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/// The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE, 1975) and Its Meaning to Finland and Hungary Revisited

Abstract

In this paper, an attempt is made to show why and how the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was conceived and convened in Helsinki in 1975, how it became a means for Finland to pursue a pragmatic but active policy of neutrality, and what it meant to Hungary in the demanding circumstances of the Cold War. In this connection, an opportunity is also taken to compare what President Kekkonen and General Secretary János Kádár thought about it and how they evaluated the CSCE summit and its results. The source material of this short study consists of archival sources, historical studies of the Cold War, contemporary commentary, and memoirs. The approach in the study is combined political history (the history of foreign policy) and the history of political ideas. It should be realized that this paper does not purport to give a comprehensive narrative of the topic, but rather an overview of the policies, adopted in an atmosphere of détente, which created the circumstances for an exceptional international venue for discussing and deciding on matters of European security and cooperation.

In this article I attempt to show why and how the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was conceived and convened in Helsinki in 1975, how it became a means for Finland to pursue a pragmatic but active policy of neutrality, and what it meant to Hungary in the demanding circumstances of the Cold War. In this connection, I also take the opportunity to compare what President Kekkonen and General Secretary János Kádár thought about it and how they evaluated the CSCE summit and its results. In doing this I complement the history of

diplomacy with the history of political ideas.[1] What comes to the historiography of the theme, it was not properly studied before the Kádár-Kekkonen Project financed by the Academy of Finland (2002–2005), the results of which are shown in the text and notes.

One crucial precondition for the realization of the CSCE must be mentioned at the outset. Namely, the development of international *détente* in the 1970s created a situation with which to settle the nagging dilemma of Germany; the two Germanies finally recognized each other, and Finland recognized both. This solution paved the way for a new opportunity to call for a European security conference, which the Soviet Union had been trying in vain to bring about since the 1950s. KGB officer and diplomat Viktor Vladimirov, who had been stationed intermittently at the Soviet Embassy in Helsinki since the 1960s, recalls in his memoirs that the Soviets made several requests to persuade Finland to initiate a pan-European conference of this kind, but President Kekkonen[2] had feared it might compromise his country's neutrality and had objected.[3] Furthermore, at the time, all European states could not yet have participated. For Kekkonen, who was an autocrat in foreign policy matters in Finland,[4] it was at least as important to signal to the West that Finland was a neutral state as it was to point out to the Soviets that, although Finland was a trustworthy neighbor of the Soviet Union, it could not comply with such a proposal that could harm its credibility and was unfeasible.[5] In Finnish-Soviet bilateral relations, Finland's policy of neutrality was registered in a paragraph of the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance from 1948, but

1 = = Anssi Halmesvirta, *Aatehistorian harjoitus* (*History of Ideas in Practice*) (Jyväskylän Yliopisto, 2012).

2 = = Urho Kaleva Kekkonen (1900–1986), often referred to by his initials UKK, was a Finnish politician who served as the eighth and longest-serving President of Finland from 1956 to 1982. He also served as Prime Minister (1950–1953, 1954–1956) and held various other cabinet positions. He was the third Chairman of the Agrarian League/Centre Party. Serving as the head of state for nearly twenty-six years, he dominated Finnish politics for thirty-one years. Holding a large amount of power and prestige, he won elections with little opposition mainly because he had "friendly" relations with the Soviet leadership.

3 = = Viktor Vladimirov, *Näin se oli… Muistelmia ja havaintoja kulissientakaisesta diplomaattitoiminnasta Suomessa 1954–1984* (Otava, 1993), 53.

4 = = The wisdom of democracy is that from a democratic process can follow a non-democratic result. A majority elected by normal general elections can overrule minorities or lead a country through a democratic process even to a sort of autocracy if one person is regarded as irreplaceable—as was the case in Finland, when most of the parties supported Kekkonen from 1956 on. He was invincible in presidential elections and according to the constitution, he was responsible for foreign policy. The situation changed only after his death in 1982. Presidential powers were gradually reduced.

