

Forsvarsstudier 1/1993

Foreign policy and national identity

The Norwegian integrity treaty 1907-24

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Foreword

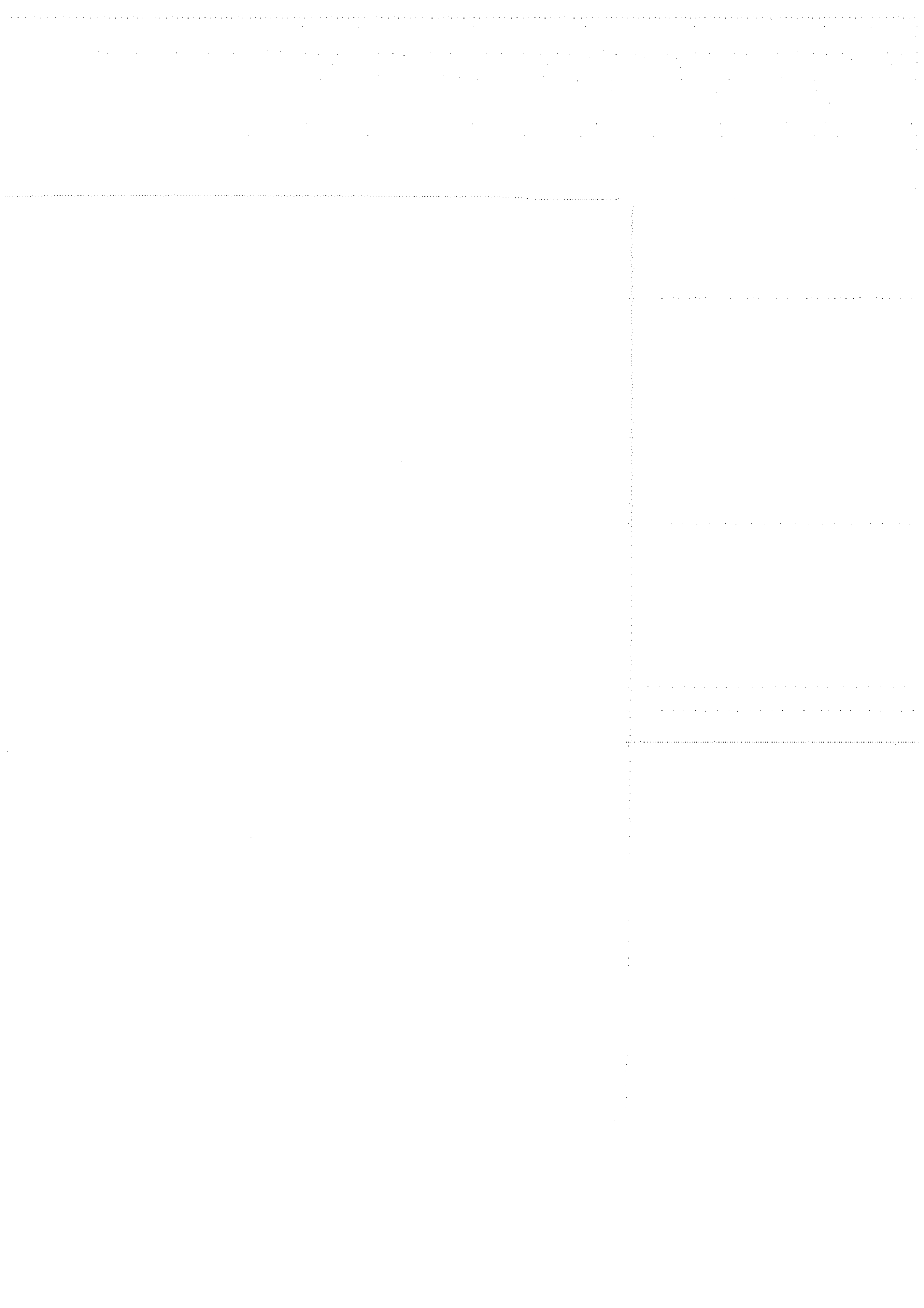
It is a great pleasure to acknowledge the financial support and the hospitality offered by the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies and its director, Professor Olav Riste, to enable me to undertake this study. Additional support was provided by the Small Grants Research Sub-Committee of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Herr E.-W. Norman of Utenriksdepartementets arkiv, Herr Bjørn Rønning of Stortingets arkiv, Frau Dr Maria Keipert of the Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Bonn, and the staff of the Public Record Office in London all provided invaluable assistance in making available the archival material in their care. I am grateful for the generous help and advice given by Roald Berg, Sven Holtsmark and Tom Kristiansen, and in particular by Olav Riste, who made many constructive comments on an earlier draft, as well as correcting my translations from the Norwegian.

*Newcastle upon Tyne
May 1992*

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Introduction

This is a study of the complications encountered by a small power when it attempts to extract itself from a contractual relationship with larger ones.

After Norway's entry into the League of Nations in 1920, the Norwegian government approached the four great powers Britain, Germany, France and Russia - which had guaranteed the integrity of newly-independent Norway in 1907 - with a proposal to abrogate the integrity treaty. Largely owing to Soviet objections no solution to the question could be reached until 1924, and it was not until 1928 that the treaty finally went out of force.

The episode is a minor one. It is nevertheless valuable for the insight it provides into the relationships between major and minor powers. What seemed at first sight a quite straightforward, almost routine procedure became complicated because each great power - not the Soviet Union alone - viewed the question in the light of its own preoccupations - strategic, political and ideological. Those preoccupations emerge clearly from the diplomatic exchanges which resulted from the Norwegian initiative. Norway's own diplomacy also comes under scrutiny. How well did this small and relatively inexperienced state handle relations with its larger neighbours? Finally we have to consider the significance for Norwegian security of both the 1907 treaty and its disappearance. Was it merely 'a worthless scrap of paper',¹ or did it provide at least a residual constraint on the behaviour of the great powers towards Norway during the First World War? Did its absence have any bearing on the traumatic events of April 1940?

Although the origins of the integrity treaty have attracted considerable scholarly interest, few historians have devoted much attention to Norwegian foreign policy between the wars.

The best studies remain the second volume of Reidar Omang's *Norsk utenrikstjeneste*, which covers the period 1913-28, and Arne Bergsgård's contribution to the post-war parliamentary enquiry into the events of 1940, 'Utrikspolitikk',² which concentrates on the period 1933-40. Neither makes any mention of the demise of the integrity treaty in the 1920s. The only historian to have examined the episode at any length is Egil Danielsen, in his study of Norwegian-Soviet relations between the wars.³ In contrast to other parts of his book, however, he has not consulted the relevant documents from the archives of the Norwegian foreign ministry (Utenriksdepartementet).

The core of the present study is based on those files: the three volumes of documents which take the integrity treaty question through from its ratification by the Storting in 1908 to the eve of the Second World War in 1939.⁴ However, it also draws extensively on primary sources from the two great powers most directly concerned - Great Britain and the Soviet Union - as well as from the German foreign ministry. Great-power perspectives are essential to an understanding of the question. Indeed it was through a chance reference in the Foreign Office files at the Public Record Office in London that the present author first became aware of its significance. It is not surprising that historians relying solely on Norwegian sources have failed to do so. Soviet sources are also unexpectedly revealing. The glasnost era in the former Soviet Union saw the publication of much important material, notably the diaries of Aleksandra Kollontai, the first Soviet minister to Norway. Moreover, as Norwegian reports from Moscow reveal, Soviet leaders were - perhaps paradoxically - more candid with the Norwegians than were any of the other powers. Chicherin took the Norwegian representative in Moscow into his confidence in a way that Lord Curzon would never have deigned to do with his counterpart in London.

The important consultative role played by the Norwegian parliament, the Storting, provides the historian with a further

source of great value. Although the influential foreign policy committee of the Storting has left only a bare record of the subjects it discussed in this period,⁵ the Storting itself held frequent debates on foreign policy behind closed doors. The 'unspoken assumptions' underlying Norwegian foreign policy often emerge more clearly from the stenographic record of these secret sessions - from the exchanges between foreign ministers and their parliamentary critics - than they do from the cryptic files of the foreign ministry.

The Norwegian integrity treaty of 1907

On 7 June 1905 Norway seceded unilaterally from the Scandinavian union. For the great powers, the break-up of the union posed a threat to the stability of northern Europe and, more specifically, raised the question of what was to replace the treaty of 1855 by which Britain and France had guaranteed the territorial integrity of the Swedish-Norwegian kingdom in exchange for a Swedish undertaking not to cede territory to Russia. The leaders of independent Norway for their part regarded their task as incomplete unless the new state's security was explicitly guaranteed by the great powers.⁶ In November 1906 Norway formally appealed to the powers for a treaty which would guarantee both the country's integrity and its neutrality. The Norwegians also wished to include a reservation clause allowing Norway to go to the assistance of Sweden or Denmark if either should be attacked. Following protracted and complex negotiations they were obliged on 2 November 1907 to sign a treaty with Great Britain, France, Germany and Russia which contained far less than had originally been hoped. Both the guarantee of neutrality and the Scandinavian reservation had been dropped: only a guarantee of integrity remained.

The integrity treaty imposed obligations on both Norway and the four great powers.⁷ Article 1, aimed at ruling out the use of Norwegian territory in time of war, bound Norway not to

cede territory 'to any Power to hold on a title founded either on occupation, or on any other ground whatsoever.' Under Article 2 the four powers undertook to respect Norwegian integrity and, in response to an appeal from the Norwegian government, 'to afford to that Government their support, by such means as may be deemed the most appropriate, with a view to safeguarding the integrity of Norway.' Article 3 stated that the treaty would remain in force for ten years from the date of the exchange of ratifications (6 February 1908), and for further ten-year periods, unless it was 'denounced by any of the parties at least two years before the expiration of the said period.' If, however, one of the parties did denounce the treaty, 'such denunciation shall have effect only as far as that Power is concerned.' In other words the treaty could go out of effect only with the consent of all five signatories.

Of the four great powers it was Great Britain that did most during the negotiations of 1906-7 to dilute the treaty's terms. Although the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, was initially receptive to the idea of guaranteeing Norwegian neutrality, the British authorities gradually came to regard a guarantee for Norway alone as being undesirable if, as became clear, Sweden and Denmark would not agree to having their neutrality guaranteed at the same time. As far as Denmark was concerned, the British objection was principally on strategic grounds. The director of naval intelligence warned the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) in February 1907 that

Norwegian neutrality might handicap Great Britain in a war with Germany - if the latter occupied Denmark, Great Britain would need to seize a Norwegian port. The terms of the treaty might involve Great Britain in a war with Russia and France who would be obliged to defend Norwegian integrity.⁸

It was imperative to leave open the possibility of responding to a German attempt to close the Danish Straits. Sir Charles Hardinge, the head of the Foreign Office, wrote:

*If in time of war the Straits remain open that is all we want. If Germany tries to close them we shall regard ourselves as absolutely free to do what we like and even to ignore the integrity of Norway should we require a naval base on the Norwegian coast.*⁹

The British thus drew a distinction between integrity and neutrality. Eyre Crowe, the head of the Western Department of the Foreign Office, minuted that a guarantee of integrity alone 'need not be held to prevent one of the guaranteeing powers from temporarily occupying Norwegian territory without any intention of retaining it. Such a course might conceivably be convenient to Germany or even England in case of a war with Russia, or to Russia in the converse case'.¹⁰

The case of Sweden was rather different. Here the objection to a guarantee of Norwegian neutrality was essentially political. Britain's primary interest in Scandinavia was not the seizure of a Norwegian base but the stability of the entire Scandinavian peninsula.¹¹ To this end it was vital to reassure Sweden, which had been alienated from both Britain and Norway in the aftermath of Norwegian independence. The fact that Sweden was not to be included among the signatories of the treaty was regarded in Stockholm as an affront. In the light of Sweden's long-standing fear of Russia, with which Britain concluded an entente in August 1907, there was a distinct danger that an isolated Sweden would gravitate towards Germany. To a far greater extent than the Swedes realised, the British thus worked for a treaty which would not raise insuperable barriers to Swedish-Norwegian reconciliation. 'When we discovered that you did not desire a declaration of neutrality for Sweden', Grey told the Swedish minister in London, 'we considered it unsuitable for Norway to be declared neutral.'¹²

The Norwegian government was only imperfectly aware of the considerations lying behind Britain's diplomacy. They combi-

with an exaggerated fear that Britain might seize a Norwegian port in the event of an Anglo-German naval war. Indeed for Jørgen Løvland, who negotiated the integrity treaty first as foreign minister and later as prime minister, the latter danger became something of an obsession.¹³ To this extent the treaty represented a residual check on Great Britain as the only power which had the capacity to violate Norwegian neutrality and might be tempted to do so in order to strengthen its position against Germany in time of war. However, during the Storting's debate on the ratification of the integrity treaty in January 1908 Løvland chose to defuse possible criticism of the treaty by emphasising the role of Great Britain as Norway's diplomatic mentor.¹⁴ It was primarily on Britain's advice, he said, that Norway had agreed to the stripping down of its original requirements and their substitution merely by a guarantee of integrity. The tactic was successful. No trace of resentment at Britain's role appears to have surfaced during the debate. The main objection to the treaty was that it gave the impression of being directed against Sweden and thus impeded the process of reconciliation between the two countries.

The integrity treaty was nevertheless something of a disappointment. Løvland's original hope - that it might form the basis of a neutral Scandinavian bloc - had not been fulfilled. Nor was there any illusion that the treaty was of itself a sufficient guarantee of Norwegian security. Løvland emphasised that it did not make defence redundant; on the contrary Norway's defences must be sufficiently strong to enable it to maintain its obligations under the treaty.¹⁵

If the result of Norway's 'short-term venture into the dangerous world of international politics'¹⁶ had so little practical value, was there any suggestion that it was a positive disadvantage to Norway? Few contemporary critics went this far. Some argued that it was irrelevant in a crisis situation; others pointed to its repercussions for relations between Sweden and Norway.¹⁷ Halvdan Koht, in a pamphlet published in the spring

of 1907, went further and argued that such a treaty could be exploited by the guaranteeing powers in order to exert undue influence over Norway's affairs.¹⁸ There appears to have been little open expression of the view that was to become prominent after the war (pp. 26-8 below) that the treaty was demeaning to Norway's status as an independent state. Yet, within a few months of its ratification, the integrity treaty could be seen to have had precisely this effect. On 23 April 1908 two agreements were concluded affirming the territorial status quo in the countries bordering the North Sea and the Baltic Sea respectively. Norway was not among the signatories of the North Sea agreement. Norway's exclusion from a treaty which directly concerned its political and strategic interests was justified, like that of Belgium (whose neutrality was guaranteed by the treaty of 1839), by its status as a guaranteed state. Sweden and Denmark, however, were able to participate on equal terms with the other North Sea states: Britain, France, Germany and the Netherlands. It is possible that such episodes rankled with Norwegian diplomats, as well as with the generation of politicians that came to replace the 'men of 1905' in the years following the First World War.

