

Law and order — Finnish style

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Setting the scene

It should be pointed out at the beginning of this section that Finland is a western democratic republic. The laws of the country are therefore drafted by the elected representatives of the people and the police as well as other officials who enforce the laws are also governed by laws and rules made up the same way.

A democratic republic is not a place where you can do whatever you want. If the police or some other official tell you to do something, it is generally wise to think twice about not doing it. If you have slept on it and still think an official has treated you unjustly, there is usually some place you can complain to and if you have good arguments, you may win your point. In the process of complaining, though, you should become familiar with the general rules of the game, the laws which govern both you and the officials. In finding out about laws and rules you may need some help because these are only available in Finnish and Swedish. Later on I will mention some people and places you can go to for this kind of help.

After asking around for some more information you may find that you disagree with the law. In a democratic republic laws are made by majority vote in parliament and once the voting is over with, even those who vote against have to obey the law. You have to obey, but you don't have to agree. In a democratic republic — let's use DR for short — there are ways to get laws changed. These ways are usually called basic or civil rights which CAN'T be taken away or altered even by laws. These rights are usually mentioned in the constitution of DR countries and include things like the right to say what you think, the right to hold meetings and form organizations, the right to put your ideas into print, and the right to move



about as you wish. We might even include the right to work. All of these ways of operating are open to citizens who disagree with laws so they can try to persuade the rest that a certain law should be changed. There is a mutual understanding among DR's that resident foreigners should also have access to these basic rights although in practise there are a lot more restrictions on foreigners in these things.

Another valuable tradition of DR's is that the majority should not be allowed to push around minorities as they like. In other words, minorities cannot be mistreated because no one cares about them. Minority rights are a very valuable matter for the 12 000 or so foreigners living in Finland.

One of the basic principles embodied in the Finnish Constitution is that all citizens are equal before the law. Although the Constitution only specifies that Finnish citizens have the civil rights mentioned in the law, this does not imply that foreigners are without civil rights. Many laws do not specify foreigners. Finland has also ratified several international treaties such as the U.N. Human Rights Declaration and the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which guarantee basic rights to all persons regardless of religion, race, nationality or language.

Pointers for getting in

The main rules concerning foreigners living in Finland are contained in the new Aliens Act which was approved by parliament in 1983, and is in force as of early 1984. Also significant are the Nordic Labour and Passport Control Pacts. According to the above only citizens of the Nordic countries may enter Finland without a passport and reside in the country for an unlimited period. With the exception of Iceland, they may also work in Finland without a special permit.

Before a citizen of a country other than those participating in the Nordic Council is admitted to Finland he must produce a passport for the examination of the authorities at the place where he enters the country. Unless the foreigner comes from a country with which Finland has concluded an agreement for visa exemption, he should have a visa entered into his passport before coming to Finland. Visas are obtainable at any Finnish consulate or embassy abroad and are usually granted for a period of three months. If you are a citizen of a country which has no visa exemption agreement with Finland, you may be admitted to Finland at the border for a short visit. This type of admission is solely at the discretion of the Aliens Office however, and there is no guarantee you'll get one. The best bet is to arrange your visa early at a Finnish embassy before coming to Finland. If you are uncertain whether you need a visa or not, any travel agent dealing with travel to Finland should be able to tell you.

In addition to passport, Finland accepts other travel documents issued according to the United Nations Geneva Convention, including refugees with a travel document issued accordingly. Persons without nationality may be admitted if they possess a travel document issued according to the UN agreement on the juridical status of stateless persons. Also accepted are so-called aliens passports issued by a competent national authority. Other acceptable documents for tourist travel are British visitor's passports, as well as identity cards issued by competent authorities in Belgium, Austria, Lichtenstein, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland.