5 = = Max Jakobson, *Tilinpäätös* [Closing of the Books] (Otava, 2003), 64.

internationally the idea of Finland being a neutral country no longer caused too much trouble with the Soviets.

= = = Why Helsinki? Kekkonen's Initiative and the Hungarian Assistance

When in April 1969 the Soviet Union again proposed to all European states that they should make the necessary preparations for convening a security conference, the Finnish government surprised all concerned by offering on May 5, 1969 to organize it without preconditions. How was this possible? In the West at least, it would have given the impression that Finland was acting as the Soviet Union's proxy.[6]

East-West relations had been changing to such an extent with détente that the Kekkonen initiative could be expected to succeed, although his closest advisers could hardly believe it.[7] A proposal was sent to every European state and to two of the most influential NATO members, the USA and Canada. Finland offered not only to take responsibility for the inter-governmental consultations over the conference preparations, but to host the security conference itself, if this was deemed appropriate. In principle, the CSCE process was designed to bring stability and peace to Europe. It seemed acceptable to every European nation, and Hungary strongly supported Finland along the way.[8] However, the reality was that the Soviets desired to maintain and increase their influence in and over Europe, whereas NATO wished to secure Western Europe's position so that there would be no fear of aggression from the Soviets. Nevertheless, these realities also made it possible for the Finnish initiative to be received favorably, and the consultation process began before the end of 1969. The acceptance of Helsinki as the venue was further confirmed by the moral support of the decision, made by the USA and the Soviet Union, to organize the first round of their Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in Helsinki in November–December of the same year.[9]

Finland's Ambassador to the United Nations, Max Jakobson, who had prepared the proposal to host both the security conference and the SALT talks, cherished a long-standing ambition to become the next UN Secretary-General, the

6 = = For the image of Kekkonen in the West, see Vesa Vares, "Foes Who Grew Better in Time: The Image of Janos Kadar and Urho Kekkonen in the West from 1956 to the End of the 1960's," in *Kádár's Hungary – Kekkonen's Finland*, Hungarologische Beiträge 14, ed. Anssi Halmesvirta (University of Jyväskylä – Kopi-Jyvä, 2002), 15–56.

7 = = Juha Pohjonen, "In Kekkonen and Kádár We Trust," in *Bridge Building and Political Cultures: Hungary and Finland 1956-1989*, Hungarologische Beiträge 18, eds. Anssi Halmesvirta and Heino Nyyssönen (University of Jyväskylä –Kopi-Jyvä, 2006), 123.

8 = = HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-1967/37/44-142. Sándor Kurtán's letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, February 7, 1967.

9 = = Jukka Nevakivi, "From the Continuation War to the Present, 1944–1999," in *From Grand Duchy to a Modern State: A Political History of Finland since 1809*, eds. Osmo Jussila, Seppo Hentilä, and Jukka Nevakivi (Hurst & Company, 1999), 312.

prerequisite for which was that Finland's initiative/proposal should have the support of the two superpowers. In the event, Jakobson's candidacy failed due to Soviet opposition, but the initiative for the security congress went through. Even the NATO powers finally accepted it on the condition that the conference agenda would include not only principles governing inter-state relations—notably a ban on the use of force—but also the development of international relations with a view to achieving greater freedom of movement of ideas and people, human rights issues, exchange of information, and cooperation in culture, economy, technology, science and environmental protection. The planned congress became known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

