“In a Class by Itself”
Cold War Politics and Finland’s Position vis-à-vis the United Nations, 1945–1956

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In November 1947, five weeks after Finland’s bid to join the United Nations (UN) was thwarted by a Soviet veto in the UN Security Council, the minutes of the internal meetings of the Danish delegation to the UN General Assembly noted what might happen if Finland were admitted to the world body: “Finland would quickly get Finland’s role.” The word “Finland’s” was crossed out in the minutes and replaced with “Czechoslovakia’s.”¹ The original version came closer to describing what actually happened in later years, but the corrected version reflected the widespread fears in Denmark at the time about Finland’s vulnerability to ever greater Soviet pressure.

Danish concerns about the possibility of Finland’s absorption into the Soviet bloc were shared by many Finns. In the aftermath of the February 1948 Czechoslovak coup, Finns’ anxiety about their country’s status turned into alarm, and the advent of the UN did little to assuage their trepidations. Finland, with its precarious geopolitical location and an unwelcome Soviet military base at Porkkala on its territory, had particular reason to doubt that the UN would usher in a new era of international peace. The deliberately low profile chosen by Finnish politicians after 1945, most notably by President Juho Kusti Paasikivi (1946–1956), was an outgrowth of Finland’s peculiar status as a democratic state that had been on the losing side of World War II. The de facto relegation of Finland to the Soviet Union’s sphere of interest meant that Finland would have to defer to Moscow’s ambivalent view of the UN and would have to be wary of antagonizing Soviet leaders on the various discussion points on the UN’s agenda.

Western scholars tend to overestimate the initial zeal in Scandinavia for the UN cause, but in the case of Finland the reverse is true. Observers both then and now have ascribed to Finland a profound lack of interest in UN membership and have ignored the many years of non-admission altogether. This view, though not wholly fallacious, is much too simplistic. The simplifications that are all too common in the literature can be seen in the memoirs of the renowned Finnish diplomat and publicist Max Jakobson, who, despite noting that Finland’s debut in the UN was “prepared with mixed feelings,” offered only negative thoughts on the matter. The mirror image is provided in a recent review of historiography on Finland’s role in the Cold War that mentions the UN solely as an evolving arena for “Finland as a ‘great power’ in UN peace-keeping operations.”

The dominant bias of these sorts of interpretations lies in what is at once a “national” and “realist” perspective that attempts to gloss over the humiliating experience of non-admission by assuming Finnish indifference toward membership and preference for non-membership. In this article I argue that the “lucky outsider” interpretation hews unduly close to one strand of post-war discourse and overlooks the (perceived) advantages that could have accompanied membership in the UN. The UN was not solely a trap that would have drawn Finland into a conflict between the superpowers and ultimately put its sovereignty at risk. Although such a danger did exist, admission to the UN was also apt to strengthen Finland’s position as a recognized and sovereign member of the international community. I offer a multilayered perspective on the ambiguities of Finland’s position vis-à-vis the UN, taking account of both the advantages and the disadvantages of membership rather than simply dismissing the UN as a danger zone or as an irrelevant body. The Finnish case illustrates that the UN could in fact confer greater status and legitimacy on its members and help to shape their conceptions of their national interests.

The article begins by examining the steps taken by Finland before its application for UN membership was thwarted on 1 October 1947. The article then discusses Finland’s shifting attitudes toward the UN over the next eight

5. Among the works belonging to the “lucky outsider” interpretation are Max Jakobson, Finnish Neutrality: A Study of Finnish Foreign Policy since the Second World War (London: Hugh Evelyn, 1968); and Raimo Väyrynen, Stability and Change in Finnish Foreign Policy (Helsinki: University, 1982).
years before the country finally gained membership in late 1955. The third section assesses Finland’s initial experiences in the UN and the decisions taken by the Finnish government. The conclusion emphasizes that early Finnish attitudes toward the UN were far more nuanced than most of the literature suggests.

The Application Process

Finland did not become a member of the UN until 14 December 1955, a decade after the other Nordic countries, which either were founding members (Norway, Denmark) or had been admitted at the first session of the UN General Assembly (Iceland, Sweden). Finland had fought two wars against the Soviet Union starting in 1939—the first in self-defense, the other in revenge and as an ally of Nazi Germany. In official Finnish parlance, the relationship with Germany was defined as merely one of “co-belligerency,” but distinctions of this kind did not spare Finland from being considered one of the “enemy states” against which the wartime Alliance was directed. In addition to fighting the Soviet Union, Finland as one of the Axis satellites was nominally at war with Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, India, South Africa, Czechoslovakia, Bolivia, and Mexico. Moreover, according to UN practice, the Belorussian and Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republics were regarded as subjects of international law with which Finland had been in a state of war. Despite Finland’s long and colorful list of adversaries, memories of the Soviet Union’s unprovoked attack on Finland in 1939 and of Soviet annexation of Finnish territory after the Winter War of 1939–1940 lived on and ultimately saved Finland’s reputation. Even in Norway, the generally accepted view was that although Norway and Finland had fought on opposite sides, they had nonetheless “fought the same fight . . . against reckless great powers, for which power is tantamount to right.”

After agreeing to a ceasefire with the Soviet Union and Great Britain on 19 September 1944, Finland was placed in the category of Hitler’s former satellites—in the same class as Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, and Romania. The Allied Powers signed peace accords with these belligerent states in Paris on 10 February 1947. The Paris Peace Treaty was important in paving the way for Finland’s admission to the UN inasmuch as the text and the related discussion actually recommended that Finland apply for membership. However, in contrast to earlier suggestions made by the Soviet Union, the British had stipulated at an early stage of the drafting that they would not agree to a

provision unconditionally binding them to support Finland’s membership in the
UN. The British shifted the clause on Allied support for Finland’s mem-
bership from a separate article to the preamble of the treaty, thereby lending it
a more non-committal tone.7 The Finns took the provision for what it was. In
the submission requesting parliamentary authorization to sign the proposed
treaty, the Finnish government declared its satisfaction that the Allied and As-
sociated Powers were now able to support a Finnish request for membership
in the UN.8 This same point was stressed in the parliamentary debate on the
matter.9

