

MUNEA'26

Study Guide JCC

Agenda Item: Finnish Civil War

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1. Letters from the Academic Team

1.1 Letter from the Secretary General

Esteemed Participants;

My name is Mustafa Gürmeriç and I am serving as the Secretary General of MUNEA'26. It is a great honour to welcome you all to the 2nd edition of Ankara Erman Ilıcak Science High School's Model United Nations Conference, MUNEA'26.

This conference means a lot to me, not just because I helped organize it, but because I began my MUN career in 9th grade with MUNER'24, our school's mock MUN. Since then, I've continued to participate in conferences, and I've finally come back to where I started but this time not as a delegate, but as someone organizing it. This entire process has not only taught me a great deal but has also been a significant experience that has shaped who I am today.

As the MUNEA'26 community, we have dedicated ourselves fully to this process and worked tirelessly to bring you one of the best conferences possible. And I cannot conclude without thanking the entire academic community and the organizing team, especially my colleagues on the executive team for their contributions to this process.

And finally, dear delegates, I would like to thank you for joining us on this journey; it would not be complete without you. I hope you come to your committees well prepared and enjoy three days that are as academic and fun as possible. I look forward to seeing you all at our school from May 22–24. Debate. Collaborate. Make a Change.

Sincerely,

Mustafa Gürmeriç

Secretary General of MUNEA'26

1.3 Letter from the Under Secretary General

Esteemed and Distinguished Delegates,

Firstly, welcome to MUNEA'26 and the Joint Crisis Committee. My name is Elif Ata, and I'm an 11th grader at Prof. Dr. Aziz Sancar Science High School. I will be serving as your Under Secretary General. I hope every one of you will be delighted with this committee both during and after the conference, and enjoy your time there. I will be doing my best to make sure that you all will.

This committee will aim to provide you with an in-depth simulation of the Finnish Civil War. You will be the one deciding upon the fate of this civil war in this difficult state and dealing with the many crises. I believe this study guide has enough information for you, and that after reading it, you won't need any further research for the committee.

I would firstly like to thank the Academic Assistant of this committee, Nazlı Deniz. She helped me so much during the preparation of this committee. Then I would like to thank the executive team of this conference, the Secretary General Mustafa for inviting me, the Deputy Secretary Generals Hamza and Elif, Director General Yiğit Efe Koçak and the Deputy Director General Esila for all their hard work in making this conference happen.

It's normal to have questions about the committee. You can contact me anytime with any questions you have at my email, elifata0212@gmail.com. I hope to see you all at the conference!

Elif Ata

Under Secretary General of JCC

1.4 Letter from the Academic Assistant

Distinguished participants,

First of all welcome to the Joint Crisis Committee. My name is Nazlı Deniz Bölücek.

And I am currently studying in Mimar Sinan Fine Arts Highschool. It's a great honour to serve you as the Academic Assistant during the MUNEA'26.

It has been one year since I started this journey and from that moment to today, I gained so many unforgettable memories and friends that made it so special. Therefore I hope we can provide a committee that you have fun with these three days and when you look back remember it with great memories.

All of you will represent brave generals, commanders or important figures who etched their names into this war. So don't hesitate to take valiant actions and participate in the committee, whether to share your opinions or make plans.

And there was no one I would enjoy working with while making this committee other than Elif Ata, thank you for everything. And I would like to thank the executive team, Mustafa Gürmeriç, Yiğit Efe Koçak, Esila, Hamza and Elif. Thank you all for your efforts in making this conference.

Now, it's your turn to decide the future of Finland. Will the Reds achieve victory and bring socialism to the region or will the White monarch keep continuing its rule?

If you have any question marks in your mind, you can always contact me via

denizbolucekadmission@gmail.com Sincerely,

Academic Assistant of JCC

Nazlı Deniz Bölücek

2. Introduction to Joint Crisis Committees

Joint Crisis Committees are where participants are divided into two or more cabinets to take actions, write directives, command armies as generals, or act as important historical figures simultaneously. In this committee, delegates make decisions that can change or affect the way things will turn out.

For making these possible, crisis committees require directives. With the shortest definition, a directive is the main document used for giving direct orders from the simplest actions to complicated operations. The delegates will receive updates based on their actions, and these updates will determine their future strategies.

Personal Directives: Any action regarded as a completely individual activity or within a delegate's assigned roles and authority -if the role allocated to you is the commander of X division, marching, relocating, giving orders to that division, or using special features of your role- must be sent by personal directives.

Joint Directives: Joint directives are the directive type that is written and signed by more than one delegate from the same cabinet.

Top Secret Directives: Only directives that do not require the chairboard's signature are top secret directives. If a delegate wishes to plan anything that should not be seen by anyone in the cabinet, they must write "top secret" clearly on top of the directive before giving it directly to the cabinet admin.

Cabinet Directives: Significant decisions that needs to be agreed upon by all members of a cabinet -declarations, demands, etc.- should be sent as a cabinet directive and require every single member's signature to send.

Press Releases: Speeches, announcements, posters, or any type of document wished to share with the public or a specific group of people will be published via these directives.

In this crisis committee there will be no General Speakers List or Moderated Cacus, and the committee will run within Semi-Moderad Caucuses, Unmoderated Caucuses and Tour de Tables. These motions have to be at least 5 minutes and at most 20 minutes to be risen and can be terminated when the half time of the motion passes. The caucuses can be extended with an extension motion and the time of it has to be less than the time that was given in the first motion.

Semi-Moderated Caucus: During the semi-moderated caucus, delegates may deliver speeches without raising their placards. However, they're expected to rise and speak, keeping only one speaker standing while not crossing the boundaries of respect, while other delegates speak.

Unmoderated Caucus: In this caucus, delegates can walk freely around the cabinet, communicate with each other and write documents.

Tour de Table: When this motion is given the delegates will speak in a clockwise rotation one by one without a time stritch.

In this committee there will be some points where both sides will clash in the battlefield. Times like that are when exactly *battle sessions* begin.