At this point, it may not go amiss to have a look at how the Finnish political aims behind the initiative were received and interpreted in Hungary. They were reflected in an article in *Népszabadság* on September 23, 1969, just before Kekkonen's first official state visit to Hungary. It was an extensive and quite well-studied summary of Kekkonen's public speeches and announcements on Finnish foreign policy by István L. Szabó who, according to my scant information, was the Director of the Press Department of the Foreign Ministry. Harking back to history, Szabó emphasized that Finnish foreign policy was now entirely different compared to what it had been in the 1920s and 1930s, when the basic line had been to remain aloof from Great Power conflicts. Finland had been quite isolated, left alone to face Soviet aggression in the Winter War. Now, in the times of détente, Finland's position had changed drastically and everything that happened in the world was also its concern. Szabó designated this new line as "positive" foreign policy, meaning that every conflict between East and West was a test of Finland's neutrality, whereas before the wars, isolated Finland could only remain "negative" (my wording), without any possibility of making an impact on the affairs of Europe. Szabó opined that Kekkonen's policy line—basically, the realization of the fact that there was always the Soviet Union, the security interests of which Finland had to respect—tied Finland's destiny to the question of peace and its promotion. The suggestions of creating nuclear arms-free zones were concrete evidence of this policy. This novel feature in Finnish foreign policy showed its "positiveness" (*pozitivum*: based on an understanding of the geopolitical facts)—and it could succeed with the CSCE initiative because Kekkonen was highly appreciated both in the East and West as its formulator.[10] It is worth mentioning that Kekkonen himself had de-

10 = = From a synopsis of a press release from *Népszabadság*, September 23, 1969 (UMA 94 B), and from other experts on Finnish foreign policy: Mikola Rezső, "A Finn semlegesség néhany fontosabb sajatossága" and Hajdu Gyula, "Semlegesség a hidegháborúban" (HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-k-Finn/1963/5/12). It was realized that the Soviet trust in Finns was "a question of life and death" (*létfontosságu*) for the Finns.

scribed his foreign policy as not positive but "active" in the late 1960s.[11] If I dare to compare Szabó's and Kekkonen's characterizations, I will suggest that "positive" may even be an understatement because "positiveness" does not *necessarily* imply activities in the foreign political arena. Szabó's statements were otherwise quite accurate, especially when he referred to the reason why Kekkonen hoped for success from the CSCE: he wanted Finland to become recognized worldwide as a fully independent, neutral country which was not controlled remotely from Moscow. There had been suspicions that symptoms of Finlandization could be detected also in the CSCE initiative. Szabó concluded that Finland's new policy was welcomed by the Hungarians, and immediately after receiving the initiative, the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducted an analysis of the benefits the Eastern bloc could and would gain from the conference. Firstly, because the original idea came from the Soviets, it would increase the influence of the Eastern bloc in pan-European matters, and secondly, it would impinge on the unity of NATO and Western countries in general.[12]

Behind the scenes, the Soviets had pressured Finland for weeks on the matter, and the Hungarians had made proposals to the same effect in order to enhance the role of the socialist countries from the outset.[13] During the official talks between Kádár and Kekkonen on September 29, 1969, Kádár reminded Kekkonen that it had actually been the Advisory Board of the Warsaw Pact which had published the call for a security conference and thanked Kekkonen for a very "positive echo" in realizing that it had not been given with propagandist goals. Kekkonen emphasized that he had had to revise the call into a proposal which could be accepted by the NATO countries. Kádár was also "positive," suggesting that the conference could be convened in a couple of years' time after preparatory negotiations that would resolve the easier concrete questions and then proceed to deal with the difficult ones. Optimistically, he foresaw that within ten to fifteen years the most burning problems of European security could be solved. He asked Kekkonen to do all in his power to make the conference happen. Kekkonen answered that he would approach the Western powers after the NATO Council Meeting and talk about the

11 = = Urho Kekkonen, *Suomen turvallisuuspolitiikka: Tasavallan presidentti Urho Kekkosen turvallisuuspoliittisia puheita vuosilta 1943–1979* (Otava, 1982). It has become a cliché to say that too-active foreign policy is dangerous; Finland should not be too active, nor attract too much attention. It is rather better to keep a low profile to avoid demands from outside.

