

## THE FINNISH DILEMMA: NEUTRALITY IN THE SHADOW OF POWER.

By *George Maude*. Published for the Royal Institute of International Affairs. London: Oxford University Press, 1976. vi, 153 pp. \$13.25.

After the Second World War the Soviet border on the west was protected by Moscow-controlled states, with the exception of Finland, a free non-Communist country. This well-written and instructive book by Mr. George Maude deals with Finland's intricate connections with her neighbor.

Mr. Maude presents Finnish neutrality against the background of a brief outline of Finland's modern history. On one point only—but an essential one—should objections be raised. The Soviet Union, which began the hostilities in 1939, did not plan and start the Continuation War with Finland in 1941. However, the Finnish political leaders in 1941 wanted the Finnish people to believe that the Russians had done so. President Ryti and Marshal Mannerheim were both ready to take sides with Germany, and military preparations for a war were completed in June of that year. This partly explains the Russians' deep distrust of Mr. Ryti, during the war criminal lawsuits after the war, and of Finland itself for a long time afterward. That same distrust motivated several well-known acts of interference in Finland's internal affairs by the Soviet Union. As late as 1962, Moscow prevented Mr. Honka, a judge, from standing against Mr. Kekkonen in the presidential elections.

Mr. Maude gives a very good survey of the successful foreign policy of Presidents Paasikivi and Kekkonen and of the position of equilibrium thus achieved. He also discusses the so-called Finlandization, a difficult subject, as a common conception of its meaning does not exist. Mainly, it is an attitude, found both inside and outside governmental circles, that responsible men should form their own opinion of the risks for Finland in a particular situation, and that matters should be handled in a way palatable to the Russians—that is, that actions are adapted to a presumed Soviet reaction. Newspapers are careful, not knowing how much they can publish; some authors (Solzhenitsyn, for example) are not printed—but are sold—in Finland, courts of law have in some cases made questionable decisions, probably under pressure, and so forth.

No one knows if this is necessary. Mr. Kekkonen himself has been rather outspoken with the Russians. And the president is, as Mr. Maude points out, responsible for foreign policy. But while representing Finnish interests, it is significant that even Mr. Kekkonen can never disregard Soviet ones.

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NAZI CINEMA. By *Erwin Leiser*. Translated from the German by *Gertrud Mander* and *David Wilson*. New York: Macmillan, 1975 [Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1968; London: Secker & Warburg, 1974]. 179 pp. Photographs. \$7.95.

THE MYTHICAL WORLD OF NAZI WAR PROPAGANDA, 1939–1945. By *Jay W. Baird*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974. xii, 329 pp. + 8 pp. photographs. \$15.00.

When I wrote a general study of Nazi propaganda many years ago, there existed no specialized monographs on the subject. Since the early 1960s academic inquiries into propaganda have become a minor industry, and monographs on various aspects of Nazi propaganda are one of its main products. Here we can study the functioning of totalitarian propaganda in a highly industrial state. The techniques as well as the

technical equipment (with the exception of TV) are all there; the period is conveniently short, compact, and includes war as well as peace; the documents are available; and old men who took part in the creation of the grand illusion are still alive and talkative.

Of the two volumes under review, one covers a specific subject—films—and the other a specific period—the war. The study of Nazi cinema is by a film maker: Erwin Leiser has made a number of distinguished documentaries on the Third Reich, and the book is a by-product of one of these films, which in fact dealt with the same theme. Some 1,150 feature films were made under Dr. Goebbels's auspices, but probably fewer than 200 of them were straight political propaganda. It is on the latter films that Mr. Leiser concentrates. This is a film maker's rather than a historian's book, and it is very good in its way. It presents us with some fascinating technical information and relates this information to the main propaganda themes of the time.

Professor Jay Baird has chosen propaganda as the theme of his book. The chapters dealing with propaganda surrounding the war in the east are the most dramatic and detailed. Professor Baird shows the role Stalingrad played in wartime propaganda: how Goebbels, after Stalingrad, began more and more to rely on irrational themes, and how Nazi propaganda gradually turned away from reality and retreated into myth—this is a subsidiary theme of the book, which is well argued and illustrated. The theater of annihilation was being acted out, and Goebbels knew it.

Professor Baird also convincingly demonstrates the kinks of German anti-Soviet propaganda, which the minister of propaganda was unable to iron out. Goebbels could not reconcile Hitler's position that the "Bolshevik system was archaic, bankrupt and decadent" with the "objective organizational and military performance of the Soviet Union and the Red Army during the war." Hitler presented Goebbels with other insoluble problems during the war: first his dreadful public optimism, and later, when his strategy became unstuck, his refusal to take responsibility.

Professor Baird's study is very good on these problems, and his subsidiary theme, the steady retreat from reality by Nazi propaganda, is well presented. There are some inelegancies of style (for example, propaganda follow-up to the death of Horst Wessel and other, similar hooligans, is described by Professor Baird as a "myth to lend a new meaning to what otherwise would have been a banal and thoroughly routine death of often rather degenerate human material"), but then the study of Nazi propaganda has a brutalizing effect on style.

It is the main theme of the volume—the development of Nazi propaganda during the war as a function of Nazi ideology—that may have to be reconsidered. To relate Nazi propaganda to a broader background in only this way does not seem to be very promising. Propaganda was an essential political tool for the Nazis, but its uses and importance varied widely in the thirties and during the war. Has the time come for another general history of the subject? If so, Professor Baird is ideally equipped for the task.

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HITLER'S DECISION TO INVADE RUSSIA, 1941. By *Robert Cecil*. Introduction by *Noble Frankland* and *Christopher Dowling*. The Politics and Strategy of the Second World War series. London: Davis-Poynter, 1975. 192 pp. £4.50.

Few decisions have had greater repercussions than Adolf Hitler's decision to attack the Soviet Union. At the height of his power, and in the face of Stalin's efforts to avert war by appeasing Germany, Hitler launched his forces into a campaign in which they were eventually clawed to pieces.