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SECURITY DILEMMAS IN SCANDINAVIA

Evaporated Nuclear Options and Indigenous
Conventional Capabilities

René Nyberg

Number 17

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Evaporated Nuclear Options and Indigenous Conventional Capabilities

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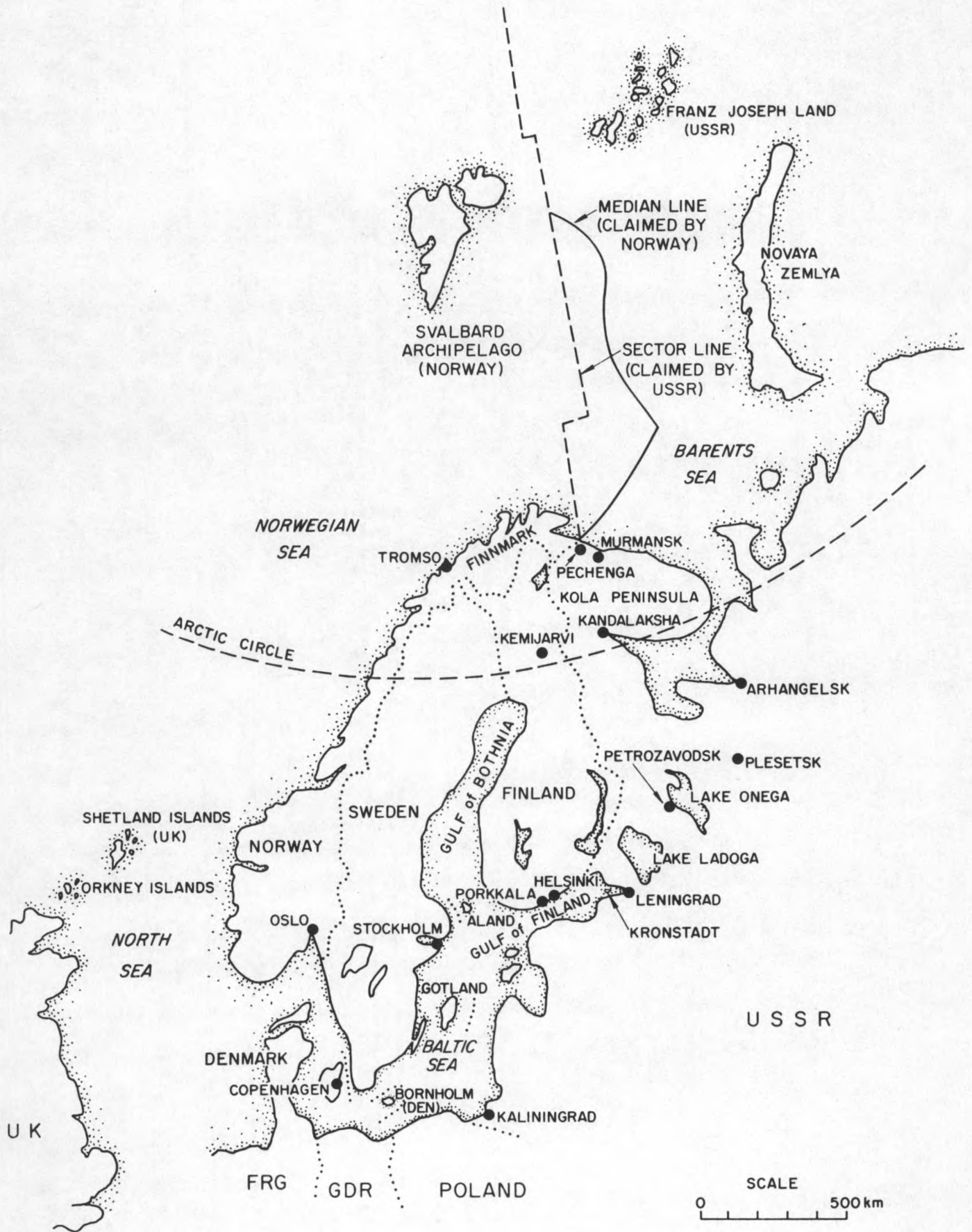
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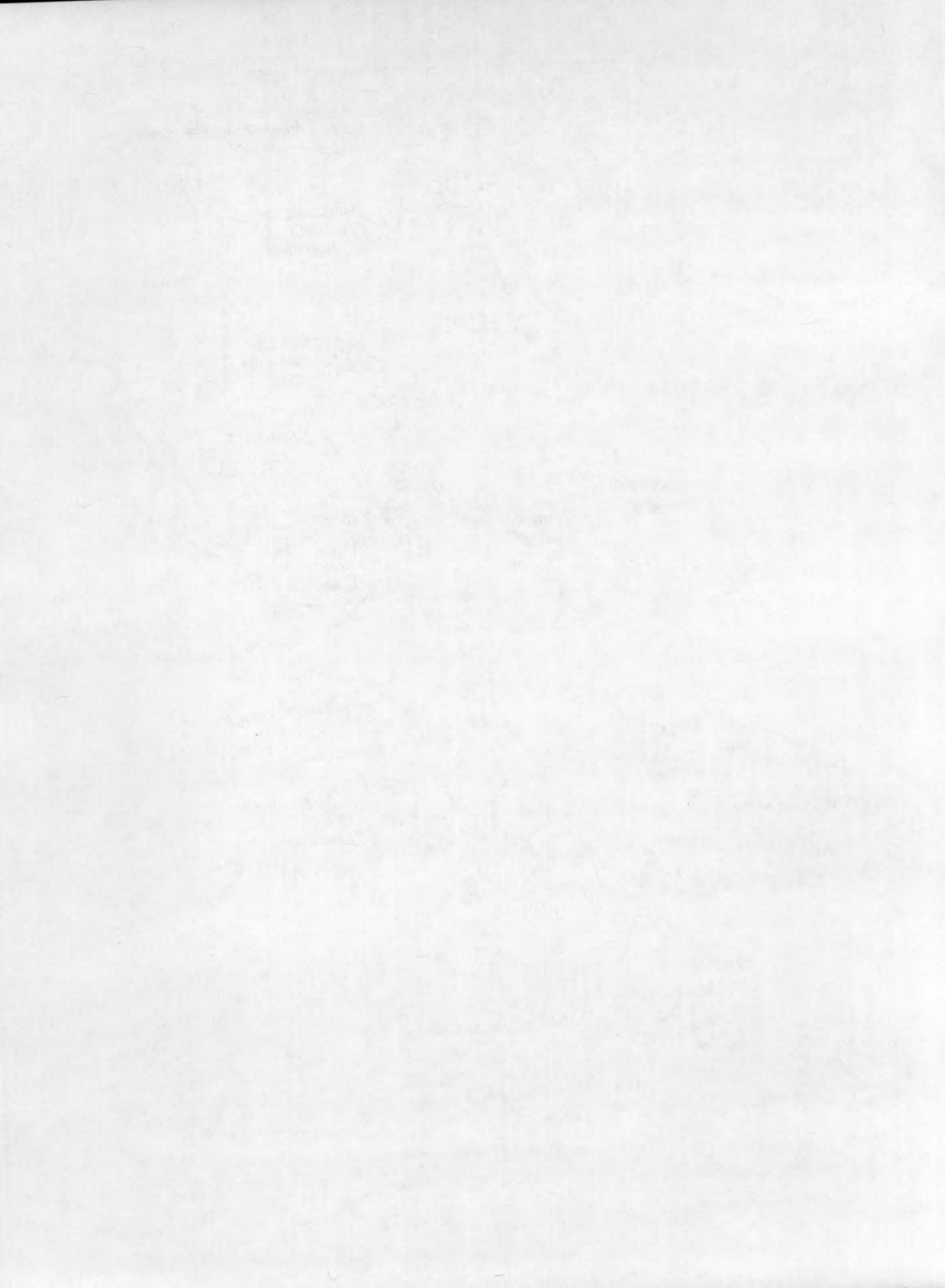
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The author is a Finnish Foreign Service Officer. The views expressed are those of the author and not of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

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1. Introduction - Indispensable Conventional Capabilities

In the nuclear age, it might seem futile to look into the virtues of conventional defence, even in the case of small states that are not parties to alliances. But the recent debate on "no-first-use" of (tactical) nuclear weapons suggests the contrary. It has once again clearly demonstrated the irreplaceable role of conventional capabilities, even for countries allied with nuclear powers and regardless of possible future adjustments of doctrines. This sudden burst of ideas has also vindicated Lawrence Freedman's observation that debates on strategy have a cyclical character since "[M]uch of what is offered today as a profound and new insight was said yesterday."¹

The defence postures of the Scandinavian countries² have gradually emerged from parallel but distinct evaluations of general nuclear strategies. In this respect the outcome of the Swedish nuclear debate of the 1950's and 1960's is still of interest for small states, non-aligned as well as aligned, as an argument for indigenous conventional capabilities.

In World War I, the remoteness of Scandinavia shielded her from the fighting, but not so in World War II. The Soviet attack on Finland in 1939 and the German occupation of Denmark and Norway in 1940 left only Sweden untouched. In the aftermath of the war, however, the division of Europe was never completed in Scandinavia. Both Denmark and Norway (together with Iceland, which had gained independence from Denmark in 1944) broke with their traditional neutrality and became founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty

¹ Lawrence Freedman, The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), p. xv.

² Iceland has no armed forces. (The American forces in Keflavik are called "The Icelandic Defence Force".)

Organization (NATO) in 1949, but Sweden and Finland did not join military alliances.

The "Nordic pattern" that emerged was full of caveats reflecting security dilemmas and interdependence. In 1948 Finland concluded a treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (FCMA) with the Soviet Union, thus achieving an arrangement which provided a solution to her security problem. The FCMA-treaty, which includes military stipulations in case of an attack against Finland or against the Soviet Union through Finnish territory, never resulted in peacetime military cooperation. A Finnish defence posture has emerged based on an indigenous area denial capability.