12 = = HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-k-Finn-l-001386. Attachment on European Security Conference, undated,

13 = = They wanted to take the initiative, prevent NATO intervention, show unity among the Eastern bloc, and raise disagreements among the Western powers. See: HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-k-Finn-1-001386. Attachment on European Security Conference, undated.

practical issues.[14] As usual in the unproblematic Hungarian-Finnish relations at the time, the discussions were not so successful only out of obligatory diplomatic politeness, but because Hungary and Finland shared a common interest in promoting the conference.[15] It is obvious that Hungary used the situation to its advantage, realizing that Finns tried from all sides to get their neutrality policy recognized and to improve their international prestige[16]—which was actually taking place.

In the meanwhile, the Finnish Ambassador in Budapest had been called home by Kekkonen because he had accused the socialist countries of an intervention in the conference matter.[17] He had trod on Kekkonen's toes and offended the Soviets, too—but Kekkonen found a solution to the dilemma. He ordered his political advisors to draft Finland's own proposal, different from the one the Soviets had offered, which did not include the great NATO states (the USA and Canada), with the suggestion that the venue for the final summit would be Helsinki. This made the proposal and, consequently the CSCE project, very tightly attached to Kekkonen's person.[18] By making the proposal more congenial to the West, he showed how he could act independently of Soviet monitoring. CSCE became a political mission for him, not only a gesture of encouraging further European détente and supranational rapprochement; he already felt that it would be his last and splendid opportunity to show off internationally and prove also to the Finns how he could promote the country's national and international interests in such a grand manner. Additionally, Helsinki, where the spies of West and East had built their nests on fer--tile ground, was also geopolitically very suitable for conferences. It was an attractive, lively city between East and West—Stockholm was out of the question in the Soviets' eyes—and it boasted a new, grand venue, too: the recently opened, concert and conference oriented Finlandia Hall.

It may be worth mentioning that during his visit to Washington in July 1970, Kekkonen wanted to remove Nixon's suspicions about the conference with two arguments he had prepared based on reflections about talks with the leaders of some small Eastern European countries, Kádár most influential among them. Kekkonen reminded Nixon that the USA had to consider the strong interest of those countries

14 = = HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-1969/37/44-1. Note of the negotiations between Kádár and Kekkonen, September 29, 1969

15 = = HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-1969/37/44-1. Note of the negotiations between Kádár and Kekkonen, September 29, 1969.

16 = = HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-1970/36/44-142 Ferenc Esztergályos's letter to Helsinki, March 5, 1971 (the background for the proposal of Finland concerning the German question);. HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-k-Finn-10. Agoston's letter to Budapest, September 30, 1971.

17 = = Juhani Suomi, ed., *Urho Kekkosen päiväkirjat 3* [Diaries of Urho Kekkonen 2–3] (Otava, 2002), 50–51.

18 = = Jakobson, *Tilinpäätös*, 64–65.

in expressing and strengthening their national identity. He added that the conference could be a risk to the Soviet Union in its relations with the satellites. Nixon rose to the bait, but Kissinger, as usual, had his proviso about the Soviets.[19] In any case, Kekkonen's straightforward performance accelerated the preparations for the conference, which was also on the agenda during the visits of PM Fock and Foreign Minister Péter from Hungary to Finland in early 1971. It was agreed that the passivity of the West and further conditions for the conference laid down by the USA had to be cleared out of the way.[20]

After preparatory discussions in Helsinki from November 1972 onwards, the first operative stage of the CSCE was formally opened there on July 3, 1973. Then the proceedings moved to Geneva for practical and logistical reasons. A rearguard boost to the CSCE process was given by Kádár during yet another top-level state visit to Finland in September 1973. Having convinced Kádár that Finland's joining the EEC would not cause any trouble in the relations of the kinship-countries, nor would it slow the CSCE process down, Kekkonen expressed his appreciation of how Hungary cooperated in the preparation of the CSCE. Kádár responded that Hungarians admired how Finland, a small country, could play such a great role in international relations, particularly in building bridges between East and West—the same policy West initially condemned but now followed itself. Kádár had recently observed certain opposition (not pointing to any country) to the "Helsinki idea," but he reassured Kekkonen that it was "only everyday practice," not the leading historical process which was now carried forward by Hungary and Finland together.[21]