When Soviet, U.S., and British leaders met in Potsdam in the summer of
1945, they decided that peace treaties with the governments of Italy, Bulgaria,
Finland, Hungary, and Romania were preconditions for supporting member-
ship applications from these countries.10 Italian membership was promoted by
the Western allies, whereas Finland, together with Bulgaria, Hungary, and
Romania, was consigned to the Soviet sphere of influence. However, the
Western powers were in agreement regarding the democratic character of the
Finnish government.11 President Harry S. Truman made this clear in a tele-
gram to the Soviet leader Josif Stalin in June 1945, arguing that the Finnish
people had “through their elections and other political adjustments . . . dem-
onstrated their genuine devotion to democratic procedures and principles.” In
contrast, he claimed not to have “found in Hungary, Roumania [sic] and Bul-
garia the same encouraging signs.”12 The crucial difference in the amount of
domestic latitude granted to these states by the Soviet Union might have had
its origin in the fact that Finland was able to sign a peace accord with the
USSR and Britain without ever having been occupied by the Red Army.13

As stated in the preamble, the peace treaty enabled “the Allied and Asso-
ciated Powers to support Finland’s application to become a member of the

7. Tuomo Polvinen, Between East and West: Finland in International Politics 1944–1947 (Minneapolis:
8. For the text, see the parliamentary record, Riksdagen, Handlingar III, No. 129 (1946), 21 January
1947.
pp. 316–335. On earlier Finnish views of the UN, see Polvinen, Between East and West, pp. 20, 123.
11. Mee, Meeting at Potsdam, pp. 66, 213.
12. “Personal and Top Secret for Marshal Stalin from President Truman [Received on June 7, 1945],” in
Correspondence between the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Presidents
of the U.S.A. and the Prime Ministers of Great Britain during the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945, Vol. 2:
Correspondence with Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman (August 1941–December 1945) (Mos-
vian Journal of History, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1994), pp. 91–115. Because Finland had not been at war with
the United States and France, only Britain and the Soviet Union signed the treaty with Finland.
United Nations and also to adhere to any Convention concluded under the auspices of the United Nations.” The Finnish government, as Jaakko Ilvessalo has pointed out, applied for membership in the UN “on the first occasion offered.” Finland’s Foreign Ministry began preparations as early as January 1947, and the application was submitted at a time when the world organization was far from universal. Finland also contacted the foreign ministries of its fellow Nordic countries to inquire about their respective handlings of UN matters, their membership in organizations belonging to the UN system and the associated fees, and the status of voluntary UN associations.

When Finnish Foreign Minister Carl Enckell was asked by his Swedish colleague, Östen Undén, in mid-February 1947 about Finland’s intentions vis-à-vis the UN, Enckell said that his government would be addressing the issue at the soonest possible opportunity, noting that “in the text of the peace treaty, indeed, Finland has been promised membership.” Concrete planning for Finland’s bid to join the UN commenced after the Finnish government ratified the Paris Peace Treaty on 27 April 1947. Finnish leaders decided, however, that they would not actually submit an application for membership until after the Soviet Union had ratified the treaty. Although the Finnish consul-general in New York, Ville Niskanen, had made some early attempts to establish himself as an observer at the UN, the government on 30 May 1947 nominated Olli Kaila, the attaché at the consulate, to serve as an unofficial observer until he could be officially installed in this capacity.

Officials in Helsinki believed that they would be able to place the membership issue on the UN agenda in the near future, and in June 1947 they asked the Finnish parliament to authorize the appropriate steps. The parliamentary committee gave its consent, expressing sympathy for the idea that the UN was based on “the principle of the sovereign equality of all members.”

16. See Memorandum from the Finnish Legation in Copenhagen, 22 January 1947, in DNA, FMC, 119, D.1.a, pk. 1. Similar inquiries were made in Norway and Sweden.
At the same time, the committee warned the government not to “underestimate the difficulties of the organization.” During the brief parliamentary debate on the matter, the speakers likewise emphasized that “we have already had the chance to notice that this world organization is not an ideal organization.” In the end, however, although Finnish politicians and legislators realized that joining the UN would not be a panacea, they regarded membership in the world organization as an essential step. The Finnish parliament voted unanimously to authorize work needed to gain Finnish admission.

Even as the Finns were preparing to apply for UN membership, the Soviet Union was slowing things down with the peace treaty. Not until 29 August 1947 did the Soviet government formally approve ratification of the treaty. Because the initial deadline for application to the UN was 10 August, Finnish leaders by mid-summer 1947 were becoming increasingly nervous. Even though Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, and Italy were in the same position as Finland, they had already applied in the spring and early summer of 1947 for UN membership. Afraid of falling behind, the Finnish government instructed its minister in London, Eero Wuori, to inquire at the British Foreign Office whether any advantages could be gained if Finland’s application were submitted before the peace treaty formally took effect. At a meeting in early August, British officials offered a “strictly confidential” recommendation to the Finns to be patient. Wuori surmised—wrongly, as we now know—that the British government would not like to see a possible delay in Finland’s admission into the UN. Wuori also believed that the British understood Finland’s delicate situation and that the British even anticipated and accepted the possibility that Finland would have to side with the Soviet Union on UN issues. Recent scholarship reveals that Britain was in fact much less favorably disposed toward Finland than Wuori and other Finns suspected at the time.

A few days later, when Finnish Foreign Minister Enckell asked his Swed-
ish counterpart what he thought would be the best way to proceed, Undén echoed the British view that waiting would be the most prudent course. Undén’s reservations about early Finnish membership were shared by other Nordic officials, who worried that Finland’s admission might create problems for their own countries. A senior Danish diplomat, Henrik Kauffman, summed up these concerns in June 1947 when he advised the Danish foreign minister that “Finland’s membership was not necessarily an advantage—not for the country itself, nor for the other Nordic countries.”

The peace treaty finally took effect on 15 September 1947 when the Soviet Union deposited its instrument of ratification. In a radio speech hailing this event, Prime Minister Mauno Pekkala declared that Finland could now “also take part in international life.” At the official festivities three days later, President Paasikivi took it as given that “by affiliation with the UN Organization we enter the family of peoples as an independent state.” He stressed that admission into the UN would be a momentous turning point for Finland:

> Previously we have not sped up action on this matter, but now, when the promise made in the treaty by the Soviet Union and Great Britain for support on this point has become applicable, we no longer doubt that such a step will succeed. The highlight in celebrating this peace [treaty] is the feeling that we can now approach the Soviet Union and Great Britain and indeed the whole democratic world under changed circumstances, as an equal friend.