In a mix of deterrence and assurances vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, Denmark and Norway adopted self-imposed restrictions to their NATO-membership. No foreign troops could be deployed on Danish or Norwegian soil during peace time, and as a corollary both countries refused nuclear weapons as well. Subsequent developments have led to a virtual evaporation of the nuclear option, even though it is still formally retained.

Through an impressive build-up of her armed forces during the war, Sweden's neutrality at the end of hostilities in Europe was backed up by considerable armed strength; in particular Sweden had the fourth largest air force in the world. After an interlude in the 1950's and the 1960's when a possibility of a Swedish tactical nuclear deterrent was contemplated, a Swedish doctrine of deterrence through a strong conventional area denial capability emerged, with the assumption that this would also provide the ability to withstand possible nuclear blackmail.

In the case of Finland, two lost wars against the Soviet Union and a campaign to oust the Germans from northern Finland ended, nevertheless, in an improved strategic situation after stabilization of relations with the Soviet Union. This was a result of a shift in the military center of gravity in the Soviet

Northwest away from the Gulf of Finland (Leningrad) to the coast of Murmansk and to the southern Baltic. Even the increased strategic importance of Northern Scandinavia because of the Soviet base complex on the Kola peninsula does not alter this situation. Important geomilitary constraints prevent the northern parts of Finland and Sweden from being used as a short-cut for possible surprise thrusts to the Norwegian coast or against Murmansk.

Geography together with interdependence has created an important deterrent against increased outside involvement in Scandinavia. The fact that no nuclear weapons nor foreign troops are deployed in Scandinavia, and nuclear weapons very likely never will be, has especially enhanced Finnish security and her possibilities to avoid a conflict of interest with the Soviet Union.

2. Sweden - Armed Neutrality with a Nuclear Interlude

2.1 A Request for Nuclear Weapons

The fact that Sweden (like Switzerland) contemplated in the 1950's and 1960's acquiring an independent nuclear deterrent is of historical importance only. The significance of the outcome of the decision process lies in its confirmation of the role of a conventional area denial capability.

In hindsight, it might be argued that the Swedish nuclear option was not really based on realistic assumptions because Sweden never had adequate plutonium production capacity. This does not mean that the lack of technological or intellectual wherewithal would have constituted an obstacle, had the Swedish government made the final decision to go for the bomb. But economic considerations, and the political developments that led to the signing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968, as well as the decisive reappraisal of the role of tactical nuclear weapons, had effectively arrested the development of indigenous nuclear fuel cycles or even modest capabilities to produce weapon-grade plutonium. To quote George Quester, "In effect the bargains offered by the American Atomic Energy Commission had quietly undone a Swedish defence plan."¹ Actually, the technical hub of the Swedish option, the heavy-water research reactor (R4 Eva) in Marviken, was initially scheduled for operation in 1969 but was never finished.²

¹ George Quester, "Sweden and the Non-Proliferation Treaty," Cooperation and Conflict 1/1970, p. 54; Jerome Henry Garriss, Sweden and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons, A Study in Restraint, Los Angeles: University of California, Ph.D. 1972, p. 310. Garriss' work is a careful study, although it does not deal with the military-strategic implications of the Swedish decision. It compares favorably with an other thesis on the same subject (Jerry Wilson Ralston, The Defense of Small States in the Nuclear Age, The Case of Sweden and Switzerland, Geneva: Universite de Geneve Institut Universitaire de Hautes Etudes Internationales These no. 193, 1969).

² Cf. Garriss, pp. 79, 131. The reactor was planned to use natural uranium, not subject to international controls, from Sweden's Ranstad uranium mine.

The drive in the 1950's and 1960's by the Swedish military and the sympathetic political parties (foremost the conservatives and the liberals) to acquire atomic weapons reflected besides concepts of deterrence also the prevailing view - that nuclear weapons were desirable as an enhancement of firepower and that a limited war with small "tactical" nuclear weapons, without an assumption of escalation, was a likely scenario. At the same time the demand also reflected the essence of Sweden's armed neutrality, the conviction that the buildup of a strong defence had made neutrality possible and indeed, had dissuaded a German invasion and intolerable political pressure during the war. In the case of Sweden the blatant shortcomings of the early days of World War II were in fresh memory. The defence plan of 1925, influenced by a League of Nations euphoria, had resulted in substantial defence cuts. This was, however, abandoned with the defence plan of 1936, but the shortcomings were not effectively remedied before fighting broke out around Sweden in 1939.

A concerted effort especially after the successful German surprise attack against Denmark and Norway in April 1940 resulted in a military build-up that was maintained after hostilities ended in Europe, giving Sweden in the early 1950's the fourth largest air force in the world. Defence expenditure as a share of GNP remained high, around 5% throughout the 1950's and 1960's, after which it leveled off to approximately 3.5%.¹

Excluding the Soviet Union Sweden has the largest uranium resources in Europe. In contrast, no known uranium deposits exist in Switzerland. Cf. Uranium, Resources, Production and Demand, (Paris OECD 1982), pp. 165-166. The Ranstad deposit in Billinge in Southern Sweden is actually one of the largest known deposits in the world, although it is lowgrade and accessible only by strip-mining.

¹ 1982 3.4%, The Military Balance 1982-83; cf. also Ingemar Doerfer, who makes a wide range of international comparisons, System Viggen 37, Arms Technology and Domestication of Glory, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 1973), pp. 36-46.

It is the Swedish Air Force - together with universal conscription and the "total defence" concept - that symbolizes Sweden's armed neutrality and defence resolve. Although the size of the Swedish Air Force has been declining, Sweden's ability to develop and produce four generations of indigenously designed jet aircraft (the fifth being now in development) is indeed a major achievement.¹ In 1971 when the first attack-Viggen was deployed the Swedish Air Force with its 650 combat aircraft still compared favorably with the French (700), British (600) and West-German (600) Air Forces and Naval Air Arms.²

Sweden's interest in acquiring nuclear capabilities has to be seen against this background of successful armed neutrality and an ability to build up almost from scratch an air force comparable to the fighter part of the Royal Air Force (RAF).³ To Swedish planners there seemed no reason why Sweden should not acquire any new weapon system deemed necessary for her defence. On the contrary, the idea of giving up their position as a front runner in defence technology must have seemed totally unacceptable, especially for the air force. It is therefore only logical that it was the air force that first came out with a demand for atomic weapons. The proposal by the air force commander in December 1952 was immediately opposed by the army and navy, and an intraservice quarrel ensued. Atomic weapons were first seen as air force gadgets that would only drain resources from other services.

¹ J 29 Tunnan 1948, A 32 Lansen 1952, JA 35 Draken 1955, AJ 37 Viggen (attack) 1967, JA 37 Viggen (fighter) 1978, (JAS 39 Gripen 1992, 250 will be procured in all by the year 2005).

² Ingemar Doerfer, Arms Deal, The Selling of the F-16, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983) p. 179.

³ In presenting its proposition for a defence decision in 1948 to Parliament the Swedish government made an explicit reference to the RAF and the Battle of Britain - The Baltic Sea was to be Sweden's Channel. Doerfer 1973, p. 49; Dick Stenberg, "Flygvapnet" (Air Force) 1926-1976, Kungliga Krigsvetenskapsakdemins Handlingar och Tidskrift 4/1976.

But the emerging political and doctrinal readjustments especially in the United States resulted in a change of heart in Sweden. Two years after the air force demands were denied, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces made a forceful request for tactical nuclear weapons. Maneuvers held in the autumn of 1954¹ in Bergslagen, western Sweden in which the use of tactical nuclear weapons was simulated, convinced the army of their utility for Swedish defence, indeed their indispensability as the argument later developed.

In contrast to Switzerland where the government in 1958 made a decision in principle to arm Swiss forces with atomic weapons (a decision that was unsuccessfully challenged in two referenda)², in Sweden the government (under the firm foreign policy leadership of Oesten Unden)³ retained its freedom of action by not committing itself to any decision. Jerome Garris contrasts the aloofness of the Swedish social democratic government to the "disastrous" approach of the British Labour Party on nuclear issues.⁴ Another example of intra-party disagreement of the same period can be found in Norway, where the formulation of Norwegian nuclear weapons policy by the Labor Party government was exploited in order to split the party.⁵

Before the Swedish defence community in the mid 1960's changed its opinion on nuclear weapons, the armed forces held firmly for their demand for nuclear

¹ Comparable NATO-maneuvers in Western Germany were held in 1954 (Carte Blanche) and 1955 (Sagebrush).

² Theodore H. Winkler, Kernenergie und Aussenpolitik (Berlin: Berlin Verlag 1981, pp. 152-157.

³ 1886-1974, Foreign Minister 1924-1926 and 1945-1962.

⁴ Garris, pp. 281-282.

⁵ Einar Gerhardsen (Prime Minister 1945-1951, 1955-1965) I medgang og motgang, Erindringer (III) 1955-65 (memoirs), (Oslo 1972), pp. 109-120.

weapons. They enjoyed the unequivocal support of the opposition (conservatives and liberals, the agrarian center party was somewhat more hesitant) alternatively voicing demands of joining NATO and also of some prominent social democrats. For tactical reasons the demand was modified into a request for research funding to reduce the lead-time needed from the affirmative decision to deployment. Funding was granted, not for weapons research, but for "protective" research with an understanding of a broad interpretation. From the armed forces' point of view, this was an incremental approach. At the same time, "protective research" not only provided the National Defence Research Institute (FOA) with insights into protection against the effect of nuclear weapons, as Quester seems to suggest¹, but also gave the Swedish armed forces a unique opportunity to acquire in-depth knowledge of nuclear weapons technology and thus a sound basis for judging the relevant doctrines as well.

