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Between «russophobia» and «bridge-building»

The Norwegian Government
and the Soviet Union
1940 – 1945

Sven G. Holtsmark

Institutt for forsvarsstudier (IFS) Tollbugt 10, 0152 Oslo 1, Norge

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Introduction

In his book *Great Power Politics and Norwegian Foreign Policy. A Study of Norway's Foreign Relations November 1940 - February 1948*, Nils Morten Udgaard has described the evolution of the Norwegian government's foreign policy during the second world war as developing from "total political commitment to the Atlantic Great Powers early in the war; to a policy of non-alignment and accommodation to Soviet interests at the close of the war".¹ According to Udgaard, this process revealed itself as "a continuous - though reluctant - re-orientation towards the Soviet Union, closely following the rise in Soviet power and influence".² Udgaard sees it as a development closely connected with the evolution of relations between the great powers. He identifies two main determinants of Norwegian foreign policy during the war. On the one hand, there is the influence on Norwegian foreign policy of the evolving British and American policy towards the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the Norwegian government had to adjust its policy to the situation created by the steadily increasing role of the Soviet Union as the dominant single power facing Norway in the North.

The question presents itself whether Udgaard's model is adequate and credible as a characterization of Norwegian foreign policy during the war years. And if this is the case, how did this policy reveal itself in the day-to-day affairs of Norway's relations with the great powers? How did Norwegian policy-makers go about operationalizing their declaratory foreign policy? The question also rises about the character of the forces motivating the government's foreign policy in the period under review. Did the politicians in charge of Norway's foreign relations at any stage intend to place Norway in a middle position between East and West? Or was Norway, as Udgaard's qualification cited above suggests, only reluctantly forced into a position of apparent "accommodation to Soviet interests"?

The underlying purpose of this study is to examine Norway's policy towards the Soviet Union during the war in light of the generalizations suggested by Udgaard. I will try to give a tentative answer to the questions asked above as far as the Norwegian policy towards the Soviet Union is concerned. The general aim, however, as the title suggests, is to give a comprehensive presentation of the Norwegian government's policy towards the Soviet Union from the German attack on Norway in April 1940 to the capitulation of the German forces and the subsequent return of the government to Norway in the spring of 1945. It should be noted that I have deliberately chosen to offer more attention to topics which have been the object of only limited treatment by earlier researchers in the field, while for instance the now well-known story of president Roosevelt's free port scheme for Northern Norway, as well as the far more important Spitzbergen question in 1944/45, have only been given limited treatment. In addition, based on this more or less chronologically organized description of the Norwegian policy towards the Soviet Union, an attempt will be made to assess the influence of the Soviet Union on the Norwegian government's overall foreign policy during the war.

The main current in Norwegian foreign policy from about 1944 to Norway's entrance into NATO in 1949 is conventionally described as the policy of "bridge-building".³ Continuing the line of argument presented above, we will look for the operational content of this policy in the period of its formulation during the latter half of the war. Did the Norwegian government, as Udgaard suggests, really view Norway "as occupying an intermediate position between East and West"?⁴ By pointing to the fact that the Norwegian government continued to involve Norway in a multitude of cooperative ventures with the western powers, particularly with regard to military matters, Udgaard himself warns against drawing too far-reaching conclusions about the meaning and the scope of the policy of "bridge-building". Towards the end of the war Norway was, according to Udgaard, "in the process of being woven into the fabric of incipient western co-operation which was to develop fully in the post-war period".⁵ In view of the fairly obvious fact that the Norwegian government's policy towards the Soviet Union will occupy a central position in all attempts to describe and evaluate the changes in its main foreign policy line during the period under review, a discussion of the development of the relations between the government-in-exile and the Soviet Union during these crucial years should constitute a contribution to a better understanding of this general topic as well.

Udgaard's main points have not, of course, been left unchallenged. The contributions of Olav Riste, who in books and articles has delivered strong arguments in favour of a re-evaluation of some of Nils Morten Udgaard's major points and conclusions, merit special attention.⁶ According to Riste, a description of twentieth century Norwegian foreign and security policy requires a two-level analysis. On the one hand, there is the declared policy line, i.e. "the public, official declarations and various kinds of acts which together constitute the nation's official policy in matters of security". On the other hand there is the no less important unofficial level: "the substructural realities, the often implicit preconditions".⁷ As a logical outcome of this line of thought Riste tends to place a greater stress on the continuity of the basic features of, or prerequisites for, Norwegian foreign policy. According to his alternative approach, "the Atlantic Ocean policy", which was introduced by the Norwegian minister of foreign affairs Trygve Lie⁸ in 1940 and further developed during 1941, should be viewed in many respects as a mere formalization of the implicit precondition for Norway's foreign policy since the independence in 1905: namely the belief that the Atlantic great powers, then Great Britain, would stand ready to help Norway if it was faced with a threat from Germany or Russia. Riste continues his argument by stating that the shift during the war years from "Atlantic Ocean policy" towards a policy of "bridge-building" as the declared policy of the government did not signify that the Norwegians gave up their belief in the Atlantic powers as the ultimate guarantors of the integrity and security of Norway. The redirection of the official line of policy towards a loosening of the formal ties to the western powers during the latter half of the period under review is not in dispute. It could be argued, however, that it is possible to direct the attention to other facets of Norway's relations with the great powers; facets which seem to necessitate a greater stress on the continuity in the policy of the Norwegian government. One could, for instance, point to the great variety of Norway's "functional ties" in military

and security matters with the United States and Great Britain. These ties were not cut after the introduction of the "bridge-building" doctrine as a main element of the official Norwegian foreign policy.

Although my study deals with Norway's foreign policy during the war only, an examination of the government's policy towards the Soviet Union during the earliest phase of the "bridge-building" period might also give a contribution to the discussion of to which extent the decision in 1949 to participate in NATO represented a fundamental redirection of Norway's policy towards the great powers. If fears of Soviet expansionist plans in the North, the traditional Scandinavian "russophobia", were clearly influencing Norwegian foreign policy in the formative period of the "bridge-building" doctrine, rising tension between the Soviet Union and the western great powers would tend to revitalize the idea of Norwegian participation in a western defence system.

The study is based on a variety of published and unpublished source material. It goes without saying that the files of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been extensively utilized. The Norwegian National Archives (Riksarkivet) are in possession of a mass of interesting material. Most important for my purpose have been the archives of the post-war Parliamentary Commission of Investigation (Den parlamentariske undersøkelseskommissjonen av 1945), the minutes of cabinet meetings, various military files, and some of the private collections; not least the diaries and papers of professor Halvdan Koht, minister of foreign affairs until Trygve Lie took office in November 1940. The University Library in Oslo is the holder of various collections of letters and personal papers, the most important of which have been the diaries of Arne Ording, a principal advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The material from Norwegian sources has been supplemented with documents from the Public Record Office in London (mainly from the Foreign Office), which have proven to be very useful by their illumination of certain elements of the Norwegian government's foreign policy.

Although the study is based to a high degree on unpublished sources, I have also made use of some collections of printed documents, monographs, articles, and memoirs.

Not Yet Allies

Prior to the German attack on Norway on 9th April 1940 the various Norwegian governments had paid only limited attention to their relations with the Soviet Union. Norwegian foreign policy was traditionally oriented towards the Nordic countries, Western Europe, and the USA, although the last years before the war had seen some limited attempts to explore the possibility of developing Norway's relations with the smaller countries in the eastern part of Europe. There is no doubt that Halvdan Koht, a historian of European reputation and minister of foreign affairs from 1935 to his resignation in November 1940, took a personal interest in developing the country's relations with the Soviet Union as well. These efforts, however, gave only limited results before the European war broke out in September 1939, and thereafter the attention of the Norwegian government was mainly directed towards the limited aim of keeping Norway out of the war. Shortly afterwards, the Russian attack on Finland on 30th November 1939 effectively blocked, for the time being, any attempt to establish closer Norwegian-Soviet political contacts.

Norwegian-Soviet relations before the Second World War

The Norwegian attitude towards the Soviet Union before the war was characterized by a widespread feeling of general uncertainty as to Soviet foreign policy goals, linked up with the traditional Scandinavian "russophobia", i.e. fear of inherent Russian expansionist tendencies westward through Scandinavia towards the Atlantic.⁹ This traditional line of thought was particularly wide-spread in the military establishment, although some important qualifications should be made. In the twenties and early thirties the possibility of a Soviet military threat to Norway seems in fact to have been largely disregarded, even in military circles. A report by a parliamentary Defence Commission in 1926 concluded that Northern Norway for the time being was under no military threat from the Soviet Union.¹⁰ The Army High Command had concluded along similar lines in a situational report in 1922.¹¹

Beginning in the late twenties, however, the increase of Soviet military and economic power gave rise to a growing concern about the Soviet Union's strategic objectives in the North. A report from the Navy Command in the autumn of 1929 suggests a revival of the traditional "russophobia". The existence of Soviet expansionist tendencies westward, which were expected to reveal themselves as soon as the domestic disturbances in the Soviet Union were brought to an end, was taken for granted:

As soon as Russia renews its expansionist policy towards Finland, our own moment of destiny will - even if may be not in the first round - in actual fact arrive.¹²

Gradually the traditional fear of Russian military expansion was supplemented by a fear of "revolutionary expansionism". This direction of thought was most clearly expressed by the later nazi collaborator Vidkun Quisling during his period as defence minister in the early thirties.¹³

Although there were signs of a growing concern for future developments in Northern Norway during the thirties, the actual scope of the strategically or ideologically motivated "russophobia" should not be exaggerated. Voiced warnings about the possibility of an isolated Soviet expansionist drive against Norway's northern areas¹⁴ were the exception rather than the rule. Most serious attempts at analyzing the strategic significance of Norwegian territory to the Soviet Union seem to have limited themselves to a discussion of the situation in case of a general European war.

In analyzing the significance of Norway's geostrategic position, the perspective of Northern Norway as a possible theatre of war in case of an armed clash between Germany and the Soviet Union was the focus of attention. German attempts at interrupting or bringing to a halt the shipments of supplies to the Soviet Union by way of the Arctic were then taken for granted. In order to achieve this aim, the Germans might wish to secure for themselves naval and air force bases along the Norwegian coast.¹⁵ The Russians were assumed to be in exactly the opposite position. To achieve their primary aim of securing the vital lines of communication with the West, they were expected to see their interests best served by the existence of neutral waters along the Norwegian coast. The Navy Command did not rule out the possibility of a Soviet preemptive move to secure bases on Norwegian territory for the purpose of denying the Germans the benefit of possessing similar bases. The necessary Soviet naval forces for such an operation were hardly at hand. The Russians were therefore most likely to apply a defensive strategy in the Arctic.¹⁶

Turning to Norwegian-Soviet political relations, it is a well established and well-founded view that prior to August/September 1939 the broad outlines of the various Norwegian cabinets' policy towards the Soviet Union showed a spectacular degree of continuity. This was not least due to the general absence of serious political disagreement in matters of foreign policy between the major political parties.¹⁷ Shortly after the revolutions and the establishment of the new order in Russia, the Norwegians had set out to renew their economic and political relations with what was to be the Soviet Union. After the exchange of diplomatic representatives in 1924, the two countries mutual relations were characterized by the limited scope and significance of conflicts as well as the relative insignificance of relations in the economic, political and cultural fields. The Trotsky-affair, disagreements on fishery-rights in Arctic waters and some other sources of conflict were not able to spoil the basically good and tranquil relations between the two countries.

Soviet policy in Europe after August 1939 brought profound changes in Norwegian attitudes towards the Soviet Union. For conservatives, the seemingly aggressive Soviet moves were less of a surprise: they had always warned against the inherent aggressiveness of the Communist system. Socialists and radicals found themselves in a more difficult position. The feeling of sympathy towards the internal achievements of the Soviet Union was still widespread. Now the sudden realization of the hard-to-conceal similarity between the expansionist tactics of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union in matters of foreign policy brought to bear the need for a fundamental reevaluation of the basic attitudes towards the Soviet system as a whole. For the socialist foreign minister Halvdan Koht, however, the need for a reevaluation was less acute: to

him relations among all the great powers were a matter of mere power politics, independent of the socio-political system in each country.¹⁸

The Soviet attack on Finland on 30th November 1939 brought by a single stroke the Soviet Union to the centre of Norwegian foreign policy. The Norwegian policy line was clear from the outset: to keep Norway clear of the conflict. On this point there was hardly any disagreement. However, some politicians, amongst whom the future foreign minister Trygve Lie was prominent, were in favour of a more active material help to Finland without breaching the formal rules of neutrality.¹⁹

Soon rumours began to circulate about the imminence of co-ordinated Soviet-German moves against Northern Norway, in striking contrast to the earlier basic doctrine that a threat to Norway would emanate from a conflict between the two major antagonists on the European continent. The military preparedness of Norwegian forces in the areas bordering to Finland in the North was consequently heightened.

There is little evidence that responsible Norwegian authorities actually feared a complete Soviet conquest of Finland with a subsequent attack on Norway. On the other hand, the Soviet behaviour could not help but deepen the general uncertainty and anxiety as to Soviet foreign policy objectives in a wider perspective. Frequent rumours about Soviet preparations to move against Norway left their traces in Norwegian opinion, and were to reappear on several occasions during the following years. Not surprisingly, therefore, relations with the Soviet Union, and the question of the Russian intentions towards Norway, came to occupy a prominent place in the political deliberations of foreign minister Halvdan Koht and the rest of the Norwegian government during the campaign in Norway in the spring of 1940.

Will the Soviet Union intervene? The campaign in Norway 1940

The official Soviet reaction to the German attack on Norway and Denmark on 9th April 1940 went rather far in expressing understanding and sympathy with the German cause. Molotov ended a conversation with the German ambassador von Schulenburg that morning by wishing Germany complete success in its "defensive measures".²⁰ The Soviet attitude as perceived by the Norwegian diplomats in Moscow was more ambiguous. In fact the Norwegians did not hear anything from the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, and only on 16th April did a meeting take place on Norwegian initiative between the Norwegian minister²¹ in Moscow, Einar Maseng, and the director of the Scandinavian department in the Commissariat, Pavel D. Orlov. The Norwegian legation was left without any instructions from Koht after the German attack, and in this situation Maseng found it difficult to ask for a meeting with Molotov himself.²² The conversation with Orlov on the 16th, and impressions gathered during a second talk a few days later, seem to have convinced the Norwegian minister that the Soviet Union for the time being was bent on assuming the role of an observer in the conflict. In Maseng's opinion, furthermore, the public Soviet endorsement of the German cause was a cover for a more fundamental feeling of sympathy for the Norwegian struggle. In his messages minister Maseng consequently laid

great stress on what he regarded as a primary Soviet interest in keeping the parts of Norway close to the Soviet Union out of the reach of the other great powers. Maseng expressed the hope that Eastern Finnmark would not be touched by the ongoing conflict.²³

Halvdan Koht, on the other hand, during the campaign repeatedly expressed grave anxiety in his diary as to the possibility of a Soviet move against Norway in the North.²⁴ There seems to have been, however, some inherent inconsistencies in Koht's reflections about what could trigger such a Russian move. During the first part of the campaign the foreign minister feared a development similar to that in Poland, i.e. that the Russians, by taking advantage of the confused situation in Norway, should occupy parts of the country. "That will mean partition of our country, and the fate of free Norway will be sealed".²⁵ This line of argument led him in the early days of May to ask for a more determined and effective allied military effort in the Narvik area.²⁶ During the following weeks Koht gradually became convinced that the primary interest of the Soviet government was to keep Northern Norway free of troops from *any* of the other great powers, allied or German. Consequently, the Soviets were expected to view favorably the perspective of Northern Norway as an neutral enclave under exclusively Norwegian control. A letter from minister Maseng, which reached Koht during his visit in London on 7th May, may in this respect have been of some importance. Maseng reiterated the content of his previous messages, stressing that the Soviet Union in fact wanted Norway to continue as an independent state, not under military control by any of the belligerent nations.²⁷ Koht at this time, however, was still of the opinion that the Russians preferred Northern Norway to be under German, rather than allied, control. The only alternative left was that this part of the country remained under Norwegian control. This would presuppose strong allied support in logistics and possibly with troops as well, a development which was expected to be extremely unwelcome to the Russians.²⁸

Towards the end of May, Koht seems to have concluded that the Soviet Union was possibly no less apprehensive of an eventual permanent German than of an allied armed presence in the North of Norway and in Scandinavia in general. The Soviet minister in Stockholm, Alexandra Kollontay, sought to convince Koht that the Soviet Union took an interest in the continued independence of Norway,²⁹ and her assurances that the Soviets were bent on the withdrawal of the German troops from Norway after the end of hostilities were confirmed by Norwegian diplomatic sources.³⁰ Strong Soviet verbal support at this time in favour of Swedish neutrality served to strengthen Koht's conviction that the Russians were not at all happy with the German presence in Scandinavia.³¹ As a consequence of this line of thought the foreign minister in the last days of May set in motion a diplomatic action with the aim of making the Soviet government more sympathetic towards the allied cause in Norway; a plan which, not surprisingly, led to nothing.³²

The two leading Norwegian military men during the campaign, generals Otto Ruge and Carl August Fleischer, were no less than the minister of foreign affairs apprehensive as to possible Soviet intentions. Early in May general Ruge in a memorandum pointed to the importance of a strong allied military effort in Northern Norway, arguing that a weak Norwegian or allied military presence could lead to some sort of Soviet military interference in

Norway's northernmost county.³³ General Fleischer argued along similar lines in a situational report after the allied reconquest of Narvik at the end of May. Being unaware of the allied decision to evacuate Norway, Fleischer was optimistic about the possibilities of stabilizing the front in Northern Norway, thereby keeping parts of the country under Norwegian or allied control. The general, however, pointed to the danger of a Soviet attack in the north-easternmost part of the country. Although the actual fighting was limited to the counties of Troms and Nordland, general Fleischer had consequently kept some contingents of troops in Eastern Finnmark as a minimum security measure. A Soviet move against Norway, in Fleischer's view, would mean an imminent danger of "the whole of Scandinavia being swallowed by Russia and Germany".³⁴ Fleischer therefore also argued in favour of the stationing of allied troops in the North-East to ward off an eventual Soviet attack. The Norwegian forces in the area were too weak to halt and repulse a massive Soviet advance.³⁵

The widespread fear and uncertainty as to Soviet intentions also played a part in the formulation of some Norwegian politico-military initiatives towards the end of the campaign. Firstly, an earlier idea of reaching an agreement with the Germans about a demarcation line in the Narvik area between Norwegian and German troops, possibly with Swedish troops occupying a corridor to the North and South of the line, was revived when the allies communicated to the Norwegian government their decision to evacuate Norway. Having rejected the idea on several earlier occasions, the cabinet resumed discussions of the proposal during their meeting on 1st June. It appears that the future minister of foreign affairs, Trygve Lie, presented arguments against the project reminiscent of the views expressed by generals Ruge and Fleischer. Trygve Lie feared that an area in the North which was held by only comparably weak Norwegian forces was liable to present an attractive aim for Soviet expansionist drives. Foreign minister Koht, on the other hand, arguing in favour of the view that the Russians' primary interests were best served by the absence of troops in Northern Norway from either of the belligerent great powers, thought the project worth trying.³⁶ Koht consequently undertook a last-minute effort to come to an agreement with the Germans about a line of demarcation, supervised by Swedish troops, in the conviction that "the Russians would be happy about the prospect of an absence of foreign great powers troops from Northern Norway".

