



The Uniter and the Divider

MARSHAL C. G. E. MANNERHEIM



Finland's history as a free and independent democratic nation converges around the life and career of Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim. Born into a Swedish speaking aristocratic family in Finland, Mannerheim began his career in the Russian Imperial Army. By the end of World War I, he had earned the rank of Lieutenant General. In 1918, he strongly objected to the changes in the Army following the Russian Revolution and resigned his commission. He returned to Finland.

C. G. E. Mannerheim

Finland Defence Forces Education Development Centre, Production Division/Photographic Section

In 1917, after 600 years of Swedish domination and 100 years of Russian rule, Finland declared its independence. It established a European style parliamentary democracy. The nation was divided between those sympathetic to the Russian Revolution, called "Red Guards" and those who opposed it. In 1918, Red Guards attempted to seize control of the government with the active support of military forces of the new Soviet Union. Mannerheim was asked by the Finland's Senate to form a White Army to oppose the Red Guards. With Mannerheim in command, the White Army defeated the Red Guards in a three month long civil war.

During and after the civil war, Mannerheim opposed the pro-German policy of many of Finland's political leaders. He foresaw that German military assistance during the war would become a problem in future relations with the Soviet Union.

Mannerheim was a candidate in Finland's first presidential election in 1918. He was defeated at the ballot box and left government to organize agencies to promote health and welfare programs within Finland.

In 1931, Mannerheim was appointed chairman of the National Defense Council. He urged the nation's political leaders to strengthen the armed forces, but his advice was ignored. In 1939, when war with the Soviet Union seemed inevitable, he advised the politicians that his army was too weak to fight. He urged compromise, but once again his advice was rejected.

Now Mannerheim was forced to use all his skills, as a military and political leader, to fight the Soviets long enough and hard enough in the Winter War until they were ready to accept a negotiated settlement. Through Mannerheim's considerable skill in waging military and diplomatic battles, he united the Finnish people to withstand an enemy far superior in force.

JOSEF STALIN

The Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, transformed the Russian Revolution into a regime based on Marxist ideology. With Lenin's death, Josef Stalin took the reins of power and transformed the Soviet Union into a political and economic system that has been called Stalinism.



Josef Stalin
Wikipedia.com

Stalin was born in Georgia, the son of a shoemaker and a serf. As a young man, he became involved in the socialist and communist movements after being expelled from seminary school. A political revolutionary, he spent a decade facing repeated arrests, exile and a life in the political underground. In 1912, he became a member of the Bolshevik Central Committee and in 1917, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee.

In 1922, Stalin became Secretary General of the Communist Party and in 1924, after Lenin's death, Stalin began to consolidate his power. During the 1930s Stalin ruthlessly eliminated rivals and opponents, real or perceived, in a reign of terror known as The Great Purge. By 1938, he had achieved absolute power.

During this period, Stalin instituted a policy of industrialization, a crash program built on great sacrifices by workers and the extensive use of slave labor in a vast system of prisons known as the gulag. The Soviet Union was quickly transformed into an industrial and military power.

Stalin also moved to collectivize agriculture by force. When he was faced with widespread resistance by farmers, Stalin ordered that they be either shot, deported or placed in the gulag – a network of political prisons and labor camps. The disruptions caused by forced collectivization led to a famine and the deaths of an estimated 5 million people.

Stalin's Great Purge swept through Soviet society. Many millions lost their lives, were deported or arrested, including writers, artists, scientists and most of the Red Army's leadership.

In August of 1939, Stalin came to terms with another proponent of absolute power – Adolf Hitler. The Soviet and German foreign ministers, Vyacheslav Molotov and Joachim von Ribbentrop, signed a pact that divided Europe into their mutual spheres of influence. A few weeks later the Soviets and the Germans invaded and divided Poland. Stalin was soon demanding concessions from the Baltic States including Finland. It was the triggering event of the Winter War and World War II.



Lesson Plan

Grade level 7-12

Time allotment 4-5 55 minute class periods

Standard 4B

The student understands the global scope, outcome and human costs of the war, and is therefore able to:

Assess how the political and diplomatic leadership of such individuals as Churchill, Roosevelt, Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin affected the outcome of the war.

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will compare the political and diplomatic leadership styles of Josef Stalin (Soviet Union) and C.G.E. Mannerheim (Finland) by creating a résumé for each leader. Students will also devise a set of hypothetical interview questions and responses to be presented to the class.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast Mannerheim's and Stalin's leadership styles
- Devise a list of interview questions that a present-day interviewer might ask Stalin and Mannerheim and then generate a list of possible responses for each leader

VOCABULARY

Bolshevik	Marxist	Stalinism
Great Purge	White Army	gulag
collectivization	industrialization	Red Guards
parliamentary democracy		

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Classroom board
- Paper and pencil
- Scissors
- 2 containers
- Word processor

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

After reading the essay, "The Uniter and The Divider," have students create a sample résumé for both Stalin and Mannerheim. In addition to the information provided in *Fire and Ice* and the essay, have students use all available classroom resources to acquire additional facts. Use the résumé sections below to guide students in their search for biographical information. Provide students with a sample résumé for their reference.

- Name
- Address
- Education
- Work Experience
- Political Accomplishments
- Philosophy statement
- Hobbies

ACTIVITY

After researching the biographical information and leadership styles of Stalin and Mannerheim, have students draw up three questions each for both Stalin and Mannerheim that a present-day television or radio interviewer might ask regarding the decisions they've made or the influence they've had on history. Once students write their three questions, have students cut their paper into individual questions and toss them in two separate containers labeled Stalin and Mannerheim. Each student will then choose three questions from each container and generate a list of possible responses to each of those questions. Students should write the questions they selected along with their responses. Have students share responses with the class with an assigned interviewer asking the questions. Use the themes below to generate ideas.

- Mannerheim's exit from the Russian Army
- Mannerheim's defeat in the first Finnish presidential election
- How Mannerheim planned on dealing with a possible Soviet attack
- The effect of Stalin's "collectivization of agriculture" on the Soviet Union's people
- The reason for Stalin's repeated arrests
- Stalin's motivation for The Great Purge