2.2 Nuclear Fallacies

Perhaps the most relevant conclusion that small states might draw from the debate on limited nuclear deterrents is the fact, as Michael Handel points out, that the tight bipolar system "... has decreased [at least in Europe] the major powers' desire to intervene conventionally against weak states when there is a chance of confronting another nuclear power, and therefore of risking escalation."² This has in a way given the non-aligned small states more freedom of action than before.

¹ Quester, p. 61.

² Michael Handel, Weak States in the International System, (London: Frank Cass, 1981), pp. 195-196.

These kinds of conclusions may be right, but only if applied to the immediate physical security of the countries. A broader interpretation is easily misleading; for example compare the notion that voting power in international organizations would represent real power.¹ Nevertheless it is clear that the increasing difficulty of nuclear powers to employ their "strength in a rational manner"² benefits the bulk of small states (in Europe), which by definition are status quo-oriented. Combined with the "diminished legitimacy of war" (at least in Europe)³, "[T]he factors that inhibit the superpowers' exploitation of their enormous military machines ... ipso facto increase the lesser states' capacity to use their own power for denial against the superpowers and their allies."⁴ The argument above seeks to establish certain positive aspects of the present nuclear parity but from an obvious assumption of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Although it seems against the instincts of a military man to give up any option to plan for every possible contingency, nuclear weapons were denied to the armed forces of Sweden. From the start of the debate, concern was voiced by the opponents of nuclear weapons that acquiring even a modest nuclear capability would drain resources if a strong conventional defence were not to be abandoned. The correctness of this argument can be proven by referring, e.g., to the experience of NATO. Nuclear defence was preferred because it promised a

¹ Perhaps this is how one should understand Klaus Knorr's remark "[T]his leads...to an appreciation of the power of the less powerful, and hence, the small powers are weak but not meek." Klaus Knorr, On the Uses of Military Power in the Nuclear Age, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 78.

² Robert L. Rothstein, Alliances and Small States, (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 265.

³ Knorr, p. 122.

⁴ Stanley Hoffman, Gulliver's Troubles, Or the Setting of American Foreign Policy, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company 1968), p. 53.

"defence on the cheap,"¹ consequently conventional capabilities were neglected because of their cost. The economic argument was coined by the Eisenhower administration (with the backing of the conservative British government) into the slogan "security or solvency", which was easily modified into a promise of "a bigger bang for a buck."²

Neglecting conventional capabilities leads to the risk of early use of nuclear weapons. If this is unacceptable for major nuclear powers, it is prohibitive for small states like Sweden or Switzerland. Concerning a war in Europe, some strategists have argued that "[A]ny war will be nuclear, whether or not nuclear weapons are used, in the sense that deployment - even of conventional forces - will have to take place against the backdrop of tactical nuclear weapons, and the risk of escalation ... can never be wholly removed."³ This leads to the crucial realization that the site of the first use of nuclear weapons is not decisive. Even if one super power initiates the use of nuclear weapons in a secondary direction it must reckon with corresponding counteractions from the other super power as the war escalates. In particular, operations against Sweden, would represent thrusts in strategic directions, either to the North Sea or to the Soviet heartland.⁴ This observation led to the Swedish government's view that Sweden in every essential way enjoys the protection of the "nuclear umbrella" approximately in the same way as the surrounding countries. By contrast, if a country were to acquire an

¹ Michael Howard, "Reassurance and Deterrence: Western Defense in the 1980s," Foreign Affairs Winter 1982/83, p. 312.

² As quoted by Freedman, pp. 76-90.

³ Henry Kissinger, "The Unresolved Problems of European Defence," Foreign Affairs July 1962, p. 526.

⁴ On threatening thrusts cf. Barry Posen, "Inadvertent Nuclear War? Escalation and NATO's Northern Flank," International Security, Fall 1982.

independent nuclear deterrent, "... the responsibility for defence passes into its own hands symbolically and, as the last resort, in fact." This observation by George Liska was made about members of alliances, but could also serve to demonstrate the eventual dilemmas of small non-aligned powers especially with independent nuclear forces.¹ On the other hand, theories of "proportional or finite deterrence" put forward by General Pierre Gallois and others argue that the damage a small state could cause to a great power by using its nuclear weapons would be out of proportion to its value as a prize.² Such notions were dismissed out of hand by the Swedish government in considering adoption of nuclear weapons.

According to the Swedish parliamentary defence committee that submitted its report in 1968, it would be inconceivable for a Swedish government to initiate nuclear war against an adversary that is far superior in such warfare.³ This is in concurrence with David Vital's findings that "... the military consequences of the inequality of states persist into the nuclear age: only one side has to weigh the risks of overwhelming destruction."⁴ In realizing that a weak nuclear deterrent

¹ George Liska, Nations in Alliance, The Limits of Interdependence, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), p. 277.

² Cf. Raymond Aron, The Great Debate, (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), pp. 122-125; Handel, pp. 198-201. General Gallois' extreme views on the neutralizing effects of thermonuclear weapons may be demonstrated by the following quote: "It is easy to prove that those countries as different as Switzerland and Communist China are in the same boat when it comes to the nuclear threat." as quoted by Aron, p. 102.

³ The relevant Swedish documents are: Karl Frithiofson's (under-secretary of defense) lecture "Saakerhetspolitiska perspektiv paa fraagan om svenska kaernvapen" (Perspectives of security policy concerning the question of Swedish nuclear weapons) Kungliga krigsvetenskapsakademins Handlingar och Tidskrift 9/1966, pp. 303-315; Saakerhetspolitik och foersvarsutgifter (Defence committee report) SOU 1968:10, pp. 137-139; Kungl. Maj:ts proposition nr 110 aar 1968 (government five-year defense plan proposal), pp. 65-66.

⁴ Vital, p. 173.

might actually prove to be provocative and thus at its worst invite preemption, the debate had come full circle. This led to a new appraisal of the virtue of a strong conventional defence. A Swedish defence posture emerged with the assumption that it would be possible to create a conventional area denial capability that would either dissuade a possible aggressor from launching an attack or force him to use nuclear weapons. As long as nuclear weapons have not been used a conventional area denial capability would also provide the ability to withstand possible nuclear blackmail.

Especially in the case of Sweden this reasoning was based on a crucial marginal-strategy assumption: Sweden is not a major goal in any possible conflict and thus no power would be able to concentrate more than marginal forces in her direction. It is what Raymond Aron has called:

"... a small country on the fringes of the rival power blocs and lacking any and all reprisal weapons: will such a country be forced to capitulate if threatened by a thermonuclear power? Given the new factors of mass destruction, the theoreticians' answer was affirmative at first, and in the abstract this remains true. But having admitted that there can be no such thing as perfect security in this world, one must concede the partial efficacy of territorial defense. The thermonuclear power could in fact destroy the small country; but to what purpose? If the people and their leaders show the requisite courage, their defensive capability will force the aggressor armed with his superbombs to choose between costly conquest and futile destruction. A weak retaliatory capability might in some cases prove more of a danger than a protection."¹

Probably the most important though unintentional, side-effect of the Swedish (and Swiss) decision not to go nuclear was the demonstration to other small European states that there is life beyond nuclear deterrence. Swedish conclusions about area denial based on a strong conventional defence were applicable even in countries like Finland and Norway with rather different defence postures.

¹ Aron, p. 204.

3. Denmark and Norway - Evaporated Nuclear Options

In 1957 Denmark and Norway refused to accept nuclear weapons or to allow nuclear missiles to be deployed on their soil during peacetime, as a corollary of "base policy", i.e., the self-imposed restriction not to allow foreign bases or deployment of allied forces during peacetime.¹

These identical decisions² against nuclear weapons put the two smallest armed members of NATO into a category of their own inside the alliance. Between 1957 and 1962 the United States negotiated bilateral agreements with all NATO countries except Denmark, Luxemburg, Iceland and Norway for cooperation "in the operation of atomic weapons systems for mutual defence purposes."³ When the Norwegian government in 1961 defined its nuclear weapons policy in the Norwegian Parliament, it was partly as a response to a request by the military to have tactical nuclear weapons. The line adopted in 1957 was confirmed with the important specification "no nuclear weapons during peacetime." The right to review the self-imposed restrictions at any time was, however, retained.

Although the Norwegian defence committee, in submitting its report in 1978, took pains to emphasize that the signing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty does not impede nuclear defence in the framework of an alliance, the Norwegian

¹ An additional restriction concerns allied maneuvers etc. in the northernmost part of Norway (Finnmark) and on the Danish island of Bornholm.

² The relevant general sources on Norwegian and Danish nuclear policy are: Forsvarskommisjonen av 1974, (Oslo, NOU 1978:9) (Defence Committee Report); Dansk Sikkerhetspolitik 1946-66, I & II, (Copenhagen 1968) (Security Policy Report); Problemer omkring dansk sikkerhetspolitik, (Copenhagen 1970) (Defence Committee Report); Johan Joergen Holst: Norsk sikkerhetspolitik i strategisk perspektiv I & II, (Oslo 1967) a still actual presentation of Norwegian security problems with a documentary appendix; cf. also "Nordic Security Today," Cooperation and Conflict, XVII, 1982.

³ M. Leitenberg, "Background information on tactical nuclear weapons (Primarily in the European context)", SIPRI Tactical Nuclear Weapons: European Perspectives (London: Taylor & Francis, Ltd., 1978), p. 15.