A subsequent arrangement with the Germans, about the stationing of some Norwegian border troops under Norwegian command in Eastern Finnmark after the Norwegian capitulation, is best understood as a development of the Norwegian military commanders' fear of the Soviet Union's intentions. The arrangement, in fact, came about on general Ruge's initiative.

Ruge's motives were clearly expressed during a conversation with the British general Pollock on 4th June. Ruge feared the consequences of Northern Norway being left as a no-man's-land between Soviet and German troops. Referring to the idea of a Swedish-supervised demarcation line Ruge told the British general that

he feared a move by Russia against Northern Norway on lines of those in Poland unless either (a) Swedish proposals now entertained for demarcated

neutral zone permitted Norway to maintain Government and armed forces in North or (b) control by German forces including Finnmark.³⁷

According to general Ruge, the prospect of a German occupation of the whole of Norway was preferable to the Soviets establishing themselves in the north-easternmost part of the country. Consequently the Norwegian representatives, in the negotiations with the Germans about the capitulation agreement for the Norwegian forces in Northern Norway, proposed a continued Norwegian armed presence in the county of Finnmark until the Germans themselves were ready to replace the Norwegian forces there.³⁸ The capitulation agreements from 10th June in fact stipulated the continued service of some small Norwegian armed contingents in Eastern Finnmark. Only in July did German troops arrive to take over the duties of, and disarm, the last Norwegian units in Finnmark.

The Soviet Union in Norwegian foreign policy during the summer 1940

We have already noted the discrepancy between the official Soviet reactions to the German attack on Norway and the numerous hints and unofficial declarations of a more sympathetic attitude to the Norwegian cause. The messages from the Norwegian minister in Moscow during the campaign in the spring of 1940 served to weaken the fear and anxiety in Norwegian government and military circles as to Soviet intentions in Norway. The Soviet minister in Stockholm, Alexandra Kollontay, played a special part in conveying to leading Norwegians expressions of Soviet good-will and interest in the continuance of Norway as an independent country.³⁹ The Soviets also gave the Swedes assurances of similar content.⁴⁰

When the government had established itself in London in June 1940, it gradually became clear that the former position of Halvdan Koht as the unapproachable and decisive member of the cabinet in matters of foreign policy was in the process of withering away. Koht was identified with the traditional Scandinavian policy of neutrality, and the increasing opposition against his conduct of the government's foreign policy ultimately led to the instalment in office of Trygve Lie as new minister of foreign affairs in late November 1940. This change was by Norwegians and the allies correctly perceived as the consequence of a growing concern about the need to develop Norway's relations with her main ally, Great Britain, thereby symbolizing the abandonment of the policy of Norwegian neutrality.

During the summer of 1940, Halvdan Koht and his adversaries were involved in a complex discussion of objectives and instrumentalities in Norwegian foreign policy. Koht himself, although castigated as a "neutralist", should not be presented as being in favour of simply continuing the pre-war neutrality-oriented foreign policy; an alternative which in the new circumstances of war and emigration was clearly seen as non-existent. However, there was still considerable leeway for argument as to the character and scope of co-operation with Great Britain as the main allied belligerent power. Consequently, the discussion evolved around the general question of Norway's place in the alliance, with the relations with Great Britain as its focal point. Relations with the Soviet Union constituted, however, an important element of the debate,

and in order to understand the reasons for this we will make an attempt to reconstruct the basic traits of Koht's evaluation of the situation during the first summer in London.

After the allied defeat in Norway and France and after Italy's entrance into the war, Koht was rather pessimistic about the probable outcome of the struggle. This is clearly revealed in the foreign minister's diary. In late June, for instance, Koht expected the rest of his life to be spent in emigration.⁴¹ This pessimistic outlook had some direct consequences for Koht's foreign policy doctrine during his last months in office. In the case of Great Britain being defeated by Germany, the argument went, a complete Norwegian identification with the British cause would make the prospects of continued, albeit limited, Norwegian independence bleak indeed. Consequently, according to this point of view, Norwegian interests were best served by a foreign policy stressing the independent stance of the government-in-exile, although Koht himself never argued in favour of a complete Norwegian disentanglement from the allied cause.

Relations with the Soviet Union were accorded an important role in Koht's foreign policy scheme. The uncertainty as to Great Britain's position when the war was over could in itself be presented as an argument in favour of Koht's "independence line". Arguing over the possible role of the Soviet Union in the case of an allied defeat, Koht came to similar conclusions. The Soviet Union, as one of the two remaining continental great powers after an allied defeat or some sort of compromise peace, would no doubt be in a position to exert decisive influence when the shape and order of post-war Europe was decided. It would then obviously be in Norway's interest to be able to draw on a reserve of Soviet good-will and, if possible, on a commitment to the restoration of some sort of Norwegian state.⁴² Fundamental to Koht's view was an assumption that the Soviets would be favorably inclined towards a Norwegian foreign policy which stressed the nation's continued independence in matters of foreign affairs within the framework of the war-time alliance with Great Britain. In this connection it is noteworthy that Koht, some weeks after his arrival in London, made use of an opportunity to assure Ivan Maisky, the Soviet ambassador to His British Majesty's government, that the Norwegians had not asked for allied help after the German attack. Ivan Maisky, according to Koht, attached due importance to his communication.⁴³

The attitude of the foreign minister may be characterized by a remark he reportedly made during another interview with the Soviet ambassador. According to Maisky, Koht spoke of Norway as "still remaining 'neutral' though at war with Germany".⁴⁴ Some of the members of the Norwegian cabinet were of the opinion that Koht wanted Norway to be "a belligerent neutral". The minister of justice, Terje Wold, returned on various occasions to a discussion of Koht's views on foreign policy in his diary. According to Wold, Koht held the view that "our position in relation to Russia will be better [...] the less we have to do with England".⁴⁵

The opposition to Koht's policy line was most fully formulated in a memorandum from 10th July 1940, written by Arne Ording and signed by him and four other intellectuals of the inner circle surrounding the government.⁴⁶ Many of their main presumptions about the foundations of Norwegian foreign policy accorded with Koht's own basic views. The Soviet expansionist policy

since September 1939 was explained as measures aiming at the strengthening of the Soviet Union's defensive positions against Germany. "The five", just as Halvdan Koht himself, were of the opinion that the Germans had given assurances to the Soviet government as to their long-term intentions in Scandinavia. The Soviet Union would make every effort to gain benefits from an eventual break-down of the British empire, at the same time as the German expansion in territory, power, and influence would give rise to growing concern in Moscow. According to "the five", the Soviet Union might ultimately feel compelled to join in the war against Germany. There were, however, other alternatives. In order to secure its own interest without going to war against Germany, the Soviet Union could claim a part in a German-led reshaping of Europe. In that case the position of Norway would be decided by agreement between the two continental great powers. This far there was in fact no fundamental disagreement between "the five" and Koht's own views. On the other hand, the consequences for Norwegian foreign policy of this line of analysis did give rise to disagreement.

The memorandum was quite clear in its rejection of a policy stressing Norway's independence and autonomy in her relations with Great Britain in order to preserve and cultivate the Soviet connection. In this respect "the five" utilized a two-level analysis. First, they argued that all attempts at a really effective war-time cooperation between Norway and her allies would be seriously hampered by a Norwegian policy of preparing for the worst alternative by building up her relations with a great power which was supporting the allies' adversary in the war. Norway must avoid the situation of being suspected of cultivating friendship with "the foe of her ally". This argument went to the core of Koht's foreign policy doctrine, and it appears reasonable to suppose that "the five" were hinting directly at the foreign minister's conversation with Ivan Maisky a few days earlier. Secondly, "the five" argued that the Soviet Union, as a consequence of its interest in avoiding Norway's complete dominance by Great Britain, must view favorably all attempts to make Norway an active participant in the war. A policy of active cooperation with the allied powers in the struggle for the allied cause was Norway's single chance of asserting the country's position as a sovereign power, thereby avoiding "complete dependence on England in case of a German defeat". Summing up: "the five's" principal concern was the necessity of developing a more active and whole-hearted cooperation with the British. The relationship with the Soviet Union, which was of only limited interest if treated in isolation, thus gained in importance by its potential influence on Norwegian-British relations.

The argument about the government's foreign policy continued during the rest of the summer and during the autumn 1940. Koht answered his opponents in the beginning of September, in a lengthy memorandum provoked by a letter from the members of cabinet Anders Fjelstad and Sven Nielsen. Olav Riste has traced two main elements in Koht's argument. One the one hand, there is his preference for arguments in terms of "Real-politik", stressing the limited validity of formal agreements when they are confronted with the harsh reality of conflicting great power interests. One the other hand, there is the foreign minister's great stress on the relations with the Soviet Union. The crucial point in this respect is Koht's disbelief in ultimate allied victory. The prospect

of a compromise peace, or even an allied defeat, enhanced the potential importance of cultivating the relations with the Soviet Union as one of the two dominant continental powers. What would be the attitude of the Soviet government towards Norway if Great Britain lost the war? Could Germany and the Soviet Union be expected to reach an agreement on the partition of Norway, or would the Soviet Union act as a guarantor of continued Norwegian statehood and independence?

At the foundation of Koht's foreign policy doctrine was the second, optimistic, alternative. The Soviet Union, according to Koht, was primarily interested in denying any of the other great powers "strategic positions in Norway". In fact, Koht had reason to believe that the Soviets had been assured of Germany's intention to evacuate Norway after the war. Neither the Soviet Union nor Germany would allow the other part the benefit of establishing themselves in a dominant position in Norway. This situation, according to Koht, lent itself open to exploitation by the politicians in charge of Norwegian foreign policy, if Norway only avoided being hopelessly identified with the allied cause.

The installment in office as minister of foreign affairs in November 1940 of Trygve Lie, former minister of supplies, meant a radical departure from the "Koht doctrine" in Norwegian foreign policy. The new foreign policy doctrine, which was to be known as "the Atlantic Ocean policy", or simply the "Atlantic policy", represented a fundamental departure from the traditional Norwegian policy of neutrality. Some isolated voices, for instance the Norwegian minister in Moscow, Einar Maseng, continued to argue in favour of a more "independent" foreign policy line. At this stage it suffices to note, however, that the representatives of the old line of neutrality had lost their influence. The change in the Norwegian foreign policy was profound, indeed.

The Soviet Union in Norwegian foreign policy, November 1940 - 22nd June 1941

Norwegian pre-war foreign policy had primarily aimed to keep Norway and Scandinavia outside the conflicts between the great powers. However, the fate of the small countries of Europe since the outbreak of the world war served to question the continued validity of this basic doctrine. The alternative was to seek post-war security through cooperation with the group of non-aggressive, "friendly" great powers. To the Norwegians, given the primary direction of Norway's international commercial, political, and cultural affinities, every alliance-system of which Norway was to be a member must be based on the participation of Great Britain. However, right from the beginning the Norwegians also stressed the importance of American participation in the planned cooperation.⁴⁷

The general idea of a continuation of the cooperation between the allies after the war might seem a logical outcome of the new solidarity and realization of common interest among the great and small comrades-in-arms. Of greater interest is the operational content Lie gave his ideas even at an early stage of their elaboration. Lie wanted to offer Great Britain and the USA military bases in Norway even in times of peace. This idea was aired for the first time in the autumn of 1940, and shows that, as far as the foundations of

Norway's security were concerned, the new foreign minister and his advisors had a frame of reference that differed radically from the dominant pre-war doctrine.⁴⁸

What was the role of the Soviet Union in the new foreign policy doctrine? On the one hand, there is the question of the purpose of the system, i.e. whether the planned arrangement of military and political cooperation between the Atlantic powers was to have the dual purpose of creating security against both German *and* Soviet aggression. On the other hand: if the Soviet Union was not perceived as a potential future threat, did the creators of the Atlantic policy view the future system in the light of possible Soviet active participation and responsibility?

The introduction of the Atlantic policy in the autumn of 1940 must be viewed not least as influenced by Lie's perception of the need to stress Norway's will to identify its cause with that of the allies, in order to ensure that the great allies would be committed to the complete restoration of Norway as a free and independent country in any peace settlement. In other words, the Atlantic policy was partly a demonstrative policy of fairly short-range goals.⁴⁹ The limitation of potential participants in the system to the countries along the shores of the North Atlantic was, according to Lie, preconditioned by these powers' cooperation in the war against Germany.⁵⁰ In this perspective, the offer of bases in Norway to Great Britain and the USA presents itself as an additional attempt to convince the great allies of Norway's uncompromising will to cooperation and responsibility in the war-time alliance.

The Atlantic policy did, however, have a long-range operational content as well. The first to introduce Lie to the idea of Atlantic military-political cooperation seems to have been Dr Arnold Ræstad, a specialist in international law and an advisor to the government in matters of foreign policy.⁵¹ Ræstad's concern was the necessity of creating a set of "security combines" which together would be strong enough to eliminate the possibility of renewed aggression on the part of Germany or Japan.⁵² Ræstad left no hints as to the eventual necessity of safeguarding against Soviet expansion as well. The area of responsibility of each of the "combines", together with its system of military bases, was to constitute "a strategically complete field of defensive operations".⁵³ In Dr Ræstad's opinion, the countries bordering on the North Atlantic together constituted such a regional entity, and he consequently argued in favour of the creation of a "North Atlantic Security Combine".⁵⁴ Neither a purely European nor a Nordic system would be strong enough to give Norway the sufficient degree of security against aggression from an expansionist great power. Within the framework of each of the regional organizations there should be created "a permanent military machinery, sufficiently manned and alertly watched", which was to dispose of "massed air and sea forces".⁵⁵

From the perspective of the familiar post-war bipolar world order it may seem strange that the Norwegian government prior to 22nd June 1941 apparently did little to explore the possible future role of the Soviet Union when formulating its own long-range foreign policy programme. But in fact, when reviewing the scarce source material on the subject, every description of the Norwegian government's views in this respect must to a certain degree be speculative and tentative. After the war Trygve Lie was to say that the Soviet

Union, from the very beginning of the evolution of the idea, was assigned a role within the propagated North Atlantic security system. Any mentioning of that country in connection with the Atlantic policy in the autumn of 1940 would, however, have led to "complications".⁵⁶ The importance of this and some other similar post-war statements about the content of the Atlantic policy may easily be exaggerated. More fundamental to the understanding of Norwegian policy towards the Soviet Union prior to (and to some extent, even after) the German attack on the Soviet Union on 22nd June 1941 is the high degree of uncertainty about Soviet intentions in the international field, and the lack of reliable information among Norwegian politicians with regard to most aspects of Soviet foreign policy. As a result, the place of the Soviet Union in Norwegian foreign policy planning was largely left open.

There is, however, some evidence in favour of the view that the Norwegians neither before nor after June 1941 were inclined or wished to assign to the Soviet Union a role in the planned defence system in the North Atlantic. Admittedly, Lie in a letter to the leading labour politician Martin Tranmæl in May 1941 wrote that "still more would be gained" with the participation of the Soviet Union in the system if this was possible "without weakening our own security".⁵⁷ But this possibility was clearly seen as hypothetical. Other evidence reveals Lie's distrust of the Soviet Union. For instance, when during June and July 1941 the Norwegians and the Soviets were in the process of revitalizing their diplomatic relations, Lie remarked to Anthony Eden that he "was not without a suspicion that Russia had ulterior designs on Spitzbergen and hoped thereby to secure an outlet for herself to the Atlantic".⁵⁸ In the autumn 1942, moreover, Lie expressed apprehension about signs of Soviet intentions of demanding a role in any North Atlantic defence system. "If only", Lie told Laurence Collier, British ambassador to the Norwegian government, "your authorities had not taken such a long time to consider my original proposals, we might have avoided this danger".⁵⁹

Supposing that the Soviet Union did not play the part of a participant in Lie's scheme for the Atlantic security system: did Lie and his advisors prior to June 1941 in fact assign to the propagated Atlantic policy the primary task of safeguarding against possible Soviet aggression in the future? On the one hand, there is the almost complete lack of direct evidence to support such a view. On the other hand, there is, as noted above, no lack of evidence of a general suspicion as to Soviet intentions in the realm of foreign policy. In regard to northern Europe this suspicion was often visualized as a Soviet drive towards direct access to the Atlantic through Scandinavia. These tendencies, resembling the traditional Scandinavian "russophobia", were to reassert themselves with force right up to the very end of the war. On some occasions after June 1941, Lie would even give subtle hints at Norwegian participation in the system of Atlantic cooperation as a measure of security against possible Soviet pressure. However, the operational content of the North Atlantic defence system as elaborated by Lie through 1940 and 1941 was basically seen as a way of precluding new aggression in the future on the part of Germany. In the midst of the life and death struggle with that country, a possible future Soviet threat was a matter of less urgency.

It should be noted that the Atlantic policy did not exist as a fully developed foreign policy doctrine during the latter half of 1940 and the first

half of 1941. In the letter to Martin Tranmæl cited above, Lie laid stress on explaining that the Atlantic doctrine at that stage (i.e. May 1941) was only "scattered thoughts" about his main concern: "the future freedom and security of Norway".⁶⁰ Even more important was the ambiguous position of the Soviet Union in the war. Nobody, at least not the politicians in charge of Norwegian foreign policy, had any clear-cut ideas as to the future role of the Soviet Union in Europe and the world. It was therefore clearly outside the range of possibility to elaborate a long-range policy towards the Soviet Union. In the long, as well as in the short run, the dominant determinant of Norwegian foreign policy doctrines was the relations to Great Britain and the USA. The Soviet connection was only a secondary one.

The last months before the German invasion of the Soviet Union marked the low ebb of Norwegian-Soviet relations. On 8th May 1941, the Soviet government broke off diplomatic relations with the Norwegian government, using as a pretext that Norway no longer existed as a sovereign nation.⁶¹ There was no forewarning of the Soviet decision, and the Norwegian government was taken by complete surprise. In fact, just as during the spring of 1940, the Soviet attitude towards the Norwegians remained rather ambiguous. Ivan Maisky, for instance, continued to address formal letters to "the Royal Norwegian Government in London",⁶² and Soviet diplomats in Helsinki and Stockholm were at pains to explain to their Norwegian colleagues that the Soviet move was in fact not directed against Norway at all. After some initial confusion and anxiety as to the next possible Soviet move, Lie and the government came to the conclusion that the Soviet withdrawal of recognition from the Norwegian and Belgian representations in Moscow was to be understood as an attempt to placate the Germans after the rather unhappy Russian involvement in Yugoslavian affairs just before that country was overrun by the German armies. The Norwegians chose to leave the matter without any formal protests, thereby hoping to minimize the practical significance of the Soviet decision.

