

The work of the Control Commission in Finland has proceeded incomparably more smoothly than in the Balkan states. There appear to be three reasons for this: the reasonable attitude of Zhdanoff, who is a sufficiently influential personage in the U.S.S.R. to possess some personal initiative, the stability of the Finnish political system and the good faith of the Finnish Government in complying with the Armistice terms. As was demonstrated by the failure of the attempt to foist a Communist regime on Finland in 1939-40, there appeared to exist no disagreement among the Finnish people regarding their fundamental institutions. The good faith of the Finnish Government was shown by the initiative of responsible political leaders in seeking to establish friendly relations with the U.S.S.R. and by the scrupulous avoidance of appeals to the United States and the United Kingdom for support against Russia.

(iv) Recognition of Finnish Government

In June 1945 Mr. Stalin sent messages to Mr. Churchill and Mr. Truman urging renewal of diplomatic relations with Finland. In view of the fact that the United States had never been in a state of war with Finland, Mr. Truman agreed that normal relations should be established as soon as possible and indicated his readiness to exchange diplomatic representatives without delay. Mr. Churchill replied on the other hand that the United Kingdom had been considering the question of future relations with Finland and that he hoped to submit comprehensive proposals for discussion at the next meeting of the Big Three.

At Potsdam the Soviet Government expressed the view that the Government of Finland had faithfully carried out the obligations assumed under the armistice terms and it urged recognition of the Finnish Government in the immediate future. A compromise was reached on the whole problem of recognition in respect to the former Axis allies whereby each Government agreed to examine separately in the near future the possibility of establishing diplomatic relations with Finland and the other former satellites to the extent possible prior to the conclusion of peace treaties with these countries. It was also decided that the anomalous position of Finland should be terminated by the conclusion of a peace treaty although it was carefully stipulated that only a recognized democratic government could be signatory to such a treaty.

United Kingdom policy demanded that Finland have as independent a government as possible and it is a tribute to the stability of the Finnish political system after two wars that the government achieved virtual de facto recognition in August 1945. Constitutional considerations precluded the establishment by the United Kingdom of diplomatic relations with a country with which it was still technically at war. This was not applicable, however, to quasi-diplomatic relations. Moreover, the United Kingdom Government could see no political objections to establishing such relations with a Finnish Government which it considered to be truly democratic and to have the support of a majority in a freely elected Diet. Accordingly it invited the Finnish Government to appoint a political representative in the United Kingdom with the personal rank of Minister, not