



Gunnar Artéus & Kent Zetterberg

# COLD WAR VIEWS ON SWEDEN

Medströms Bokförlag

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**COLD  
WAR  
VIEWS  
ON SWEDEN**





# **C O L D W A R V I E W S O N S W E D E N**

**Edited by  
Gunnar Artéus och Kent Zetterberg**

Medströms Bokförlag in cooperation with  
forskningsprojektet Försvaret och det kalla kriget (FoKK)

Publication nr 52



# Contents

9	Preface
13	The Danish View
33	The Finnish View
47	The Norwegian View
81	The Soviet View
103	The American View
123	Summary and some reflections
129	Bibliography and notes
144	Picture sources
145	Contributors
147	FoKK Publications





# Contents

9	Preface
13	The Danish View
33	The Finnish View
47	The Norwegian View
81	The Soviet View
103	The American View
123	Summary and some reflections
129	Bibliography and notes
144	Picture sources
145	Contributors
147	FoKK Publications



## Preface

This book has been produced by the Swedish research project *Försvaret och det kalla kriget* (FOKK, in English: Sweden's defence during the Cold War.)

The project is directed by a committee chaired by Professor Kent Zetterberg. Other members are Professor Gunnar Artéus, the late Captain (N) Herman Fältström, Colonel Bo Hugemark, Mr Olof Santesson, and Colonel Bertil Wennerholm. The project is being financed primarily by the Wallenberg Foundations. It has since 2002 produced more than 50 books.

The book contains the text of five lectures given at a conference on September 7–8 2017 in Stockholm. The theme of the conference was named “External Views on Sweden's Neutrality and Defence Capability during the Cold War”. The speakers, representing Denmark, Finland, Norway, Russia and USA respectively, was asked to answer three questions, viz:

- 1) How was Sweden's neutrality regarded in your country?
- 2) How was Sweden's defence capability judged in your country?
- 3) How was Sweden viewed in your country's strategic thinking?

The book concludes with a summary and some reflections.

Gunnar Artéus  
*Editor*

Kent Zetterberg  
*Project leader*

Not only the states surrounding the Baltic Sea made regular reconnaissance flights in the area, mainly for signals intelligence (SIGINT). Also the U.S., Great Britain and France (photo) flew regularly. When close to Swedish borders they were met by Swedish Air Force.







Öresund or the Sound, the narrow strait between Denmark and Sweden, has always been of great strategic importance. During the cold war it called for cooperation between the two states. Another cooperation was the Danish purchase of SAAB J 35 Draken, here flown south of the Sound close to the island of Mön.

# The Danish View

*by Michael H. Clemmesen*

## Reconstructing the tacit views.

“If ... only Sweden is attacked and occupied, both Denmark’s and Norway’s defence problems will become far more difficult ... in this case Danish armed assistance to Sweden can consist of Danish participation in blocking the exits from the Baltic Sea ...” (Den skandinaviska försvarskommittén 1949.)<sup>1</sup>  
“It nearly seems as if Sweden and Swedish security policy is taken for granted – or simply does not exist in the Danish security policy landscape.” (Ib Faurby 2003.)<sup>2</sup>

## Initial notes

In 1993 I was invited to report to the Swedish Neutrality Defence Commission.<sup>3</sup> My clearest recollection from that event was the near disbelief of my hosts, when I informed them that Sweden’s position and role was basically assumed fixed and

therefore undiscussed in both national Danish defence planning and in that of Headquarters Baltic Approaches (BALTAP). It always seemed tacitly assumed that if the Soviets violated Swedish neutrality, Sweden would fight and thereby implicitly cover the BALTAP eastern flank. Sweden's armed forces were assumed strong enough to hold unaided at least as long as the COMBALTAP's German and Danish forces.

A few knew or suspected the level of local coordination in the Sound (Öresund) Region that followed the pre-North Atlantic Treaty Scandinavian Defence Committee talks. However, there was no knowledge in Denmark of the actual level of cooperation and defence preparations for assistance between Sweden and the West that has now been revealed by post-Cold War research.

At the time of reporting to the Swedish Commission I served as Danish Defence College Director of the Joint Staff Course as well as Director Strategic Studies. In my previous position as Director Joint Operations, I had been mildly disciplined by the College Commandant for developing the staff "Exercise BLEKINGE" in winter 1990–91 for the deployment of a Danish joint force of an Armoured Infantry Brigade, Danish Navy missile boats, HAWK air defence missile batteries and F-16 squadrons to join the defence of the Karlskrona Naval Command defence area (Sydkustens Marinkommando).

My purpose of the exercise had been to break open the minds of the future staff officers to the demands of a then likely Post-Cold War future, where Danish forces might have to be integrated and supported away from home bases and forward of the BALTAP Area. In order not to compro-

mise the always assumed Swedish neutrality, the name of the exercise was thereafter changed and “Sweden” in the exercise papers adjusted to “S-land”. So, we pretended the exercise to be a generic one just using the Blekinge maps and some local forces that happened to be similar to the actual Swedish forces of the defence district.

I remembered another incident from WINTEX-CIMEX 1981, where I served in my war-time position as a member of the Danish Chief of Defence’ liaison team to COMBALTAP, then Lieutenant-General Otto K. Lind. The team liaised to Lind in his national position as the operational commander of the Danish Armed Forces.

During that exercise, a planning staff from the USMC 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Amphibious Force had been integrated into the BALTAP HQS to exercise the various possible missions after the MAF’s reinforcement option to BALTAP had been realized. During a liaison visit to the USMC team I noticed that the planning charts had included the usual 200 nautical miles Area of Operation circles from the Air Wing Bases. The operations area therefore covered most of southern Sweden, and I informed the team chief of staff, a USMC colonel that this was somewhat controversial as Sweden was neutral. The American officer just replied that he did not include political concerns in his plans. I reported the incident to General Lind, and the next time I visited the U.S. team, the charts had been adjusted not to violate Swedish territory.

In my professional experience during the Cold War, Sweden was considered a useful inspiration and legitimate reference for doctrinal and planning ideas. From the late 1970s,



the doctrine for the defence of the Danish main island, Zealand, put ever more emphasis on a well-prepared defence of the coast. Where the former doctrine had been one of harbour defence and counter attack by the mobile field army elements (Regimental Groups and later brigades), the army now formed what was in reality light specialised coastal defence brigades as part of the mobilised Zealand army mobilised reserve forces. Inspiration for the new doctrine was sought in Sweden, and during the following years, the Danish Army used the Swedish Army field manual in its education of general staff officers in coastal defence.<sup>4</sup> In our comparison with the comparative Danish field manual, the Swedish format was admired for its pedagogic qualities, especially in the use of graphics (sketches illustrating tactical action).<sup>5</sup>

Another example of direct Swedish inspiration comes from my first General Staff Officer position, which was as a desk officer from 1979 to 1982 in the small Defence Staff Long Term Planning Group. The creation of the group early in the 1970s had been directly inspired by the Swedish example, and during my service we worked directly guided by and copying ideas from the latest Swedish “perspective plan”, “Utblick mot sekelskiftet 2000”. The work however, resulted in the completion of a far less convincing Danish document.<sup>6</sup>

During my time as battalion commander in Bornholm in 1986–88, I participated in the friendship programme with P7 in Ystad and Revingehed. The comparative materiel richness of the Södra skånska regementet did nothing to trigger concern that the Swedish eastern flank of BALTAP was in any way exposed.

## The Danish Cold-War History contributions

The research based historical literature did nothing to correct the already noted view of Sweden during the Cold War. Poul Villaume's magisterial doctoral dissertation<sup>7</sup> argued that Denmark's membership of the Alliance was influenced by its past history as neutral and a fundamental doubt about its ability to physically defend its territory by its own military contribution. Therefore, Danish security policy sought to balance and bridge between the Blocks even as a formal Western Alliance member. He describes what was already known in 1995 about Swedish prepared defence cooperation with the West, but he does not in any way question Sweden's intent or ability to defend its neutrality and territory.

The analysis was repeated in his Danish 2011 Cold War Encyclopaedia article: Denmark's and Sweden's security had much in common in spite of one formally being a NATO member and the other maintaining defended neutrality.<sup>8</sup> As something very typical Danish, the encyclopaedia did not include a focused discussion of the developing threat perceptions during the four decades of East-West confrontation.

Ib Faurby is quoted initially for the difficulties he found, when asked 15 years ago to describe the Danish Cold War views of Sweden. He wrote before the publication of the Danish Cold War history volumes listed below. However, he had the advantage of being able to place his observations within the perspectives of the close Post-Cold War co-operation both in support for the Baltic States and in combined peace support operations during the successor states' wars in Former Yugoslavia.

In his discussion of Danish views of Sweden's role during the Cold War, he noted the Danish Foreign Minister Per Hækkerup 1965 observation that Nordic Cooperation was one of the four pillars of Danish Foreign Policy, the others being the UN, NATO and Europe.

In his discussion, Faurby starts with a description of the 1970s theoretical notion of a "Nordic Balance" that helped maintaining Scandinavia as a pseudo-neutral<sup>9</sup> "Low Tension Area" between the blocks. In a simple and automatic view of the Nordic Balance theory, which Faurby did not support,<sup>10</sup> any Soviet pressure on Finland within the framework of the 1948 Finno-Soviet Treaty<sup>11</sup> would provoke a Norwegian adjustment of its basing reservations ... and visa-versa. The "Balance" was seen as resting on the solid foundation of Swedish independence of alliances in peace aiming at a well defended neutrality in war, but in the logic of the theory, a Soviet move against Finland might even provoke a breakdown of the "balance" and Swedish NATO membership.

Actually, the intensification of the Cold War in the early 1980s had one of its key foci off Northern Scandinavia in the Norwegian and Barents Sea plus the routes of U.S. sea and air launched cruise missiles launched here. The missiles were likely to cross Swedish and Finnish air space. This new situation undermined the relevance of the "balance" and was extremely awkward because the logical legitimate Soviet response within the theory would have been demands against Finland within the 1948 Finno-Soviet Treaty framework.

Faurby also described how the UN pillar was given a clear Nordic dimension in the 1964 decision to develop a common

reaction force of 5,000 soldiers for peace-keeping missions (that was followed by common cadre courses in training centres in all four Nordic States). He notes the Danish respect for the level of the Swedish defence industry that was given a clear expression in the purchase of the Swedish F-35 Draken fighter as a fighter-bomber for the Royal Danish Airforce. However, as indicated in the initial quotation, Faurby searched in vain for Danish official views of Sweden's Cold War policy.<sup>12</sup>

The history of Danish foreign policy during the Cold War period was covered by two volumes. In the first that covers the period 1945–72, Danish-Swedish relations, including the relevance of Swedish neutrality was followed and discussed closely. This was a natural result of the focus and interests of the two authors of that volume, Thorsten Borring Olesen and Poul Villaume. However, as should be expected from any such Danish academic work, the military dimension of the Danish-Swedish relations became limited to very general summary of the Scandinavian Alliance negotiations in 1948–49.<sup>13</sup>

The volume covering the period 1973 to 2003 was authored by the eminent nestor of Danish Cold War history, Nikolaj Petersen. However even his narrative is devoid of any discussion of defence issues. The only important security policy issue discussed in the volume was the fate of the idea of a Nordic Nuclear Free Zone.<sup>14</sup>

In the Danish perspective the international Cold War ended up being remembered as only the external framework for the domestic confrontation that came to dominate the internal security policy discourse from the Vietnam War Era to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The domestic Cold War

confrontation was soon dramatically intensified following the NATO INF Double Track decision in 1979 and then poisoned by the Social Democratic Party's decision in opposition from autumn 1982 to force the new Conservative-Liberal Government to break with NATO consensus on nuclear weapons issues. The schism and the resulting antagonism deeply tainted the otherwise sound academic research and production of an official history of Denmark during the Cold War.

The result of the research was published in three massive volumes – where each covered a period of the Cold War – plus a smaller, summary and concluding volume. The work was conducted and published by The Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS). The three main volumes did actually cover military threat issues, however that subject was never considered more than secondary and allocated research resources accordingly. The analysis of the threat aspects was left to one historian with a military history background from his dissertation about the 1563–70 Danish-Swedish War, and neither he nor the research team sought surviving actors' or other military professional assistance in the analysis of the various threat documents and other sources.<sup>15</sup> The focus was maintained on the domestic political and media dimensions of the Cold War.

Therefore, Sweden remained nearly invisible in most of this official Danish narrative. Volume 1, that covered the period 1945–62, described how the 1953 NATO threat estimate of Soviet operations against the Nordic area expected eight to nine divisions to be used for the invasion of Denmark with the object of gaining control of the access to the North Sea.

It is important to understand that the Alliance estimate was developed with a Danish Defence Intelligence<sup>16</sup> contribution and thus also reflected its views. The operations were expected to include an offensive up the Jutland Peninsula as well as a combination of sea and air landings on Zealand and Bornholm. It was considered “a possibility that the offensive would be continued towards Norway and maybe Sweden”. There was no mention of any possibility of an invasion of southern Sweden which would thereafter create a threat against Denmark from the east.

Two years later, in 1955, the Soviet force expected by NATO to be earmarked for Denmark had risen to ten divisions of which four plus one or two airborne divisions would be used for the follow-on offensive against southern Norway. This year the possibility of Soviet invasions of south, central and northern Sweden were mentioned, but this was not seen as likely considering the difficulty and complications that would follow from such an option.

In 1958 the expectation was that the invasion of Denmark would be followed by an operation against southern Norway “and possible Sweden”.

From 1960 onwards, Denmark objected to NATO’s views that the Baltic Approaches had lost in relative importance as the Soviet Northern Fleet was expanded, meaning that the invasion of Denmark might be postponed to take place later than at the start of the war.<sup>17</sup>

However, even if actors or other military expertise had been included in the production of the DIS volumes, it is not likely that Sweden would have been given a more prominent

place in the Danish Cold War narrative. In the anthology marking the 50 years' anniversary of the creation of HQ BALTAP in Karup, Sweden was totally absent in the narratives of the former Commanders of the development of BALTAP during their time.<sup>18</sup> In this anniversary publication the Post-Cold War BALTAP Commander, Kjeld K.G. Hillingsø, outlined the threat against BALTAP in his article without addressing the geostrategic role of Sweden for the defence of the area. The same became the case in Hillingsø's 2004 book on the Cold War threat against Denmark: Sweden would neither be involved in the initial Warsaw Treaty Organization offensives in the contemporary threat perceptions nor in what he and others had found by 2004.<sup>19</sup> Thus the lack of Danish worry and interest for the eastern Swedish flank was perfectly logical.

To sum up, it was not seen as totally inconceivable that southern Sweden might be included in a Soviet operation to gain control of the Sound, but otherwise the country would only figure as a possible follow-up objective as had been the case following German control of Denmark on 9 April 1940. There was no perception that southern Sweden might be taken for use as a springboard against Denmark ... or southern Norway.

Otherwise the official Danish Cold War history by DIIS only included Sweden by accepting the theory that senior Swedish naval officers had conspired in the early 1980s with the U.S. and United Kingdom against the official neutrality line of their government.<sup>20</sup> In a relapse to political neutrality, the leading Danish official historians adopted the conspiratorial source reading of Ola Tunander.<sup>21</sup>

As a reaction to the official Danish Cold War history by DRIS, the historian Bent Jensen led a research project to counter what he saw as an appeasing whitewash of the collaboration by the anti-democratic Left with the Soviet Union. To Jensen the domestic Cold War struggle was first and foremost an ideological confrontation between good and evil. That view led to the massive counter-narrative with the title *Wolves, Sheep and Guardians. The Cold War in Denmark 1945–1991* published in 2014. It focused in the Soviet led clandestine and open campaign to undermine Denmark's attachment to NATO and its support in the country. His was a therefore detailed story of agents and subversion as well as of "useful idiots" and the failure to authorise a proper "psychological defence" against the challenge.<sup>22</sup>

With Bent Jensen's focus on the domestic ideological struggle, it is natural that the time and space he spends on military threats is very limited. However, as the Danish ever weakening solidarity towards the Alliance was mirrored in the country's defence policy, he applies the far more robust Swedish example to criticise his own, half- and weak hearted country. The following quote is part of a chapter discussing the geostrategic situation and is repeated in his conclusion:

That it isn't impossible for a small country to develop a credible military defence was illustrated by Sweden during the Cold War. In spite of its neutrality, the country maintained a credible defence ... The problem in Denmark was basically the lack of Alliance solidarity, which deepened during the Cold War.



By the 1980s the responsible leadership of the Social-Democratic Party saw NATO as a necessary evil, a sort of assurance contract where it was important to keep the assurance premium to the common defence as low as possible without regard what that meant for the premium of the Allies.<sup>23</sup>

What is important here is Bent Jensen's view of the Swedish Cold War military defence as "credible".

### As remembered by other actor-witnesses

General Jørgen Lyng served as the Chief of Defence Staff from 1985 to 1989 and continued as Chief of Defence until 1996. As a young staff officer, he had served at the Defence Staff as a plans- and policy desk officer in 1968–74 and as head of a plans- and policy section 1977–82. At the end of his service, Lyng developed a close personal and working relationship with general Bengt Gustafsson, the Swedish Chief of Defence from 1986 to 1994.

In 2008 Lyng finished his detailed service memoirs for the years 1985–96 for the Chapter of the Royal Danish Orders of Knighthood. Sweden's strategic role is only discussed in one place of the roughly 600 memoir pages. It happens in a text that deals with the invasion threat against Zealand. In the early 1990s he and Bengt Gustafsson had had an extended discussion during a conference in Vienna of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) forces' possibilities against Zealand and South Sweden. In the Swedish general's firm opinion, the WTO's offensive against South Norway in the 1980s would

be conducted via South Sweden. Lyng had "... insisted as strongly that the resulting dispersion of the invaders forces and the making of Sweden into an active opponent was unrealistic considering the available wto forces."