The Soviet decision of 8th May nevertheless made the task of forming a Norwegian policy towards the Soviet Union still more difficult. The main question of the place of the Soviet Union in the war remained fundamentally unanswered until the German attack on 22nd June. The minister of foreign affairs had himself discussed the matter with a number of high-ranking and well-informed British and other officials during May and June, but continued to feel uncertain about the development of Soviet-German relations and Soviet intentions almost until the Germans finally attacked.⁶³ The Soviet move on 8th May, in any case, served to deepen the Norwegian suspicions of Soviet intentions and motives in the field of foreign affairs.⁶⁴

The German attack brought an end to speculations, and was to introduce into Soviet-Norwegian relations an era of attempts at cooperation in solving tasks of common interest to the two countries. The Norwegian military establishment had since long been aware of the potential importance of Northern Norway in case of a Soviet-German conflict. The Germans were expected to attempt to disturb the shipping of supplies to the Soviet Union from bases along the Norwegian coast. The allies would have to consider counter-measures. The Army High Command concluded in a situational report in May 1941 that "in case of the outbreak of war between Germany and Russia,

military operations in Northern Norway may be expected, and a British operation is very likely to take place".⁶⁵

Cooperation and Alliance, June 1941 - May 1944

Only informal contacts remained in Norwegian-Soviet relations during the last months leading up to the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union. In this respect the Soviet move on 8th May 1941 had merely been an affirmation of *status quo*. The new situation now presented the Norwegian government with a set of fundamentally different tasks to be solved with regard to the Soviet Union. First, normal diplomatic relations had to be restored. Then the two countries could seek to develop their mutual military, political, and commercial relations.

The Norwegian response to the German attack on the Soviet Union

Whereas the official British reaction to the German attack was a declaration of unreserved support for the Soviet cause,⁶⁶ the Norwegian government only hesitatingly took a public stance. Laurence Collier, British minister to the Norwegian government, felt the absence of any official Norwegian reaction during the first few days as rather embarrassing, and consequently asked the Norwegians to give public support to the British declaration. The Foreign Office, he said, was anxious to avoid the impression of dissent among the allies in this matter.⁶⁷

The anticipated declaration from the Norwegian government finally appeared as part of a general exposé by Lie of the government's foreign policy on 28th June. Although Lie's declaration gave unreserved support to the views of Churchill, Eden and Attlee, the wording of the declaration did reveal a certain reluctance to become too closely identified with the Soviet Union.⁶⁸

There were several reasons for the ambiguous Norwegian attitude to the entrance of the Soviet Union into the war on the allied side. On the one hand, there was widespread doubt about the effectiveness and will of resistance of the Soviet army. The coverage of the invasion in the official *Norsk Tidend* in the form of a small notice on page three may in this respect be regarded as symptomatic. No less important was the known skeptical attitude towards the Soviet Union in Norwegian public opinion as well as among the London politicians themselves. The Fenno-Soviet war of 1939/40 had left a profound impact, and the government may have feared that too close an identification with the Soviet Union might present the German propagandists in Norway with a fertile field for exploitation. As will be shown later, this argument was made quite explicit when the Russians soon were to present the idea of a formal Soviet-Norwegian treaty of alliance.

A letter from Johan Ludvig Mowinckel to premier Johan Nygaardsvold may be quoted as an example of the widespread feeling of ambiguity in the face of eventual Soviet participation in the war together with the western allies. Writing a few days before the actual German attack, Mowinckel held the view that the allies ought not to give the Soviet Union immediate moral or material support in the case of war between Germany and the Soviet Union:

The Soviet Union should never be allowed to become an ally in the democracies' struggle for freedom [...] Of course, the prospect of the two villains mutually weakening each other is in our interest indeed, but we ought not to forget that we are fighting in the name of democracy and freedom, and the new world can not be built on the foundations of the unscrupulous and lawless policy of the "friends" of 1939. Good democrats in all countries will feel worried if we tie our future too closely to the Soviet Union.⁶⁹

The variations of opinion within the cabinet is not easily open to reconstruction. Trygve Lie, who had lost his illusions about the "idealism" of Soviet foreign policy as a result of the Soviet participation in the 1939 partition of Poland, had himself been on the side of the "activists" during the Fenno-Soviet war.⁷⁰ After 22nd June, however, no real alternative was left open to the Norwegians but to follow the British in their support of the Soviet war effort.

Diplomatic relations resumed

The question of resuming normal diplomatic relations between Norway and the Soviet Union was prompted in July 1941 by the discussion of a joint Norwegian-Soviet-British military expedition to the Spitzbergen archipelago, which had been under Norwegian jurisdiction since 1925.

The Norwegians felt that it was up to the Soviet government to take the first step towards normalization of relations. The question was brought into the open when Laurence Collier during a conversation with Lie on 17th July informed the Norwegian foreign minister that Molotov had proposed the planning of a Soviet-British military expedition to the archipelago.⁷¹ As a precondition for any talks about allied military intervention in the Spitzbergen archipelago Lie at once demanded the complete restoration of diplomatic relations between the Norwegian government and the Soviet Union.⁷²

The following day Lie discussed the matter with Anthony Eden, and the two ministers agreed that any discussions about Spitzbergen had to be preconditioned by the full recognition by the Soviet Union of Norwegian sovereignty over the islands, and Soviet recognition of the Norwegian government in London followed by the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two governments. Ivan Maisky gave his agreement the same day.⁷³

On 21st July, Ivan Maisky presented Erik Colban, the Norwegian minister to the British government, with the text of a proposed Soviet-Norwegian treaty built on the agreement which had been signed between the Soviet and Czechoslovak governments some days earlier. In addition to restoring normal diplomatic relations, the proposed treaty pledged the two governments to give each other every kind of help and support in the war against hitlerite Germany.⁷⁴

Erik Colban was in favour of accepting the Soviet proposal, which would have formalized Norway's hitherto *de facto* alliance with the Soviet Union. The treaty, however, had to be presented to the Norwegians in a way which made it perfectly clear that the protocol did not include any additional secret agreements.⁷⁵ Trygve Lie, however, was highly critical as to the utility of concluding a formal agreement with the Russians. Lie feared the reactions in

Norway, and the treaty might also, in his opinion, cause considerable apprehension in Sweden and Finland.⁷⁶

Consequently Lie told Maisky that the Norwegian government for the moment felt it to be unwise, due to "the political situation in Norway", to sign a treaty of alliance with the Soviet Union. Lie proposed the informal procedure of Maisky's sending a letter to Lie proposing to accredit a Soviet minister to the Norwegian government. The Norwegians, in their turn, would then make a similar proposal to the Russians. Ambassador Maisky accepted the procedure, and the corresponding letters were made public on 5th August 1941.⁷⁷

Finland: Nordic unity versus allied solidarity

As a result of Finland's participation in the war against the Soviet Union on Germany's side, the Norwegian government was repeatedly confronted with the necessity of choosing between its traditional concern for Scandinavian solidarity and unity and its commitment to the Soviet Union as one of the allies. We have already noticed the existence of a widespread feeling of sympathy towards Finland in Norway, which still further complicated the task of balancing the conflicting policy aims of Scandinavian versus allied unity.

Anxiety as to the reaction in Finland had been one of the factors behind the Norwegian decision to reject the Soviet proposal of a Soviet-Norwegian treaty. Soon the question of whether the Norwegian government was to uphold its diplomatic representation in Finland brought the potential conflict of interest into the open. As a matter of fact, to begin with the Norwegians were extremely anxious lest the Finns should break the relations with Norway upon the outbreak of Finnish-Soviet hostilities.⁷⁸ The Finnish government, however, limited itself to placing certain restrictions on the activity of Norwegian diplomats, and the Norwegian legation confirmed its unique position by continuing the work at the same time as the representatives of the other occupied countries had to leave the country.

In the course of the summer and the autumn it gradually became clear that the Finnish government had no intention of stopping its armies' advance along the pre-1939 border. Trygve Lie accordingly began to feel uneasy about possible Soviet negative reactions to the continued existence of a Norwegian legation in Helsinki. Lie feared that his government would find itself in the dubious position of "maintaining diplomatic relations with a government who were pursuing aggressive military operations against an ally of their own great ally, Great Britain".⁷⁹ He nonetheless preferred to maintain diplomatic relations with Finland, conscious, however, that the Russians might at any moment ask the Norwegian government to remove its representatives from Helsinki.⁸⁰

In the middle of September Lie proposed to Collier a joint presentation by the Norwegian and the British governments to the Finnish government, urging Finland to stop its offensive operations against the Soviet Union and withdraw its forces to the line of the pre-1939 frontiers.⁸¹ After some discussion in the Foreign Office, the British decided to send a message of their own through the Norwegian minister in Helsinki, and the two *démarches*

were delivered to the Finnish minister of foreign affairs on 22 September 1941.⁸²

The Norwegian *démarche* did not specifically mention the Soviet-Finnish conflict, and presented itself instead as a somewhat pathetic appeal to Scandinavian unity. Lie's reflections on this occasion are symptomatic of the ambiguous Norwegian attitude to the alliance with the Soviet Union:

they [i.e. the Norwegian government] could not refer specifically to the 1939 frontier of Finland with Russia without exposing themselves to the retort that this was no question of theirs, since they were not actually allies of the Soviet Union.⁸³

During the autumn of 1941, the Soviet government put steadily increasing pressure on the British government to declare war on Finland. Anthony Eden and Lie discussed the matter in the middle of November, Lie advising the British to take "a strong attitude" toward Finland. Lie reportedly held the view that Great Britain would have to declare war on Finland within approximately a fortnight if the Finns did nothing to meet the British demands.⁸⁴ Although well aware that this would lead to a break of Norwegian-Finnish relations, Lie must have felt that the benefits of keeping the representation in Helsinki had to be sacrificed for the sake of allied solidarity. Consequently, when the British government finally declared war on Finland on 7th December 1941, the Norwegians at once withdrew their legation from Helsinki; a decision which led to vehement and bitter protests in Finland and Sweden.

The Norwegian government continued thereafter to take an interest in Finnish affairs, trying on some occasions rather unsuccessfully to act as an intermediary between Finland and the Soviet Union, and stressing the necessity of restoring Finland after the war as a free and independent country.⁸⁵ Meanwhile, Finland's participation in the war against the Soviet Union was to represent an obstacle in the development of Soviet-Norwegian military cooperation on the Northern front.

Norwegian-Soviet military cooperation

Northern Norway with the county of Finnmark became, not surprisingly, the only area where Norway and the Soviet Union were to engage in projects of military cooperation during the war. A marked disinterest in Northern Norway on the part of Great Britain and the USA contrasted with the obvious Soviet interest in an area of Norway which was after the war to border directly on the Soviet Union.

On the Norwegian side there had even before 22nd June 1941 been some half-hearted attempts to make military contacts with the Soviet government. The possibility of an armed clash between Germany and the Soviet Union on Norwegian territory led the High Command in April 1941 to propose sending a military attaché to Moscow.⁸⁶ We have noted above that the Norwegian military authorities, on the eve of the German attack on the Soviet Union, expected armed operations to take place in Northern Norway in the case of war between the Soviet Union and Germany.

The Norwegians also made a vain attempt to send a Norwegian officer with the British military mission which left for Moscow after the German attack,⁸⁷ but normal military-diplomatic relations were established only in November 1941 when general Wilhelm Steffens was sent as military attaché to Moscow. As it turned out, the general and his assistant were not unduly busy during their stay in the Soviet Union; due to Soviet fondness of secrecy they had to limit their activity to the systematic reading of newspapers.⁸⁸

During the summer of 1941 the Russians made repeated attempts to get the British to engage themselves militarily in the Arctic.⁸⁹ The Norwegian government's actual participation in the discussions was, as it turned out, limited to the planning of "Operation Gauntlet", the evacuation of Spitzbergen in August/September 1941. The other British naval operations in the Arctic earlier that summer were set in motion without the Norwegians being informed at all.

The Russians were in favour of operations involving infantry as well, and proposed the opening of a new front together with the British in the Kirkenes - Petsamo - Murmansk area. The operation should eventually lead to the liberation of Norwegian territory.⁹⁰ Maybe in order to soothe the suspicious Norwegians, Stalin proposed the despatch of "one light division or more" of Norwegian troops from Scotland "for insurgent operations against the Germans".⁹¹ In any case, there existed no Norwegian "light division" or its equivalent.

The Soviet proposals for a joint operation in the Arctic were rejected by British military authorities, although the Foreign Office and Churchill himself seem to have been positively inclined.⁹² In an attempt to meet some of the Russian demands for a more active British support of the Soviet war effort, the British government decided instead to send a naval expedition to disturb the German shipments of supplies for the Northern front along the Norwegian coast. The expedition left Scapa Flow in the middle of July headed by the aircraft carriers *Furious* and *Victorious*, but did not succeed in any of its primary operational aims.⁹³

British awareness of the need to give the Russians some kind of substantial military support now led to the exploration of the possibility of a British-Soviet-Norwegian expedition to Spitzbergen. The original idea was to prepare a base of support for the British naval operations against the Germans in the Arctic.⁹⁴ There is no need here for a detailed discussion of the complicated process which ultimately resulted in the launching of "Operation Gauntlet" late in August 1941.⁹⁵ We will restrict our discussion to the question of the Norwegian government's attitude to the possibility of a Soviet presence on the archipelago, and, as far as possible, its evaluation of Soviet intentions with their involvement in the area.

Lie raised the question of eventual Soviet "defensive measures" on Spitzbergen during a conversation with Laurence Collier on 25th June. The Norwegian minister of foreign affairs obviously feared that the Soviet government was going to launch a military action of its own on the archipelago, and sought to make it clear to Collier that something had to be done to "defend the Norwegian interests" as well.⁹⁶ In the middle of July Lie told the American minister to the governments-in-exile in London, Anthony Drexel Biddle, that he

would view favorably any American request for Norwegian consent to the stationing of US troops on Spitzbergen.⁹⁷

There is hardly any doubt that the Norwegian government was not at all happy with the thought of Soviet participation in an allied military expedition to Spitzbergen. Trygve Lie told Anthony Eden that he "was not without a suspicion that Russia had ulterior designs on Spitzbergen and hoped thereby to secure an outlet for herself on the Atlantic. In other words he had to be careful".⁹⁸ Lie also told Collier that he did not like at all the thought of a Soviet force being stationed on Spitzbergen. The rest of the cabinet, according to Lie, took a still more uncompromising stance.⁹⁹ The Norwegian premier later wrote that the cabinet was "not at all" delighted at the thought of foreign troops on Spitzbergen: "If the Germans did occupy Spitzbergen they were in any case to be ousted some day. Other nations' soldiers might prove harder to get removed".¹⁰⁰

Trygve Lie felt that the stationing of Soviet troops on Spitzbergen was likely to provoke negative reactions among people in Norway, and complicate further the relations with Sweden and Finland. A Soviet participation should therefore be preceded by an agreement between the Norwegian and Soviet governments which would make clear that Norwegian and Soviet forces were sent to the island to defend Norwegian territory against German attack, "and to prevent the utilization of Spitzbergen as a base for military operations".¹⁰¹

The Russians gradually became less enthusiastic about the idea of Soviet participation in a military expedition to Spitzbergen, and let it be known that they preferred to send specialists to arm and train the Russian mine workers in Barentsburg. The Norwegians were dubious about the idea of a military occupation of the islands, even with the participation of Norwegian troops, since the soldiers would be too vulnerable to German air attacks. On the other hand, they were willing to evacuate the Norwegian inhabitants on Spitzbergen on the condition that the Russian population was evacuated simultaneously.¹⁰²

As it turned out, the Norwegians did not wield any significant influence on the further planning of the operations to be set in motion. On 31st July a group of British warships under the command of Rear-Admiral Philip Vian arrived at Spitzbergen, in order "to prepare a squadron to be based in the north to work with the Russians". Vian realized, however, that Spitzbergen was no suitable place for an "advanced base" for the British fleet. The Admiralty hence decided to drop the more ambitious military plans in favour of an evacuation of the Norwegian and Russian population on the islands.¹⁰³ The Norwegians were only informed about the British plans on 12th August, and "Operation Gauntlet" was launched after Ivan Maisky gave his consent a few days later. The Norwegians and Russians were finally evacuated during the first days of September 1941.

Whereas the British engagement in the distant area of Spitzbergen is best understood in light of the British' wish to give the Russians some sort of visible, active support in their struggle against the Germans, the Norwegian government was motivated by the fear of Russian single-handed action to defend Soviet interests on the archipelago. There are virtually no signs that the Norwegians viewed the Spitzbergen affair as an opportunity to lay the foundations for a cooperation with the Soviet government in military and political matters.

The Norwegian military authorities continued to worry about the possibility of Northern Norway becoming a new theatre of operations in the world war. This concern was strengthened by repeated Russian inquiries about Northern Norway during the autumn and winter 1941/1942,¹⁰⁴ and by newspaper rumours about an imminent Finnish-Soviet separate peace. Molotov at one stage even proposed to the Norwegian minister in Moscow, Rolf Andvord, to launch a Soviet-British-Norwegian operation in Northern Norway.¹⁰⁵

The commander-in-chief of the Norwegian army, general Carl August Fleischer, was aware of the possibility of a Soviet offensive through Finland into Norwegian territory, and thought the Norwegians had to be prepared for this eventuality. Talks ought to be started with Soviet authorities, and Norwegian forces should be prepared for immediate despatch to Northern Norway in case the Germans did evacuate or in the event of a Soviet offensive aiming at Norwegian territory.¹⁰⁶ This view was supported by Bjørn Christophersen, chief-of-staff in the Norwegian Defence High Command from February 1942. Christophersen particularly stressed the importance of early Norwegian participation in the planning of any offensive into Northern Norway.¹⁰⁷

A memorandum from the Army High Command in January 1942 started a discussion about some of the questions related to a possible allied reconquest of Finnmark. Such an operation, according to the memorandum, was likely to be set in motion as a consequence of the common Soviet-British interests in the defence of the transport lines to Murmansk and Arkhangels. General Fleischer, who signed the memorandum, did not view favorably an eventual participation of Soviet troops in an allied occupation of Northern Norway, "in the first place because of the doubtless Russian interest in these parts of Norway, secondly because of the propaganda campaign which will be launched by the Germans and the quislings in Norway". The use of British, Canadian or American troops was "very much to be preferred".¹⁰⁸

A subsequent commentary on the report from the Navy Command concluded that it was beside the point to discuss the desirability of a Soviet move into Norway: the Norwegians would not be in a position to veto such operations if the Russians deemed them desirable. Consequently, the Navy Command argued in favour of early preparation of Norwegian troops for cooperation with the Soviet Army in case of operations in Norway.¹⁰⁹

Discussions in the Defence Council (Forsvarsrådet, an advisory body to the government) revealed a widespread fear of Soviet expansionist intentions in the North. The Council decided to ask the British if they felt a Soviet-German clash on the north-eastern border of Norway was likely or imminent. If so, and in order to forestall such a development, the British would be requested to make arrangements for the launching of a British-Norwegian expedition to take Finnmark.¹¹⁰ A contemporary letter from Crown Prince Olav to president Roosevelt leaves the impression of a revival of the traditional "russophobia". The Crown Prince warned that there was "a great risk of Russia wanting to permanently annex a part of Northern Norway for all times".¹¹¹

These outbursts of Norwegian fears of Soviet expansionism receded into the background after January and February 1942. The newly elected commander-in-chief of the Norwegian armed forces, general Wilhelm Hansteen, rounded off the discussion by concluding that there might occur situations which would demand the immediate action of Norwegian troops.¹¹²

The first years of the alliance with the Soviet Union saw only limited attempts at Soviet-Norwegian cooperation in the military field. During the first six months of 1942 an attempt was made to develop a common Norwegian-Soviet intelligence network in Northern Norway. The venture ended in disaster. Two Norwegian agents were sent to Finnmark from the Soviet side in the middle of August 1942, but were immediately arrested by the Germans and later shot.¹¹³ Thereafter there were no signs of Soviet-Norwegian cooperation in the field of intelligence. The Russians, however, developed their own set of agents in Northern Norway to the great dislike of the Norwegian government in London.¹¹⁴

Until the last year of the war the Soviet government appeared more eager than the Norwegian government to bring about Soviet-Norwegian cooperation in military matters. A Soviet diplomat in June 1942 suggested discussions about an eventual participation of Norwegian troops in the Murmansk area.¹¹⁵ Some months later Molotov told Rolf Andvord, who had been accredited as Norwegian ambassador when the legation in Moscow in August 1942 was transformed into an embassy, that the Norwegian government ought to present some projects of Soviet-Norwegian military cooperation.¹¹⁶ This, according to Andvord, pointed to an important future role for Northern Norway in the war. It also did not go unnoticed in London that a Soviet general had told the Norwegian military attaché in Moscow that the Soviet high command was interested in all available information about German military objects in Norway.¹¹⁷

An exchange of letters in March 1943 between general Hansteen and Terje Wold leaves the impression that the question of military cooperation with the Soviet Union was then no longer regarded a priority task in the Norwegian High Command. Terje Wold, being acutely aware of the possible implications of an eventual Soviet move into Norway, would have preferred to forestall this eventuality by a western military action in Northern Norway. He feared, however, that the liberation of the area was more likely to come from the East than from the West. Therefore the Norwegian government had no alternative but to seek to develop as far as possible contacts and cooperation with the Soviet Union, hoping thereby to secure "the freedom and independence of our country in the future".¹¹⁸

General Hansteen disagreed with Wold's opinion, and thought that a Soviet move into Norway was not likely to take place unless the situation was changed by Finland withdrawing from the war. If a Finnish-Soviet peace agreement led to Soviet forces crossing the Norwegian border, Hansteen continued, the participation of Norwegian forces would be of great importance. Towards the East the Norwegian soldiers would have to "mark Norwegian sovereignty on the border to Finland (Russia)", while fighting the Germans to the West. General Hansteen foresaw an arrangement whereby the Soviet detachments stopped at the border, leaving it to Norwegian and allied troops to continue the offensive to the West and South.