Battle Sessions: Once a battle session is announced for one side, delegates are expected to respond immediately according to the situation until the time limit expires. (The timeframe will be determined by the committee secretariat and may vary depending on the scale of battle.) At the end of the given time directives will be collected by the crisis team members and no additions will be allowed. In certain situations the delegates will be taken into a battle room where they will initiate their attack/defense verbally with a map in front of them and their forces shown on the map. There will be rounds of these verbal orders from both sides and after they end the result of the battle will be calculated by the Committee Secretariat.

3. Historical Background

3.1 Finland as the Grand Duchy of Russia

The Finns lived with the Swedish for over 600 years. Under the Swedish ruling, with Swedish managing bodies and Swedish as the official language. Finnish was seen as the language that the people spoke. In 1809, after Russia captured Finland in the Russo-Swedish War, Finland was made an autonomous state with their own legislative (Diet) and executive (Senate) bodies- the Grand Duchy of Finland. Finland was not directly under the Russian Empire, but it was joined to it through the Tsar. The government of Finland would be directly controlled by the Tsar, and a governor general appointed by him would move into the new capital, Helsinki. With this agreement, the Tsar took the place of the Swedish king as sovereign. The Finns inherited their traditions intact. The laws and the constitution remained unchanged; however, the military force was disbanded. In 1812, the Tsar restored to Finland the lands Russia had annexed in the 18th century. With having a state of their own for the first time, the Finns were now starting to create their own national identity.

The chief institution was the Senate, which was composed of 14 Finns appointed by the Tsar. The counterpart of the Senate was the Committee for Finnish Affairs, which presented the requests of the Finns to the Tsar. The Diet was formally the lawmaking body for the Grand Duchy; however, it could not initiate any legislation but petition the Tsar to introduce the legislation. The Tsar could summon or dissolve the Senate without getting a reference from the Diet. Finland retained its own judicial system and the taxes collected in Finland remained in the country and were not given to Russia. Finns were exempted from conscription into the Russian army.

The interests of Finland in the imperial court were represented by a Minister-Secretary of State. All acts of the Emperor concerning Finland were to be signed by this State Secretary or deputized officials. The Committee for Finnish Affairs was wound up in 1826 and replaced by a non-advisory State Secretariat for Finnish Affairs in St. Petersburg, which caused a shift of balance in the Senate. However, the internal administration of Finland remained separated from that of empire, and in spite of his formal position as chairman of the Senate, the Governor-General, was not able to exert much influence (Kirby, 2014:80). In 1831, there was a certain duality of administrative institutions; there were two offices of the Governor-General, one officially located in Helsinki and another in St. Petersburg.

Despite the efforts of trying to build joint institutions for attaching the Grand Duchy to the Empire, Finns felt the autocratic power of the Tsar. The Finnish Diet was dismissed in 1809, and it was not recovered until nearly fifty years later.

During Alexander II's rule, he made some significant reforms for Finland. In 1858, Finnish was made the official language of local self-governments in provinces where Finnish was the majority spoken language. In 1863, Alexander II called the Diet and announced that the

Finnish language would have equal position to Swedish and Russian in the Grand Duchy. This was later expanded to state that offices must serve the public in Finnish when requested. In the 1870s, the right to teach in Finnish in secondary schools was gained. In these reforms, the position of the Diet was also strengthened. After 1869, it could initiate legislation and the Tsar was obligated to summon the Diet every five years. Later, they got the right to implement their own monetary system, which is the Finnish markka and could maintain their own national army.

When Alexander II fell victim to an assassination, his 36-year-old son Alexander III succeeded his father. The reforms that were initiated by his father were too liberal in his views. His political ideal was a nation formed of only one nationality, one language, one religion and one administration. He planned to achieve these in three steps: imposition “of the Russian language and Russian schools in his German, Polish and Finnish subjects, by fostering Orthodoxy at the expense of other confessions, by persecuting Jews, and by destroying the remnants of German, Polish and Swedish institutions in the outlying provinces. (Żelichowski, 2019)”

The February Manifesto of 1899, was an imperial decree that ensured direct Tsarist rule of Finland without consulting either the Finnish State or the Diet (Cieślak 1983: 182). This initiated a wave of protests in the form of petitions called “Great Address”, signed by more than 500,000 Finns, which were ignored by Alexander III when these were sent to him. When the Language Manifesto of 1900 made Russian the official language of the Empire in administration and in government offices. Later, a new law including the Finnish army in the Empire’s army structure was established. Finns again signed petitions, which were again ignored by the Tsar. The domestic policy of the Russian government during this period of time only got worse and repressive measures against the Finns were applied (Żelichowski, 2019). The censorship was

expanded in 1903 and the Governor-General was granted dictatorial powers. This oppression was met with resistance, and the movement called “Kagal” started, which was named after a similar Jewish resistance organisation in Russia, and succeeded in assassinating the Governor-General. This oppression and Russification era ended with the outbreak of the revolution in Russia.

The policy of Russification continued throughout the years 1909-1917. After the Russians faced a defeat against the Japanese in 1905 and the revolution that broke out that year made the Russians give the Finns a break, they made new legislative reforms. In 1906, the Tsar proposed that the Diet be replaced by a modern unicameral parliament, which was accepted by the Finns and Eduskunta was created. However, these ideas of reform were not supported by most of the influential people of Russia, including the Prime Minister of that time, Pyotr Stolypin. When the oppression started again in 1909, Stolypin formed the Special Conference of the Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Finland in order to deal with what they had called the “Finnish Problem”. After he got permission from Nicholas II, who was the Tsar, he started rearranging the relations of St. Petersburg and Helsinki. Nicholas II especially disliked the Finns, as he put it during his conversation with German ambassador in 1907, “the Finns were at a very low cultural level with regard to morality, and nothing good is to be expected from them” (Ascher 2002: 307). The rights of Eduskunta to legislate on matters of general state interests were denied by him. Stolypin’s legislation in 1910 decreed that all legislation was to be made by the Russian imperial institutions, which gave the Senate and Eduskunta merely the right to state their opinion. The Senate once tried to combat Stolypin; however, his position in power and having the support of Nicholas II was enough to win. Stolypin’s actions were the ones that led to his assassination in 1911 by a Ukrainian leftist revolutionary. After the assassination, until Russia’s collapse, the form of rule turned to a monarchist dictatorship.