Enckell, however, was somewhat more guarded when he spoke at the celebration. He merely “dared to express the hope” that Britain and the Soviet Union (and the other great powers) would accept Finland into their circle.

The next day, the Finnish government applied to the UN for membership. Although the application encountered no public opposition in Finland, it was viewed with a modicum of ambivalence in some political quarters, as indicated in a summary by Paasikivi: “The advantages of membership evidently outweigh the disadvantages.” Although the overall evaluation

27. Danish Minister in Washington, Henrik Kauffmann, to Danish Foreign Minister Gustav Rasmussen regarding a Meeting with Nordic Representatives, 9 June 1947 (Copy), in SNA, FMS, HP 48, Vol. 1783.
of the prospect of membership was decidedly positive, Finland had no chance to enjoy the potential benefits during Paasikivi’s presidency. At a UN Security Council session on 1 October 1947, the Soviet Union reacted to the defeat of Hungary’s, Romania’s, and Bulgaria’s applications by vetoing the applications of Italy and Finland. The Soviet veto has to be seen in the context of the West’s own gatekeeping on membership in the UN. In a recent history of the UN, a prominent specialist on the world body misconstrued the Soviet action as a principled rejection of granting membership to countries “that had previous or current Fascist leanings, were still seen as neocolonial satellites, or were Catholic conservative states.” The problem is that none of these characteristics applies to the Finnish case. The real motive was retaliation for the blockage of the Hungarian, Romanian, and Bulgarian applications.

The Soviet veto of Finnish membership had the practical result of demonstrating that Finland in the immediate postwar period would not automatically belong to the Soviet voting bloc in the UN. In the UN Security Council, the then-Soviet Ambassador Andrei Gromyko claimed that the Soviet Union actually favored Finland’s membership but was not willing to allow the country to “be placed in a class by itself.” In light of the debate, Paasikivi, as shown by his diary entry for 3 October 1947, was not unhappy with the way things turned out:

A good outcome. Maybe the whole question is adjourned until autumn 1948, so we are excused from taking part in the present General Assembly. There we would encounter numerous difficulties. The situation in the UN is really miserable. Why? Is the UN going to fail from the beginnings?

Although Paasikivi was strongly critical of the UN in this entry, he wrote it right after the vote, not in advance. In reacting to what had just occurred, he was hoping to save face and was therefore wont to view the UN more negatively than he had earlier, especially if the UN Security Council members’ conflicting views of the terms of enlargement kept the world body from getting off to a good start. He was not suggesting that the Soviet Union’s rejection of Finland’s application was desirable beyond the short term (i.e., beyond 1948).

The Finnish press expressed clear disappointment at the unforeseen rejection of the application. Most of the press coverage suggested that the Soviet

veto was aimed not at Finland but at the United States and Britain for having blocked the membership of three countries that were increasingly under Moscow’s domination. Although the press commentary reflected some sense of humiliation over Finland’s newfound status as a pawn in political struggles between the great powers, many of the commentators claimed to find consolation in the involuntary detachment of Finland from an international hot spot.\footnote{See the documentation in Brage Press Cutting Archive (BPCA), Helsinki, Politik yttre (PY), Vol. 707a. Although the collection includes only articles published in Finland’s Swedish-language newspapers, it also houses press reviews of relevant articles originally published in newspapers in the Finnish language. An overview of reactions in the Finnish press, especially in left-wing newspapers, is also given in Memorandum from Otto Johansson, Swedish Minister in Helsinki, to Foreign Minister Undén, 4 October 1947, in SNA, FMS, HP 48, Vol. 1783.}

\section*{From Packaged Applicant to “Package Deal”}

Despite the initial disappointment in Finland with the October 1947 result, a more relaxed and even positive interpretation eventually took hold. Finns’ conception of the UN during the early postwar era can be summarized as “The Danger Zone and the Lucky Outsider.”\footnote{Cf. the title of the article “Vår lyckliga obemärkthet” (Our Lucky Unnoticedness), Nya pressen (Helsinki), 17 October 1948, p. 3.} Finnish politicians and ordinary citizens reassured themselves that they had a sober-minded perspective on the UN, that Finland was not at all to blame for the rejection of its application, and that Finland was in the advantageous position of not having to make undesirable choices facing states embroiled in the Cold War. The discussion in the press emphasized Finland’s status as a respectable state and downplayed the need for immediate entry into the UN.\footnote{A typical example of this sort of narrative is “Finland och FN.” Nya pressen (Helsinki), 12 August 1954, p. 7.}

Even though the question of UN membership was on hold for the time being, other entanglements of the Cold War could not be avoided. The Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance signed between the Soviet Union and Finland on 6 April 1948 was, despite its anodyne title, actually a military agreement. Although the preamble stated that the parties to the treaty would “respect Finland’s desire to remain outside the conflicting interests of the Great Powers,” the document in fact bound Finland to the Soviet Union by requiring the two countries to coordinate their actions in the event of an armed attack or the threat of such an attack by Germany or its allies against Finland or against the Soviet Union through Finnish territory.\footnote{“Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Finland: Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation, and Mutual Assistance,” United Nations Treaty Series, No. 48 (1950), pp. 149–161.}
Despite the establishment of this military link between Finland and the Soviet Union, Western countries put up few protests later when Finnish leaders used the language of the preamble to anchor Finland’s neutrality on a “desire to remain outside the conflicting interests of the Great Powers.” The advent of the concept of “Finlandization” in the 1960s was the only exception to this rule.41

Even more telling than the phrasing of the treaty was the context in which it was concluded—at a time when Central and Eastern Europe was falling ever more stringently under Communist rule and Soviet domination. In late February 1948 Paasikivi had received a letter from the Soviet dictator Josif Stalin asking for consultations about an agreement modeled after the treaties signed earlier that month by the Soviet Union with Hungary and Romania.42 The Soviet-Hungarian and Soviet-Romanian treaties were concluded at the peak of the crisis in Czechoslovakia that led to the Communist takeover there. Paasikivi sent a high-level Finnish delegation to Moscow, and they eventually succeeded in negotiating better terms than those achieved by Hungary and Romania, but the practical implication of the treaty was ambiguous at best. The treaty aggravated East-West tensions and was one of the factors that induced the Norwegian and Danish governments to pursue a military alliance with the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Even though “the image of Finland as the next domino” that would fall under Communism started to become less pronounced in the summer of 1948, Finnish leaders continued to see merit in looking to the UN and other international organizations as a hedge against the large neighbor to the east.43