The integrity treaty appears to have provoked little public discussion between 1908 and the outbreak of war. In 1915, however, its future began to be the subject of debate. This was because of the provision of Article 3 that, if it was to go out of effect on the tenth anniversary of its ratification, in February 1918, notice had to be given two years in advance: in other words by February 1916. A pseudonymous article in the Swedish liberal (*Venstre*) journal *Forum* of February 1915, probably written by the former Swedish foreign minister Ehrensward, wished to see the treaty disappear because it was an obstacle to improved relations between Sweden and Norway - an opinion shared by Brunchorst, the Norwegian minister in Stockholm.¹⁹ Bredo Morgenstjerne, Professor of Jurisprudence at Christiania University, opposed this view. His article in the *Law Quarterly Review* of October 1915 argued that the treaty, though its terms could be fulfilled only if

Norway maintained forces adequate to defend its neutrality, yet had some moral value: 'For it cannot be doubted that such a breach of a solemn treaty, quite recently concluded, would be judged more severely by public opinion than other breaches of international law.'²⁰

More importantly, both the foreign ministry and the government had decided that the treaty should remain in force.²¹ A Storting motion to denounce the treaty was rejected, with only the eighteen socialist members voting in favour, on 29 January 1916. Realism was the order of the day. Foreign minister Ihlen told the Storting that Norway would run great risks if it made any move to alter the status quo.²² The belligerent powers would not be impressed by the argument that the treaty was unnecessary in view of Norway's record in maintaining its neutrality, or that it was incompatible with Norway's dignity. Any reference to the possibility of closer cooperation with Sweden would raise the spectre of a Norwegian-Swedish defensive alliance. None of the powers would regard the treaty's disappearance with equanimity; Norway would be obliged to undertake new measures to demonstrate its continuing will to neutrality. The Norwegian government was congratulated by the Russian minister, who spoke of 'une acte de grande sagesse politique', and by his French colleague. There appears to have been no response from the British legation.²³

While any move to denounce the treaty during the war would undoubtedly have drawn unwelcome attention to Norway, there is little sign that its existence acted as a deterrent to any of the belligerent powers. Britain was the only power which both possessed the means to occupy Norwegian territory and had an incentive to do so. In 1917 the question of the occupation of a Norwegian port in support of the 'northern barrage' (a mine barrier across the North Sea) was under consideration by the British Admiralty and War Cabinet.²⁴ At one point the Admiralty suggested that there was 'reason to believe that Norway would not object to such action on our part, and might even

welcome it as tending to bring the war to a more speedy conclusion.²⁵ However Sir Mansfeldt Findlay, the British minister in Christiania, warned that Norway would in no circumstances agree to a British occupation, and in early 1918 the idea of a Norwegian base was dropped from the plan.²⁶ On this occasion as on others 'the strength of Norwegian neutrality was a significant deterrent': the British acknowledged that 'the risks of converting Norway into an ally were greater than the benefits which could be expected from a foothold in Scandinavia'.²⁷ At no point, however, did the integrity treaty enter into the British debate; indeed the files betray no knowledge of its existence. No doubt the treaty would have come into play if Great Britain had decided to violate Norwegian neutrality. However, it would have functioned not as a deterrent but merely as a legal stick with which to beat the British, in the sense that had been suggested by Morgenstierne in 1915.

The treaty after the First World War

Norway's diplomatic position at the end of the First World War was problematic in a number of respects. Some of the difficulties were of Norway's own making, notably the disputes with the wine-producing countries - France, Spain and Portugal - which resulted from the outcome of a referendum on prohibition in October 1919. Others arose from the drive for a 'greater Norway', directed mainly towards the Arctic region. A prolonged dispute with Denmark over Greenland was not settled until the Hague Tribunal came down in favour of Danish sovereignty in 1933. Norway was successful in obtaining international recognition of its sovereignty over the Svalbard (Spitsbergen) archipelago but only, as we shall see, at the cost of greatly complicating its relations with the new Soviet government. In other respects Norway's exposed position was an unavoidable outcome of the four years of war in which, though not a belligerent, it had placed its economic resources and shipping largely at the disposal of

the Allies, and of the revolutionary upheavals which had shaken Europe since 1917. By 1918 Norway was bound to the West by ties of sympathy and self-interest. It was difficult if not impossible for Norway to strike out on a path which was not broadly in line with the wishes of Great Britain and France. In the early post-war years this was to entail, among other things, abandoning neutrality in favour of membership of the League of Nations and going along with Western ostracism of the new Soviet regime in Russia.

Yet Norwegians had considerable reservations about taking both of these steps. The decision to join the League was taken less out of conviction than from a desire to avoid the isolation which would ensue if Norway was not numbered among its founding members.²⁸ Since relations with Russia touched on Norwegian interests at many points, Norway could not view a breach with the Soviets with equanimity even though it was obliged to bow to Western pressure and, along with Sweden and Denmark, broke off diplomatic relations in November 1918. Until Finland became an independent state and acquired an outlet to the Arctic Ocean at Petsamo, Russian territory bordered on that of Norway in the far north. There remained many unresolved territorial issues in the Arctic, notably the question of sovereignty over Svalbard. Russia was also an important customer for the Norwegian fishing industry. Finally, there were close links between the Norwegian labour movement, which was among the most radical in western Europe, and the new Soviet leadership. The Liberal and Conservative politicians, who alternated in a succession of short-lived governments in the early 1920s, were thus subject to conflicting pressures. Western blandishments and domestic political fears made them wish to keep the Soviets at arm's length. Economic self-interest and the desire to regulate the situation in the Arctic pushed them in the direction of re-establishing commercial relations with Russia (in 1921) and ultimately (in 1924) towards full diplomatic recognition of the Soviet government. The Soviets for their part were fully aware of the Norwegian predicament. On such matters as exports of fish

and manufactured goods, or fishing and hunting rights in the White Sea and Arctic Ocean, they had the power to grant or deny Norway's wishes. They also held the key to two diplomatic issues of importance to Norway. One was the question of Norwegian sovereignty over Svalbard. The other was that of the integrity treaty. Between 1921 and 1924 they exploited each of these concerns in pursuit of what was probably their principal goal: *de jure* recognition.

The Svalbard question was the product of a widespread feeling at the end of the war that Norway's sacrifices of men and shipping in the Allied cause entitled it to some recompense. This sentiment, which was reciprocated to some degree in the Allied capitals,²⁹ was articulated most vocally by Count Fritz Wedel Jarlsberg, the Norwegian minister in Paris, who actively lobbied the peacemakers gathered there in 1918-19.³⁰ For a short time Norwegian ambitions encompassed the idea of an East African colony, but they were directed mainly towards colder climes. The government wisely rejected Wedel Jarlsberg's proposal that Norway should lay claim to all or part of the Russian Murman coast. It concentrated instead on winning international recognition of Norwegian sovereignty over Svalbard. The archipelago was a no-man's land in which not only Norway, but also Sweden and Russia had traditional interests, while the citizens of a number of other powers, including Great Britain, had mineral rights there. The Peace Conference ultimately decided in favour of Norway and Norwegian sovereignty was recognised in a treaty of February 1920. Only the Soviet government withheld ratification. It continued to do so until 1924.

The prospect of Norwegian membership of the League of Nations, and of a new system of collective security, called into question not only Norway's traditional policy of neutrality but also its one existing security arrangement with foreign powers: the integrity treaty of 1907. A committee of experts appointed by the government to look into the conditions for Norwegian membership decided that the terms of the treaty,

'which promise Norway the support of a limited number of great powers' were incompatible with 'the system of mutual and direct guarantees' established by Article 10 of the League Covenant.³¹ Article 20, moreover, declared that all treaties which were incompatible with the Covenant were to be regarded as null and void. In addition, the expert committee suggested, it was contrary to the spirit of the pact that a state should be guaranteed by powers which were not members of the League. The committee pointed out finally that Article 1 of the 1907 treaty, by which Norway undertook not to cede any part of its territory to any other power 'to hold on a title founded either on occupation, or on any other ground whatsoever', was incompatible with Article 16 of the Covenant, which bound states to allow the use of their territory for purposes authorised by the League.

The expert committee appears to have given no serious thought to the possibility that the disappearance of the integrity treaty might have political as well as legal ramifications. Nor did it give any advice as to the procedure by which the treaty was to disappear from the world. However, it had placed the question on the political agenda. Once Norway had joined the League, as it did in March 1920, it was a problem that Norwegian diplomacy would be obliged to address sooner or later.

The making of Norwegian foreign policy

In the early 1920s Norwegian foreign policy was in a state of flux not merely in relation to the outside world, but also in terms of its own administrative and political arrangements. Following the recommendations of a royal commission appointed in 1919, a major reform of the foreign service was undertaken in 1922, integrating the diplomatic and consular services, as well as the ministry at home and the missions abroad. Three of Utenriksdepartementet's officials were to play an important role in the formulation of policy on the integ-

rity treaty question. The first was the ministry's permanent head from 1922 onwards, August Esmarch, described by a British minister as 'the most able and business-like official I have met in Norway. He is the only man at the Ministry who is not afraid to answer a question in a straightforward way.'³² However, where relations with the new Soviet government were concerned, Esmarch's position was influenced by his connections with Norwegian business interests who were seeking compensation for assets which had been confiscated by the Bolsheviks.³³ Within Utenriksdepartementet questions of international law and League of Nations affairs were dealt with until 1922 by the 2nd *kontor* and thereafter by the *Felleskontor*, both headed by Jens Bull. In the autumn of 1921 the youthful Frede Castberg was appointed to the ministry as an expert in international law and League of Nations affairs.³⁴ From 1928 he combined his role as adviser to Utenriksdepartementet with a professorship at Oslo University.

Despite the relatively low priority attached to the conduct of foreign policy in Norway, Utenriksdepartementet was by no means left to its own devices in its handling of relations with foreign states. Given Norway's heavy dependence on foreign trade and the enormous size of its merchant fleet, it was inevitable that much attention would be paid to business interests. Indeed the promotion of Norwegian foreign trade and shipping had been one of the chief reasons for the creation of a separate Norwegian consular service, which in turn had helped to precipitate the break-up of the union between Sweden and Norway in 1905. However, the role played by business in the foreign policy-making process was perhaps excessive. Pressure from north Norwegian interests was instrumental in the tough line adopted by the government towards the Soviet Union on the question of hunting and fishing rights in the White Sea between 1921 and 1926.³⁵ It has been suggested, not without justice, that to judge from Aleksandra Kollontai's diaries, 'the price of Norwegian [diplomatic] recognition was virtually identical with the price for Norwegian herring.'³⁶

Parliament also came to exert a growing influence over the making of Norwegian foreign policy between the wars. The process began in 1917 with the establishment by the Storting of a 'special committee for foreign affairs'. It was renamed the 'foreign policy committee' in 1922 and merged with the 'constitutional committee' in December 1923. To an increasing extent the *utenriks- og konstitutionskomité*, usually known as the *utenrikskomité*, functioned as 'an advisory body for the government'.³⁷ Like the equivalent committees which emerged in Sweden (*utrikesnämnd*) and Denmark (*udenrigspolitiske nævn*), it was also a means of obtaining cross-party consensus in matters of foreign policy. Although they were often under no legal obligation to do so, governments found it politically desirable to consult the Storting on all foreign policy matters of importance.³⁸ The British minister recorded in 1928 that 'The debates arising out of the reports of the committee are frequently held behind closed doors, and it is somewhat remarkable that, in my experience, there appears to be very little leakage.'³⁹ It was therefore much more than a formality when, having reached a decision on how to deal with the integrity treaty the foreign ministry asked for the Storting's approval. However, the role of the committee remained a matter of controversy among parliamentarians. This emerged with particular clarity when the Storting debated the integrity treaty question in closed session on 9 June 1923.⁴⁰

Although only one member of the Storting demanded that the foreign policy committee should be abolished as an emergency body which had outlived its usefulness,⁴¹ there was widespread disquiet about the way in which the government appeared to be using the committee as a means of shifting responsibility from itself on to the Storting. The sharpest criticism came from a member of the committee, the Conservative politician and newspaper editor Carl J. Hambro, who expressed his dissatisfaction with the way in which complex questions, like that of the integrity treaty, were brought before members who had not been able to prepare in advance but who were then

associated with the decisions taken by the government.⁴² Already making foreign policy his *métier* and later identified (unfairly) by the British legation as 'a fanatic, pro-German, pro-Irish, and, in practice, everything that is anti-British',⁴³ Hambro was to change his opinion of the committee when he became its chairman in 1926. Indeed the British minister complained that during the period of Conservative rule from 1926 to 1928 'the conduct of important foreign affairs lay in the hands of M. Hambro rather than in those of the Ministry concerned'.⁴⁴

To complicate matters further there were no fewer than five governments and six foreign ministers in the short period between 1920 and 1924. Gunnar Knudsen's ministry, which had been in power since 1913, resigned in June 1920. With it went the formidable but much criticised foreign minister Nils Claus Ihlen, who had dominated Norwegian foreign policy throughout the war years. The Conservative (*Høyre*) government of O.B. Halvorsen, with Christian Michelet as foreign minister, lasted exactly a year. A man of charm and cultivation, Michelet was, according to the British minister, 'most unsatisfactory to deal with officially': 'he seemed incapable of giving a straightforward answer to the simplest questions, and on more than one occasion he was deliberately misleading'.⁴⁵ Aleksandra Kollontai found Michelet equally irritating but had little difficulty in dealing with his attempts to ingratiate himself.⁴⁶ Halvorsen's government was replaced in June 1921 by the Liberal (*Venstre*) ministry of Otto Blehr. Arnold Ræstad, distinguished more as a theoretician than as a practical politician, served as foreign minister until May 1922, when he was brought down by a trade dispute with the wine-producing countries of Spain and Portugal.⁴⁷ He was succeeded by Johan Ludwig Mowinckel, the Bergen shipowner who was to dominate Norwegian politics for much of the inter-war period, heading three governments in the period 1924-35.⁴⁸ In March 1923 Halvorsen returned to power, again with Michelet as foreign minister. After Halvorsen's death in May 1924 the Conservative ministry was headed for a brief period by

Abraham Berge before its fall in July. In July 1924 Mowinckel became head of his own Liberal ministry for the first time, while simultaneously holding the post of foreign minister.