(and Danish) armed forces have never embarked on any preparations to receive these kinds of weapons. This has to be seen in stark contrast to their base policy where preparations for the expeditious reception of allied reinforcements are a major concern. The sources available do not shed much light on this apparent contradiction. As late as 1978 the Norwegian defence committee dogmatically declared that the adopted policy on nuclear weapons does not "in principle" prevent the use of nuclear weapons by Norwegian troops. But two years later defence minister Thorvald Stoltenberg stated in Parliament that Norwegian troops have never been trained to use nuclear weapons, nor are there any plans to do so. As for receiving nuclear weapons, the defence minister pointed out that there are no special depots in Norway for storing these kinds of weapons, and neither does there exist a required special communications network. The remarks of the defence minister - that were later reiterated by the Labor government in April 1981 and the conservative government in June 1982¹ - have to be seen against the backdrop of the heated debate over a Nordic nuclear-weapons-free-zone (NWFZ) that emerged after NATO's "dual track" decision and the question of prestocking materiel for U.S. marines in Norway. In his conclusion to the above-mentioned parliamentary debate, the defence minister added that, in contrast to the base policy, the nuclear weapons policy does not include a reservation limiting it only to times when there is no attack or threat of an attack against Norway.² The Labor government's policy program for 1982-85, presented in April 1981, contained the following statement:

"Norway will not permit foreign troops to be stationed in our country in peace time. Nuclear weapons and chemical weapons will not be

¹ Government Report on Security and Disarmament, Stortingsmeldning 101, Oslo, June 1982, p. 28.

² Parliamentary defence debate 5.12.1980, Stortingsforhandlinger, Oslo, pp. 1800-1801.

stored or stationed in Norway. Norway will base itself on conventional defence. The Norwegian military will neither be trained nor equipped for conducting atomic warfare. The goal must be to prevent the use of atomic weapons on or against Norwegian territory."¹

In the same year, the then governing Danish social democratic party at its party congress dropped the reservation "in peacetime" attached formerly to the nuclear weapons policy. This was followed by an explanation by Prime Minister Anker Joergensen that this does not mean any change in Danish policy.²

The Danish and Norwegian governments were ready to go only this far but not further. Any subsequent step would have interfered with the essence of their alliance with NATO - positive guarantees of help when needed - and created possibly corrosive precedents within the alliance. Formal renunciation of the nuclear option or what was left of it became synonymous with ideas of a Nordic NWFZ. This was the position anyway of the new conservative Norwegian government, which carried the elections in the autumn of 1981. This was also the view of an independent Danish committee that looked into the question.³ Over twenty-five years the Swedish pro-nuclear slogan "Nukes or NATO" had in the neighboring Scandinavian countries turned into a question "A NWFZ or NATO?" Although the empty shell of a nuclear option had lost most of its significance the uncertainty of securing alliance help in time of war still remained.

3.1. Exposure and Vulnerability

There is a striking similarity between the West German and Norwegian efforts to insure help by building up an effective conventional defence, while

¹ Langtidsprogrammet 1982-85 Stortingsmelding no. 79, Oslo, April 1981, (Report to Parliament).

² Cf. Politiken, Copenhagen, 9/15/1981.

³ Det sikkerheds-och nedrustningspolitiske udvalg: Dansk sikkerhetspolitik og forslagene om Norden som kernevaapenfri zone, (Danish security policy and proposals concerning a Nordic NWFZ) (Copenhagen, 1982).

painstakingly avoiding any notion of an isolated or self-sufficient national defence. The virtual evaporation of the Norwegian (and Danish) nuclear option seems dissimilar to the bipartisan West-German reaction against ideas of formal pledges of no-first-use of (tactical) nuclear weapons,¹ but the unequivocal Norwegian refusal to sanction legally the present nuclear-weapons-free status of Northern Europe and her continued adherence to the doctrine of flexible response suggests the contrary. In the case of Norway, with her strategic location, there has been an increasing effort to extract additional guarantees of help from the alliance, especially from its key members. The comparison to West Germany is obviously out of proportion, not only because of differences in geography and topography, but also in terms of manpower and hardware, and the fact that there are no foreign troops on Norwegian soil. Nevertheless the similarities are still considerable, the most important being strategic exposure and vulnerability. But just as the Soviet build-up in the Far East around the Sea of Okhotsk is not determined by the proximity of Japan, neither is the Soviet build-up on her Barents Sea littoral determined by Norway.

The recent build-up by the Soviet navy, which might ultimately endanger the Western sea-lanes of communication is perceived as most threatening by Norway. Although Norway's importance as a littoral of both the Norwegian and the Barents Seas and her constantly growing wealth in hydrocarbons has undoubtedly improved her standing in any NATO plans, the Norwegians are haunted by the fear of being cut off from their allies in the event of war. Psychologically, this fear is probably magnified by the traumatic experience of 1940, when the British assistance was improvised and inadequate, as well as that of the last year of World War II, when the exiled Norwegian Government in London appealed in vain to the Western Allies.

¹ Cf. Karl Kaiser et.al., "Nuclear Weapons and the Preservation of Peace," Foreign Affairs, Summer 1982.

for help to avoid utter destruction of Norway at the hands of the retreating Wehrmacht. The Germans had already made extensive use of scorched-earth tactics in Northern Norway. The allies, however, were more concerned with the campaign on the central front and with avoiding any friction with the Soviet Union.¹

3.2 A Mix of Deterrence and Reassurance

Technological and doctrinal developments in nuclear weapons and their possible use has fundamentally reduced the need to deploy them, even in a time of crisis, on Norwegian or Danish soil. This is especially evident in the case of Denmark with her small territory and her integrated defence with the Federal Republic of Germany. As matters stand, the commander of NATO's Baltic Approaches Command (COMBALTAP) is always a Dane, who thus, even in times of peace, commands West German units armed with nuclear weapons (albeit the warheads are in American custody). Even in the case of Norway, with her extended coastline reaching all the way up to the Barents Sea, the defence of the country by nuclear weapons might not necessarily require their presence on Norwegian soil. In fact, nuclear artillery, in particular, would probably, be useless, owing to limited range, although it has to be admitted that Norwegian territory, with its deep fjords, isolated valleys, critical mountain passes and sparse population, might appeal as ideal "nuclear terrain." A possible need for nuclear weapons could be satisfied by carrier-based aircraft or aircraft based already in peacetime on the British Isles, to say nothing about air- or sea-launched

¹ Nils Morten Udgaard, Great Power Politics and Norwegian Foreign Policy (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1973), pp. 22, 75-90.

cruise missiles.¹ Airports in the southern parts of Norway would serve in a supporting role (so called Collocated Operating Bases where fuel, conventional ammunition etc. are prestocked).

From a military point of view, the nuclear option has irretrievably lost its practical significance for both Denmark and Norway except as a deterrent. Politically, as things stand, it is inconceivable that any Danish or Norwegian government would be able, or even willing, to invite nuclear weapons into the country. A non-nuclear defence posture, though ultimately backed up by a nuclear guarantee, has gradually emerged.

Considering Norway's exposed geographical location, a strong indigenous conventional defence blends well with her mix of deterrence and reassurance vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. A strong defence constitutes the basis for receiving allied reinforcements when needed. The non-nuclear character of this defence is a vital element in assuring the Soviet Union of Norway's defensive purposes.

Nevertheless, defensive intentions by themselves do not provide a solution to the security dilemma of Norway. Norway's efforts to increase her security can actually decrease it despite her self-imposed restrictions. An important variable to be considered is whether capabilities that protect the state also provide the capability for attack. If they do not, that is, when defensive weapons differ from offensive weapons, a state can increase its own security without decreasing that of others (as should, for example, be the case with countries like Sweden and Finland, which are not party to a military alliance). In the case of Norway, however, there is no guarantee that the inferences drawn by the Soviet Union would always be the "right" ones (as seen by the Norwegians) because of Norway's

¹ In its report to the Parliament in June 1982 the Conservative government reiterated that vessels calling at Norwegian ports, which carry nuclear weapons aboard, do not violate stipulations of Norwegian nuclear-weapons policy.

membership in NATO and considering especially the nuclear factor and the central role of the Kola base-complex to the Soviet Union. The fine line between offensive and defensive acts is especially illusive in anti-submarine warfare (ASW). All reinforcements - especially American - entering Norway would be regarded from a Soviet point of view as potential elements of a nuclear defence, a trip wire of sorts, maybe even a potential nuclear offence, regardless of what is said or, indeed, whether nuclear weapons are brought ashore.¹

It has been a central element of Norwegian security policy to retain the right to define and if necessary to reconsider the self-imposed restrictions concerning her NATO membership. By refusing to assign legal status to them, Norway effectively denies the Soviet Union a right to interpret them (*droit de regard*). Still Norway has not been able to escape Soviet influence in the Northern sea areas where a host of unsolved problems (friction on Svalbard, delimitation of the Barents Sea continental shelf, fishery) bear upon these two countries. This state of affairs with sluggish negotiations and with no hope of early settlement, actually provides the Soviet Union with leverage it has not been able to obtain elsewhere.

¹ Cf. Robert Jervis: "Cooperation under a security dilemma," World Politics, January 1978, no. 2. I am indebted to Barry R. Posen for calling my attention to this article.

4. Finland - "The Moment of Truth is the Crisis Rather Than War"

4.1 Historical Background

The strategic situation of Finland has dramatically improved since the end of the war. This can mainly be attributed to the Fenno-Soviet reconciliation and the fact that the strategic center of gravity of the Soviet Union's Northwest has shifted from the Gulf of Finland to the Murmansk coast and to the southern Baltic. The decades since the armistice of September 1944 have confirmed the basic underlying assumption of Finnish security policy, that "Russia's main interest in Finland is military."¹ The war resulted in border changes which correlate with both the military interests of the victorious power and the changing strategic environment. What Stalin did in 1940 and repeated in 1944 was to reestablish Peter the Great's border (with the Swedish realm) in order to secure St. Petersburg/Leningrad. By insisting additionally in 1944 on acquiring the Finnish outlet to the Barents Sea (Petsamo/Pechenga), Murmansk was secured. After the headquarters of the Baltic fleet were moved from Kronstadt to Kaliningrad-Baltisk (formerly Koenigsberg-Pillau) in the middle of the 1950's the return of the Porkkala naval base, west of Helsinki, became possible in 1955-1956 and the strategic shift was completed.²

The bare essence of the Soviet strategic interest in Finland is reflected in the wording of the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance

¹ The phrase was coined by J.K. Paasikvi (1870-1956, prime-minister 1918, 1944-46, president 1946-56) in his memoirs dealing with the so-called years of oppression 1899-1905 and 1907-1917. Paasikiven muistelmia sortovuosilta (Porvoo: WSOY 1957) (Swedish language translation exists), p. 84.