The notion that the UN could provide political insurance, cultivated by the Finns in connection with the Soviet Union’s insistence on a treaty, was inspired by a suggestion to the Finnish government from U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall. On 2 March 1948 he informally requested his envoy in Helsinki to inquire whether Finnish leaders were aware that if their country came under military attack, they could, according to Article 35 of the UN Charter, bring their case before the UN Security Council, where the United


States would support Finland. If in fact a Soviet attack on Finland had occurred, U.S. officials at the time were actually planning to do no more than go to the UN and take a “vigorous stand.” But Marshall apparently was seeking, if only for propaganda purposes, to give the impression that U.S. support at the UN would be substantial. The Finnish government was savvy enough not to expect to benefit from such support, but the idea of some sort of reliance on the UN did take hold.

The day after Marshall conveyed his suggestion, the most influential Finnish daily, *Helsingin Sanomat*, carried an extensive article referring to the UN Charter. The article was intended to strengthen Finland’s self-confidence and resolve in the forthcoming negotiations with the Soviet Union, while also attempting to allay domestic fears that a treaty would be closely modeled on the treaties just signed by the USSR with the East European satellite states. The paper indicated that Finland’s position would be strong in light of the general acceptance of the principle of national self-determination, and it emphasized that the Charter “guarantees small and large states equal rights to exercise their interests and rights.” The day after that, Enckell spoke with Paasikivi and said that “the treaty should be registered at the United Nations” because “that would imply some sort of endorsement.” A week later, when Onni Peltonen, the chairman of the parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, held a preparatory meeting with the Finnish delegation, he argued that Finland could at most conclude a friendship agreement assuring that the country would defend itself “with help from the UN and with [the UN’s] participation.” Several weeks after the treaty was signed, Paasikivi also invoked the utility of the UN. In a conversation with the publisher of *Helsingin Sanomat*, who was about to leave for a visit to the United States, Paasikivi remarked that if the Soviet Union were to encroach on Finland’s Western-style political system or to renege on its agreements, “we will appeal to the UN and world opinion.” Other evidence also confirms that Paasikivi had a positive view of the UN at this time.

The approaches taken by senior Finnish officials on foreign policy matters diverged, but they had at least one important element in common.

47. Entry for 11 March 1948 in ibid., pp. 187–188; emphasis added.
Although they did not specifically endorse the procedure suggested by Marshall, they all saw the UN as a strategic asset of last resort. Their view of this matter was bolstered by Article 7 of the Soviet-Finnish treaty, which stated that “the execution of the present treaty shall take place in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Organization.” Both the Finnish government and the parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee emphasized this point when the treaty was submitted to Parliament for ratification. In a radio speech a week after the signing of the treaty, Prime Minister Pekkala depicted the wording of Article 7 as an indication of new, increased hope for Finland’s admission to the UN. Finnish Minister of Education Reino Oittinen voiced appreciation for the UN in a radio speech on 24 October 1948 marking United Nations Day. Oittinen reaffirmed Finland’s aspiration to join the UN as soon as possible, with the precise timing contingent on the consent of all member states.

In the end, however, the hopes expressed by Pekkala and Oittinen were dashed. Finland’s application for membership was put to a new vote in the UN Security Council on 13 September 1949. Reacting to the West’s unwillingness to accept the applications of Soviet-bloc states, the Soviet Union again vetoed Finland’s application. This outcome, at a time of intensifying confrontation in Europe, spurred debate in Helsinki about ways of working with the UN short of full membership. Well before the vote, some in Finland had already begun to speculate about these options. A newspaper editorial in late 1948 had proposed a consultative relationship between international non-governmental organizations and the UN Economic and Social Council. In October 1949, a month after the Finnish application for UN membership had been blocked again, festivities marking United Nations Day were held in Finland for the first time. In a speech celebrating the occasion, Oittinen noted that Finland, as a non-member of the UN, had not yet become “a full-value member of the great family of nations.” He suggested that Finland should “seriously consider” membership in the UN Educational
Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a substitute for participation in the main bodies of the UN.⁵⁶ (As it turned out, Finland did not join UNESCO until 1956, after the East European states had started to take part in the organization and after Finland was admitted to the UN.⁵⁷)

Until 1950, Finnish leaders saw the UN as an asset in light of the military treaty with the Soviet Union and the hardening Cold War divide in Europe, but these views began to shift after the outbreak of the Korean War. The UN’s involvement in this conflict (even though it came about largely by accident when the Soviet delegate happened to be absent) made Finnish membership in the organization appear highly problematic. Paasikivi interpreted the Soviet government’s fateful decision to boycott the UN Security Council session that approved the decision to give military support to South Korea (a decision that the Soviet delegate could have vetoed if he had been present) as a sign that the world organization was going to fragment along Cold War lines. If that were to happen, Finland’s membership application would likely be approved right away, but such a result would inevitably provoke the Soviet Union.⁵⁸ Paasikivi’s diary entries illuminate his own reasoning on the matter:

1) If the Soviet Union leaves the United Nations, we should consider withdrawing our application for membership. The Soviet Union believes and claims that the UN is an organization directed against the Soviet Union. And we have been bound to avoid that already in the peace treaty.