The fact that these changes of government made little difference to the goals and methods of Norwegian foreign policy (though the Conservatives were more cautious than the Liberals on the question of de jure recognition of the Soviet regime) was further tribute to the consensual nature of policy making. In the Storting's secret debates on foreign policy during periods of Conservative government, Mowinckel was at pains to emphasise the common ground between the two main parties. He was glad, he said on 30 January 1924, that there was no party political disagreement on certain issues, and he hoped that 'where questions of foreign policy were concerned, party politics would also give way more to a united approach.'⁴⁹ This was naturally due in part to the fact that any criticism of the government would rebound on himself as a former foreign minister and exponent of a virtually identical foreign policy. However the same sentiments were to be echoed by Hambro when he wrote during the Second World War of 'the important fact that in Norway ... foreign policy is considered a national affair as distinct from party politics. No small nation can afford to have its foreign relations made a matter of factitious controversy. We have also felt that there ought to be the fullest possible continuity in our foreign policy.'⁵⁰ Even the communist Schefflo acknowledged the need for a consensual foreign policy in a small country such as Norway - though he urged his colleagues not to take it too far.⁵¹

One further area, but one on which it remains difficult to obtain any firm knowledge, concerns the role of the king in Norwegian foreign policy-making. We know that King Haakon VII was extremely active throughout the period leading up to the signature of the integrity treaty in November 1907.⁵² He was also on close terms with successive British ministers to Norway, particularly Sir Mansfeldt Findlay, who served in Christiania from 1911 to 1924.⁵³ When Findlay referred in his

despatches to 'a very high authority', the person in question was invariably the king. Utenriksdepartementet sent the king all important correspondence on the foreign policy issues of the day, including the integrity treaty. However, the king's personal role in the making of foreign policy certainly diminished after the end of the First World War. This was due in large measure to the emergence of the Storting's foreign policy committee. The foreign minister's duty to consult parliament was not easily reconcilable with that of consulting the king.⁵⁴

The Norwegian approach to the making of foreign policy was thus more consensual, but also more casual than was the case in systems with more established procedures. These included all the European great powers, including the Soviet Union even in its early years, but also minor powers with long diplomatic traditions such as Sweden.⁵⁵ There are resemblances, however, to another, much larger country which also favoured isolation and disliked foreign entanglements: the United States.⁵⁶ Few in Norway were in a position to take a strategic view of Norwegian foreign policy interests. Indeed, bearing in mind the powerful forces in Norway which rejected anything that resembled power politics, there was a positive disincentive to do so. The Norwegian outlook on the world tended to be legalistic and moralistic, while displaying a hard-headed concern for Norway's economic interests abroad. At the same time there was a preoccupation with Norway's dignity as an independent state and a determination that it should not be compromised by too close an association either with Norway's Scandinavian neighbours or with the European great powers. Such attitudes were as prevalent among the officials of Utenriksdepartementet as elsewhere in the policy-making establishment. Traces of a more cosmopolitan approach can be found among certain individuals - notably the king - and in business circles, as well as within the diplomatic service. Veterans of the diplomatic struggle surrounding Norway's achievement of independence in 1905, such as Johannes Irgens in Rome or Wedel Jarlsberg in Paris, were

certainly capable of taking a broad view. At the same time it was precisely such figures as Wedel Jarlsberg, aptly described by a British diplomat in 1905 as being 'of an excitable and optimistic character'⁵⁷ who, in the absence of clear guidelines from the foreign ministry, were apt to take impulsive steps which might have unforeseen and unwelcome consequences.

Norway's first attempt to abrogate the integrity treaty 1920-22

Following Norway's entry into the League of Nations in March 1920 the government took no immediate steps to give effect to the expert committee's opinion in favour of abrogating the integrity treaty. It was characteristic of Norwegian policy making that the first initiative should have come from Wedel Jarlsberg. In November 1920 he proposed that Norway should give the League Secretariat written notice that the treaty was to be regarded as having lapsed. It was, he said, a matter of 'our status as a nation and member of the League'.⁵⁸ 'Unwelcome consequences' for Norway's international position would ensue if Norway 'continued to remain silent'.

The Norwegian delegation at Geneva advised caution: any initiative should be addressed first to the signatory powers.⁵⁹ This was sound advice even though two of the signatories, Britain and France, could be expected to raise few difficulties. Germany, however, was a defeated power and was not a member of the League of Nations. Wollbæk, the minister in Berlin, recommended that the German government should be approached at the same time as the other signatories. Germany had, after all, recognised the League Covenant as part of the peace treaty.⁶⁰ Russia was still more problematical. The tsarist government had been replaced by a Soviet regime which was neither a member of the League nor officially recognised by Norway or any other Western country. The Soviets appeared, moreover, to have renounced the treaties concluded by their tsarist predecessors. It seemed that little could be done in this

direction until either the Soviet government received recognition or the Soviet Union became a member of the League of Nations.⁶¹

In June 1921 a much clearer message came from Geneva. The question had been examined by the League's legal experts and Erik Colban, Norway's representative, had discussed it with the secretary general, Sir Eric Drummond. There were, it appeared, differing opinions as to the extent to which the treaty might be in conflict with the League Covenant. It was by now evident that the League, far from deprecating regional security arrangements, welcomed them in so far as they contributed to a more stable world. The Secretariat therefore wanted the Norwegian government to make no move for the time being.⁶²

Utenriksdepartementet's files contain no further discussion of the question until April 1922. There is no obvious explanation for the gap. The ministry may have been waiting for another message from Geneva. It may simply have been too busy with other matters. In the summer of 1921 it was occupied with the negotiations which led to the conclusion of a provisional trade agreement with the Soviets on 2 September, by which Norway also gave the Soviet government de facto recognition. By the early spring of 1922 the foreign ministry was beginning to consider terms for de jure recognition and to prepare for Norway's participation in the Genoa conference which was to take place in April (and was to collapse with the conclusion of the Rapallo treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union on 16 April).

Utenriksdepartementet resumed its discussion of the integrity treaty on 5 April 1922. Acknowledging that the question of its compatibility with the League Covenant was still unresolved, Frede Castberg proposed that the ministry should 'either announce that the integrity treaty should be regarded as having gone out of force, or terminate the treaty from 6 February 1928.' As far as Russia was concerned, Castberg suggested

that 'the treaty might be regarded as having lapsed owing to the Soviet government's attitude towards Russia's older treaties in general.'⁶³ Jens Bull favoured a more clear-cut approach.⁶⁴ If the treaty *was* incompatible with the Covenant, he argued, Norway should have denounced it immediately. It was admittedly now doubtful whether the treaty must necessarily be seen in this light, especially in view of the growing tendency to approve regional groupings and alliances. But since, as Bull pointed out, this was a tendency which Norway generally resisted, it added a further strong argument in favour of denunciation.⁶⁵ So too, he added cryptically, did the current situations in Russia and Germany. Bull therefore came out strongly in favour of denouncing the treaty rather than merely announcing that it was no longer in force. However, he wanted this to take place at the appropriate time shortly before the expiry of the treaty in 1928 - in other words in 1926 - not four years in advance: 'We shall have to see how Europe (and the League of Nations) develop over the next 4 years.' Foreign minister Ræstad took a middle line between the solutions favoured by Castberg on the one hand and Bull on the other. He instructed his officials to draw up a proposition (*proposisjon*) to the Storting, putting forward the reasons for approaching the signatory powers with a statement that the treaty was no longer in force. If this approach did not work, the treaty should be denounced, even though its demise would then be delayed for some years.⁶⁶

Utenriksdepartementet started to draft the *proposisjon* in late April 1922. In the early drafts no mention was made of the Soviet government - a quite remarkable omission which seems to have been based on the assumption (reflected, for example, in Castberg's minute of 5 April) that in the light of the Soviet government's rejection of the treaties signed by the tsarist regime, no formal communication was necessary. Yet the Soviet position on the Svalbard question should have alerted the Norwegians to the new regime's insistence that it was the legal successor to the rights of the tsarist government.⁶⁷ Utenriksdepartementet evidently soon changed its mind and

decided that it was advisable to approach the Soviet government along with the other powers. In doing so, however, the Norwegians did not mean to imply any recognition that the Soviets were the heirs to the tsarist government's treaty rights, merely to record the fact that the treaty had lapsed.⁶⁸ On 16 May, therefore, when the *proposisjon* had been completed, its contents were communicated confidentially both to the British, French and German legations and to the Soviet trade delegation in Christiania.

Before discussing the reactions of the four great powers, it is worth considering the motives that lay behind the Norwegian initiative. In 1920, before Norway's entry into the League, the technical question of the integrity treaty's compatibility with the League Covenant had been the only matter of concern to the committee of experts. In its *proposisjon* to the Storting, the foreign ministry repeated the arguments that had been put forward in 1920 about the treaty's incompatibility with the Covenant, but also made reference to the change in political circumstances that had come about since 1907. The situation had altered so completely, it said, that the whole basis of the treaty had been removed (*forrykket*). 'The Department is thinking here in particular of the consequences that the world war, the revolutions in Russia and the conclusion of the Versailles peace treaty have had as far as Russia and Germany are concerned.'⁶⁹ A further consideration, adduced by *Tidens Tegn* on 3 June 1922, was a desire to demonstrate the harmonious relations between Norway and Sweden by removing a treaty which had been thought to be directed mainly against the latter country.⁷⁰ There was something to be said for this assumption: it was on this ground that Mowinckel had attacked the treaty in the Storting as far back as 1908, and Mowinckel remained an active exponent of Scandinavian cooperation throughout the inter-war period.⁷¹ However Sir Mansfeldt Findlay, for one, was sure that such considerations 'were not the principal grounds which led to the action of the Norwegian Government.'⁷² 'In fact', he went on, 'it does not seem to have occurred to them that they were losing a good

opportunity of legitimately improving relations with Sweden by emphasizing this point of view.' His supposition is confirmed by Utenriksdepartementet's files on the question, which contain no reference to Norway's relations with other Scandinavian governments, as well as by the absence of a 'Scandinavian' dimension in the Storting's debates on the integrity treaty. Findlay came up with a startlingly different explanation. He had, he reported, very high authority [i.e. that of the king] for stating ... that the real reason on which the Norwegian Government based their action was the view that, in the present state of Germany and Russia, both of whom were parties to the Integrity Treaty and neither of whom are members of the League of Nations, the Integrity Treaty might be used by both or either of these Powers in such a manner as to become a danger to Norway. I cannot say that I quite follow this train of thought.⁷³

Information from such a source clearly has to be taken seriously. It receives some support from the anxiety about Russia and Germany expressed in Jens Bull's minute of 5 April as well as from the foreign ministry's allusion to 'great changes' in the international situation in its *proposisjon* to the Storting. Presumably the fear was that either Russia or Germany or both together might seek to use Norwegian territory in order to mount an attack on members of the League. If it seems as fanciful in retrospect as it did to Findlay at the time, the apprehension may nevertheless have been a real one in the aftermath of Rapallo. The Soviet leadership certainly entertained such fears in reverse.

However, the immediate circumstances of post-war Europe may have had less to do with the Norwegian decision than did older and more deep-seated - though not always fully articulated - perceptions of Norwegian foreign policy interests and Norway's place in the world. Traditions of isolationism and hostility towards great-power politics remained strong. The integrity treaty was regarded as an unfortunate and perhaps dangerous hangover from the era of great-power rivalries.

Membership of the League of Nations allowed Norwegians (along with many others) to persuade themselves that such commitments were no longer necessary. To these sentiments was added one that was perhaps even more powerful: nationalism. The treaty was simply incompatible with Norway's dignity as an independent state. This was the view articulated by Wedel Jarlsberg when he first proposed the elimination of the integrity treaty in November 1920 (p. 22 above). It was shared by Thor von Ditten, Norway's minister in Berlin, when he condemned in 1919 the terms of the proposed Svalbard treaty as reducing Norway to vassal status and being 'as damaging to the development of a Norwegian sense of independence as the integrity treaty.'⁷⁴ Similar views were to be expressed during the secret Storting debate on the integrity treaty on 9 June 1923. The key word was *formynderskap*. Translatable as 'guardianship' or 'tutelage', it was used by several speakers to describe the relationship established between Norway and the great powers by the treaty of 1907.⁷⁵ The two impulses - isolationism and nationalism - were expressed most revealingly when Mowinckel invited the Storting to recall the period after 1905:

Everyone now realises ... that this treaty was from the outset an extremely serious political mistake on Norway's part which, so far from strengthening us, has, on the contrary, weakened us and placed us under a formynderskap to an extent which must be a matter of regret to all of us. The security it was supposed to give us could well have proved a danger after the world war broke out. However, we have now reached the point where the treaty can no longer be seen to have any significance or value. The only question now is the procedure by which it is removed.⁷⁶

Mowinckel was thus as critical of the policy makers of 1907 as he had been when the treaty was first discussed by the Storting in 1908 and he had described it as 'an ephemeral

document' [*et døgnpapir*].⁷⁷ His judgment was endorsed by Hambro:

*I agree with Hr Mowinckel that the integrity treaty has not brought our country any real advantages. I have always regarded it as a document demeaning to our national dignity which was signed at a time when we lacked any kind of training in foreign policy.*⁷⁸

Both men belonged to the generation that had come to maturity in the years before 1905. Their outlook, like that of many others, had been shaped by the struggle for independence from Sweden and they resented any suggestion that Norway might continue to be subjected to the tutelage of larger powers. In this consensus, which transcended party differences and united politicians and diplomats, may be found the true 'unspoken assumptions' behind the Norwegian initiative.

French, British and German reactions to the Norwegian proposal

The most immediate reaction came from the French. Two members of the legation called within two days in order to discover precisely what the Norwegian government meant by its proposal.⁷⁹ Both were sympathetic but suggested that multilateral groupings were quite compatible with the League Covenant: indeed there was no obstacle to a collective guarantee from both members of the League and nonmembers. This was clearly far from what the Norwegians had in mind. The German minister, Rhomberg, also responded positively, although he thought that Germany would not accept any interpretation based on Article 20 of the League Covenant since, in its view, this article applied only to members of the League.⁸⁰ Following the advice of Friedrich Gaus, the *Auswärtiges Amt's* legal expert, Rhomberg was instructed in June to confirm that this was Germany's official position.⁸¹ Findlay

volunteered no opinion on the matter. Unknown to the Norwegians, however, the despatch to London of 18 May in which he reported their proposal provoked a flurry of interest in the Foreign Office.⁸² It led ultimately to a discussion of the question by the Committee of Imperial Defence as a matter directly affecting Britain's strategic interests.

