

to buy cuts of meat or shoes other than those he is looking for cannot be ignored merely because it cannot be measured. To take one minor example, the price table in the article cites frankfurter sausages at 16.50 roubles per kilo. They happen to be of good quality but, when I was in Moscow, I was never able to buy any in the shops. Sometimes there are queues and, worse still, sometimes there are not queues because the goods desired are not there to queue for. Of course, there are many things to buy in Russian shops and nothing should be said to support the stupid propaganda-stereotype picture of empty shops and endless queues; but if one is to correct the false impressions which are left through simply comparing relative prices in the two countries, it is misleading to suggest that the corrections should only be in one direction.

Finally, housing. The authors are, of course, well aware that Soviet housing is poor, but they do not seem to allow adequately for this in their comparisons of living standards. Thus, if, instead of having five rooms each, the authors and their families were moved into one room each and charged 1 dollar per month per room instead of the 60 dollars which they may be paying at present, this would doubtless free 59 dollars of their income for other purposes. It may enable them to buy larger quantities, of, say, books and whiskey. However, if they prefer to spend all or a large part of these dollars not on these commodities but on additional housing space, this would be relevant to the assessment of their real income and living standards. In fact this is a special case of the general question of availability at established prices. It is as if British and American living standards were compared at a time when rationing was still in force in Britain, without any allowance for this fact. If a Russian family lives in one room and shares a kitchen with other similarly-placed families, then, against the low rent one must consider the lack of privacy and other irritations associated with the communal apartment. True, irritations are not capable of statistical measurement, but the whole point of the entire article was to prove that purely statistical comparisons of purchasing power and prices *understate* Soviet living standards in relation to the west. I repeat, in certain respects this is undoubtedly true, but to obtain a balanced picture one should recall some other relevant factors.

Yours faithfully,

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To the Editor:

In the April, 1958, issue of *The American Slavic and East European Review* (XVII, p. 191), in a footnote to an article entitled "The Problem of Generations in Finnish Communism", Mr. Marvin Rintala takes exception to my article on "Russia and the Origins of the Finnish Civil War of 1918",

which appeared in an earlier issue of the *Review* (XIV, 1955, pp. 481-502). He rightly claims that my conclusion, *i.e.*, "that at best the coup d'état [of the Finnish Reds] of January, 1918, was a Russian wolf in Finnish sheep's clothing," is contrary to that of Juhani Paasivirta's *Suomen itsenäisyyskysymys 1917*, which, according to Mr. Rintala, is a "definitive" work.

Subsequently, in a review of my *Finland and the Russian Revolution, 1917-22* in *The American Slavic and East European Review* (XVIII, 1959, pp. 270-271), Mr. Rintala returned to the attack. While conceding that many facts concerning the involvement of Finland in the Russian Revolution are "correctly stated" in my book, he nevertheless feels that many are "incorrectly stated." He attributes this alleged deficiency in part to neglect of the work of Juhani Paasivirta, who, according to Mr. Rintala, has written "a monumental three-volume study of Finnish-Russian relations in 1917-18." It is apparent from Mr. Rintala's detailed comments that he feels that I have failed to follow Paasivirta principally in the matter of Bolshevik Russian interference in Finland in 1917-18.

Even if Finnish historians were in substantial agreement that the Finnish Civil War of 1918 was not "a Russian wolf in Finnish sheep's clothing," the objective historian could not fail to note that quite the opposite impression is given by a vast amount of material published in Soviet Russia prior to World War II. But as a matter of fact, many respected Finnish professional historians (as well as the "bourgeois Finnish political leaders" mentioned by Mr. Rintala in his review) have held and now hold views in substantial agreement with those presented in my book.

The above statement can be readily verified by a glance at the review of the "definitive" and "monumental" work of Juhani Paasivirta which appeared in *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* (1958, No. 4, pp. 338-343), the authoritative journal of the Finnish Historical Society, and at the subsequent exchange between Paasivirta and his critic, the distinguished Professor L. A. Puntila (one of the editors of the journal) in *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* (1959, No. 1, pp. 14-21). The Puntila-Paasivirta dispute over Finno-Russian relations in 1917-18 suggests that the "bourgeois" historical interpretations of the 1920's and 1930's are still very much alive in Finland, despite all that has happened since 1944.