3.2 The First World War's Impact on Finland

Because of the involvement of Russia in the Great War, Finland could not escape the negative effects. In the summer of 1914, the Russians were scared that the Finns could try to revolt or that Sweden could attack Finland. Because Finland was very close to the proximity of St. Petersburg, for the Russians, the area was very sensitive. In order to take control, a state of war was declared in the Grand Duchy in 30th July. By the end of the year 1914, about 35,000 Russian soldiers were deployed to different locations in Finland.

The Finns did not have an army, nor had the requirement to send soldiers to the front, but many of the Finns joined the Russian army as volunteers. Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim, the future Marshal of Finland and president of the country, reached the rank of general. In May 1915, a group of Finnish activists made an agreement with the Germans, which allowed them to flee from Finland to get military training in Germany. Later, these soldiers formed a military unit called the Jäger Bataillon, and they were sent to fight on the Eastern Front in May 1916.

The war especially affected the Finnish economy. The most important industry, which was the wood industry, had been severely hit by the loss of Western export markets (Żelichowski, 2019). However, not all industries were at a loss as the metallurgical industry benefited from the Russian war orders. This relative economic flourishing lasted until 1917, when Russian orders ceased, leading to massive layoffs that affected the entire economy (Żelichowski, 2019).

4. The Year 1917

4.1 The February Revolution in Russia

The February Revolution, also known as the Menshevik Revolution, happened between 8 and 12 March 1917. The date was 23-27 February 1917 according to the Russian calendar at that time. In the revolution's first days, the wave of strikes grew and mass street protests in St. Petersburg against the destitutions of the First World War and the autocratic government. Against the orders of the Tsar, large sections of the army that were stationed in St. Petersburg joined the protests. When March 12 came, the revolutionaries took control of the capital and on March 15, Tsar Nicholas II was forced to abdicate. After the abdication, two organisations shared the administration control over Russia. The Provisional Government, headed firstly by the Liberal Prince Georgy Lvov and the socialist Petrograd Soviet or Workers Council. The optimism of the revolution soon faded as the Russian public faced continuing war, food shortages, mass unemployment, a greatly increased cost of living, and a weak and divided government. In July 1917, peaceful mass demonstrations were seen on the streets of St. Petersburg, and the authorities, supported by the Social Revolutionaries, responded with force, causing the death of hundreds of civilians and ordering the arrest of leading political opponents, such as the leading Bolsheviks. Opposition to the Provisional Government grew, with an attempted military coup by General Kornilov in August 1917, which led to the release of the Bolsheviks from prison, and the final overthrow happened in November with the October or Bolshevik Revolution.

4.2 The Power Act

After the February Revolution, things seemed to take a better turn for Finland. The temporary government also opposed the previous government in its policy toward Finland. One

of the first things done was to restore Finland's constitutional rights and autonomous position. The Diet was convened, and the government, which before the revolution was mostly formed by Russians, was displaced and a new government was formed, so a coalition government was formed with a Socialist majority.

The Russian soldiers stationed in Finland have perpetrated numerous acts of violence towards both other Russian soldiers and Finnish civilians, constantly interfering with the internal affairs of Finland. The Finnish government made several representations to the temporary government; however, the representations upon the remonstrances of the troop were of no avail.

The idea of independence was cultivated among the Finnish people during the rule of the Russian bureaucracy, and this idea was discussed in the press, and a Finnish premier at that time, who was a socialist, officially proclaimed total independence as the aim of Finnish aspirations. In July, a new bill was adopted, which was mostly signed by the socialists, that included sanctioning laws and appointing members of the government to be vested in the Diet. This bill was called the Power Act or Valtalaki, which was a step of Finland trying to get its independence, but it failed. The government of Russia refused to sanction this bill, dissolved the Diet, and ordered new elections. As a consequence, socialist members resigned, and the non-socialist members remained as a cabinet until the new elections. The elections took place on October 1 and 2, 1917, and the results were the defeat of the Socialist Party, with only 92 of the 103 members returning.

4.3 The October Revolution in Russia

The October Revolution, also known as the Bolshevik Revolution, was the second revolution that happened in Russia in 1917. It began on 7 November, in the old Russian calendar, 25 October, and with the insurrection of St. Petersburg. It was led by Vladimir Lenin's

Bolsheviks. Before the day of the uprising, 6 November, the government closed several newspapers and closed St. Petersburg; however, these were not enough to prevent a full-scale uprising. Bolshevik Red Guards started to occupy government buildings, and on the morning of 8 November, they had occupied the Winter Palace, which is the seat of the Provisional Government of Russia, and then the capital was occupied.

Because the revolution was not universally recognized, the country fell into a civil war that lasted until 1922 and ended with the creation of the Soviet Union. This revolution inspired many communist movements globally.

4.4 Declaration of Independence

The Decree on Peace, which was written by Lenin, changed the situation again because it appealed to the governments of all the warring states and to their people to conclude a rapid truce. This mentioned truce was for three months to allow for all to complete the peace negotiations with the representatives and the convocations of the assemblies of the countries for the confirmation of peace conditions.

The Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, on the other hand, was signed by Lenin and Stalin. It proclaimed that “The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, even to the point of separation and the formation of an independent state” (Declaration of the Rights of the People of Russia, 1917). The fall of the Russian Empire caused a power vacuum in Finland, which ultimately led to this civil war as well. Growing social unrest led to the election of a new government under Pehr Evind Svinhufvud, and the summoning of the Independent State. The new prime minister presented a declaration to Eduskunta, which was passed on the 6th of December 1917, and a Finnish proclamation of independence.