A couple of years later Gustafsson had written Lyng that he had now been convinced that the wto lacked the required forces.<sup>24</sup> However, the Swedish general continued his search, and by 2010 he ended quoting the view that the wto "strategic assault" against the Danish Straits and Northern Scandinavia would include "violating Swedish and Finnish territory by land forces. For a long period ten divisions were earmarked for this option".<sup>25</sup> Actually, the views of the two generals are compatible if we see the invasion of Sweden as conditional and related to a phase after the initial operations of the war. Gustafsson concludes that during most of the Cold War Sweden would have been able to maintain its neutrality if the Soviet Union would have succeeded in its planned operations against Denmark and Norway and thereby surrounded Sweden as Germany had done in April 1940.<sup>26</sup> I would add that this would only have been possible if Sweden had tolerated the forward Soviet fighter anti-cruise missile patrols in Swedish airspace operating from the Soviet fighter bases in the western part of the Baltic Soviet Republics.<sup>27</sup>

In the interview with Jørgen Lyng conducted to prepare for this article, he added to what he had written in the memoirs. He had always been confident of the Swedish ability and will to defend her neutrality and territory, and he did not think that the wto had enough forces to attack NATO and Sweden at the same time. He had plenty of problems of his own and saw

little reason to consider those of others such as the Swedes. Nobody could know whether Sweden would leave neutrality and join the West if not invaded. He had no knowledge then of Swedish co-operation with NATO or other NATO members than Denmark and Norway and saw no reason to seek such knowledge. He was determined to limit knowledge of the Danish-Swedish war coordination to those directly responsible. He also expected that any NATO-Swedish military co-operation in war would be hampered by a high risk of friction due to differences in doctrine and procedures.<sup>28</sup>

The interview with General Lyng was followed by one with Lieutenant-General Kjeld G.H. Hillingsø, who served as head of the Defence Staff planning department from 1986 onwards. Hillingsø had expected that Sweden would join the West if attacked, and remembered that it was estimated that her defence would be able to contain the attack for at least six days. This was long enough for immediate BALTAP area defence needs, considering the Danish level of force endurance and resilience in case of a general WTO offensive. At the time he had no knowledge of the Danish intelligence and defence co-operation with Sweden. His impression of the regular Swedish Armed forces was that they were well-equipped and had a high professional level at unit and basic formation, meaning brigade level. However, the Swedish staff officers later proved limited in understanding of inter-service co-operation and were hampered by their lack of the type of peer pressure that Danish officers had been exposed to through decades of practical co-operation experience in NATO higher tactical and operational level headquarters and exercises.<sup>29</sup>

### The secret bilateral co-operation

As a final element I shall focus on the naval and air cooperation in and across the Sound. Unfortunately, we lack a study similar to Magnus Petersson's about the relations between Norway and Sweden,<sup>30</sup> and my attempts a decade ago failed to get access to the Chief of Defence's personal archive in the Danish Defence Headquarters to search for files from the Danish end of the discreet Danish-Swedish co-operation similar to those used by Petersson.

As Peter Bogason found in his research into the Cold War history of the Danish Navy,<sup>31</sup> he had to rely on the extensive Oral History contributions to Mikael Holmström for his reconstruction of Sweden's geostrategic position and co-operation with her neighbours and the West during the period.<sup>32</sup>

The various elements of secret and direct co-operation – closest between the chiefs of defence staff and navies and most routinely conducted by the defence intelligence services<sup>33</sup> – developed familiarity with the opposite numbers. In some cases, as with Lyng and Gustafsson, the outcome was mutual respect and personal friendship. The most notable such case was between Admiral Sven Egil Thiede,<sup>34</sup> and the Swedish naval officers he worked with as Flag Officer Denmark and later as Chief of Defence, the Swedish Vice Admirals Per Rudberg, Bengt Schuback and Bror Stefenson.

The official 2005 Danish (DIIS) Cold War history's uncritical copying of Ola Tunander's accusations against these three Swedish friends for treacherous actions against their government during the submarine violations made the then terminally ill Thiede depressed and furious, and he encouraged

me to go to Stockholm meet the three old Swedish friend to assist, if possible, and to apologize.<sup>35</sup>

However, nothing indicates that the Danish senior, intelligence and staff officers who participated in the secret co-ordination of defence preparations and exchange of intelligence, had views of Sweden and her security policy and defence capabilities that differed from their less informed colleagues.

## Conclusion

The tacit Danish Cold War view of its Swedish neighbour was that she was well-defended throughout the Cold War, compared to Denmark extremely well defended. This meant that it was most unlikely that a Soviet led operation against Western Europe would include a direct invasion of Sweden, especially because the wto forces of the First Strategic Echelon had to concentrate against its essential objectives to succeed. As long as Sweden was not invaded, it was considered most likely that the country would try to stay neutral as had been the case during the World Wars.

If the expectation was incorrect and Sweden was invaded at the start of a war, her forces were expected to be able to hold at least as long as the German and Danish forces available to COMBALTAP.

There was no recorded Danish knowledge of Swedish co-operation and agreement with the larger NATO Allies or with NATO HQs. If Sweden ended up choosing or being forced to fight as a member of the West that she belonged to, the co-operation was likely to be hampered by friction due to differences in doctrine, professional language and procedures.

### Post-seminar observations

In his dissertation Poul Villaume underlined how the neutralist, bridge-building, non-provocative pre-1949 tradition still influenced Danish views and decisions as alliance member.<sup>36</sup> Seen in this context Sweden's choice of non-alignment must be seen as an advantage, as it removed the Nordic area from the direct confrontation further south. In the shadow of the ever more active Swedish foreign policy Denmark could pursue a more cooperative line in parallel with her general NATO line in defence and security policy.

It is an open question whether Danish politicians realised that this freedom was likely to have been far more limited had Sweden chosen NATO membership and a strict Alliance line.

If this contra-factual idea is followed further, it becomes clear that a Cold War Swedish alliance membership would have changed Denmark's situation in the Alliance in a fundamental way. The geostrategic conditions would have been completely different, with Denmark removed from the confrontation zone in the central Baltic Sea, initially shielded by strong alliance air power based in central and southern Sweden. After the German Bundeswehr had been developed by 1960, Denmark would have become a minor partner and contributor to a German-Swedish dominated defence cooperation in the Southern Baltic Sea. American strategic interests in Greenland would have been the main Danish security policy asset left.

Finland's respect for the restrictions imposed by the Soviet Union due to the peace treaties, made Finnish Air Force chose both Soviet MiG-21 "Fishbed" and Swedish Saab J 35 Draken, the latter provided by a neutral but still "capitalist" country.





The Soviet presence in Finland was a strong political factor during the first decade after the second world war, with the Finnish port Porkkala in Kyrk-

slätt west of Helsinki held by the Soviets until 1956. Since the peace treaties during the war Soviet inspections had to be accepted by Finland (photo).



# The Finnish View

*by Kimmo Rentola*

To understand security issues between Finland and Sweden in the Cold War, we should first take a keen look on the Second World War, in particular on how it ended for Finland. It was then that the basic postwar patterns took shape.

By early 1943, the leaders of Finland realized that they were on the losing side in the war.<sup>1</sup> The main challenge then was how to get out without losing sovereignty and everything vital for national survival. Detachment from the war seemed almost impossible. Stalin could not be trusted, there was every reason to believe that he would incorporate Finland in the Soviet Union if he ever could. On the other side, Hitler had his henchmen watching attentively for any sign of treason, and there were strong German troops in northern Finland and in Estonia. You had to wait for the moment when Germany would become too weak to prevent Finland's exit, but then the

Red Army should still be repelled or tied-up elsewhere.

Perhaps it was a miracle that Finland managed to exit in 1944 under these circumstances. Perhaps God loves the republics, as Guicciardini explained a narrow rescue of his native Florence. But if we look for more temporal reasons for the miracle of 1944, among the seminal ones is certainly Sweden.

First, the mere existence of Sweden. Seen from Moscow, beyond Finland was Sweden and not Germany, which was beyond the more unfortunate western neighbors of the Soviet Union. Stalin was not afraid of Sweden (as he was of Germany), but he saw it in the group of three historical foes, Poland, Sweden, and Turkey,<sup>2</sup> to be taken seriously<sup>3</sup> and the latter two not to be pushed unnecessarily. Stalin tended to see Finland in the Swedish sphere of influence, as it was seen also by the Finns themselves and by responsible Swedes.

Second, Swedish mediation, without which it would have been impossible for Finland to reach such a peace. Leaders of Finland would have preferred western mediation, but the Allies did not want any further disturbances in their relations with Moscow. In 1944 as well as for the whole period of the Cold War, Sweden was the only foreign country in the world for which the security of Finland was a first-rate issue. The Soviets watched suspiciously Sweden's western leanings,<sup>4</sup> but ultimately accepted that Sweden was not merely a western proxy, but also had interests of its own. This was essential for decades to come. In 1944, Swedish diplomatic efforts worked rather well, although there was one serious blunder<sup>5</sup> and the constant Swedish habit of seeing the Finns as a stupid *lillebror* (Little Brother). You could live with that.

Third, Sweden's practical ability and willingness to help Finland. In the Winter War, the aid had been arms, ammunition and even volunteers,<sup>6</sup> but in 1944 it was humanitarian and financial. After the armistice, immediately before Finland had to wage war against the Germans in northern Finland, Sweden agreed to receive the whole civilian population of Lapland as refugees – a generous act that saved thousands of lives. A little later, Swedish loans and raw materials created the basis of Finland's ability to pay the war reparations demanded by the Soviets. In addition, in 1944 Sweden received a significant amount of personnel and materials of the Finnish military intelligence, in particular signals intelligence, and some officers continued their careers in Swedish service.<sup>7</sup> This unofficial and invisible connection with Finland probably had slight effect on mutual views about each other's capabilities and intentions, as well as those of the Soviets.

After the war, the Soviets tried various ways to limit Finland's contacts with and dependence on Sweden. The huge Porkkala military base on the western side of Helsinki was, among others things, a reminder that the Soviets were now in-between and able to cut main sea and rail routes to Stockholm at will. The Soviets had abandoned their earlier idea of a base on Åland Islands, which would have provoked Stockholm in a most serious way, but even Porkkala caused deep Swedish depression, considered exaggerated by the British foreign secretary Anthony Eden.<sup>8</sup>

In June 1950, ten days before the outbreak of the Korean War, Prime Minister Kekkonen visited Moscow to sign a five-year trade agreement. Stalin said that the Finns should

produce steel themselves instead of importing it from Sweden, because in case of war the borders would be closed. "Foreign steel is blunt steel", he said.<sup>9</sup> True to his assumed name, Stalin had stressed domestic steel production on both previous occasions (March 1946, April 1948) when he received Finnish government delegations after the war. In the 1950s, big steel plants were built up in northern Finland.

In March 1947, the Soviets complained about Prime Minister Tage Erlander's unofficial visit to Helsinki. President Paasikivi explained the situation to Erlander: for the sake of caution Finland would not participate in Nordic foreign ministers' meeting in April, but that did not mean taking distance from the Nordics. On the contrary, he said, Nordic cooperation was now much more important than it was before the war and Finland would definitively stick to it.<sup>10</sup>

For the Soviets at that time, Nordic cooperation was a Swedish vehicle to draw Finland further away from Moscow's reach. The Finnish aim to stay out of big power contradictions – a shy hint to neutrality, made by Paasikivi in July 1947 when he decided to reject the Marshall Aid – was in Soviet eyes only maneuvering designed for undermining the friendship with the Soviets and for paving the way for Western influence.<sup>11</sup> Paasikivi saw (speaking with Yrjö Leino, minister of the interior, a communist) the Soviet negative attitude to Nordic security cooperation as counter-productive stupidity, since it would only push the Scandinavians to seek western support.<sup>12</sup>

In this atmosphere, cautious Paasikivi did not see much latitude for close cooperation with Sweden. It is clear that Sweden enjoyed enormous goodwill among the Finns,<sup>13</sup> and

non-communist politicians were predominantly nordists, but it was prudent to take negative Soviet attitudes into account. Therefore, Finland remained outside the Nordic Council when it was founded in 1952. In the opinion of the Soviet envoy, that was “a logical consequence” of the 1948 security treaty between Finland and the Soviet Union.<sup>14</sup> The treaty forbade participation in alliances against the other contracting party.

It seems that on behalf of the social democratic government (1948–50) it was – orally and in secret – promised to the Swedes that in case of war the Red Army would not be granted free passage through Finland to the Swedish border. On the contrary, stiff resistance would be offered.<sup>15</sup> Such sentences are not to be found in Finnish written sources. That does not mean they were not said, but president Paasikivi and the next prime minister Kekkonen probably did not say that much.<sup>16</sup> In Finland, the neutrality of Sweden was welcomed perhaps warmer than anywhere else, since it undoubtedly made Finland’s position easier. It was said then and afterwards that the Swedish decision to stay outside NATO was influenced by concern about Finland.

Even if Sweden opted out of NATO primarily because it was able to get western aid without alliance, there was still a difference between being an ally and not being, as was clear in the field of intelligence. Swedish cooperation with the West was mainly in signals intelligence, whereas the Norwegians organized human reconnaissance deep into Soviet territory, recruiting (by American money) former Finnish soldiers who had been there during the war and were able to do the deed. This was a serious source of irritation for the Soviets, and the

situation would have been much worse for Finland, had also the Swedes been involved.

At the new year of 1952, the Soviets began to change their attitude to Nordic neutrality and security cooperation, now seeing the error of their earlier views. This was connected with the preparations of the famous Stalin note on Germany. A Soviet diplomat in Stockholm speculated about a Nordic defence alliance with Finland among members. Paasikivi and Kekkonen were eager to use this; the usually cautious president thought that such an alliance would be “a good thing. It would be good not only for us, also for the West bloc and the East bloc it would be good to have here in Norden a relatively large neutral area [...] But it is difficult to get Denmark and Norway out of Atlantic alliance now when they have joined it.” Prime minister Erlander agreed, in straightforward terms, by calling the idea of Denmark and Norway abandoning NATO “wishful thinking”.<sup>17</sup> Despite that, more active Finnish attitude to neutrality created more solid common ground for the two neighbors. Erlander saw how “Kekkonen tinade upp som jag aldrig sett honom förr [thawed as never before]”.<sup>18</sup>

The Stalin note withered away, but then the Khrushchev's death changed the situation.

Travelling to Stalin's funeral, Kekkonen sounded an important opening with his KGB handler. No longer seeing the Finnish SDP purely as the American party, he now saw neutralist tendencies in Scandinavia bringing even social democratic leaders and government ministers to support the foreign policy of Paasikivi and Kekkonen himself. Kekkonen thus tried to seduce the Soviets to support neutralist tenden-

cies in Scandinavian social democratic parties, a welcome idea in post-Stalin atmosphere. Typically, Kekkonen presented an idea useful for the Soviets, with a silent collateral effect, strengthening the position of Finland.

Soviet diplomats began to interpret Finnish foreign policy in the light of the Swedish one. Former envoy to Helsinki, A.N. Abramov, drafted an assessment of the "Paasikivi-Kekkonen political course", seen reflecting "the interests of that part of the Finnish bourgeoisie, which is oriented towards the West, but takes clearly into account the real circumstances developed after the war, does not hope for a Finnish participation in new war adventures and is interested in trade with the Soviet Union. Therefore, this part of the Finnish governing circles is zigzagging and forced to support more or less normal relations with the Soviet Union. It [this group] is interested in Scandinavian neutrality, but does not want to spoil relations with the NATO member countries." As Abramov saw it, Sweden had not joined the western bloc so that the Soviet Union would not occupy Finland, but on the other hand, heavy Soviet pressure on Finland would immediately move Sweden to the West.<sup>19</sup>

On higher level in Moscow, the Paasikivi-Kekkonen line was seen as an attempt of the realist part of Finnish bourgeoisie "to secure for Finland the option, in case of a new war in Europe, to stay out of that war in a similar way the Swedish bourgeoisie did during the two world wars." By stressing the Swedish model of neutrality, Finnish leaders tried to avoid continuous development of Finnish-Soviet relations, and to limit them in the setting already achieved.<sup>20</sup>

These Soviet memos reflect rather well the thinking of the Finnish foreign policy leaders, who avoided saying things like this openly. This they had certainly learnt. When the Norwegian-Swedish project to renew the harbor in Trondheim and to build a railway to Sweden was actual, Yuri Bakey (KGB) asked Kekkonen's intimate friend, a female journalist, what would the position of Finland be in case of war between the Soviets and the West and warfare in northern Scandinavia. In case of a Soviet attack, Kekkonen hoped, according to this report, that it would pass through Finnish Lapland (at that time a military vacuum) as quickly as possible, and it would be natural that also Sweden would grant passage as they did for the Germans during the last war.<sup>21</sup> Despite these soothing words, Finland soon began, with Kekkonen's participation, efforts to build up northern defense, to restrain foreign plans to use the area.

When the Soviet Union asked for Finland's support in their note on the Trondheim project, President Paasikivi described to the government his basic reflections on correct Finnish attitude to the foreign policy of Sweden. According to him, it was not advantageous "to stress that the independence of Finland depends on the neutrality of Sweden." Of course, it was good that this was Swedish policy, but at decisive moments of survival, "Sweden would not let the cause of Finland have an effect on their decisions. *Sauve qui peut*. Even if Sweden would change its policy, we should get along." Sweden should not be asked to follow any policy because of Finland. "The government of Sweden knows what we think and that we consider the present Swedish policy as good for us. That is enough."<sup>22</sup> Sweden was believed to be at its best for Finland when it was



not asked for anything – and this was constant. If asked, the Swedes might develop doubts. Another interesting and constant aspect here is the Finnish leaders' lack of concern about Sweden's defensive cooperation with the West, which they certainly smelled in the Trondheim project. Not to say anything about it was considered the wisest course of action.

The thaw period brought some relief in Soviet attitudes to Finland's Nordic cooperation. To support favored candidates in the presidential elections, the Soviets returned the Porkkala military base and dropped their opposition to Finland's membership in the Nordic Council. At the same time, Finland became member of the United Nations, which opened a new venue for Nordic cooperation. Astonishingly, if we recall the tradition of caution, Finland participated already in 1956 in the UN peacekeeping operation at far-away Suez, in connection of which Finland began to take part in Nordic defense ministers' meetings whenever peacekeeping was dealt with.<sup>23</sup> As often, a small looking step had wide implications.

Finland's political and military leadership saw the situation to allow strengthening of defense in Lapland.<sup>24</sup> For comprehensive views, a new defense council was founded and began meetings in early 1958, presided by the Prime Minister. President Kekkonen, however, held the view taken by his predecessor Paasikivi: the foreign political position of the country did not allow extension of defense preparations. Various assessments were discussed. In a general review of Finland's defense issues, it was said that Finland and Sweden were situated in a border zone of spheres of influence, but on the flank of the decisive area. The main threats were: 1) airline activities over

the territory, 2) pressure for passage through Lapland and 3) Sweden's possible joining with the West, which would force Finland to defend western border to avoid the Soviets coming to take care of it.<sup>25</sup>

By 1959, the main task was defined as creation of real defense capability to protect the neutrality, as it was expressed. In 1961, Finland even considered purchasing Draken from Sweden, but the financial circumstances were not yet ripe. A bit cheaper, psychological defense model was copied from the Swedish one. The increasing closeness with the Swedes is demonstrated by the fact that immediately after the general staff got information about the Soviet note to Finland, already during the same afternoon a leading lieutenant colonel of the intelligence department was sent to Stockholm to consult the situation with his colleagues. This was considered necessary to maintain full Swedish confidence. From early 1960s, contacts and visits with Sweden were regular on all key branches.

So, things began going more or less smoothly and regularly, and Sweden was certainly the most confidential and comprehensive (and in many issues, the only) security companion for Finland. Swedish neutrality and the Finnish aim to neutrality seemed to fit well together.