2) If the Soviet Union creates its own organization, a United Nations together with its satellites (perhaps also including China), the Soviet Union will naturally want us to join, too. This is to be avoided. We must try to stay outside such an organization. We should stay outside both of the blocs.⁵⁹

In October 1950, as the Korean War was escalating with the entry of the Chinese, Swedish Foreign Minister Undén suggested to the Finnish government that the membership issue would probably have to be resolved through an alternative route of the sort that Oittinen had broached. Because of Finland’s position between the two blocs, Undén sensed that the only feasible solution would be along the lines of the Indonesian model. He offered to raise the matter on a confidential basis with the great powers. Although Undén told his subordinates at the Swedish Foreign Ministry that he had not received

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⁵⁹. Entry for 7 March 1951 in ibid., pp. 120 ff. According to Paasikivi, Prime Minister Urho Kekkonen claimed to have had similar thoughts on the issue. See the entry for 9 March 1951 in ibid., p. 121.
the “necessary” information about Moscow’s view, this detail apparently got lost in the transmission from the Swedish minister in Helsinki to the Finnish government. Finnish leaders erroneously assumed that Undén had probably gotten some indication that the Soviet Union might be willing to change its position, but this mistaken impression evoked only a subdued reaction in Helsinki. When submitting Undén’s inquiry to Finnish Foreign Minister Åke Gartz (who had replaced Enckell earlier that year), the Swedish ambassador in Helsinki had already surmised that “the Swedish initiative was not entirely opportune for the Finnish government.” Gartz thanked Undén for his offer of help and expressed interest in UN membership, but at the same time Gartz stressed that Finland was content with its status for the time being and preferred to let “the natural evolution of the matter take its course.” The Swedish ambassador commented that it was “obvious that the [Finnish] President and government fear that Finland will come into greater dependency on the Soviet Union if Finland now becomes a member of the United Nations.” This was an accurate appraisal of Paasikivi’s view at that time. Although he still envisaged eventual membership for Finland, he wrote in his diary on 11 October 1950 that “at the moment... it would be best if, for the time being, we could stay outside.”

Finland’s status vis-à-vis the UN changed little over the next few years. But in 1953 Stalin’s death and the ceasefire in the Korean War created a thaw in East-West relations that held out opportunities for change in international affairs, including at the UN. With the start of decolonization, the waiting list of applicants for UN membership had increased. The countries in line included Communist states, whose applications had been blocked in the UN Security Council by the Western powers, non-Communist countries such as Finland, whose quest for membership had been vetoed by the Soviet Union, and former colonies such as Cambodia, Laos, Nepal, Jordan, Libya, and Sri Lanka. Numerous efforts had been made to overcome the deadlock on membership, including two advisory opinions issued by the International Court of Justice, the establishment of subcommittees under the UN General Assembly,


61. Note for Conversation of Foreign Minister Åke Gartz with Otto Johansson, 17 October 1950, in SFMA, 113 O, Vol. 7. See also the encrypted cable from Johansson to the Swedish foreign ministry of the same day, in SNA, FMS, HP 48, Vol. 1785.


and both public and behind-the-scenes bargaining between the “Permanent Five” on the UN Security Council. A deal was overdue, and the political climate for it had substantially improved by the mid-1950s.

In January 1954 the popular Finnish daily Ilta-Sanomat described the UN as “a sort of global guarantor of security for our affairs and our rights as well as a guarantor of sorts if we at some point get into an awkward position in the field of international politics.” Two weeks later, President Paasikivi, in a conversation with Prime Minister Sakari Tuomioja, expressed a desire to revive the earlier attempts to join the UN. In his diary on 2 February 1954 he wrote that “it is now about time for us to gain membership in the United Nations. This would be a new sign of the normalization of our position. Therefore, we have no reason to take a negative stance.”

Paasikivi from that point on focused much of his attention on “our membership in the UN.” Although some Finnish politicians continued to stress the purported benefits of “outsidership,” Paasikivi was committed to joining the world body. In the summer of 1954 he met with Urho Kekkonen, who was about to become prime minister and who later (in 1956) succeeded Paasikivi as president, to discuss the question of UN membership. Kekkonen, who was known for his friendly attitude toward Moscow, preferred that the government refrain from actively working for membership. Paasikivi responded by emphasizing that Finland should accept membership if admitted. The difference between them on this issue may have been partly influenced by the wide gap in their ages: Kekkonen was only in his early 40s, whereas Paasikivi was in his mid-80s. Paasikivi evidently wanted to get Finland back on track for UN membership before his retirement opened the door to the next generation.

In line with Paasikivi’s renewed interest, the Finnish government made an interesting terminological change in its 1954 annual report to parliament, describing Finnish membership in the UN as “undecided” rather than just “open.” This small change of semantics was accompanied by the formation of a semi-official UN Association on 29 November 1954. Known formally as the Voluntary Organizations’ UN Association (Kansalaisjärjestöjen YK-liitto), this body was founded by two dozen labor, social, and cultural organizations.

68. Entry for 1 September 1954 in ibid., p. 312.
Within a year, the number of member organizations had risen to three dozen, and the number of individual members was more than 2 million out of a total population of 4.2 million.\footnote{70}

In the summer and autumn of 1955, a public debate began in the Finnish media that challenged the conventional wisdom about Finland and the UN. Many of the commentators emphasized the internal and external disadvantages of isolation. The commentators argued that an international role for Finland via the UN would be indispensable, at least in the medium term.\footnote{71} In a speech marking United Nations Day in October 1955 the chairman of the Voluntary Organization’s UN Association, Niilo A. Mannio, went so far as to correlate a country’s interest in international cooperation with its level of cultural development.\footnote{72} Commentators in the press argued that Finland should not merely be an observer in world affairs but should take an active part. They cast doubt on the alleged benefits of not being compelled to take a stance and argued that Finland could play a “responsible” role by acting cautiously and possibly abstaining in accord with Sweden’s example.\footnote{73} Not only would participation in the UN demonstrate that Finland could be a constructive actor in the world, but it also would consolidate the country’s neutrality.\footnote{74} The commentators emphasized that international isolation, by contrast, not only would have adverse effects on Finland’s domestic polity but would also breed misconceptions about Finland’s geostrategic and ideological position around the globe, potentially relegating Finland to the status of a Soviet satellite.\footnote{75} The UN would underscore Finland’s “position as a free and independent state” in the “eyes of the world.”\footnote{76}

On 17 August 1955, amid a continued easing of East-West relations, Paasikivi and Prime Minister Kekkonen were invited to Moscow to discuss a
possible trade involving the early abandonment of the Soviet military base in Porkkala in return for renegotiation of the expiring treaty on mutual assistance. Among the potential conversation topics listed by Paasikivi for the meeting was “Approval of our membership in the United Nations.” When Finland’s ambassador in Moscow, Eero Wuori, asked about Finland’s position on UN membership, Paasikivi instructed him to say that the Finns would be glad if the matter could be decided in a favorable way. Kekkonen, in a conversation with the Soviet ambassador in Helsinki, Viktor Lebedev, put his own twist on it: “We do not bring up the matter. In case the Russians raise it, our answer is that we hope it will be settled in a way positive for us, i.e. that our application is approved.” Had it been left to Kekkonen, the matter probably would not have been raised, but once the Finnish officials arrived in Moscow, Paasikivi took the lead. After Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov said that he would depart for New York the following day to take part in UN deliberations, Paasikivi took the initiative to remind him of the pending Finnish application, adding that a favorable decision would be appreciated. Molotov’s response was merely that he would keep the matter in mind.77