Staying on: some have succeeded

If you want to stay in Finland for a period longer than the validity of your visa, you must apply for a residence permit at your local police station. Unless there is a special reason to do otherwise, resident permits are usually granted for one year. If a foreigner has resided in Finland regularly for two years he may be granted a residence permit "without time limitation". This

does not mean, however, that a foreigner can stay in Finland until the end of his days because the residence permit expires when the foreigner's passport expires. To continue residence in Finland a foreigner must apply to his own country for a new passport and to the Finnish Aliens Office for a new residence permit.

If you are like most people, you will find it difficult to live anywhere on a permanent basis without working for a living. To do this you will also need a permit from the authorities, which you can apply for on the same form as the residence permit. The general rule is that work permits should be applied for from abroad through a Finnish embassy or consulate before you arrive in the country. To make a successful application you will also need a letter from a Finnish employer stating that you are being offered a job. It is useful to have a letter which states that a Finn is not available for the job being offered as the authorities are reluctant to allow foreigners to do work which could be done by an unemployed Finn. Although work permits are usually to be applied for from abroad, the authorities may also approve applications submitted in Finland in certain cases.

A foreigner who has been working in Finland for two years will usually receive a permit "without time limitation". The work permit will expire, however, at the same time that the residence permit expires and must be reapplied. Should your work permit be terminated prematurely by the authorities, however, you may appeal to the High Administrative Court. In most cases when you change your employer you will also have to get a new work permit because the permits are for specific employers. This also means that if you do freelance work for several employers, you need several work permits. There are also some types of work for which work permits are not required and in some cases you may be eligible for a general work permit.

Dealing With the Police

As a foreigner residing in Finland it is more than likely that you will have dealings with the police from time to time. That is because the official body for carrying out most government policies related to foreigners is the Aliens Affairs Office in the Police Bureau of the Interior Ministry.

The main function of the Aliens' Office is surveillance. It was set up during the last war to keep track of all foreigners in the country and counteract possible espionage activities. It is now forty years since the war ended. Most of the soldiers have long since returned to civilian careers, war refugees have been resettled but the Aliens' Office goes on maintaining surveillance of foreigners.

Because the Aliens' Office is in the police administration, it has not been

very successful in carrying out service or information functions. The people working there have very little experience and no training in dealing with problems of persons coming from other cultural backgrounds and helping them to adjust to living in a strange country. There is a glaring lack of even printed information on matters with which the police are concerned such as the rights and obligations of foreigners under Finnish law. Printed information about the accessibility of such services as health care, pensions, welfare and unemployment assistance to foreigners is almost non-existent.

An exception to this grim situation is the Foreign Curators' Office which was created to provide information to foreigners. Provision for the opening of this office was made in the Aliens' Act of 1983, under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

The head of the Aliens' Office is Director Eila Kännö* who is known in police circles as a capable policewoman with a distinguished reputation for combatting international crime at Interpol. Among foreigners she is better known for her present appointment as head of the Aliens' Office and as an inflexible hardliner. Chief Inspector Lauri Koivuneva is more directly involved in the day-to-day practical handling of work and residence permits. He also likes to play it by the book, but his position makes him somehow more approachable.

Above both of these officaries in the police hierarchy is the Chief Superintendent of the Finnish Police, Olli Urponen. Because he is responsible for the entire police bureaucracy he is difficult to approach on any specific problem and is likely to leave practical matters to be dealt with by his subordinates. He is responsible to the second minister of the interior who is responsible for police matters in the Finnish government.

Because it is difficult to approach officials in authority if you have a complaint, it is best to submit appeals to decisions under the Aliens Act relating to work and residence permits in writing and in the proper form. When a decision is given to you on some matter by the Aliens' Office they should also inform you of your rights to appeal — in a language you can understand. This appeal will be either in the form of submission from you to a court, called a *valitus* or a written complaint to a ministry authority or *oikaisuvaikutus*. When this book went to press we did not have exact details on how these appeals were to be submitted but information in an understandable form should be available from either the Aliens Office or the Foreign Curator (*Ulkomaalaistoimisto* and *Ulkomaalaiskuraattori*).

Because many foreigners get into difficulties with the police due to lack of information about proper procedure and police authority in Finland, we have outlined some of the main points below:

* From July 1, 1984, Risto Veijalainen.