² I have been unable to find an exact date when the headquarters were moved but considering that the fortress of Kronstadt was decorated in 1954 with the Order of the Red Banner the timing should not be totally off the mark. Dvazhdii Kraznoznamyonii Baltiskii Flot, (Moscow 1978), p. 309.

(FCMA) that was concluded in April 1948. (The final wording of the vital parts of the treaty was based on a Finnish draft.)

Article I. In the Eventuality of Finland, or the Soviet Union through Finnish territory, becoming the object of an armed attack by Germany or any State allied with the latter, Finland will, true to its obligations as an independent state, fight to repel the attack. Finland will in such cases use all its available forces for defending its territorial integrity by land, sea and air, and will do so within the frontiers of Finland in accordance with obligations defined in the present Agreement, and if necessary, with the assistance of, or jointly with, the Soviet Union.

In the cases aforementioned the Soviet Union will give Finland the help required, the giving of which will be subject to mutual agreement between the Contracting Parties.

Article II. The High Contracting Parties shall confer with each other if it is established that the threat of an armed attack as described in Article I is present.

The main features of the Finnish defence posture have not changed since 1945 when the ailing Marshal of Finland, Gustaf Mannerheim¹, drafted in longhand (using pre-revolutionary Russian spelling) the idea of a geographically limited joint defence in the case of aggression ("agressiya") against Finland, or against the Soviet Union through Finland.² This was done after a discussion in January 1945 with Stalin's heir apparent, Andrei Zhdanov.³ A military alliance was not envisioned, nor did the subsequent treaty result in one. As the Finnish Parliamentary Defence Committee that submitted its report in 1981 notes "The

¹ 1867-1951, Regent 1918-1919, Supreme Commander 1939-45, President 1944-46.

² Six months after Hitler, enraged because Finland had turned her arms against Germany, predicted that "the Bolsheviks will hang that international grand-duke (Mannerheim)", Zhdanov described Mannerheim as a "remarkable man, considering his age" to the British envoy in Helsinki. Tuomo Polvinen: Barbarossasta Teheraniin, Suomi kansainvalisessa politiikassa I, 1941-44, (Juva: WSOY, 1978), p. 335 note 23; Tuomo Polvinen: Jaltasta Pariisin rauhaan, Suomi kansainvalisessa politiikassa III, 1945-47, (Juva, WSOY, 1981), pp. 59-60. This three volume standard work "Finland in International politics 1941-1947" is based on all available archival sources except the still closed Soviet. An abridged English translation is forthcoming (University of Minnesota Press).

³ 1896-1948, Secretary of the central committee and member of the politbureau of the AUCP(b), First Secretary of the Leningrad party organization and Head of the Allied (Soviet) Control Commission in Finland (1944-47).

FCMA Treaty differs from a military alliance treaty, above all in the sense that military cooperation is confined to the territory of Finland and does not take effect automatically.... (cf. Article II) Finland has the primary responsibility for the defence of her territory."¹

After having fought two wars (1939-40, 1941-44) and thus pursued a military solution to her relationship with the Soviet Union it dawned on the small nation with a population of less than four million (4.7 million in 1983), that

"[A] small state cannot stand forever armed to the teeth.... It cannot be in Finland's interest to be the ally of some great power or other, constantly on guard in its peripheral position on the Russian border and the first to be overrun by the enemy, and devoid of political importance to lend any significance to its word when decisions over war and peace are being taken.... She would be a battlefield whenever great power conflicts beyond her control led to war."²

The solution that emerged can be described as a vindication of the advice that J.K. Paasikivi, the Finnish envoy to Moscow after the Winter War and later president, offered his government in 1940: "We must do more than just find a modus vivendi. We must also accomplish good relations, so that Russia cannot only tolerate the special status of Finland, but even notice that it is the best alternative for herself as well."³

Only gradually was Finland able to stabilize her position. The total evacuation and resolutely organized resettlement of some 400,000 Karelians (more than 10% of the population) headed off the emergence of a large displaced refugee population, thus preventing the occurrence of irrendentist sentiments and

¹ Report of the Third Parliamentary Defence Committee, (Helsinki 1981), p. 26.

² Speech by Urho Kekkonen, then member of Parliament in Stockholm 1943 (sic), Urho Kekkonen, A President's View, (London: Heinemann, 1982), pp. 42-43.

³ As quoted in Kekkonen, p. 51.

prospects of revanchist ideas or charges of revanchism. With the ratification of the peace treaty of Paris in September 1947, the last infringements of sovereignty (except for the leased naval base of Porkkala) were abolished, as the Allied (Soviet) Control Commission, which had supervised the fulfillment of the armistice, left the country.¹ Less than a year later the FCMA-treaty was signed. The treaty was renewed for the third time in June 1983 for an additional twenty years, making it the only Soviet friendship treaty from the war or post-war period still valid in its original wording. The last reparations to the Soviet Union were delivered in 1952, the year the Olympic Games were held in Helsinki. Three years later in 1955 Finland became member of both the United Nations and the Nordic Council. Finally the return of the leased naval base of Porkkala in 1955-1956 created preconditions necessary for a cautious embarkation on a road of neutrality. A Finnish "paradox" emerged, to quote the former president Kekkonen: "The greater the trust which prevails between Finland and the Soviet Union, the more freedom for maneuver we have in our dealings with other countries."²

4.2 The Finnish Defence Posture

Against this historical and political background it is understandable that the Finnish policy of neutrality, which is supported by national defence, differs from Sweden's policy of neutrality or Switzerland's statutory neutrality, both of which are based in a fundamental way on a strong defence. With a basically stable strategic environment in Northern Europe and above all with stability in her

¹The Control Commission, which included a (passive) British element was not an occupation authority, as Finland was never occupied.

²Kekkonen, p. 75.

relations with her superpower neighbor the Finnish armed forces have emerged as a vital, though auxiliary, instrument of crisis management. In addition to what has earlier been said about the advantages accruing to lesser states from the constraints imposed by the nuclear age, Raymond Aron's modification of Clausewitz' classical theory describes rather accurately the Finnish defence posture: "The moment of truth is the crisis rather than war."¹

This moment of truth, "[A] period of increasing tension and a threat of war", is assessed by the Finnish parliamentary defence committee in the following way: "In a situation where military readiness has been raised in the vicinity of Finland, our chances to stay outside the crisis - which may well be a prolonged one - will depend, on one hand, on the trustworthiness of our line of security policy, and on the credibility of our efforts to control and defend our territory, on the other."²

The decisive factors, though partly beyond Finnish control, are the strategic value of her territory and the Soviet inclination or reluctance to move in, the latter being in this author's view largely, but not solely, the result of an equation of trust between the two countries and their perception of each other. The fact that Finland after two wars was prepared in the autumn of 1944, under the terms of the armistice, to turn her arms against another great power, i.e., Germany, can be cited as historical proof of resolve to live up to her obligations, no matter

¹ "Clausewitz compared diplomacy to a business transaction on credit, in which war is the ultimate cash settlement, all outstanding obligations must be honored on the battlefield and all debts paid. The thermonuclear age does not do away with this distinction between prior commitments and the moment of truth; but now the moment of truth is the crisis rather than war, because contemporary theoreticians can no longer accept the battlefield settlements once regarded as inevitable. Their aim, on the contrary, is to prevent engagements from ever taking place." Aron, p. 207, emphasis in the original.

² Finnish Report p. 33.

what.¹ At the same time it is imperative for Finland to postpone for as long as possible the potential arrival of Soviet troops on her soil, with the obvious goal of avoiding it altogether. There are other means to strengthen Finnish defence, notably military aid, hardware², without invoking the first article of the treaty or even all of its stipulations ("...if necessary, with the assistance of, or jointly with the Soviet Union").³ As the defence committee points out, "[M]ore probable than a sudden outbreak of war in Europe is a gradually worsening situation which may last for a long time without erupting into an open war." Thus time is available for augmenting Finnish defence by indigenous means. And even the invoking of the treaty "...offers alternatives of varying degrees to strengthen our defence."⁴

¹ The dilemmas of a small country that was on her own with her neighbor are well described by Polvinen's research findings. The United States, which was never at war with Finland and broke off diplomatic relations only in the summer of 1944, toyed with the idea of solving the uncomfortable Finnish problem, i.e. a country enjoying a lot of good will in America while fighting on Hitler's side by provoking the Germans, to occupy Finland by leaking information about Finnish secret efforts to achieve a separate peace with the Soviet Union. This would have served the dual purpose of avoiding an embarrassing domestic issue while militarily weakening Germany. Polvinen, II, p. 28.

² Cf. J-M Jansson, Chairman of the Third Parliamentary Defence Committee, Hufvudtadsbladet 3/2/1983, Helsinki.

³ Cf. text of the FCMA Treaty p. 21; cf. Klaus Toernudd (Under-Secretary of the Finnish Foreign Ministry): Ord och handling, Utrikespolitiska uppsater (Essays on foreign policy), (Vasa: Schildts, 1982), pp. 27-35, in English: Finnish Features, Helsinki, April 1983; Ministry for Foreign Affairs; cf. the answer of then defence minister T. Tahkamaa to a question in Parliament 10/5/1978 concerning rumours of a Soviet proposal of joint maneuvers. "Peacetime joint military exercises or other similar co-operation in the military sphere would, however, be incompatible with Finland's international status." Ulkopoliittisia lausuntoja ja asiakirjoja (foreign policy documents), (Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1978), p. 41.

