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~~INTELLIGENCE REPORT~~

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COUNTRY Finland/USSR

DATE:

SUBJECT Status of the Conflict between Finland's
Social Democratic and Communist Parties

INFO.

4 November

DIST.

1947

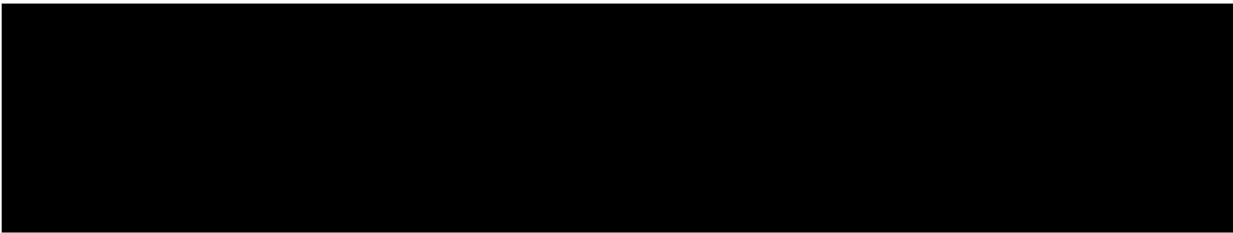
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ORIGIN

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SUPPLEMENT



1. The gradual decline in the strength of the Finnish Communist Party, noticeable since early 1947 and particularly evident in the results of the spring elections to the Trade Unions Congress, is reported due partly to labor's and the small-holders' disappointment over the demagogic trend of the Communist activities, and partly to the recovery of the Social Democratic Party. Following the Armistice the Social Democratic Party was weakened by the conflict between the faction which had urged peace with the USSR, led by men like Fagerholm and Kilpi, and the more stubborn supporters of Tanner. During the current year, however, the Tanner group under the leadership of new men has attained power in the party, and in most cases the older opposition has given in for the sake of unity in the struggle against the Communists.
2. The most influential Social Democratic politician at the present time is Vaine Varjonen, the Party's Secretary-General, who is in his early thirties and holds a Bachelor of Economics degree. He is considered intelligent, cynical, and ruthless, nursing a deep hatred for the Communists.
3. The Social Democratic program of action consists for the present of two short-range aims, namely, to save democratic institutions now threatened by the Communists, and to stabilize the economy. When the latter objective has been attained, the party hopes for a continuation of social reforms and possibly some extension of economic controls.
4. The Social Democratic Party has now built up an effective organization on the Communist pattern to combat the influence of Communism in the Trade Unions. Local Social Democratic leaders maintain continuous telephone contact with a Trade Unions Committee of the Social Democratic Party and with the Trade Unions Federation. As soon as the Communists in any locality move to undertake a strike or mass meeting, the local Social Democratic leaders immediately obtain telephoned instructions from party headquarters in Helsinki for counteracting it. In more important cases they also receive speakers or propaganda material. The party headquarters also supplies the thirteen Social Democratic newspapers of Finland with material for leading articles, in order to neutralize Communist propaganda.
5. A trial of strength between the two labor parties took place in connection with the wildcat strikes staged by the Communists in August of the current year. At that time the Trade Unions Committee of the Social Democratic Party and the Trade Unions Federation, also under Social Democratic leadership, succeeded in

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checking but did not prevent a strike movement. The most widespread opinion in Finland is that the Communists started the movement in revenge for their defeat in June at the Trade Unions Congress. At the same time a belief is reported that the Communists could not have received Moscow's consent to a course based on such irrational motives. Yet it is also believed by some that Moscow may have given consent in order to test the full strength of the Finnish Communist Party and without assessing the implications of any resulting economic crisis in Finland. It is reported, however, to be far from certain that the Finnish Communists apply for Moscow's permission before embarking on a strike movement. Many well-informed persons are said to doubt that Moscow is exercising a firm control over the Finnish Communists. They believe furthermore that the Finnish Communists must logically try to remain free of Moscow at present and avoid a policy that would tend toward a Soviet Finland, leaving them a mere unit in the Soviet party machine. It is generally held for a variety of reasons that the strike movement of August was geared to limited aims and sought to avoid a crisis calling for extra-constitutional action. The Social Democrats decided, however, to fight the strike movement with full strength because they could not rule out the possibility of wider Communist aims.

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6. The Social Democrats have obtained information on the secret Communist program to observe for the present democratic procedures without abandoning the fundamental goal of revolution. But they are never sure at a given moment which code, democratic behavior or revolutionary techniques, the Communists are actually respecting. Finnish political leaders realize furthermore that the anti-Communist program of the Social Democrats under Varjonen's leadership may provoke the Communists to extreme measures.
 7. Swedish Government observers do not, however, foresee, according to source, an early political upheaval within Finland.

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