Pehr Svinhufvud, the prime minister of the first independent Finnish government, resigned on 12 December 1918, and General Gustav Mannerheim, who was the leader of the Whites in the Finnish Civil War, was appointed as a Regent. After the elections in 1919, social democrats won three-quarters of the parliament, and Finland adopted a republican constitution. In July 1919, Kaarlo Juho Ståhlberg, Finland's first president, replaced Mannerheim, and Finland became a republic.

5. The Opposing Sides

5.1. The Reds

The Reds were mainly made up of industrial workers, agricultural labourers, and members of Finland's urban lower class who were tired of unfair working conditions and inequality over the years. They were already influenced by growing spreads of socialist ideology across Europe, and mainly by the Russian Revolution. After recent events, a socialist revolution was inevitable. The Reds aimed to establish a democratic and reduced impact of the noble class in Finland. The Reds were united under a common purpose, but nevertheless, all of the Reds cannot be strictly defined as communist since some of them were revolutionary socialists.

Their movement is politically connected to the Social Democratic Party and militarily represented by the Red Guards on the battlefield. In the civil war, the Reds kept control over southern cities such as Tampere and Helsinki, which would be their administrative capital during

the war. Even though they received weapons and limited logistical support from the Bolsheviks, and some Russian soldiers came to fight alongside them, the Reds faced serious difficulties. The lack of a centralised command system in the army, especially against The White's well organized armies and experienced officers, weakened the Red Guards, which mostly included former labour workers or volunteer citizens, as expected, not experienced soldiers. Eventually, these reasons contributed to their defeat in future conflicts.

5.1.1 The Social Democratic Party

The Social Democratic Party (SDP) was one of the largest labour parties in Finland in the 19th century. As a party which represents the working class, SDP interiorizes democratic socialism and advocates social equality, workers' rights and parliamentary reforms.

Four years before the outbreak of the civil war, in 1914, the SDP achieved a huge success in the elections by having the majority of votes. This alone was an indication of the growing support and sympathy for socialism during that period among local workers and citizens. Following the February Revolution, when Tsar Nicholas II fell, and the Russian Empire collapsed, an important question arises in the minds of the Finns: Who will be the highest authority now?

The SDP's answer was itself. From this point on, the highest authority in Finland should belong to the parliament, they defend. Since the SDP also held a majority of the parliament, this would allow the party to gain significant control over Finland's political affairs. To achieve this goal, the party proposed a new law, the *Power Act* (Valtalaki). This act directly gives the

supreme authority and full legislative rights to the Finnish parliament instead of the Grand Duke of Finland. Mentioned as “Parliamentary Sovereignty” in the Act officially. When this law reached the Russian Provisional Government, it was a matter of time before it was rejected. They clearly do not want to lose their control over Finland. As a result, the Russian Provisional Government dismissed the parliament in July 1917, which was seen as a major move against democracy by the Finns and drew a lot of criticism. Therefore, new elections were just around the corner. But these elections did not go as well for the SDP as the previous ones, so they ended up losing the majority against conservatives and the upper classes. This led to a further polarisation of the country's right and left wings, and socialists lost their faith in parliament. This unrest paved the way for the revolution in the future.

5.1.2 Red Guards

Red Guards were the primary military force of the socialist side during the Finnish Civil War. Formed in the early 1900s. However, the parliament's dissolution was the event that caused them to become radicalised and grow notably. The Red Guards operated as decentralised city-based local units rather than a unified national army, which caused difficulties for them in terms of communication and control. Also, disagreements among commanders frequently disrupted military operations.

After choosing Helsinki as the administrative capital for a while, where Reds' political leaders attempted both military and governance coordination as much as possible. Their strategy largely focused on defending urban areas and protecting transportation routes.

Further in the Civil War, railroads played a crucial role. Railroads across the country were the simplest way to relocate the soldiers, carry supplies, and connect with cities. Because of the

cities like Tampere, Viipuri and Helsinki being connected to the main train lines, Reds benefited from these roads at the beginning of the war. However, there's still a massive issue: organisational problems in the Red Guards. Despite their strategic positions, the Reds often struggled to utilise the railways effectively, due to poor communication and weak command. This situation allowed the Whites to gain an advantage and capture the railway centres. This led the Reds to a worse case of coordination than ever before, and eventually, they lost the ability to make large-scale movements, too.

5.2 The Whites

The Whites were the anti-socialist movement formed by mainly upper-class citizens, landowners, the bourgeoisie, and conservatives, unlike the Reds. After the influence of the Russian Empire began to wane and a power gap formed in Finland, the Whites saw themselves as saviours who saved Finland from chaos and Bolshevism. They valued nationalism, private property and believed a traditional and united society was necessary for Finland's survival. . Besides preventing the socialist revolution, they aimed to establish an independent Finland with a strong central government to maintain order. Geographically, they controlled the rural areas of the northern sides, which were less industrialised compared to the Reds. Where agriculture and small local communities were more common than heavy industry.

5.2.1 The White Senate

The White Senate was the conservative provisional government of Finland, representing the anti-socialist Whites in the civil war. During the conflict, Whites saw the Senate as the only legal government structure, while the communists were the illegal rebels. Shortly after Finland declared independence and the central authority weakened, Whites advocated for the Senate to

take over the government of Finland, much like the Reds had done for the SDP. The Whites saw the possibility of revolution as a threat to the already crumbling order in the country and were determined not to allow it.

Once Helsinki fell to the Reds, the Senate moved to a safer and more controlled city of Vasa. Thus, Vasa became the new capital for the anti-socialist Whites and the coordination center for the army.

The leadership of the White Senate was one of the key factors which determined the victory of the Whites. The political executive under Pehr Edvind Svinhufvud, who later became the first chief of state of Finland, was prime minister and then president. Also headed the Finnish government during the civil war and remained an influential political figure until the early 1930s. He was a previous Finnish parliament member when the country was still under the rule of the Russian Empire in 1894. And from that time until the end of his governance, Svinhufvud's strong anti-socialist views never changed. In conclusion, his leadership played a major role in both the Senate and the victorious Whites.