⁴ Finnish Report, p. 26.

The Finnish defence posture is often misjudged because of Finland's Rueckversicherungsvertrag (reinsurance treaty) with a superpower. It is geopolitically ignorant to look at Finland as a mere extension of Western defence against the Soviet Union and to gauge only the Finns' ability to take on the old "hereditary enemy."¹ The opposite view is to present Finnish defence as merely an extension (not yet integrated) of Soviet defence.² The decisive error, presented here by two extreme views is to miss the essence of the realistically set, limited goal of Finnish defence, which is primarily to master crisis situations through area denial and conventional deterrence. Nevertheless, a Soviet perception of Western views concerning the Finnish defence can not be ignored by Finland. This reflects the basic security dilemma of Finland - to combine Finnish security interest with the security interest of her superpower neighbor without a loss of credibility in the West.

Presenting a defence that is deficient in materiel like Finland's as a defence for crisis rather than for war might seem like an effort to make a virtue out of necessity. This cannot, however, obscure the fact that the credibility of every defence depends ultimately on the ability to fight. Thus the ability to "control and defend (Finland's) territory" correlates directly with the ability to "inflict casualties and loss of time to the invader" in time of war.³

¹ Cf. General Bernard Rogers' (SACEUR) interview with Helsingin Sanomat, The New York Times, 1/5/1983.

² Cf. dissenting opinion of defence committee member Matti Viialainen (minority fraction of the Finnish communist party) who accuses the defence committee of assumptions that imply "... the so-called doctrine of symmetric defence. According (to which) the Soviet Union would poses a military threat to our country." Finnish Report pp. 72-73. Similar views on the role of Finnish defence are presented by the Canadian-Norwegian historian Nils Oervik (Nils Oervik, Sicherheit auf finnisch, Finnland und die Sowjetunion, (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1972).

³ Finnish Report pp. 33-34.

Because the FCMA treaty contains no automatic provisions it has a built-in flexibility. Accepting the classical Paasikivi assumption that Soviet interests toward her northwestern neighbor are solely of a strategic nature and not ideological, it should be to the benefit of the Soviet Union to let the primary responsibility for the defence of Finland, which provides an important buffer to the northwestern border of the Soviet Union, rest as long as possible with the Finns. The Soviets thereby profit from the "security bonus" provided by the treaty,¹ because "... as long as Finland is not affected the Soviet Union is safe from attacks on her northwestern border."² In this sense, the Norwegian self-limitation concerning her northernmost province (Finnmark) where no allied maneuvers are held, markedly improves the strategic situation of Finland.

As a matter of fact the Soviet attitude towards Finnish efforts to develop Finnish defence can be cited as evidence for the assumption that a Finnish capability of area denial is not at variance with Soviet security interests. This is best reflected by the fact that the Soviet Union did not oppose the acquisition in 1962 of defensive i.e., anti-aircraft, anti-tank, anti-shipping missiles despite the provisions of the Paris Peace Treaty,³ which banned missiles of all types "... any self-propelled or guided missiles or apparatus connected with their discharge other than torpedos..." (article 17). The Finnish purchase of modern mines in 1983 from the Soviet Union and Great Britain is another example of the fact that the stipulations of the peace treaty banning "... sea-mines... of non-contact types activated by influence mechanisms" (article 17) are not interpreted in a way that

¹ Expression used by Prime Minister Kalevi Sorsa of Finland, Helsingin Sanomat 12/16/1982.

² Toernudd, p. 32.

³ It should be noted that Finland is the only former ally (or co-belligerent as the Finns preferred to classify themselves) of Germany that still honors her peace treaty obligations.

would impede Finnish defence efforts in particular the vital role of mine-warfare in the Finnish skerries.¹

Historically, this is in accord with the Soviet attitudes already demonstrated at the peace conference in 1946-47 (reflecting the logic of the above mentioned Mannerheim-Zhdanov exchange (cf. p. 21)). Limitations of the size and scope of the Finnish defence forces were demanded by the British but opposed by the Soviet delegation.² The Soviet Union has since the 1950's sold Finland armaments far exceeding the immediate needs of a conscript standing army of 40,000 men.³ Perhaps even more significant, the peace treaty limitations on manpower and equipment (ground-forces 34,400 men, navy 4,500 men, total tonnage 10,000 tons, air-force 3,000 men, 60 airplanes (article 13)), have never been interpreted by either main signatory power as a ban against training and arming a large reserve force.⁴

¹ Admiral of the Fleet S.G. Gorshkov attributes 49 percent of Soviet fighting ships lost in the Baltic Sea during World War II to mines. The corresponding figures in the Black Sea were 24 percent and in the Barents Sea 22 percent. Mines were responsible for the destruction of 52 percent of all Soviet destroyers lost in the war. S.G. Gorshkov, The Sea Power of the State, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press 1979, p. 273.)

² According to Polvinen this reflected British suspicions that Finland together with the Balkan states would sooner or later automatically augment the Soviet defence potential. Polvinen III, p. 96-99.

³ The Finnish arms procurement has over an extended period of time been roughly divided so that one third is indigenous, one third Soviet and one third Western (mostly Swedish and British lately even American TOW-antitank missiles). All training required by arms deals takes place, as a rule, in the country of the seller.

⁴ 700,000 men according to The Military Balance 1982-83. The defence committee introduced, however, a new concept by dividing the trained reserves into two categories, a "fast deployment force" including the navy and the air force with a maximum strength of 250,000 men and a "main force" (Finnish Report, pp. 38-41). The percentage of the drafted conscripts (92% of the male cohort in 1982) is probably the highest in the world, reflecting traditions of popular defence and equity. Approximately 35,000 are annually called in for refresher exercises (expressed goal 50,000 by 1986 i.e., the need of the "fast deployment force") Finnish Report, p. 55.

4.3 Misleading Notions of a Finnish "Short-Cut"

There are several incentives for the Soviet Union to content itself with less than actual presence on Finnish soil. The "Nordic pattern" that commonly but inaccurately is referred to as "Nordic balance"¹ is one. Another is the fact that in any major conflict Finland and the North of Europe (with the exception of the Northern sea areas) would be side-shows, which means that any extra demands (e.g. in the direction of Finland) would be a drain upon the Soviet resources needed on other fronts. This assumption is related to the Swedish notion of marginal strategy (cf. p. 12). Indeed, military history offers evidence that the marginal importance of the northwestern fronta (Karelian and Leningrad) of the Soviet Union decisively influenced the outcome of the strategic offensive launched against Finland in June 1944. The goal of the offensive was to crush Finland, but the offensive was fended off by the Finnish army, and the front was stabilized after several weeks of fierce fighting. As the race to Berlin took priority, the Soviet Union dropped her previous demand of unconditional surrender and contented herself with forcing Finland out of the war.

4.3.1 Nordic Stability

In November 1961 after proposing consultations to the Finnish government in reference to (the second article of) the FCMA treaty, the Soviet government agreed to postpone (indefinitely) these negotiations, after President Kekkonen had emphasized to Prime Minister Khrushchev at their meeting in Novosibirsk that "the beginning of the proposed consultations might create certain restlessness and war psychosis in the Scandinavian countries."²

¹ Nordic balance is a concept from the 1960's describing the different security arrangements of the region as balancing each other on a scale.

² TV Address to the Finnish Nation, 11/26/1961, ULA (Foreign Policy Documents) (Helsinki: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1962).

The notion that if one superpower were to increase its role in Northern Europe, this would result in counteractions by the other is as old as the "Nordic pattern" that emerged after World War II.¹ The popular view that this constitutes a balance of sorts has overemphasized the prescriptive at the expense of the descriptive element of the notion. For example, the Swedish historian Krister Wahlbaeck eschews the concept because of its strong normative character that in delicate situations might prove to have a negative effect. Although "Nordic balance" is a quintessential Norwegian concept, Johan Joergen Holst criticizes it, because according to him at times of crisis it might create expectations of certain patterns of action.² The main objection, from a Finnish point of view, is the mechanistic nature of the concept, which projects Finland as a counterweight to e.g., Norway, even though Finland is not an ally of the Soviet Union as Norway is of the United States.

Whatever expression is used, there is no way to deny that the existing interdependence of the Nordic countries constitutes a political dissuasion against any increased superpower involvement. To quote President Mauno Koivisto of Finland: "Security policy decisions of one (Nordic) country can influence the situation of another (Nordic) country or the whole of Northern Europe."³ But as Wahlbaeck points out, an important evolution has taken place. Instead of implying that changes in the status quo of Northern Europe might result in reappraisals of Swedish security policy (readjusting neutrality or even joining NATO); it is more

¹ Swedish foreign minister Hans Blix 11/1/1978, Utrikesfraagor 1978, (Foreign policy documents), Stockholm: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1979, p. 94.

² Holst, p. 130.

³ President Koivisto in Oslo, Helsingin Sanomat, 3/8/1983.

common that options inherent in Norwegian (and Danish) security arrangements are referred to in the somewhat muted Scandinavian debate on these sensitive issues.¹ For example, in the white paper on security policy of the Norwegian government issued in June 1982, a basic objection against any notion of a Nordic NWFZ was that it would deprive Norway of the possibility of using the self-imposed restrictions with regard to her NATO membership to "compensate" changes in the "Nordic equilibrium."²

4.3.2. Northern Finland

The increasing importance of the Northern sea areas is reflected in all defence arrangements of the region. (It should be noted that the Finnish defence in the North is on a par with the Swedish and Norwegian capabilities except for air-defence).³ The significance of the Norwegian littoral and in its Finnish and Swedish hinterlands is often simplistically demonstrated in popular presentations by projecting red arrows through Northern Finland as indicators of planned Soviet thrusts towards the Norwegian coast.