Finally, the hosting of the ceremonial closing session of the conference was entrusted to Finland. The highest-ranking political leaders of the participating states assembled in Helsinki in Finlandia Hall from July 31 to August 1, 1975 and signed the final act in the presence of the UN Secretary-General. It has become customary to say that everybody won something there; the first "basket" was a victory for the Soviets and the Eastern bloc because it contained the affirmation of state borders in Europe. The second "basket" contained mostly economic matters—for instance, it heeded Hungarian hopes for opening trading relations with the West—and the third one included the clause on human rights and freedom of movement of ideas and information, which was a merit to the USA. For Hungary in particular, it offered legality for strengthening its cultural ties with the Hungarians living outside its borders (especially in Romania) and an asset to defend the cause of minorities in follow-up conferences, very tangible achievements further enhanced by

19 = = Jorma Kallenautio, *Suomi kylmän rauhan maailmassa* [Finland in the World of Cold Peace] (SKS, 2005), 355.

20 = = UMA, Unkari, 94 D/K71 Kari Kupiainen's press release, January 25, 1971.

21 = = HU-MNL-OL-M-KS 288/5/621. Announcement of comrade Kádár's visit to Finland, October 4, 1973.

Kádár's stately speech during the final act of the conference.[22] Finland too was a winner, because this was the first time since the Congress of Vienna that every European nation was granted the right to neutrality, and Kekkonen utilized the situation by stressing that the summit took place on neutral ground. Hosting it was a unique honor for him. There were high hopes that the CSCE could help in ending the Cold War, introducing a new, more open style in European international relations and with it, clarifying Finland's own international position and increased significance. This was not to happen yet, as a setback followed: in 1978, in the spirit of the bilateral YYA Treaty,[23] the Soviets proposed combined military exercises to Finland. One can understand that Kekkonen was deeply disappointed. If relations between Finland and the Soviet Union were to be based on mutual trust as was agreed, this proposal betrayed it.[24]

At this point, it is worth noting that the second of the Eastern bloc gains of the conference, cited from the memo of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry above, was affirmed by Henry Kissinger: "In Helsinki all the Eastern European countries increased their maneuvering room and felt encouraged by Ford's demonstrative visit to the most independent of them [Finland]."[25]

= = = Helsinki's Aftermath: Kádár and Kekkonen's Joint Efforts to Secure the Results of the CSCE

But again, why was the summit important for Hungary? Here I refer only to a couple of additional, well-known points, but perhaps they add something from the Finnish angle. As the CSCE granted, in theory at least, the opportunity to declare nonalignment and neutrality, it could be used by Hungary: on one hand, in committing to strengthening the status quo within the bloc, and on the other hand, promoting détente—later possibly the opening of borders, but securing its own territorial integrity. It was a security guarantee to it within the Eastern bloc as a sovereign socialist country which had to fear neither aggressive intervention from any side nor dangers of internal unrest. It could now direct international attention to the problems of Hungarian minorities in neighboring countries. Showing such a firm stance gained recognition for Hungary from the West. In Finland, this situation was

22 = = Ignác Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, trans. Tim Wilkinson (Corvina, 1999), 407; László Kontler, *Millennium in Central Europe: A History of Hungary* (Kossuth Printing House, 1999), 456.

23 = = The Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance (1948). The main difference between this treaty and the ones of Hungary and Romania was that the Soviet Union would not interfere in internal Finnish affairs.

24 = = Pohjonen, "In Kekkonen and Kádár We Trust," 121.

25 = = Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal: The Concluding Volume of His Memoirs* (Simon & Schuster, 1999), 660.

readily understood, and the improvement of Hungary's position was watched with a keen eye. Even though the future would show that the declarations made in Helsinki did not have all their intended bearings on political realities in Europe, the CSCE gave hope to all the smaller countries of Europe that there would be a longer period of peace ahead,[26] although it was not possible to know what kind of peace. A Cold Peace, perhaps? It was soon widely realized that the conference had barely changed the policy of the Soviet Union. This was what Kissinger had suspected.