However, by the end of 1960s, a complicated situation developed between the two neutralities. The main cause was the Vietnam War. As you know, Sweden and in particular the new prime minister Olof Palme criticized the U.S. policies and warfare rather heavily. Finland was much more cautious and diplomatic, mainly to avoid questions about why the Soviet Union was not criticized as heavily for the occupation of Czecho-

slovakia and their other bad deeds. This led to consequences in Washington. For the first (and last) time during the Cold War, the U.S. and in particular the new Nixon-Kissinger administration began to prefer Finland to Sweden and praise the Finnish neutrality as a genuine one.<sup>26</sup> Kekkonen was invited to Washington for the first time in nine years and given high-profile treatment.<sup>27</sup> (On a more silent level, there was no great disturbance in U.S. security cooperation with Swedish authorities.)

The Washington warmth arose Soviet suspicions against Finland, probably strengthened by Finnish military plans and preparations to prevent a coup-like surprise attack, which was a new fear after the occupation of Czechoslovakia. Also, the Nordek project for closer economic cooperation played its role. In addition to these threats, the Soviets also saw opportunities, a chance to introduce elements of Swedish anti-US and anti-imperialist rhetoric in Finnish foreign policy. This situation was very much the background of the silent crisis between Finland and the Soviet Union in 1970–71. After that the Soviets decided it was not so clever to endanger everything they already had in Finland by any swift moves.

When these pressures were almost over, in 1973 the Swedish intelligence operations against the Soviet Union from the territory and waters of Finland and using Finnish contacts became generally known. The Swedes tried to solve the problem by denial and by evident lies, which irritated Kekkonen and others, used as they were to how the Norwegian took care of similar cases since the 1950s.

By mid-1970s, these pressures were over and the relations continued smoothly, in part on the basis of the CSCE process.

Norwegian exceptions were often due to the climate. Sweden was a major supplier and delivered for instance the Volvo "Laplander", the backbone also in the vast Swedish army during the cold war.





The most advanced Swedish coastal artillery – ERSTA – was exported also to Norway. With the staff in nuclear shelters the ERSTA could, always in series of three cannon, fire rounds every second with high precision. Meløyvær fort on Krøttøa, one of the Norwegian ERSTA, is kept as a museum.



# The Norwegian View

*by Tor Egil Walter*

## Sources, method and disposition

This paper<sup>1</sup> is based on the available Swedish and Norwegian research literature, to which I have added views based on my own working experience from the mid-1980s until today. In this period, I had the opportunity to follow the development in military structure in both Norway and Sweden, as well as to participate in interesting discussions of alternative future conceptual solutions at a tactical, operational and strategic level.

During my engagements within the Swedish and Norwegian staff colleges, the Nordic (Defence Staff and Ministry of Defence) cooperation bodies, and within the environments of Oslo Military Society and the Royal Swedish Academy of Naval Sciences, I have discussed these matters in details, both with colleagues, fellow lecturers and students. This, of course, makes a part of the sources more diffuse than desirable, and is

challenging in an academic reliability perspective. However, by providing a new angle, this might boost more investigations and research in this interesting field.

To better understand the Norwegian view on the Swedish Security Policy, Strategy and defence standards, it is important to recognize the level of relevant military understanding and knowledge in the Norwegian defence sector at that time. To make a proper comparison, the best common denominator is made by a general, brief assessment of the standard of the political and administrative leadership and the quality and relevance at the requested levels.

This gives an acceptable background to answer the three given questions regarding the “military Sweden”:

1. Security Policy: How was Sweden’s neutrality regarded in your country?
2. Strategy: How was Sweden viewed in your country’s strategic thinking?
3. Military Capacity: How was Sweden’s defence capability judged in your country?

In addition, this might give background to determine whether or not there are any “hidden agendas” behind the military bi-lateral understanding and cooperation. Did the NOR-SWE cooperation serve as an alibi and as a factor in intra/inter-service rivalry to preserve obviously obsolete structure elements on the expense of more relevant units? I will briefly investigate this in the coast artillery and also the stationary army structures of both countries at this time.

## Security-, Defence Policy and structural development in Norway during the Cold War

While the official Norwegian Security Policy was fairly “in line” with NATO and the U.S. during the Cold War, the Norwegian Defence Policy and structures differed quite significantly from the “mainstream” in the Alliance.

Norway was a member of the NATO-alliance since its origin in 1949. Nevertheless, at that time, Norway’s military experience was more similar to Sweden’s, despite the fact that the exile Norwegian government, the navy and the air force had participated on the Allied side ever since 1940, together with the majority of the big Norwegian merchant fleet.

The first Parliamentarian (the Bratteli) defence commission conclusions of 1950 were strongly influenced by the pre-war thinking. In general, the Norwegian people at that time included mainstream politicians and military commanders were still living in some kind of non-alliance-“prolonged neutrality” modus similar to the 1930s. Most of the commission’s conceptual work was made during the times prior to the NATO accession. To design forces for “expeditionary warfare” was out of question. Security Policy still was suffering from the statement to avoid any conflict by the Norwegian Foreign Minister of 1905<sup>2</sup>, strongly inspired by the Swedish “1812 years’ foreign policy,” founded by Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte.

The process of the NATO accession was considered as a “coup” from the “Anglo-Saxon minded” right flank elite within the Norwegian Labour Party, leaving the masses quite untouched in their traditional way of thinking, and making the growth of the “Norwegian peculiarities” within NATO



possible, and necessary in a political context. The “no basing” of foreign troops and nuclear weapons during peacetime, restrictions on allied training in Finnmark and a few strange, or rather peculiar footnotes, were internal-political answers to that.

## Defence structures

### *The build-up of defence forces after WWII*

After the end of WWII, the major goal for the government was to rebuild the civilian society, and this entailed in strict prioritization between the sectors, the defence sector was no exception.

As Gullow Gjeseth describes in his works, the Norwegian defence forces should only be considered as instruments “of last resort”, only available when the state was severely threatened or attacked.<sup>3</sup> This concept strongly needed an enemy to get funding and survive. This is possibly the main reason why the Cold War’s invasion defence concept and structure survived in Norway until 2001–02, more than ten years after the dismantling of the Soviet Union. According to my assessment, this late change is the most visible symptom showing the low quality of the entire Norwegian defence sector at that time. The parallel and similar slowness in transformation in Sweden in the 1990s is another interesting observation.

In particular the Land force structure was unexplainable in the context of Norway as allied with the two strongest maritime powers of the world. The structure and planning, however, was more explainable as contingencies for a neutral state, nevertheless attacked by a great power, on the condition

of some support being given from other great powers. The foremost example was the lack of any contingencies for of the participation in the collective defence of Denmark and the Baltic approaches; assessed to be the most effective way to break the attack power from the Soviet Union before arriving in Southern Norway, according to Gjeseth. On my own I will add that the U.S. and U.K. also were the two major Air-Force powers of the world.

The scope and organisation of the Norwegian land forces and the interlinked operational planning, more or less, survived without any substantial changes from the Bratteli Commission until the next millennium<sup>4</sup>.

A very substantial part of the re-establishment of the defence forces in Norway was funded by U.S. Military Aid, supplemented by NATO Infrastructure funds. A full-fledged Norwegian funding for any new structures was not done until the mid-1970s.

Gullow Gjeseth describes the effect of this aid between 1950 and 1968 on the Norwegian armed forces. In particular, the land forces were able to preserve a huge, obsolete organisation and old concept. The needed development in order to make the military instruments relevant; by creating better trained and equipped smaller forces similar to the leading nations in NATO, was not carried out.<sup>5</sup> The aid created an opportunity to postpone unpleasant decisions, and that in turn encouraged the organisational stasis. This also allowed the military organisation to expand so much that the nation lacked the means to fund future renewal programmes after the aid was stopped<sup>6</sup>.

The raise in defence budgets and the U.S. Military foreign aid made the anomalies invisible to the public during the entire period. In addition, it supported the establishment and development of unobtainable high ambitions. This negative result still causes trouble for defence planning in Norway, by the struggle to establish a balance between ambitions and structure, but even more evident: the imbalance between running costs and investments.<sup>7</sup>

The leadership above the service level were weak to non-existing before 1970, and still weak after the 1970 reform, despite a new DEFHQ and two “not really joint” operational commands. This did not support a seamless defence structure development supporting joint operations and interacting systems at all. In reality, the three services were on their own for the entire Cold War, with their own communication systems<sup>8</sup>, procurement processes, material organizations, and so on. Another odd factor, not enhancing the development, was a very special Human Resource Management with military ranks consisting of only officers<sup>9</sup>.

The three services developed in different directions without any real supreme advisory or strong military leadership. This split provided a poor platform for joint operations, counteracted force multipliers and undermined necessary links between the overall tasks and the instruments needed to maintain relevant military effect.

The strong focus on non-military matters made the structure less relevant for the war that never occurred, as the political governance of different colours did not make the optimal arrangements in order to get an as effective organization as possible<sup>10</sup>.

As the presence of military units was politically assessed to be a central part of the Norwegian decentralized concept and regional policy, this supported a scattered basing “where no one would think anyone would live”.

Keeping the military sector scattered in different, not necessarily interacting parts, led to fuelling the “turf wars” in order to keep it as a main sector for political horse-trades. This, on the contrary, didn’t really enhance the operational value, as the domestic political function was as important as the military usefulness during the entire period.

The shape of Norway makes the task to defend “all Norway” difficult to pursue. Due to this, the defence planning needed a set of pre-requisites to obtain some degree of credibility. The main problem in the operational planning was the lack of contingencies needed if the pre-requisites failed. The defence should be as “defensive” as possible. This underlined the use of light forces, without the needed mass of heavy capacities, real modern communication and force-multipliers.

### *The Army*

The senior service in Norway has always been the army<sup>11</sup>, always with a defensive approach, and very seldom operating outside the country since the founding in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Most army officers back in service in 1945 had either been pows in Germany, passive in Norway or with the Police troops in Sweden.

The Norwegian exile army in U.K. was quite small, even when compared to the two other services, and more focused on special operations (sof) than regular army activities.

Gjeseth also underlines that the army did not only meet military aims, but also was assumed to take the biggest burdens for serving the civilian society, described above<sup>12</sup>.

Another strange development within the Norwegian army was the lack of professional forces. While Denmark as an example only had 63 % reserves in their wartime army structure, Norway had 93 %; Sweden had 92 %<sup>13</sup> during the same period.

Nevertheless, the main difference to Sweden was the Norwegian status of peacetime army as a standing force with high readiness, required by the NATO regulations. This was a great disadvantage, as it prevented the making of mobilization units trained as battalions during the compulsory military service like in Sweden and Denmark. The consequence of this would have affected the mobilization of the units in a decisive negative direction compared with the Nordic neighbours. The total lack of standing personnel and a great part of badly trained and lightly equipped forces was the Norwegian mobilization army's mantra. In other words, the Norwegian Army was a kind of a hybrid solution between NATO's two categories of army forces; standing forces and reserve forces<sup>14</sup>. On my own, I will characterize this solution to be more like a bastard than a hybrid, – a peculiar mix between reserve units and a militia, with unknown, but certainly not very high utility benefits.

#### *The navy and the air force*

In 1945, the Norwegian navy and air force-services were small, but through seamless participation in all kinds of war activities with the British forces based in U.K. and abroad, including

equipment, tactics and educational system, they had gained war experience. Naturally, this was also the basis for post war activities in Norway.

The good news for the air force (and army, and parallel bad news for the navy) after NATO accession in 1949, was created by the alliance as a natural consequence of having the two biggest naval powers as members; to prioritize the development of land- and air forces. As the Soviet block was quite weak on the maritime arena, the allied navies were more than strong enough to counter the small threat anyway. However, this picture changed quite drastically during the early 1960s.

### *The air force*

The air force adapted further links to the U.S., and was the service with the best operational and technical development during the 1950s and further on.

The air force received the largest proportion of arms aid, and counted in 1954 more than 200 combat aircrafts. At the same time airports were built, as well as early warning systems and other infrastructure<sup>15</sup>. Modern fighter jets were transferred from the U.S. through Military Foreign Aid<sup>16</sup> and construction of military airfields and the NADGE air surveillance and control network and other C2 infrastructure projects were partly funded by NATO.

The air force (including ground based air defence, all helicopters in the defence forces, maritime air patrol and air transport) advanced through the Cold War to be the most developed, military relevant and interoperable service. The main motivator for making a good score, was the alliance-

integrated air defence system (NADGE, QRA and Air Defence) under NATO control in peacetime, with high readiness and unscheduled readiness tests (TACEVAL<sup>17</sup>).

The air defence<sup>18</sup> was organized similar to the army and coast artillery, with most units on mobilization basis.

### *The navy*

The navy of UK from WWII's heritage was aging into obsolescence during the 1950s<sup>19</sup>. Due to the NATO prioritizing the two other services, the Norwegian navy received less arms aid in the 1950s than the other branches. This changed, however, with the major fleet expansion programme of the 1960s, of which 50 percent was funded by the U.S.<sup>20</sup>

The "Fleet plan of 1960"<sup>21</sup> gave the navy a substantial number of smaller vessels, permanently operated and manned<sup>22</sup>. In the coast artillery, quite extensive modernization plans were carried out in the 1960s, -70s and -90s. However, the main tasks remained at a quite simple level, as the semi static anti-invasion concept and limited escort-tasks were prioritized.

One demand from the U.S. to support Norway in this way was to keep the fleet operational and manned. Manning and running a quite substantial number of vessels was a big task for the small Norwegian navy, and represented a farewell to the mobilization concept of the fleet as well.

On one hand, this created a significantly better readiness, on the other hand, the "overstretch" of a small navy's manpower enhanced the focus on training and operating the fleet "as is." All other important businesses, as development of

tactics, planning for fleet renewing and even a closer operation with allied navies, suffered from this.

The navy also had another component, the coast artillery (about 40 fortresses after mobilization), and regional staffs<sup>23</sup>. The concept and mainly mobilization status of this static and linear organization was similar to the army, and the effect of this structure was considered as crucial to the army's operating concept in order to gain enough time for meeting a possible attack.

### Material cooperation between Norway and Sweden during the Cold War<sup>24</sup>

As a result of the termination of military foreign aid to Norway in the 1960s, the Norwegian and Swedish governments developed a set of framework agreements from 1969 to 1988 and on. During the 1980s, the cooperation developed to 13 project-agreements and 17 areas of contact; including armour- and anti-armour systems, ammunition, tracked vehicles, anti-surface sea missiles, coast artillery, torpedoes, fast patrol boats and maintenance of aircrafts. The Swedish assessment of this cooperation, which was balancing at the edge of what a neutral state could allow according to the legal experts in the Swedish MFA, was beneficial for both parts. Norway got technological insight and partial support to industrial development, Sweden got a bigger market and cheaper military equipment. In addition, Sweden also got access to some sensitive Western technology, unavailable through other channels. Without this set of agreements, my assessment is that the NORDEFECO cooperation would have been impossible today.



In addition to the U.S. military aid, Sweden was one of the main contributors to the Norwegian procurement mostly from the 1960s and on. The land equipment included several thousand field vehicles and trucks of different types, several thousand tracked snowmobiles, more than one hundred cv 90 infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) from the 1990s, a relatively huge number of anti-aircraft missiles RBS 70 and Giraffe radars from the late 1980s and on, and numerous 84 mm recoilless guns "Carl Gustav", as well as ammunition. Moreover, a common development project for a new counter-artillery radar system ARTHUR developed and produced partly in Norway and Sweden, (delivered from late 1990s). The Swedish battle tank S-103 was tested in Norway as the second candidate before the choice of the German Leopard I was made in the late 1960s.

The Navy's procurements were also substantial, including all 40 mm AA-guns and (new) 3" turreted, automatic naval guns for the vessels of the "Fleet plan of 1960." Further, 57 mm guns for the coast guard, and three generations wire-controlled and homing heavy torpedoes for the torpedo boats and submarines. For the Oslo-class frigates; the steam turbines, electro-optical sights, and air surveillance radars from the mid-1960s and on. IP for producing new submarine batteries in the 1960s was also transferred. The Swedish submarine of Hajen class was considered as one of three candidates to the submarine part of the fleet plan of 1960. (The others were French and the winning German U-207 Kobben). For the torpedo-boats, the wire-control systems for the heavy torpedoes and radars in the early 1970s were of Swedish origin.

One of the main areas was the coast artillery. All new guns procured from the 1970s were of Swedish design. This included a substantial number of 75 mm (1970s) and 120 mm (1990s) turreted guns and ammunition, and three generations of fire-control systems from the 1970s to the late 1990s. At the edge of the Cold War, Norway acquired more than 500 RBS 17 (modified “Hellfire”) missiles for the “Light coast missile batteries», and more than a dozen of fast vessels – the “Stridsbåt 90” (“Combat boat 90”), in the late 1990s.

With the U.S. as the main provider to the air force, the air force’s procurement was not as comprehensive as the two other services, but still substantial. It included both classes of (propeller) training planes used after WWII, SAAB Safir and Safari, and a significant number of 40 mm AA guns for the anti-aircraft battalions. The Swedish fighter jet JA 37 Viggen was also evaluated as a potential candidate before the procurement of U.S. F-16.

The Swedish procurement from Norway was much less extensive, but nevertheless quite substantial. The biggest project was the Jägaren class patrol boats based on the Norwegian fast patrol boat concept. All vessels were built and equipped in Norway during the 1970s. This procurement included more than one hundred Penguin MK 11-Missiles from Kongsberg (named RBS 12 in Sweden). High-frequency, lightweight sonars during the traumatic time after “Whisky on the Rocks” in 1981 and on, were also delivered from Norway.

The procurement included a variety of ammunition and communication equipment for the army and mobile units in the coast artillery, mainly mobile radio line equipment, and

electronic switches. Another important project was crypto-equipment to the entire Swedish defence structure.

## The Norwegian view on “the military” Sweden at all levels during the Cold War

### *Research questions*

The outline of this paper is to answer the three questions:

1. Security Policy: How was Sweden’s neutrality regarded in your country?
2. Strategy: How was Sweden viewed in your country’s strategic thinking?
3. Military Capacity: How was Sweden’s defence capability judged in your country?

### *1) The Norwegian view on Sweden’s neutrality*

In general, despite the unwillingness to make the Nordic alliance in the late 1940s, the Norwegian authorities at all levels showed great respect for the Swedish non-alliance and neutrality. The main reasons for not joining the Nordic states in some kind of non-aligned defence alliance were the “lessons learned” from 1940. No cluster of neutral small states could anyway survive “realpolitik,” paving the way for a far better solution: Development of strong military and political ties to the political and ideological closest great powers through an alliance.