Police Powers and Civil Rights

According to law (*Polisilaki*) the purpose of the police force is to protect the legal constitution of the state and society as well as to uphold public order and security. The law also states that in doing this, the police must in the first instance employ methods such as providing advice, enjoiner and command. The police are not allowed to interfere with the civil rights of persons except to the extent necessary to carry out the purposes stated at the outset.

In conducting their work for the maintenance of order the police are authorized by law to make certain requirements of the public which the public is obliged to heed.

For example, everyone is required to give proper identification of him/herself to the police upon request. The police are empowered to detain an unknown person who does not give adequate information about himself or gives false information.

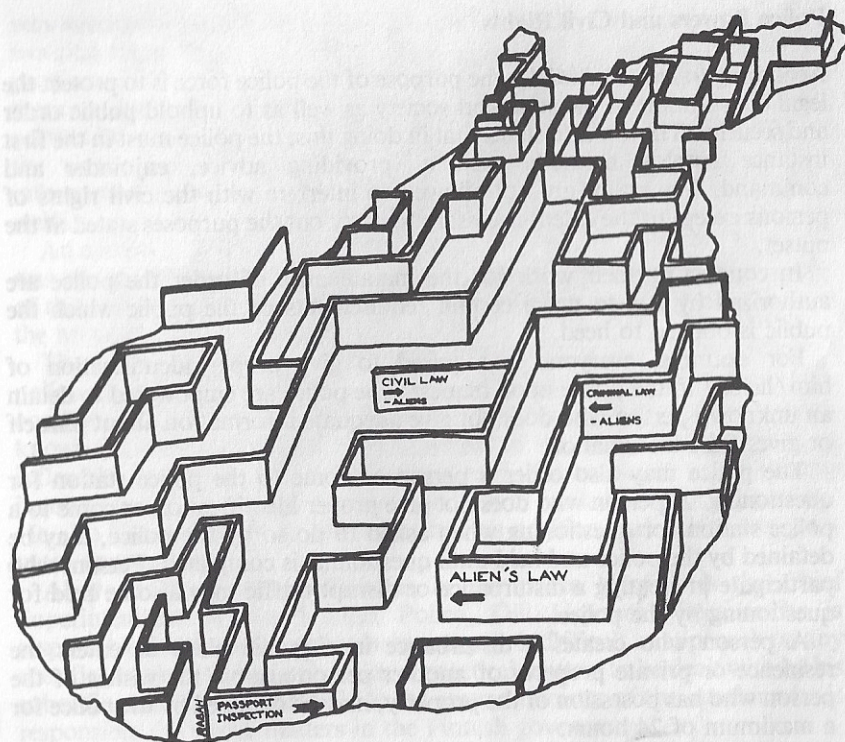
The police may also order a person to come to the police station for questioning. A person who does not give proper identification or come to a police station for questioning when asked to do so by the police, may be detained by the police and held until questioning is completed. Persons who participate in creating a disturbance or disrupt traffic may also be held for questioning by the police.

A person who creates a disturbance in a public place or enters the residence or private property of another person against the wishes of the person who has possession of the property, may be detained by the police for a maximum of 24 hours.

In dealing with the police it is also useful to know that even if you have committed a minor offence a police officer is not obliged to charge you in every case. If he considers your offence not to be serious or unintentional, he may let you off with only a warning. The police may allow this procedure with traffic offences of a minor nature, for instance if a foreigner new to Finland is involved. It is therefore useful to try to explain to the police that you are inexperienced with Finnish conditions and that your mistake was unintentional if this is actually the case.

You should also remember that ignorance is no excuse where the law is concerned. If there is any likelihood that some action on your part may lead to injury or costly damages for someone else, it is advisable to find out what the law says about it.

