



Finland in Cold War and the *Spirit of Helsinki*

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Finland after World War II

- *The beginning of all wisdom is acknowledgement of facts.* PM Paasikivi on (Independence day) 6th Dec 1944.
- Finland managed to stay independent and was not occupied during any point of World War II. Fear of Soviet occupation never realized, although years 1945-1948 are described as “vaaran vuodet” = Years of Danger.
- After the war Finland signed the Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance with Soviet Union in 1948, but tried to remain neutral.



Urho Kaleva Kekkonen

- The president between 1956 until 1982. In his youth he was an elite athlete and after that a state police detective and a right-wing politician.
- He made a total political change after the war and wanted to build a good relationship with Soviets. He was in particularly good terms with Khrushchev in 1960's.

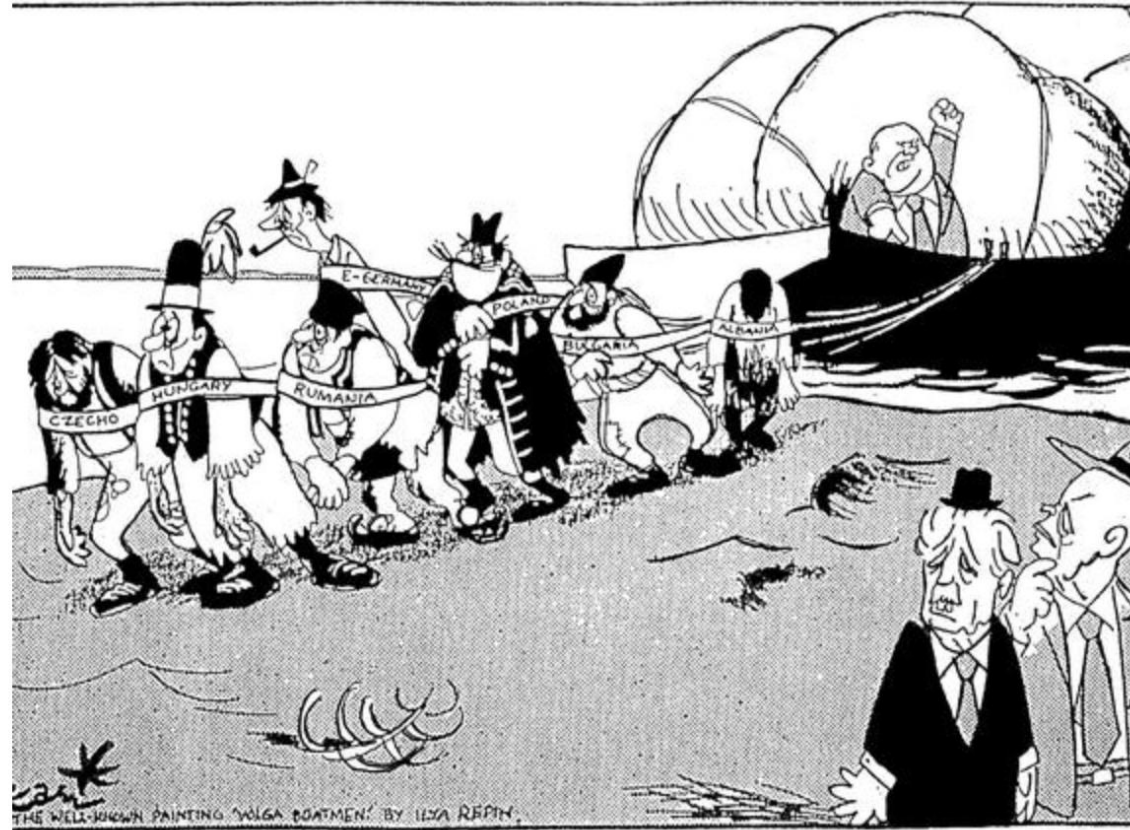
Kekkonen's presidency

- First term 1956-1962. A narrow victory 151-149 in the race for presidency.
- When UN voted about the resolution about Hungarian revolution 1956, president ordered Finns to abstain.
- Soviet Union had also a say about Finnish government and ministers – the government of 1958 was forced to resign (diplomatic and financial pressure)



Finlandization

- Finland's politics during Cold War was characterized by *finlandization*, term invented in BRD which described a country which seems to be independent but in fact is closely connected to a superpower.
- Most (if not all) Finnish political parties tried to sustain good relationship with Soviets. A term "kotiryssä" (not PC!) was used, it meant a close contact person at the Soviet embassy.
- Cartoon by Kari Suomalainen in 1958.



Note Crisis in 1961

- Soviet Union wanted to have their say in presidential elections 1962.
- Berlin situation was referred to and a suggestion of military consultations was made Oct 1961. Threat of Soviet military presence in Finland grew.
- President traveled Novosibirsk to negotiate Nov 1962, suggestion was withdrawn and Kekkonen's second term as president was secured (votes in Jan 1962: 199/300)



CSCE proposal

- Prague spring and invasion of Czechoslovakia 1968 forced Soviet Union to open a diplomatic front. An idea of a security conference emerged.
- Finland decided to make its' own proposal which differed from the Soviet proposal - Canada and USA were also invited.
- Proposal was not a big success in the beginning: in west it was seen as Soviet puppet theatre.
- Eventually foreign ministers met in Espoo in 1973 in a preliminary meeting 1973.
- Cartoon by Kari Suomalainen 16.7.1974.





- Some leaders resigned before the actual Conference (Nixon, Brandt)
- Cartoon by Kari Suomalainen 12.5. 1974

CSCE in Helsinki in August 1975

- World leaders arrived in Helsinki. Negotiations proceeded in good spirit “Helsinki spirit”.
- All European leaders (exceptions were Albania and Andorra) plus president of USA and PM of Canada were present.
- BRD and DDR leaders sat next to each other.





Helsinki Accords – everyone declared success

- Soviet Union said it had gained its' goal as European borders were now agreed upon.
- Western countries pointed out the 7th point: *Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief.*
- A network of “Helsinki groups” was established in following years - humanitarian protest groups in Warsaw Pact countries and Soviet Union. In USA NGO Helsinki Watch was founded in 1978. Helsinki Watch directly appealed communist leaders by creating petitions and publicly "naming and shaming" abusive governments.