Nevertheless, Sweden possessed, in contradiction to Norway in 1940, a strong defence able to defend its own territory. In addition, no intelligence organization was really

needed to realize the implied agreement pointing at The Soviet Union as the only realistic opponent. As the Cold War proceeded, it became increasingly important that Sweden could maintain its neutrality. If this prerequisite did not come true and Sweden was attacked, it was assessed to be of severe influence for Norway after some time. The quite drastic change of the Swedish military position after 1970 was not sufficiently monitored in Norway, and did not get any impact on the actual operational planning.<sup>25</sup> Despite the fact that the relative strength of the entire Swedish defence forces were reduced substantially during the 1970s and 1980s, the common perception of the positive value of the NOR-SWE border was strengthened during the same period among Norwegian military authorities to be like “A Chinese Wall” in the Norwegian operational planning.<sup>26</sup>

There are very few traces of Norwegian doubt regarding the Swedish will and capabilities to keep the neutrality, despite the fact that the Swedish main defence effort was to deny and beat an invasion against South- and Mid-Sweden. This also implied that the “strong” defence efforts in North only would be carried out at full strength as a contingency if the invasion in the most valuable areas were not carried out initially. In my opinion, this was not commonly known in the Norwegian military society.

From my time in the Defence forces, I have only heard one deviating voice with an alternative interpretation of the described Norwegian addiction, based on a paper my source found during a “clearing” of the archives in the Intelligence service in the mid-1990s<sup>27</sup>. This report contained the assess-

ment of the rationale for and value of the so called Kalix line. The author's assessment of this relatively strong fortification complex situated along the Kalix River is quite controversial. According to him, this "open course of action" of defensive forces in static fortifications opens for more offensive possibilities for the potential counterpart. The most dangerous aspect from a Norwegian perspective; two additional attack axes in addition to the road from Kilpisjärvi to Skibotn (from Finland). These are Kiruna-Narvik, and Ritsem-Skjomen, the first along the railroad, and alternatively the intermediate road which was planned at that time. The second by use of roads made available after the development of a net of dams and hydroelectric power stations on both sides of the border.

This report explicitly claims the Kalix line to be a standing invitation to the Soviet Union to use an adequate slice of Swedish territory to get enough communication capacity to carry out a fast attack on Northern Norway, South of the Norwegian main defence line in Troms. The Swedish motivation for doing so was allegedly the Swedish (and Finnish) fear of being the first victims for Russian aggression, without the focus from the Western powers, headed by the U.S. The best insurance to gain U.S. interest and participation would be a *fait à compli* with the Russians on the coastline of Northern Norway.

The Norwegian Security Policies in relationship to the Soviet Union and NATO are traditionally described as deterrence, reassurance, integration and screening. The leverage between deterrence, represented by the membership in NATO, and reassurance; the self-imposed restrictions regarding

nuclear arms and allied basing and training in Finnmark should contribute to an “as good relationship as possible” with the Soviet Union. The relationship with NATO was balanced between as strong integration in NATO’s structures as possible to enhance the Western side and Norway’s own defence capability, and to gain as much freedom of action as possible by tough national management of certain allied capabilities in Norway<sup>28</sup>.

Due to the similarities between Norway and Sweden in terms of threat and which states that could assist after a possible attack from the common threat, Magnus Petersson claims the same pairs of factors also can explain the Swedish Security Policy. The Swedish government acted in a reassuring way with the Soviet Union, the deterrent part was balanced by a strong national defence. The integration was in Sweden’s case not so dedicated as Norway’s efforts. Anyway, Sweden allowed quite a lot to facilitate Western assistance. However, this was very open balanced with the Swedish Security Policy mantra, the nonalignment in peacetime, seeking for neutrality in times of war<sup>29</sup>.

Petersson’s comparison gives a good explanation of the parallel, internal links in both countries, and creates a very good platform for further comparison. My assessment is that the Norwegian authorities accepted the non-alignment and potential neutrality policy partly because it was “politically correct” at the time, i.e. not very offensive, “a particular Nordic way” and quite close to the Norwegian standing. Norway could in my assessment be characterised as a reluctant allied, not far away from the non-allied Sweden, in reality a covert

member of the Western “club,” however more bi-lateral linked to the great actors included proxies than to the collective alliance.

Despite the Norwegian strong acceptance of NATO in the main political parties during the discussed period, it nevertheless was a tricky political issue. The population was split, and the bulk of the parties’ youth organizations, (including the Social Democrats) were opponents to the official Norwegian security policy. This required a careful approach from their mother parties. The acceptance of the “Nordic Balance”- an explanation of the complementarities of the Nordic states’ security policy during the Cold War<sup>30</sup>, and the mutual dynamics could be a useful part of this approach to keep the party members calm. Petersson focuses on the formal status of this balance. Unfortunately, Arne Olav Brundtland’s theory and developments was based on the so called “Note-crisis” between Finland and the Soviet Union in 1961, based on available sources at that time. Recent research has revealed a somewhat more nuanced image of the course of events that does not support the theory equally strongly<sup>31</sup>.

In my opinion, another plausible explanation of the common use of this so-called theory is that this positive focus and common use and the alleged effect both supported the chosen policy internally and in relation to the neighbour states. This was in particular fruitful in the bilateral relations with Sweden, as both governments had a common view on the Nordic area as an operational unity and a wish to stabilize their security policies; assessed to be mutual interlinked anyway.

The core of this assessment is the fact that the Scandinavian Peninsula was an operational unity in a defensive perspective of two small, not interacting military actors. These actors, however, never represented any offensive threat, as they were not allied. Overall, this gave both Sweden's neutrality and Norway's NATO affiliation important, mutual acceptance and important interacting roles at the Security policy level. The main reason for this acceptance is linked to the area's role as a flank. This fact on one hand made it difficult to get guaranteed Allied support for reinforcements in war. On the other hand, this difficulty was a compelling evidence that the main belligerents were more focused on house-holding with their military forces, most useful at the Central front.

As Norway and Sweden were not interlinked military, Scandinavia did not make any substantial threat to the mainly land and air-focused Soviet Union's potential warfare on the main front in the divided Germany. In my opinion, *this strengthens the Swedish marginalization theory as a relatively sustainable doctrine*. If Sweden, on the other hand, had been a NATO-member, the Scandinavian Peninsula would have been a natural part of the Central front, making this doctrine worthless. This would also have forced Finland into a very difficult situation, and probably resulted in Soviet bases even closer to Scandinavia.

Overall, Norway, looked at the Swedish purpose to be neutral as an advantage, as there would be great possibilities that the Soviet Union would respect this, making the "vulnerable back" of Norway more secure, and thus supporting the most important pre-requisite in Norwegian Defence planning



– a safe “Eastern back.” In addition, the neutrality contributed to a reduced tension level between the great powers in Scandinavia, supporting the Norwegian reassurance policy in relation with the Soviet Union.

*2) The Norwegian view on Sweden's role as an important element in the Norwegian strategic thinking*

During the entire Cold War, the main challenge to Norway was to influence NATO to include Norway into the contingencies in the operational planning and to get allied supporting troops to Norway in times of tension. This was not an easy task, as the prioritized area was the German/German internal border and the corresponding Central front. Southern and Northern areas were flanks, as discussed above, and most of the time the South flank was more important than the Northern one<sup>32</sup>.

Norway's efforts to get more focus on the Northern flank also involved Sweden. According to Petersson, Norway tried to upgrade “our” flank in an active way at least until the mid-1950s, by underlining the strategic value of Swedish territory, the strong Swedish defence and not at least the impact this had on the possibilities for organizing a real defence of Norway. As the Norwegian Deputy to NATO, Dag Bryn, put it in February 1952: “She would not fight unless attacked”, but, Bryn continued, “the country will still act as a flank guard for Norway and, to a lesser extent, for Denmark”<sup>33</sup>. However, the Northern flank in NATO's operational planning perspective remained of little importance until the second Cold War around 1980<sup>34</sup>, when the U.S. (naval) “Lehman plan” was developing<sup>35</sup>.

I have already described Sweden's role as a decisive prerequisite for all defence planning in Norway. A quick glance at the map and the military geographic factors make this apparent.

Strong evidence on the defence level was the parallel Norwegian defence plans, based on the prerequisite of the boundary to a truth. This was particularly the case in the North where the Swedish ability to hold territory was crucial to the defence of Northern Norway, at least until the needed build-up of sufficient allied forces were finished. In addition, Magnus Petersson's research fully underlines the fact that Norway did not put any limitation in the cooperation with Sweden, neither in peace nor wartime<sup>36</sup>. Other issues related to this is of course the credibility of the Norwegian defence forces itself, and the level of, or rather lack of knowledge of the real status of the Swedish defence forces and highest prioritized "courses of action". Nevertheless, the Norwegian assessment of Sweden as a fundamental factor in defence planning remained unchanged.

Another indication is my participation in this seminar, as one of several hundred Norwegian officers educated in Sweden after the Second World War<sup>37</sup>, representing a network not visible in any files, but still very active during the entire period. My impression during the time I had positions to evaluate this matter; from 1985 to the end of this époque, is a strong military cooperation with Swedish defence forces and defence industry. This was very often linked to personal relationship, and not necessarily approved by higher echelons. Kjetil Skogrand describes the attitude of officer's serving

abroad in a NATO context as substantial for professional, amicable bonds, as military professional alliances in the alliance<sup>38</sup>. My opinion is that these mechanisms are valid also in the Norwegian-Swedish setting as a professional alliance outside the alliance in reality.

Robert Dalsjö concludes in his work that the military contact decreased considerably as the Cold War passed on<sup>39</sup>. This is not necessarily contradictory to my assessment. What was visible in written sources decreased, but this was at least to a certain extent compensated by the raise in informal contacts on the military level. In my opinion, even Mikael Holmströms research with extensive use of oral sources points in this direction<sup>40</sup>.

The bases for this are firstly, a close to one hundred years in union during a period of high military technological development established a normative setting. Secondly, the Swedish function as “a safe haven” for the Norwegian resistance and refugees of different kinds during WWII. Thirdly, the covert development of regular military forces and secret intelligence bases in Sweden at the same time, giving some kind of non-legislative backing for irregular methods within not very well-defined frames on both sides.

I will give two examples for my own experience as an illustration. Firstly, as desk officer for the Nordic countries at the MOD Security Policy Department, expected to be responsible for all military contacts abroad, we suddenly got the knowledge that a unit from the Army’s Brigade North had participated in a border-crossing exercise with a Swedish unit in the Kiruna area. This happened without the knowledge of the Norwegian MOD or the Minister of Defence. The Swedish

government, however, had given the approval for the exercise. At that time (2005,) the NOR MOD did not have any idea of scale or scope of running activities with Sweden at the service level.

The other example is from Sweden, when I was serving at the National defence college in the late 1990s. I had a close relationship with the Norwegian defence attaché in Stockholm, who had difficulties trying to monitor the Norwegian military activities in Sweden, something that he normally didn't manage. This culminated when he came home from Gotland, very frustrated as he had met the Norwegian CHOD at the island, without any former knowledge. I have been a defence attaché twice in the Baltics, covering three countries, and did never experience this type of incidents. Noteworthy is also that in the 1990s the defence attachés were still linked to the Intelligence service, subordinated to CHOD.

Regarding Norway's role as a military supporter or at least a potential base for military support to Sweden, the picture is not so clear. There are traces of a potential supporting role to Swedish forces in the Army operational plans. However, this is not realistic due to the Norwegian mobilization army's semi static concept, training level, armament, manoeuvrability and general equipment status. After WWII, the Norwegian Army did never operate outside Norway except as occupation forces in Germany until 1952, and in UN Peace supporting missions. The first deployments in a NATO combat framework were in the Balkans during the last part of the 1990s.

However, after 1960 the potential NATO units to reinforce Norway grew to a more substantial level. Initially, NATO air-

power could be an asset for support after allied re-deployment to Norway. According to the operational plans, and dependent on the general situation, a quite substantial support could be available within the COB and Invictus<sup>41</sup> frameworks within some weeks.

A plausible draft of such an operation is the war-gaming at the Swedish Defence College described by Mikael Holmström<sup>42</sup>. Lack of interoperability in terms of communications, control procedures and IFF were compensated by “land-and airspace-management” in terms of dividing the Scandinavian Peninsula in different zones. Allocating the Allied side responsibility for the Northern one, including Swedish and Finnish airspace makes sense, the main tasks, robustness and size of both Swedish and Allied systems taken into consideration<sup>43, 44</sup>.

The allied great powers, headed by U.S., also had considerable respect for the Swedish defence forces, in particular the air force. This view also had a certain contagious effect on Norwegian authorities. During my studies at Militärhögskolan (MHS) 1986–89, we visited the Pentagon in 1989, and the briefer stated that the U.S. had better need for a Sweden as friend outside NATO with a respectable air force; a much better solution than a Sweden inside NATO with a defence spending like Belgium.

The ratification of the bi-lateral agreement between Norway and U.S. on establishing pre-position of one USMC Brigade in Trøndelag in 1981, was probably a milestone in a potential support-perspective. The Norwegian military standing was to pre-position this in Northern Norway, but the decision was in

the areas North of Trondheim<sup>45</sup>. This unit could probably have been the embryo of an allied expeditionary corps to support Sweden in case of a Soviet attack during the last years of the Cold War as well.

*3) The Norwegian judgement of Swedish Defence Capacities during the Cold War*

According to my assessment, and before answering the question explicit, it is necessary to remember the Norwegian side of the coin first. The standing structure in all services apparently gave a good impression and seemed competent. However, the level of doctrinal understanding, strategy and operations in general were not up to date. The ability to look forward and meet the challenges of a modern war was far from good. The mobilization forces standard most likely was close to a catastrophe, fortunately never tested. In contrary to the standing forces, the personnel were ill trained; military competence low to lacking, as the reserves were very seldom trained in relevant units. Logistics would probably not function very well, stocks of spares, arms and ammunition and central part of equipment were low or missing<sup>46</sup>.

There was, however, a bright spot in the armed forces, not at least recognized by the United States; the Intelligence Service. The proximity to the Kola Peninsula gave Norway an advantage as the U.S.' watchdog in this area. The cooperation and in particular the strong influence and funding from U.S. was balanced with a useful cooperation with other intelligence services on the Western side as well, included the Swedish<sup>47</sup>. The reciprocity and mutual need for information was ideal for

exchanging information on Baltic's and Barents' issues<sup>48</sup>. The quality and effectiveness of the Norwegian intelligence service has been appreciated by in particular the U.S. in different ways and are underlined on several occasions<sup>49</sup>.

Compared with Norway, the standard of the Defence forces of Sweden was, despite the shortcomings, probably considerable better.

In my opinion, this view is also supported by the former Swedish Supreme Commander General Bengt Gustafsson's comprehensive studies on the Soviet abilities to attack Scandinavia and in particular what the intentions and possible outcome of this operation could be. His assessments tend against Norway to be a designated war goal, but that depriving Sweden would require the Soviet war plan to fail, due to the strict schedule. According to his interviews, the combating of the Norwegian defence was easier to achieve, and the Soviets had more respect for supporting allied troops<sup>50</sup>.

On my own, I will add that in contrary to Norway, the Swedish systems were interacting and complex, with much redundancy.

The relatively mediocre standards of the Norwegian defence forces may have interacted on the ability for in particular military Norwegian officials to have a critical vision of the Swedish defence sector. However, as the ideas behind and structures and concepts were quite similar, the assessments can tend to be biased in a positive way. One can also suspect that this has been exploited by stakeholders to conserve certain types of military structures by enhancing the cooperation between Norway and Sweden in some areas. The stationary

coast artillery is pointing out as an obvious candidate. The Norwegian coast artillery, unlike the Swedish, was only based on fortifications with no mobile units during the Cold War. The commission of the last new fortress was on the same day as it was decommissioned in 2001, (mothballed directly and demolished after 2007). Major investments of similar type were made in Northern and Mid-Norway in the late 1990s with Swedish equipment. The characteristics of the static coastal defence were, still according to my assessment; a cornerstone in an operational and technological concept of no value, partly able to act against low or non-existing threat, but without effect against new and relevant threats<sup>51</sup>.

The Swedish structure was more flexible, mainly due to the earlier establishing of (land) mobile artillery-, mine- and missile units as well as (sea mobile) amphibious battalions. The Swedish system was less visible obsolesce, as the concept represented a more modern and layered system of interacting systems. The Norwegian concept, however, was one-dimensional and linear.

What make this even worse are the repeated and clear warnings given the Norwegian defence forces for the lack of relevance of this kind of concepts from partners within the alliance. The U.K. abandoned the coast artillery in the late 1940s due to the lessons learned of improvements of air-power, power projection and amphibious assault during WWII. (An example is the invasion of Normandy in 1944.) The U.S. abandoned the concept in the early 1950s.

One urban legend in the defence forces refers to a visit by Field Marshal Montgomery to a coast artillery fortress in



N-Norway in the early 1950s, where he just stated: “They can’t move”<sup>52</sup>. The first CINCNORTH, Admiral Sir Patric Brind, firmly declared in 1951 that coast artillery and field fortifications “Was of little military relevance”<sup>53</sup>. CINCNORTH in 1980, General Peter Whiteley, claimed regarding N-Norway: “Defence in that region based on any sort of linear concept is no longer valid.”<sup>54</sup>

This last remark also hit the mutual important role of fortifications in operational planning in the Swedish and Norwegian armies. Lessons identified during the German Blitzkrieg against the Dutch and French fortifications in May 1940 showed the lack of relevance. Nevertheless, these obsolete concepts survived in Norway and Sweden through the entire Cold War<sup>55</sup>. Also, worth mentioning is that neither great mobilization armies with old and outdated equipment nor insufficient training were good ideas either.

The answer to the raised question is implicit given in the discussion of the former one. During the period, Sweden’s military capacities enjoyed great trust in Norway. Practical evidence of this, in addition to the central part the Swedish defence took in the defence of Norway as well, were the quite substantial acquisitions of Swedish arms and equipment. The understanding and admiration of a small nation like Sweden that even was able to maintain a national aviation and submarine-industry were also important factors. The common Norwegian perception also noted that Swedish equipment and armament were custom designed and suitable for conscript use during harsh conditions in the sub-arctic regions. The relevance of these assessments, however, can be

discussed in perspective of the common sad fate of in particular parts of the navies and the land-components of the Swedish and Norwegian defence forces after the end of the Cold War<sup>56</sup>.

Due to this, I allow myself some reflections whether the Norwegian-Swedish military cooperation on certain military matters could have contributed to the obvious lack of relevance. To some extent, both the sustaining development of a stationary coast artillery in Norway the entire period, and the concept of mobilization land forces of relatively low relevance (as learned in the Balkans after the Cold War), could be linked to this cooperation.

Since Sweden had a large and well-qualified defence industry compared to Norway, it is natural that imports from Sweden were larger than exports. In particular this was the case regarding equipment not provided by anyone else<sup>57</sup>, as coast artillery guns etc. This obviously created a valuable link between in particular the Norwegian coast artillery and the similar structure elements in Sweden, supported by industry interests. The effect on conservation of this obvious obsolete parts of the structure is very likely. The argument of “adapted to Nordic conditions,” is similar to the arguments to keep the odd army structures in Norway, despite NATO’s opposition, and is also interesting in this context. The ties established by acceptance of Swedish concepts and operating the same equipment was also substantial in this addiction. Whether the Swedish opposite structure elements also benefited from this is unclear. However, on the Security and Defence policy levels, this link was probably of some domestic importance as

a benchmark to “NATO standards”. These possible interlinks qualifies in my opinion to be a topic for further research.

