

# THE U.S.S.R. AND FINLAND

Outstanding Facts and Documents



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## **Declaration of the People's Government of Finland**

By the will of the people, outraged by the criminal policy of the contemptible government of Cajander, Erkkö and Tanner, a new government of our country has today been formed in Eastern Finland—the Provisional *People's Government*, which hereby calls upon the entire Finnish people to wage a determined struggle to overthrow the tyranny of the hangmen and incendiaries of war.

The reactionary and rapacious plutocracy which in 1918, with the help of foreign imperialist troops, drowned the democratic liberty of the Finnish labouring people in an ocean of blood, has converted our country into a White-guard inferno for the working people. Having sold the independence of the country, these plutocratic rulers of Finland, acting in conjunction with the imperialist enemies of the Finnish and Soviet peoples, have been consistently engaged in hatching plans for anti-Soviet military provocations, and have finally plunged our country into the jaws of war against the Socialist Soviet Union, the great friend of the Finnish people.

In this critical situation, the broad masses of the Finnish labouring people, who have always desired to live in peace with the peoples of the Soviet country, regard it as their elementary right and their sacred duty to take the destinies of their country into their own trustworthy hands. The people have already risen in revolt in various parts of the

country and have proclaimed a *Democratic Republic*. A part of the Finnish army has already come over to the new government, a government supported by the people.

The Soviet Union, which has never menaced or molested Finland, which has always respected her independence and for two decades has patiently endured the vile acts of military provocation on the part of the adventurers who ruled White Finland, has now been faced with the necessity of putting an end to these threats to its security with the help of the Red Army. This aim fully accords with the vital interests of our people. It is therefore with the greatest enthusiasm that the people of Finland greet and welcome the *gallant and invincible Red Army*, knowing that it is not coming to Finland as a conqueror, but as the friend and liberator of our people.

The People's Government of Finland, profoundly convinced that the Soviet Union cherishes no designs upon the independence of our country, fully approves and supports the action of the Red Army on the territory of Finland. It regards it as an invaluable aid to the Finnish people on the part of the Soviet Union, in order by their joint efforts to eliminate as early as possible the highly dangerous seat of war created in Finland by the criminal government of warmongers.

With the object of achieving this aim as rapidly as possible, the People's Government of Finland appeals to the Government of the U.S.S.R. to render the Finnish Democratic Republic all necessary assistance through the instrumentality of the Red Army.

In order to fight shoulder to shoulder with the heroic Red Army of the U.S.S.R., the People's Government of Finland has already formed the *First Finnish Corps*, to be replenished in the course of the coming engagements by volunteers from the ranks of the revolutionary workers

and peasants, and to serve as the firm nucleus of the future *People's Army of Finland*. The First Finnish Corps will have the honour of carrying the standard of the Finnish Democratic Republic to the capital and planting it on the roof of the presidential palace, to the joy of the working folk and the terror of the enemies of the people.

Our state must be a *democratic* republic serving the interests of the people, as distinct from the *plutocratic* republic of Cajander and Erkko, which serves the interests of the capitalists and the landlords. Nevertheless, our state is not a state of the Soviet, type, for the Soviet system cannot be established by the forces of the government alone, without the consent of the entire people, and of the peasants in particular.

Hence our government is the People's Government of the Democratic Republic of Finland. It will be based on a broad *people's front of labour*. As at present constituted, the People's Government of Finland regards itself as a provisional government. On arriving in Helsinki, the capital of the country, it will immediately be reformed and enlarged by the addition of representatives from the various parties and groups participating in the people's front of labour. The members of the People's Government as then constituted, and its powers and actions are subject to confirmation by a *Sejm* to be elected by universal, equal and direct suffrage and secret ballot.

It will be the prime task of the People's Government of Finland to overthrow the government of the Finnish Whiteguards, to demolish its armed forces, to conclude peace and guarantee the independence and security of Finland by establishing durable friendly relations with the Soviet Union.

The People's Government of Finland is applying to the

Government of the U.S.S.R. to conclude *a pact of mutual assistance between Finland and the Soviet Union* and to satisfy the ancient national yearnings of the Finnish people for *reunion with the Karelian people in a single and independent Finnish state*. The People's Government of Finland has every reason to hope that its firm policy of establishing friendly relations with the Soviet Union will make it possible for the Government of the U.S.S.R. to meet this request.

The People's Government similarly desires to maintain friendly relations with all other states. It recognizes Finland's economic and financial obligations towards other countries, insofar as these obligations are not contradictory to the sovereignty of Finland and provided these countries do not take any hostile steps against the Finnish Democratic Republic and its People's Government.

In its home policy, the aims of the People's Government are as follows:

1. To create a Finnish People's Army.
2. To establish state control over the big private banks and big industrial concerns, and to introduce measures to support middle-sized and small businesses.
3. To take measures for the complete abolition of unemployment.
4. To reduce the working day to eight hours, to guarantee a two-weeks summer vacation for workers, and to reduce rents for workers and office employees.
5. To confiscate the estates of the large landed proprietors, without touching the land and property of the peasants, and to turn over the confiscated lands to peasants owning little or no land.
6. To exempt peasants from arrears of taxation.
7. To grant the fullest state aid for the improvement of the farms of the small peasants, primarily by assigning

to them from the confiscated estates of the large landlords additional land, pastures and, as far as possible, timber for domestic needs.

8. To democratize the political system, the administration and the courts.

9. To increase the state subsidies for cultural needs and to reorganize the system of education; to make it possible for the children of the workers and the other poor sections of the population to attend school, and also to do everything to further the development of public education, science, literature and art along progressive lines.

It appears that having lost all support among the people, who detested it, the plutocratic government of Cajander and Erkkö, which did everything in its power to ruin our country, has resigned. This detested government has been replaced by a government formed by Tanner. But Tanner is no less an enemy of our people than Cajander. The Tanner government is no whit better, and, if anything, worse, than the Cajander government. The people hate it as much as they hated the Cajander government.

*Drive these hangmen out of Finland! Overthrow this bankrupt government clique!*

Rise up, you long-suffering labouring folk of Finland! March boldly to the struggle against the tyranny of your oppressors and hangmen!

Rise up, all citizens who have the future of your country at heart!

Throw off these black hounds of reaction from the backs of the people!

Brush aside all obstacles to the prosperity and culture of the nation, and to the realization of the ancient national aspirations of our people!

*Victory to the supreme cause of the workers, peasants  
and working intellectuals of Finland!*

*Forward to victory under the banner of the free and  
independent Finnish Democratic Republic!*

OTTO KUUSINEN,

*Premier of the People's Government and  
Minister of Foreign Affairs*

MAURI ROSENBERG,

*Vice-Premier of the People's Government  
and Minister of Finance*

AKSEL ANTTILA,

*Minister of Defence*

TUURE LEHEN,

*Minister of Internal Affairs*

ARMAS ÄIKIÄ,

*Minister of Agriculture*

INKERI LEHTINEN,

*Minister of Education*

PAAVO PROKKONEN,

*Minister for Karelian Affairs*

Terijoki, December 1, 1939