In his review of the third volume of Paasivirta's "definitive" and "monumental" work, *Suomi vuonna 1918*, Professor Puntila gives due credit to the author's industry, but claims that the latter's concentration on the Red rebels of 1917-18 led him into "a distortion of the picture on many points: the viewpoints of the rebels have been discussed more thoroughly, those of the legal government more sketchily. From this point it is only a short step to deviation from objectivity." ("Mutta kuvauskulman valinta ja runsaan uuden lähdeaineuksen viehätyks ovat vaikuttaneet sen, että suhteet ovat muodostuneet monin kohdin virheellisiksi: kapinallisten näkökohdat on mitattu tarkemmin, laillisen hallituksen ylimalkaisemmin. Tästä onkin vain kukonaskel objektiivisuudesta horjahtamiseen.") Professor Puntila goes on to object to Paasivirta's calling the legal Finnish government of

1917-18 “the bourgeois bloc,” (*“Ei-vasemmistolaisesta eduskuntaenemmistöstä, joka syntyi lokakuun vaaleissa 1917, Paasivirta yleensä käyttää sanontaa ‘porvarillinen blokki.’”*) and to the latter’s adopting the attitude that the Finnish bourgeoisie was a “uniform reactionary mass.” (*“Sanomatta, mistä lainaus on otettu, Paasivirta (s. 63) mainitsee porvariston hahmoittuneen työväestölle ‘yhtenäisenä, taantumuksellisenä massana.’ Tämän käsityksen voi katsoa tarttuneen häneen itseensäkin . . .”*) According to Professor Puntila, Paasivirta, “as a scholar, ‘understands’ revolutionary actions to a degree that goes a little too far.” (*“Mutta juuri sanotun eduskunnan edistysystävällisyyden huomioon ottaen Paasivirta ‘ymmärtää’ hähdäkseni tutkijana luvattoman pitkälle kumouksellisuutta.”*)

But it is in the important matter of Bolshevik Russian intervention in Finnish affairs in 1917-18 that Professor Puntila takes Paasivirta most sharply to task. In this regard, Paasivirta is accused of taking a “biased attitude,” and of paying “very little attention” to the Bolshevik Russian share in the Finnish Civil War. (*“Kysymys Venäjän suhtautumisesta Suomessa käytyyn sotaan saa monipuolista valaistusta. Valitettavasti saattaa tässäkin todeta samaa yksipuolisuutta: kun Paasivirta on omaksunut käsityksen, että kysymyksessä on pelkästään sisällissota, venäläisten osuus sivuutetaan mahdollisimman vähin maininnoin.”*) Summing up a series of mistakes which he feels Paasivirta made, Professor Puntila expresses the following view: “Thus Paasivirta’s attempt to do justice to the viewpoints of the Reds has led to a distorted picture of the true course of events: to an emphasis on the concept that their attempt at a revolution was Finnish in nature, and on the civil-warlike quality of the events, by means of the fact that the war has been detached from events in Russia, and the share of the Russians has been underestimated.” (*“Paasivirran pyrkimys tehdä oikeutta ‘punaisten’ näkökohdille on täten johtanut näköharhaan: heidän vallankumousyrityksensä suomalaisuuden ja tapahtumien sisällissodan luonteen korostamiseen sillä, että sota on erotettu Venäjän tapahtumista ja venäläisten osuutta väheksyty.”*).

Even Paasivirta’s outline, says Professor Puntila, “discusses matters from the viewpoint of the Reds first, and after that from the viewpoint of the legal government.” (*“Jo jäsentelyssä tarkastellaan aina asioita ensin punaisten, sitten vasta laillisen hallituksen kannalta.”*) But Paasivirta’s “most obvious mistakes,” Professor Puntila adds, come when the latter discusses “the matter of the foreign aid that each side received. The underestimation of the Russian share on the rebellious side has been contrasted with the emphasis on German aid [to the legal government] all the way through.” (*“Selkeimmän Paasivirran tarkistusvirheet nähdäkseni kuitenkin ilmenevät kummankin puolen saaman ulkomaisen avun suhteen. Väheksyvää venäläisten osuutta kapinallisella puolella vastaa hänen teoksessaan Saksan-avun kaikinpuolinen korostaminen.”*)

In conclusion, Professor Puntila writes that Paasivirta’s work “does not contain a final evaluation of the historical research,” and that Paasivirta “was not able to avoid biased viewpoints.” (*“Yhteenvetona voinee sanoa,*

ettei siihen sisälly historiantutkimuksen lopullinen arviointi. . . Paasivirta on osoittanut, että 'virallisen historiankirjoituksen' kuva on yksipuolinen, tutkimuksen selostaja taas sen, ettei Paasivirta itse ole voinut vältyä vastakkeisen suunnan yksipuolisuuksilta.") This, then, is the Finnish work which Mr. Marvin Rintala has recommended to the readers of *The American Slavic and East European Review* as a "definitive" and "monumental" treatment of events in Finland in 1917-18!