During Kekkonen's last visit to Hungary in November 1976, relatively soon after the CSCE, two elderly, very experienced, and in their own countries still popular statesmen discussed in the Parliament on November 17 and 18 in a friendly atmosphere. They dealt first with the latest developments and problems of their countries' domestic politics but soon changed the subject to the CSCE, as it was the main topic on the agenda. Kádár and Kekkonen reflected on its results and glanced towards the future. Typically for Kekkonen, who had been wary of the Soviets since the 1956 invasion of Hungary and who had experienced the Prague shock in 1968,[27] his tone was again skeptical. To him, détente remained the crucial question for small countries, and that was the reason why everybody should keep their focus on the CSCE's follow-up conferences. For his part, Kádar recognized how neutral Finland was, but that as a socialist country Hungary's most important friend was the Soviet Union. Respecting the Helsinki agreements, Hungary was willing to have good relations with every country; indeed, with Finland they had already been quite unproblematic from the early 1960s on.[28] The common interest between the countries was détente and for its sake, Hungary was willing to fight, Kádár emphasized. However, what was paramount to Hungary was its national interest;[29] primarily the leaders of Hungary sought the interest of their own nation because Hungarians had gone through so many agonies that there was no reason to cause any more grief. This was what the Hungarians appreciated, and this was the reason why they supported the regime.

26 = = This hope was expressed both by Kekkonen and Kádár, pointing to their success in propagating the peaceful coexistence of European nations. See Kádár's speech in *Magyar Történeti Szöveggyűjtemény 1941–1999 II* [Hungarian Historical Sourcebook 1941–1999 II], ed. Ignác Romsics (Osiris, 2000), 344.

27 = = Anssi Halmesvirta, "Finlandizálas, a hideg béke és az intő magyar példa" [Finlandization, the Cold Peace, and the warning example of Hungary], *Debreceni Disputa* 6, no. 9 (2008): 5–9.

28 = = See e.g., Anssi Halmesvirta, *Co-operation across the Iron Curtain: Hungarian-Finnish Scientific Relations of the Academies from the 1960s to the 1990s*, Studies in General History 12 (Jyväskylä University, 2005).

29 = = HU-MNL-OL-M-KS 288/4/147–148. Briefing about the actual international questions to the members of the Central Committee, December 1, 1976; Juhani Suomi, *Umpeutuva latu* [Closing the Track] (Otava, 2000), 88.

This was very similar to what had also been Kekkonen's main concern since World War II; for their part, Finns had suffered from agonies, especially during the Winter War, which had been followed by the harsh peace conditions after the Continuation War. For both leaders, it was self-evident that, without good relations with the Soviet Union, it was hardly possible to exercise one's own foreign policy. It was not a question of whether the Soviets accepted something or not, but the relations with them had to be based on mutual trust. Hungary and Finland were secure because they did not act against the Soviet interests but, in the final instance, in the interest of their own nation's present and future. Neither Kádár nor Kekkonen had illusions about the Soviets, and they practiced political pragmatism; Hungary aimed at being a more human-faced, more independent model for the socialist camp and was, due to the CSCE, apparently able to push for room to maneuver within it, whereas Finland had become an example of how a democratic country could survive and act on its own in diplomacy. Both leaders were, for the time being, unchallenged leaders of their countries. For Finland it also meant a democratic deficit ("internal Finlandization")—for Hungary, softened dictatorship. In Hungary, it was impossible to see the future without socialism, albeit with the burden of an inefficient and indebted economy;[30] in Finland, it was impossible to see the future without Kekkonen.

