the opening of the Copenhagen meeting of the Nordic Council as a full member.

Finland's admission to the United Nations in December 1955, after having been kept out for seven years because of differences between the permanent members of the Security Council on the membership question, was a further indication of the relatively favourable position Finland was finding herself in at that time. Her United Nations membership was not received with unqualified satisfaction in Helsinki, however. An editorial in Nya Pressen, the rural edition of the Swedish People's Party organ Hufvudstadsbladet, pointed out that membership in the world organization deprived Finland of any possibility to hide her head in the sand, and that presence of mind, tact and poise would be required in harmony with her policy of the last few years,

to keep out of Great Power conflicts. *Nya Pressen* warned that to employ those principles might not be as easy as some circles believed, and Switzerland was held up as an example that the desire to keep out of Great Power conflicts could best be attained by also keeping out of the United Nations. However, Fagerholm, then Speaker of the Riksdag, while admitting that membership would involve the country in new problems and complications, stressed that Finland was prepared to take part in the work of the United Nations as a matter of course and to make a positive contribution.15

Both the promise made by Fagerholm and the apprehensions of *Nya Pressen* have since turned out to be true. One example of positive Finnish contribution was the decision to send a contingent of 258 officers, NCO's and men, all volunteers, to the United Nations Emergency Force in Gaza after the Suez crisis for two six months' terms.16 On the other hand, the Hungarian revolt faced Finland with a most ticklish situation. While she had joined in condemning the aggressors in the case of the Suez crisis, she abstained from voting against the Soviet Union in the case of Hungary. The liberal *Helsingin Sanomat* consequently wrote that this stand did not correspond to the conscience and conviction of the Finnish people, but that the government had been compelled to consider the realities of Finland's international position. The

Suomen Socialdemokraatti wrote that "great power politics are merciless in their logic and disregard feelings", and it was always wise to remember Finland's geographical position.  

Soon after the election of Dr. Kekkonen to succeed Dr. Paasikivi as President from March 1, 1956, Finland played host to Soviet President Voroshilov, who arrived for a state visit towards the end of July 1956. Although nothing concrete resulted from the meeting, the visit was very successful from the point of view of improving Finnish-Soviet relations. In fact, the following June Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin and Communist Party Secretary Nikita Khrushchev arrived in Finland with a large delegation to follow up the success enjoyed by Voroshilov. Both made a very favourable impression on the thousands of Finns who turned out to see and hear them in the several cities they visited. The success of the visit made it a high point in the Soviet 'sun and charm campaign', and it was quite clear that the Soviet guests were satisfied with the way the Finnish example of peaceful coexistence had developed. Premier Bulganin, in one of his many speeches, expressed 


18 There were rumours that Finland would get back Viipuri and the Saimaa Canal. Ibid., evening edition, July 4, 1956, p. 1.

this rather bluntly, when he said that "The Soviet Government is quite satisfied with the state of Finnish-Soviet relations which are successfully developing on the principles of peaceful coexistence, and, on its part, it will make every effort toward their further development." Khrushchev, as could be expected, was even more direct. In a speech to the Finland-Soviet Union Society, he noted that Finnish-Soviet friendship went beyond the limits of relations between the two countries and assumed international significance, because it proved that good relations could be established between states with different social systems. Khrushchev continued:

The export of communism is the invention of those who fear peace and international friendship. If there is any export which endangers peace, it is the export of atomic weapons, the creation of military bases on foreign territories. But the Soviet Union does not engage in this. It does not set up military bases on other states' territories. The Soviet Union has also liquidated its military base on Porkkala-Udd on Finnish territory. We would recommend others to do the same; then there would be more confidence in the world, and the peoples would be relieved of the heavy burden of armaments and of the fear of war.

This benevolent Soviet attitude towards Finland, which still prevails as this is written, is quite obviously due to the fact that the Soviet Union has realized the deep roots of the Finnish political system. To that extent it is indeed an attitude of peaceful coexistence. However, as the

21 Ibid., no. 127 (June 12, 1957), p. 2.
Finns are keenly aware, the general world situation plays a very important role in determining Soviet policy towards Finland, which means that changes may occur with little advance warning.