The first Foreign Office response, from its legal adviser Sir Cecil Hurst, was that there seemed to be no legal ground for the Norwegian belief that the integrity treaty was incompatible with the League Covenant. He suggested that Norway should simply give notice of its intention to denounce the treaty when it was first entitled to do so, in February 1926.⁸³ However Sir Eyre Crowe, the permanent under-secretary, quickly grasped that there was more to the Norwegian proposal than met the eye:

*The first question to be considered is whether the abrogation of the 1907 treaty would be to our advantage, or the contrary. That depends on what Britain gains by the treaty, and at what price? I should like to have this properly considered.*⁸⁴

It was unusual for the head of the Foreign Office to take the initiative on such an apparently minor matter at such an early stage. But Crowe was unusually well acquainted with Norway. As head of the Western Department until November 1914, and then as head of the newly created Blockade Department, he had been intimately concerned with the negotiations for the integrity treaty in 1906-7 (pp. 8-9 above) and with the problem of Norwegian neutrality throughout the First World War. As early as 5 August 1914 Crowe had advocated bringing Norway and other neutral states into 'a system of fighting alliance ... surrounding the enemies.'⁸⁵ In October 1916 he had written a long memorandum advising the Cabinet that on balance it would be to Britain's advantage if Norway were forced into the war by German aggression, since the

blockade of Germany would then be considerably easier to maintain.⁸⁶

In response to Crowe's request Esmond Ovey of the Northern Department produced a lengthy minute setting out the pros and cons of the Norwegian integrity treaty from the British point of view.⁸⁷ Ovey, who had been first secretary at the Christiania legation during the war, suggested that Britain gained no advantage from the treaty in peace time, while in time of war it committed Britain to Norway's defence. More importantly, it placed constraints upon Britain's own freedom of action:

As a matter of fact, in the next great war it might very conceivably be advantageous and perhaps even essential to this country to occupy a naval base in Norway. It will perhaps be remembered that on the very eve of the armistice His Majesty's Government had actually gone so far as to invite the Norwegians to close their territorial waters against enemy submarines, as it was considered imperative to stop the egress of German submarines into the open sea.⁸⁸ To have seized a base in the great war would have been in direct violation of the treaty of 1907, and would have literally justified the Germans, French and Russians (in practice only the Germans) in going to the defence of Norway. A similar occasion might quite easily arise in the next war.

If the treaty were denounced and substituted by the guarantee of the League of Nations, Great Britain would no longer be prohibited from making use of Norwegian territory but would, on the contrary, have the right to do so in execution of its obligations under the League Covenant. In any future war Norway would probably again be of great importance to Britain 'owing to her friendliness and her geographical position, as blocking the only exit of German submarines into the open sea':

It seems probable that the Scandinavian powers, who succeeded in remaining neutral in the last war, will find means to do so in any future general war. Even then the right (or the absence of a distinct provision denying to His Majesty's Government the right) to pass troops through Norwegian territory would presumably include the right to pass naval forces through Norwegian harbours and would be extremely valuable without bringing the Norwegians directly into the war.

For Great Britain, therefore, the balance of advantage seemed to be very much in favour of the abrogation of the treaty. 'If this view is correct,' Ovey wrote, 'the action of the Norwegian Government in wishing to bring about such a situation in the early future is somewhat surprising. In fact, it would appear that they can hardly have realised the point.'

Ovey's advice was what Crowe wanted to hear. Proposing that the matter might be referred to the CID for consideration, he remarked: 'My own view is that if Norway wishes to abandon whatever guarantees she has hitherto derived from the Integrity Treaty, we need not oppose her.'⁸⁹ Lord Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, was more than ready to support Crowe's proposal: 'I cannot imagine', he wrote, 'what good arguments can be adduced against allowing Norway to denounce the treaty as soon as she likes.'⁹⁰

The Norwegian integrity treaty was discussed by the Committee of Imperial Defence on 12 July 1922.⁹¹ The members of the committee, chaired by Balfour and including the civilian and military chiefs of the three armed services as well as Winston Churchill (the Colonial Secretary) and a number of advisers, had before them copies of Findlay's despatches from Christiania, together with a Foreign Office letter incorporating the whole of Ovey's long minute. Crowe told the committee that 'from a political point of view no valid arguments existed against the denunciation of the Treaty, should Norway wish to abandon whatever guarantees she had

hitherto derived from the Treaty. The Treaty imposed upon us a burden from which we should be glad to be relieved'. Lord Beatty, the First Sea Lord, endorsed the Foreign Office's advice on behalf of the Admiralty, and the CID had little difficulty in agreeing that 'the proposed denunciation by the Norwegian Government of the Integrity Treaty of the 2nd November, 1907, would not be against the interests of the British Empire.'

The Whitehall debate on the integrity treaty reveals some interesting contrasts in national mentalities. The Norwegians naturally had no inkling of what the British were thinking. If they had, they might have been surprised that a treaty to which they now attached no practical significance was still taken so seriously by a great power. There is no indication that Britain's deliberations on Norwegian neutrality during the First World War had been influenced by the existence of the integrity treaty. However, the British had undoubtedly been restrained (as they were to be again in 1939-40) by the impact that a violation of Norwegian neutrality would have had on world opinion. However little value Norwegians attached to the treaty, they would undoubtedly have cited the treaty if its provisions had been breached by Britain or any other belligerent power. In dismissing the treaty so readily, post-war Norwegians (like Koht in 1940) were perhaps taking an over-cynical view of the conduct of great powers. Paper guarantees may occasionally be of some value. To this extent the British did take their international obligations seriously, though they were naturally not averse to being relieved of them in such a painless way as Norway had offered.

Following approval of the *proposisjon* by the constitutional committee of the Storting on 10 July 1922, the Norwegian government officially informed the four signatory powers that the treaty was to be regarded as being no longer in force.⁹² Both France and Germany gave their consent, but the grounds on which they based it were totally at variance. The German government, as was to be expected, based its acceptance solely

on the change in international conditions which had come about since 1907. Since it was not a member of the League, it could accept no obligations in respect of the League Covenant.⁹³ The French, while accepting Norway's wish, pointed out that membership of the League did not necessarily invalidate the 1907 treaty and cited Article 21 of the League Covenant in support of their view.⁹⁴ More importantly, they rejected the argument that the treaty had lapsed owing to changed international circumstances. The French insisted (rightly) that 'une telle application d'une doctrine des plus dangereuses pour le principe du respect des traités ne saurait être acceptée que pour des cas tout à fait exceptionnels.' The British replied briefly on 22 August, merely recording their acceptance of the change and naturally giving no hint as to the nature of their internal discussions.⁹⁵

The problem of the Soviet Union

Nothing, meanwhile, had been heard from the Soviets. The Norwegian note had been delivered to Karakhan, the deputy commissar for foreign affairs, on 29 July, but no reply was received until 25 October.⁹⁶ By the middle of 1922 Norwegian-Soviet relations were in a state of suspended animation. In the trade agreement of September 1921 Norway had been the first country in the world to recognise the Soviet government's foreign trade monopoly. The agreement had also entailed de facto recognition of the Soviet government. However, there had subsequently been little development of trade between the two countries and Norwegian fishing interests were vocal in their demands for an agreement to sell herring to the Soviets. Further problems resulted for Norwegian fishermen and hunters from the Soviet declaration in May 1921 of a 12-mile territorial limit in the Arctic Ocean, and of the White Sea as an internal sea. There was growing pressure for full de jure recognition, not merely from labour circles but also from businessmen and prominent figures such as Nansen and Ella Anker. The government realised for its

part that without de jure recognition the Soviets were unlikely to acknowledge the Paris treaty of February 1920 giving Norway sovereignty over Svalbard. It was reluctant to take over control of the archipelago without having reached prior agreement with Norway's powerful neighbour.

The Soviet leadership had mixed feelings about Norway. Krasin told Kollontai before her appointment as counsellor to the Soviet trade delegation in Christiania in the autumn of 1922 that Norway was 'a nice country, and we have many friends there.'⁹⁷ There were sympathisers not only among the communists but within the labour movement as a whole, and Norway had been forthcoming on trade questions. However Surits, the head of the trade delegation, was thoroughly dismissive. 'What do we have here?', he complained. 'Herring plus seals. A dull country. Even their liberals are spineless, and as for their conservatives, they're trailing along behind England.'⁹⁸ Between the two extremes stood Chicherin, the people's commissar for foreign affairs. For him Norway was clearly not a country of the first importance, but it was nevertheless of value for the Soviet Union, as he told Kollontai, to 'establish normal diplomatic relations': 'We already signed quite a good trade agreement with Norway in 1921, but it is only a recognition of us *de facto*. There should be mutual recognition *de jure*.'⁹⁹ Though he did not share Surits's hostility towards Norway, Chicherin's inveterate suspicion of Great Britain made him alert to any indication that Norway might be unduly exposed to British influence. When British-Soviet relations deteriorated in 1923, Chicherin (like his colleague Litvinov) became, as we shall see, less tolerant of what he saw as Norwegian procrastination on the question of de jure recognition.¹⁰⁰ In the autumn of 1922, however, there seemed no reason for the Norwegians to fear any change for the worse. On the contrary, the omens seemed good for the settlement of a number of outstanding questions on favourable terms. In November negotiations for de jure recognition were reported to be taking place in Stockholm. On 18 November Mowinckel had sufficient confidence to draft a memorandum

setting out the terms on which Norway would grant recognition. They included a revision of the trade agreement to give Norway most-favoured-nation treatment; hunting and fishing rights in the Soviet Arctic; the recognition of Norwegian sovereignty over Svalbard and Bear Island; and a Soviet acknowledgement 'without further discussion' that the integrity treaty was no longer in force.¹⁰¹ Already, however, the Soviets had served notice that on one question at least - the integrity treaty - they had no intention of complying with Norway's wishes.

When he received the Norwegian note on 29 July 1922, Karakhan admitted that 'for the moment he could not recall the Norwegian integrity treaty' but thought that in view of the present Russian government's attitude towards old treaties, no difficulties were likely to be raised on the Soviet side. Nothing could have been further from the truth. On 25 October Litvinov, another leading member of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, finally conveyed the Soviet response. The Russian note was discouraging. It declared that the Soviet government could not accept that the principles expressed in the integrity treaty no longer applied to the relationship between Russia and Norway. It proposed that the two governments should work together to find means of affirming the ideas embodied in the treaty. This was thoroughly alarming. In the course of the next two days, Jakhelln, the head of the Norwegian delegation in Moscow, attempted to discover what lay behind the Soviet note. He spoke first to Litvinov, then to the two heads of department in the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs who were most directly concerned with the matter, and finally to Chicherin himself.¹⁰²

From Litvinov Jakhelln learned that the Commissariat had acted on the assumption that Norway had negotiated first with the other signatories and only then made its approach to the Soviet Union. From the two department chiefs he gathered that the Soviets really did want a new agreement with Norway to

replace the integrity treaty. With Chicherin Jakhelln held three lengthy late-night conversations on the question. Revealing Chicherin's deep (though sometimes defective) knowledge of Russian diplomatic history as well as his pathological suspicion of Great Britain, they did little to clarify Soviet motives.

Chicherin started by referring to the long-standing good relations between Norway and Russia. The Soviets had not forgotten, he said, that Norway had been one of the last powers to break off diplomatic relations, and that it had done so under pressure from the Entente.¹⁰³ The treaty signed by Russia in 1907 marked a declaration that Russia had no unfriendly feelings towards Norway and did not covet any Norwegian harbours, even though some circles in Petrograd had had their eye on them. Russia could not be influenced by the actions of Britain and France and would not be dictated to by the League. The integrity treaty should therefore be replaced, as far as Norway and Russia were concerned by some new arrangement which would embody the ideas of 1907. Finally Chicherin let fall some remarks about the Finnish activists and 'imperialists' who wished to annex both Petrograd and the Norwegian county of Finnmarken.

Jakhelln's misgivings about this conversation were confirmed when a second note, of 23 November, reiterated the Soviet government's earlier position: it did not accept that the treaty had lapsed but was willing to negotiate changes. He surmised that the intention might be to put pressure on Norway to grant the Soviet government de jure recognition.

Jakhelln challenged Chicherin directly on the point when he met him in another late-night encounter on 25 November.¹⁰⁴ Russia's desire to protect Norwegian integrity against Norway's wishes seemed, Jakhelln said, to be the expression of an imperialistic policy more in keeping with the old Russian regime than with the new Soviet government. He could only assume that it had something to do with the question of de jure recognition. Chicherin replied that this assumption was

quite wrong. He reminded Jakhelln that the treaty contained not only obligations on the part of the great powers, but also an obligation by Norway not to relinquish any part of Norwegian territory - and this clause was of great importance to Russia. Chicherin explained Soviet interest in the integrity treaty by reference to the history of the 1907 negotiations - or at least his version of them - and went on to draw lessons for the present. At the time, he stated (incorrectly), there had been an exchange of views between St Petersburg and London. Whilst the Russian government had declared that it had no designs on Narvik, the British government had declared that it had no intention of occupying the Varanger Fjord or any other part of northern Norway. In the present international situation it was of great importance for Russia to have an assurance that Norway would not place territory at England's disposal. Britain threatened Russia in the Near East; Russia for its part had to prevent itself from being placed in a vice, with pressure being exerted from the north as well as the south. Hence Russia's desire to negotiate with Norway. In return Russia might recognise the Svalbard treaty and (again playing on a supposed common antagonism towards Finland) support a rectification of the Norwegian-Finnish frontier in Norway's favour. The circumstances, Chicherin concluded, were similar to those prevailing after the Russo-Japanese war. Jakhelln was not sure what he meant by this. Presumably Chicherin was thinking about the way in which skilled diplomacy (notably that of Izvolsii) had contributed to Russia's remarkable recovery in the aftermath of military defeat and revolution. Jakhelln could only try to reassure Chicherin that neither the present nor any future Norwegian government wished to place territory at Britain's disposal, and that Britain itself had shown no desire to use Norwegian territory as a basis for operations in the recent great war.

Chicherin's final remarks on the question, two days later, openly linked the question of Svalbard with that of the integrity treaty, implying that a more accommodating Soviet attitude over Svalbard would depend on a more accommo-

dating Norwegian attitude on the integrity treaty.¹⁰⁵ Given this choice, Jakhelln suggested in his despatch to Christiania, the Norwegian government would no doubt prefer to leave the status quo unaltered until the time when the integrity treaty could be denounced. He, at any rate, would attempt to ensure in his dealings with Litvinov over Spitsbergen that the two questions were kept entirely separate. In fact, as we have seen, just such a linkage had been envisaged by Mowinckel in his memorandum of 18 November, and was eventually to form the basis of the agreement on de jure recognition reached in February 1924.