Military history of the region offers ample material, that has not lost its relevance even for modern mechanized armies, despite improved road conditions, regarding major land operations in the extreme North of Europe. Especially relevant are the campaigns at the end of World War II together with the multiple

¹ Krister Wahlbaeck, "Sverige, Norge och stormakterna" (Sweden, Norway and the great powers), Kungliga krigsvetenskapsakademiens Handlingar och Tidskrift 4/78, p. 212.

² Report, 1982, p. 80.

³ One squadron of JA 35 Draken -interceptors. The defence committee made a recommendation to acquire "... air-defence missiles in those exposed border areas not covered by interceptors," meaning the extreme north "the top of the head" of Finland. Finnish Report p. 43, cf. also dissenting opinion, p. 75.

difficulties Wehrmacht's mountain-troops (Gebirgsjaeger) encountered in Northern Finland. The German offensive against Murmansk in 1941 from Petsamo never reached beyond the river Litsa (an advance of a mere 50 kilometers). The Soviet campaign in the autumn of 1944 to oust the Germans from Petsamo and the Eastern parts of Northern Norway and the Finnish campaign against the German army corps in Northern Finland from 1944-45 resulted in commendations to the Soviet and Finnish commanders (Marshal Meretskov, Lieutenant General Siilasvuo) and gave the German commander Colonel General Rendulic swords to his Ritterkreutz for an orderly withdrawal through scorched earth but were a far cry from swift, elegant operations.¹

Exactly as the German defence of World War II, the present day Norwegian defence is concentrated behind the Lyngen fjord and mountains, in the southern parts of Troms (at the narrowest point, 35 km, of the country). Considering the inherent strength of the Norwegian defence positions it seems unlikely that any land offensive could rapidly subdue them. Extensive use of air and sea power, including airborne and amphibious troops, would be required.² As to notions of limited Soviet advances into Northern Norway (Finnmark) it is this author's view that these are irrelevant theoretical derivations of the old "Hamburg Grab" -

¹ Cf. Sampo Ahto, Aseveljet vastakkain, Lapin sota 1944-1945, (Helsinki: Kirjayhtymä 1980) (The War in Lapland, forthcoming in German) an excellent military-history that unfortunately does not deal with the Soviet campaign; K.A. Meretskov, Serving the People, (Moscow: Progress Publishers 1971); Lothar Rendulic, Gekaempft-gesiegt-geschlagen, (Heidelberg, 1952).

² The political decision in 1980 not to prestock heavy material for an U.S. Marine Amphibious Brigade in Northern Norway (Troms) but instead in Central Norway (Troendelag) coincides with the recommendation of the Norwegian defence committee of 1978 to reinforce the defence of Central Norway and thus the flank of the main defence positions. (Defence committee report 11.4.3, 11.9.8) Simultaneously a decision was made to prestock materiel for an additional Norwegian brigade in Troms.

concept of the 1950's.¹ The distance from the Soviet border to Troms is 500 km as the crow flies and 800 km by the coastal road.

As a careful geomilitary study would reveal, a short cut through Finland by land can only be of secondary importance in the case of a surprise attack. Because of topography Finland has the best south-north transport net of the area², but the existing few east-west arteries in the north of the country would not help a putative Soviet offense to bypass the Norwegian main fortifications. It would as a matter of fact deliver the attacker right in front of them. Although the Norwegian expression describing the "right arm" of Finland as a "wedge" has become commonplace, it is strategically misleading. The road winding up to the elevated juncture (1,000 m) of the Finnish and Swedish borders and leading beyond to the Lyngen mountains (1,800 m) and Lyngen fjord on the Norwegian side would be literally uphill for any contemplated offensive, with a forward assembly area hundreds of kilometers behind.

The "wedge" is also politically moot, in that it implies Finnish connivance. Besides, the invoking of the FCMA-treaty and possible Soviet deployments in Finland would invariably trigger countermeasures from Norway and her allies, thus defeating advantages that might be gained and possibly even invite preemption. It seems evident that a short-cut through Finland, if it were to be realistically executed, would inevitably require a violation of Swedish territory as

¹ "It was as if police officers were being taught the art of homicide in terms of opportunity and murder weapon, but never motive." Freedman, pp. 180-181.

² The infrastructure on the Soviet side is rather undeveloped. A surfaced road connection from Leningrad to Murmansk was only completed in the latter part of the 1970's and the Murmansk railway is to this day only partially electrified and double-tracked. The railroad connection between the Murmansk railway and Northern Finland (Kanadalaksha-Kemijarvi), which was built according to the Fenno-Soviet Peace-treaty of Moscow 1940, is idle and the tracks have been partly removed (approximately 50 km) on the Soviet side of the border.

well. This again would mean from a Soviet point of view a major escalation far beyond the scope of bilateral Fenno-Soviet relations. Moreover, a short-cut through Sweden would only theoretically promise a bypass of the Norwegian main line of defence (Skibotn Valley), since the road and terrain conditions (rivers, bogs and mountains) on the Swedish side of the Tornio (Torne) river are even less hospitable than on the Finnish side. Especially Sweden, but also Finland, have avoided building additional east-west roads.

An effective Swedish air-defence provides for Finland a vital buffer-zone (except for the high North) against any contemplated NATO intrusions via Finland to the Soviet northwest (Leningrad) or against Norway. This is especially important as the air-force is the weakest of the Finnish armed services.¹ (If the base complex on the Kola peninsula is the target, an incentive to violate Finnish air space does not arise, except in the extreme North and possibly for deception.) On the other hand, prestocking heavy materiel from American marines in Troendelag, Central Norway creates a possibility of Soviet air-strikes against these depots from the east or south-east, i.e., violation of at least Swedish air space. The newest kind of a potential violation of Swedish and Finnish air space that has to be considered in contingency plans comes from air- or sea-launched cruise missiles launched, e.g., from the Norwegian Sea.² The Swedish defence committee that submitted its report in 1981 seems to be confident that Sweden has the required capability to handle even low flying cruise missiles (except in a

¹ Two fighter squadrons with 22 MiG 21bis, 12 J-35S-Draken, one squadron with 15 Hawk trainers (35 on order), The Military Balance 1982-83.

² Routings via the Baltic Sea to avoid Swedish air space do not seem feasible.

saturation attack).¹ Although this might be questioned in face of the development of advanced cruise missiles, the Swedish resolve to keep up with technological progress should not be doubted.

4.3.3. Southern Finland

The strategic shift away from Leningrad to Murmansk is a historic and important development. As a result of the FCMA treaty, the Gulf of Finland and its northern shores have lost their threat as potential invasion routes to the second industrial and cultural center of the Soviet Union. The demilitarized Aaland islands, belonging to Finland, have also lost most of their strategic importance, except for Sweden. At the same time the Baltic Sea has developed into a hotbed of intelligence gathering. Daily Western reconnaissance aircraft fly over international waters all the way up to Finnish territorial waters (Bogskaer). Geographically, the Baltic Sea offers deeper electronic intelligence gathering opportunities into the Soviet heartland than any other area.

Observations that the bulk of Finnish defence, regardless of the strategic shift northward, are still located in Southern Finland, are basically right. Subsequent conclusions² that this actually constitutes a defence against a possible Soviet threat for the Finnish population centers, however, miss the point. If Finland is to assert her claim that she is able to control and defend her territory no matter what, it would be most unwise, to scrap the defence of her southwestern and southern coast (considering the traditional Russian/Soviet view

¹ The committee recommendations included among others acquisition of airborne radar systems in addition to the already existing look-down/shoot-down capability of Swedish interceptors (JA 37 Viggen armed with Sidewinder AIM 9L missiles). Total foersvaret 1982-87, (Stockholm DsFoe 1981:1), p. 132.

² Cf. Erling Bjoel, "Nordic Security", Adelphi Paper 181, The International Institute for Strategic Studies (London Spring 1983), pp. 13-15; cf. Jon L. Lellenberg, The North Flank Military Balance, Office of National Security Programs, The BDM Corporation (Washington, D.C. October 1979), p. 15; cf. also dissenting opinion of M. Viialainen, Finnish report p. 72-73.

of the role of land forces), so long as the defence of Leningrad is not abandoned. (Seven divisions out of the nine of the Leningrad military district are deployed in the southern parts of the district, although the majority of the Baltic Military District forces (nine divisions) are in the south).

The merits of the assumption that a Finnish area denial capability should appeal to the Soviets can be demonstrated best of all with the example of the Aaland islands. Although the islands have been traditionally demilitarized since the Crimean War, which brought the British and French fleets to the shores of the Baltic, Finland retains the obligation to defend these islands as part of her sovereign territory. The ability to defend the Aaland islands requires a capability to transport troops to the island and naval forces designed for warfare in one of the largest archipelagos of the world.¹ The recent submarine incidents off the Swedish coast have highlighted these defence requirements. As there are no international waters in the sound separating the demilitarized island of Aaland from Sweden all passages of third country military vessels or aircraft through the sound to the Gulf of Bothnia require prior consent from either Finland or Sweden. A look at a map reveals the Swedish interest in the defence of the Aaland islands resting with the Finnish defence forces. On the other hand, the Swedish capability of area denial enhances simultaneously Finnish possibilities to control and defend its southern and south-western coast and guarantees the Soviet Union a relative sanctuary in the northern parts of the Baltic.

¹ New high-speed combat vessels with Swedish-made RBS-15 anti-shipping missiles provide the main fighting force. By removing navigation buoys and employing mine-warefare the skerries can effectively be made unpenetrable in a matter of hours.