In the autumn of 1955, a “package deal” was brokered by Canada, whereby the admission of all applicants to the UN—with the exception of politically divided states—would be approved, but the deal was disrupted when the Guomindang-led Republic of China (which at that time held China’s seat on the UN Security Council) vetoed the admission of the People’s Republic of Mongolia. In response, the Soviet Union on 13 December 1955 vetoed Finland’s application for a third time.78 Despite this brief impasse, the admission of Finland and other new members to the UN was settled the following day, when the UN Security Council recommended the admission of sixteen new member states—but not Japan or Mongolia. The UN General Assembly quickly endorsed this recommendation on the evening of 14 December, thereby admitting Finland as one of the sixteen new member-states.79 Paasikivi expressed satisfaction in his diary on 15 December 1955 that the deadlock on Finnish membership had finally been broken, but he noted concern that future difficulties stemming from membership could still arise.80 The tradeoff between Finland’s enhanced prestige as a UN member with the unfavorable yet inherent necessities of UN membership had been a source of

concern among Finnish politicians and in Finland as a whole from the very start. In any case, the successful resolution of key issues such as the Soviet withdrawal from Porkkala and the admission of Finland into the Nordic Council and the UN helped Kekkonen win the February 1956 presidential election.

**Tiptoeing into the Fire**

Ironically, the Finnish government’s ill-preparedness to attend a UN General Assembly ceremony for newcomers on 15 December 1955, which might have resulted in a rather quiet entry into the UN, had the opposite effect. Arturi Lehtinen, the Finnish observer to the UN, represented Finland at the event without having received any specific instructions from the Foreign Ministry. Prime Minister Kekkonen and Foreign Minister Johannes Virolainen claimed that they were unaware of Lehtinen’s mission, and the daily *Hufvudstadsbladet* pointed out that Lehtinen took his seat in the UN General Assembly “a quarter of an hour early.” Nonetheless, Lehtinen’s unauthorized appearance at the ceremony did ensure that an official from Finland was present when Max Engen, the Norwegian permanent representative to the UN, expressed particular pleasure on behalf of the four Scandinavian countries “to see as a new Member of our Organization our old friend and good neighbour, Finland.”

When the UN Secretary-General asked Finnish Foreign Minister Virolainen for the Finnish representative’s official credentials, Virolainen said that he had not yet designated a permanent representative and that Lehtinen would “continue to act as Finland’s observer” in the meantime. Virolainen’s public rebuke of the Finnish observer seems to have aroused some negative attention internationally and was also criticized by the Finnish press.

Despite this clumsy debut in New York, preparations for the appoint-


ment of Finland’s permanent representative to the UN had actually been made by the Finnish Foreign Ministry well before the UN Security Council decision. On 23 December, Paasikivi and Kekkonen gave formal approval to the candidate proposed by the Foreign Ministry, Georg A. Gripenberg, who had been serving as ambassador to Stockholm. According to one of Paasikivi’s confidantes, the president welcomed the appointment of the 66-year-old Gripenberg because of his “thorough cosmopolitan experience, moderate inclination to take the initiative, and capacity for cynical resignation.”

The appointment of Gripenberg, an old-style diplomat of pronounced aristocratic disposition and refined manners who was nicknamed the “tired moose,” was a subtle move that quietly helped Finland establish greater distance from the Communist bloc.

On the other hand, subsequent briefings from both the Foreign Ministry and Paasikivi in late February and March 1956 (by which time Paasikivi had left office and Kekkonen had been elected president) emphasized the importance of taking account of the Soviet Union’s point of view, and Kekkonen, who apparently was aware of Gripenberg’s personal distrust of him, emphasized the importance of keeping as low a profile as possible. Interestingly, Gripenberg had the mistaken impression that Paasikivi would have preferred to stay out of the UN, whereas in reality Paasikivi was the one who had actively promoted membership for some time. Paasikivi’s diary entry for 27 March 1956 gives a slightly different summary of his conversation with Gripenberg.

Despite the confusion surrounding the welcome ceremony, Finland otherwise made a quiet entry into the UN. Two types of quietness were in play, however. On the one hand, Finns attempted to foster a positive image of quiescence and calmness that made Finland a constructive member of the international community. On the other hand, some construed Finland’s silence as the cowed behavior and submissiveness of a small state in the shadow of a powerful and threatening neighbor. The former image was a matter of national pride, the latter impression gave rise to national shame. Being more ex-

posed to this tension than probably anyone else, the new Finnish ambassador to the UN was indeed well served by his capacity for “cynical resignation.”

In the spring of 1956, at Gripenberg’s first UN meeting, which dealt with the effectiveness of the organization, he was the only participant who did not take the floor. In his diary he noted, with due cynicism, that there seemed to be a negative correlation between the size of the country and the length of its representative’s speech. His amazement over his fellow representatives’ loquacity did not diminish over time. He himself took no part in the debate, though not necessarily by his own choosing. The Finnish government decided not to register for a contribution to the general debate—a decision taken well before the Soviet invasion of Hungary put Finland into a difficult position. Finland was unique among the newly admitted countries in refraining from any participation in the general debate.

The Soviet invasion of Hungary on 4 November 1956 created for the Finnish government a nightmare scenario at a very early juncture in Finland’s tenure at the UN. An emergency special session of the UN General Assembly was already under way regarding the Suez crisis, and this made it possible to convene an additional session the same day to discuss Hungary. A Second Emergency Special Session of the UN General Assembly, addressing the events in Hungary, was held from 4 to 10 November. On the first day of the emergency, a resolution calling for an immediate withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungarian territory was passed. Three more resolutions regarding the Hungarian crisis were adopted later in the session: one that reiterated the demand for an immediate Soviet troop withdrawal, a second asking for the cessation of measures against civilians and for the provision of support to refugees, and a third requesting Soviet participation in humanitarian relief operations. Further resolutions were adopted at the eleventh regular session of the UN General Assembly on 21 November 1956, 4 and 12 December 1956, and 10 January 1957.

