
ARMISTICE AGREEMENT WITH FINLAND*

ON SEPTEMBER 19 an agreement was signed in Moscow between the Soviet Union and Great Britain, on the one hand, and Finland on the other. Representatives of the Soviet Union and Great Britain conducted the negotiations with representatives of Finland on behalf of all the United Nations at war with Finland.

The Agreement was signed, by authorization of the Governments of the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain, by Colonel General Zhdanov, and by representatives of the Government of Finland. Finland's withdrawal from the war and the conclusion of an armistice agreement with her is a new big military and political defeat for Hitlerite Germany and an important success for the policy of the Soviet Union and all the United Nations.

One after another Hitlerite Germany's allies of yesterday are breaking with her. Following Rumania, which served as the southern flank of the German front against the U.S.S.R. and a *place d'armes* of the German offensive on the Balkans and the Middle East, Finland—which played the part of the other flank of the German offensive on the Soviet Union and the most important strategic *place*

d'armes in the entire north and in the Baltic area—has broken with Germany.

In the person of her ruling circles, Finland was one of the most malicious and obstinate allies of Hitlerite Germany. Despite the fact that the alliance with the latter brought Finland to the verge of disaster, Finnish ruling circles did not wish to break relations with fascist Germany, and tried in every way to drag out the war, in the hope that the war situation would change in Germany's favor.

Finland thwarted the negotiations for an armistice which were begun upon the request of the Finnish government itself in February, 1944. Moreover, in June, 1944, the Finnish rulers, with President Ryti at their head, concluded a new military agreement with Hitlerite Germany aimed at increasing Finland's activity in the war against the United Nations.

The so-called Ryti - Ribbentrop agreement, however, proved to be stillborn, and as is well known existed for only one month. Events which developed on the Soviet-German front, including its Finnish sector, and also on the Western Front, have demonstrated with the utmost clarity that Hitlerite Germany is on the eve of utter defeat and that consequently all calculations and hopes which the Finnish and other

* From an editorial in *Pravda* on September 21, 1944.

politicians placed upon Germany have finally fallen through.

In his broadcast speech of September 3, Prime Minister Hackzell admitted that the "military and political situation in Finland has sharply changed for the worse."

After long procrastinations, the Government of Finland again posed the question concerning an armistice and accepted the preliminary condition of the Soviet Government to break with Germany, and that not a single German should remain on the territory of Finland who would not be disarmed and turned over to the Allies. On this basis, the possibility was opened to conclude an armistice agreement.

This Agreement meets the interests of all the United Nations and constitutes another proof of their growing cooperation and fighting unity. It goes without saying that when concluding the Armistice Agreement with Finland, the Governments of the Soviet Union and Great Britain paid great attention to insuring the necessary conditions for dealing further blows to Hitlerite Germany, so as to hasten her defeat.

The Agreement binds Finland to make available at the request of the Allied (Soviet) High Command, airdromes on the southern and southwestern coast of Finland during the period necessary for air operations against the German forces in Estonia and against the German navy in the northern part of the Baltic Sea. Until the end of the war, Allied naval vessels and merchant ships shall have the right

to make use of the territorial waters of the ports of Finland.

Under the Agreement, German land, naval and air forces which have remained in Finland after September 15, 1944, must be disarmed and their personnel handed over to the Allied (Soviet) High Command as war prisoners. The Government of the Soviet Union undertook to render the necessary assistance in disarming the German forces in Finland.

The basic interests of the war of the United Nations against Hitlerite Germany require that Finland actually cease to serve as Germany's base, and that the Hitlerite influence in Finland be entirely eliminated.

Of essential importance are those terms of the Armistice Agreement which bind Finland to break all relations with Germany's satellites; to dissolve immediately pro-Hitler organizations (or of a fascist type) as well as other organizations conducting propaganda hostile to the United Nations, in particular to the Soviet Union, and not to permit in the future the existence of organizations of that nature; to collaborate with the Allied powers in the apprehension of persons accused of war crimes and in their trial.