During 1943 and 1944 new prospects opened for the development of Soviet-Norwegian military cooperation. The formation of detachments of "police troops" in Sweden placed at the disposal of the government military forces that were at least formally outside the reach of the military agreement between the Norwegian and British governments. The police troops could be

moved more freely by the Norwegian government, subject only to acquiescence of the Swedish government.

The decisive factor was still the course of the war between Finland and the Soviet Union. Finland being a participant in the war against the Soviet Union, the Norwegian government could only send troops to participate on the northern front at the cost of placing the relations with the other Nordic countries under heavy strain. The prospect of a separate peace agreement between the Soviet Union and Finland, eventually followed by a Soviet offensive against the Germans in the North, made things look different. This development ultimately resulted the crossing of the Norwegian-Soviet border by Soviet troops in October 1944, thereby beginning the liberation of the country. But this still lay in the future.

Civil cooperation: Norwegian tonnage to the Soviet Union?

In December 1941 the Soviet minister to the governments-in-exile in London, Alexandr Bogomolov, asked Lie if the Norwegian government was willing to place at the disposal of the Soviet government 25-30 ships for the transport of supplies from USA to the Soviet Union.¹¹⁹ The Norwegians, although for the moment not willing to bind themselves to any definite agreements, reacted favorably to the Russian request. Olav Riste has characterized the Norwegian attitude as an early attempt on part of the Norwegian government to infuse the relations with the Soviet Union with a positive spirit, thereby preceding the later policy of "bridge-building".¹²⁰ Trygve Lie has also written that the government's attitude was dictated by a wish to strengthen and improve the bonds with the Soviet Union.¹²¹ This positive spirit was, however, counteracted on the one hand by strong British resistance to the proposed agreement, and on the other hand by the presence of differing views within the Norwegian government itself and its agencies.

The Norwegians were not in a position to negotiate with the Russians without an eye to the views of their British and American allies. Their single most important asset as a member of the great alliance was Norway's great fleet of modern merchant ships, which is generally acknowledged to have played a crucial role in the battle of the Atlantic. For the duration of the war the Norwegian ships had been placed under the control of an agency of the Norwegian government, Nortraship, and were operated from Nortraship's offices in London and New York. The greater part of the ships were placed at the disposal of the British government by British-Norwegian agreements, the so-called "scheme-ships". The use of these ships were to be agreed upon through an *Anglo-Norwegian Shipping Committee* in London. The rest of the fleet consisted of "free" ships, i.e. ships which were outside the direct control of British maritime authorities.

Lie's answer to Bogomolov's request seems to have suggested the possibility of treating the matter as a Norwegian-Soviet affair, to be solved by direct negotiations between the two governments. He obviously had in view chartering to the Soviet Union some of the "free" ships not already chartered to the British Ministry of War Transport (MOWT).¹²² This was questioned by Arne Sunde, the minister in charge of shipping matters, who held the view

that "all questions concerning the disposal of Norwegian ships" were to be discussed by the Anglo-Norwegian Shipping Committee.¹²³ Øyvind Lorentzen, head of Nortraship, pointed at the great risks involved in the shipping of supplies to ports in Northern Russia, and preferred to offer to the Soviet government "older scheme-ships" rather than valuable "free" ships.¹²⁴

The British, however, were not inclined to release ships already under charter to the MOWT, and were for reasons of their own bent on keeping control over the shipping of supplies to the Soviet Union. A separate Norwegian-Soviet agreement would in their opinion result in "hideous confusion" in the allied shipping effort.¹²⁵ The Norwegian government, according to the British view, should tell the Russians that all Norwegian tonnage was placed at the disposal of the United Kingdom government, subject only to certain restrictions securing American interests.¹²⁶

As the Russians continued to raise demands of a separate agreement with the Norwegian government, the Norwegians tried to argue that an eventual agreement was to include only ships released from British-Norwegian "schemes". In an *Aide-Mémoire* on 12th January the Norwegian government declared its agreement "en principe" to a Norwegian-Soviet agreement, but made it clear that all questions regarding the allocation of Norwegian tonnage had to be discussed in the Anglo-Norwegian Shipping Committee.¹²⁷ The Norwegians now found themselves in a rather embarrassing situation. For political reasons they were clearly interested in an agreement with the Soviet government, realizing that it would serve Norway's long time interests "to be on a friendly footing with the Soviet Union in the future".¹²⁸ Reasons of economy and national interest, however, argued in favour of preserving as much as possible of the Norwegian tonnage in the more profitable "free" traffic.

During a conversation with Anthony Eden on 5th January 1942, Lie made a strong appeal for the release of a number of Norwegian ships for chartering to the Soviet government.¹²⁹ Eden was evasive, and was not at all happy when Lie later told him that the Norwegian government had made arrangements for the transfer of three ships from American trade to the Russians.¹³⁰ It is important to note that the Norwegian minister of foreign affairs in his discussions with Eden laid stress on the possible long-term benefits of a Soviet-Norwegian shipping agreement.¹³¹

As a result of the British refusal to consider the release of ships already on "scheme", the Norwegians began to consider the possibility of letting an agreement include "free" ships as well. Although the British were of the opinion that His Majesty's government had priority rights on all Norwegian tonnage,¹³² they finally agreed to an arrangement whereby five ships not in British charter should be placed at the disposal of the Soviet government.¹³³ On 3rd February the Norwegian cabinet consequently decided to assign to Nortraship the task of chartering five ships to the Soviet government.¹³⁴

In the meantime the British had arrived at an arrangement with the Russians which authorized the British-Soviet Shipping Committee¹³⁵ to discuss even the shipping of supplies to the Soviet Union outside the Moscow protocols.¹³⁶ The Norwegians, having been informed of the discussions between the British and Ivan Maisky since the end of January, decided to await the further development of the situation before approaching the Russians with any concrete proposals. The Soviet government, on the other hand, seems to have

been satisfied by the Soviet-British arrangement. Alexandr Bogomolov and Trygve Lie touched on the matter during a conversation on 3rd March, but the Soviet minister limited himself to remark that he was "fully aware" of the Norwegian government's efforts to arrange for transfer of tonnage to the Soviet Union.¹³⁷

Maisky and Bogomolov returned to the matter in the spring and summer of 1943. After some initial hesitation the Norwegians, in an *Aide-Mémoire* on 5th August 1943, asked the British to release five Norwegian ships for chartering to the Soviet government.¹³⁸ The Norwegians again stressed the political importance of an eventual Norwegian-Soviet agreement. Laurence Collier was of the opinion that the Norwegian government feared that the Russians might challenge Norwegian interests in other fields if the two parties did not arrive at a solution in the shipping question.¹³⁹ Lie stressed the importance of an agreement as an example of practical "bridge-building" between a small power and one of the great powers, which might in the long run prove beneficial even from the point of view of relations between the great powers themselves.¹⁴⁰

Apparently the British then decided to test how far the Norwegians were willing in fact to sacrifice other interests in order to come to an arrangement with the Russians. Undoubtedly Collier was fully aware that he placed Lie in a rather embarrassing situation when he asked whether the Norwegian government had contemplated to bring into an arrangement some of the remaining "free" ships. Lie had to confess that there were, in fact, some "free" ships, but, he continued, "they are our one ewe lamb, the last piece of independent bargaining power left to us, and it would be to much too ask us to sacrifice that for the Russians".¹⁴¹ This attitude, not surprisingly, produced some sarcastic comments among the British about the Norwegians' eagerness to build bridges without wanting to cover the costs.¹⁴² The Norwegian government was, however, spared the troubles of balancing its opposing interests. Ambassador Bogomolov left for Algiers, and the Russians apparently decided for the time being to drop the matter.

In January 1944 Lie on his own initiative called a meeting to discuss the question of a Norwegian-Soviet shipping agreement. Lie's motivation was purely political, and evolved from his realization of the growing power and influence of the Soviet Union. He referred to "the Polish situation", obviously as an example of the relative impotence of a small country when confronted by Soviet demands, even if that country was backed by Great Britain and the USA. Lie apparently cherished the hope that a demonstration of will on part of Norway to engage in cooperative ventures would improve her bargaining position vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. The meeting did not lead to any definite decisions or initiatives.¹⁴³

The matter was raised for the last time during Lie's visit to Moscow in November 1944. Lie came to the conclusion that the Russians still attached considerable importance to the question. This time the Norwegian foreign minister was quite firm in his decision to reach an agreement with the Soviet government.¹⁴⁴ Consequently, after Lie's return to London the government made arrangements for the transfer of a number of Norwegian ships which had been interned in Swedish ports to Soviet charter for use in the Baltic. The British

were informed, but saw no reason to oppose the proposed agreement. As it turned out, however, the Norwegian offer apparently did not correspond to Soviet needs. In the middle of January 1945 the government in Moscow declared that the freezing of the Gulf of Finland for the time being excluded the movements of ships in the area.¹⁴⁵

Agreement on jurisdiction and civil affairs

Finland's participation in the war against the Soviet Union was a major obstacle to the development of a Soviet-Norwegian military cooperation in the North. The Norwegian government was bent on avoiding direct confrontation between Finnish and Norwegian troops, though the cabinet members realized at an early stage in the war that some sort of future Norwegian armed participation in the war against Finland might prove unavoidable.¹⁴⁶ At the same time, a direct Soviet intervention against the Germans in Norway had to be preceded by Finland's capitulation or withdrawal from the war. It was also clear to the Norwegians that the Soviet government would demand the cession of the Petsamo (Pechenga) area to the Soviet Union as one of its preconditions for a separate peace-agreement with Finland, which would mean the restoration of a common Norwegian-Soviet border. This would open to the Soviets a direct route to attack the German troops and fortifications in Eastern Finnmark.

In this perspective it is hardly surprising that the Norwegians in London were extremely sensitive to any signs of a possible or imminent armistice or truce between Finland and the Soviet Union. Johan Michelet, the Norwegian minister in Helsinki who left for Stockholm when the legation in Finland was closed down in December 1941, kept on sending the government in London regular reports about the evolution of Finnish-Soviet relations.¹⁴⁷ On several occasions there had been rumours of Finnish-Soviet negotiations, and the Norwegians were hardly surprised when it became clear during February 1944 that such talks were in fact going on. In December 1943 ambassador Andvord had sent a message to London about signs of an increased Soviet preoccupation with the Northern areas.¹⁴⁸ One is left with the impression that he expected a Soviet offensive on the Northern front to materialize in the near future, though the ambassador did not make his fears explicit. The Defence Council had discussed the situation in Finland at a meeting in the beginning of December 1943, with a view to what had to be done to secure Norwegian interests in case of a Soviet-Finnish agreement.¹⁴⁹ At approximately the same time Erik Colban discussed the matter with Sir Alexander Cadogan, trying to convey to the under-secretary of state the need to prepare the despatch of allied (i.e. western) troops to Northern Norway. A Soviet invasion in Norway, Sir Cadogan was told, would not be in the interest of either Norway or Great Britain.¹⁵⁰ Finally, the Norwegian minister of foreign affairs was alarmed by an article in *Sunday Times* on 23rd January 1944, which discussed the prospects of a Finnish-Soviet armistice and a consequent Soviet move into Northern Norway.¹⁵¹ The members of the cabinet now realized that the near future might confront them with what had so far been only a distant, though

far from pleasant, possibility: the presence of Soviet soldiers on Norwegian soil.¹⁵²

The basis of the government's planning and policy formulation for the ultimate liberation of Norway was the supposition that this task would be left to Norwegian troops in cooperation with their western allies. The presumed agreement between the "big three" about Norway as an exclusive western zone of operations may be traced back to a remark by Anthony Eden to Lie in January 1942, after Eden's return from his first visit to Moscow. According to Lie's minutes from the conversation, Eden made a point of stressing that Stalin had explicitly renounced any Soviet demands on Norway. Stalin had also made it clear that the Soviet Union would not object to Norway's participation in a western oriented security system.¹⁵³ Lie apparently interpreted this as implying that Norway was to belong to the zone of operations of the western powers during the war as well, although no such explicit and authoritative statement had been made.

Developments on the Northern front raised questions as to the validity of the supposed agreement that Norway was a in the zone of operations of the western allies. Lie raised the question with Eden on 21st December 1943, referring to their conversation in January 1942. Quite apart from signs of an imminent Soviet offensive in the North, Lie was also alarmed by the signing of the Soviet-Czechoslovak agreement on 12th December. The Soviets, Eden was told, might possibly want to sign a similar agreement with the Norwegian government, since Norway and the Soviet Union would probably become neighbouring states. Anthony Eden, however, was not able or willing to give a definite answer.¹⁵⁴

After the article in *Sunday Times* Lie again requested clarification of the issue, without succeeding. As a result, Lies and his colleagues in the cabinet were coming to realize that a Soviet move into Northern Norway was no longer outside the range of possibility or even of probability.¹⁵⁵ The government had to act accordingly.

Already in the spring of 1943 the Norwegian and the British governments had started talks about an agreement on jurisdiction and civil administration in liberated territories in Norway in case of an allied military reconquest. Agreement on the text of the document was reached in the summer the same year, and during the next months the US government agreed in principle to a similar agreement with the Norwegians. As it turned out, however, the British and the Americans were in no hurry to finalize the agreement.

Now the Norwegian government began to consider concluding an agreement with the Russians as well. Lie first asked the British to supply the Soviet government with information about the agreement,¹⁵⁶ obviously hoping to ensure that the Soviets would apply and respect the stipulations of the agreement if their soldiers crossed the Soviet-Norwegian border. The Soviets, however, were in no hurry to give official approval of the text of the proposed Norwegian-British and Norwegian-American agreements.

The Norwegians had a double set of motives in this affair. On the one hand, they had been constantly pressing the British and the Americans to sign the agreement as soon as possible. On the other hand, there was the necessity of bringing into the open the Soviet attitude. Lie had told the Foreign Office that the Norwegian government might feel obliged to start talks with the

Soviet government in order to safeguard Norwegian interests in case of a Soviet invasion of Norway, if the supposed agreement about Norway as a western sphere of operations was in fact non-existent.¹⁵⁷ Asking them to await the Soviet reaction to the text of the proposed Norwegian-British agreement, the British attempted to discourage the Norwegians from taking any definite steps in the direction of a separate agreement with the Soviet Union. Lie grudgingly consented, but added that the British government was responsible for the situation which would arise "if Russian troops appeared on Norwegian territory".¹⁵⁸

Some days later Lie conveyed to Mikhail Lebedev, the new Soviet ambassador to the Norwegian government, the first hints that he might be interested in a separate Norwegian-Soviet agreement. Pointing to the fact that there had been talks of an agreement only with the British and US governments, he said: "[We] had got the impression that Norway was part of the Anglo-American sphere of operations, and that consequently Russian troops were not to be used on Norwegian soil. If this assumption does not hold good, we will have to reconsider the matter."¹⁵⁹

The Norwegian strategy at this juncture seems to have been as follows. On the one hand, Lie and his colleagues were doing their best to ensure that the liberation of Norway would be the task of Norwegian and Anglo-American troops. They made repeated attempts to convince the western allies of the necessity of planning for intervention in Northern Norway in case of a German evacuation or withdrawal. Otherwise, Lie argued, the German evacuation of Northern Finland, and possibly parts of Northern Norway as well, might result in a Soviet penetration "deep into Norwegian territory".¹⁶⁰ On the other hand, the prospect of the Soviets being the first of the big allies to start regular operations against the Germans in Norway seemed no less probable than an invasion from the West. In that case agreements with the western powers would be of only limited value, unless the Soviet government undertook to "give them its sanction and respect their stipulations if Russian troops moved into Norwegian territory".¹⁶¹ Trygve Lie, in fact, argued that the presence of Soviet troops in Norway would make the signing of a separate agreement with the Russians unavoidable.¹⁶²

On 8th March 1944 Lie took another step towards an agreement on jurisdiction and civil administration with the Soviet government. Contrary to his assurances to Collier the day before that he would not press the matter with the Russians,¹⁶³ he told Lebedev that "in the case of Soviet participation in the liberation of Norway from German occupation, [...] we would want an agreement with the Russians similar to those which we had reached with the British and the Americans". Lebedev, however, avoided committing himself, by countering that the Soviet Union, in view of its many commitments elsewhere, was hardly in a position to offer assistance in the liberation of Norway.¹⁶⁴

During a conversation with Lebedev on 22nd April Lie reminded the Soviet ambassador of their earlier talks on the subject, and told him bluntly that the Norwegian government wanted agreements with all countries which were to participate with troops in the liberation of Norway. On Lebedev's request Lie confirmed that he wanted the initiation of Soviet-Norwegian negotiations.¹⁶⁵ The formal request from the Norwegian government to start negotiations was sent three days later. The message pointed to the uncertainty

as to "whether the supposed understanding between the three great powers for operations in Norway was actually arrived at and in that case whether it is still valid or whether some other arrangements have been made".¹⁶⁶ No real negotiations, however, took place. Lie simply sent ambassador Lebedev a proposed text of the agreement, similar to the Norwegian-British one. On 13th May Lebedev handed to Lie an *Aide-Mémoire* whereby the Soviet government agreed to sign the text without any alterations.¹⁶⁷ The three agreements with Great Britain, USA and the Soviet Union were signed on 16th May 1944.