These resolutions were part of a symbolic political game, described by

92. Ralf Törngren, Finnish Foreign Minister, according to a report from the Danish Embassy in Helsinki to the Danish Foreign Ministry, 19 October 1956, in DNA, FMC, 119.H.1.1956.
Conor Cruise O’Brien as “using the stage machinery of the United Nations as a substitute for action” and “a rite of purification through anathema.” This game transferred responsibility to the UN, where the Soviet Union exercised a veto in the UN Security Council and where the United States could go through the symbolic motions of aiding Hungary without risking the provision of direct military support.\footnote{95} For Finland, however, the activities at the UN did cause some political damage, or at least a loss of face. Finland was the only European democracy to abstain on the demand for withdrawal of Soviet forces. Finland also abstained on most of the other resolutions regarding the events in Hungary.\footnote{96} Yet, as O’Brien remarked, “those who were apparently ‘on opposite sides’ were in fact playing their appropriate parts in a ceremony of survival.” The UN enabled both the United States and the Soviet Union to try to avoid losing face, and it also helped to avert a conflict that could easily have been the prelude to a third world war.\footnote{97}

Commentators in Finland expressed strong criticism of the abstentions at the UN, arguing that Finland had betrayed its “own beliefs” and its (linguistic) “brother nation Hungary” and that the government had pusillanimously “departed from the Nordic group.”\footnote{98} Nonetheless, the Finnish government’s opportunistic stance can still ultimately be interpreted as a contribution to the containment of the Cold War. On this matter, the prediction of the newspaper Åbo Underrättelser that Finland’s vote “will quite certainly be correctly interpreted everywhere as an expression of our will to maintain frictionless relations with the great neighbor” proved well-founded.\footnote{99} When Gripenberg, in a later conversation with James J. Wadsworth, the U.S. deputy representative to the UN, explained the low profile of the Finnish delegation as “Finland’s position toute spéciale,” Wadsworth repeatedly assured him that “everybody perfectly understands that.”\footnote{100} Moreover, the parallel Suez crisis gave Finland the opportunity to take a constructive part in the UN by contributing to peace-keeping missions. The fortunate timing of this opportunity helped to salvage Finland’s national self-respect and international esteem and to demonstrate

\footnote{96. For the voting records, see Documents on International Affairs: 1956 (London: Royal Institute of International Affair, 1959), pp. 492, 495–497, 537–539, 547.}
\footnote{97. O’Brien and Topolski, The United Nations, p. 287.}
\footnote{98. See the multitude of press reviews covering the Finnish language press in BPCAH, PY, Vol. 712 A. The quotations are taken from an editorial in Helsingin Sanomat, cited in press review, “Att Finland lade ned sin röst i FN,” Nya Pressen (Helsinki), 6 November 1956, p. 1.}
\footnote{100. Entry for 10 June 1957 in Diary of Georg A. Gripenberg, in FNA, GGC, Vol. VA Y 3480. The statement by Wadsworth is quoted in English.}
the long-term prospects for Finland’s constructive participation in world affairs as a neutral state.101

The Finnish government’s guidelines for participation in the UN General Assembly had instructed the Finnish delegates to keep out of debates that affected the interests of the great powers, to facilitate consensus, and to “refrain from all measures that help to spark, maintain, or aggravate conflicts.” When discretion was required to achieve these objectives, the delegation was to refrain from taking any stands.102 The application of these principles to concrete situations, however, inevitably left some room for maneuver. When Kekkonen discussed the Finnish vote on Hungary with Paasikivi, both of them were inclined to join the Soviet camp in voting against the resolution. But Ralph Enckell (the son of the former foreign minister), who headed the Foreign Ministry’s Political Division, was eventually able to convince Kekkonen that such a course of action would undermine Finland’s claim to a policy of neutrality. Thanks to Enckell’s intervention, the cable of instruction sent to Gripenberg ordered him to abstain.103

The “cynical” and “tired moose,” for his part, did not refrain from criticizing the policy that he was duty-bound to execute regarding Hungary. Gripenberg reportedly asked for further instructions, obviously being confused by the order to abstain.104 He clearly had doubts about the wisdom of abstaining rather than voting for the resolution. Although he did not explicitly mention these doubts at delegation meetings, he wondered in his diary on 3 December 1956 whether abstention was “all that wise in the long run, inasmuch as the West will get the impression that we are perilously close to being a [Soviet] satellite-state.” The members of the Finnish delegation had little choice but to go along with the policy of abstention, but they diverged in their assessments of the policy.105 Contrary to what one might expect, several of the diplomats (including Gripenberg) favored a bolder course of action in support of the resolution. By contrast, other delegates either wanted to vote with the Soviet bloc or to stick with the policy of abstention. Foreign Minister

101. See Foreign Minister Ralf Törngren’s message: “Förståelsen för Finland stor i FN,” Hufvudstadsbladet (Helsinki), 25 November 1956, p. 3. See also the articles collected in BPCAH, PY, Vol. 712 A.
Ralf Törngren and former deputy foreign minister Reinhold Svento complained to Kekkonen that some Finnish Foreign Ministry officials were more interested in earning “applause from the West” than in upholding the line of their own government.\(^{106}\)

The widespread sentiment among the Finnish public in the fall of 1956 was summed up in a newspaper editorial declaring that “by entering the United Nations we ended up in a hot sauna.”\(^{107}\) The observations recorded in Gripenberg’s diary indicate that the Finnish government was determined to stay as inconspicuous as possible in this metaphorical sauna. When the UN General Assembly debated whether the crisis in Hungary should be placed on its agenda in 1957, Gripenberg received extraordinary instructions from Helsinki: “Remain silent—and if it really becomes necessary to say something, you should say that [you] have not yet received any instructions.” The following year, when the UN General Assembly again discussed the events in Hungary, Gripenberg’s observation in his diary was marked by a dash of sardonic resignation: “It goes without saying that Finland does not say a word.”\(^{108}\)

The government’s own view was explained by Foreign Minister Törngren in a confidential talk at Finland’s Swedish Press Club on 8 December 1956. He insisted that eight abstentions out of 35 votes did not make for a bad record, and he affirmed that Finland in the future would “largely follow the friendly Nordic countries on all matters in which the interests of the Soviet Union are not opposed or are not readily identifiable from Soviet actions.”\(^{109}\) Törngren’s successor, Johannes Virolainen, argued that abstaining implied “a stance as clear as voting for or against.” When Virolainen suggested that Finland was similar to the other Nordic countries in this respect, Norway’s ambassador in Helsinki expressed concern about the risk that his country would experience adverse effects if it were seen as being grouped with Finland.\(^{110}\)

Facing the political challenge of maneuvering through the Hungarian crisis and Soviet invasion of Hungary, Kekkonen privately voiced the opinion

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107. See the press review “I en het bastu,” Västra Nyland (Tammisaari), 20 November 1956, p. 1. The quotation is probably a paraphrase from an editorial in Maakansa.