Irrespective of this emphasis on détente, the influence of the Soviets could also be felt during the 1976 visit. The problem was the wording of the final *communiqué*. Kekkonen had demanded that there be a phrase pointing to Finland's neutrality in the text. Kádár had told Kekkonen privately that he regarded Finland as a neutral country, but it was difficult to put it on paper. After lengthy and frustrating negotiations, the magic word was added in the document—the permission to use it having come from Moscow.[31] That was the small price Kádár had to pay for his policy, and that was the reward Kekkonen had achieved with his policy. More tangible, and certainly promising for the future, was the agreement of scientific cooperation between the MTA and Academy of Finland, boosted by the Helsinki spirit and signed in 1976. It bore remarkable fruit in many fields.[32]

Kádár and Kekkonen understood each other almost all too well, and the CSCE was a success story for them both. It was not only symbolic that Kekkonen had placed Kádár next to him at the state dinner, after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act on August 1, 1975.[33]

30 = = Nigel Swain, *The Rise and Fall of Feasible Socialism* (Verso, 1992).

31 = = Suomi, *Umpeutuva latu*, 127.

32 = = See Halmesvirta, *Co-operation across the Iron Curtain*, 32–37.

33 = = Cf. Kimmo Rentola, "Kekkonen and Kádár in the Soviet Sphere of Influence," in *Kádár's Hungary – Kekkonen's Finland*, Hungarologische Beiträge 14, ed. Anssi Halmesvirta (University of Jyväskylä—Kopi-Jyvä, 2002), 113.

Following the successful execution of the Helsinki summit, Hungary and Finland soon planned coordinated cooperation in the Belgrade follow-up meeting in 1977. The CSCE had served the interests of détente quite well, but the political atmosphere had changed for the worse and the dialogue between East and West had slowed to an ideological struggle. Kádár and Kekkonen had agreed to take care that Belgrade did not become a venue for mutual accusations and a one-sided agenda, containing only the issues fixed in the third basket's clauses—on human rights, family relations, and the exchange of information—with which the Western continuously pressurized socialist countries. The common aim was also to isolate the forces which exacerbated the Cold War. Kádár had emphasized that the détente spirit was not enough;[34] it had to be followed by "military détente."[35] (NATO was reluctant to remove forces from Central Europe.)[36] Finland and Hungary wanted to increase and endorse the cooperation sectors to which Helsinki's final act had given momentum: especially well-functioning bilateral agreements on cultural, educational, and scientific exchange. Hungary also wanted to free itself from trading and other kinds of economic discrimination.[37] Finland's principal aim was to enhance or at least keep up the Helsinki détente spirit, which seemed to be evaporating. However, it continued its propagation of the nuclear-free zones and further disarmament. All the same, these plans reflected the precariousness of the entire CSCE process, the success of which ultimately depended on the relative imbalance of the relations between the two juxtaposed blocs. To make a lasting impact on it was nearly impossible for such small agents as Finland and Hungary, and if some achievement appeared to last, a sudden crisis in great power politics could jeopardize it. However, Finland, playing the leading role and Hungary giving necessary rearguard support, protected their national and international interests together by promoting peace and security (stability) in Europe. In this they succeeded, at least for a time.

= = = Epilogue

The President of Finland, Alexander Stubb, commented via TV on the twenty-third of August on the historical importance of the CSCE to Finland. He put it neatly: with the CSCE, the right of self-determination of Finland started to liberate itself—he did not have to mention from what. When it comes to the recent activity of the

34 = = HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-1976/53/44-1. Frigyes Puja's report to Council of Ministers, November 24, 1976.

35 = = HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-1978/51/44-1. List of Hungary's aims of disarmament (Gajda Ferenc), May 28, 1978.

36 = = HU-MNL-OL-XIX-J-1-j-1976/53/44-1 Frigyes Puja to János Berecz, September 10, 1976; Endre Erdős's note, October 7, 1976.

37 = = HU-MNL-OL-M-KS 288/5/719. Frigyes Puja's announcement, May 31, 1977.

successor of the CSCE—the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE, established in 1995), which held a grotesque summit in Helsinki last summer—one of the organizers of the 1975 summit put it bluntly: it is a great disappointment. The so called "Helsinki spirit" is in deep sleep, and only the idea remains.[38]

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