5.2.2 The White Guards

The White Guards, also known as the Civil Guard, were the main military force formed against the Red Guards by the anti-socialist, nationalist White movement. It was formed mainly by the voluntary middle-upper class, former officers and conservative citizens.

The Guards command was led by Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim, who was a general of the Imperial Russian Army during the First World War. Afterwards of the Russian Revolution, he was asked to serve as the chairman of the Whites' military forces. And with the subsequent Red

Revolution in Helsinki, he became the commander-in-chief of the White forces of the Senate. In the event that his professional military experiences and strategic tactics gained the upper hand over the whites on the battlefield.

However, the whites' victory on the battlefield wasn't solely due to better organization and more experienced soldiers. There is one more significant factor, the Jäger Movement. In World War I, Finnish volunteers secretly left Finland to get trained in Germany for the army. This training lasted from 1915 to 1916 when they were sent to the Eastern Front. This training equipped them with strong German discipline. When they returned to Finland, they instantly faced the chaos of the seeds of civil war. In the autumn of 1917, the repatriation of the Jäger Battalion began. In conclusion, these foreign trained Finnish soldiers formed the core part of the White army.

6. International Involvement

6.1 German Empire

The involvement of the German Empire in the Finnish Civil War was one of the most decisive factors for both sides. For Germany, Finland was strategically important due to its proximity and access to the Baltic Sea. And the aftermath of the First World War was still lingering, and Germany saw Finland as an opportunity to weaken the Russian impact, so it was a geopolitical tool for them. Therefore, especially after the 1917 Russian Revolution, the spread of the Bolshevik regime had created fear and growing concerns in most countries. A possible victory of the Reds in Finland could influence other communists in Northern Europe to rebel

against their governments. The fact that Germany was initially an empire, ruled by a monarchy, and had an aristocratic class was enough to worry them. In the case of a Reds victory, it would also have resulted in Soviet Russia and Finland uniting, meaning Germany would have an even more powerful enemy than before. The German Empire was already worn out. Small scale worker strikes and the economic crisis were an indication of that. The Bolshevik Revolution not only emboldened socialists in the German Empire but also led to the German Revolution (1918-1919) after the war. All these reasons led them to support the White Guards and Senate in the Finnish civil war.

On 3 April 1918, a German unit, the Baltic Sea Division, landed in Hanko city to reinforce the White Senate. This unit professionally trained and well-equipped German soldiers, weapons, and artillery. The division was commanded by Rüdiger von der Goltz, who also served in the First World War. With their experiences from the previous war, the Baltic Sea Division and Jager unit had become the stepping stone in the White side's most important operations in the later periods of the war. Such as the fall of the Red Guards' administrative capital, Helsinki, and the capture of many of the railway junctions on which the Reds were vitally dependent.

Besides the military, the German Empire's support for the White Senate was a politically important matter too. A superpower like Germany's recognition of Whites ensures that other countries in Europe think of Whites as the official government. This brought them prestige both domestically and in foreign affairs and made it easier to portray the Red Guards as revolutionaries who rebelled against the real state.

6.2 Soviet Russia

Shortly before his return to Russia, Vladimir Lenin expressed his support for an independent, democratic, and socialist Finland. But what he didn't predict was that Finland soon erupted into a civil war after gaining its independence. He also assumed that Finland's developed socialism corresponded with an equally developed militant revolutionary culture that would allow the Finnish socialists to easily seize power. Again, he was wrong.

These assumptions caused Finnish Reds to heavily rely on Russian revolutionary ideologies. This dependence allowed Whites to focus more on mobilization while Reds put their fates on the Soviets. In 1918, Soviet Russia officially recognized Red Finland as the government. Following this recognition, they began to provide limited logistic and military support to the Reds. Including weapons, professional officers, and financial aid, although they were able to send some aid, the Bolsheviks had only recently come to power and were struggling with internal difficulties, and the Russian Civil War was about to break out. The Bolsheviks were in conflict with anti-Bolshevik White armies, monarchists, and liberals in their country at the same time. Because of that, they were unable to send enough supplies in a row or organize large-scale military operations in Finland. Moreover, there was one determining reason that restricted their support: *the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk*. This treaty was signed between the Soviet Russia and the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire) on 3 March 1918. The aim was to put an end to World War I on the Eastern Front. The terms of the treaty were solid for the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. Bolsheviks have two choices: they can reject the treaty and fight both in the First World War and the upcoming Civil War, and deal with a collapsing economy, more casualties, and tired armies for the sake of losing no land. Or they will agree upon giving Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, Finland, the Baltic States (Estonia, Lithuania,

Latvia), and some parts of the Caucasus. With this, Germany grew their territories by taking the Baltic States. Therefore, the rest of the regions would not be under Russian rule anymore. It was a sharp decision, but Lenin and the Bolsheviks thought this was a temporary sacrifice to maintain order in the country and the new regime. When all these reasons came together, they had no choice but to accept the terms.

This event's impact on the Finnish Civil War cannot be crossed. Brest-Litovsk was an indicator of Russia's withdrawal from the war, which means they officially made peace with Germany, who were the main foreign supporter of the Finnish Whites. A direct intervention in Finland could have reignited the idea of conflict with Germany again. Since they lost a significant amount of regions and were exhausted, opening a new front when the country was already weak was not an option for the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. As an inevitable consequence of these, the aid they were able to send was limited, and it hadn't been as effective as the Finnish Reds expected.

6.3 Sweden

Sweden's involvement in the Finnish Civil War was not as direct as Germany's or Soviet Russia's. That's mainly due to the Swedish government's official neutrality policy. They were not in a position to sustain such a war militarily or economically, so they did not take a clear stance on Finland's side, just as they remained neutral in World War I.