Finland undertakes immediately to release all persons, irrespective of citizenship or nationality, held in prison on account of their activities in favor of the United Nations or because of their sympathies with the cause of the United Nations.

The Armistice Agreement solves a number of problems which directly concern the Soviet Union and

Finland. In the course of 25 years, the ruling circles of the Finnish bourgeoisie were steadfastly and consistently pursuing an anti-Soviet policy. Instead of insuring truly good neighborly relations with the great Soviet Union, which granted a state of independence to Finland in 1917, the Finnish rulers converted Finland into a hotbed of constant anti-Soviet provocations and military adventures.

Within a quarter of a century, Finland has three times conducted hostilities against the peoples of the Soviet Union. The whole world is well aware of the part played by Finland in the present war. She not only placed the most important strategical bases at Germany's disposal, which the Germans used both against the U.S.S.R. and other United Nations, but the Finns took an active part in military operations against the Soviet Union, established a brutal occupation regime on temporarily occupied Soviet territory, and participated in the criminal blockade of Leningrad.

From the experience of the policy pursued by Finland's ruling circles for more than 25 years, from the experience of the war of 1939-1940 and especially the war of 1941-1944, the Soviet people draws the decisive conclusion that the firm, stable security of the northwestern frontiers of the U.S.S.R., and that of Leningrad in the first place, must be insured forever as a result of the present war.

The effect of the peace treaty between the Soviet Union and Finland concluded in Moscow on March 12,

1940, is restored under the Armistice Agreement, with certain changes. Finland undertakes immediately to withdraw her troops behind the line of the Soviet-Finnish frontier of 1940 and to place her army on a peace footing within two and one-half months. The Petsamo Region, which was twice (in 1920 and in 1940) voluntarily and generously ceded to Finland by the Soviet Union, and which was used by the Finns in the war against the U.S.S.R., will be returned to the Soviet Union. In the area of Porkkala-Udd, that is, the narrowest part of the Gulf of Finland, the Soviet Union will establish its own naval base. On its part, the Soviet Union renounces its rights to the lease of the Peninsula of Hango. The effect of the Agreement concerning the Aaland Islands, concluded on October 11, 1940, is completely restored.

Finland has caused tremendous damage to the Soviet Union. The Armistice Agreement provides for indemnification of part of the losses caused the U.S.S.R., and that indemnification is restricted to \$300,000,000, which goes to prove once again exceptional generosity on the part of the Soviet Union.

At the same time, Finland is bound to return to the Soviet Union within a fixed period, in completely good condition, all valuables and materials removed from Soviet territory to Finland, belonging to state, public and cooperative organizations or individual citizens.

The conditions of the Armistice Agreement emphasize once again the fact that the Soviet Union, true

to its international policy, has never threatened and does not intend to threaten Finland's state sovereignty and independence. It is natural that, in the interests of the further prosecution of the war against Hitlerite Germany, the Allied powers must pay special attention to complete and strict observance by Finland of all the conditions of the Armistice Agreement. With this purpose, an Allied Control Commission will be established which will carry out its responsible and great tasks under the general direction and instructions of the Allied (Soviet) High Command.

However, the imperative question in this is the immediate execution by Finland of the Allies' preliminary condition. Indeed, nearly one week has passed since Finland was to start disarming German troops on Finnish territory and handing them over to the Allies as war prisoners. So far, not a single German soldier in Finland has been dis-

armed or handed over to the Allies. Meanwhile, the Hitlerite radio in Germany keeps broadcasting for all the world to hear that German troops are retreating over Finnish territory with the obliging assistance of the Finnish authorities.

Thus, it is necessary as yet to insure the execution of the above-said preliminary condition without permitting any further delay in this matter.

The freedom-loving peoples will be satisfied with the conclusion of the armistice with Finland, which signifies an actual reduction of the sphere of war. The Agreement helps the Soviet Union in the achievement of its aims in this war of liberation against German fascism. The freedom-loving peoples will see in this act of the Soviet Union and the United Nations a new step toward the final and early defeat of the hateful enemy of all freedom-loving peoples — Hitlerite Germany.

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