By the end of 1922 the Norwegians had been forced to recognise that the Soviet position on the integrity treaty was immovable. What lay behind it? Several motives are conceivable. One is suggested by the first comment on the Soviet proposals when they reached the British Foreign Office in 1923: 'It is evident that the Soviet government desire to obtain a pretext for interfering in Norway where a portion of the population has Bolshevik sympathies.'¹⁰⁶ This supposition was not wholly unfounded. Communism certainly held a persistent appeal for many of the inhabitants of the sparsely populated far north of Scandinavia.¹⁰⁷ Around 1920 the Finnish communist Edvard Gylling, later prime minister of the Karelian Autonomous Socialist Republic, devised a plan by which 'northern Finland, northern Sweden and northern Norway should, at some opportune time, be forcibly incorporated into Soviet Karelia, which would thus be expanded into the Soviet Republic of the North.'¹⁰⁸ The Soviet government was probably not involved in the plan though it was well aware that there was widespread agitation in northern Norway in 1920 aimed at separation and joining the Soviet state.¹⁰⁹ But by 1922 it can scarcely have regarded such a goal as achievable.

A second consideration was suspicion of the League of Nations and everything connected with it. Danielsen points out that it was natural that the Soviet government should react against the *form* taken by the Norwegian government's

initiative on the integrity treaty, with its references to the League Covenant and Versailles.¹¹⁰ It was extremely sensitive towards anything which might be interpreted as discriminatory treatment from the world at large. The Soviet regime wished to increase its international authority at a time when many states were seeking to isolate it. Hence its insistence that the treaties signed by the tsarist government remained valid.

There was continuity with tsarist Russia in another respect. Like its predecessor, the Soviet government had a real interest in maintaining the status quo in the north.¹¹¹ Soviet policy naturally favoured an agreement which could prevent other states from establishing strategic positions in a region close to its frontiers. This explains its desire to see the integrity treaty, if it were not to remain in force, replaced by a new security arrangement between Norway and Soviet Russia. This traditional defensive preoccupation was given a new ideological edge by the need to prevent Norway from becoming an advanced base for British imperialism. Chicherin's emphasis on this point in his exchanges with Jakhelln must undoubtedly be taken seriously. And Chicherin, despite his eccentricities, is not a figure to be underestimated. Although he was later to be shifted to the sidelines by Stalin and by his erstwhile subordinate Litvinov, the architect of Rapallo was at this stage central to Soviet decision making on foreign affairs.¹¹²

Finally there is the question of de jure recognition. This was the goal repeatedly emphasised both in the private exchanges within the Soviet leadership and in its diplomatic encounters with the Norwegians. With this end in view, everything that the Norwegians wanted - from recognition of their sovereignty over Svalbard to hunting and fishing rights in the Arctic to the abrogation of the integrity treaty - was grist to the Soviet mill: bargaining material for obtaining diplomatic recognition. The integrity treaty was especially important in this connection, since it was the most explicit link between the international rights enjoyed by the tsarist regime and those claimed by its Soviet successor. In February 1922 Jakhelln sent to

Utenriksdepartementet an article published by the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs on the Soviet Union's relations with Norway in the year 1922.¹¹³ He drew attention not only to its notably friendly tone, but also to the fact that it echoed Chicherin's emphasis on Norway's obligations under the 1907 treaty. Norway's approach to the Soviet government on the question amounted, it said, to a recognition that it was the legal successor to previous Russian governments, 'or in other words: it recognises it de jure.'¹¹⁴ Of course withholding consent to the abrogation of the integrity treaty did not bring de jure recognition any closer. Nor could the Soviets do anything to prolong the treaty. At most they could prevent it from lapsing before its termination date in 1928. However, this presumably mattered less than the principle that no change could be made without the Soviet government's consent as an equal partner, and as legitimate heir to all the rights of its tsarist predecessor.

Exchanges with the signatory powers: second phase 1923-24

The Norwegians now had to decide how to proceed in the face of Soviet opposition. At first Utenriksdepartementet considered a fairly sharp protest note.¹¹⁵ By January 1923 the foreign ministry had decided that the best approach would be to conclude a protocol with the British, French and German governments confirming that the treaty was no longer in force, which would then be registered with the League of Nations. They might inform the Soviet government before approaching the three other powers to give it the opportunity to join in. If it refused, they could inform the League of the fact and send the Soviet government a formal denunciation in accordance with Article 3 of the treaty.¹¹⁶ Bull reiterated the point that any communication to the Soviets must merely record the lapse of the integrity treaty as an established fact: anything more would imply recognition of the Soviet government as possessing the same rights under the treaty as its tsarist predecessor. It might

even be taken to imply de jure recognition.¹¹⁷ The legations in London, Paris and Berlin were requested on 16 February to propose this procedure to the three western governments.

British and French responses, February - March 1923

Following the CID's decision in July 1922 that the lapse of the integrity treaty would be in Britain's interest, the Foreign Office was not unduly concerned about the precise means by which this was to be achieved. There was of course no question of Britain's signing any kind of joint protocol with the Soviet Union, and a junior official suggested that the Norwegians should be warned against concluding a separate agreement with the Soviets. He was overruled. 'It is perhaps wiser not to interfere', Gregory remarked.¹¹⁸ On 16 March 1923 the British therefore accepted the Norwegian proposal, suggesting only that it would be desirable to follow the precedent of the abrogation of the 1855 treaty guaranteeing the integrity of Norway and Sweden (the immediate predecessor of the 1907 treaty).¹¹⁹

As they had done in 1922, the French raised significant objections to the procedure proposed by the Norwegians. Again they did so not in a negative spirit, but in order to meet Norwegian wishes while 'sans toutefois créer un précédent qui risquerait d'être dangereux pour le respect dû aux traités'.¹²⁰ Pointing out that the treaty had been renewed in 1918 and remained valid until 1928, they recommended on 12 March that the French, British and Germans should mutually agree among themselves not to regard it as being in force, and then denounce it in 1928. In support of their case they cited the London Declaration of 17 January 1871, according to which a treaty could not be abrogated or modified without the consent of all the contracting parties.

In Britain the French proposal, communicated on 28 March, was at first greeted with suspicion. One member of the Foreign Office's Treaty Department did not regard it as 'any improvement on our own', while another suspected that 'the French may be trying to lay a trap for us in this matter':

If they can get us to assent to what they think about the 1871 declaration, they may be able to use it against us in future negotiations with regard to the Rhine. We recently considered the possibility of Great Britain withdrawing from the Rhine Convention without consulting the French or the Belgians. I therefore think that this matter requires careful handling.¹²¹

Even the more considered view of Sir Cecil Hurst was that 'Norway has got nothing to do except denounce the treaty and her purpose will then be achieved.'¹²² However, a more thorough examination of the treaty's origins lent weight to the French interpretation:

The treaty was contemplated as a means of pacifying the North and was not given perpetuity only because it was feared that such perpetuity might make it a dead letter. It was originally intended to make it effective for periods of 20 years, denunciation to take place within 5 years before the 20 years period expired.

In its present form Article 3 appears to me to intend, though it does not say so in words, that while denunciation may take place at any time, no sudden denunciation shall be effective at any time other than the stated 10 years periods.¹²³

Hurst therefore recommended acceptance of the French proposal.¹²⁴ The British decision was communicated to the Norwegians on 17 May.

Norway adopts the French proposal

Long before Utenriksdepartementet learned of Britain's acquiescence in the procedure proposed by the French, it had been forced to make up its own mind on its merits. Jens Bull realised that there was much to be gained from accepting the French proposal even though it conflicted with the Norwegian interpretation of the treaty's status. 'In reality,' he wrote, 'we obtain all that we want by the French proposal.'¹²⁵ Others, however, were more reluctant to give way and expressed the hope that in any exchange of notes the Norwegian government would maintain its earlier view that the treaty had already lapsed.¹²⁶ More importantly, a warning note had belatedly been sounded from Berlin. On 10 March 1923 Arne Scheel, now Norwegian minister to Germany, responded to the instructions he had been sent on 16 February. Scheel warned against taking German acquiescence for granted.¹²⁷ First, it was practically certain that they would not sign any joint protocol with France. For this reason Scheel suggested that Norway should sign separate protocols with each power. Utenriksdepartementet accepted his advice on this point.¹²⁸ Secondly, Scheel went on, the Germans now attached great importance to the close relationship with Russia established at Rapallo in April 1922. He argued that before making its approach to the other powers, Norway should 'open friendly discussions with Russia': 'The most important thing is that we should not, being in a weak contractual position, treat the Soviet Union in a nonchalant manner and in a way likely to antagonise it.'¹²⁹

Utenriksdepartementet did not follow this part of Scheel's advice. Instead, it took upon itself the task of responding to the opinions expressed in Narkomindel's survey of Soviet foreign policy in 1922 which had been reported by Jakhelln on 3 February (p. 39 above).¹³⁰ Changed into the less formal form of a *note-verbale* after consultation with the Storting's foreign policy committee, the Norwegian communication was nevertheless unconciliatory.¹³¹ It contested the Soviet view that

Norway's earlier notes on the integrity treaty implied an acknowledgement of the Soviet government as the legal successor of previous Russian governments - in other words, de jure recognition. The Moscow delegation was instructed on 5 April to deliver the *note-verbale*. The instructions did not arrive until 30 April; the note was delivered on 1 May and a reply was finally received on 30 June. Apart from making some basic factual errors about the terms of the integrity treaty, the Soviets again denied that the 1907 treaty had gone out of effect and asserted the right of each party to draw what conclusion it liked about whether or not Norway had given the Soviet government de jure recognition.¹³² Utenriksdepartementet responded by advising the Moscow legation that it was 'scarcely necessary to continue the discussion' but nevertheless took the opportunity to correct the Soviet errors.¹³³

Following the fall of the Liberal government on 6 March 1923, the Conservatives had returned to office under Halvorsen, with Michelet again as foreign minister. The new government had to decide whether to go along with the procedure proposed by the French. There could be little doubt that Norway would acquiesce even before the French proposal received the backing of Great Britain. At the end of March Utenriksdepartementet sent a memorandum on the current position on the integrity treaty question to the king and to each member of the government.¹³⁴ In early May the cabinet decided to accept the French proposal.¹³⁵ The question was discussed in a secret session of the Storting on 9 June which concurred in the standpoint taken by the foreign ministry and by the government.¹³⁶ As we have seen (pp. 26-8 above), there was general agreement that the treaty should go, although there was criticism of the government's allegedly cavalier treatment of the Soviets from both Hambro at one end of the political spectrum and the communist members Scheflo and Egede-Nissen at the other. On 26 June an approach was finally made to the German government, without mentioning the fact that the proposed procedure had originated with the French.¹³⁷

Between the Soviets and the Western powers

Norway's relations with the Soviet Union in 1923 were even more frustrating than they had been in 1922. With the departure of Mowinckel from the foreign ministry in March, the process of rapprochement lost some of its momentum. In May, however, Kollontai became acting head of the Soviet trade delegation in place of Surits. Authorised by Krasin to go ahead with an agreement by which Norway was to sell herring to Russia in exchange for grain, she threw herself into the negotiations with great energy and clinched the deal on 24 June.¹³⁸ For Kollontai, fish was only one of 'a series of preparatory steps' leading to de jure recognition.¹³⁹ That this priority was shared in Moscow was shown in July, when the Soviet government requested permission for a naval training squadron to visit Norwegian ports. 'I gather from Litvinov's telegram that he is raising this question to urge the Storting to proceed even during its current term to discuss recognition of our state', Kollontai noted on 15 July.¹⁴⁰ Already, however, the improvement in Norwegian-Soviet relations had fallen victim to a drastic deterioration in Russia's relations with the West.

This resulted mainly from the change of government in Britain in the autumn of 1922, when the Lloyd George coalition had been replaced by a Conservative government under Bonar Law. Unlike his predecessor, the new prime minister made no attempt to restrain the hostility towards the Soviet regime of the man who served as foreign secretary in both administrations, Lord Curzon.¹⁴¹ The latter's ideological and imperial preoccupations were widely shared within the Conservative Party as well as in the Foreign Office. The 'Curzon note' handed to the Soviet government on 8 May 1923 was intended to clear the way for a breach with the Soviets. It catalogued an accumulation of grievances concerning, among other things, the treatment of British subjects and of Russian priests, as well as communist propaganda in India and the Near East. One complaint concerned a matter which touched closely on

Norwegian interests: the arrest of British trawlers off the north Russian coast. Two had been arrested early in 1922. Both had been outside the three-mile limit: one appeared to have been outside the twelve-mile limit claimed by the Russians; the other had sunk in a storm while in Russian custody. Although the crews were released in February 1923, a third trawler was arrested in March and a fourth on 7 May 1923, just before the delivery of the Curzon note. In April 1922 the British government had despatched a warship to protect British fishing vessels outside the three-mile limit. It did so again on 10 May 1923. A ship was sent to the Murman coast with instructions 'to prevent interference with British vessels outside the three-mile limit, using force if necessary.'¹⁴² Sympathisers with the Soviet regime were not the only ones to wonder why such a drastic measure was necessary, in view of the fact that Britain had been disputing Russian claims to a twelve-mile limit since pre-war days.¹⁴³

The British government disclaimed any intention of going to war with Russia, and the crisis occasioned by the Curzon note was defused by a series of conciliatory responses from the Soviet side, as well as by the replacement of Bonar Law by Baldwin on 22 May. The new prime minister exerted his influence to avert a breach of relations. Nevertheless the confrontation between Britain and Russia in the far north continued to alarm the Norwegians. The British warship, HMS *Harebell*, was based at the Norwegian port of Vardø. During the Storing's secret debate on the integrity treaty of 9 June 1923, the communist member Egede-Nissen argued that the British presence lent force to Soviet fears of what might happen if the treaty lapsed. The British could use Norwegian territory as a naval base for war with Russia.¹⁴⁴ This charge provoked a vehement response from Mowinckel, who declared that Britain was merely defending the interests of its large fishing fleet in northern waters and that, being so far from home, its ships had no choice but to use Norwegian ports for taking on coal and supplies. For Norway, he said, it was merely a matter of hospitality. 'The moment that conflict

breaks out between England and Russia, Norwegian harbours will be closed to English warships.¹⁴⁵

