

invaded Finland in November 1939. Heroic Finnish resistance took a heavy toll of Soviet forces and equipment during a bitter 100-day winter war. Just prior to the arrival of British-French expeditionary relief forces, the Finnish leaders suddenly requested peace terms from Moscow. It is believed the peace initiative came as a result of Finnish fears that the Allied powers would find themselves at war with not only Germany and the U.S.S.R., but with Sweden and Norway — who were determined to resist the proposed transit of the British-French expeditionary force through their territories.

When Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, Finland took advantage of the new situation to recover the territory it surrendered to Moscow after the Winter war. Nevertheless, when it became clear three years later that Germany was headed for defeat, Finland again sought peace terms from the Soviet Union. The price paid included surrender of the recovered territories plus Petsamo, the only Finnish outlet to the Arctic seas. The Soviet Union also demanded expulsion of all German forces from Finland. As a result of the Finnish campaign to rid itself of German troops, a devastating scorched-earth policy in northern Finland was initiated by retreating German soldiers.

The two wars against the Soviet Union and the campaign against the Germans took a heavy toll of Finnish lives and property. During the Winter war, 25,000 Finns were killed and 10,000 permanently disabled. In the second round of battle with the Russians beginning in 1941, some 60,000 servicemen and 2,000 civilians were killed. 200,000 refugees from the areas ceded to the Soviet Union were absorbed and settled in the shrunken homeland. The Soviet Union presented a formidable reparations bill, which Finland repaid in exports to the U.S.S.R. On the positive side, Finnish independence had been preserved and post-war occupation was avoided.

Russo-Finnish agreement

Finland emerged from the chaos and ruin of World War II understandably convinced it could not count on outside support in the event of another war with the Soviet Union. Its post-war governments neither sought nor were offered NATO membership. Marshall Plan aid from the United States was declined in deference to the new policy of neutrality. Past and current history indicated Finnish destiny would be governed by success or failure of efforts to establish constructive relationships with the Soviet Union while retaining a democratic, free market society internally and friendly relationships with Nordic neighbours and the West generally. Developing relations with the Soviet Union entered delicate ground in 1948 when Joseph Stalin invited Finland to sign a Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance Agreement. Despite an unfavourable reaction from a broad spectrum of Finnish society, Finnish leaders decided to negotiate to obtain the best

conditions possible. Eventually they signed a cautiously-worded document. Proponents of the "Finlandization" theory maintain the agreement casts doubt on Finnish neutrality and provides the Soviet Union with decisive influence on Finnish foreign policy.

Despite initial fears, the vast majority of Finns have over the years, been persuaded that the agreement has not proved harmful to Finnish independence. On the contrary it has provided foundations for mutual trust by assuring the Soviet Union that Finland will not again permit the use of Finnish territory for aggression against the Soviet Union. For its part, the U.S.S.R. to date has recognized the right of Finland to interpret terms of the agreement in a manner which does not prejudice Finnish neutrality.

The 1948 agreement recognized "Finland's desire to remain outside the conflicting interests of the Great Powers". It commits Finland to fight only in self-defence and only on its own territory. Soviet assistance for defence of Finnish territory would be given only on the basis of mutual agreement.

The most delicate clause of the agreement for Finland is contained in Article 2 which provides for consultations "if it is established a threat of armed attack is present". Recognizing that military consultations with the Soviet Union would be viewed in the West as an impingement on Finnish neutrality, the Finnish authorities have succeeded in persuading the Soviet Union not to force the issue when the latter have raised it.

Professor Peter Crosby of the United States, a widely-recognized authority on Finnish foreign policy, disagrees strongly with the "Finlandization" theory which implies an abdication of Finnish neutrality. He believes Finland's sovereignty and independence remain intact. Finnish democratic political and economic systems function freely and Finland is a more democratic country today than it was before World War II. Finland has learned to live with dissent at home. It has learned to live in peace with its superpower neighbour to the East. If the latter causes skeptics in the West to use this as an example of "Finlandization", Finland must learn to live with this burden also, concludes Professor Crosby.

The stabilizing of post-war relations between Finland and the Soviet Union and the slow but steady development of mutual confidence and understanding have facilitated the conclusion of trade-balancing agreements which have proved highly beneficial for Finnish industry which is handicapped by a small domestic market for industrial products. Lacking significant energy resources, Finland relies on the U.S.S.R. for 65 percent of its petroleum requirements and significant imports of natural gas and uranium. Payment is made primarily with Finnish manufactured products including machinery and ships. Five-year agreements stabilize trade and production. Despite a favour-