In fairness to both Paasivirta and Mr. Rintala, let it be added that the former, in his reply to Professor Puntila, sought to show that "because of the weakness of the Bolshevik government [in 1917-18] its possibilities for creating real activity [in the Finnish Civil War]—a propagandist tendency is another matter—were, in my opinion, very limited." ("... ts. siitä, että bolševikkihallituksen heikkouden takia sen edellytykset luoda—propagandasuuntaus on asia erikseen—tosiasiallista aktiiviteettia olivat käsitykseni mukaan erittäin pienet.") Thus, Paasivirta does not deny the reality of the Bolshevik intervention, especially the agitation among Finnish workers for a revolution, but claims only that it was ineffective (though one would never guess this from Mr. Rintala's comments on my article and book.) But Professor Puntila, in replying to Paasivirta, was not convinced. Paasivirta, he writes, has failed to grasp the essential point that in 1917-18, the Bolsheviki wanted to include Finland in a Soviet union of states: "*Kun Suomen proletariaatti sitten tarttui väkivaltaisiin keinoihin, niin Venäjä oli valmis tekemään Juhani Paasivirran vähälle huomiolle jättämän sopimuksen kansanvaltuuskunnan kanssa. Kuinka sitovana tätä venäläisellä taholla pidettiin, siitä voinee todistuksena ottaa järeänkin Stalinin lausunnon, tällä kertaa Pravdassa huhtikuussa 1918. Hän esittelee lehdessä Venäjän federatiivisen tasavallan valtioiden joukossa mm. Suomen. Näihin Paasivirta ei ole mitään huomiota kiinnittänyt.*") Professor Puntila quotes extensively from the 1949 edition of the collected works of Stalin, an obvious source apparently missed by Paasivirta, to prove his point. Had he so desired, Professor Puntila might have added that Paasivirta also ignored the Lenin *Sochineniya* of 1931-35 in favor of a German translation of an earlier and less complete edition of the Bolshevik leader's works. Indeed, for the great bulk of his Russian sources, Paasivirta seems to have found it necessary to rely upon what was available in Finnish or one of the western languages.

If my own *Finland and the Russian Revolution* had really overemphasized the Bolshevik intervention in Finland, then surely the fact would have been noted by Mr. Tuomo Polvinen in his review appearing in *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* (1959, No. 1, pp. 47-51). To be sure, Mr. Polvinen did object to a geographical mistake, to some name spellings, to my use of a Russian-language, Finno-Karelian source in one instance, to my defense of the hapless Russian Provisional Government, and to my "basic liberal viewpoint." ("*Kirjoittajan liberaalinen perusnäkemys on selvästi havaittavissa.*") But he calls my treatment of the events of 1917-18 "fairly balanced and objective." ("*Aiheen käsittely on verrattain hyvin tasapai-*

noitettus ja objektiivista . . .”) Though he thinks there is nothing new for Finnish readers in this first part of the book (which suggests that my account of the Bolshevik intervention is an accepted commonplace in Finland), he concedes that the book as a whole “is not without significance, and as a general survey for American readers it certainly has its place.” (*“Kokonaisuutena katsoen ei Smithin teos . . . silti ole vailla merkitystä ja amerikkalaiselle lukijakunnalle tarkoitettuna yleisesityksenä se varmasti täyttää paikkansa.”*)

Mr. Polvinen also thinks that the second half of the book, covering the events of 1918-22, is a pioneering work, and recommends it to future Finnish students in the field of Finnish foreign affairs, *viz.*: “Smith’s presentation becomes considerably more interesting when he begins to discuss the question of East Karelia and Finno-Russian relations from 1919 to 1922, a subject which has been studied very little up to now in Finland. . . . The events of 1919 . . . are illustrated in a very interesting way by Smith, among other things, by means of diplomatic reports included in the printed publications of documents by the British Foreign Office and the United States State Department. . . . In describing these manifold events, the author was able to base his work . . . on a very vast amount of material printed in the U.S.S.R. . . . We Finns have to be blamed . . . for up to now no scholastically competent special studies, which would look at matters from a sufficiently objective viewpoint, have been written in this country about the development of foreign policy after 1918. . . . For the person who will work on them Smith’s work will certainly not be without significance.” (*“Huomattavasti mielenkiintoisemmaksi Smithin esitys muuttuu hänen siirtyessään käsittelemään Itä-Karjalan kysymystä ja Suomen-Venäjän suhteita vuosina 1919-1922, joita meillä toistaiseksi on hyvin vähän tutkittu. . . . Vuoden 1919 tapahtumille antoivat leimansa ennen muuta valkoisten venäläisten kiihkeät yritykset saada Suomi liittymään Pietaria vastaan suunniteltuun offensiiviin. Valtionhoitaja Mannerheim oli valmis sängen pitkälle meneviin myönnytyksiin, joita Smith mielenkiintoisella tavalla valaisee mm. Englannin Foreign Officen ja Yhdysvaltain State Departmenin painettuihin dokumenttjulkaisuihin sisältyvien diplomaattiraporttien avulla. . . . Kyseessä olevia monisäikeisiä tapahtumia kuvatessaan tekijä on voinut nojautua läntisten asiakirjajulkaisujen ja tutkimusten ohella varsin runsaaseen Neuvostoliitossa painettuun materiaaliin. . . . Meidän suomalaistenkaan velkatili ei ole puhdas, sillä tieteellisesti päteviä riittävän laajasta näkökulmasta tarkastelevia erikoistutkimuksia vuoden 1918 jälkeisestä ulkopoliittisesta kehityksestä ei meillä toistaiseksi ole kirjoitettu. . . . Niiden laatijoille ei Smithin teos varmaankaan tule olemaan hyödytön.”*)

Yours very truly,

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