The controversy over the British naval visit had scarcely died down before the Soviets made their request to send a training squadron to Norway. It was mentioned by Michelet in a further closed session of the Storting on 10 July which had been arranged at Mowinckel's request in order to provide an opportunity for a discussion of the full range of outstanding foreign policy issues.¹⁴⁶ Michelet stated that to accept such a visit would bring Norway close to de jure recognition (as Litvinov had intended): he therefore proposed not to allow it for the time being. On the question of recognition the foreign minister remained cautious. 'In my opinion,' he said, 'Norway should be one of the first countries to recognise Russia de jure. ... But I do not believe the time has yet come.'¹⁴⁷ He saw no indication that Britain's attitude had changed. As usual, Mowinckel spoke in favour of speedy recognition: it was important for the question of Norwegian sovereignty over Svalbard as well as for the development of trade. But Norway must not be too late. Mowinckel remarked revealingly that 'it would be rather humiliating for Norwegian foreign policy if, for example, Sweden and Denmark should steal a march on us in relations with Russia.'¹⁴⁸

However, throughout the summer and much of the autumn of 1923 there was no sign that the Western powers were yet prepared to relent on the question of recognition. In the face of the determined stand taken by Great Britain, France and the United States, it was impossible for Norway to break ranks, not least because of the unfortunate consequences that might follow for its financial situation. There were numerous warnings, from London and elsewhere, that the country's credit position would suffer if Norway went ahead alone.¹⁴⁹ Yet solidarity with the West entailed further damage to Norway's relations with Russia. When Kollontai visited Moscow in August 1923 she found Krasin preoccupied with the consequences of the Curzon note, including his own recall

from London, though he approved the fish agreement that she had concluded with the Norwegians. Litvinov, however, was hostile: 'Norway is a dependent country. Just why should it recognise us?' As for Chicherin, 'He offered me no advice, nor did I get any directives from him. He takes little interest in what we have been doing in Norway.'¹⁵⁰ Chicherin's only concern was that Russia should sign the Paris treaty on Svalbard as a means of achieving international recognition.¹⁵¹ Presumably the Soviet leaders had lost interest in Norway once it had become clear that it could not be detached from the West's united front. As Schefflo had warned his colleagues in the Storting on 10 July, if Norway was the first country to recognise Russia this was something which would be valued very highly, but the Soviets would be quite indifferent if Norway came third, fourth or fifth in line behind Great Britain.¹⁵²

The Soviets continued in their attempt to achieve recognition via Svalbard. Michelet, however, was determined - contrary to the approach pursued by Mowinckel as foreign minister - to keep the two issues separate.¹⁵³ In a note of 7 November 1923 the Soviet government suggested that a solution to the Svalbard question might be reached if Norway was prepared to contemplate 'la discussion des autres questions politiques restées jusqu'ici en suspense entre les deux Gouvernements.'¹⁵⁴ This, Kollontai noted in her diary, was 'a decisive step on our part. The Norwegian government must respond, it cannot fail to.'¹⁵⁵ But Michelet remained evasive, still awaiting a change of mood among the Western powers. Only towards the end of 1923, with a shift of opinion in Italy and, more importantly, Labour's election victory in Great Britain, did the situation suddenly appear more hopeful.

The end of the integrity treaty

Following Norway's approach to the German government at the end of June 1923, progress on the treaty question was stalled once again. On this occasion the summer holiday arrangements of the Wilhelmstrasse appear to have been the chief culprit.¹⁵⁶ There was no response until 25 September, when the German government gave a verbal reply to the Norwegian proposal. It turned out to be entirely positive, although Ministerialdirektor Wallroth admitted to Scheel that the Auswärtiges Amt had at one time contemplated getting in touch with the Soviet government on the matter through the German embassy in Moscow.¹⁵⁷ The way was now clear for Utenriksdepartementet to begin drafting notes in October 1923 to the three Western governments proposing an exchange of notes affirming that the treaty was no longer in force. Another note denouncing the treaty was prepared in late November for delivery to the Soviet government.

It was decided in early December that unless negotiations leading to de jure recognition were to begin shortly, all four notes should be delivered simultaneously, since the Soviets might regard Norwegian silence on the matter as indicating acquiescence in their position. It was also better to have the treaty out of the way as soon as possible in case negotiations for de facto recognition did begin, since the Russians still appeared to regard the treaty as a lever for extracting concessions from Norway.¹⁵⁸ On 13 December the legations in London, Paris and Berlin were instructed to transmit draft notes to the respective governments (together with a copy of the note to the Soviet government) with a view to an exchange of notes on 8 January 1924.¹⁵⁹ Apart from one minor modification suggested by the French, the three Western governments acquiesced entirely in the Norwegian proposal, and the formal exchange of notes duly took place on schedule.¹⁶⁰ The three governments later agreed, at Norway's request, to make no announcement to the press. The denunciation of the treaty in Moscow took place on the same day.

Receiving the Norwegian note, Litvinov expressed his surprise that Norway had chosen this moment to denounce the treaty.¹⁶¹ Only the previous day, the Norwegian government had announced its readiness to begin negotiations for de jure recognition.¹⁶² The integrity treaty, Litvinov thought, could have been dealt with at the same time. It emerged from a later exchange with Florinskii, the head of Narkomindel's Western department (and one of the few former tsarist diplomats serving under the new regime), that the Soviets were still inclined to argue, on the basis of their mistaken reading of the text of the treaty (despite the correction provided by Utenriksdepartementet on 8 August 1923), that it could not be denounced unilaterally by Norway.¹⁶³ Jakhelln corrected the misapprehension once again and Florinskii promised that the Commissariat would reconsider the question.

Norway's de jure recognition of the Soviet Union

The first breakthrough on the question of de jure recognition had come with the return from Moscow to Christiania of Kollontai, now head of the Soviet trade delegation, on 16 December 1923. Determined to 'force the pace of the talks on recognition',¹⁶⁴ she saw Michelet the following day and offered a comprehensive package, including a solution to the Svalbard question, the regulation of hunting and fishing rights in the Arctic and concessions to Norwegian businessmen in Russia. Kollontai had also been authorised to make large purchases of industrial goods in Norway.¹⁶⁵ Given the shift in favour of recognition both at home and abroad, the government decided on 21 December that it could hesitate no longer. Denmark and Great Britain had ratified the Svalbard treaty in December; if the Soviets agreed to do so as well, the treaty could be put to the Storting for ratification in the session beginning in January 1924. In a note of 7 January the Norwegian government declared that it was ready to negotiate

with the Soviets on all outstanding economic and political questions. Negotiations were begun between the trade delegation and Utenriksdepartementet, conducted principally by Kollontai and Esmarch. Despite Michelet's personal enthusiasm for recognition and the prospect of imminent recognition by other countries, notably Britain, there was still procrastination on the Norwegian side. This appears to have been due mainly to Esmarch's concern for the interests of those Norwegians who were claiming compensation for confiscated assets.¹⁶⁶ Then, as Britain recognised the Soviet government on 1 February and Italy on the 9th, it was the Soviet turn to procrastinate. Litvinov ordered Kollontai 'not to make any promises even orally until there is an act of recognition'.¹⁶⁷ Under pressure from all sides, the Norwegian cabinet accepted the Soviet draft agreement. The Storting gave its approval on 12 February.

An exchange of notes on 16 February marked Norway's full recognition of the Soviet government, as well as Soviet recognition of Norwegian sovereignty over Svalbard.¹⁶⁸ There was now no obstacle to the publication of the agreement to abrogate the integrity treaty. On 19 February the Storting was informed of the exchange of notes with the Western governments and of the denunciation of the treaty with the Soviet Union. Announcements in the Norwegian press soon followed, with most papers following the interpretations provided by Utenriksdepartementet and only *Arbeiderbladet* taking a more sympathetic view of the Soviet stance.¹⁶⁹ Among foreign newspapers, only *Le Temps* and *Izvestiia* chose to report the event.¹⁷⁰ On 1 August 1924 the foreign policy committee of the Storting gave its formal approval to the government's procedure.¹⁷¹

On 6 February 1928, unnoticed, the integrity treaty finally went out of effect. There is one final, enigmatic document in Utenriksdepartementet's files on the question: a brief, one-page outline of the origins of the treaty and the circumstances of its denunciation. It is dated 17 April 1939. A note by Jens Bull

of 18 April records: 'The above communicated to Stortings-president Hambro today, in reply to a telephone enquiry to me yesterday.' We shall probably never know why Hambro wanted this information at this time.

Conclusion

The absence of the integrity treaty made little visible difference to Norwegian security. For much of the inter-war period Norway's membership of the League of Nations performed much the same function as the integrity treaty had once done: as 'an expression of a non-binding and harmless alignment with the Western powers'.¹⁷² The collapse of collective security did not alter Norway's position in relation to Great Britain. Norwegian security remained wholly dependent on British naval power, but Norway could still do nothing to prevent Britain from violating its neutrality should the latter wish to do so.

By 1939 the integrity treaty appears to have dropped entirely out of the collective memory of policy makers in both Britain and Germany. In Britain, at least, there might have been an opportunity to examine the history of the treaty when, in the spring and summer of 1939, the Foreign Office and the Chiefs of Staff considered giving Norway some form of guarantee against German attack.¹⁷³ It clearly occurred to no one to do so. Nor does any Norwegian policy maker appear to have recalled the existence of the treaty with either nostalgia or regret during the dangerous months which preceded the German invasion of 9 April 1940. Carl Hambro, who had enquired about the history of the integrity treaty in April 1939, did not take the opportunity to draw the government's attention to it, though he had ample means for doing so if he wished.

In the winter of 1939-40 both Britain and France on the one hand and Germany on the other were actively contemplating

military intervention in Scandinavia. If the existence of the integrity treaty had done nothing to restrain the belligerent powers during the First World War, it would presumably have been even less likely to do so during the Second, had it remained in force. Yet the neutrality of Norway (and Sweden) was undoubtedly a constraint on British and French policy. The framers of the integrity treaty had calculated correctly to this extent: that Britain was ultimately unprepared to violate Norwegian neutrality in either the First or the Second World Wars without a prior violation by the enemy. In a sense the Chiefs of Staff were acting in accordance with the spirit of the integrity treaty when they ordered that the expeditionary force destined for Norway in early April 1940 should set sail only when 'the Germans set foot on Norwegian soil, or there is clear evidence that they intend to do so.'¹⁷⁴

The Soviet Union did not forget so quickly. It did not abandon the idea of concluding some kind of special security arrangement with Norway of the kind that Chicherin and Litvinov had tried to salvage from the integrity treaty. In February 1928, during her second period of service as minister to Norway, Kollontai handed over a copy of the German-Soviet non-aggression treaty of 1926 with the suggestion that it might serve as a model for an agreement between Norway and the Soviet Union.¹⁷⁵ The matter was under discussion between the Norwegians and the Soviets for more than two years, but by 1930 it was evident that their views were too far apart for any agreement to be reached. Whereas the Soviet Union wished to conclude a neutrality and non-aggression pact, the Norwegians were prepared to consider only an arbitration treaty. They felt that the Soviet proposal would be incompatible with Norway's obligations as a member of the League of Nations and that it was a matter on which they should act in concert with the other Nordic countries. Nevertheless, the Norwegian-Soviet exchanges seem to have been taken more seriously by both parties than the discussions of similar pacts which took place between the Soviet Union and Sweden (1926-27) and Denmark (1930-31). As late as October

1930 Litvinov told Kollontai that the conclusion of an agreement with Norway was a matter of 'great importance'.¹⁷⁶ On the Norwegian side Mowinckel showed himself to be consistently in favour of some kind of agreement with the Soviet Union. He raised the question with the Soviet minister in Oslo, Bekzadian, after his return to government as prime minister and foreign minister in 1933, and in 1934 proposed to his Danish and Swedish colleagues a joint Scandinavian initiative for a non-aggression pact with the Soviets. On neither occasion was the initiative pursued very far.

However the question of a Norwegian-Soviet agreement was revived after the end of the Second World War as the Soviet Union was taking steps to consolidate its security position in the northern sphere. Already in November 1944 Molotov had approached his Norwegian opposite number, Trygve Lie, with a proposal to revise the Svalbard treaty of 1920 to allow joint Norwegian-Soviet sovereignty over the archipelago.¹⁷⁷ Early in 1948 there were hints that the Soviets might wish to establish a special security relationship with Norway similar to the one that was to be embodied in the treaty of friendship and mutual cooperation signed by Finland and the Soviet Union in April. The Soviet overtures, though they were not followed up, served to raise the temperature of the Cold War by several degrees. Particularly significant in this context were two telegrams sent by the ambassador in Moscow early in March to the Norwegian foreign minister Halvard Lange.¹⁷⁸ The first, sent on 5 March, suggested that 'it might be of interest to investigate possible notes and correspondence in the Department's archive concerning plan for Norwegian-Soviet non-aggression treaty in 1930 or '31 under Mowinckel's government.' The second, sent two days later, stated that 'one of my Russian connections' had referred in a private conversation about developments in Finland to plans for a Norwegian-Soviet agreement in the inter-war period, but had not elaborated further. Ambassador Berg's informant was the elderly Aleksandra Kollontai. Although her memory for dates may have been slightly faulty, Kollontai was still a figure to be taken

seriously as the embassy's only contact who had direct access to Stalin.¹⁷⁹

Norway's leaders had few clear aims in mind when they initiated the procedure that was to lead to the disappearance of the integrity treaty, beyond a general feeling that the treaty was incompatible with Norwegian dignity.

The Norwegians conducted their negotiations with the four signatory powers fitfully and sometimes with alarming insouciance, especially where the Soviet Union was concerned. They had little idea of what was going on in the minds of policy makers in Moscow, Berlin, Paris and above all London. In the event, no harm was done. Norway was not important enough for its *faux pas* to do any lasting damage. The integrity treaty question may be seen as an example of a persistent Norwegian inability to grasp the complexities of conducting relations with more powerful neighbours - as one of a series of foreign policy failures that was to culminate in the disaster of 1940.¹⁸⁰ There is an interesting parallel with what Rolf Tamnes has characterised as Norway's 'non-policy' on the question of Svalbard.¹⁸¹ Following its vigorous pursuit of 'Arctic imperialism' in the early 1920s, Norwegian policy became strangely passive once the Svalbard treaty had been ratified. It made little effort after 1925 to secure its sovereignty, preferring to react to the initiatives of others - in this case, those of the Soviet Union. The parallel is not exact. Norway's initiative over the integrity treaty was not aimed at achieving a higher international profile but was intended rather to clear away a relic of a bygone era of great-power politics. However, the end result was the same. Once the treaty was gone, Norway would be able to retreat into isolation - into a 'non-policy' - free from the attentions of larger powers.