Meanwhile, Finland adheres to the 'Paasikivi line', which is even more essential than previously now that the internal Communist threat has all but disappeared. Those who uphold this line, and there are very few Finns who do not, also point out that it is in the best interests of the Soviet Union that friendly relations exist between herself and her Northern neighbours. It is in Central Europe, in the Middle East and in former colonial areas that the Soviet Union is today concentrating her diplomatic attacks. She can gain little or nothing by subjugating Finland, and the undesirable byproduct of such a policy would probably be to force Sweden into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. As long as Finland is allowed to live her own life, the Scandinavian countries are not likely to take any further drastic steps to irritate the Soviet Union either, which means that everybody directly concerned in this region is interested in maintaining the present balance. There is no doubt that the strong reaction of the Norwegian Prime Minister to American proposals for guided missiles bases in Norway, presented during the North Atlantic Treaty Organization 'Summit Meeting' in Paris last December, was based on these considerations. Mr. Gerhardsen's stand was, of course, merely the continuation of traditional Norwegian
policy concerning foreign bases. The Norwegian Foreign Minister Halvard Lange wrote in 1954 that:

The Norwegian government maintains in particular that the permanent stationing of allied units in the Scandinavian peninsula might provoke increasing Soviet pressure on Finland, and possibly Russian occupation of Finnish bases near the Norwegian and Swedish borders.... Norway is fully aware of the objections which can be raised against this policy from a purely military point of view, but we are of the opinion that the political considerations I have mentioned are of overriding importance.\(^{22}\)

That the Norwegian assumptions are correct, was underlined by Khrushchev early this year when, in an interview with the Danish periodical Dansk Folkestyre, he said that the creation of rocket bases for atomic weapons in Norway and Denmark would directly affect the security and sovereignty of Sweden and Finland.\(^{23}\)

The concentration of armed might maintained by the Soviet Union in the Baltic and on Finland's eastern border is an indication of how sensitive she is to any threats to her northern flank. The Soviet Baltic fleet was recently estimated to number one battleship, one hangarship, 45 destroyers, 200 motor torpedo boats, 90 submarines and an undetermined number of mine sweepers and landing craft. Approximately 1,500 aircraft stationed


between Rügen and the Finnish Gulf are ready to start at all times, and between Leningrad and Petsamo (now Pechenga) another 1,000 aircraft are ready for swift action. In addition, about eight army divisions are employed there. Four cruisers, ten destroyers, 20 escort vessels and at least 60 submarines are believed stationed at bases on the Barents Sea and White Sea coast.24

The discovery and development of a variety of minerals in the Soviet Northwest has made the region more essential than ever before. Firstly, the Soviet Union took over the Finnish mines in the Petsamo area. Since then, even larger deposits of nickel have been found at Monchegorsk on the Kola Peninsula. Other strategically important minerals such as cobalt, titanium, zirconium, apatitene-pheline and molybden have been found in many locations in the same area,25 which makes the Kola Peninsula a most important region for Soviet industry. Any threats against it will naturally bring a prompt and strong reaction.

Finland, therefore, is indeed balancing on a tightrope. She is in need of further trade relations with Western Europe, but she is reluctant to take advantage of all possibilities for fear of what the Russians might do. For instance, although Finland stands to reap the greatest

benefits from the proposed Nordic customs union, she is proceeding with great caution in the matter. She would like to join the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, but it is doubtful whether she will actually take such a step since the Soviet Union regards OEEC as an offshoot of NATO. Considering the present Soviet attitude towards Nordic cooperation, one cannot exclude the possibility that Finland will be able to take part in these two groups, however. On the other hand, increasing Soviet interest in trade with Finland may indicate that the Soviet Union is attempting to make up to the Finns what they cannot have by participation in the OEEC and the Nordic customs union. The latest example was the substantial increase in Finnish-Soviet trade resulting from Bulganin's and Khrushchev's visit to Finland last year.

The Finns are now nurturing hopes that the Soviet Union may be willing to grant further economic concessions to Finland. Officially, there are no unsettled questions between the Soviet Union and Finland, but the Finns cannot hide that they hope President Kekkonen's visit to the Soviet Union this summer will lead to gratifying results. Specifically, the Finns feel that the Russians may be ready to


27 See Ibid., pp. 22-23.
return the Saimaa Canal. The Soviet Government has earlier offered to rent it to Finland, but the Finns are reluctant to enter into an agreement on such an uncertain basis since the canal has been left unattended by the Russians and is in need of extensive repairs. The savings which such a concessions would mean for the Finnish forest industries are, of course, enormous. There are no illusions about the possible return of the Karelian Isthmus or the areas north of Lake Ladoga, however. The latter area has reportedly been colonized by Russians and would hardly be surrendered. The Karelian Isthmus is largely unpopulated, however, and since it is no longer of the same significance for the security of Leningrad as it was during World War II, there are speculations that the Russians might come up with a pleasant surprise some day.