Another noteworthy aspect is that the Norwegian media of course registered the Swedish debacle around the submarine-penetration of territorial waters, in particular the time after “Whisky on the rocks” in Karlskrona in 1981. Although the decision to abandon the traditional ASUW capacities of the Swedish Navy was discussed internally in the Norwegian navy, this did not lead to any open discussions on the quality of important Swedish military capabilities in Norway.

One reason for that might be that Norway also had experience from the same kind of incidents. Throughout the entire post-war period, there were lots of alleged submarine observations reported by the public. Despite lots of effort were conducted by the navy and air force, included occasionally use of depth-charges, and reported in media as well, no (public) secure identification of the possible intruders was ever made. A still open question is whether this was more or less continuous operational pattern created by the Northern fleet during the times of German occupation of Norway or not.

However, there can be several reasons for the different internal and public interests for possible submarine violations in Norway and Sweden. The Norwegian coastal waters are vast compared to the possibility to react on this kind of violation. There might also be other factors involved. On one hand, on the covert level, the intelligence service had quite good control. At least regarding the strategic submarines of the Northern fleet, most likely this service kept a sufficient level of control

by use of technical means and information from the network during the entire period. Secondly, there could be reasons not to be too strict on these possible violations, due to the principles of reciprocity between the Soviet Union and NATO<sup>58</sup>. Last, not being a neutral state, possible violation of sovereignty represents no crucial threat to the chosen Security Policy. Norway did not share the fear to be a non-aligned state with an ambition to be neutral, but not the ability to be accepted as trustworthy by the potential belligerents. Norway's strong desire to continue on the same path as Sweden was broken forever in 1940.



In 1967 six MiG-21 "Fishbed" from Kubinka air base outside Moscow visited Uppsala. It was the first Soviet visit of this kind to a western country, with the exception of Finland. The Swedish J 35 Draken were planned to visit Kubinka the year after, but due to the Soviet led invasion of Czechoslovakia it was postponed until 1972.



Sweden had at an early stage of the Cold War naval vessels of almost the same size as the Soviet Union in the Baltic Sea. The Soviet cruiser *Sverdlov* and the Swedish *Göta Lejon*, the largest ship in the Swedish

navy ever, both went to Spithead outside Portsmouth during the coronation of queen Elizabeth II 1953. The journey back to the Baltic Sea turned out an informal race, with a tiny margin won by the Swedes.

# The Soviet View

*by Alexey Komarov*

In the 1920s after World War I and the October Revolution in Russia the geopolitical situation in the Scandinavian-Baltic region changed radically. For Soviet Russia, ravaged by the Civil War, it was important to settle its relations with the new border states that emerged on the Western fringes of the former Russian empire. Relations with the Baltic States and Finland were a priority then, while the Scandinavian countries were at the periphery of Soviet foreign policy interests.

In the 1930s, as the threat of a new war was growing, Moscow's interest to the Nordic countries heightened. A good illustration of Soviet attitude to the security problems at the Scandinavian "bridgehead" and Nordic neutrality in that period is provided by articles in the *Pravda* - the official mouthpiece of the Communist Party's Central Committee. The newspaper regarded the perception that the policy of "neutrality", even if it



was backed by military buildup, could save the relevant countries from aggression, as a grave fallacy.<sup>1</sup>

The article published in *Pravda* after the German invasion of Denmark and Norway stated that “neutrality of a small country that is unable to defend it by real force is nothing but a fiction, an empty illusion”<sup>2</sup>.

After the occupation of Denmark and Norway the Soviet government made an official statement in favor of preserving Sweden’s neutrality.<sup>3</sup> On April 20, 1940 Foreign Commissar Molotov told the Swedish Envoy to the USSR Per Assarsson<sup>4</sup> that “neutrality policy should be implemented consistently and, therefore, should be defended when needed.” Molotov also said that in the existing situation Sweden’s neutrality policy “is the most expedient one.”

Swedish neutrality stance during World War II, however, was not consistent. Up to 1943 the Swedish government pursued a policy of concessions to Nazi Germany. After the Wehrmacht’s defeat in Stalingrad Sweden’s neutrality line, according to some scholars, strengthened and gained consistency, or, according to others, started to pivot in favor of the Allies.<sup>5</sup>

A negative attitude towards neutrality was characteristic for the Stalin period. His own statements show that he regarded neutrality as a kind of free-riding policy that could be implemented only with great powers’ consent<sup>6</sup>.

In a document elaborated in summer of 1944 Vice Foreign Commissar Maxim Litvinov called Sweden’s neutrality in World War II “suspicious.”<sup>7</sup> Aleksandra Kollontai, Soviet Ambassador to Sweden in the war years, working on her



memoirs,<sup>8</sup> made the following telling note: “Swedish neutrality is “not unbiased,” but we need it”<sup>9</sup>.

With the end of World War II, under the influence of wartime experiences that significantly affected Swedish identity, Stockholm’s foreign policy became more active. During the Cold War Sweden repeatedly declared a strict adherence to its foreign policy doctrine, classically formulated by Östen Undén:<sup>10</sup> an alliance-free line in peacetime aimed at preserving neutrality in case of war.

The issues of Nordic neutrality in general and Swedish neutrality in particular became more relevant for Soviet policymakers in 1948–49, when Sweden, Norway and Denmark, on Stockholm’s initiative, actively discussed the plan to form a Scandinavian Defence Alliance on a neutralist basis.<sup>11</sup>

The prevailing opinion at the Soviet Foreign Ministry was – if the Scandinavian defence alliance indeed materializes, it would be tied to the emerging Western bloc. Moscow refrained from stating its position towards the planned alliance on the official level, but in the articles by Soviet journalists and conversations of Soviet diplomatic representatives abroad this idea was criticized.<sup>12</sup> In February 1949, when it became clear that the Scandinavian defence union will not emerge, the Soviet Foreign Ministry’s Fifth European Department<sup>13</sup> in charge of relations with the Nordic countries prepared a short memo on the subject. According to it, in spite of the fact that the Swedish government “continues to declare hypocritically its intention to pursue the policy of neutrality,” if an armed conflict breaks out, the country “will join the bloc of Western powers” without hesitation<sup>14</sup>.

In April 1949 Norway, Denmark and Iceland joined NATO. This started the process of shaping the phenomenon known as the “Nordic balance”, that would determine the character of international relations in the European North for many decades to come.

Though the anti-neutrality campaign in the Soviet press continued, in the Foreign Ministry a more pragmatic attitude was emerging. The signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in April 1949 had changed foreign policy realities. Norway’s and Denmark’s rejection of the Scandinavian defence alliance option in favor of membership in NATO significantly raised the value of the neutrality concept in the system of Soviet foreign policy priorities. The idea of spreading Swedish neutrality to other countries now looked quite attractive, and it turned out that Stockholm’s stance can be used as a positive example.

The international discussion of a Scandinavian defence alliance resumed in the beginning of 1952 when the Finnish newspaper *Maakansa* published on January 23 the so-called “pajama pocket speech” by Finland’s Prime Minister Urho Kekkonen in support of Scandinavian neutrality. The Finnish politician’s initiative was discussed in advance with the Soviet leadership. On January 4, 1952 Kekkonen informed the Soviet Envoy in Finland Viktor Lebedev of his intention to present a plan to unify the Nordic countries “around the idea of neutrality as Finland understands it.”<sup>15</sup> On January 10 instructions were sent to the envoy: to tell the Finnish Prime Minister that he – Viktor Lebedev – supports Kekkonen’s “idea to unify Nordic countries around the concept of neutral-

ity in order to strengthen peace and these countries' national sovereignty"<sup>16</sup>.

In the opinion of the Soviet Foreign Ministry's Scandinavian Department Kekkonen's speech was provoked by a context of "military preparations" started "in Denmark and Norway and the growing U.S. pressure on Sweden to drag it into NATO."<sup>17</sup> Finland's ruling circles were worried by a possibility that these military preparations and pressure on Sweden could make the Soviet Union to raise the question of "establishing military cooperation between the USSR and Finland"<sup>18</sup> in accordance with the Soviet-Finnish Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, signed on April 6, 1948.

According to the summary of Kekkonen's speech in *Pravda*<sup>19</sup>, the Finnish Prime Minister stressed that this military cooperation will take place only in case Finland or the Soviet Union via Finland are subject to an armed attack. As, due to "geography," such an invasion could be carried out only through the territory of a Scandinavian country bordering Finland, Kekkonen said that "Finland's interests would be best served by a real and guaranteed Scandinavian neutrality of the kind Sweden has been pursuing already for a century and a half, because it would eliminate even a theoretical threat of attack against the Soviet Union via Finnish territory"<sup>20</sup>.

The "Pajama pocket speech" attracted the attention of the media and provoked lively discussions in the Nordic countries' political circles. The Swedish press came to a conclusion that the Soviet Union changed the position it held in 1948–49,

and was no more against a Scandinavian defense alliance. The Soviet press took no part in the polemics arising in Scandinavia – it only published several responses to Kekkonen's speech stressing the desirability of Norway and Denmark leaving NATO. For instance, on February 21 *Pravda* published an article with a telling title "Against Scandinavian countries' subordination to American Diktat," which read that "movement against Denmark's and Norway's participation in the aggressive Atlantic Alliance is gaining strength in both countries"<sup>21</sup>. The Soviet side refrained from any official comments on Kekkonen's statements.

An obvious growth of Soviet interest towards neutrality policy demonstrated in connection with the discussion of the "Pajama pocket speech" can be connected with the preparation of the so-called Stalin Note of March 10, 1952 with the proposals for the reunification and neutralisation of Germany. According to Austrian scholar Peter Ruggenthaler "Kekkonen's speech was integrated seamlessly in the overall trajectory of Soviet foreign policy both with regard to Finland and Northern Europe as a whole on the one hand and to Germany on the other"<sup>22</sup>.

Eventually, however, Moscow deemed the idea of a "neutral Scandinavian union" a dubious one. In the memo of October 12, 1953, signed by Andrei Plakhin,<sup>23</sup> these considerations were thoroughly elaborated and reasoned. This memo "On Scandinavian Neutrality" was prepared before the visit of Swedish Foreign Minister Östen Undén to Moscow, scheduled for 1954. "The most important task of our policy toward Scandinavia, – the document read, – is to turn Scandinavia to the positions

of neutrality.”<sup>24</sup> Plakhin, head of the Fifth European Department, admitted that it was a difficult task, as “the political sympathies of Scandinavian ruling circles rest completely with the West.” Still he thought that “now the conditions for our measures to support and develop the movement for Scandinavia’s neutrality are relatively favorable.”<sup>25</sup> The memo’s author emphasized that “the Swedish people is worried that Sweden would be dragged into the war because of its neighbors – members of the Atlantic bloc,” and the peoples of Denmark and Norway feel their countries’ membership in NATO “as a burden,” because it “has weakened rather than strengthened Scandinavia’s security.”<sup>26</sup>

According to Plakhin most Scandinavian neutrality advocates supported the idea of a “Scandinavian neutral bloc” as an alternative to NATO, but “neither we, nor our friends” should propagate this idea. (The term “friends” in internal Soviet documents meant representatives of Communist parties.) He gave the following reasons: on the one hand “one should not expect real neutrality from such a bloc,” and on the other its supporters thought that it “should include Finland, which is unacceptable for us.”<sup>27</sup> Plakhin thought that Denmark’s and Norway’s return to the position of neutrality should be achieved “not by substituting one bloc for another,” but by moving towards “real neutrality” that could be supported by guarantees “from the USSR and probably Western powers.” He suggested to persuade Undén during his visit that “we [like Sweden] want peace and would respect Scandinavia’s neutrality, that we are ready to discuss the issue of our guarantees with all Scandinavian countries”<sup>28</sup>.

Undén visited the Soviet Union on June 8–18, 1954. In Moscow he met with a number of officials including Vice Foreign Minister Valerian Zorin. Before the meeting Zorin was instructed to ask Undén about the possible guarantees that a “neutral” Nordic bloc would not lead to the inclusion of Sweden and Finland into the orbit of NATO as appendages of U.S. aggressive policy.<sup>29</sup>

In February 1954 *Kommunist* – a theoretical and political journal of the CPSU CC – published an article entitled “The Scandinavian countries and the Atlantic bloc.” This article, as the Foreign Ministry’s Scandinavian Department put it, gave an extensive expose of the Soviet government’s negative opinion on a creation of a neutral Scandinavian defence alliance<sup>30</sup>. The article stated that “propaganda of a “neutral alliance” of the Nordic countries is now in fact transforming into a cover-up of sorts.”<sup>31</sup> The authors added that this cover-up was needed to obscure Scandinavian reactionary circles’ attempts “to bind Denmark and Norway even tighter to the chariot of the Atlantic bloc, to drag Sweden into this bloc, to spoil good-neighbor relations between Finland and the USSR in order to tie Finland with Atlantic strategists’ aggressive plans as well”<sup>32</sup>.

After Stalin’s death the so-called Khrushchev Thaw began. The winds of change started to blow not only in domestic policy, but in the foreign one as well. In mid-1950s a temporary “warming” in international relations marred by the Cold War occurred. International détente led to a marked intensification of Soviet diplomatic contacts with the Nordic countries. In November 1955 the Norwegian government delegation headed

by Prime Minister Einar Gerhardsen arrived to Moscow. That was the first visit of a NATO country leader to the USSR, which required from Norway additional consultations with its allies. In the spring of the next year, 1956, Moscow hosted two other important visits – by Danish Prime Minister Hans Hansen and Swedish Prime Minister Tage Erlander accompanied by Minister of the Interior Gunnar Hedlund. The last two summits took place soon after the CPSU XX Congress. This Congress is known not only by the condemnation of Stalin's "personality cult", but also by its resolutions establishing principles of peaceful coexistence of states with different social and political systems.<sup>33</sup>

On March 29, 1956 – the day when Erlander and Hedlund arrived to Moscow – *Pravda* published an editorial formulating all the main priorities of Soviet foreign policy on the Swedish "direction". The article emphasized "our countries' common interest in the strengthening of peace," and noted that the Soviet Union "has always regarded Sweden's neutrality policy with understanding and respect" and is ready "to participate together with other countries in the guarantees to countries pursuing the policy of neutrality and non-involvement in military groupings".

In Moscow negotiations between the Swedish guests and the Soviet leadership took place. On the last day of the official part of the visit a Soviet-Swedish communique was published. The Soviet side declared that the USSR, like it did before, will respect Swedish alliance-free and peaceful policy.<sup>34</sup>

According to the informed opinion of Andrei M. Aleksandrov-Agentov – in 1966–86 he was a personal assistant of

CPSU cc General Secretaries in charge of international affairs – Moscow's main foreign policy tasks in the Khrushchev period amounted to the following: first, to consolidate the socialist countries around the USSR as much as possible; second, to create a neutral "belt" between the two opposing military and political blocs, and; third, to establish gradually peaceful cooperation with NATO countries<sup>35</sup>. One of these neutral belts was supposed to be created in Northern Europe.

The period of "first détente" was characterized by a growing number of publications about neutrality by Soviet specialists in international law, historians and journalists<sup>36</sup>. In those years the notion of "active" or "positive" neutrality was added to the Soviet political vocabulary. Sweden's neutrality policy was now presented as a model for other states, primarily Scandinavian NATO members

The reciprocal visit of Soviet leaders to Sweden planned for 1957 was postponed because of the events in Hungary in the fall of 1956. The preparations for the visit to Scandinavia were stepped up in 1959. On June 13, 1959 the Scandinavian Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry submitted a voluminous memo entitled "The Foreign Policy of Scandinavian Countries and their Attitudes to the USSR." In the part devoted to Sweden's neutrality a traditional characteristic was included: "... Sweden's ideological, political and economic communion with Western countries invariably results in Sweden's neutrality policy being a friendly one to the West. Swedish politicians assume that only the USSR can be a source of military threat to Sweden."<sup>37</sup> The document also referred to Sweden's extensive military links with Western countries and concluded: "The



character of Sweden's military contacts with NATO members shows that the Swedish government and military leadership is counting on NATO's assistance, if Sweden would not be able to stay neutral in case of war"<sup>38</sup>.

During the preparation to the scheduled visit the Soviet Foreign Ministry assessed a hypothetical possibility of Norway's and Denmark's withdrawal from NATO and their reorientation towards the policy of neutrality. In this case it was deemed possible to raise the question of the Nordic countries' joint efforts to arrange a common defence system to protect their national sovereignty accompanied by obligations of great powers to respect Nordic neutrality and facilitate its consolidation; the Soviet Union would be ready to do this together with other states.<sup>39</sup> Therefore the idea of a neutral Scandinavian defence alliance received a new relevance in the context of the peaceful coexistence.

Khrushchev's visit to Sweden, Norway and Denmark, scheduled for August 1959, however, was cancelled at the last moment. As far as Sweden was concerned, the anti-Soviet campaign unleashed by the so-called "August Committee" was given as a pretext. But there was another reason, and it proved decisive. Shortly before the beginning of Khrushchev's Scandinavian trip he received from President Dwight D. Eisenhower an invitation to visit the U.S. Later, Khrushchev in his memoirs would explain: "Etiquette demanded from us to visit those countries that were the first to invite us. But we were more attracted by America. The USA is the key capitalist power."<sup>40</sup> Khrushchev thought that to solve contentious international problems it was enough to reach agreement with the

United States. Other countries would have to comply with Soviet-American decisions.<sup>41</sup>

In the fall of 1961 the XXII Congress of the CPSU took place, continuing the policy of De-Stalinization. At this forum the word “neutrality” was mentioned much more often than before. In his report to the Congress Khrushchev stressed that there were “three groups of states” in the world – “socialist, neutralist and imperialist ones.”<sup>42</sup> Having no immediate opportunity to move states quickly from the imperialist group to the socialist one, he actively sought to broaden the neutralist group in order to strengthen his own position. Here lies the difference between his and Stalin’s perceptions of neutrality. Stalin had a dualistic outlook: in his opinion the socialist system could not really rely on neutral states in its confrontation with the imperialist camp.

Khrushchev finally came to Scandinavia five years later. On June 22, 1964 he arrived in Stockholm. The principal negotiations between Khrushchev and Tage Erlander took place the next day. During the talks the two leaders exchanged opinions on pressing international issues, including the German question – the main obstacle to the further development of détente, according to Khrushchev. “You Swedes, – Nikita Sergeevich insisted, – evade this problem by referring to your neutrality. For you this question is like a cold one catches in autumn – it’s better to avoid it, let neighbors sniffle.”<sup>43</sup>

As a whole Khrushchev’s visit to Sweden was a success. At the end of the visit the parties, in accordance to the tradition of that period, approved a joint Soviet-Swedish communiqué summing up the results of their negotiations. In a

“political letter” on Khrushchev’s visit to Sweden the Soviet Embassy in Stockholm emphasized that the Swedish public and press regarded the Soviet side’s statement that it “highly values Sweden’s neutrality policy and considers it an important contribution to the tranquility and stability of the situation in Northern Europe” included into the communiqué as the most important result from the Swedish point of view.