The agreement with the Soviet Union came about as a result of an initiative on part of the Norwegian government. The British were informed of Lie's decisive move only on 4th May, i.e. when the Soviets had already accepted the Norwegian offer. And the British, to be sure, were rather unhappy about the whole matter.¹⁶⁸ The Norwegian policy may be viewed as an example of practical "bridge-building". It should be noted, however, that the Norwegians, when deciding to open negotiations with the Russians, were guided primarily by their fear of possible Soviet expansionist intentions in Norway. The Norwegian policy, furthermore, did not signify a loosening of the country's ties to the western powers. When viewing the signing of the Norwegian-Soviet agreement on jurisdiction and civil administration in liberated Norway as an example of "bridge-building", one should avoid the misconception of Norway occupying a middle position between the Soviet Union and the western powers.

Norwegian troops to the Soviet Union? March 1944

The question of sending Norwegian troops to Soviet territory, which was raised during March 1944, was an additional attempt on the part of the Norwegian government to safeguard Norwegian interests and territorial integrity. The military attaché in Moscow, general Steffens, held the view that the presence of a more than token Norwegian force would be of the greatest "strategic, political and psychological importance" if Soviet troops were to move into Norway.¹⁶⁹ The message from general Steffens, together with a similar message from ambassador Andvord, prompted the government to undertake an exploration of the Russian attitude to the idea of forming contingents of Norwegian troops on Soviet soil.¹⁷⁰

Three sets of motives on part of the Norwegian government deserve mentioning. Foremost in the minds of the decision-makers was the need to safeguard Norwegian interests and territorial integrity. Simultaneously, the Norwegians were eager to prevent the formation of contingents of Norwegian volunteers in the Soviet Union outside the control of the government. There had been repeated reports about detachments of "partisans" operating against the Germans in the Murmansk area, and Lie and his colleagues feared that refugees from Sweden might now join these forces. Secondly, the government had to take into account Norwegian public opinion in Norway and Sweden. It had to give proof of its determination to enhance Norway's military effort with all the means at its disposal. The third motive was a more subtle one. The Norwegians cherished the hope that the prospects of a transfer of Norwegian manpower to the Soviet Union might prompt the western allies to

give higher priority to the transport of Norwegians from Sweden to the British isles. This question had loomed large in the discussions between Lie and representatives of the British and American governments since the autumn of 1943.

Lie presented the idea to Lebedev on 8th March, and the Soviet ambassador returned a highly positive reply from the Soviet government a week later. Whereas the Norwegians had cautiously spoken of sending a force of about thousand men, i.e. a battalion, the Soviets declared themselves ready to accept a force of several battalions, or even a division. Lebedev furthermore declared that the arrangement "from the political point on view" had the approval of the Moscow authorities, and advised Lie to pursue the matter through the Norwegian embassy in Moscow.¹⁷¹

For the time being, no presentations seem to have been made in Moscow. Norwegian military authorities were far from enthusiastic about the idea.¹⁷² More important was the course of events on the Finnish-Soviet front. The Norwegians had contemplated the plan to be executed in the event of an armistice between Finland and the Soviet Union. In the course of March and April it became clear that the no separate peace agreement was forthcoming in the near future, and Lie decided to postpone the execution of the plan.

The Soviet Union in Norwegian Foreign Policy, June 1941 - May 1944

The entry of the Soviet Union into the war on the allied side was bound to have an effect on the general orientation of the foreign policy of the Norwegian government. So far we have studied some attempts after June 1941 at establishing cooperation in military matters and in shipping. On the following pages we will turn our attention to a more general analysis of the position of the Soviet Union in Norwegian foreign policy thinking in the same period, i.e. until the winter 1943/1944.

We have already mentioned that the general uncertainty with regard to Soviet intentions in the realm of foreign policy made itself felt when the Norwegian politicians set out to include that country in their long-term foreign policy planning. It goes without saying that the Norwegians, even before the German attack on 22nd June 1941, were perfectly aware of the potentially decisive role of the Soviet Union in deciding the course of the war and the future shape of Europe. But nobody knew how and in what direction this influence was going to manifest itself.

22nd June 1941 gave only partial answers to these questions. The entrance of the Soviet Union into the war on the allied side made it possible for the Norwegians to envisage an alliance and war policy which included that country. The Norwegian government had to adjust its former policy of exclusive reliance on the western powers to the new situation. On the one hand, Norway would try to develop its own relations with the Soviet Union, not least in the field of military matters. On the other hand, the Norwegian government was perfectly aware that the course and duration of the war would to no small degree depend on the relations between the western powers and their new great ally. Thus, it appeared to be in Norway's own interest to contribute, with the limited means at its disposal, to a positive development of the relationship between the three great allied powers.

In the longer perspective, i.e. for the period after the end of the war, the basic uncertainty as to Soviet intentions remained. Even in this perspective, however, the crucial question remained the same, namely the evolution of the relationship between Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. Consequently, it appeared to be in the obvious interest of Norway to assume the role of "bridge-builder" between the great powers even after the war. In this respect, Norwegian foreign policy aimed at safeguarding Norwegian interests by contributing to the peaceful solution of future potential conflicts between the great powers.

Towards a policy of "bridge-building"?

Beginning after the German attack in June 1941 *Norsk Tidend* continually stressed the existence of an atmosphere of "friendly cooperation" between the great powers as the single most important prerequisite for Norway's security in the post-war world. In this respect, the official view of the Norwegian govern-

ment was basically fixed for the duration of the war already by the summer of 1941. In his article in *The Times* on 14th November 1941 Lie declared that

the most important basis for extended international cooperation in the future is an amicable relationship between the British Empire, the United States, Soviet Russia, and China.

Norway was seen as occupying a position particularly well suited to the task of acting as a "bridge" between the Soviet Union and the western powers. *Hovedlinjer i norsk utenrikspolitikk* (*The principal features of Norway's foreign policy*), the government's official policy programme from May 1942, reiterated these views. This line of thought manifested itself towards the end of the war most clearly in the Norwegian government's active support of the planned new global security organization.¹⁷³ Such a policy of "collective security" was hardly compatible with open support of the idea of regional defence arrangements.

On this declaratory level the "bridge-building" doctrine also asserted itself through an increased emphasis on the importance of Norway's relations with the Soviet Union, while simultaneously loosening the one-sided ties to the western powers.

It must be noted, however, that the Norwegians were bent on expressing their will for "bridge-building" not only on the purely declaratory level. Their policy towards Finland during the autumn of 1941, for instance, went far in sacrificing traditional Nordic unity for the sake of expressing solidarity with the Soviet Union. In the spring of 1942 there was even a suggestion of declaring war on Finland; an idea which was however rejected outright by Lie and his principal advisors.¹⁷⁴ In general, the Norwegians were unwilling to commit themselves to foreign policy projects, even for the post-war period, which might be unwelcome in Moscow. This manifested itself clearly in the discussions in 1942 about Nordic and European cooperation after the war.¹⁷⁵ The question of allocating Norwegian vessels to the Soviet Union, on the other hand, shows the conflicting interests which made themselves felt when the ideology of "bridge-building" was to be operationalized.

Not only when it came to cooperation with the Soviet Union, but even more with respect to any attempts at "bridge-building", it was necessary first to reevaluate and reinterpret certain aspects of Soviet domestic and foreign policies. Norwegian public opinion in London and in Norway had to be presented with an analysis of Soviet policies contrary to the image shaped by the terror in the thirties and by Stalin's expansionist foreign policy during the first year of the world war. The government was confronted with the formidable task of advocating cooperation with a great power which until the summer of 1941 had hardly enjoyed greater popularity among most Norwegians than Hitler's Germany. More attention was paid to Soviet foreign policy than to its domestic policies. *Norsk Tidend* limited its comments on the latter subject to expressions of hopes for a future development in the direction of democratic reforms. The Soviet system was explained as resulting from "particular historical and social preconditions", alien to Western Europe.¹⁷⁶

The reevaluation of Soviet foreign policy, on the other hand, regularly reappeared as a subject in *Norsk Tidend*, beginning in July 1941. The general task was to give an explanation of the Soviet policy from August 1939 to June

1941 which dispelled the familiar image of the country as an aggressor on line with Germany. To Norwegians, however, the policy of the Soviet Union against Finland was the single most important obstacle. More than anything else, the war against Finland in the winter of 1939/40 had made the Soviet Union unpopular among Norwegians.

Lie's principal advisor, Dr Arne Ording, gave the lead by an article in *Norsk Tidend* on 8th July 1941. According to Ording, the principal interests of the Soviet Union and Germany were fundamentally contrary to each other. Their cooperation after August 1939 was from both sides dictated by tactical considerations, with the Soviet Union wanting to postpone and gather strength for the unavoidable clash with Germany. The Soviet demands towards Finland had been motivated by strategic considerations, and no Soviet demands had ever been raised as regards Norway.¹⁷⁷ Some months later Ording went even further, stating that the Soviet ultimatum to Finland in 1939 was based on "good strategic reasons". *Norsk Tidend* stated that the Soviet Union right from the moment of the German attack on 9th April 1940 had been benevolently inclined towards Norway. The rupture of diplomatic relations in May 1941, furthermore, was prompted by developments outside the purview of Norwegian-Soviet relations.¹⁷⁸

Rolf Andvord, the minister and later ambassador to Moscow, distinguished himself as an ardent admirer of Joseph Stalin and the accomplishments of the Soviet system, especially with regard to military matters. His reports, beginning in the winter of 1941, were increasingly optimistic in their evaluations of the direction of Soviet domestic and foreign policies.¹⁷⁹ It is hard to establish to what degree his views were influential in London. But they are of interest as an example of a mood of enthusiasm for everything Soviet which swept the western world during the years following the entrance of the Soviet Union into the war.

Continued preference for regional agreements?

The German attack on the Soviet Union did not immediately turn the foreign policy programme of the Norwegian government away from the principles of post-war Atlantic cooperation in matters of security. In a radio speech on 28th June Lie reiterated and elaborated the already known arguments, making a point of presenting Norway's future in light of cooperation with Great Britain and the USA. At the same time the speech made only a short and comparatively cautious reference to the fact of the Soviet Union's entrance into the war.¹⁸⁰ The Norwegians were apparently, like their allies, uncertain as to the endurance of the Red Army's resistance to the German assaults. In an article in *The Times* on 14th November Lie repeated and further developed the familiar arguments. The Norwegians, according to Lie, were an Atlantic people, and their primary concern was to establish cooperation with the Atlantic great powers, Great Britain and the USA. The foundations for cooperation were already laid by the military struggle against the common enemy. Lie continued:

Such military cooperation, however, should be developed to continue in the future. An agreement should be reached for all the Allied countries to

take over certain duties. As far as the smaller states are concerned, these duties should be primarily regional. For Norway it seems natural to think of the defence of the Atlantic and strongly to emphasize our desire to see the United States participating in this task.¹⁸¹

Norway's relations with the Soviet Union were, on the other hand, described as being of a traditionally good, neighborly character, and the two countries had been engaged in no serious conflicts with each other.¹⁸²

A multitude of factors worked in favour of cooperation with the West: traditional economic and cultural contacts, a common ideological base, common ideals etc. As regards relations with the Soviet Union, the Norwegian politicians were confronted with the absence, or even the negation of all this. Norwegian-Soviet cooperative ventures, during the war as well as in the post-war period, could only materialize if the Norwegians had a clear idea of the benefits of involving the Soviet Union in solving particular tasks. This, no doubt, was not the case with regard to the planned defence of the North Atlantic. Quite the contrary, the Norwegian government itself cherished suspicions as to the Soviet Union's own designs in the northern areas. We have already noted the appearance of similar tendencies during the discussions about Spitzbergen in the summer of 1941. Later that year Lie alluded clearly to a possible future Soviet threat during a conversation with the Dutch and Belgian ministers of foreign affairs. Lie pointed to Norway's primarily western orientation, and added that

Germany is not necessarily the only possible source of threat to Europe. Even though the Soviet Union has declared that they do not harbour territorial demands, Russia's policy towards Finland during the last years point in a western direction, and there has been writings about Russian designs for a port on the Atlantic.¹⁸³

If this was part of the motivation behind Lie's Atlantic policy, it could hardly have been the intentions of the Norwegian government to include the Soviet Union in the system. He had been thinking of Russia, Lie told Eden at about the same time,

but he did not want Russia in the North Atlantic; though he also thought Russia would want to be there. Part of his purpose in proposing an Anglo-Norwegian and, if possible, American defensive plan for the North Atlantic was to be all prepared were Russia to present any demands.¹⁸⁴

Arne Ording argued along similar lines, pointing to the exposed position of particularly Northern Norway in case of an aggressive Soviet foreign policy leading to "a new period of arms race and formation of alliances". Ording concluded that only Great Britain and the USA were in a position to provide security for Norwegian independence. "No other form of absolute security exists, at least not in the foreseeable future."¹⁸⁵ An official committee for the planning of Norway's post-war defence concluded in March 1942 that an aggressive Soviet policy *might* reassert itself after the war. Norway's defence had consequently to be planned with an eye to this alternative as well.¹⁸⁶

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was aware of the possibility of Soviet objections to Norway's participation in a western-dominated defence system in the Atlantic. Arne Ording, commenting in June 1942 upon a Dutch

proposal of similar content, pointed to Norway's special position vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. After the war Norway and the Soviet Union would in all probability become neighbours. Ording did not exclude the possibility of the Soviet Union assuming a favorable attitude towards Norwegian participation in a defence system together with Great Britain and the USA. "This is, however", Ording continued, "the most sensitive question arising as a result of the proposed agreement".

The Foreign Office was acutely aware that the Soviet Union was likely to put obstacles in the way of any realization of Lie's plans for a North Atlantic defence system. The Russians were expected to raise objections to discussions of the plan between Norway and the western powers without Soviet participation. Eden's primary concern was to avoid elements of friction in the relations between the great powers.¹⁸⁷ Consequently, the Soviet Union must eventually be invited to participate in the discussions, though Eden feared that its contribution would be "entirely destructive":

It is probable that their [i.e. The Soviet Union's] line would be that it is also a Russian interest to participate in the defence of the Atlantic, and that for this purpose Russia must have an ice-free base in Northern Norway.¹⁸⁸

Eden's visit to Moscow in December 1941 did much to weaken the fear of Soviet territorial ambitions in Norway, at least in British government circles. Stalin told Eden that the Soviet Union would not object to the British acquiring military bases in Norway after the war. Apparently Stalin at that time viewed Norway as belonging to a western sphere of interests. Eden conveyed Stalin's assurances to Lie during a conversation on 5th January 1942. Eden tried to convince the Norwegian minister of foreign affairs that the fear of Soviet demands for bases or ports in Norway was groundless. Eden also told him, according to Lie's own minute, that

Stalin had said in plain words that he would not object to the conclusion of agreements between the Atlantic countries on a system of common defence of the North Atlantic, which might be joined by Norway as well.¹⁸⁹

Eden's assurances did not, however, put an end to the Norwegian fear of sinister Soviet intentions in the North. "Russophobia" continued as one of the determining factors behind Norway's policy towards the Soviet Union.

"The principal features of Norway's foreign policy"

The document *The principal features of Norway's foreign policy (Hovedlinjer i norsk utenrikspolitikk*¹⁹⁰), which was finally approved by the cabinet on 8th May 1942, was an answer to growing opposition to the foreign policy of the Norwegian government. In particular, the Norwegians were intent on defining the official view of the government with regard to the heated discussions about the forms of post-war Nordic cooperation. A similar but separate discussion with the Polish government playing the leading part concerned the

future political organization of Central Europe from Scandinavia to the Balkans.¹⁹¹

The principal features of Norway's foreign policy concluded that a future world organization would not in itself, at least not in the foreseeable future, have the power to safeguard the security of nations. This would be the case only if the great powers renounced part of their powers to a world government, their armed forces being dissolved and replaced by an "international police force". Thus the need for regional defence arrangements was thought to remain. Within the framework of regional defence systems, Norway would opt for participation in an arrangement for the defence of the North Atlantic.

Norway's future relations with the Soviet Union was seen as depending first of all on how the relations between the Soviet Union and the western powers developed after the war, but *The principal features of Norway's foreign policy* leaves no doubt as to the Norwegian government's intention *not* to include the Soviet Union in the Atlantic defence system. The United States, Great Britain and Norway should form the nucleus of the arrangement. It might also include Sweden, Denmark, Canada, Iceland, the Netherlands, Belgium and France. The plan, in fact, looked like a blueprint for a block of the countries in north-western Europe and North America.

A first draft of the document was discussed at a cabinet meeting on 24th April 1942. The final version, which was approved by the cabinet on 8th May, differed from the draft by more strongly stressing Norway's relations to the Nordic countries and by emphasising the importance of the future world organization. The discussion revealed the absence of unanimous support among the members for the cabinet of Lie's Atlantic orientation. Some voices held that the policy recommendations of the document meant "an invitation to block-formation", leaving Norway as a "buffer-state" between the Soviet Union and the western powers.¹⁹²

The principal features of Norway's foreign policy was not made public, but the diplomatic representatives of the great powers were informed of the content of the document. Great Britain and the USA did not feel it convenient or necessary to give an official answer. The Norwegians were therefore rather embarrassed when the Soviet ambassador on 24th September 1942 delivered a Soviet memorandum¹⁹³ in answer to the Norwegian document. The Soviet memorandum stated that the Soviet Union would be an active partner in all ventures to safeguard the future peace. With reference to the Soviet agreement with Great Britain from 26th May 1942 the document held forth:

the Soviet Union, even in virtue of its geographical position cannot be uninterested in those problems of providing security of communication and preventing aggression which were concerned in the above mentioned Memorandum of the Royal Norwegian Government.