But that doesn't mean they had no role in this war. Even if the government remains neutral, conservative Swedes developed sympathy for the White side. Underlying this were fears of a possible revolution once again. At the beginning of 1918, the *Swedish Brigade* (Svenska Brigaden) was established to serve this purpose. Included volunteers who traveled to Finland and

joined the White Guards. Although it was not a large force, they had participated in important battles such as the Battle of Tampere and fought in the southern and western fronts of the war alongside the White Guards, and strengthened their morale during this period. However, it should be noted that the Swedish Brigade was not the official army of Sweden and that the government maintained its neutrality.

6.4 Western Powers

The Western Powers term contains the Allied Powers (United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Italy) in the First World War era. Like most of the countries in Europe, the Allied powers were preoccupied with the aftermath of the bloody World War. Therewith, allies also feared a socialist uprising to spread and were not favorably disposed towards the Reds. Also, Germany gained influence in Finland and the Baltic Sea at the same time, which was seen as another threat from an allied perspective. Despite their concerns, allied forces were also unwilling to send a large force to Finland due to their heavy casualties and traces of war in that year.

Western powers' involvement in the war was mostly diplomatic rather than military. As an example of that, allies saw the White Senate as a more stable and legitimate authority against the rebellious Bolsheviks. It enchanted White's international prestige and portrayed it they were the legal government.

Another reason for the Western side's interest in Finland was its strategic geographical position. Finland is located in the North of the Baltic Sea, which is a crucial naval route for both

economic and military access. Also, Finland's close proximity to Petrograd, which was the capital of the Bolsheviks during that period, attracted attention.

Although the future of Finland was a matter concerning many countries across Europe, as it would determine the balance of powers in Europe and ideological stability.

7. The Course of the War

7.1 The Outbreak of the War

At the coincidence, the first move from both sides happened on the same day. On 27 January 1918, the Red Guards seized power in the capital, Helsinki, and declared a revolution. The first proper battle of the war is often accepted as the Battle of Kämärä, which was on the day of the occupation of the capital by the Reds. It was a tactical ambush on the Karelian Isthmus train that was carrying rifles and artillery from Petrograd to Helsinki for the Reds. A White Guard battalion, led by Colonel Adolf Aminoff, intercepted the train by occupying the village of Kämärä and attempted to cut the tracks by using explosives. However, due to frozen ground, they were unable to plant the charges and only succeeded in derailing the locomotive. A gunfight erupted in the station, the escort of the train, the Petrograd Finnish Red Guards, engaged with the Whites. Because of being outnumbered and running out of ammunition, the Whites' ambush team retreated, and the Reds quickly repaired the tracks, allowing the train to arrive at its destination, in Helsinki, to deliver the guns and artillery. However, the Whites succeeded in disrupting and delaying the arrival of the train as they had planned; this was considered a tactical success. Simultaneously, the White Guards began the disarmament of Russian troops in Ostrobothnia, which is located on the western coast of Finland.

On 3 February, in Oulu, which was quite essential for the Whites to secure the Northern Finland's largest port. The Red Guards positioned in the fortified Workers' Hall engaged in urban combat before surrendering when they realized the help they expected from the Russian garrisons would not arrive. Because the Whites positioned their reinforcements, artillery, on the northern bank of the Oulujoki River to shell the Russian barracks.

On 19 February, during the Siege of Varkaus, which is an industrial enclave deep behind the White lines. The White Guards under General Ernst Löfström surrounded the town, after the 2 days of urban combat, forcing the Red Guards to retreat to the Ahlström industrial island. The Reds tried to defend with a "home-made" cannon manufactured at the Varkaus metal works. The engagement ended with the "Lottery of Huruslahti" which was a mass execution of the Reds' leaders.

7.2 Battle of Tampere

After the start of the war, the industrial town of Tampere became one of the strongholds of the Reds. Tampere had a large working-class population and a central location as a railway junction, which made the city the base of the Red on the Northern Front. In February, the front line formed in Vippula, which is located about sixty kilometres northeast of Tampere. The Red offensives, even though they received support from Russian soldiers, were unsuccessful.

In early March, the Whites started preparing for a major offensive in Tampere. They aimed to siege one of the most important strongholds of the Reds and destroy the main Red forces in western Finland. After the Senate, the Whites secured Imperial Germany's support, Commander-in-Chief Gustaf Mannerheim wanted a victory before the intervention of the Germans for the reasons of prestige. The operation began on March 15, when Whites broke through on the Northern Front. The Red forces, which were located in Kuru and supported by the

remaining Bolshevik Russian soldiers, were routed on the first day, while the Länkipohja locality was captured by the White troops in one of the bloodiest engagements in the war. After mid-March, the horrors and reprisals committed by the White's have gradually exceeded the Red terror, and the execution of the Red prisoners became so common.

On March 18, the Whites attacked the Orivesi railway station, but the Reds managed to repel the attack with their armoured train; however, the chaotic situation forced them to evacuate the locality. Even though the Northern Front was crumbling, the Reds managed to delay the advance of the White on the western side of Tampere.

By the end of March, the situation in Tampere became desperate; however, the Reds Commander-in-Chief Hugo Salmela was able to reorganise the city's defences. As the Whites approached from the outskirts of the city in the northeastern part, the forces from both sides clashed in Vehmainen, which is located ten kilometres east of Tampere. On March 24, the Whites captured the strategic locality of Lempäälä, which severed the railway between Tampere and Helsinki, and helped to cut the supplies to the city. Two days later, when the Whites captured the railway station of Siuro, the siege of Tampere was complete. The Red troops succeeded in beating back the White attacks, which led to the Whites using the Jäger battalions. 28 March, or the day allied as the "Bloody Maundy Thursday", the Whites attempted to break the Reds' defences in Kalevankangas Cemetery. The Whites were met with the Reds' machine guns and artillery bombardment and gave great casualties. The fight continued for a full week, and the eastern city districts remained in the Red control. When the Whites were preparing for another push, the Reds tried to break the siege from the south. However, they have failed to relieve the city. The Reds' Commander-in-Chief Salmela died in an accidental discharge of a hand grenade at the depot, and he was succeeded by the cavalry commander Verner Lehtimäki.