If you receive any of the above kinds of directives from the police it is advisable to follow them if at all possible. It may satisfy you to know that there are also stern sanctions in Finnish law against the abuse of authority by the police and civil servants. These are contained in Finland's Criminal Code. Section 40 of the code provides for dismissal of officials and imprisonment for life in some cases if a person is wrongly imprisoned or falsely condemned without proper justification.



If you feel you have received such treatment from the police you may initiate an administrative suit against a police officer. The suit takes the form of a notification in writing to the officer's immediate supervisor, usually a police chief, the Inspector of Police in the provinces or to the Ministry of the Interior.

Another possible avenue of remedy is to appeal to the parliamentary ombudsman *oikeusasiainmies* or the Chancellor of Justice who are especially charged with supervising the legal conduct of civil servants. In launching such appeals it is advisable to contact a lawyer, the Foreign Curator in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, or the legal advisor of your student union if you are a student. If you decide to ask for legal advice it would be useful to speak to a lawyer who can converse in your own language and has some experience with the problems of foreigners.

One of the first questions you should ask a lawyer if you don't have much money is whether you can apply for legal aid to cover his salary. The availability of legal aid to foreigners depends on certain international agreements and the lawyer should be able to tell you if you are eligible.

If Arrested or Jailed: Read This

If you have been arrested and put in jail, you should know why. According to the Finnish Criminal Code (Ri 2 41 a§) "When a person is arrested he must be informed of the crime of which he is suspected. The household members or next of kin of the person arrested must be informed of the arrest as soon as possible without interfering with the investigation. Such information must not be given, however, unless there is a special reason, without the consent of the person arrested."

A person may be arrested and detained for a period of 17 days if he is suspected of a crime punishable by one year's imprisonment or more. (Ri 20§).

A person suspected of even a lesser imprisonable offence may be arrested and similarly detained if he has no regular place of residence and there is reason to assume that he will flee the country. This also applies to persons who do not give personal identification information to the police or give information which is suspected to be incorrect.

While you are in jail you may not be prevented from meeting your immediate next of kin, counsel or person who is looking after your affairs. (Sisäasiainministeriön päätös no. 5459401/72, 13§). The police may only temporarily delay such meetings and are permitted to supervise such meetings on the grounds that they may interfere with an investigation in progress. An imprisoned person also has an absolute legal right to meet with his legal advisor before appearing in court (L tutkintavankeudesta 12 §).

Leaving Finland: A Glossary

Finland is a country where foreigners and citizens alike can come and go rather freely. There are 4 Finnish language terms which refer to exceptions to this rule.

Karkoitus — trans. Deportation. This refers to a situation where the authorities send you out of the country whether you want to go or not. The only good thing about deportation is the free trip — one way. Only available to foreigners.

Maastapoistumiskielto — this is the term for an order given by the Ministry of the Interior, forbidding you to leave the country. This is usually a temporary measure pending the conclusion of some investigation. If you try to leave and are caught you may be jailed under the Aliens' Act — if you are a foreigner. These orders can be applied to both foreigners and Finns.

Maahantulokielto — this means that you are not wanted. In other words it is declaring a foreigner as a *persona non grata*. The order is usually for a certain period and almost always accompanies a deportation order. Only applies to foreigners.

Rajalta käännyttäminen — this is having to leave before you've even arrived. This refers to the measure of turning away at the border a foreigner trying to come into the country.

Although these measures are only rare occurrences in international travel between Finland and other countries, it is good to know something about them because they occur in mainly unpleasant circumstances. Knowing about them is important civic knowledge especially for foreigners since they are the ones usually involved. If you don't personally become involved in such matters, it is possible that someone you know will.

Deportation is a stern measure and can be ordered if a foreigner:

- * abides in the country without the required passport, visa or residence permit
- * continually neglects seeing to the validity of his residence and work permits or registering his place of residence or other requirements of the Aliens' Act
- * does not observe his social responsibilities as required by law
- * abuses alcohol or drugs and becomes incapable of supporting himself or dangerous to others,
- * has committed a serious crime, or
- * is suspected of sabotage based on previous activities or other evidence, or is suspected of intending to carry out espionage, illegal spying or activity endangering the relations of Finland with other states.