During his three-week Scandinavian trip, the Soviet leader, of course, did not remain silent on the NATO issue. He stated his position on the contentious issue of Norway’s and Denmark’s membership in NATO at the meeting in the Folkets Hus in Oslo. Informing his audience that Norway’s and Denmark’s participation in NATO was caused by “an accidental coincidence,” the Soviet leader added that in Moscow’s opinion “the most reliable security guarantee for countries like Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland is a policy of neutrality that could be recognized by both sides – the Western powers and the socialist countries ... An internationally recognized neutral status of the Nordic countries would, of course, be extremely beneficial both for these countries’ peoples and the strengthening of peace in general.”<sup>44</sup> It is worth noting that the idea of a neutral Scandinavian defence union was not mentioned in this context.

As we know, Khrushchev’s ideas of a neutral Nordic region were never implemented in practice. Obviously, he thought that there could be several neutral countries in Northern Europe: apart from Finland, whose neutrality policy was the best one in the Soviets’ opinion, and alliance-free Sweden, whose neutrality was qualified as second-best by Moscow,

Norway and Denmark ought to become neutral as well, which meant they should part with NATO. A possibility that Norway's and Denmark's exit from NATO could disturb the existing balance between the two competing blocs in the North of Europe was never discussed.

The basis of Soviet foreign policy toward the Nordic countries in general, and Sweden and its alliance-free policy in particular, laid down in the Khrushchev period, remained unchanged even after his resignation in the autumn of 1964. During the Cold War the Nordic region played a role of a stabilizing factor in the two blocs' global confrontation. And Sweden occupied a central place in the Northern geopolitical balance.

In 1971–82 Mikhail Yakovlev served as Soviet Ambassador in Sweden. Reflecting later on this eleven-year term, he stressed: in that period “both countries’ firm desire to preserve and strengthen peace, curb the arms race and prevent a nuclear war” formed a “solid basis” of Soviet-Swedish good-neighbor relations. Indeed, in 1970s this bilateral relationship had a positive dynamic, facilitated in no small part by the “second détente.” In those years heads of the two countries’ governments regularly exchanged visits traditionally accompanied by signing of joint communiqués. For instance, in the communiqué on the visit of Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme in April 1976 the Soviet side acknowledged once again that “Sweden’s neutrality policy is an important contribution to the maintenance of peace in Europe”<sup>45</sup>.

On June 5–7 1978 Swedish King Karl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia were in the USSR with an official visit. The King

met with the CPSU General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev. In the course of their conversation both sides stressed that “traditionally peaceful Soviet-Swedish relations are a good example of a multi-dimension and active cooperation between countries with different social systems, based on equality, mutual respect and non-interference in each other’s internal affairs”<sup>46</sup>.

In the semi-official “History of Diplomacy” published in 1979 it was noted that “smooth relations between the USSR and Sweden facilitate strengthening peace and security in Europe”<sup>47</sup>.

In the early 1980s, however, Soviet-Swedish relations deteriorated, and this period lasted until the perestroika changes. This deterioration was influenced both by a new Cold War crisis, and, last but not least, by the beginning of a hunt for Soviet submarines in Sweden’s territorial waters.<sup>48</sup> With the dissolution of the USSR, the end of the bipolar system and the transition to a one-polar one the significance of neutrality policy – formerly a very important foreign-policy instrument – was reduced to a minimum. In the current international situation, however, neutrality policy has started to attract much more attention once again.

In the Soviet period a tradition of including laconic statements on Moscow’s high appreciation of Sweden’s neutrality policy into official texts, joint communiqués and materials of CPSU Congresses was upheld consistently. In newspaper articles, political comments and academic publications this formula was expanded in more detail. For instance, in a book *Small countries of Western Europe* published by the Institute of

World Economy and International Relations of the Soviet Academy of Sciences the chapter on Swedish foreign policy concept contained a detailed explanation that Sweden's neutrality still had a "bourgeois" character, was Western-oriented, and that the country was ideologically close to the West.<sup>49</sup> The fact that neutral Sweden was cooperating with NATO countries in the military-technical sphere was also often mentioned<sup>50</sup>. Similar definitions of Swedish neutrality can be found in Soviet Foreign Ministry's internal documents. In my opinion documents containing more detailed information on Sweden's informal but extensive military-technical cooperation with the USA and NATO also exist<sup>51</sup>.

Swedish neutrality was a recognized foreign-policy phenomenon of the Cold War and bipolarity era. When the Soviet Union disintegrated and Sweden became a member of the European Union Stockholm's foreign policy concept started to change. Östen Undén's classic formula was replaced by more extended definitions of security policy<sup>52</sup>.

Sweden's deviation from neutrality has had an impact on its image in Russia. This image has lost an important and familiar element – "Swedish neutrality", which served mostly as a positive example in in years of cold war.

The genesis of Soviet evaluations of Sweden's neutrality policy did attract the attention of Stockholm's diplomats. Recently the Swedish Foreign Ministry Archive declassified a voluminous memorandum by a well-known Swedish diplomat and expert on the USSR and Russia Tomas Bertelman. In this document dated March 22 1985 and entitled "Soviet attitudes to Swedish neutrality policy in the postwar period" – the author

emphasizes five dimensions of Soviet critical approaches to this policy:

*First*, a desire to nip the unwelcome phenomenon in the bud.

*Second*, the “no harm in trying” approach: to try to get a more advantageous position by carrying out critical attacks on Swedish foreign policy, but, as Bertelman put it, “if the Russians encounter a sufficiently stiff resistance, they will content themselves with what they already have.”

*Third*, to cite Swedish neutrality policy as a positive model of behavior at the international arena.

The *fourth* approach is defined by Bertelman as a “Spill-over” dimension: “Russian suspiciousness sharpens in the periods of heightened tensions at the foreign policy arena and vice versa.”

And, finally, the *fifth*, “tit for tat” approach.

As a whole I agree with Tomas Bertelman’s analysis: his estimates of that period’s policy tendencies are correct. I would just like to add that this mode of action is not something unique in the sphere of international relations, and especially great powers’ policies. For instance, nowadays we can see a lot of similarities with the aforementioned tendencies.

Summing up analysis of Soviet attitudes to Swedish neutrality policy, Bertelman coined an appropriate motto for them: “It could be worse, but it could also become better” (*Det kunde vara värre, men det skulle kunna bli bättre*). “Worse” – because we are not in NATO, which is certainly esteemed highly and respected, while “better” because we have too many links with the West”<sup>54</sup>.

Tomas Bertelman's estimate is correct. The study of sources on Soviet foreign policy towards Sweden in the Cold War period leads to the conclusion that the USSR valued the policy of nonalignment proclaimed by Sweden, regarding it as a stabilizing factor in the European North in the period of the two superpowers' global confrontation. Also, there is no doubt that the Soviet Union did not welcome Sweden's close ties with the West in every sphere – politics, the economy, and, among other things, military-to military cooperation. Obviously, the latter could be evaluated as a deviation from principles, proclaimed in Swedish foreign policy doctrine. But politics is the art of the possible.







Sweden constructed and built its own advanced anti-ship missiles, but trusted the U.S. to provide the Air Force with air-to-air missiles technology. The American AIM-4C Falcon got in Sweden the more neutral name RB 28, built by Saab and maintained at the missile facilities in Arboga.

The Swedish jet engine project "Dovern" was abandoned in 1952 and adaptations of U.S. designs were chosen instead. In 1962 the American general Curtis LeMay makes an inspection at the assembly line at Volvo Flygmotor in Trollhättan.



# The American View

*by Leo Michel*

## Introduction

During the approximately 45-year span of the Cold War, one overarching objective of U.S. foreign policy and defense strategy was to prevent the Soviet Union and its allies from dominating the Eurasian landmass and putting at grave risk America's most basic national security interests. In pursuit of this objective (known as "containment"), the United States employed, at various times and with differing emphasis, all major instruments of its national power – diplomatic, military, economic, and intelligence. In dramatic breaks from its historical experience, the United States launched the Marshall Plan in 1947, which helped to rebuild Europe's war-ravaged economies. And in 1948–49, it took a lead role in the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), where U.S., Canadian, and European civilian and military officials pursued

collective efforts to deter and, if deterrence failed, defeat any Soviet attack.

In military terms, the U.S. investment in Europe's defense was enormous. At the height of the Cold War – widely considered to be the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 – more than 400,000 U.S. soldiers, airmen, sailors and marines (plus tens of thousands of their dependents) were stationed across more than one hundred European communities. In addition to its conventional capabilities, U.S. European Command was armed, beginning in late 1954, with non-strategic nuclear weapons; by the early 1970s, several thousand such weapons (artillery rounds, rockets, air-delivered bombs, and atomic demolition munitions) were deployed on the territory of several Allied nations or on U.S. Navy ships assigned to the European theater. Behind these forward-deployed forces, the U.S. strategic deterrent of long-range bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and submarine launched ballistic missiles (and, at their high point, an estimated 10,000 deployable warheads) provided the “supreme guarantee” of Allied security.

There can be no doubt that U.S. leaders appreciated the enormous potential costs of another major war erupting in Europe. In late 1962, for example, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara told his NATO counterparts that “after a full nuclear exchange such as the Soviet bloc and the NATO Alliance are now able to carry out, the fatalities might well exceed 150,000,000 ... In such a situation the devastation would be complete and victory a meaningless term.”<sup>1</sup>

Given this context, it is not surprising that U.S. officials viewed relations with Sweden primarily through the lens of

their broader containment strategy in and around the Nordic and Scandinavian region. Hence, when the Swedish government opted not to join neighboring Norway and Denmark in the negotiations leading to the North Atlantic Treaty, it confirmed for many American diplomats and military leaders that Sweden should be regarded as a friendly but not especially reliable country. At the same time, there is ample evidence that U.S. officials were not, as a rule, dismissive of Swedish concerns; nor were the Americans systematically opposed to pragmatic cooperation with Sweden, provided that such cooperation served the above-mentioned U.S. strategic objective.

To explain how and why these American attitudes took shape and evolved over time, this paper focus on two issues: the U.S. view of Sweden's decision to remain outside NATO; and U.S. reactions to Sweden's exploration of a nuclear weapons option during the period 1945–68. The paper concludes with brief observations on the relevance of these issues to the contemporary security environment faced by the United States and Sweden.

### **Sweden's decision to remain outside NATO**

In the immediate aftermath of World War II, prominent U.S. officials believed that the Swedish government's initially lukewarm reaction to the Marshall Plan and its determination to avoid any involvement in a potential third world war reflected several "flawed assumptions" in Swedish thinking. According to U.S. Ambassador H. Freeman Matthews' cable to Secretary of State George Marshall in February 1948, Swedish officials

incorrectly assumed the following: that both the United States and Soviet Union would find Swedish neutrality advantageous; that any Swedish steps toward the West, whether political or military, would incur Soviet suspicion and potential reprisals (to include a possible Soviet occupation of Finland); that in the event of a real threat of war, Sweden would have ample time to change its policy; that, in the event of war, the West would forget any resentment of Swedish neutrality and ultimately offer Sweden military assistance to face the Soviets; and, finally, that even if neutrality were not the wisest policy, it would be too divisive internally to argue against it. On this latter point, Matthews believed that Swedish leaders in effect placed maintaining domestic political unity above safeguarding national security.

Despite such harsh assessments, U.S. officials did not dismiss the possibility that over time, Swedish views might change. Indeed, some State Department and White House officials apparently contested Matthews' inclination to punish Sweden for its neutral stance. For example, in his March 1948 memorandum to President Harry Truman, White House adviser Clark Clifford recommended that Sweden be included among the nations invited to join negotiations on a collective defense arrangement between North America and Western Europe. In the following months, U.S. diplomats tried to press the argument that Swedish proclamations of neutrality were in a very risky policy. As Matthews told a senior Swedish foreign ministry official: "One cannot expect the United States to go to war to help a neutral which is unwilling to join with other free nations in the common interest of the Western free

world and share common risks and responsibilities. What Sweden failed to understand was the importance of joining with other nations to help prevent a war. It was not just a question of perhaps saving a few weeks of neutrality if war broke out.”

But U.S. diplomats soon concluded that under Foreign Minister Östen Undén, Swedish neutrality policy was unlikely to change. Undén, they believed, took a “plague on both your houses” view of the East-West conflict. Hence, in September 1948, the National Security Council (NSC) sent Truman a report on U.S. policy toward Scandinavia that recommended making “it perfectly clear to Sweden our dissatisfaction with its apparent failure to discriminate in its own mind and in its future planning between the West and the Soviet Union.” However, Washington would refrain from any pressure on Sweden to take an “unnecessarily provocative” step toward the Soviets. One practical result of this approach was to prioritize U.S. military assistance to nations interested in NATO membership – in effect, putting any Swedish requests at the end of the queue.

During this period, Washington was counseled by others not to overreact to Sweden’s public stance. Senior Norwegian officials pointed out, for example, that Sweden – with a relatively capable navy and a potential mobilization strength of some 600,000 soldiers – remained the only military force of any value in Scandinavia. Moreover, they told American counterparts that Norwegian parties and public opinion would find it difficult to accept a break in Norway’s traditional ties with Sweden.



Marshall may have had these factors in mind when he met with Undén in October 1948, but their conversation only confirmed their fundamental disagreement on the neutrality question. Undén acknowledged that in the event of a major conflict, Sweden likely could not remain neutral “for any extended period of time.” He argued, however, that any Swedish step toward the West would immediately have a negative effect on Soviet policy toward Finland. (In a separate meeting a few weeks later, a senior Swedish official specified that anticipated Soviet “countermeasures” to any Swedish move to join a military alliance would include the “prompt Russian occupation of Finland.”) Undén then sought Marshall’s reaction to Sweden’s idea of a “neutral Scandinavian bloc” that would provide for “joint defense action” among Sweden, Denmark, and Norway with no “outside tie” – meaning the three countries would not join the envisioned North Atlantic Treaty.

In response, Marshall pointedly asked Undén to consider how the world might look if Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt had maintained, during the two world wars, the same sort of neutralist policy advocated by Sweden. He stressed the military vulnerabilities of the Scandinavian region, as well as the changing nature of military operations that increasingly favor “surprise and quick initiative.” As Marshall later recounted to the Norwegian foreign minister: “I mentioned [to Undén] that while Switzerland could maintain neutrality based on geography, Sweden could not.”

Marshall’s successor, Dean Acheson, was similarly unimpressed by Swedish efforts to create a neutralist Scandinavian defense pact as an alternative, for the three countries

concerned, to NATO membership. Nevertheless, by mid-August 1949 (shortly before the North Atlantic Treaty entered into force) Acheson's State Department approved a policy statement that reflected a relatively balanced, if not entirely uncritical, view of Sweden. The overall objectives of U.S. policy were declared to be "preservation of Sweden's independence and democratic outlook and ... cooperation in our efforts to achieve economic recovery and political stability in Europe." Given the new treaty commitments to Norway and Denmark, "an attack on Sweden could not fail to create the most serious effects for us ... [as the] hostile occupation of Sweden would render infinitely more difficult any future defense of those [Allies.]"

Hence, while making clear to Swedish officials that the United States viewed its policy of neutrality as "dangerous and impractical," the policy statement ruled out exerting pressure on Sweden to join NATO. And while the statement decried Sweden's "negative attitude" toward strengthening Western Europe's military capabilities, it raised the prospect that a combination of NATO's performance and growing public unease with Soviet policies "may in time bring Sweden into participation in collective defense measures."

With Sweden's decision to stay outside NATO now set, the U.S. shifted its approach to considering pragmatic bilateral cooperation on a case-by-case basis. Informal contacts between Swedish military authorities and the U.S. European Command were established, and as one U.S. diplomat put it, "we became rather satisfied with the fact that ... [the Swedes] weren't formally [in NATO], but they were keeping up their military

posture.” The increased yet discreet military-to-military contacts probably reinforced U.S. appreciation for the strategic position of the Scandinavian region; an intelligence assessment in 1952 noted, for example, Sweden’s potential importance for providing early warning facilities, allowing overflight of Allied aircraft en route to Soviet targets, and helping to impede Soviet operations in and through the Baltic Sea. Some diplomatic reports noted a correlation between the progress of U.S. rearmament programs for Western Europe, the increasingly confident statements by Swedish officials on their ability and will to defend their country, and their willingness to continue “cooperation on an even more covert basis with the West on matters of politico-strategic importance.” The overall U.S. assessment was that, if attacked by the Soviets, Sweden would resist and expect assistance from the West.

On the other hand, Swedish security concerns apparently were not among Washington’s top priorities. For example, in August 1950, when the NSC assessed the possibilities of Soviet aggression in Europe – up to and including “global war” – in the weeks following the invasion of South Korea by the Communist regime in the north, there was no mention of Sweden. In fact, the NSC recommended that in the event of Russian aggression against Finland – a scenario that U.S. planners knew would be extremely grave for Swedish interests – the United States should “take no military action ... to oppose the aggression.” In addition, Washington imposed restrictions on technology and military equipment transfers to Sweden on the grounds that Swedish exports with potential military applications had gone to the Soviet bloc.

As the Truman administration drew to a close in 1952, U.S. officials clearly differentiated between the treaty-based commitment to defend Norway and Denmark, and U.S. “interest” that Sweden be in the “best possible position to resist Soviet pressure or aggression.” In other words, the Swedish presumption of U.S. assistance in case of war was, from an American perspective, less than iron clad.

The Swedish analyst Robert Dalsjö does an excellent job in documenting and analyzing the clandestine relationships between Swedish and American defense, military and intelligence officials in *Life-Line Lost: The Rise and Fall of “Neutral” Sweden’s Secret Reserve Option of Wartime Help from the West*. From an American perspective, that relationship was broadly consistent with the Truman Administration’s ultimately pragmatic approach, which was further developed under his successor, President Dwight Eisenhower.

For instance, a comprehensive NSC report on U.S. policy toward Denmark, Norway, and Sweden (approved by Eisenhower in 1960) emphasized the region’s strategic importance, noting that “Soviet domination of Scandinavia would enable the USSR to deploy forces further to the West, thus permitting it to increase the threat to the Western Hemisphere, to threaten operations in the North Atlantic, and to form a protective shield against sea or air attack from the Northwest.” According to the report, Swedish armed forces, especially the air forces, were “by far the most effective military forces in Scandinavia.” While it found that “under the present circumstances, Sweden’s membership in NATO is not necessary to Western defense,” the report observed that a strengthened

Swedish defense posture, including “early warning, air control, and advanced weapons systems” would “contribute to the overall defensive strength of the Western powers.” The report also cited Sweden’s willingness to cooperate “informally” with the Western system of controls on trade with the Soviet bloc, known as COCOM – an important step given earlier U.S. concerns about Soviet bloc acquisition of Swedish dual-use technologies.