The Riksdag election which will take place next July will hardly bring about any changes in Finnish policy or in Finnish-Soviet relations. While the Communist Party - which has lost the support of the small Socialist Unity Party28 - will probably maintain its present strength and perhaps even win a few seats because of the extremely critical economic problems presently harassing Finland, there is no possibility of a repetition of the situation which existed during the difficult period of 1945-48. Since any Communist gains are likely to take place in the north

and at the expense of the Agrarian Party, the possibility exists that the next government may be formed by the Social Democrats, themselves badly divided at the present, but whether such a development will have a decisive affect on Finnish-Soviet relations is uncertain. The prospect of having Väinö Tanner as Finnish Prime Minister may not appeal to the Russians. 29

In the meantime, Finland is governed by a caretaker government headed by the former Governor of the Bank of Finland, Rainer von Fieandt, and Finnish-Soviet friendship and cooperation continues in the spirit of the treaty of 1948 and as a result of circumstances beyond Finland's control. How long the Finns will be allowed to enjoy this situation cannot be predicted, but it is reasonable to believe that as long as the 'cold war' does not become 'hot', and as long as Denmark and Norway maintain their policy of not allowing foreign bases on their territories, Finland will be able to stay aloft on her political tightrope.

29 Tanner, who was returned to the Riksdag in 1951, was reelected to his prewar position as leader of the Social Democratic Party in 1957.
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A brief account, in text and pictures, of the Winter War.


This book contains more propaganda than scholarship. Generally it is correct, but some facts are distorted and some quotations used out of context to give a onesidedly favourable picture of Finland.


Excellent discussions of the deliberations of the Constitutional Committee of the Riksdag. Of particular use on the ouster of Leino and on the "war responsibles" trial.


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**VIII. PAMPHLETS**


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IX. PERIODICAL ARTICLES


A review of the autobiography of Arvo Tuominen, who was Finland’s leading Communist before the Winter War and was scheduled to have headed the Terijoki Government subsequently led by Otto Kuusinen.


A discussion, prompted by Lundin's book, of Mannerheim's Memoirs. Points out that they were not intended to be history, only the experiences of one man who helped make history.


A discussion, prompted by Lundin's book, of the attitude of the Finnish people towards the Continuation War. Charges that Lundin has failed entirely to understand this attitude and that he has accepted the falsifications of some disgruntled elements who conveniently forgot to mention their true attitudes towards the war at the time of its outbreak. Claims that there was no 'peace opposition' in Finland for quite some time after June, 1941, and that the 'peace opposition', when it was formed, differed from the government only in its appreciation of when it would be possible for Finland to withdraw from the war.


A discussion of German Foreign Office documents recently brought to light and published in Finland (too late to be considered in the present thesis, but would strengthen the argument that the Soviet Union planned invasion of Finland in late 1940). Proves the inevitability of concluding the transit agreement with Germany.


An excellent study, the best to appear in periodical literature on the origins of the Winter War.


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An excellent discussion of Scandinavia's international position and the interplay between Scandinavian foreign policies and Finnish-Soviet relations.


X. NEWSPAPER ARTICLES


A review of Lundin's book. Admits that mistakes were made in the handling of Finnish foreign policy during World War II, but cannot go along with Lundin's harsh judgment.


Discusses the inconsistency of Soviet policy towards the Scandinavian countries and towards Finnish-Scandinavian contacts between 1951 and 1954.


Deals with the influence of the iron ore mines in North Sweden on the Anglo-French plans to send an expedition force to Finland in 1940 by way of Narvik and Kiruna.


See also letters to the Editor about this article by Professor John H. Wuorinen and Mr. A. J. Lazarus in the issue of December 13, 1953, p. 4.)


An attack on President Roosevelt for lack of leadership. Warns that the Soviet Union will misuse her new power on the day of victory and that the United States is doing nothing to prevent it. Foresees East European satellite system and split in United Nations because of it.


A review of Lundin's book. Shows that a great many well known facts and circumstances prove Lundin wrong. Surprised that Lundin could overlook them all.