110. Memorandum from Hans Olav, Ambassador in Helsinki, to the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, 5 October 1957, referring to a radio speech of Virolainen, quoted in the 4 October 1957 edition of Hufvudstadsbladet, in NNA, FM, 26.4/62. Olav was referring to a radio speech by Virolainen quoted in the 4 October 1957 edition of Hufvudstadsbladet.
that Finland had “ended up in the UN too early.” This sentiment, however, evolved in hindsight and did not last long. Skillful politician that he was, Kekkonen soon advanced a more positive interpretation of Finnish “exceptionalism” in the world organization. In a conversation with Törngren, Kekkonen outlined the credo of Finland’s UN policy for many years to come:

In the work of the UN one has to remember that our foreign policy line might lead us to an isolated position, but this is not something to fear. After all, our special position makes us truly unique in the world. When relations between the blocs move to the brink of war, it is no wonder that Finland is isolated. [But being isolated] is of course a situation better than if a sequence of events and external constraints were to bring us into the firing line.112

**Conclusion**

For a decade after World War II, Finland was merely a semi-sovereign state. The country was under permanent, if decreasing, threat of Soviet military intervention and without prospects for effective assistance from the West. In 1955, however, many Finns were confident that their country’s admission to the UN, belated though it was, meant that “the last shadow of the discriminatory consequences of the war has been eliminated.” As Jaako Nousiainen puts it in his classic study of the Finnish polity, membership in the UN implied that Finland “was freed from the position of a conquered ‘enemy state’ and in this respect became the equal of other countries.” According to Nousiainen, subsequent experience showed “that the advantages of membership outweighed the resulting difficulties”—contrary to the apprehensions and misgivings that were widespread in Finland prior to the country’s admission to the UN. This retrospective evaluation bears out the expectations of President Paasikivi as outlined in his diary in August 1947.116

Scholars who have analyzed Finland’s participation in the UN usually assume that the world body was a platform for Finland to display its distinct

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111. Suomi, Urho Kekkonen, p. 64.
112. Ibid., p. 66.
113. On Finland’s semi-sovereign status, see Väyrynen, Stability and Change in Finnish Foreign Policy, p. 42.
116. See, for example, the entry for 24 August 1947 in Paasikivi, Dagböcker 1944–56, Vol. 2, p. 83.
national profile in international relations. The lengthy period in which Finland had to wait for membership, from 1947 to 1955, has either been ignored or been interpreted in terms of the supposedly beneficial effects of non-membership and of Finland’s supposed lack of interest in joining. To be sure, it is certainly possible that membership from 1948 to 1955 would have been detrimental even though membership after 1955 was advantageous. But the problem is that the former part of this formulation is based solely on counterfactual suppositions. In thinking about these counterfactuals, we should bear in mind that Finland joined the UN only a year before Soviet troops invaded Hungary to crush a popular uprising there. As one observer put it at the time, “Finland’s entry into the UN [only months before the Soviet invasion] could hardly have come at a more inconvenient time.” Yet, Finland ultimately was able to weather the 1956 Hungarian crisis and the Soviet invasion—events that would have been nightmare scenarios for Finnish leaders if Finland had still been outside the UN. Why should it be taken for granted that Finland would not have similarly managed to survive the crises of the early Cold War?

There can be no doubt that skepticism toward the UN in the early post-war years was widespread in Finland. However, this attitude was not unique to Finland. Moreover, the negative sentiment was in part a reaction to the humiliating experience of having been denied membership and in part a “sour-grapes” feeling that Finland’s inability to gain admission must mean that admission was not desirable anyway. The notion that Finnish politicians and ordinary citizens genuinely lacked interest in UN membership is not borne out by the evidence. So eager was the Finnish government to apply for UN membership (despite the non-binding nature of the stipulations in the Paris Peace Treaty) that it began taking steps toward this end even before the formal prerequisites were in place. Although the Soviet Union’s rejection of Finland’s bid for membership spurred the Finns to adopt a more passive stance vis-à-vis the UN, Paasikivi eventually abandoned this line and declared to Molotov that Finland wanted to join.

A complex picture thus emerges of Finland’s relationship with the UN. The low point in Finnish estimations of the UN was during the Korean War, when Finns feared that the conflict might endanger Finland’s own situation. The high points came on several occasions: first, in 1947, just before Finland submitted its abortive application; second, in 1948, after the Soviet Union insisted on signing a de facto military pact with Finland, causing many Finns to
regard the UN as a tacit safeguard; and third, in 1954–1955, during the post-Stalin détente and the increasing desire for normalization of Finland’s international status.

Ultimately, what happened with Finland was precisely what Gromyko had hoped to forestall when he vetoed Finnish admission into the UN in October 1947. Finland ended up “in a class by itself.” Finlandization—not Czechoslovakization—became a generally known concept. The United Nations offered the perfect venue for Finland to act eccentrically and demonstrate its “exceptionalism” in a low-key, Nordic manner. Discretion was the watchword. Even when the Finnish voice at the UN became more audible in the 1960s, the essence of Finland’s approach to the UN did not change. Finland’s demeanor at the UN during the Cold War is neatly summed up in an anecdote: In 1967, Finland’s permanent representative to the UN, Max Jakobson, was asked to name Finland’s main contribution to the world body. He “reflected a while and then answered: Silence.” Silence was indeed an apt characterization of Finland’s UN policy. The same point was made more jocularly in 1973 by the chief Norwegian Foreign Ministry official responsible for the UN, who suggested that Finland’s discretion was not merely a matter of temperament but also the result of the country’s underlying geopolitical dilemma: “From the Finnish side it has been made clear with the usual clarity that nothing is clear.”

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