The Norwegians were not at all happy about the Russian memorandum. They had cherished the hope that the Soviets, like the British and the Americans, would refrain from giving an official commentary.¹⁹⁴ Lie, according to Anthony Eden, "seemed considerably perturbed at the idea of the Russians interesting themselves in the Atlantic at all".¹⁹⁵ Lie told Collier that he feared, "from his

own and other people's experiences of Soviet methods", that the Soviet Union would demand to be included in the Atlantic arrangement. "If only", Lie explained to Collier, "your authorities had not taken such a long time to consider my original proposals, we might have avoided this danger."¹⁹⁶

Lie was anxious that the Russians might present "unacceptable demands". What he really feared, Collier noted, was Soviet demands for the use of bases in Northern Norway. Lie and Collier agreed, however, that the Soviet memorandum called for no reply, and they decided to proceed on the assumption that the Soviet government had no right "to object to the Powers immediately interested in Atlantic defence making provisional arrangements for that defence in the post-war period, without bringing them [i.e. the Soviet Union] into the discussions".¹⁹⁷

We have already noted that the Norwegians were aware of the possibility of the Russians wanting to participate in the Atlantic system. The Norwegian government had, according to Arne Ording, realized this eventuality long ago.¹⁹⁸ Ording's reflections in his diary show that the task of combining the Atlantic policy with the declared intention of Norway to act as a "bridge" between the great powers was becoming increasingly difficult:

The Russians have indicated that they take an interest in our Atlantic policy. Then we may be confronted with the following choice: either to offer bases only to the English and the Americans, which may be received by the Russians as a challenge, or to offer bases to the Russians as well, an alternative which will create strategic as well as domestic policy problems. Or we might conduct a new kind of neutrality policy, trying to balance between the western powers and the Soviet Union in the way we, with the well-known and dismal result, tried to balance between Germany and the western powers.¹⁹⁹

The Atlantic policy, as set out in *Principal features*, met with criticism from the leaders of the Norwegian resistance movement. The Home front, like the opposition in the cabinet, was particularly intent on stressing the importance of cooperation within the future world organization, and also the relations with the other Nordic countries. The leaders of the Home front did not object to the view that regional economic and military organizations might prove indispensable until the world organization had proved effective. In Norway's case this would primarily mean cooperation with Great Britain, but the Home Front added that the Soviet Union had to be included in the cooperation even at the preparatory stage.²⁰⁰ This was, as shown above, quite contrary to the government's view. The apparent consensus on the necessity of regional agreements in the post-war period was thus seemingly contradicted by a fundamental disagreement on the nature of Norway's relations with the Soviet Union and the western powers after the war.

Elements of friction in Norwegian-Soviet relations

The Norwegian policy towards the Soviet Union after 22nd June 1941, aiming at dispelling previous antagonisms, sought to lay the foundations for war-time

cooperation and a positive development of mutual relations in the post-war period. We have seen evidence, however, of continued Norwegian uncertainty and anxiety as to Soviet intentions in the North. Some incidents may have served to reinforce these tendencies.

At the end of September 1942, the leaders of the Home Front requested the government to ask the Soviets to induce Norwegian Communist resistance groups to stop the launching of "isolated acts of terror". These groups were outside the control of the Home Front leadership, and their activity, according to the Home Front, resulted in heavy German reprisals completely out of proportion to the limited value of the gains obtained. The Home Front was of the opinion that the Communists even received their orders from Moscow.²⁰¹

The government acted quickly to the Home Front's request. On 5th September Bogomolov received an *Aide-Mémoire* whereby the Norwegian government urgently asked the Soviet government to induce the Communist resistance groups to stop further isolated acts of terror.²⁰² Neither Bogomolov nor Molotov, who discussed the matter with ambassador Rolf Andvord, gave a clear-cut answer to the Norwegian request. Molotov, however, promised to cooperate with the Norwegian government.²⁰³ Thereafter the question of the Communist resistance activity in Norway was never again raised as a diplomatic matter between the two governments. Nor was Lie and his government willing to discuss with the Russians the broadcasts of the Moscow-based *Folkesenderen Norges Frihet* (*The People's Radio Norway's Freedom*), which in its broadcasts to Norway disregarded the directives of the Home Front.

The suggestion of Norway offering free ports in Northern Norway to the Soviet Union, which was raised by president Roosevelt during Lie's visit to Washington in the spring of 1943, was hardly designed to weaken the inherent Norwegian fear of Soviet expansionist tendencies in the North. The Norwegians were extremely sensitive to any suggestions that the Soviet Union might have special interests in Northern Scandinavia. A Polish booklet from December 1942, *The Baltic, Britain and Peace*, for instance, created considerable consternation among the Norwegians. Rowmund Pilsudski, the author of the booklet, wrote i.a. that "Russia's policy of developing her northern access to the Atlantic through the unfrozen Arctic ports of Scandinavia is comprehensible".²⁰⁴

President Roosevelt aired his idea of offering to the Soviet Union the use of a free port in Northern Norway during a conversation with Lie on 12th March 1943.²⁰⁵ According to Lie, Roosevelt told him that the Russians were interested in ports in Northern Norway "with railway connections to the Soviet Union".²⁰⁶ Lie apparently felt his fears as to Soviet intentions in the North confirmed by the president's proposal, and reacted accordingly. A message by Lie to Johan Nygaardsvold contained the following phrases:

The question thus raised presents itself to the Minister of Foreign Affairs as the most serious one confronting the Government since its arrival in London. [...] With all the means at our disposal we shall have to counteract the Russian efforts to acquire ports in Northern Norway. We must not even allow a discussion to commence about the establishment of free

ports and must refuse to participate in any discussions about a linking up of our railways with those of the Soviet Union.²⁰⁷

The first reaction of Arne Ording was no less vehement:

Sinister perspectives. One cannot avoid the image of a new war and Norway either as a theatre of war or betrayed by a new Munich. In any case this question will cast a shadow on us in the future.²⁰⁸

Subsequent talks between Crown Prince Olav and the president, however, made it fairly clear that the Soviet government had presented no demands for ports in Northern Norway. Lie sent some comforting messages to London,²⁰⁹ and Ording noted in his diary that the whole matter was "hypothetical" and the president's own idea.²¹⁰

The question of offering free ports in Northern Norway to the Soviet Union never again became a diplomatic issue between Norway and her allies. But the fear of Russian expansionism towards ice-free ports in Northern Scandinavia did not originate in March 1943. Thus, the traditional "russophobia" remained one of the factors determining Norway's policy towards the Soviet Union.

Norway, the Soviet Union, and regional arrangements in Europe

Norway's direct intercourse with the Soviet Union was, even in the midst of war against Germany, only of limited scope and depth. Some additional light may be thrown on the Norwegian attitude to the Soviet Union, by examining how considerations of assumed Soviet policy preferences were factors contributing to the formation of Norwegian policy in matters outside the purview of purely Norwegian-Soviet relations. This "indirect" approach may be helpful in giving an idea of what the Norwegian government regarded as "assumed Soviet policy preferences", and also of its way of adjusting to expectations of Soviet approval or disapproval of a given policy.

A major foreign policy aim of the Polish government-in-exile of general Wladyslaw Sikorski was the creation of a system of federations or confederations in Central Europe for the post-war period. A Czechoslovak-Polish confederation was to form the nucleus of the system, which, however, could be expanded to include countries from the Scandinavian peninsula to the Balkans.²¹¹ The Norwegian government chose from the outset to take an outspokenly negative stance towards the Polish projects. Norway was not intended to play an important role in general Sikorski's planned Central European system. The Norwegian government was, on the other hand, inclined to take only a limited interest in continental European affairs. Why then did the Norwegians not content themselves with expressing their disinterest in general Sikorski's projects, but felt the need to campaign actively against them?²¹²

The Norwegian government felt that the evolution of relations between the great powers would in the short as well as in the longer run be the factor determining Norway's security. Any future conflict between the great powers might be expected to leave Norway only a small chance of not being dragged in. The Norwegian government consequently tended to oppose planned arrange-

ments which one of the great powers could be expected to view with suspicion. In the case in point, the Norwegians had good reasons to believe that Sikorski's projects were in fact not only directed against Germany, as was officially proclaimed,²¹³ but were equally aimed at meeting a possible future Soviet threat. Lie and his government were of the opinion that the Soviet Union would oppose all projects of forming independent small-state unions or confederations in east-central Europe. This kind of planning would consequently expose the inter-allied cooperation to serious strains, and could give rise to tension after the war as well.²¹⁴ The Norwegians were also aware of the negative Soviet attitude to the planned Polish-Czechoslovak confederation.²¹⁵ The available evidence seems to suggest that expectations of Soviet opposition to the projects, which in turn might give rise to tension and conflicts between the great powers, were the single most important cause of the Norwegian government's negative attitude to the Polish plans for east-central Europe.

In February 1942 general Sikorski presented Trygve Lie and Johan Nygaardsvold with the idea of issuing a declaration on behalf of the governments-in-exile of the eight occupied countries in Europe. The declaration, according to Sikorski's explanation, was to aim at creating a common policy towards Germany after the war, in order to exclude any possibility of renewed German aggression. The Norwegians, however, were not at all enthusiastic about the idea.²¹⁶ Some days later Dr Józef Retinger, Sikorski's private secretary, returned to the matter during a conversation with Trygve Lie. To Lie the whole thing still appeared rather nebulous. He pointed out to Dr Retinger that the Norwegian government was not likely to participate in any project "that might incite Russian suspicions".²¹⁷ As it turned out, this was also the view of the British and the American governments, which soon induced general Sikorski to shelve the project.

In a letter to Rolf Andvord in June 1942, Trygve Lie ascribed to himself a major role in the efforts to stop what he described as Sikorski's plan of creating "something like a bloc of the governments of the eight occupied countries, a bloc which in my opinion could only be directed against the Soviet Union".²¹⁸ Lie was not alone in his interpretation of Sikorski's planned declaration. The American ambassador to the governments-in-exile, Anthony Drexel Biddle, held opinions similar to Lie's. When the Poles asked him what he thought of the planned declaration, he replied

that I personally believed that before launching any such move at this time, it should be put to the "acid test": would it in any way prove offensive to the Russians? - could it be interpreted by the Russians as a move to form a bloc against them?²¹⁹

Such was the view of Trygve Lie as well. He told the British that he opposed the Polish plans for two reasons. Firstly, the Norwegians were in favour of close cooperation with Great Britain and the USA, whereas the Polish project was inspired by the ideology of small-state cooperation. Secondly, Norwegian support of Sikorski's idea might damage Norwegian-Soviet relations, "which were at present quite good".²²⁰ The proposed declaration would, according to Lie, serve no other purpose than to "incite Russian suspicions". Lie consequently planned to tell the Soviets that the Norwegian government had been invited to

join a declaration by the governments-in-exile, but that they were inclined to refrain from doing so.²²¹

Some days later Lie accordingly asked Alexandr Bogomolov "if he was aware of the Polish plans of a joint declaration by the eight occupied small countries in Europe". Bogomolov was indeed aware of them, and he did not disagree with Lie's inference that the Soviet government would not wish the plan to be realized.²²² The Soviet attitude was signalled more bluntly to the Polish government. Bogomolov explained to Kajetan Morawski, the Polish deputy foreign minister, that "Russia had a loathing for all pacts which aimed at shaping the future, and in particular for agreements to which she was not a party". There could be no arrangements in Europe, and in particular not in Eastern Europe, which excluded the Soviet Union.²²³

The Soviets were content with the attitude of the Norwegian government. In April 1943, Alexandr Bogomolov told the Norwegian minister of finance, Paul Hartmann, that the Soviet government was fully aware of Norway's desire to remain on good terms with the Soviet Union. They had noted with satisfaction that the Norwegian government, together with the Dutch and the Belgians, had kept aloof from the Polish anti-Soviet machinations.²²⁴

Norway, the Soviet Union and future Nordic cooperation

The discussion about federative solutions on the European continent was, at least in the minds of the Norwegian politicians in London, closely linked to the question of post-war Nordic cooperation. The Norwegian government's violent reaction, when articles in the Swedish and British press in the spring of 1942 raised the notion of developing Nordic cooperation as an alternative or supplement to the Atlantic policy, may at the first glance seem to be greatly exaggerated in view of the limited significance and authority of the Swedish proponents of the "Nordic" orientation. Lie and his government were, however, of the opinion that a "Nordic bloc" in the minds of its proponents was imagined as constituting the northernmost link of the Central-European system. Thus the discussion about cooperation in Scandinavia, as well as the ideas of continental confederations, gained in importance by force of their mutual interdependence.

The idea of a "Nordic bloc" linked to a system of federations or confederations on the European continent was seen by the Norwegian government as contrary to Norway's interests. The familiar argument was that Norway had more in common with the countries bordering on the Atlantic, above all with Great Britain and the USA, than with most of the continental European countries. More important, however, were considerations of possible repercussions in the realm of relations with the Soviet Union. After the war, Arne Ording admitted that the government had treated the discussions about Nordic cooperation in the spring of 1942 "a little too seriously". Nonetheless, according to Ording, the matter had gained in importance by its connection with the "Polish propaganda" for small-state federations in Europe. "The Russians were very disturbed by this propaganda, and consequently they did not like the idea of a Nordic federation either."²²⁵

Towards the Liberation of Norway

In the preceding paragraphs we have discussed the evolution of Norwegian-Soviet relations from the German invasion on 9th April 1940 until the signing of the agreement on civil affairs etc. between Norway and the three great powers on 16th May 1944. An endeavour has also been made to discuss the Soviet Union as a determining factor in Norwegian foreign policy during the period. Norwegian-Soviet relations during the period from the outbreak of war until the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 was characterized primarily by the two countries' different relationship with Germany, which led to an almost complete absence of Norwegian-Soviet cooperation. The uncertainty as to the future role of the Soviet Union in the war and in the post-war world made it impossible for the Norwegian government to ascribe to the Soviet Union any clearly defined role in its long-range foreign policy planning.

After 22nd June 1941 the two governments had to arrive at some sort of *modus vivendi* with a view to the war effort against the common enemy. This being accomplished, the next task was to further develop the relations, searching for possible fields of cooperation and means of developing a minimum of mutual confidence. As it turned out, the presence of the Soviet Union in the allied camp also became a limiting factor for the foreign policy options open to the Norwegian government.

As the ultimate victory in the war approached, the attention of the Norwegian government in London was increasingly directed towards making arrangements for the liberation or reconquest of Norway. Simultaneously, problems related to the post-war political organization of Europe and the world grew in importance and urgency. The Atlantic policy of Trygve Lie was to no small degree meant to signal Norway's uncompromising will to reject the old ideas of neutrality and participate fully in the war-time alliance. In the last years of the war Norwegian foreign policy doctrines had to be adjusted to meet the demands of the post-war period as well. As a consequence, the Atlantic policy was forced to recede into the background during 1943 and 1944, though the process was a gradual and ambiguous one.

The signing of the agreement on jurisdiction etc. on 16th May 1944 marked a turning point in the bilateral Norwegian-Soviet relations: for the first time it was openly admitted that Soviet forces would possibly participate in the liberation of Norway. More than anything else, the situation created by this fact was to determine the Norwegian policy towards the Soviet Union during the following months.

Military cooperation continued

The agreement of 16th May 1944 about jurisdiction and civil administration in Norwegian areas liberated by an allied expeditionary force, was designed for a situation whereby allied troops, under Soviet, British, or American command, advanced on Norwegian territory fighting retiring German detachments. In

areas affected by military operations, it was stipulated that during a first phase

the Commander in Chief of the Expeditionary Force on land must, to the full extent necessitated by the military situation, exercise supreme responsibility and authority.

The relations between the allied commander and the local Norwegian military and civil authorities during the first, or military, phase was to be arranged according to the agreement's paragraph 3:

(a) During the first phase the Commander-in-Chief will make the fullest possible use of the advice and assistance which will be rendered to him by Norwegian liaison officers attached to his staff for civil affairs and included in the personnel of a Norwegian military mission to be appointed by the Norwegian Government. He will also make the fullest possible use of loyal Norwegian local authorities.

(b) The Norwegian liaison officers referred to in sub-paragraph (a) above will, so far as possible, be employed as intermediaries between the Allied military authorities and the Norwegian local authorities.

The talks preceding the signing of the agreement had not, however, led to the elaboration of procedures for the practical implementation of the agreement's various stipulations. In the case of Great Britain and the USA, this task raised no serious difficulties. The implementation of the Norwegian-Soviet agreement proved to be a more tedious and lengthy affair. In the following I shall restrict the discussion on the subject to questions related to the appointment and despatch of a Military Mission to work with the Russians, and to the efforts to arrange for Norwegian troops to participate in an eventual Soviet entry into Norway.

During a luncheon following the signing of the agreement on 16th May, Lie promised to send ambassador Lebedev a memorandum presenting the views of the Norwegian government on the implementation of the agreement's various stipulations.²²⁶ The Norwegians were, for the time being, apparently not overly eager to make the agreement operational, certainly they were in no hurry to send the promised memorandum to ambassador Lebedev. This might be due to developments on the Finnish-Soviet frontier where, notwithstanding the breakdown of the Finnish-Soviet negotiations, no major operations were seen until the Red Army started its decisive offensive against the Finns on 9th June 1944. A possible Soviet offensive against the Germans in Norway thus being postponed to the indefinite future, Lie and advisors saw no reason to push on with the implementation of the agreement, although Lie personally may have favored a speedy despatch of a Norwegian Military Mission to the Soviet Union.²²⁷

Once more the minister of justice, Terje Wold, proved to be the member of cabinet most conscious of the possible value of Norwegian participation in a Soviet move into Norway. After the signing of the agreement on civil affairs, Wold set out to argue in favour of the immediate appointment of the Military Mission to be sent to the Murmansk front in the course of the summer. The

Norwegian government should, according to Wold, also declare itself ready to send parts of the Norwegian forces in Scotland to the Soviet Union. The minister of justice stressed the "political significance" of the matter, no doubt holding the view that the chances of safeguarding Norwegian territorial integrity, and Norwegian interests in general, would be enhanced if Norwegian troops were present if and when the Soviets crossed the border.²²⁸

The launching of the Soviet offensive on the Karelian Isthmus on 9th June 1944 prompted Lie to raise the question of a military mission and despatchment of Norwegian troops to the Soviet Union in a cabinet meeting on 13th June.²²⁹ The cabinet decided to offer the Soviet government negotiations about the detailed implementation of the agreement, in accordance with the stipulations of the text. The talks were to be conducted either in London or in Moscow.²³⁰ Two days later ambassador Lebedev was handed an *Aide-Mémoire* whereby the Norwegian government expressed itself prepared "to open discussions with the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in order to come to a practical arrangement" regarding the sending of the Military mission and Norwegian liaison officers to the Soviet Union.²³¹ Lie returned to the matter on several occasions during the summer of 1944, urging the Soviets to reply to the Norwegian proposal. The Norwegians had, however, to wait until the Russians actually crossed the Norwegian-Soviet border in October 1944 before the Soviet government deemed it necessary to give an official reply to the Norwegian *Aide-Mémoire*.

The skeptical attitude in the Norwegian military establishment towards military cooperation with the Soviet Union prevailed even after the signing of the May agreement. An exchange of opinions between the Defence High Command and the Army Command throws an interesting light on the different views on the matter within the highest military circles. The commander-in-chief of the Norwegian armed forces, general Wilhelm Hansteen, held the view that the administrative arrangements would in principle be identical whether the liberation of Norway was launched from the West or from the East. In case of a Russian offensive against the Germans in Eastern Finnmark, "some [Norwegian] field contingents" should be sent to the Kirkenes area from Great Britain, together with civil administrative organs and a relief expedition to take care of the civilian population. The field contingents were initially to limit their task to functions of guarding and policing the liberated areas. Differences in training, equipment, and supply would complicate attempts at a more intimate cooperation with the Soviet forces. General Hansteen continued:

If both partners agree, it might thus prove unnecessary to engage in the difficult task of defining more detailed arrangements as to matters of command etc. over Norwegian and Russian forces similar to the stipulations regulating the relations between our field troops and an Allied expeditionary force of which they are part.²³²

The Army Command (HOK) objected to the views of general Hansteen, arguing that the cooperation with Soviet, British, and American troops in Norway must be subject to equal terms. HOK interpreted the May agreement to the effect that Norwegian field troops, in an area of Norway under liberation by Soviet

troops, would be under the command of the local Soviet commander-in-chief, similar to the arrangement in case of an invasion from the west. HOK obviously felt that general Hansteen's letter showed only lukewarm support for active participation by Norwegian troops if the Red Army moved into Norway. The maintenance of good relations with the Soviet ally, according to HOK, demanded "our wholehearted participation in the task of liberation".²³³ General Hansteen felt forced to deny that he intended "to show restraint in an eventual cooperation with the Russians in Eastern Finnmark".²³⁴ There are, however, reasons to believe that the Army Command was right in its suspicions. There are, for instance, few indications of any operational planning to prepare for Norwegian cooperation with the Russians in Eastern Finnmark.

