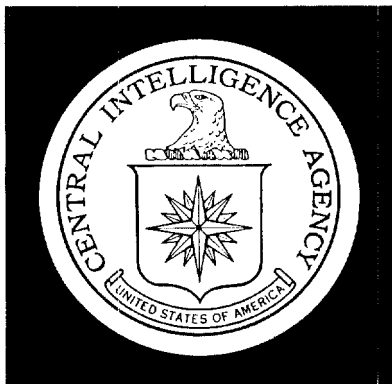


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2 January 1971

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2 January 1971

Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

FINLAND: The governmental crisis has subsided.
(Page 11)

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/05/19 : CIA-RDP79T00975A017900070002-5

Next 11 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2003/05/19 : CIA-RDP79T00975A017900070002-5

FINLAND: The governmental crisis subsided earlier this week when the Communists reversed themselves and voted for key portions of President Kekkonen's economic stabilization program, but the program is not yet out of the woods.

The crisis had its origins in the factional infighting within the Communist Party, which is a member of the governing center-left coalition. By mid-October, the conservative minority within the party had in effect moved, with apparent Soviet support, into a position of opposition to the government, hoping thereby to increase its political appeal.

Rather than see the party split or fall into conservative hands, the moderate leadership decided to adopt the minority's tactics, thus posing the choice to the Soviets whether to see the party leave the government and oppose Kekkonen on an issue on which he had staked his prestige.

the conservatives, presumably at Soviet instigation, backed down, proposing instead that the party remain in the government and allow the stabilization bills to be passed.

The battle over approval of the program has now shifted to the trade union movement, where Communist-led unions continue to oppose it. The pivotal event will take place on 3-5 January, when the metal workers union membership votes. Social Democratic union leaders, who support the government, are cautiously optimistic.

Whatever the outcome of the trade union balloting, feuding within the Communist Party will continue.

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Next 2 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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