A person who has been allowed to enter Finland as a refugee may only be deported for the last reasons. A refugee may not be deported to a country where his life or freedom is likely to be threatened. (Ulkomaalaislaki 18§) Additionally a refugee may be deported for an exceptionally serious crime. A deported person can be denied re-entry to Finland for a maximum of five years or until further provision.

A foreigner who is dissatisfied with a deportation order may appeal within 14 days to the High Administrative Court. The letter of appeal is to be left with the Ministry of the Interior. If a foreigner is imprisoned his appeal will be forwarded by the official in charge of the prison.

The only other decision from which an appeal to the High Administrative Court is allowed under the Aliens' Act is cancellation of the work permit of a foreigner who has lived regularly in Finland for two years.

Concerning the other measures mentioned, there is no appeal open to a court but a foreigner may submit a written complaint within 14 days to the relevant police or passport office or directly to The Ministry of the Interior.

There is also some provision made in the Aliens Act for persons whose lives or freedom may be endangered upon leaving Finland, or if denied entry. Such persons may be allowed special exemption to enter Finland or remain in the country as refugees if they are able to prove their need for sanctuary. The law is somewhat weak on this point though, because the foreigner must *prove* his refugee status and acceptance is at the discretion of the official in charge. The laws in other Nordic countries are more favorable on this point, so if you are a refugee and have a choice, try the others first.

Finns, drugs, alcohol and you

Concerning drugs and alcohol the laws of Finland are sterner than in most western countries. Unlike some western countries, in Finland even the possession and use of drugs such as marijuana, hashish, LSD, speed and STP are criminal offences. The taking or bringing of illegal drugs into the country, their preparation, sale or other trafficking or even attempting to do these things is punishable by fines or up to two years imprisonment. The punishment depends on many things but it can generally be said that possession and personal use only are not punished as severely as importation and all kinds of distribution.

The punishments for serious drug offences have been tightened in Finland in recent years. Importing and trafficking in large amounts of the above drugs or even small amounts of powerful drugs like 1 gram of heroin can be punishable by up to 10 years in penitentiary. There are some drugs sold for medicinal purposes abroad which are illegal in Finland. If you have drugs from abroad in any quantity without a medical prescription, about which you are uncertain, you may be advised to consult one of the following hospitals which give information on drugs:

Auroran Poliklinikka tel. 4701 (Helsinki)
Hesperian Poliklinikka tel. 402 11 (Helsinki) or call the Police
Department Drug Squad at 1891 (Helsinki).

One potent drug which those who use it have succeeded in legalizing in the teeth of the prohibitionists is alcohol. Alcohol, especially in its stronger forms is extremely popular in Finland. There are many cultures where

people drink larger quantities of alcohol than in Finland, but few where so much is consumed at one sitting and public inebriation is so common.

This is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that anything stronger than a low alcohol content beer can only be bought at an outlet owned by the state-owned alcohol monopoly, Oy Alko Ab, or at a restaurant licensed by it. Alko is very stingy about licensing new outlets and all forms of private sale are sternly prohibited and punished.

The foreigner faces the danger of being caught in the battle between the prohibitionists and the inbibers. For instance, the anti-alcohol lobby has influenced the enactment of extremely strict laws and penalties for drunken driving which an unsuspecting foreigner would do well to be aware of to avoid a rude awakening in jail.

The scene around the railway station in Helsinki on Friday night or in any conubation on May Day or at Midsummer would lead a stranger to think drinking by minors and noisy displays of drunkenness by adults were permitted in Finland. In fact, they are not, as the foreigner will find out if he passes the bottle among youths after Sunday school as a simple gesture of comraderie. When the police cart him away he will have learned a valuable lesson in how laws bend with social custom, but seldom in his direction.

The foreigner's sole consolation is that he is entitled to have an interpreter in court to explain his misunderstandings to the bored tribunal.