The policy guidance that flowed from the NSC analysis fell short of a unilateral guarantee of U.S. military assistance to Sweden if it were attacked, but it strongly suggested that such assistance would be forthcoming. Specifically, the document stated that: “In the event of general war with the Soviet Bloc [the United States will] (a) seek to prevent Sweden, as long as it remains neutral, from giving any assistance to the Soviet Bloc, and (b) encourage and assist Sweden, without prejudice to US commitments to NATO, to resist Soviet Bloc attack against Sweden. In the event of Soviet Bloc aggression against Sweden alone, [the United States would] be prepared to come to the assistance of Sweden as part of a NATO or UN response to the aggression.” Moreover, while Sweden (unlike Denmark and Norway), was not to receive grant (i.e., non-reimbursable) military assistance, the NSC opened the door to selling Sweden modern weapons systems, especially air defense systems “compatible with and complementary to” those intended for Norway and Denmark, provided that NATO Allies received first preference.

There is little evidence to suggest that the strategic approach decided by the Eisenhower administration was

substantially changed under the seven U.S. administrations that followed during the Cold War. U.S. officials, influenced in part by their British counterparts, began to see some aspects of Sweden's position as politically useful to the West – or example, in avoiding greater Soviet pressure on Finland. Washington also was aware and supportive of Swedish military cooperation (including communications) with Norway and Denmark. And by 1969, Sweden was purchasing more U.S. military materiel than British, French, or West German equipment.

To be sure, political relations between Washington and Stockholm waxed and waned as a result, for example, of outspoken Swedish criticism regarding U.S. actions in Vietnam and race relations in America. (During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the large demonstrations in Sweden against the Vietnam war, its offers of economic aid to North Vietnam, and its welcome of U.S. deserters and draft dodgers reportedly led senior U.S. military officers to question the value of any military-to-military ties.) The drawdown of Swedish defense forces in the 1970s apparently diminished U.S. interest in maintaining some of its informal channels for cooperation. And some U.S. defense experts were critical of what they considered to be Sweden's "timid" response to Soviet submarine activities in its territorial waters during the 1980s. However, as Dalsjö correctly points out, "such phenomena did not really change the [U.S.] position taken on the basis of lasting political and strategic realities: Sweden was basically a Western country and its defenses were an important part of the security of the northern flank."

### The United States and Sweden's "nuclear option"

U.S. reactions to the Swedish nuclear weapon research program constitute one of the most interesting aspects of the bilateral relationship during the Cold War. As elements of Sweden's nuclear weapon-related research began to take shape in late 1945 – apparently instigated by the military, but with support from at least some prominent political leaders – it is unclear whether U.S. officials were initially aware of the scale or intent of the effort. According to an American expert's account, the CIA assessed in 1949 that Sweden's main interest in nuclear research was to find a cheap energy alternative to coal, not to develop a weapon. The CIA also assessed that Swedish deficiencies in nuclear research were largely attributable to a "lack of manpower and economic resources, not to any lack of ability." The U.S. ambassador was given a "thorough briefing" on the Swedish nuclear research program in 1950, but there is no indication that its possible weapon applications were discussed. At the same time, Swedish authorities were credited with helping U.S. efforts to block shipments of specialized equipment to the Soviet Union for use in the latter's nuclear weapon program. In any event, by 1955, the U.S. Government was sufficiently confident of Sweden's ability to control sensitive technologies and materials – as well as its intent to focus on civil applications of atomic energy – to conclude an agreement on cooperation.

Curiously, by 1955, some American analysts already had concluded that Swedish planners were interested in acquiring or developing so-called tactical nuclear weapons. According to those analysts, the Swedes had concluded that such

weapons were necessary to deter a Soviet attack and, if deterrence failed, to stop an invasion that likely would be staged from Finland. By 1957, a U.S. intelligence assessment warned that “it is likely that Sweden will decide to produce nuclear weapons within the next decade.” A 1963 assessment reported that Swedish military authorities “unanimously agree that nuclear weapons are necessary [to] maintain the current level of effectiveness ... otherwise, conventional forces will become increasingly powerless to offer any significant resistance.” And a 1966 assessment stated that Swedish military planners had “apparently considered in some detail the types of weapons which would be most effective against landing forces [prepositioned demolition weapons and low yield warheads for delivery by tactical aircraft or short-range missiles.]”

That many Swedish politicians and a large segment of the public were opposed to acquiring nuclear weapons was no secret to American officials, who closely observed the growing debate and repeated delays affecting the Swedish program. By 1967, U.S. analysts concluded that defense budget cuts ordered by the then minority Social Democratic government would reduce the likelihood of any decision to acquire nuclear weapons. With its decision to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968, the Swedish government effectively ended its nuclear weapon-oriented research and planning.

For purposes of this paper, two aspects of Sweden’s “nuclear option” deserve special mention, as they seemed to reflect important disconnects between U.S. and Swedish expectations regarding the limits of any nuclear cooperation.



First, beginning in the early-mid 1950s, Swedish military planners apparently saw the relaxation of previous U.S. restrictions on sales of conventional weapons to Sweden – part of Washington’s reaction to the perceived threat of Soviet aggression in the wake of the Korean War – as a sign of U.S. willingness to eventually sell tactical nuclear weapons, as well. According to U.S. diplomatic reporting, beginning in 1954, Swedish officials expressed interest in acquiring U.S. dual-capable short-range missile systems – i.e., systems able to carry either conventional or nuclear warheads. U.S. officials saw this as another indicator that a Swedish request to acquire nuclear weapons might follow sometime in the future, depending on the evolution of the Soviet threat. Indeed, between 1955 and 1960, U.S. diplomatic reporting mentioned a few incidents when Swedish officials appeared to broach the idea of obtaining nuclear weapons from the United States. (Swedish interest in exploring such an option reflected, in large part, the anticipated high costs of a purely national weapon development and production effort.) In fairness, by 1962, a Swedish study group concluded that “if the Swedish armed forces are to be equipped with nuclear weapons, they must be produced [in Sweden.]”

While the United States had provided nuclear-capable delivery systems (aircraft, artillery, and short-range missiles) to certain NATO Allies, it was widely known that U.S. forces retained custody and control of the associated warheads. In a crisis, only the President could decide to order the release of those warheads to selected Allies under “dual key” procedures. It was remarkable, therefore, that Swedish military authorities

might have believed that, while Sweden remained outside NATO the United States nonetheless would consider it to be so vital to Western security as to devise some sort of special nuclear sharing arrangements. In fact, in the above-mentioned NSC report approved by Eisenhower, it is explicitly stated that the United States will “not provide nuclear warheads [to Sweden]; and [will] discourage Sweden from producing its own nuclear weapons.”

A second noteworthy aspect of Sweden’s “nuclear option” involved its political-military analysis of the U.S. “extended nuclear deterrence” doctrine. According to American analysts, beginning in the early 1960s Swedish defense planners came to understand that the Soviets’ military buildup in the Kola Peninsula region had up-ended previous assumptions that Sweden could somehow distance itself from a major East-West conflict. On the one hand, this could buttress the arguments of those favoring a Swedish nuclear deterrent, as well as strengthened conventional forces. On the other hand, opponents of a “nuclear option” could point to the Soviet buildup as another reason for confidence that, if Sweden were attacked, the United States would be obliged to come to its assistance. Moreover, the latter group could argue that Sweden did not need nuclear weapons because it would be essentially protected by the U.S. nuclear deterrent. Or, as one American analyst has summarized it: “In the Swedish view, deterrence is a general condition, not a specific guarantee that can be extended to or withdrawn from a particular country.”

From an American perspective, such reasoning was not wholly unreasonable. To be clear, U.S. policy never supported

enlargement of the “nuclear club,” even if it came to accept, for somewhat different reasons, the U.K. and French independent nuclear deterrents. Moreover, U.S. willingness to provide extended deterrence to NATO Allies – a decision, it must be emphasized, that involved additional risks for U.S. national security – was motivated, in large part, by a desire to discourage additional, technologically capable Allies from acquiring nuclear arsenals of their own. An additional U.S. concern was that Swedish conventional defenses, which U.S. planners valued, would suffer under the weight of a costly nuclear program. The principal problem, from an American perspective, was that for much of the Cold War – in particular, from the mid-1960s onward – Sweden’s defense policy benefitted from U.S. extended deterrence while its declared foreign policy called for nuclear disarmament.

### Relevance of the Cold War experience to contemporary security issues

Today’s international security environment is, of course, very different from the Cold War. U.S. and European relations with Russia are difficult in many areas, particularly after Russia’s illegal annexation of Ukraine and military intervention in Eastern Ukraine. But the seemingly implacable ideological conflict and looming risk of large scale military confrontation that permeated relations with the Soviet Union are largely gone. Sweden and Finland are fully integrated into the European Union. They also cooperate as close Partners with NATO and, increasingly, through bilateral defense channels with the United States.

Nevertheless, a few arguments and assumptions heard during the Cold War still echo today.

On the question of NATO membership, the Swedish debate is no longer dominated by a principled dedication to “neutrality.” As Defense Minister Peter Hultqvist made clear during his speech in May 2017 in Washington: “The European security order is no longer in place as we know it because of Russia’s aggressive behavior ... A strong U.S. link to Europe is important for the stability in NATO and Europe. And it is only together with the United States that European countries can balance the Russians.” In discussing the Statement of Intent that he signed in 2016 with then Defense Secretary Ashton Carter, the Minister pointed out that the two countries have “deepened our dialogue on the policy and military level. Focus for our discussion has been Northern Europe and how we can respond to challenges together. We have stepped up our training and exercise programs, in the air, at sea and on ground. All this, recognizing that joint activities bolster our ability to operate together and send security political signals to friends and others.”

In this author’s view, these programs – and the Minister’s realistic but balanced statements regarding the challenges posed by Russia – are to be applauded. But they do not address the issue of Swedish assumptions. Are those assumptions still essentially the same as during the Cold War, when – again, from an American perspective – Swedish planners believed their geographic location, military capabilities, and political and economic ties to the West in general, and the United States in particular, provided a virtual guarantee of U.S. and

Western assistance in the event of aggression from the East? If so, one should not forget the aforementioned admonitions by the U.S. ambassador and Secretary of State in 1948.

Finally, on the question of nuclear deterrence, Sweden's decision not to pursue the nuclear option was, in retrospect, the proper one. Thankfully, the risk of nuclear conflict on the European continent is much, much lower today than at the height of the Cold War. That said, to paraphrase Leon Trotsky's famous dictum on war: "You may not be interested in nuclear weapons, but nuclear weapons are interested in you." In recent years, various forms of "nuclear saber rattling" by the Russian Federation – reflected in its nuclear modernization programs, shifts in its military doctrine, the conduct of recent military exercises, and threatening rhetoric by prominent Russian leaders – have prompted NATO to focus new attention on nuclear issues.

Based on Russian actions and policies – and in anticipation of nuclear-related developments outside Russia that will occur over the next few years, including the U.S., U.K., and French programs to modernize their respective deterrents – Sweden (and, for that matter, Finland) might not have the luxury of ignoring or playing down the nuclear dimensions of NATO's deterrence and collective defense strategy and capabilities. Hence, Sweden will need to consider how to rejuvenate its expertise on how deterrence works, including its nuclear dimensions. Based on admittedly anecdotal evidence, it would appear that much of that expertise has eroded since the end of the Cold War.

Moreover, if one accepts the premise that Sweden has a shared interest with the United States, other NATO Allies, and

Finland in maintaining peace, security, and stability in the Nordic-Baltic region – and that this will require for the foreseeable future an important role for nuclear weapons as part of an effective deterrent to aggression – then Sweden needs seriously to consider if its interests are best served by joining efforts, such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, to “delegitimize” the possession of nuclear weapons consistent with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.



# Summary and some reflections

*by Gunnar Artéus and Kent Zetterberg*

In this final chapter we will present a summary of the lectures given at the conference on “External Views on Sweden’s Neutrality and Defence Capability during the Cold War” (Stockholm, September 7–8, 2017). We have also added some reflections of our own relating to the theme of the conference. The summary has, for greater clarity, been organized under the headings of the three questions we asked the speakers to deal with.

## Question 1

*How was Sweden’s neutrality regarded in your country?*

Danes and Norwegians looked upon Sweden’s neutrality as beneficial to stability and peace in the Nordic region. They might have wished that Sweden also was part of the Western alliance but they never publicly said so. One advantage recog-



nised by Danish and Norwegian politicians was that Sweden's neutrality provided them with greater freedom of action.

To the Finns, Sweden's neutrality was more than beneficial, it was no less than vital. It lessened tangibly and significantly Soviet pressure on the country's politics, media and society.

The Soviet attitude to Sweden's neutrality shifted over time. Stalin regarded it with contempt, but during the longest period of the Cold War it was seen and publicly acclaimed as a model for other states. That changed, however, during the final decade of the Cold War. Then Sweden was seen as "not neutral enough", that is being too Western oriented.

The American view of Sweden as a state was that it was friendly and definitely Western oriented but not completely to be trusted. The Americans saw, however, how helpful Sweden's neutrality was to the Finns in their precarious situation.

## Question 2

*How was Sweden's defence capability judged in your country?*

There seems to have existed in Denmark and Norway a consensus, a consensus they shared with the Americans, that Sweden possessed a respectable defence capability which was able to withstand a Soviet attack for up to two weeks – time enough for Western military assistance to have effect. Observers were particularly impressed with the strength of the Swedish air force.

The American speaker said very little on this matter. But we are nevertheless reasonably well-informed about what the Americans thought concerning Sweden's role in a major war, that is one between NATO and the WTO and with Sweden involved. Sweden was expected to help in defending the north

of Norway and the Danish straits, and also to provide on its territory advanced bases for the Western air forces.

As regards the Soviet view, the Russian speaker stated that he was unable to say anything on the matter since he had not found time to do the research needed.

### Question 3

*How was Sweden viewed in your country's strategic thinking?*

In the other Nordic countries there naturally existed some thinking about Sweden's role in their strategy if an encompassing war came to the region. But little or nothing was actually planned in Denmark and Norway. And in Finland, officers were "forbidden" even to think about it, that is to think aloud or on paper.

As for the Soviet Union, the Russian speaker stated – as he also did concerning question 2 – that he for certain practical reasons was unable to answer the question.

Yet there existed some thinking on the matter. So, what was envisioned in the minds? In Norwegian thinking, Sweden was expected to slow down, maybe effectively, a Soviet offensive against the north of Norway, and the Danes expected Sweden to assist from Scania in their defence of the Straits. To the Finns, the scenario in question was clear: intimate strategic cooperation with the Swedes.

To our summary of the conference lectures we have here added three reflections

1) It is interesting, though hardly surprising, that the other Nordic countries had no problems to accept Sweden's neutrality. They had learned to regard it as a long and deeply

rooted behavioural tradition whose stability could safely be counted on. Nor is it surprising that USA and the Soviet Union also accepted Swedish neutrality as something comparatively solid although they looked upon it also with a measure of suspicion or distrust.

2) None of the speakers noted (had observed) the diminishing strength of Sweden's military defence during the later period of the Cold War. This suggests a somewhat provocative conclusion: that Sweden's military defence had actually been stronger than it needed to be. That is in other words to say that it had in actual fact been so strong that it could lose a considerable part of its strength without losing its credibility as a respectable military force.

3) The Russian speaker was, for certain practical reasons, unable to say anything about Sweden's place in Soviet strategic thinking. In the event of a major war (defined above) it seems, however, obvious enough that Soviet forces would have advanced against northern Norway across Swedish territory, thus starting a war with Sweden.

To the Danes and especially the Norwegians this would have had significant implications. It meant that Swedish forces would in practice have helped out in the defence of northern Norway, and it probably also implied that some Swedish assistance would have been given to the defence of the Danish straits.

Would Finland have opposed with arms a move by Soviet forces across its territory? Probably, and this would reasonably have made Finland and Sweden into intimately cooperating partners in operations and strategy.

A major war, that is a war with Sweden being involved, would have given our country a rather interesting role in Western (American) strategy. Sweden's possible, indeed probable, role in the defence of northern Norway and the Straits has already been mentioned. Equally or even more important to American strategy, would have been the fact that Sweden certainly would have provided on its territory advanced bases for the NATO air forces.



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## The Danish View

### Notes

- 1 Den skandinaviska försvarskommittén, Hemlig, 14-1-1949, VI, pp. 29f (author's translation from Swedish).
- 2 Ib Faurby, "Svensk säkerhetspolitik set gennem dansk prisme", Erik Rossander (ed.), *Föreningen FHS 1953-2003*, (Svenskt Militärhistoriskt Bibliotek, Stockholm 2003), pp. 47-63, (author's translation from Danish). Faurby is an invited member of RSAWS due to his extended contribution to Nordic security policy studies.
- 3 My contribution by interview to: SOU 1994:II, *Om kriget kommit ... Förberedelser för mottagande av militärt bistånd 1949-1969*, Betänkande av Neutralitetspolitikkommissionen.
- 4 During the 1980s, Arméreglemente del 2, AR2, Taktik, the part on "Avväjningsstrid vid kust" was used directly.
- 5 HRN 010-001, Feltreglement I.
- 6 Forsvaret År 2000: Perspektivplan, 1. Del: Forsvarets udvikling 1985-1994, (Forsvarskommandoen, Vedbæk 1982).
- 7 Poul Villaume, *Allieret med forbehold. Danmark, NATO og den kolde krig. En studie i dansk sikkerhedspolitik 1949-1961*, (Eirene, København 1995).
- 8 Thorsten Borring Olesen, "Sverige", John T. Lauridsen, Rasmus Mariager, Thorsten Borring Olesen and Poul Villaume, *Den kolde krig og Danmark*, (Gad, København 2011).
- 9 Author's view.
- 10 Ib Faurby, "Kontinuitet og opbrud i dansk sikkerhedspolitik", Nils Andrén (ed.), *Säkerhetspolitik i Norden, Försvar och Säkerhetspolitik*, (Folk och försvar, Stockholm 1984), pp. 42-75.
- 11 The Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (VSB (Swedish) or YYA (Finnish)).
- 12 Ib Faurby, op cit pp. 47-63.
- 13 Thorsten Borring Olesen and Poul Villaume, *I Blokopdelingens tegn. Dansk udenrigspolitisk historie, Vol. 5, 1945-1972*, (Danmarks