The final push for the city started on 3 April, with an intense artillery bombardment, and it was followed by an attack against the eastern city quarters. Jäger Lieutenant Gunnar Melin made the first breakthrough and crossed the dam bridge over the Tammerkoski rapids and captured the Näsilinna Palace located in the heart of the city, where they defended themselves against the Reds' counterattacks and escaped over the frozen Lake Näsijärvi. By the evening, the Whites had reached the rapids from the east, north, and south. The Reds managed a successful fighting retreat across the Hämeensilta Bridge and left the city's eastern half to the Whites. As the fighting continued in the streets in the city centre, the Red armoured train was taken out by a White artillery grenade. The last of the Red troops retreated to the districts of Pyynikki and Pispala starting from 4 April, and the defenders of the City Hall surrendered on 5 April. The prisoners were gathered on the Central Market Square. This battle was one of the largest battles in the history of the Nordic countries.

7.3 The Final Campaigns

7.3.1 Battle of Antrea

Battle of Antrea fought on 11 February 1918, is mostly remembered for its *Ahvola* front which was one of the few locations with any prolonged trench warfare. The Battle of Ahvola was of such exceptional magnitude in the context of the Finnish Civil War that Carl Gustaf E. Mannerheim compared it with the Western Front battlefields. Consequently, Ahlova became known as the longest lasting front in Antrea, and later called the "Verdun of Finland."

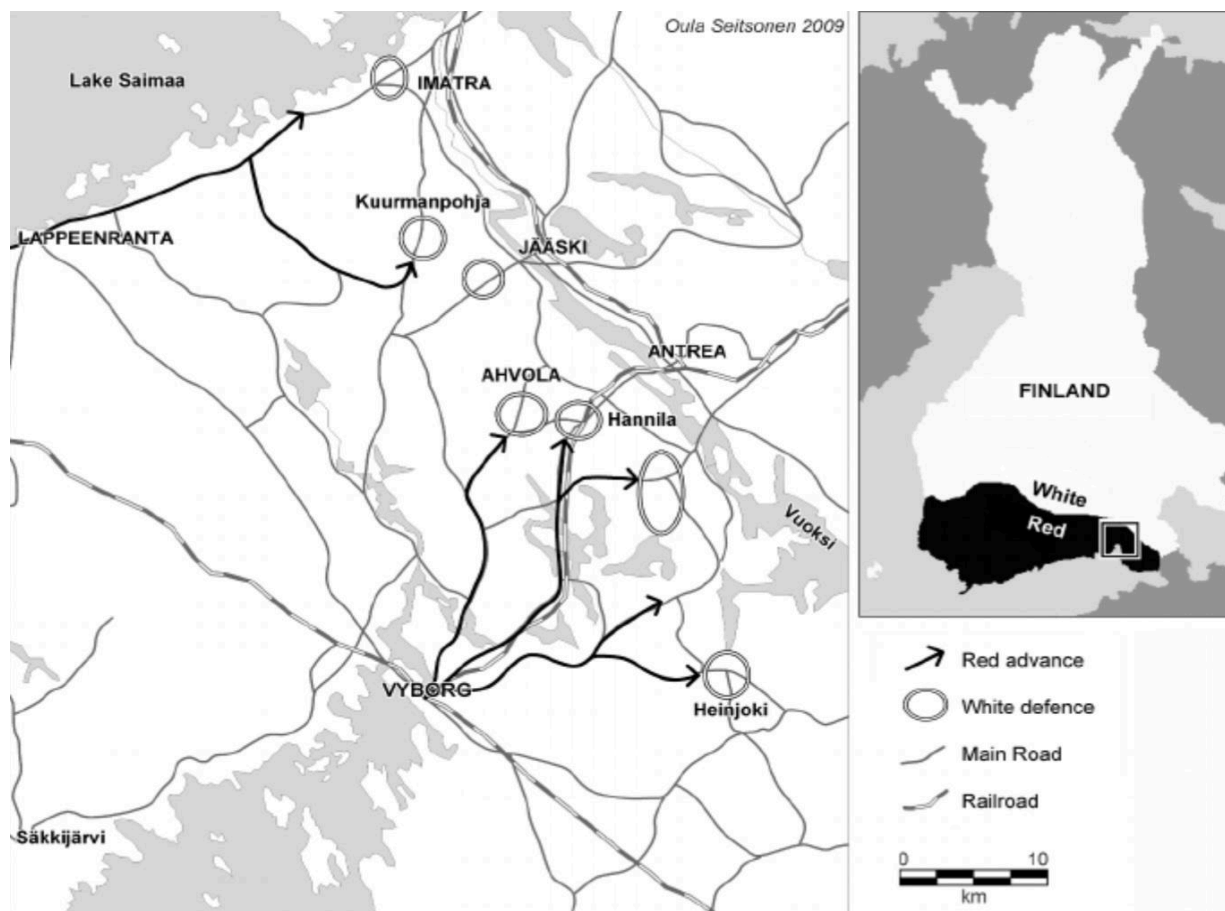


Fig. 1, Left: Main lines of the Red advance on the Karelian front and the centres of the White defence (after Donner et al 1927, Susitaival 1937). Right: Boundary of the Red and White-controlled areas in the spring 1918; national borders are shown as they were in 1918–1939

Antrea was also an important region for transporting troops and rotating supplies due to its railway connections between Viipuri and other parts of Finland. And the Reds' who were aware of this aimed to stop White advance by capturing these railway junctions in that area. After the war began, Reds moved toward the northern sides and successfully took over the control of Tali and Karislami railroads. As the battle intensified, the use of trenches and artillery became increasingly important. The Red Guards established machine gun positions and held

defensive lines in villages to slow down the Whites and protect the routes leading to Viipuri. Whites repeated frontal assaults in order to break the defensive lines. However, due to machine guns unceasingly fire they failed. The battle continued for weeks. But in this time, they successfully stabilized their defenses too and built trenches around the Ahvola. The German intervention and fall of Helsinki has already shown its effect on the Reds in a negative sense. Since the Whites are getting closer to Viipuri, Reds have no choice but abandon Antrea. This allowed Whites to gain strategic advantage across the city.