On liability to taxation*

A person in Finland is either totally or partially liable to taxation. A person resident in Finland is totally liable to taxation, and he must pay taxes on any income earned either in Finland or abroad. A person is regarded as residing in Finland if his home is in this country or if he stays here for over six months. The taxes to be paid by such a person are determined in accordance with the statutes of the law concerning income and property, and a portion of his salary is withheld in accordance with the entries in his taxation book. Both a taxation book and any relevant certificates allowing for a reduction in the level of tax withheld may be obtained from the local tax office.

A person whose place of residence is not in Finland or who will stay in this country for less than six months is partially liable to taxation, having to pay taxes only for such income as he has earned in Finland. The taxes to be paid by such a person are determined in accordance with the statutes of the so-called law on tax at source, with the final tax at source being withheld in accordance with the entries on the tax at source card. A tax at source card

* Higher education in Finland, Guide for Foreign Students, by Ministry of Education, pp. 58-59, Helsinki 1982.

with the appropriate entries may be obtained from the local tax office.

There are regulations resulting from taxation treaties ratified between Finland and some foreign countries limiting liability to Finnish taxation beyond that which is stated above.

The tax offices also provide guidance and advice. A person receiving income in Finland should always contact his local tax office.

Every person liable to taxation (except those who are only partially liable to taxation and whose final tax at source has been withheld from their salary) who, during the taxation year has received taxable income either in Finland or abroad, must, without having to be notified, complete and submit a report of taxable income by the end of January of the following year. A final tax assessment, in which either excess taxes withheld will be returned or additional taxes will be levied, is calculated on the basis of the report of taxable income, the taxation book, and other material submitted along with it.

This article is only meant to be a primer. I have tried to touch on some of the main laws related to foreigners in Finland, mainly in the area of civil rights. In most cases I have not dealt in depth with laws related to other chapters in this book. Of course, there are a great many laws and regulations even outside the scope of this book, most of them cover both Finns and foreigners. These include laws covering such traditional crimes as theft and crimes of violence. There are also any number of more modern offences such as driving offences various forms of economic crime and there is even a law about smoking in public.

Social Services: the brighter side of taxes

So far this article has been rather heavy on duties. Equally worthwhile for the foreigner is to know about his rights. As a Nordic-style welfare state, there are many benefits and services to which the tax-paying foreigner is entitled.

Perhaps the most important of these is *health insurance* for which every person permanently resident in the country is eligible. Persons who have stayed or intend to stay in Finland for more than twelve consecutive months are covered by health insurance. A foreigner must register with his local NHI office before he can claim health insurance benefits. He can only do this after he has submitted a form indicating his address and personal particulars to the population register of his place of residence.

NHI provides refunds for medical expenses. In addition to services

provided by a doctor, it also covers all treatments, medicine and transportation ordered by a doctor. NHI also provides compensation for lost earnings due to sickness or maternity leave. Maternity allowance is available for those who have been registered for NHI in the Nordic countries or West Germany to 180 days prior to confinement.

Claims for NHI benefits are dealt with by the Social Insurance Office of your place of residence. The local office's address and phone number can be found under *Kansaneläkelaitos* in the phone book.

If you become destitute without money or shelter you should be able to get *welfare assistance* from the municipality you are living in or even only passing through if your need is acute (*Huoltolaki*). One of the things that the Aliens' Office looks at in granting residence permits is the financial situation of the foreigner. If you plan to apply for residence permission and have frequently received welfare assistance the authorities may get the idea that you cannot support yourself. Getting temporary emergency assistance should not allow such a conclusion, however, and if you are really down and out contact the *huoltovirasto* or *sosiaalitoimisto* of the municipality where you live.

If you have been working, however, it might be advisable to first contact the employment office, *työvoimatoimisto* and determine your eligibility for *unemployment benefits*. Foreigners who have been working in Finland regularly with a work permit or other trade permit are usually eligible for unemployment benefits.