On 5th September 1944, at 7:00A.M., the fighting along the Finnish-Soviet front came to a halt, and on 19th September the two countries signed an armistice agreement. The Petsamo (Pechenga) area was ceded to the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union and Norway became neighboring states, with a common border stretching some two hundred kilometers to the west and south from the outlet of the river Grense Jacobselv located to the East of Kirkenes. On 7th October the Red Army launched its offensive westward from the river Litsa, forcing the German 20th army to retreat to Norwegian territory. On 18th October the first Soviet detachments crossed the border from the eastern bank of Grense Jacobselv, continuing their offensive towards Kirkenes, which was seized against heavy German resistance on 25th October. The Soviet forces, about a division in size, established themselves in the Kirkenes area, revealing no inclinations to proceed further westward.

Similar to the situation in June, when the launching of the Soviet offensive on the Karelian Isthmus had prompted the Norwegians to deliver their *Aide-Mémoire* to ambassador Lebedev, the Soviet-Finnish armistice brought about new efforts on part of the Norwegian government to come to terms with the Russians about the practical implementation of the May agreement. Lie raised the question with Lebedev once more on 6th September, referring to the June memorandum, adding that the Norwegian government's offer to send troops to the Soviet Union was still valid. The decision in the matter was now left to the Soviet government.²³⁵ The Defence Council had already decided that the Military Mission to the Soviet Union should be appointed as soon as possible.²³⁶ During September, the Norwegians were growing increasingly anxious to make arrangements with the Soviets in case of a Soviet entry into Norway. The military attaché in Stockholm, lieutenant-colonel Ole Berg, proposed to start negotiations with British and Soviet authorities about sending detachments of the "police troops" in Sweden to Finland. The troops were to march against Finnmark "together with Russian troops".²³⁷ Terje Wold presented a similar proposal.²³⁸ Ambassador Rolf Andvord also stressed the significance of the presence of even token Norwegian forces alongside with the Russians.²³⁹ The government, however, felt unable to act as long as the Soviets did not reply to Lie's numerous inquiries since June. At the same time the Norwegians were held completely in the dark about Soviet intentions in the North.²⁴⁰

Even the Defence High Command (FOK) now felt the need to direct its attention to questions related to a possible Soviet entry into Norway. Although FOK in its own opinion had been conscious of the importance of establishing military contacts with the Soviet Union, they had proceeded from the assump-

tion that Norway was defined as belonging to the operational zone of the western powers.²⁴¹ The Finnish-Soviet armistice made it urgently necessary to establish Norwegian-Soviet contacts in order to safeguard Norwegian interests. The Military Mission had to be appointed, though FOK omitted any mentioning of an eventual despatch of Norwegian troops to the Soviet Union.²⁴²

The Norwegians made the final attempt to uncover the Soviet attitude to cooperation with the Norwegian government in the North on 15th October 1944. Ambassador Andvord was then instructed to deliver in the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs a memorandum on the following lines:

1. Do the Russians desire Norwegian troops despatched to the Soviet Union via Finland, troops which will be finally organized in the Soviet Union in order to participate in operations against the Germans, when these are pushed towards Northern Norway, cf. the talks in March.

2. Do the Russians desire, and will they be instrumental in organizing, the transport of Norwegian police troops from Sweden to Finland, in order to participate in the struggle of the Finns to oust the Germans from Finland?

3. Do the Russians desire our initiative towards the British and the Americans to bring Norwegian troops by air and sea to Russian-occupied parts of Northern Finland or to Northern Russia?

4. Do the Russians desire the despatch of a Norwegian military mission to Russia, or should it be formed in [lacking word; London?]

5. Are negotiations being conducted between the Russians, British, and Americans on one or more of these questions?²⁴³

After some initial hesitation and contradictory hints ambassador Andvord was summoned to Molotov on 18th October. According to Andvord, the commissar of foreign affairs made the following declaration:

With great pleasure the Soviet Government accept all four paragraphs of the Norwegian note [i.e. §§ 1-4]. Nothing could be better than the Norwegian government's proposal of common action against the Germans. We will give you all kind of help and political support, and all you desire and need. It is possible that we may, in the immediate future, pursue the Germans into Norway. In that case it will be of importance, with regard to both the world opinion and the Norwegian people, that Norwegians participate and hoist the Norwegian flag over free Norwegian soil.

Molotov was in favour of the immediate despatch of Norwegian troops to the Soviet Union. The details of the arrangements were to be clarified through the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs and the Soviet High Command.²⁴⁴

The Norwegian government did not then know that the first Soviet troops had crossed the border that very morning. They were only informed about the presence of Soviet troops on Norwegian territory on 25th October, i.e. the day of the Soviet entry into Kirkenes. The cabinet met the next day, and decided to send the Soviet government the following message:

On the occasion of the commencement of Norway's liberation, the Norwegian Government sends it warmest greetings to the Government and people of the Soviet Union. For more than four years the Norwegian people has been oppressed and plundered by the German aggressors. They

have followed with enthusiasm the heroic and victorious battles of the Soviet armies, led by Marshal Stalin. During the war the Norwegian Government has received many proofs of the Soviet Government's friendship and sympathy for Norway. The people of the most northerly part of Norway will greet the armies of our Soviet Allies as liberators. Norwegian armed forces will take part in the struggle and both the Norwegian population and the civil authorities appointed by the Norwegian Government will do their utmost in the common struggle against the German oppressors. The liberation of the northernmost parts of Norway will be greeted with joy and enthusiasm by the whole of the Norwegian people, and will further reinforce the friendship between our two countries.²⁴⁶

The Norwegians at once set out to arrange for the practical implementation of their own proposals and Molotov's declaration. Trygve Lie departed for Stockholm, in order to get the Swedish government's consent to the transfer of police troops to active service in the North. The decision to go to Stockholm was no doubt motivated primarily by the latest development in Norwegian-Soviet relations. Two days earlier Lie had objected to the idea of visiting Sweden. The Soviets, according to Lie, were not in favour of a possible Norwegian-Swedish rapprochement.²⁴⁶ Lie left London on 23rd October, and was weather-bound on a Scottish airfield when the message arrived of the Soviet entry into Norway and the seizure of Kirkenes.²⁴⁷

The military authorities, for their part, started planning for the despatchment of Norwegian troops from Scotland to Northern Norway. SHAEF and SCOTCO, under whose command were placed the Norwegian troops in Great Britain, agreed to send one of the two Norwegian "Mountain Companies", though without the greater part of their transportation equipment. The members of the Norwegian Military Mission in Russia (NMMR) were appointed, and the head of the mission, colonel Arne D. Dahl, was ordered to keep his men ready to depart on short notice.²⁴⁸ The Norwegian troops, who were given the code-name "Force 138", left Scapa Flow on 1st November 1944, followed by NMMR some days later. "Operation Crofter" was set in motion. The Norwegians arrived in Murmansk on 6th and 7th November, and continued by land and sea to the Kirkenes area on the Norwegian side of the border. The Military mission established itself at Bjørnevåtn, a mining centre to the South of Kirkenes, while the mountain company was ordered to patrol the vast territories between the Soviet forces and the Germans further to the West. The Norwegian troops were under Soviet operational command. During January and February 1945 the soldiers from Scotland were reinforced by some companies of police troops from Sweden.

Trygve Lie and the minister of defence, Oscar Torp, argued in favour of making the Norwegian presence in Eastern Finnmark as strong as possible. Other members of the cabinet, foremost among them premier Johan Nygaardsvold, were more concerned with a possible combined action further to the South in order to cut off the German retreat from Norway's two northernmost counties, Finnmark and Troms.²⁴⁹ The German withdrawal from Finnmark was accompanied by a ruthless policy of scorched earth, and Nygaardsvold's motives were almost purely humanitarian in their origin.

Trygve Lie defended the concentration of the Norwegian military effort in Eastern Finnmark by pointing to the danger of the Soviets using a feeble Norwegian military presence in the area as a pretext for not withdrawing their troops from Norwegian territory.²⁵⁰ Lie attached importance to this point, and during a conversation with general Hansteen and Oscar Torp in the middle of December he even demanded an increase in the number of Norwegian troops to be sent to Eastern Finnmark. According to Lie, the Soviet troops expected to be replaced by Norwegians, and it would hardly be understood in Moscow if the Norwegian government made no efforts to transport more troops from Great Britain and Sweden to the area.²⁵¹ Lie expressed his opinion in a letter to general Hansteen:

I point to [...] the impossibility of resuming complete Norwegian sovereignty in Eastern Finnmark, with Norwegian administration and military command etc., unless we send to this part of the country at least the military forces which it was originally decided to send there. It is my personal belief that the Russians, when they feel safe by an adequate military presence in the area, will [...] renounce the power of command which they now possess in accordance with the agreement on Civil Affairs from May 16, 1944.²⁵²

Trygve Lie, in other words, envisaged sending Norwegian troops to Eastern Finnmark in a number which would make the Soviet presence, in terms of military considerations at least, superfluous. Thereafter the Norwegian government would demand the restoration of the complete authority of Norwegian civil and military organs.²⁵³

Thus it may be stated that at least the minister of foreign affairs was not completely reassured about the Soviets' further intentions with their military presence in Eastern Finnmark. There is, on the other hand, scarcely any evidence pointing to the existence in Norwegian government circles of a fear that the Soviet Army might resume its drive westward in Finnmark with the aim of annexing additional Norwegian territory. Lie's conversations with Molotov and deputy commissar of foreign affairs Dekanozov, during his stay in Moscow in November 1944, were quite reassuring on this point. Molotov on several occasions told Lie that the Soviet troops had done their part of the job, now it was left to the Norwegians to finish the task.²⁵⁴ Lie apparently drew two set of conclusions from Molotov's and Dekanozov's remarks. Firstly, he felt convinced that the Soviet forces were not going to proceed forcefully in Northern Norway,²⁵⁵ i.e. they would remain within the area they had occupied by the beginning of November 1944. Lie had previously felt frustrated at the lack of information about Soviet intentions in Northern Norway. In the beginning of December, however, he argued in favour of the view that there was no more need

to raise once more the question of how far the Soviets intend to penetrate into Norwegian territory in the course of liberating Norway, or over which areas they eventually want to exercise operational control.²⁵⁶

Secondly, Lie held the opinion that it was primarily up to the Norwegians themselves whether the Soviets were going to stay where they were, or resume the offensive. His opinion on this point may have been reinforced by repeated

Soviet calls for a more serious Norwegian military commitment.²⁵⁷ The Soviets left Norwegian and British civil and military authorities in no doubt as to their low opinion of the size of the Norwegian military contribution.²⁵⁸

After their arrival in Murmansk, the Norwegian forces and the Military Mission had no reason to complain about lack of Russian hospitality. The cooperation between the Norwegian and Soviet forces and their commanders also later evolved to the satisfaction of colonel Dahl.²⁵⁹ The Soviets even contributed to supplying the poorly equipped Norwegian forces with food and equipment.

The local Norwegian military authorities' evaluation of Soviet intentions in the area was more ambiguous. The attitude of their Soviet counterparts seemed to indicate a friendly and benevolent relationship.²⁶⁰ Colonel Dahl, despite his satisfaction with the state of the Norwegian-Soviet cooperation, feared nonetheless that the Soviets had sinister intentions:

There is a great danger that they [i.e. the Soviets] will never depart, and that they regard Sør-Varanger to the head of the Varanger-fjord - river Tana as their sphere of interest and plan to move the border to the line mentioned above.²⁶¹

As late as April 1945 Dahl sent an alarming report, warning of an imminent Soviet offensive towards the county of Troms. It seems, however, that the government did not attach too much importance to Dahl's warnings, which were partly based on rather dubious evidence.

The Soviets, not surprisingly, were bent on easing the Norwegian anxiety about what might happen to Finnmark. The signal was clearly received in London when, in March 1945, the head of the Nordic department in the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, proposed to appoint a Soviet-Norwegian commission to survey "the old border" between the two countries.²⁶²

At this point it seems fair to conclude that Lie, quite soon after the Soviet entry into Norway, reached the opinion that the Soviets did not entertain far-reaching expansionist intentions in Norway. He did, however, fear that the Red Army might establish itself in Eastern Finnmark for an unspecified period.

Abandoning the Atlantic policy?

A speech by the South African Field Marshall Jan Christiaan Smuts in November 1943 had revived a discussion about certain aspects of Norwegian foreign policy. The arguments used throw revealing light on the implications of Lie's Atlantic policy. Smuts argued in favour of organizing close cooperation between Great Britain and the other West European countries, in order to counterbalance the power of the Soviet Union and the United States by shaping a "trinity" of forces.²⁶³ An editorial in *Norsk Tidend* objected to this part of Smuts' speech. Smuts, the paper held, was obviously influenced by the ideology of "balance of power and spheres of interest". *Norsk Tidend* had to admit, however, that Smut's scheme bore some resemblance to the Norwegian Atlantic policy. But it was argued that the resemblance was a superficial one,

because the Norwegian schemes had always envisaged American participation, and the planned defence system in the North Atlantic was, according to *Norsk Tidend*, to be organized "in intimate cooperation with the Soviet Union".²⁶⁴

The article in the official Norwegian newspaper was precipitated by a conversation on the matter between Lie and Collier. The Norwegian minister of foreign affairs deplored the public presentation of the idea to group the smaller West European states around Great Britain. According to Lie, such plans were bound to incite Soviet suspicions.

Lie went on to say that there were now more signs [...] that the Russians would be likely to take a suspicious and unhealthy interest in Norwegian foreign policy, if it showed signs of linking up with that of this country and that of America. [...]

He did not himself actually fear Russian territorial designs on any part of Norway; but he did fear that the Soviet Government might try, for reasons of their own, to prevent the Norwegian Government from conducting their foreign affairs in the way in which he would like to see them conducted, and that was the main reason why he regretted the publication of Smuts' speech.²⁶⁵

Lie's statement gave rise to a discussion in the Foreign Office. One officer held the view that the statement was contradictory to Lie's own cherished idea: the Atlantic Ocean policy, which would involve Norway in close collaboration with Great Britain and the United States: "If Mr. Lie is afraid of Norway taking this course, then why does he proclaim [...] in favour of it?" It was held that the rising power of the Soviet Union obviously had forced Lie to change his mind. The only commentator who felt that Lie's statement did not signify a change of his views was G.M. Gathorne-Hardy. He maintained that from the very introduction of the idea the Soviet Union had been ascribed a role in the North Atlantic cooperation. In his opinion the Norwegians were particularly opposed to the idea of creating a third block to counterbalance the power of USA and the Soviet Union.

In the Foreign Office, Lie's rejection of Smuts' ideas was seen as one more sign of a growing Norwegian fear lest the Russians had their own designs for Northern Norway. This anxiety might dispose the Norwegian government towards downgrading its advocacy of the Atlantic policy, which would in fact imply some sort of alliance between Norway and Great Britain and the USA.²⁶⁶

At approximately the same time, Lie, in a conversation with Collier, left the impression that the idea of an Atlantic security system was not at all abandoned. After the signing of the Soviet-Czechoslovak treaty of friendship, mutual assistance and postwar cooperation on 12th December 1943, Lie feared that the Soviet government might demand a similar agreement with Norway. He continued his argument:

He would not like such a request to come from the Russians before agreement had been reached with the British and the Americans on the question of Atlantic security, and he thought we might not like it either.²⁶⁷

The British, however, were bent on avoiding any discussion on Lie's Atlantic

projects. The Norwegian minister of foreign affairs was accordingly to be told to shelve the idea of Atlantic defence for the moment.²⁶⁸

At this point, the Atlantic policy was no longer an expression of the official foreign policy doctrine of the Norwegian government. The Norwegians continued, however, to argue in favour of regional arrangements within the framework of the future world-wide security organization. As late as April 1944, *Norsk Tidend*, obviously expressing the government's official view, stuck to Norway's wish to participate in a defence system together with the Atlantic powers, although "with the consent of the Soviet Union". *Norsk Tidend* knew perfectly well that the idea of regional arrangements was not unequivocally endorsed:

In some quarters there has been fear that a system of regional cooperation thus envisaged might give rise to spheres of influence and alliances. But this will depend completely on the cooperation between the great powers. If this succeeds, the great powers will have no need for spheres of influence, and regional security agreements will not have the character of alliances, but will serve as a supplement to the obligations within the framework of the international organization.²⁶⁹

Until the end of the war and the conference in San Francisco in the spring of 1945, official proclamations of Norwegian foreign policy views were increasingly adamant in their support of the ideas underlying the new world organization. The emphasis on regional agreements was correspondingly downgraded. Towards the end of the war it was even admitted that regional agreements might constitute an element of tension between the great powers. In any case, they had to be subordinated to the world organization. Nonetheless, the Norwegians continued to assert the small states' interest in the existence of regional systems within the framework of the incipient "United Nations Organization".²⁷⁰ The main currents of Norwegian foreign policy during the period from Dumbarton Oaks to the Conference in San Francisco were marked, however, by the Norwegian government's willingness to support every attempt to solidify and further develop the cooperation between the great powers.²⁷¹

Trygve Lie himself did not altogether abandon his former ideas. In October 1944 he told ambassador Lebedev that the Norwegian government had deliberately chosen to avoid propagating the idea of Atlantic cooperation after the Soviet response on *The principal features of Norway's foreign policy*. But the Norwegian attitude "as to the necessity and advantage of a regional agreement between the Atlantic countries, now called Western Europe, has surely not changed".²⁷² The Norwegian doctrine was indeed an ambiguous one.

In November 1944, during Lie's visit to Moscow, the Soviets introduced into the Norwegian-Soviet relations the question of altering the Paris-agreement of 1921 on Spitzbergen, which had placed the archipelago under Norwegian jurisdiction and sovereignty since 1925. Along with questions related to the organization of a Norwegian armed presence in Northern Norway, the Spitzbergen affair loomed large during the last period of Norwegian-Soviet war-time collaboration. Molotov introduced the matter on the night of 12th November 1944, suggesting a revision of the Paris treaty with a view to a possible remilitarization of the archipelago. According to the Soviet proposition, the

main Spitzbergen archipelago was in the future to be administered as a Soviet-Norwegian *condominium*, while Norway was to cede Bear Island to the Soviet Union.²⁷³

During the following months the Norwegian government was apparently inclined to go rather far in order to reach an agreement that satisfied the Soviets. Which were the considerations deciding the Norwegian response in the Spitzbergen affair?

