

Finland-Estonia Relations: Estonian Interior Minister Was Kinda Right but Also Kinda Wrong About Finland

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The Estonian Interior Minister was correct in calling out the new Finnish government's extreme Europhilia which he fears is destined to turn the country into a so-called "euro-province" at the expense of its national sovereignty, but his invocation of Lenin and the Finnish Civil War-era Reds was a wink at the Russophobic tendencies that pervade his society, as well strongly hinting at the role of what right-wing forces such as him controversially describe as "Cultural Marxism" is supposedly playing in bringing about the aforementioned scenario.

The EU has been fairly criticized in recent years for its ultra-liberal universalism and the trend towards a so-called "[federation of regions](#)" that would ultimately [do away with the nation-state](#), so it wasn't surprising in principle that a "Euro-Realist" (the neologism that the author believes is more accurate euphemism for "Euroskeptic") politician in an EU-member state publicly touched upon this topic, though the controversy this time around is that it was the Estonian Interior Minister addressing his words towards the new government in socio-historically similar Finland in a way that some felt went against the spirit of their people's friendship. Mart Helme, a former Estonian Ambassador to Russia who's also the chairman of the Conservative People's Party of Estonia which forms one of the members of the ruling coalition, [had the following to say](#) about new Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin and her entirely female-led coalition:

"What has happened in Finland now still makes the hair stand on end. I would still recall [Soviet leader] Vladimir Ulyanov-Lenin's saying that every cook could become a minister, or words to that effect. Now we can see that a saleswoman has become a prime minister and some other street activist and uneducated person has also become a member of the government. Now we can actually see to some extent how the historical revenge of the reds on the whites, that is to say, the reds who wanted to liquidate the Finnish state already in the [Finnish Civil War of 1918], have now come to power and are now desperately trying to liquidate Finland, making it a euro-province which could be called either Suomi or Finland, but which, in fact, completely drags it down in the ideological philosophy at the end of the so-called Fukuyama history."

The point that this populist politician was trying to convey is that the EU is just as much of an ideologically radical supranationalist entity as the USSR was (for better or for worse), one which also endeavors to swallow up whole countries in pursuit of its geopolitical objective of taking over the world. According to him, Lenin's quip about how even the most formally

unqualified person could become a government minister has been presently proven in the Finnish case, which he also regards as representing the victory of the Finnish Civil War-era Reds over the Whites due to his fears that the new government will essentially dismantle the state to facilitate its more efficient incorporation into the EU just as Soviet-backed communists did with some of the formerly independent republics like interwar Estonia that eventually acceded to the union.

On one hand, Helme is correct in drawing attention to the EU's totalitarianism and even invoking Fukuyama's provocative "End of History" thesis to raise alarm about the new Finnish government's unstated acceptance of this ultra-liberal worldview, which he fears is a threat not only to socio-historically similar Estonia, but to every single other country in the bloc too. On the other, however, he's clearly winking at the Russophobic tendencies within his own society by talking about Lenin, the Reds, and the Soviet Union's liquidation of some of the formerly independent republics' national sovereignty seeing as how this language naturally triggers those in the Baltics to react at the very least in an extremely unfriendly way towards Russia. It can be argued that no other relevant historical example exists to illustrate the point that he's making, though the case can also be made that he should have still tried to use different language instead.

This clarification isn't only being made for reasons of Russians' sensitivity towards his words, but also because Helme is clearly hinting that the new Finnish government is comprised of what many of the right have recently taken to describing as "Cultural Marxists", which is a term of debatable accuracy. It's true that the ultra-liberal ideology that Marin's new government represents has attempted to incorporate Marx's teachings on economic equality into the socio-cultural (identity) sphere, which is the basis on which the comparison is made, but it's extremely deceptive in the sense that Marxism itself never traditionally dealt with that topic in such a way. Marx did touch upon socio-cultural issues in his works, but that's only because he believed that they were shaped by economic conditions, not in order to bring about a socio-cultural transformation of society without first undertaking what he believed were the revolutionary economic prerequisites.

Marin's ultra-liberals (or "Cultural Marxists" as many on the right call them), however, are much more focused on implementing their views of socio-cultural equality without paying much attention to the economic side of the coin other than perhaps a few socialist tweakings to the already generous welfare system. This therefore makes the "Cultural Marxist" label misleading since it has no direct connection to actual Marxism itself unless that word is being used as a euphemism for "revolutionary change towards equality". One might say that no other word better encapsulates that idea than "Marxism", which is a plausible claim to make but still doesn't take away from the ideological inaccuracy of the term's inclusion in that concept. Nevertheless, if one looks beyond the Russophobic dog whistles that Helme was blowing to his countrymen and his controversial hinting of "Cultural Marxism", then his warning about the new Finnish government actually makes a lot of sense.

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