

S U M M A R Y

The Position of the Attorney General in the Finnish Cabinet. By Olavi Honka.

The Finnish attorney general, Olavi Honka, explains in his article the attorney general's present position in the cabinet. The account thus concentrates on a by no means minor but on the contrary very important and exacting part of the tasks which belong to the attorney general in Finland. The account is based on the attorney general's address at a meeting of the Finnish Political Science Association in Tampere last October.

Initially the attorney general gives a short review of the phases the post has gone through. The post of attorney general is no creation of the independence period. On the contrary, its traditions are evidenced under the title of »procurator» more than 150 years ago. The attorney general's present position was confirmed in the Finnish Government Act of 1919, which was enacted as a constitution and is still in force more or less unchanged.

In § 37 of the Government Act it is provided that the attorney general is to be in the cabinet. According to § 46 the attorney general must see that the authorities and officials comply with the laws and fulfil their duties in such a manner that no one will be oppressed in a legal matter. The attorney general has the right to be present at the sittings of the cabinet and to receive information about the minutes of the cabinet and its ministries. § 48 provides that the attorney general must give the president and parliament an annual report on his office and his observations concerning compliance with the law. He must also give, on demand, information and opinions to the president and cabinet. The attorney general's tasks as regards the cabinet have been prescribed as follows: his function is to see that the treatment of a matter in the cabinet proceeds according to legal order and in compliance with the regulations in force. He must, unless his other official duties prevent him, be present at the sittings of the cabinet and his presence is especially required when matters are put before the president of the republic in the cabinet.

In addition he is to see that the cabinet's minutes are drawn up in a proper manner. If the attorney general thinks that, in the matters dealt with in the cabinet, some fact of a legal nature gives due cause, he may pronounce his opinion in the minute of the cabinet.

The attorney general's position in the cabinet is founded on a characteristic of the Finnish government regulations: the division of authority between the administration and independent courts of law. According to the parliamentary system, the cabinet and its members are responsible for their measures to parliament and are dependent upon its confidence. But this confidence does not release them from the responsibility and surveillance which occurs through the court of law in the order prescribed for it.

The Problem of Disarmament. By Risto Hyvärinen.

In recent years the question of disarmament frequently comes up as the focus of public discussion. This has been partly caused by the enormous and — particularly since the second world war — cumulatively increasing efficiency attained by the means of destruction. Partly it has been due to the swift rise in the cost of the weapons themselves.

Efforts towards disarmament have taken place on two levels, independent of each other. A distinction should be made here between ideological and political efforts towards disarmament. The various movements aiming at the elimination of force from international

relations belong in the first category. Measures towards disarmament undertaken by states are, however, of a political order. For they in no wise aim at the elimination of force; they aim at changes in the political power relations, and this is the very same aim as that of armament itself.

In the field of international politics disarmament is thus merely the reverse of armament. A state may strive to reinforce its own political position either by equipping itself with arms or by decreasing the armaments of others. The latter way is, in comparison, much less costly and may be conceived of as concerning for instance the particular fields of armament in which one tends to be at a disadvantage oneself. For instance, the elimination of nuclear weapon weakens the position of the great powers to the advantage of the small states.

The question of disarmament may be analysed from several different points of view. We may, for instance, distinguish between the following three alternatives: 1) voluntary disarmament, 2) forcible disarmament and 3) inevitable disarmament. Voluntary disarmament has never led to a lasting decrease in the use of force in the case on any state. Nor has the forcible disarmament of other states proved effective in the long run. Germany after the first and second world wars provides an illustrative example of this. Inevitable disarmament, again, poses special problems of its own. For it implies efforts to obtain agreements not to produce and not to use weapons whose destructive power is so excessive as not to be effectively controllable by the users. This form of disarmament has become necessary only during the latest phase reached by military technology, a phase characterised by the emergence of means of mass destruction such as nuclear weapons and others.

Since measures towards disarmament are by their very nature political actions — means of achieving the purposes of the states concerned — it is natural that general disarmament in a real sense has never been achieved in spite of the continuous discussions that have taken place over many years. No state has been able to afford to weaken its own position. The situation is however changing in, perhaps, a decisive way. The appearance of nuclear weapons among the means of war is confronting humanity with the inevitability of general disarmament.

Principles and Methods in Political Ecology. By Jaakko Nousiainen.

The ecological method in the study of voting behaviour has roots extending back to almost half a century. Particular interest attaches to the study of the features of its development, as the method developed in two countries, France and the United States, without any noteworthy points of contact. For the most part, too, both the basis of study and the direction pursued were different in the two countries.

When French political science began its renaissance after the second world war, «electoral sociology» became its focal point. The research procedure has not undergone any essential changes since the year 1913, when André Siegfried published his classical work on Western French politics. Electoral sociology still has the following characteristics: a firm geographical basis; an aspiration towards a total analysis taking into account all the possible factors in the area selected; lack of development in statistical methods; and deficiency in forming theories.

In the United States political ecology has been more closely associated since the 1920s with general human ecology and other political studies. It has taken into use the quantitative methods characteristic of the developing social sciences; and special studies aiming at strictly limited objectives have a central place alongside broader total presentation.

In recent years the panel method has come into extensive use. These two methods are not, however, mutually exclusive. They suitably complement each other, when the aim is to obtain greater ability than before to account for the behaviour of individuals and groups in political life.