4.4. The Nuclear Factor

Considering the fact that nuclear weapons cannot be separated from troops or installations of nuclear weapons states, any superpower move inherently has a nuclear dimension.¹ It is against this background that the Finnish aspiration to "...isolate as fully as possible the Nordic countries from the effects of nuclear weapons strategy"² should be seen. Thus Finnish efforts to ensure the existing nuclear-free status quo of the region by promoting arrangements, of which a Nordic NWFZ is but one possible variation, reflects a "rather conservative approach, aiming at consolidation rather than at change."³ For various reasons though, partly discussed above, no formal codification of the present nuclear-free status seems at hand, although the defence postures of Denmark and Norway have distanced themselves from any use of nuclear weapons. Evaluating Finnish motives in promoting the idea of Nordic NWFZ, some Danish and Norwegian observers have interpreted the Finnish proposals as an attempt to prevent the possibility that installations or troops of a nuclear power (i.e., the Soviet Union) might be stationed in Finland as a result of invoking the FCMA-treaty.⁴ This undoubtedly reflects only a partial aspect of the dilemma given the fact that Norway and Denmark are allies of a nuclear power but Finland has only a "reinsurance treaty" arrangement with the Soviet Union. The Finnish proposals should rather be seen as consistent with the Danish and Norwegian efforts to forego any use of nuclear weapons (except for deterrence). In addition, the

¹ "A conventional clash between the two sides in this region would mix together strategic and conventional forces in a potentially escalatory way." Posen, p. 39.

² President Kekkonen, 5/5/1978, in Stockholm, ULA (Foreign policy documents (Helsinki: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1979)).

³ The Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations, Ambassador Keijo Korhonen 2/11/1983 Los Angeles, World Affairs Council.

⁴ Cf. Holst, p. 108; Norwegian Defence Report 1978 8.5.15; Danish Report 1982 p. 117.

security arrangements of the Nordic countries reflect a common aspiration to avoid any deployment of foreign troops in peacetime anywhere in the region, as this would inevitably introduce a nuclear element. In this sense notions of nuclear-free defence are related to ideas of no-first-use of nuclear weapons, especially as credible conventional capabilities are the prerequisite of both.

A look at so-called negative guarantees¹ offered by the relevant nuclear powers might be helpful in order to gauge the repercussions of even limited military cooperation with a nuclear power. According to assurances given in different United Nations fora the Soviet Union has stated that:

"... the Soviet Union will never use nuclear weapons against those states which renounce the production and acquisition of such weapons and do not have them on their territory."

As discussed above, the question whether or not nuclear weapons are deployed with the troops cannot be separated from the deployment of the troops themselves. In this respect, the American assurance is more detailed:

"Not to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapons State except in the case of an attack on the United States, its territories or armed forces or its allies by such a State allied to a nuclear-weapons States or associated with a nuclear-weapons States in carrying out or sustaining the attack."²

The dilemmas arising from alliance membership or treaty obligations, as reflected in these superpower assurances, have clearly been recognized by the Nordic countries. In the case of Finland the determination to live up to her treaty obligations - not to allow the use of Finnish territory against the Soviet Union - has never been considered to conflict with the fact that, according to the treaty, the primary responsibility for the defence of her territory rests with Finland.

¹ A negative guarantee is an assurance not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states. A positive guarantee is an assurance of help given, e.g., by one's allies.

² United Nations Committee on Disarmament, CD-report 1980 A/35/27 Annex B (emphasis supplied).

Even less of a conflict could be attributed to attempts to safeguard the existing stability and the non-nuclear status quo of the Nordic region.

The wish to maintain the existing stability in Northern Europe without endangering at the same time the trust (doverie)¹ built over the past decades with the Soviet Union could be described as the basic Finnish security dilemma - to avoid a conflict of Finnish security interests with the security interests of her superpower neighbor.

The role and significance of a Finnish area denial capability in managing this dilemma has lately been dealt with in key policy statements.

"We have to retain the ability to defend and control our own territory; otherwise we run the risk of losing the trust which has been built up in the course of decades Finland, through her own actions, must prevent her national territory from being drawn into military-political speculations Even in altered circumstances the basic obligations enshrined in the FCMA-treaty have retained their importance. Thus Finland must be capable of defending her territorial integrity and of preventing the use of her territory for an attack against the Soviet Union. If we fail to preserve our ability to control our territory, we shall be drawn into strategic - and strategic nuclear - contingency plans of power groupings."²

Three years later the Commander-in-Chief of the Finnish defence forces touched upon the same question:

"The defence forces can naturally not guarantee that nuclear weapons are not used against our country, but (the defence forces) can significantly lower the probability by preventing the use of Finnish territory for military purposes in general The goal of military means is to assure the territorial integrity of the country and thus lower the risk of (the country) becoming a target of nuclear weapons or their influence."³

¹ On Soviet suspicions that Finland would "avoid" (*izbegat*) military cooperation under by the FMCA-treaty cf. an authoritative Soviet view by the pseudonyms T. Barten'ev & Yu. Komissarov, Tridcat let dobrososedstva (Thirty years of good-neighborly relations) (Moscow, IMO, 1976), pp. 108-109.

² Foreign Minister Paavo Vayrynen 12/10/1979 Oulu, Finland. ULA (Foreign Policy Documents) (Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1980).

³ General Lauri Sutela 11/22/1982 Helsinki. The defence committee avoided the problem except for a short notice: "Our country,... neither possesses nuclear weapons nor has nuclear weapons or, for that reason, their targets on her territory." (Finnish Report, p. 32) To cite other source where the problem has been dealt with cf. then under-secretary of the Foreign Ministry Keijo Korhonen, "The Nordic Region - Still Secure in the Eighties?", Finnish Features, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Helsinki: September 1981; And Pauli Jarvenpaa: "The Concept of Limited Nuclear War: Technology, Doctrine, and Repercussions" in Yearbook of Finnish Foreign Policy 1980, Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 1981.

5. Conclusions

The absence of foreign troops from Nordic soil emphasizes the role of indigenous forces even for the aligned Scandinavian countries. The Norwegian government considers indigenous capabilities, together with allied training and prestocking as a precondition of a credible base policy needed to avoid being forced to invite allied reinforcements into the country before it is absolutely necessary. For NATO any increase in Norway's defence effort can only be marginally significant, since the size of her armaments and manpower is small. The most important Norwegian contribution to the overall defence of NATO is the strategic services rendered, i.e., ASW-surveillance and electronic intelligence in the immediate vicinity of the Kola peninsula and the missile launch site of Plesetsk. This explains the basic security dilemma of Norway and her need to reassure the Soviet Union.

Theoretically, the situation in Denmark should be similar to Norway's as the background of their self-imposed restrictions to their NATO-membership suggests. But although the frontline of British defence may well be in Norway, as lessons of World War II demonstrate, Denmark is part of West-German defence. The role of the Bundeswehr is constantly growing at the expense of the Danish defence forces. Historically, this is of course proof of genuine reconciliation. And because of the West-German "Ostvertraege" it has also lost most of its ominous repercussions for Finland (cf. the explicit reference to Germany in the Finnish FCMA-treaty). Geographically it demonstrates, in stark contrast to Norway, the limited defence requirements of Denmark.¹

¹ To quote Winston Churchill, when he met with Scandinavian correspondents in February 1940: "England does not blame Denmark. The other Scandinavian countries have at least a moat to feed the beast, but Denmark is so terribly close that no help can reach her." (Troels Fink, Die geschichtlichen Voraussetzungen der daenischen Aussenpolitik (Flensburg, 1968), pp. 116-117, author's translation from Danish).

The stabilizing effect of a strong conventional defence can best be demonstrated with the example of Sweden that especially in the post-war period became something of a moderator (or even "calibrator"¹) of Scandinavia. Due to geography, Sweden has vested interest in all directions. The Swedish proposal to form a Scandinavian defence union in 1948 was an unsuccessful attempt to stop a Norwegian glide to the West which was largely triggered by the Finnish FCMA-treaty (and the trauma of April 1940). Since the war years, Swedish support to Finland has been crucial in many ways. Simultaneously the stability of Fenno-Soviet relations is a vital precondition of Sweden's policy of "non-alignment in peace aiming at neutrality in war." All Nordic countries have continued to profit in one form or another from a strong Swedish defence. This applies to the Soviet Union as well, which undoubtedly prefers to see Sweden remain neutral. For Denmark the denial of Swedish airspace is an important factor in the defence of the Baltic approaches. A strong Swedish defence, particularly air-defence, has enabled Norway to concentrate her defence efforts to the north.

For Finland, Swedish airspace is a vital buffer. The Swedish defence in the north and of her Baltic coast have a direct influence on the strategic situation of Finland, which has profited from the shift away from Leningrad to Murmansk and Kaliningrad. For Finland the fact that the North of Finland is not suited for large scale ground operations additionally improves her strategic standing. Again conventional capabilities are indispensable if the claim of area denial and primary responsibility for the defence of Finland is to be asserted.

It is difficult indeed to see any development, political or technological, that would deemphasize the role of indigenous conventional capabilities of the Nordic countries. The evaporation of Norwegian and Danish nuclear options has resulted

¹ Steven L. Canby, "Swedish Defence," Survival May/June 1981.

in a complex defence posture that could be characterized as "maybe-no-first-use" of tactical nuclear weapons combined with an explicit goal of raising the nuclear threshold. The risk that nuclear weapons would be introduced to Scandinavia, i.e., a new area where these kind of weapons have never been deployed before, has clearly been reduced. These developments have, above all, enhanced Finnish security by diminishing the possibility that nuclear weapons would be deployed in areas adjacent to the Soviet Northwest.

Crucial geomilitary constraints and the emergence of realistic conventional defence postures in the Nordic countries emphasize the basically defensive nature of these arrangements. Although as the Finnish Parliamentary Defence Committee notes "...the proximity of the base network on the Kola Peninsula...makes all military arrangements in the area strategic in character."¹ Nordic countries are not themselves sources of friction. Possible destabilization could only be exogenous even in the Northern sea areas, with their enhanced strategic and economic significance and multiple problems. All this has markedly improved the role of limited conventional capabilities to help small states ride out a crisis even in the age of nuclear weapons.

¹ Finnish Report, p. 18.

Guernica (1937) by Pablo Picasso

Extended Loan from the artist to The Museum of Modern Art, New York City, N. Y.