But there is another side to the story. Norway was in the last resort a small country with only a limited capacity to influence the international environment in which it was forced to operate. Norwegian foreign policy would not necessarily have

been more successful if it had been more 'realistic'. This is demonstrated by the career of Halvdan Koht - 'Norway's first Foreign Minister with a clearly formulated concept of the nation's foreign policy interests'¹⁸² - between 1935 and 1940. No Norwegian politician between the wars had a clearer understanding of *Realpolitik* or pursued a more active personal diplomacy.¹⁸³ That war came to Norway in 1940 was not due to a failure of Norwegian diplomacy (though Koht certainly misjudged the relative threats posed by Germany and the Western Allies) but to a great-power conflict over which Norway had no control. The international situation in the early 1920s was less threatening, but it was hazardous enough. No country was more exposed than Norway to the pressures generated by the deep ideological antagonism between the capitalist powers - among which Great Britain was foremost - and the new Soviet state. Norway could not afford to antagonise either of its powerful neighbours. A certain measure of passivity, of waiting on events, was unavoidable. To this extent Norwegian policy was pre-eminently realistic.¹⁸⁴ The last word should perhaps be given to Christian Michelet. During the Storting's debate of 12 February 1924 on Norway's diplomatic recognition of the Soviet government the foreign minister expressed with unusual clarity the constraints placed upon the makers of Norwegian foreign policy:

It is said that the government has been too cautious in this matter. I would reply that there is a deeper truth than many in this gathering will admit, in the words once spoken by prime minister Gunnar Knudsen in this place: that the time for Norway to recognise the Soviet will come only after certain great powers have done so. I believe that there is much to be said for the view that a small country like Norway should pursue a foreign policy which has some relation to its economic strength, the size of its population and its capacity to uphold its principles, its opinions, in the world at large.¹⁸⁵

Appendix:

The Norwegian integrity treaty of 1907

Treaty between the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Norway and Russia respecting the independence and territorial integrity of Norway. Signed at Christiania, November 2, 1907¹⁸⁶

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom and of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India; His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia; the President of the French Republic; His Majesty the King of Norway; and His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias, animated by the desire to secure to Norway, within her present frontiers and with her neutral zone, her independence and territorial integrity, as also the benefits of peace, have resolved to conclude a Treaty to this effect, and have named as their respective Plenipotentiaries:

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom and of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, Mr. W.G. Max Müller, British Chargé d'Affaires at Christiania;

His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia, M. de Treutler, his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Christiania;

The President of the French Republic, M. Delavaud, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Christiania; His Majesty the King of Norway, M. J. Løvland, his Minister of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs;

His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias, M. A. de Krou-pensky, his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Christiania;

Who, having communicated to each other their respective full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed as follows:-

ARTICLE I.

The Norwegian Government undertake not to cede any portion of the territory of Norway to any Power to hold on a title founded either on occupation, or on any other ground whatsoever.

ARTICLE II.

The German, French, British and Russian Governments recognize and undertake to respect the integrity of Norway.

If the integrity of Norway is threatened or impaired by any Power whatsoever, the German, French, British, and Russian Governments undertake, on the receipt of a previous communication to this effect from the Norwegian Government, to afford to that Government their support, by such means as may be deemed the most appropriate, with a view to safeguarding the integrity of Norway.

ARTICLE III.

The present Treaty is concluded for a period of ten years from the day of the exchange of ratifications. If the Treaty is not denounced by any of the parties at least two years before the expiration of the said period, it will remain in force, in the same manner as before, for a further period of ten years and so on accordingly.

In the event of the Treaty being denounced by one of the Powers who have participated with Norway in the conclusion of the present Treaty, such denunciation shall have effect only as far as that Power is concerned.

ARTICLE IV.

The present Treaty shall be ratified and the ratifications shall be exchanged at Christiania as soon as possible.

In witness whereof the Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done in quintuplicate at Christiania, 2nd November, 1907.

Abbreviations

AA	Auswärtiges Amt
ADM	Admiralty
CAB	Cabinet
CID	Committee of Imperial Defence
FO	Foreign Office
PA	Politisches Archiv
PRO	Public Record Office
SA	Stortingets arkiv
UD	Utenriksdepartementet

Notes

1. Reidar Omang, *Norsk utenriksjeneste: Stormfulle tider 1913-28*, Oslo 1959, p. 28, cited in Olav Riste, 'The Foreign Policy-Making Process in Norway: An Historical Perspective', *Forsvarsstudier. Årbok for Forsvarshistorisk forskningssenter*, Forsvarets høgskole 1982, Oslo 1983, p. 233.
2. *Innstilling fra Undersøkelsekommissjonen av 1945, Bilag, vol. I*, Oslo 1947, pp. 117-264.
3. Egil Danielsen, *Norge - Sovjetunionen. Norsk utenrikspolitikk overfor Sovjetunionen 1917-1940*, Oslo 1964, pp. 124-7. But see the brief reference in A.J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs 1920-1923*, London 1925, pp. 231-2.
4. Utenriksdepartementets arkiv, Oslo (UD), P 12 C 3/06, vols. I and II [to 1923]; 47 A 6 [from 1924].
5. Information provided by Hr. Bjørn Rønning, head of Stortingets arkiv.
6. Roald Berg, "'Det land vi venter hjelp af..." Norge og stormaktene 1905-1908: en holdningsanalyse', Hovedoppgave i historie, University of Bergen 1983, p. 111.
7. For the text see Appendix, p. [71].
8. PRO, CAB 2/2, CID, 95th meeting, 21 February 1907, quoted *ibid*, p. 128.
9. Hardinge to Sir A. Nicolson (St Petersburg), 5 February 1908, *British Documents on the Outbreak of the War 1898-1914*, vol. VIII, London 1932, pp. 164-5.
10. Minute of 27 November 1906, quoted in Pertti Luntinen, *The Baltic Question 1903-1908*, Helsinki 1975, p. 95.
11. This is the conclusion reached by Tom Kristiansen, 'Mellom landmakter og sjømakter. Norges plass i britisk forsvars- og utenrikspolitikk', Hovedoppgave i historie, University of Oslo 1988, p. 147. It is also the aspect emphasised in Folke Lindberg, *Scandinavia in Great Power*

Politics 1905-1908, Stockholm 1958, pp. 128-34. Luntinen, *Baltic Question*, p. 130, disagrees with Lindberg, arguing that the British decision to drop neutrality from the Norwegian treaty was dictated by concern for the strategic position of the Danish Straits.

12. Quoted in Lindberg, *Scandinavia in Great Power Politics*, p. 133.
13. *Ibid*, pp. 54-5.
14. For a detailed analysis of this debate see Berg, 'Det land vi venter hjælp af', pp. 136-46.
15. *Ibid*, p. 143.
16. Riste, 'Foreign Policy-Making Process in Norway', p. 233.
17. For an analysis of press comments see Berg, 'Det land vi venter hjælp af', pp. 147-55.
18. *Ibid*, pp. 147-8.
19. 'Observer', '1905-1914. En återblick', *Forum*, 27 February 1915; Brunchorst to UD, 1 and 10 March 1915, j. nr. 07925, 09224, UD, P 12 C 3/06 I. Ehrensvärd had worked actively for reconciliation between Sweden and Norway during his period as foreign minister from 1911 to 1914: Folke Lindberg, *Den svenska utrikespolitikens historia*, vol. III, part 4, 1872-1914, Stockholm 1958, pp. 279-82.
20. Bredo Morgenstjerne, 'Norway's Integrity and Neutrality', *Law Quarterly Review* 31 (1915), p. 393. There is a typescript copy of the article in UD, P 12 C 3/06 I.
21. UD minutes of 4 and 8 December 1915, *ibid*.
22. Statement to Storting, 29 January 1916 (drafted by UD), *ibid*.
23. UD minute of 15 February 1916, *ibid*.
24. Olav Riste, *The Neutral Ally: Norway's relations with belligerent powers in the First World War*, Oslo 1965, pp. 212-24; Kristiansen, 'Mellom landmakter og sjømakter', pp. 193-6.

25. Unsigned memorandum, 'Norway and the Allies', 23 October 1917, PRO, ADM 137/2711, p. 226.
26. Riste, *Neutral Ally*, pp. 216-17.
27. *Ibid*, p. 227.
28. Nils Ørvik, *Sikkerhetspolitikken 1920-1939*, Oslo 1960, vol. I, p. 36.
29. Cf FO 'Memorandum on Norwegian and Danish questions', 16 December 1918, PRO, ADM 116/2055.
30. F. Wedel Jarlsberg, *Reisen gjennom livet*, Oslo 1932, pp. 365-76; Omang, *Norsk utenrikstjeneste II*, pp. 260-81.
31. 'Betenkning angående spørsmålet om Norges tiltredelse til Folkenes Forbund', 22 September 1919, St. prp. nr. 33 (1920), bilag 4, pp. 60-105. For the circumstances of this report see Ørvik, *Sikkerhetspolitikken I*, pp. 21-33.
32. F.O. Lindley, 'Notes on the leading personalities in Norway', 22 December 1926, PRO, FO 371/11758, N5753/5753/30.
33. Danielsen, *Norge - Sovjetunionen*, pp. 116, 121.
34. Frede Castberg, *Minner om politikk og vitenskap fra årene 1900-1970*, Oslo 1971, p. 20.
35. Olav Riste, 'Ideal, interesser og parlamentarisk kontroll: Utforminga av norsk utanrikspolitikk 1905-1945', in Trond Bergh and Helge Ø. Pharo (eds), *Historiker og veileder. Festskrift til Jakob Sverdrup*, Oslo 1989, pp. 69-70.
36. *Ibid*, p. 69.
37. Erik Colban, *Stortinget og utenrikspolitikken*, Oslo 1961, p. 31.
38. Colban, *Stortinget*, pp. 210, 245-7.
39. Lindley to FO, 24 March 1928 (reporting Norwegian press criticism of Hambro's committee), PRO, FO 371/13298, N1932/539/30.
40. Stortingets arkiv (SA), Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1923 ..., Arkivnr. 96, pp. 553-84.
41. Heppelund, *ibid*, pp. 577-8.

42. Ibid, pp. 570-1.
43. Lindley to FO, 24 March 1928 (as note 39 above).
44. Lindley, 'Notes ...' (as note 32 above).
45. Ibid.
46. 'Diplomatic diary: a record of 23 years', Part 2, *International Affairs (Moscow)*, January 1989, p. 108 (entry for 15 November 1923) [hereafter cited as '*Kollontai diary*'].
47. Omang, *Norsk utenriksstjeneste II*, pp. 411-12. As a member of Utenriksdepartementet Ræstad had taken a leading part in the formulation of Norway's policy during the negotiations for the integrity treaty in 1906-7.
48. Toralv Öksnevad, *Joh. Ludw. Mowinckel*, Bergen 1963, is uninformative about Mowinckel's role in foreign policy before becoming prime minister in 1924.
49. SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1924 ..., Arkivnr. 97, p. 472.
50. Carl J. Hambro, *I saw it happen in Norway*, London 1940, p. 83.
51. SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1923 ..., Arkivnr. 96, p. 742 (secret session of 10 July 1923).
52. Tim Greve, *Haakon VII of Norway*, London 1983, pp. 51-4; Berg, 'Det land vi venter hjælp af', p. 134.
53. Greve, *Haakon VII*, pp. 76-7.
54. Ibid, pp. 97-9.
55. On the lack of a foreign policy tradition in Norway see Riste, 'Foreign Policy-Making Process', esp. pp. 236-7. For the Soviet Union see Teddy J. Uldricks, *Diplomacy and Ideology: The Origins of Soviet Foreign Relations 1917-1930*, London and Beverly Hills 1979.
56. Cf Nils Ørvik, *The decline of neutrality 1914-41. With special reference to the United States and the Northern neutrals*, Oslo 1953.

57. Alan Johnstone (British minister in Copenhagen in 1905), quoted in Kristiansen, 'Mellom landmakter og sjømakter', p. 86.
58. Tel to UD, 18 November 1920, j. nr. 27852, UD, P 12 C 3/06 I.
59. Tel to UD, 22 November 1920, j. nr. 28145, *ibid.*
60. Wollebæk to UD, 7 January 1921, j. nr. 00521, *ibid.*
61. UD to Colban (Geneva), 2 March 1921, j. nr. 00521, *ibid.*
62. Colban to UD, 2 June 1921, j. nr. 13455, *ibid.*
63. Unsigned minute of 5 April 1922, j. nr. 10101, *ibid.*
64. Bull's preference, he stated later, was always for denunciation: undated minute on draft despatch to Berlin, 21 March 1923 (not sent), UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
65. Minute of 5 April 1922, j. nr. 10101, UD, P 12 C 3/06 I.
66. Minute of 6 April 1922, j. nr. 10101, *ibid.*
67. Trygve Mathisen, *Svalbard i internasjonal politikk 1871-1925*, Oslo 1951, pp. 257-78; Rolf Tamnes, *Svalbard og stormaktene: Fra ingenmansland til Kald Krig, 1870-1953*, Oslo 1991, pp. 33-5.
68. Bull minute of 25 May 1922, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
69. St. prp. nr. 105, 2 June 1922.
70. Findlay to FO, 9 June 1922, PRO, FO 371/8116, N5689/4839/30. This interpretation is also emphasised by Danielsen, *Norge - Sovjetunionen*, pp. 124-7.
71. Omang, *Norsk utenriktjeneste II*, p. 29; Berg, 'Det land vi venter hjælp af', p. 143; Øksnevad, *Mowinckel*, pp. 63-4.
72. Findlay to FO, 9 June 1922, PRO, FO 371/8116, N5689/4839/30.
73. *Ibid.*
74. Quoted in Tamnes, *Svalbard og stormaktene*, p. 29.
75. SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1923 ..., Arkivnr. 96.

76. SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1923 ..., Arkivnr. 96, pp. 557-8.
77. Omang, *Norsk utenrikstjeneste* II, p. 29. Berg, 'Det land vi venter hjelp af', p. 143, notes that Mowinckel was the 'hardest critic' of the integrity treaty during the 1908 Storting debate.
78. SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1923..., pp. 563-4. Hambro repeated this view in a review of Reidar Omang (ed), *Norge og stormaktene 1906-14*, vol. I, Oslo 1957, 'Av utenriksdepartementets saga', parts I and II, *Morgenbladet*, 7 and 8 November 1957. I am grateful to Olav Riste for drawing my attention to this review. During the Second World War Hambro spoke out against the 'formyndermentalitet' of the Western powers towards the smaller countries: Olav Riste, '*London-Regjeringa*'. *Norge i krigsalliansen 1940-1945*, vol. II, Oslo 1979, p. 335.
79. Bull minutes of 22 and 25 May 1922, *ibid*.
80. Mowinckel to Berlin legation, 30 June 1922, *ibid*; Rhomberg (Christiania) to AA, 16 May 1922, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Bonn (PA), AA Abt IV Norden, Politik 1 Norwegen.
81. Gaus memorandum, 2 June 1922; Rhomberg to AA, 27 June 1922, *ibid*.
82. PRO, FO 371/8116, N4839/4839/30.
83. Minute of 30 May 1922, *ibid*.
84. Minute of 31 May 1922, *ibid*.
85. Quoted in David French, *British Strategy and War Aims 1914-1916*, London 1986, pp. 28-9.
86. Riste, *Neutral Ally*, pp. 148-50.
87. Minute of 1 June 1922, PRO, FO 371/8116, N4839/4839/30. The minute was embodied with some additions and modifications in a letter from the FO to the CID of 27 June 1922, *ibid*. The quotations below are taken from this letter.

88. For details of this episode see Riste, *Neutral Ally*, pp. 212-24.
89. Minute of 14 June 1922, PRO, FO 371/8116, N4839/4839/30.
90. Undated minute, *ibid.*
91. CID 159th meeting, PRO, CAB 2/3.
92. *Forhandlinger i Stortinget* 359, p. 2865.
93. Reichskanzler Wirth to Legationssekretär Gregg, 24 July 1922, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II (also in PA, AA Abt IV Norden, Politik 1 Norwegen).
94. Poincaré to Norwegian chargé d'affaires, 5 August 1922, *ibid.*
95. Ovey (FO) to Birkeland (Norwegian legation), 22 August 1922, PRO, FO 371/8116, N 7590/4839/30.
96. Bolstad (chargé in Moscow) to UD, 29 July 1922, j. nr. 21540, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
97. Kollontai diary, *International Affairs* (Moscow), October 1988, pp. 124-5.
98. *Ibid.*, November 1988, p. 131 (entry for 17 October 1922).
99. *Ibid.*, October 1988, p. 125.
100. *Ibid.*, January 1989, p. 106 (entry for 19 August 1923).
101. UD, P 10 A 3/17 I.
102. Jakhelln to UD, 31 October 1922, j. nr. 29908, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
103. Cf Danielsen, *Norge - Sovjetunionen*, pp. 66-8. On Sweden and Denmark see Sune Jungar, 'Bolsjevikmissionen lämnar Stockholm - Sveriges brytning med sovjetregjeringen 1918', in *Studier i moderna historia tillägnade Jarl Torbecke den 18 augusti 1990*, Stockholm 1990, pp. 151-67; Bent Jensen, *Danmark og det russiske spørgsmål*, Århus 1979.
104. Jakhelln to UD, 26 November 1922, j. nr. 32121, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.

105. Jakhelln to UD, 27 November 1922, j. nr. 32120, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
106. Minute by G. Warner (Treaty Department), 2 March 1923, PRO, FO 371/9307, N1975/1975/30.
107. W.R. Mead, *The Scandinavian Northlands*, Oxford 1974; David Kirby, 'The Labour Movement', in Max Engman and David Kirby (eds), *Finland: People, Nation, State*, London 1989, pp. 193-211.
108. Arvo Tuominen, *The Bells of the Kremlin: An experience in Communism*, Hanover and London 1983, pp. 45-6; A.F. Upton, *The Communist Parties of Scandinavia and Finland*, London 1973, p. 144.
109. Sune Jungar, 'The XXth century Varangians: The Russian policy of Sweden, Norway and Denmark after the Revolution. Some comparative observations', in John Hiden and Aleksander Loit (eds), *Contact or Isolation? Soviet-Western Relations in the Interwar Period*, Stockholm 1991, p. 167.
110. Danielsen, *Norge - Sovjetunionen*, p. 127.
111. Cf Sune Jungar, *Ryssland och den Svensk-Norska unionens upplösning. Tsardiplomatie och rysk-finlandsk pressopinion kring unions upplösningnen från 1880 till 1905*, Åbo 1969.
112. Timothy Edward O'Connor, *Diplomacy and Revolution: G.V. Chicherin and Soviet Foreign Affairs, 1918-1930*, Ames, Iowa 1988; Uldricks, *Diplomacy and Ideology*.
113. Jakhelln to UD, 3 February 1923, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
114. Precisely the same interpretation was placed on the Norwegian approach to Soviets by a British Foreign Office official (unnamed) on 27 February 1923 - though of course he judged it in wholly negative terms. He was surprised, he said, that the Norwegians had approached the Soviets at all on this matter, rather than keeping them at a distance as they had done in the Spitsbergen question, since to do so on such a purely political question was, in his view, equivalent to recognising them de jure: Vogt to UD, 1 March 1923, *ibid*.
115. Draft aide-mémoire, 2 December 1922, j.nr. 31793, *ibid*.

116. 'P.M. om integritetstraktaten', 23 January 1923, *ibid.*
117. Minute of 10 February 1923 on draft despatch to Berlin, London and Paris legations (sent 16 February 1923), j.nr. 04785, *ibid.*
118. Minutes by G. Warner of 2 and 6 March 1922; marginal comments by Sir William Tyrrell and J.D. Gregory, PRO, FO 371/9307, N1975/1975/30.
119. FO to Vogt, 16 March 1923, *ibid.*
120. French Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Norwegian legation, 12 March 1923, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
121. French ambassador to Curzon, 28 March 1923; minutes by W. Ritchie, 6 April, and M. Shearman, 11 April 1923, PRO, FO 371/9307, N3000/1975/30.
122. Minute of 11 April 1923, *ibid.*
123. Minute by G. Mounsey, 25 April 1923, *ibid.*
124. Minute of 26 April 1923, *ibid.*
125. Undated minute, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
126. Another (unidentified) minute on same despatch, *ibid.*
127. Despatch of 10 March 1923, j.nr. 07181, *ibid.*
128. Esmarch minute, 19 March 1923; UD to Berlin legation, 21 March 1923, *ibid.*
129. See also Scheel's despatch of 7 July 1923 in which he advocated simply denouncing the treaty under the provisions of Article 3: this, he thought, would avoid all difficulties: j.nr. 18587, *ibid.*
130. Jakhelln to UD, 3 February 1923, j.nr. 05561, *ibid.*
131. 'Projet de note', 26 March 1923; Jens Bull minute, 5 April 1923, *ibid.* The only extant account of the foreign policy committee's discussion on this occasion appears to be that given by one of its members, ex-prime minister Ivar Lykke, in the secret session of the Storting on 9 June 1923. The committee was, he said, unanimous that the treaty should be regarded as having lapsed: the discussion was mainly about relations with Russia, on the initiative of the communist members. The committee agreed that

- Russia should be notified but in a form different from that proposed by Utenriksdepartementet: SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1923 ..., Arkivnr. 96, p. 584.
132. Bolstad to UD, 7 July 1923, j.nr. 19002, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
 133. UD to Moscow legation, 8 August 1923, j.nr. 19002, *ibid.*
 134. J.nr. 08574, 31 March 1923, *ibid.*
 135. Esmarch minute, 1 May 1923, *ibid.*
 136. Esmarch minute, 9 June 1923, *ibid.*; SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1923 ..., Arkivnr. 96, pp. 553-84.
 137. UD to Berlin legation, 21 June 1923, j.nr. 17181; Scheel to UD, 26 June 1923, j.nr. 17588, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
 138. Kollontai diary, *International Affairs* (Moscow), December 1988, pp. 113-16 (entries for 14 May - 24 June 1923).
 139. *Ibid.*, p. 115 (entry for 9 June 1923).
 140. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-18.
 141. W.P. and Z.K. Coates, *A history of Anglo-Soviet relations, London 1944*, pp. 102-29; Stephen White, *Britain and the Bolshevik Revolution*, London 1979, pp. 140-71.
 142. 163 H.C. Deb. 5s (Hansard), col. 2578.
 143. Coates, *Anglo-Soviet relations*, pp. 106, 110-12.
 144. SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1923 ..., Arkivnr. 96, p. 560.
 145. *Ibid.*, p. 562.
 146. *Ibid.*, pp. 682-763; Esmarch P.M., 7 July 1923, j.nr. 18793, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
 147. SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1923 ..., Arkivnr. 96, p. 685.
 148. *Ibid.*, pp. 688-93.
 149. Danielsen, *Norge-Sovjetunionen*, pp. 117-19.
 150. Kollontai diary, *International Affairs* (Moscow), January 1989, p. 106 (entry for 19 August 1923).

151. Mathisen, *Svalbard*, pp. 269-70, links this with the Soviet readiness to sign the Treaty of Lausanne, with its provisions on the status of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus, again possibly as a means of securing de jure recognition.
152. SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1923 ..., Arkivnr. 96, p. 740.
153. Danielsen, *Norge - Sovjetunionen*, pp. 119-20; Mathisen, *Svalbard*, pp. 268-78.
154. Quoted *ibid*, p. 272.
155. Kollontai diary, *International Affairs* (Moscow), January 1989, pp. 107-8 (entry for 15 November 1923). The reference in this entry to the formation of a Labour government in Britain casts doubt either on Kollontai's chronology or on that of her editors. Parliament was dissolved on 16 November; the general election was held on 6 December; MacDonald formed his government on 22 January 1924.
156. Scheel to UD, 19 September 1923, j.nr. 23949, UD, P 12 C 3/06 II.
157. Scheel to UD, 25 September 1923, j.nr. 25881, *ibid*. There is no trace of this idea in the German files.
158. Michelet (?) minute of 3 December 1923, *ibid*.
159. J.nr. 25881, *ibid*.
160. Official letters from British, French and German governments, j.nr. 00751, 00994, 01000, UD, 47 A 6; British note also in FO 371/9307, N10053/1975/30.
161. Jakhelln to UD, 8 January 1923, j.nr. 01598, UD, 47 A 6.
162. Danielsen, *Norge-Sovjetunionen*, p. 117.
163. Jakhelln to UD, 30 January 1924, j.nr. 03794, UD, 47 A 6.
164. Kollontai diary, *International Affairs* (Moscow), January 1989, pp. 108-9 (entry for 24 December 1923).
165. Danielsen, *Norge - Sovjetunionen*, p. 120.
166. *Ibid*, p. 121.

167. Kollontai diary, *International Affairs* (Moscow), January 1989, p. 112 (entry for 11 February 1923).
168. The Soviet Union did not adhere to the Svalbard treaty until 7 May 1935.
169. 'Integritetstraktaten faller først bort i 1928', *Aftenposten*, 19 February 1924; 'Opsigelse av integritetstraktaten. Da Rusland ikke vilde betrakte den som bortfaldt', *Norges Handels og Sjøfartstidende*, 19 February 1924; 'Integritets traktaten av 1907 er opsagt', *Morgenbladet*, 20 February 1924; 'Integritetstraktatens opsigelse', *Arbeiderbladet*, 20 February 1924.
170. 'Norvège. Dénonciation d'un traité', *Le Temps*, 25 February 1924; *Izvestiia*, 3 March 1924, reported in Jakhelln to UD, 3 March 1924, j.nr. 06971, UD, 47 A 6, and in Radowitz (Moscow) to AA, 3 March 1924, PA, AA Abt IV Norden, Politik 1 Norwegen.
171. Indst. S. nr. 98, 1 August 1924.
172. Olav Riste, 'Frå integritetstraktat til atompolitikk: Det stormaktsgaranterte Norge 1905-1983', *Forsvarsstudier III 1983-84*, Oslo 1984, p. 16.
173. Patrick Salmon, 'Scandinavia in British strategy, September 1939 - April 1940', unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Cambridge 1979, pp. 39-45.
174. Chiefs of Staff memorandum, 31 March 1940, PRO, CAB 66/6.
175. The following discussion is based on an unpublished study of the Norwegian and Soviet documents kindly provided by Sven Holtmark.
176. Litvinov to Kollontai, 2 October 1930, quoted by Holtmark, *ibid.*
177. Riste, 'London-Regjeringa' II, pp. 315-39.
178. Magne Skodvin, *Norden eller NATO? Utenriksdepartementet og alliansespørsmålet 1947-1949*, Oslo 1971, pp. 95-6.

179. T.M. Hetland, 'Da Moskva sa nei til Norden. Sovjets syn på Norden og NATO 1948-1952', *Forsvarsstudier IV 1985*, Oslo 1985, pp. 17-18.
180. For this argument see Joseph Frankel, 'Comparing foreign policies: the case of Norway', *International Affairs* 44 (1968), pp. 485-6.
181. Tamnes, *Svalbard og stormaktene*, pp. 10, 36-8.
182. Riste, 'Foreign Policy-Making Process in Norway', p. 238.
183. For a spirited defence of Koht see Magne Skodvin, 'Aspects of Neutrality: The Norwegian Experience', in Karl Rommetveit (ed), *Narvik 1940: Five Nation War in the High North*, Oslo 1991, pp. 21-2.
184. A recent study of Norwegian policy on Baltic questions after the First World War shows that it displayed many of the same features, notably the attempt to keep in step with the Entente powers while maintaining Norway's traditional relationship with Russia: Tom Kristiansen, *Det fjerne og farlige Baltikum. Norge og det baltiske spørsmål 1918/1922*, IFS Info No. 4 - 1992 (Oslo 1992).
185. SA, Referater fra møter for lukkede dører i sesjonen 1924 ..., Arkivnr. 97, p. 888.
186. Source: Treaty Series No. 4, 1908 (Cmd. 3878), London 1908. The Treaty was signed in the French language only.

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The Norwegian integrity treaty 1907-24

After Norway's entry into the League of Nations in 1920, Norway approached Great Britain, France, Germany and Russia, the four powers which had guaranteed the integrity of Norway in 1907, with a proposal to abrogate the integrity treaty. The negotiations proved far more complex than had been expected. Largely owing to Soviet objections no solution could be reached until 1924, and the treaty did not finally lapse until 1928.

This study shows how Norwegian diplomacy drew the country unwittingly into the ideological antagonism between its two powerful neighbours, Great Britain and Soviet Russia. Through the use of British and Soviet sources it also reveals much about the political and strategic preoccupations of the two great powers in the early 1920s, and suggests that there was a continuity in Soviet attitudes towards Norway extending well into the Cold War period.

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