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- 14 Nikolaj Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement. Dansk udenrigspolitisk historie, Vol. 6, 1973–2003*, (Danmarks Nationalleksikon, Gyldendal, København 2004).
  - 15 Based on later discussions with Dr Frede P. Jensen (died 2008), Colonel (ret.) John E. Andersen (Jensen's contact in the Danish Defence Intelligence Service) as well as other members of the research team.
  - 16 Forsvarsstabens Efterretningsafdeling, from 1967 Forsvarets Efterretningsstjeneste (FE).
  - 17 *Danmark under den kolde krig. Den sikkerhedspolitiske situation 1945–1991, Del 1, 1945–1962*, (Dansk Institut for Internationale Studier, København 2005), pp. 572–577.
  - 18 Over Høegh-Guldberg Hoff (ed.), *Safeguarding Security in the Baltic Approaches 1962–2002*, (Joint Headquarters NORTH-EAST, Karup 2002). General Otto K. Lind mentions the USMC participation in WINTEX' 81 on p. 84 that I included in the introduction.
  - 19 Ibid., pp. 95–101; Kjeld Hillingsø, *Trusselsbilledet – en koldkriger taler ud*, (Gyldendal, København 2004).
  - 20 *Danmark under den kolde krig. Den sikkerhedspolitiske situation 1945–1991, Del 3, 1979–1991*, (Dansk Institut for Internationale Studier, København 2005), s. 459–461, 549f, 476–492; *Del 4, Konklusion og perspektiver*, p. 53.
  - 21 In his books from: *Cold Water Politics: The Maritime Strategy and Geopolitics of the Northern Front*, (Sage, London 1989) to *The Secret War against Sweden: US and British Submarine Deception in the 1980s*, (Frank Cass & Routledge, London & New York 2004).
  - 22 Bent Jensen, *Ulve, får og vogtere. Den Kolde Krig i Danmark 1945–1991. Bind 1 og 2*. (Gyldendal, København 2014).
  - 23 Ibid., Volume 2, pp. 76, 566. (Author's translation from Danish).
  - 24 General Jørgen Lyng, *Levnedsbeskrivelse, Bind 1 og 2*, (non-published manuscript for *The Chapter of the Royal Danish Orders of Knighthood*, København 2008).
  - 25 Bengt Gustafsson, *Sanningen om ubåtsfrågan. Ett försök till analys*, (Santérus, Stockholm 2010), Chapter "Invasionen", pp. 327–332).
  - 26 Ibid., p. 351.
  - 27 According to interviews with a former Soviet Airforce (now Lithuanian Airforce) fighter pilot, the patrols would be supported in Swedish Airspace by Airborne Early Warning and tanker aircraft from Siauliai. On my question he made clear that the Swedes

- would be compelled to accept the patrols.
- 28 Telephone conversation author–Lyng (30.6.2017).
  - 29 Telephone conversation author–Hillingsø (30.6.2017).
  - 30 Magnus Petersson, "*Brödralfolkens väl*". *Svensk-norska säkerhetspolitiska relationer 1949–1969*, (Santérus Förlag, Stockholm 2003).
  - 31 Peter Bogason, *Søværnet under den kolde krig – Politik, strategi og taktik*, (Snorres Forlag, København 2016), p. 62.
  - 32 Mikael Holmström, *Den dolda alliansen. Sveriges hemliga NATO-förbindelser*, (Atlantis, Stockholm 2011), e.g. pp. 94, 97, 99, 101, 112, sketches after that page, 113, 115ff, 140, 142, 151f, 320, 377, 508–523.
  - 33 Telephone interviews with two Russian speaking former defence intelligence officers: Major-General (retd.) Kasten Jakob Møller (30.6.2017) and Captain (Navy, reted.) Poul Grooss (29.6.2017).
  - 34 Jørgen Lyng's predecessor as Chief of Defence Staff and later Chief of Defence.
  - 35 The author had number of meetings with Thiede in the autumn of 2005. The admiral died in March 2006.
  - 36 Reference note 7.

## The Finnish View

### Notes

- 1 That is, the top three: Marshal Mannerheim, SDP leader Tanner and even President Ryti. Many believed in German victory much longer.
- 2 All three figure prominently in Stalin's thinking during the Winter War, see K. Rentola, "Intelligence and Stalin's Two Crucial Decisions in the Winter War, 1939–40", *International History Review* 35, no. 5, (2013); see also Alfred J. Rieber, *Stalin and the Struggle for Supremacy in Eurasia* (Cambridge University Press 2015), 242.
- 3 This was a lasting tradition. "You are no small country", prime minister Aleksei Kosygin said to Olof Palme, "you say that all the time, but look what you produce ..." Memcon Palme-Kosygin in the Kremlin, 17 and 18 June 1970, UD HP 1 G / Sovjet 2/3.
- 4 In December 1943, the Soviets expelled Swedish envoy Assarsson and the military attaché, because Stalin was "irritated" by the envoy's keen contact with the Americans, whom he kept informed about developments with Finland. V.S. Khristoforov, "*Za kulisami sovetsko-finlyandskikh peregovorov o peremirii. 1943–1944 gody.*" *Novaya i noveishaya istoria*, 2015,



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- p. 25. This article is based on counter-intelligence and surveillance records.
- 5 During the Soviet general attack in June 1944, information about political chaos in Helsinki changed a bit with each step from Helsinki to Stockholm to Moscow. Most decisive misinterpretations were made by Erik Boheman (UD), whose words were perhaps further exaggerated by envoy Alexandra Kollontai. According to her telegrams, Boheman saw the morale of the leading Finns as broken and the Finns ready to ask for peace on any conditions (*na lyubykh usloviyakh*), in fact they “submit into your [Soviet] hands”, so he concluded that it was possible for the Soviets even to demand surrender (*vozmozhno takzhe trebovanie kapitulyatsii*). Kollontai to Molotov, nos. 1984, 2010 and 2018, 19/20 June and 22 June 1944. In response, Moscow on 23 June demanded capitulation. However, the Finns agreed with Germany (Ryti’s letter to Hitler) and continued to fight, driven by desperation. Seeing the blunder, Stalin said to the US ambassador that the honest Swedes had been taken in by the devious Finns. Harriman’s report, no. 2296, 27 June 1944, *FRUS* 1944: III. In Boheman’s opinion, the best Ryti could now do was to shoot himself; hopefully the Red Army would swiftly advance to Helsingfors. Telegram from V. Mallet to London, no. 746, 1 July 1944. Boheman had already assessed that the possible Soviet occupation of Finland would be of short duration. Ehrensvärd’s diary, 20 June 1944. Short duration or any leniency were not discernible in the harsh surrender terms prepared by the Voroshilov commission in Moscow.
  - 6 “It was your war”, Molotov complained to the Swedish envoy in September 1940. K. Wahlbäck, *Jättens andedräkt: Finlandsfrågan i svensk politik 1809–2009* (Atlantis 2011), 165.
  - 7 Sweden received also Soviet citizens (mostly Ingrian Finns, Karelians and other former POWs), who had been recruited for Finnish reconnaissance, and some Finnish former security police officers. These groups were not recruited in Swedish service. Many of the latter group continued to other countries, even to Latin America.
  - 8 Eden’s memo to the War Cabinet, 24 Sep 1944, *DBPO* I: IX, doc. no. 2. – When the Finnish peace negotiators and then leaders in Helsinki in September 1944 saw the claim for Porkkala, they were shocked. “Herrejesus! Ännu därtill!” said Marshal Mannerheim. The Finns talked about offering Åland instead, but there was no time even to prepare a proposal. It seems that the Soviets leaked this to the Swedes to drive a wedge between the two Nordic neighbors. Hearing

- the news, the Swedes were not at all pleased. Sven Grafström's diary, 7 to 13 Oct 1944.
- 9 Kekkonen's memo on the talks in Moscow, 30 June 1950, Urho Kekkonen Archives 21/30; Kekkonen's letter to Paasikivi, 13 June 1950, J.K. Paasikivi Archives V:24. – Stalin mentioned Sweden by name only to Kekkonen and spoke at a more general level with the whole Finnish delegation.
  - 10 Paasikivi's diary, 21 March 1947; about the Soviet complaint, 19 March (at 21 and 27 March). The complaint was presented orally by foreign intelligence resident Razin to his foreign ministry contact. Still in 1959, the Soviet ambassador Zaharov complained to the Agrarian party secretary Korsimo that the Finnish SDP had invited the three Scandinavian prime ministers to the party's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations on 29 November, which happened to be the eve of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of the Winter War.
  - 11 Peter Ruggenthaler. *The Concept of Neutrality in Stalin's Foreign Policy, 1945–1953* (New York: Lexington Books 2015), 128–129, 135, based on Soviet sources. See also M. Korobochkin, "Soviet Views on Sweden's Neutrality and Foreign Policy, 1949–50", in *Peaceful Coexistence? Soviet Union and Sweden in the Khrushchev Era*, ed. by H. Carlbäck, A. Komarov & K. Molin (Stockholm: Södertörn University 2010); A. Rupasov & L. Samuelson, *Sovetsko-shvedskie otnoseniya: Vtoraya polovina 1940–kh – nachalo 1960–kh gg.* (M.: Rosspen 2014).
  - 12 Leino's notes, no date, Yrjö Leino Archives. The discussion must have taken place when Leino was in the government, that is, before the end of May 1948.
  - 13 For this reason, even the Communist Party avoided direct attacks against Nordic cooperation, which was popular among the voters.
  - 14 Paasikivi's diary, 31 Dec 1951 (Erlander), 3 Jan 1952 (Lebedev). The Soviet envoy was very suspicious about Erlander's visit.
  - 15 British embassy in Stockholm to FO, 16 Dec 1948, TNA FO 371/77391, quoted by Visuri.
  - 16 "Information about the foundations of defence decision or about many arrangements was not considered prudent to leave even in the most securely guarded archives", writes Pekka Visuri (2010, 10), who has not spared any effort to find such traces.
  - 17 Paasikivi's diary, 22 (first quote) and 31 Dec 1951 (Erlander quote).
  - 18 Erlander's diary 31 Dec 1951. Initial atmosphere between the two prime ministers was that of stiff mutual suspicion. Erlander's Finnish party

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- friends saw the agrarian Kekkonen as their sworn enemy and excessively pro-Russian. Kekkonen for his part described to the Soviets the Finnish SDP as "the American party".
- 19 Draft memo "O nashikh otnosheniyakh s Finlyandei" by A.N. Abramov, July 1953, registered only on 22 Jan 1954, pr. 06/300, AVP RF, f. 0135, op. 38 (papka 204), d. 8, str. 1–15, quoted on p. 8–9.
- 20 Draft memo "K obstanovke v Finlyandii (spravka)" 24 June 1954, written by A. Aleksandrov & I. Marchuk, signed by dept. chief G.F. Pushkin, AVP RF, f. 0135, op. 38 (papka 204), d. 8, str. 16–27. In this memo, the point of departure were the thankful words of UD cabinet secretary Arne Lundberg on Soviet policy to Finland. On these, Petersson 1994, 88.
- 21 Memcon, Yu.V. Bakey-Anne Marie Snellman, 6 and 7 May 1954, AVP RF, f. 0135, op. 38 (papka 204), d. 5, str. 324–334. Bakey later served as KGB *rezident* (chief of station) in Copenhagen. – Incidentally, on 8 May the Americans did a deep reconnaissance flight through Finnish Lapland over the Murmansk area. After an American bomber exercise flight on 28/29 April through southern Sweden this certainly alarmed the Soviets.
- 22 Paasikivi's diary, 4 June 1954.
- 23 This is mentioned in Government foreign affairs subcommittee minutes on 12 Feb 1957, Foreign Ministry Archives.
- 24 Kekkonen's notes, November–December 1956, Urho Kekkonen Archives 21/35.
- 25 Memo for the Defense Council, "Yleiskatsaus Suomen puolustuskykyymyksen" (Oct. 1958), quoted by Visuri 2010, 42–45. – Soviet minister of defense, Marshal Rodion Malinovski visited Finland in July 1961 and assessed also Sweden's role: "Sweden has practiced wise policy of neutrality, which is advantageous both for the Soviet Union and for Finland. However, it is well known, on which side lie the sympathies of the Swedes." He noted that the Swedish land force commander had a lieutenant general as his liaison officer, while the Marshal himself only had a colonel. He had dismissive opinions of some of the Soviet allies, the Poles, and in particular "the Romanians, good for nothing as soldiers." Memo by lieutenant general T.V. Viljanen, 15 July 1961, published by Visuri 2010, 65.
- 26 "There are neutrals and neutrals", foreign secretary William Rogers said to Finnish foreign minister Ahti Karjalainen in September 1968, praising Finland and criticizing Sweden. Similar views were

- later expressed more heavily by Kissinger. Washington embassy telegram, 13 Sept 1968; Memo by Risto Hyvärinen on discussion with Kissinger, 24 Oct 1969, Kekkonen's yearbooks.
- 27 The main result was that Kekkonen was able to sell the European security conference idea to the U.S. by saying that after the Hungarian experience of 1956 and the Czech experience in 1968, this was the most believable road for eastern Europeans to express their separate identities.
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og forsvarspolitikken". (The most relevant Defence. The small state's leeway in Security- and Defence Policy), in *The Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences Proceedings and Journal, Stockholm*, Vol 1: 2015, p. 51–72.

## Notes

- 1 All quotes from Norwegian and Swedish texted sources are unofficial translated to English by the author.
- 2 The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jørgen Løvland stated in Stortinget (after declaration of independence in 1905): "Our goal shall be to keep out of all combinations and alliances, which can drag Norway into war-adventures together with some of the European warrior-states." Stortings-tidende (Official minutes from meetings in Parliament) 1905/06, p. 45.
- 3 Gjeseth, Gullow: *Landforsvarets krigsplaner under den kalde krigen. (The land force's war-planning during the Cold War)*, further G: 2011, p. 18.
- 4 G: 2011 p. 85.
- 5 Gullow Gjeseth: *Den amerikanske våpenhjelpen, modernisering eller konservering. (U.S. military aid to Norway, modernization or conservation?)*, further G: 2014, p. 4.
- 6 The Army part of U.S. Military Foreign Aid was including equipment for 100 000 soldiers. G: 2014, p. 4
- 7 Ibid. p. 70.
- 8 An example from my own experience; in 1997, it was still impossible to send an e-mail by a military network from the Naval staff in Oslo to the main naval base in Bergen due to different, not interoperable systems.
- 9 The NCO corps was dismissed "for social reasons" by the reorganization of 1933, but re-introduced during the WW II in U.K. However, by 1975 the last remnants of the (technical) NCOs were given officer ranks. This peculiar system sustained until 2014, and a standard system is now under re-establishment.
- 10 For further assessments and details, see Walter: Tor Egil: *Et mest mulig relevant forsvar. Småstatens handlingsrom i sikkerhets- og forsvarspolitikken. (The most relevant defence. The small state's leeway in Security- and Defence Policy)* in *The Royal Swedish Academy of War Sciences Proceedings and Journal*, Vol 1: 2015, p. 51–72.
- 11 This is a real paradox as Norway always has been totally dependent on sea; fisheries, shipping and sea lines of communication. In addition, most of the population is living close to the sea as well.

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- 14 Ibid. p.60.
- 15 G: 2011 p. 4.
- 16 Air force grow from 139 to 250 fighters from 1952 to 1955 (Ibid. p. 125).
- 17 Tactical Evaluation, implemented by permanent teams of experts that made unscheduled unit performance tests without any warning.
- 18 With longer range than SHORAD. (One NIKE/HERCULES battalion, and a number of 40 mm L-70 gun battalions, at the edge of the period Hawk battalions transformed to NASAMS).
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- 20 G: 2014 p. 4.
- 21 The deal with U.S. was to build a standing D-Day navy, (of mostly small vessels, armed with torpedoes and missiles,) tailored for anti-invasion tasks. All vessels should be finished within 1967. After fulfilling this plan, the NOR navy had a substantial fleet covering most of the coast for the rest of the Cold War.
- 22 K: 2010 p. 365–366.
- 23 An average of six fortresses had partly standing crew, and readiness on the same level as the army. These units were producing conscripts to the remaining 34 units, and close-defence units for the entire naval organization due to the same principles as the army.
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- 27 A former colleague, (retired long time ago,) with background in the Intelligence service as an analyst. The referred report was probably written in the last part of the 1960s, and my source had never tracked any further development of this train of thought during his long time in the service.
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- 35 This underlines the great discrepancy in threat assessment between NATO’s main players and Norway’s official view during most of the Cold War. On one hand was the cause why Norway organized the national defence in a quite inadequate way, which on the other hand was accepted by the real players due to the area’s status as a not so important flank to the potential European air-land Central front.
- 36 P: 2003 p. 237–238.
- 37 The number of Norwegian military students at staff college level in Sweden during the Cold War overrule the number of similar Norwegian students participating in other foreign similar studies, included the main Allied states. In addition, the number of Norwegian students of this type also overrule the number of all other foreign students in Sweden during the entire period.
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- 41 U.S. Air force’s and Naval aviation’s contingencies, included some forward deployed ammunition, fuel and spares for reinforce Norway in times of tension.
- 42 H: 2011 p. 347–366, 478 and 479.
- 43 Walter, Tor Egil: Bokanmeldelse; Den dolda alliansen. (Book Review; Holmström’s The Secret Alliance). *Pro Patria*, Oslo Vol 3: 2012, p. 57–60.
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- 45 In order to calm Soviet Union and not put Finland under pressure from the same. A good example that the Nordic Balance was accepted by at least this Norwegian government.



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- 46 One of my former colleagues described a potential mobilization: "A general mobilization will be the greatest self-created catastrophe that can hit Norway. Even without any enemy action, the entire society will collapse by itself in less than 14 days".
- 47 In particular FRA.
- 48 S: 2004 p. 216.
- 49 In particular abroad, I have discussed these matters foreign military personnel in several settings. My general understanding of these discussions was that in a U.S. perspective, *the only useful part of the Norwegian defence was the intelligence service*.
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- 55 One important factor is the two-years course fortification officers' course at the National Defence College in Sweden, a study frequently visited by numerous Norwegian officers from WW II and on, and a good inspiration to continue "state of the art" of conservation of obsolete (and not so obsolete) samples of fortifications.
- 56 The huge wartime structures both in Norway and Sweden just evaporated in a strange way without very little public notice, at least outside the small society of "the closest mourners."
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## The Soviet View

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- 4 Per Vilhelm Gustaf Assarsson (1889–1974) was Sweden's envoy to the Soviet Union in 1940–1944.
- 5 See Kan A.S., “Neitralistskie tendentsii vo vneshnei politike skandinavskikh gosudarstv,” *Novaya i noveishaya istoria*, 1962, no. 4, p. 63–79.
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- 11 On this issue see also Maxim Korobochkin, “Soviet Views on Sweden's Neutrality and Foreign Policy, 1945–50,” in Helene Carlbäck, Alexey Komarov and Karl Molin (eds.) *Peaceful coexistence? Soviet Union and Sweden in the Khrushchev era*, (Moscow, Ves Mir, 2011), p. 81–112.
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## The American View

### Notes

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During the Cold War, the real meaning of Swedish neutrality and of the capability of Sweden's armed forces played a significant role in any predictions of how a future military conflict would develop in northern Europe. The territory of this non-aligned country covered half the demarcation-line between NATO and the Warsaw Pact in Europe, and it spent significant sums on defense. It had undeniable ties to the West, but had managed to stay out of two earlier world wars and signaled a firm determination to stay out of a third one.

How successful were the Swedes in convincing the surrounding world? What was the perception of Swedish defense and security policy during the Cold War in the two Super Powers and among Sweden's neighbours?

In this volume, experts from Russia, the US, Norway, Finland and Denmark discuss this subject. Their contributions are commented upon by Swedish scholars.