At age 65, all persons who have worked in Finland are eligible for an *employment pension*. You may collect the pension earlier if you are disabled for a minimum of one year. In the case of death, your spouse and children are entitled to a survivors' pension. If you are self-employed you must make arrangements yourself to pay for and be covered under the employment pension. You may collect the pension even if you have only worked in Finland one month, and even if you no longer live in the country. The amount depends on your wage level and contributing period. If you are eligible you must apply for the pension on a form available in banks and post offices.

Foreigners with young children should inform themselves about the *child care centers* in their community. Parents who need child care help because of work or study may bring pre-school aged children to municipal nurseries practically from birth. Child care is provided in institutions or in supervised homes at costs geared to the income of the parents. Workers usually speak only Finnish, Swedish or Sami (in Lapland). There is still shortage of nursery places in many areas necessitating the screening of applications according to need. Application forms can be obtained at any *päiväkoti*.

Conclusion

This article was meant to be mainly about law and order but we have also wandered onto some other related subjects. If the wandering has been too haphazard, I can only apologise to the other contributors and the readers.

Someone once said that when rights were mentioned in Finnish law, these always referred to Finnish citizens, but when duties were mentioned, these usually applied to everybody living in the country. The person who said this was a foreigner because it is the sort of thing a foreigner is likely to notice quickly.

A foreigner is less likely to appreciate the historical reasons behind some of the laws disadvantageous to him. The fact may even escape him that for most of their history Finns have been dominated by foreigners. First the Swedes came over in the twelfth century and more or less bullied the Finns into accepting Christianity and fighting their wars against the Russians for them. Then the Russians took over and did more or less the same thing until 1917, when Finland ducked out the back door and declared independence while the Russians were distracted by revolution at home. The Finns had their own civil war in 1918 and one issue was whether the country should be run by foreigners in the future or the Finns themselves. The Finns compromised on democracy and independence, leaving foreign kings and international revolution to others.

Although Finnish independence and neutrality have since gained a great deal of respect internationally, their long history as a small and abused minority in large empires helps them to be sympathetic with the problems of the foreigners in their midst. Its position today as a small neutral state between two competing superpowers should also make Finland very sensitive to issues involving minority rights. In discussing injustices in Finland, Finnish history also provides foreigners with an understanding of why the country's laws frequently deal with them rather brusquely.

Such understanding should lead both foreigner and Finn to action against injustices, however, not apathy.

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Four Walls

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The problem of housing can be divided into three basic questions — where to live, how to live and why to live. A foreign student usually has the most problems in answering the first question, but if he gets that answer wrong he'll soon be wondering about the last question. There is a widespread suspicion among psychoanalysts, that the Finnish way of isolated living and the high suicide rate are somehow connected. Students, especially, are known to get queer ideas in those nice, modern, concrete giants built for them somewhere in the suburbs where ordinary folks won't disturb them.

Back now to the question where to live. If you come from some more liberal-minded country, you might have ideas about sleeping in parks, under bridges, in barns or with friendly people. There are several drawbacks to these ways of accommodation. One is that, if the police find out, you'll sleep in prison until you're put on a homebound plane. And, when applying for a residence permit, you'll have to give an address in Finland, which is going to be checked and doublechecked by the officials.

Of course there are positive sides to sleeping under bridges. Judging from the amount of frozen drunkards collected by the police every winter, you won't get lonely there. And as for staying with friendly people — you'll usually have to pay your rent with sex, especially if you are a male foreign student. After she's handed you on to her seventh girlfriend, you might start dreaming about getting your own place to stay.

The obvious solution seems to be a student flat. Life in student accommodations is great (just remember those high suicide rates) and anyway student places are meant for students (seemingly not always for students' purses, though). I have friends, who — logically deducing from the system in other countries — have come to Finland in the firm belief that the University has reserved them a student apartment or will arrange them one quickly. Well, in the ordinary case — i.e. if you are not a scholarship holder — the University hasn't and the University won't. Where you live is strictly your problem, of interest only to you and the officials at the Ministry of the Interior. Those friends of mine, being thousands of miles from home, had