



MARSHAL MANNERHEIM
The "Butcher" was not there

(Continued from previous page)

The State owned 30 per cent of the land, 40 per cent of the forests (Finland's chief export), and many industrial enterprises. In short, Finland by 1940 had become strikingly like New Zealand—or what New Zealand would be like if four-fifths of our population still lived in the country.

Russia Also Reforms

Meanwhile, across the border—which, remember, is a real frontier of habits and outlooks—the Russians were also taking giant strides. But their advances clashed with the Finns at nearly every point. Thus it was Russia's reformist politicians who early in this century attempted to "Russify" Finland as the Tsars had never done. And consequently in the 1914 war Finland stayed neutral as Eire has in this—for Eire's reasons. Then, with the Bolshevik revolution, Finland's parliament declared complete independence, and Lenin agreed. But the Russian troops which garrisoned the south coast, unpaid and insubordinate, refused to move out. The city's workers, deep in the misery of a post-war slump, called on these rioting foreigners to help them establish a Soviet. To the country as a whole this looked like a return to Russian rule. Out marched the farmers to crush the "Reds" and a thorough job they made of it. Independence, however, brought separation from the fellow-Finns of East Karelia and from the great timber outlet of Leningrad. The failure of the Soviet to open a chink in the frontier or to implement its undertaking to give the Karelians more than paper autonomy kept feeling alight, until, when Moscow intensified Finland's 1929 slump by dumping timber under cost price on her foreign markets, it kindled spontaneously into the Lapuan movement. This party succeeded in outlawing all Communist organisations, which it regarded as Russian Fifth-Columbism. (Later its own activities were prescribed under this law of its own making!) Then, as Finland was returning with prosperity towards its normal social-reformist sanity, the bomb-shell fell out of the blue. The Ancient enemy demanded Finland's sole Defence Line, her richest district, her main Naval Base, and military dominance of her only northern port. War had to result.

The Case For Russia

Of course, Moscow had a case. To safeguard Leningrad by sea the Gulf of

Finland must be closable by battery fire from both coasts. To safeguard it by land the Finnish frontier must be moved further away. And by abolition of serious barriers to invasion from Russia, Finland must be prevented from becoming a base for outflanking attack upon the U.S.S.R.

Unfortunately for the Soviet, however, the world was not then in the mood it has since reached where such Power considerations seem reasonable and realistic. Therefore the Kremlin had hastily to think up social and even humanitarian justifications for its action. It set up a "Puppet" (or "Quisling") "Government-in-Exile" for Finland which broadcast a "Nine Point Programme" of liberation—obviously intended for export consumption, since the Finns already possessed in substance all the nine advantages it promised (eight-hour day, banking control, etc.). Individual Communists outside Russia rushed into considerable absurdities—representing (for example) the mouse as "conspiring" against the lion; the Lapuans as "Fascists" and even "Nazis"; and Marshal Mannerheim as a "butcher" who invited Germany to take over Finland in the "White Terror" after the Civil War. Actually Mannerheim had resigned rather than agree to German intervention and was not even in the country when the (much exaggerated) Terror occurred. The Lapuans were not Fascists but farmers sore at having their winter jobs in the sawmills shut down by Russian timber. Their leaders, being Lutheran pastors, were as much anti-Nazi as anti-Communist, lumping the two movements together and more concerned with their ideology than with their social effects. And the Farmer-Labour combination which has ruled Finland most of these last decades had resisted pressure to invade Russia both from British and Poles.

Nevertheless, when all these criticisms of Communist propaganda have been made, the fact remains that the Finnish Army was largely officered by men who, as fanatically patriotic youngsters, had joined the German Army to learn to fight the Tsars. And it was precisely such minor but highly-placed elements that betrayed equally-democratic Norway into becoming a base for Nazi aggressions.

Right On Both Sides

In short, this second Finnish-Soviet war, in which the Finns fight with Germany, but not—in intention at least—for her, is an example on a national scale of that clash between personalities and interests which we know only too well in our personal lives—a clash in which right lies on both sides, yet only one can win. When the "personalities" are history-created national outlooks, and the "rights" are the freedom of millions, the impasse is indeed tragic. Therefore, despite the bad company into which the Finns have fallen, the world will sympathise with them in their approaching loss of full sovereignty. But it just as certainly will commend the Russian Government for offering a reasonable rather than a revengeful peace: in other words, for being as realistic in 1944 as it was in 1940.

OPTREX

still the best eye lotion

still available through your
Chemist

People who need a proper medical eye lotion should not use home-made or casually prepared lotions. Optrex is still the best for regular use. It is produced under conditions of clinical asepsis. Its manufacture requires laboratory apparatus of a very special character. Its ingredients are carefully balanced. The result is a lotion which is isotonic, sterile, safe and effective.

Optrex is still available through your Chemist. If everybody uses it with care there should be enough to go round.



EYE LOTION

Obtainable from all chemists, at
4/3, triple size 8/-.
S.4

Optrex (Overseas) Ltd., 17 Wadsworth
Road, Perivale, Middlesex, England.

CASH FOR CAMERAS

If you have an Idle Camera or
Photo Apparatus, let Kodak
make you a Cash offer.
Highest prices given. Write
or call today.

KODAK NEW ZEALAND LTD.

162 Queen Street, Auckland
292 Lambton Quay, Wellington.
681 Colombo Street, Christchurch.
162 Princes Street, Dunedin.

43