7.3.2 Battle of Helsinki

In the year of 1918, on April 3, German expeditionary forces showed up on the coasts of Hanko to seize the Reds' administrative center, Helsinki. The aim was clear: the whole of southern Finland was under the control of the Finnish socialist government, so the only way to move troops to Finland was by sea. A land connection to Finland could only have been created by continuing the war against Russia and advancing from Estonia via Petrograd to southeast Finland. However, the recent Treaty of Brest-Litovsk prevented the continuation of hostilities, and in any case, a ground operation would have required considerable resources. The naval division was necessary for transport and to control the northern part of the Baltic Sea, were a resource that Germany judged sufficient for this purpose.

To enhance the effect of surprise, the Germans decided to make two separate landings instead of one, further complicating logistics for the Reds and the concentration of forces for an effective defence. The forces of the White Guards would attack with all their strength from the north, and the Germans at the same time from the south. For them, the main objective was to isolate the city by cutting off its railway junctions and logistics lines. Then, to besiege the city in

coordination with the White Forces. The Reds initially failed to develop a swift and organized counterattack against the German landing. Even if they tried to resist until the very end for the working class, as previously explained, the Red Guards, composed of workers and volunteers, were at a disadvantage against the professional and experienced armies they faced.

After landing took place 130 kilometres west of the capital Helsinki with success, the Reds retreated from the city without a direct fight with German superiority, and formed the first line of defence only in Karjaa city. However, the defence could not hold the German troops in the long term. They broke through the defense thanks to their artillery, which was another advantage they had, and continued their advance to the east.

The second landing took place on 7 April in Loviisa and ended with the same success. The operation came as a complete surprise to the Reds, who were already suffering heavy casualties.

Following days on the eastern front, the Germans were outnumbered by the Red Guards and had retreated to the city of Ahvenkoski, establishing a defensive line to secure their position. Although in the north, things went better for the Germans. They advanced quickly and cut the east-west railway near the city of Lahti. This line was one of the Reds' most important logistical lines and also provided them with a connection to Bolshevik Russia via Saint Petersburg. The loss of this railway caused serious panic among the Reds and affected the outcome of the battle. Capturing Helsinki was a particularly difficult operation due to the city's urban areas. Conditions in the big city would favour the defending Red side, if they had time to prepare. Eventually, Red's main strategy in this battle was delaying the enemy's advance as long as possible and distracting them to gain more time to organize. But indeed there were not enough military forces in Helsinki to defend, and the White's were aware of that.

In conclusion, Germans tried to force the defenders of Helsinki to surrender to prevent the extreme damage the city could take during the conflict. On 11-12 April, some negotiations took place between Finnish Reds and Germans, but they ended up without results. After these, the Germans made their last move. In the morning of 12 April, the Germans launched their final attack on the city, and Helsinki fell in less than two days on the evening of 13 April. And about 4,000 Reds were taken prisoner.

7.3.3 Battle of Viipuri

Viipuri was one of the most important cities in the eastern front of Finland. City's close distance to the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic made it a key escape route for Reds. After Helsinki fell to White sides control, the Reds having retreated eastward, were already demoralized and facing logistical difficulties. Meanwhile, the German forces and White Guards were moving towards Viipuri from both north and south sides. The war had inevitably advanced into the city and the battlefield became an urban warfare. Reds tried to resist in industrial areas while White Guards were having their artillery backup and systematic coordinations to keep moving forward. After the Red side's successive losses, some Red units tried to retreat from the city or surrender. At this point, keeping the army united and motivated became more difficult. Simultaneously, the Whites had already begun to encircle and draw closer to the city. While the battle progressed, the communication between Reds went worse and eventually Viipuri fell as a result of the Whites' rapid advance into the city center and the Reds' inadequate defense. This battle caused the complete disintegration of the Red Guards at the end. And paved the way for a swift conclusion to the war that led to White's victory.

8. The Aftermath of the War

8.1. The White Victory

With the Whites' win over the Red Guards in the Spring of 1918, Red leaders fled to their exile in Soviet Russia along with about five thousand Finnish Reds. In the same year, General Mannerheim and the Whites staged their victory parade in the streets of Helsinki. At the end, Whites saw the war as a form of independence, and the Reds saw the war as a chance to revolutionize. The Civil War in Finland lasted a short period of time, but thousands of civilians were killed over a few months.

Following the White victory, a phase of rapid political induration and violent terror activities appeared from both sides. Commonly known as White terror and Red terror. By the end of the war, eighty thousand Reds were interned in prison camps across Finland. Approximately twelve thousand prisoners died from poor living conditions, malnutrition and disease within camps. At the end of 1918, White government finally began to deal with Red prisoners. Nevertheless, they were too late and 67,788 prisoners were already sentenced for treason during this time.

The Red terror mainly was involved in the war, not after. Like their armies, their terrorist activities were carried out not in an organized manner, but rather as individual actions and led by local commanders. Also Red terror was milder compared to white terror. Killing a number of politicians, bourgeois, and white sympathizers paled in comparison to the arrests and imprisonment of Whites simply on suspicion of being communist supporters. These camps take place in several different areas of Finland such as Lahti, Tampere and Suomenlinna. And the execution of many radical socialists and previous Red officers immediately after their arrest without proper trials was also among the examples of White terror activities.

All of this created a trauma in Finnish lands that would have an impact for years to come. Even after the war, the exclusion of the socialist working-class did not come to an end. And leaving a lasting division between the political left and right in Finland.

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