The available evidence, scrutinized by Olav Riste in volume two of "*London-regjeringa*", seems to give no unambiguous answer to the question. The Norwegian policy of compliance may be interpreted as an expression of the Norwegian government's intentions to make the affair a test-case of its will of non-declaratory "bridge-building", by accepting the Soviet demands as legitimate in view of Soviet economic and security interests. In my opinion, the single most dominant factor in the deliberations of the government is likely to have been the presence of Soviet troops on Norwegian soil. The uncertainty as to the Soviet intentions in occupying an area in Eastern Finnmark made it imperative not to give the Russians any pretext to prolong the presence or even expand the area occupied by their troops. Norwegian obstinacy in face of Soviet demands might trigger off some sort of unpleasant Soviet action in the North. There is no lack of evidence, as has been shown above, of Lie's preoccupation with the prospects of a postponement of the Red Army's departure from Norwegian territory. Continuing this line of argument, it seems likely that the government was of the opinion that still worse Soviet demands might be avoided by a show of compliance on its part.

The Spitzbergen affair did not result in a visible change in the policy of the Norwegian government towards the great powers. The affair, on the other hand, undoubtedly left the Norwegians conscious of the possibility of unexpected and unpleasant exigencies arising out of the privilege of bordering on the Soviet Union. The affair may have reinforced the Norwegian anxiety as to Soviet long-range intentions. In other words: the Spitzbergen experience demonstrated the necessity of a policy of "bridge-building" in Norway's relations with the Soviet Union and between the Soviet Union and the western powers, while at the same time exposing the limitations of the doctrine.

We will end the treatment of the Norwegian-Soviet relations during the last period of the war by citing some messages from Rolf Andvord, the indefatigable ambassador to Moscow. Andvord had distinguished himself by his optimistic reports and forecasts of the future Soviet foreign policy, and by his similarly sanguine estimates of the evolution of the relations between the great powers after the war. Nonetheless, during the last months of the war Andvord became aware that there were rising tensions between the great allies. In February 1945 he still held optimistic, although somewhat qualified, views, stating that the Soviet Union would presumably "cooperate loyally with the other cultured nations to maintain peace".²⁷⁴

After the Yalta conference, however, the alliance was confronted with mounting difficulties. "Man never had a more successful conference than that in Yalta", William Averell Harriman told Andvord, "but since then nothing has

been omitted here in Moscow that could spoil the results of it."²⁷⁵ Andvord concluded:

It is still my opinion, that when the second world war is over, the development in this country [i.e. the Soviet Union] will take a turn which will create better and more healthy conditions for cooperation with the western powers [...]. Let us fervently hope that this will be the case. We ought not to forget, that after the defeat of Germany, the bonds linking the Soviet Union to the western powers will disappear. Simultaneously the treatment of Germany and her satellites will create a number of difficult and delicate problems. Certainly, it will not be an easy task to conduct the foreign policy of the great powers during the first years after the war.²⁷⁶

Conclusion

The German attack on Norway on 9th April 1940, which brought Norway into the war on the allied side, came at a moment of low ebb in Norwegian-Soviet relations. It seems that never since the revolutionary upheavals in Russia in 1917 had the Soviet Union enjoyed less sympathy and support in Norwegian opinion and among Norwegian politicians. The Soviet-German cooperation in Poland, and the Soviet attack on Finland in the autumn of 1939, placed the Soviet Union amongst the ranks of aggressor states on line with Hitler's Germany. Reports of purges, famines and show-trials during the preceding year had left the Soviet system with little of its original attractiveness. Now, laden with the burden of critical attitudes, the Norwegian government set out to formulate a policy towards the Soviet Union, at the same time attempting to include Russia in its long-term foreign policy planning.

We have noted signs of a profound anxiety during the campaign in Norway in the spring of 1940, among politicians and military leaders alike, of possible Soviet intentions to move into and occupy parts of Northern Norway. The traditional "russophobia" reasserted itself, now prompted by the Soviet policy towards Poland and Finland. The "russophobia", or fear of Soviet intentions to forward demands on Norwegian territory, remained as an under-current in the Norwegian government's policy towards the Soviet Union for the rest of the war. On several occasions Norwegian military authorities demonstrated their skeptical attitude towards cooperation with the Russians. The Norwegian policy leading to the signing of the May agreement in 1944, and the subsequent despatchment of Norwegian troops to Northern Norway, must be understood primarily as precautionary measures to obstruct any sinister Soviet intentions. In view of this, there is no need to search far for an explanation of the vehement Norwegian reaction to Roosevelt's free port scheme and Molotov's Spitzbergen proposals. Nevertheless, as the war progressed, the Norwegian "russophobia" lost some of its former strength, though it tended to reappear when the Norwegians were forced to evaluate certain Soviet initiatives; or what was thought to be Soviet initiatives.

After 22nd June 1941, when Norway and the Soviet Union became allies in the war against Germany, the idea of "bridge-building" appeared as an element in Norway's policy towards the Soviet Union and the western great powers. In contrast to the "russophobia", the new doctrine could only to a small degree be traced back to a tradition in Norwegian foreign policy. In the inter-bellum period, Norwegian foreign policy had shown signs of isolationism and seclusion rather than of intentions to build bridges. Much of Norway's foreign policy activity had been invested in development of the relations with other small and medium-size countries, primarily the other Scandinavian ones. The new doctrine of "bridge-building" developed during the war was, at least if taken literally, far more ambitious. It defined its main goal as contributing to the continuation of the war-time collaboration between the Soviet Union and the western great powers in the post-war period. The doctrine evolved from the realization of how much Norway's security depended on the existence of a degree of harmony and low tension between East and West.

Thus the Norwegian policy towards the Soviet Union was pulled between the seemingly opposite tendencies of "russophobia" and "bridge-building". But a fear of possible Soviet expansionist intentions might in itself point in the direction of working for a state of low tension between the great powers. The Soviets were likely to set out to realize their eventual ambitions only in times of immediate crisis. And, the other way round, a policy which in fact originated in intentions to forestall presumed Soviet plans might present itself to the world as a piece of practical "bridge-building". The policy resulting in the signing of the May agreement in 1944 is a case in point.

What, then, was the content of the policy of "bridge-building" during the war, on the non-declaratory level? The government itself was intent on transferring the doctrine from the level of declarations to that of operational policy. The Norwegian attitude to the Soviets' eagerness for a Norwegian-Soviet agreement on shipping, however, indicates that the obstacles to "bridge-building" might be numerous and hard to overcome. The "bridge-building" doctrine, aiming primarily at influencing the decisions of the great powers, left means of only limited scope at the disposal of the Norwegian government on the non-declaratory level. Representing a small country, the policy makers in most cases had to limit themselves to expressions of preparedness to help events take a positive course. From this point of view, the enthusiastic and whole-hearted support for the new world organization may be seen as the single most important result of the Norwegian ideology of "bridge-building".

The doctrine of "bridge-building" may as well be viewed as a return to a more passive conduct of Norwegian foreign policy, whereas the Norwegian government had displayed initiative in the alliance by introducing the idea of Atlantic cooperation. Introducing the Atlantic policy, Trygve Lie had pledged Norway to play an active part and take its share in building the post-war political order in Europe. A policy of "bridge-building", by its vague statement of aims and means, left greater leeway for manoeuvre. The Atlantic policy may further be regarded as a formalization of the implicit precondition for Norway's pre-war security policy, namely Norway's dependence on support from the west in times of crisis. In this less benevolent interpretation, the "bridge-building" doctrine may be seen as a return to the policy of neutrality, under the umbrella of Great Britain and the United States' presumed self-interest in protecting Norway from aggression by any other great power.

The foreign policy of the Norwegian government during the war cannot be understood without giving due attention to the principal importance of considerations of war-time alliance policy. The Atlantic policy had, however, much wider implications. In the post-war period the tasks to be solved by Atlantic cooperation were qualitatively different from the aims to be pursued by the doctrine of "bridge-building". The two doctrines did not mutually exclude each other. "Bridge-building" could lay the foundations of peace, Atlantic cooperation should be constructed to safeguard it. Considerations of expediency could, however, make it seem less opportune to propagate the military aspects of Atlantic cooperation while at the same time conducting a policy of "bridge-building". Lie and his government consequently had to draw less public attention to the Atlantic projects, but they did not abandon the considerations of strategy which formed the foundations of the doctrine.

The Atlantic policy was not, during the war, primarily envisaged as a counter to a possible future Soviet threat. There could, on the other hand, be no question of Lie and his advisors leaving this eventuality out of consideration, and the Soviet Union was never intended to participate in the system. This is true even for the period after the entry of the Soviet Union into the war. The Soviet reaction to *The principal features of Norway's foreign policy* in the autumn of 1942, by pointing to possible Soviet interests to assume their part of the responsibility to defend the Atlantic, revealed the necessity of toning down the Atlantic propaganda.

Continuing the discussion initiated on the first page of the introduction, an examination of the Norwegian policy towards the Soviet Union seems to indicate that Riste's description of Norwegian foreign policy during the war is closer to reality than Udgaard's model. The considerations of strategy and security policy at the base of the Atlantic policy were not abandoned. No option was in reality open to the Norwegian government other than to conduct on the official level a policy of "bridge-building", and this necessity forced them to downgrade the public propagation of the Atlantic policy. With an eye to the situation after the war, an exclusively western defence system in the Atlantic could hardly be perceived as not intended to safeguard against a Soviet threat.

From the Norwegian point of view, a formal implementation of the plans for Atlantic cooperation was not indispensable. On the one hand the functional bonds, especially in military matters, could be further developed independent of any declarations or political agreements. On the other hand the Norwegians were convinced that the western powers viewed Norway as belonging to their sphere of interest. Thus they were for their own sake expected to take an interest in the defence of Norwegian independence. If this assumption proved to be in accordance with reality, and the international situations remained in a state of relative harmony and absence of acute tensions, Norway would find herself in an almost ideal situation.

The Atlantic policy, made operational, would have implied the formation of a kind of military alliance system between Norway, Great Britain, the USA, and possibly other "Atlantic" countries, i.e. a western sphere of interest in the north-western part of Europe. Lie's objection against including Central European countries in the system makes it probable that he was thinking in terms of a corresponding Soviet sphere of interest in that part of Europe.²⁷⁷ Lie criticized Sikorski for entertaining thoughts of projects which might prove offensive to the Soviets. The British, as shown above, were aware that the Soviet Union might raise objections to the Norwegian Atlantic ideas as well. It is reasonable to assume that the apparent lack of logic in Lie's reasoning is explained by his different approach to matters of political organizations in Eastern and Western Europe. According to Lie, Norway was clearly within the western sphere of interest, while the Central European countries (Poland among others) were not. If this interpretation of Lie's thinking is correct, his resistance to the establishment of too close political contacts with the Polish government needs no further explanation. Lie's alternative to Sikorski's European schemes was thus the partition of Europe into spheres of influence. His support early in the war of Soviet claims in the Baltic area may be

interpreted to support this view.²⁷⁸ The Poles, as may be expected, were extremely critical of the Norwegian Atlantic policy.

Until the last year of the war, the scope and significance of contacts between the Norwegian government and the government in Moscow were limited indeed, and one may be tempted to conclude that the relations with the Soviet Union were assigned a secondary place in Norwegian foreign policy. The relations and collaboration with the two great western allies occupying most of the Norwegian politicians' interest and energy, this view contains a certain degree of reality. The Norwegian government and its administrative organs were bound to Great Britain by a tight-knit web of military and civil cooperation. The Norwegians were almost daily presented with tasks to be solved in consultation with the British and US governments.

During the first years of the war, the relations with the Soviet Union were marked by an absence of matters of common interest that might prove incentives for the launching of ventures in military and civil cooperation. They waged different wars, though against the common enemy. A superficial glance at the relations between the two countries may leave the impression of a Norwegian "non-policy" towards the Soviet Union. And in fact the Norwegian policy towards the Soviet Union revealed itself primarily outside the realm of purely Norwegian-Soviet relations.

Relations with the Soviet Union had to take into consideration a set of uncertainties as to Soviet conduct in foreign affairs. Until June 1941 the future turn of the Soviet-German relations was the object of speculations. Later, when the Soviets were safely established among the allied United Nations, the uncertainty as to further Soviet intentions remained. Only during the final stage of the war did Soviet war aims begin to reveal themselves in some detail to the other allies. The governments of the smaller allied countries had moreover only limited access to existing information of Soviet policy.

These circumstances were bound to put their mark on the ventures into Norwegian-Soviet cooperation which were launched during the war. Norwegian military authorities were inclined to take a skeptical attitude towards establishing contacts with the Soviets, though this attitude manifested itself most clearly in the beginning of the war. During the first years of the Norwegian-Soviet *de facto* alliance, the Soviets demonstrated more interest in military cooperation than did the Norwegians.

The last year of war and alliance showed a somewhat different picture. In the spring of 1944 the Norwegian government conveyed to the Soviets its interest in a Norwegian armed presence in the North, simultaneously signing the Norwegian-Soviet agreement on jurisdiction etc. in liberated areas. By this time the roles were changed, and the Soviets refused to give an answer to Lie's inquiries. The Soviet endorsement of the Norwegian plans came only after the Soviet entry into Norway in October 1944. The effect of the delay on the preparations for, and effectiveness of, the Norwegian military effort in Finnmark was clearly demonstrated when the Norwegian troops finally arrived in November 1944. The pattern is a familiar one, indeed: the Soviets were eagerly propagating cooperation between the allies, but tended to place difficulties in the way of a realization of the plans.

Notes

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With the exception of references to documents from the Foreign Office, which all are from the Public Record Office in London, the names of archives and institutions are indicated by the first abbreviation in each note referring to unpublished source material. The following abbreviations are used:

- FD-London: *Forsvarsdepartementets London-arkiv* (documents from the Ministry of Defence in London) in the National Archives, Oslo.
- FKA: *Forsvarets krigshistoriske avdeling* (documents from the former Defence Department of War History) in the National Archives, Oslo.
- FO-London: *Forsvarets overkommandos London-arkiv* (documents from the Defence High Command in London) in the National Archives, Oslo.
- HD: Handelsdepartementet. Skipsfartsavdelingen, 1940-1945 (documents from the Department of Shipping in the Ministry of Trade in London) in the National Archives, Oslo.
- RA: *Riksarkivet* (National Archives, Oslo).
- UB: Universitetsbiblioteket i Oslo (University Library, Oslo).
- UD: *Utenriksdepartementet* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and documents from the archive of the Ministry).
- UK-1945: *Den parlamentariske undersøkelseskommissjonen av 1945* (documents of the Parliamentary Commission of Investigation of 1945) in the National Archives, Oslo.

1. Nils Morten Udgaard, Great Power Politics and Norwegian Foreign Policy, Oslo 1973, p. 248.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
3. The analogy of Norway acting as a "bridge" between the Soviet Union and the western powers seems to have appeared for the first time in an article in the government newspaper Norsk Tidend shortly after the German attack on the Soviet Union in 1941.

4. Nils Morten Udgaard, op.cit., p. 94.
5. Ibid., p. 106.
6. See for example Riste's review of Udgaard's book in Historisk tidsskrift, Oslo 1973, p. 261-267, "Alliansepolitikk og brubygging". Riste's own view is conveniently summarized in English in his contribution "The Foreign Policy-Making Process in Norway: A Historical Perspective", in Forsvarsstudier 1982 (Defence Studies 1982), Oslo 1983.
7. Olav Riste, "Frå integritetstraktat til atompolitikk: Det stormaktsgaranterte Norge 1905-1983", in Forsvarsstudier 1983-84, Oslo 1984, p. 14. This, and all following translations, are done by the author.
8. The ideas behind the "Atlantic policy" are most fully developed by Dr Arnold Røstad in his posthumous book Europe and the Atlantic World, Oslo 1958. According to various sources Røstad actually introduced the idea to Lie. In this case, as in all matters of foreign policy during the war, a key role in the formulation of the Norwegian views was played by Dr Arne Ordning, historian and advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
9. For a further elaboration of this point, see Olav Riste "Stormaktene og nordkalotten 1940-1945", in Motstandskamp, strategi og marinepolitikk, Oslo 1972, p. 73-74.
10. Bilag I til Forsvarskommisjonens instilling i 1920, in bilag til St.prp. nr. 33, 1926.
11. Nils Ørvik, Sikkerhetspolitikken 1920-1939. Fra forhistorien til 9. april 1940 I, Oslo 1960, p. 137 et passim.
12. Report from the Navy Command, September 15, 1929, as cited in Nils Ørvik, Sikkerhetspolitikken I, p. 156.
13. This view was expressed in the Storting as well. Cf. St.prp. nr. 66, 1931; and Innst. S. nr. 11, 1932, p. 27. Similar thoughts were aired by the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, general Bauck. Cf. St. prp. nr. 57, 1931, letter from general Bauck to the Ministry of Defence, December 8, 1930.
14. Another report from the Navy Command refers to the existence of Soviet military plans aiming at "the complete or partial conquest of Finland and the Scandinavian peninsula". RA, Koht's arkiv, pakke 1, "Norges sjøforsvar. Oppgaver og midler. Utarbeidet i Admiralstaben", March 3, 1937.
15. The Norwegian evaluation of Norway's position in case of a Soviet-German war is outlined in some detail in two reports from the Navy Command from December 1936 and March 1937. FKA, Komm. Admiral og Admiralstaben, 442, "P.M. Sjøforsvarsproblemer i Nord-Norge", December 11, 1936; and report of March 3, 1937, mentioned above.
16. Ibid.
17. The following remarks are mostly based on Egil Danielsen, Norge-Sovjetunionen. Norges utenrikspolitikk overfor Sovjetunionen 1917-1940, Oslo 1964, and Nils Ørvik, Sikkerhetspolitikken I-II, Oslo 1960-1961.
18. For a statement of Koht's view, see Samtiden, Oslo 1939, p. 13-14.

19. Lie was highly critical of the Soviet behaviour, linking his criticism of Soviet foreign policy with the internal dictatorial rule in country. See Trygve Lie, Leve eller dø, Oslo 1955, p. 44.
20. Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918 - 1945, Serie D, Band IX, document No 73, von Schulenburg's letter to the Auswärtiges Amt, April 9, 1940.
21. Prior to the second world war, most smaller countries had their diplomatic representations abroad in form of legations, which were headed by a "minister". Only the great powers set up embassies and exchanged ambassadors.
22. UD, 34.4/99, Maseng's letter to Wollebæk, April 15, 1940; and *ibid.*, Maseng's letter to the UD, April 22, 1940.
23. *Ibid.*
24. RA, Koht's arkiv, mappe 6, "Ymse notat frå dei fyrste krigsdagane", p. 35. Hereafter referred to as "Koht's diary".
25. Koht's diary, May 3, 1940.
26. *Ibid.*
27. UD, 34.4/99, j.nr. 329/40, Maseng's letter to the UD, May 8, 1940, with reference to Maseng's letter of May 6, 1940.
28. RA, Koht's arkiv, pakke 6, PM May 19, 1940.
29. Halvdan Koht, Frå skanse til skanse, Oslo 1947, p. 142.
30. UD, 34.4/99, j.nr. 314/40, message from the legation in Stockholm to the UD, received May 18, 1940.
31. UD, 34.4/99, j.nr. 382/40, message from the legation in Stockholm to the UD, May 19, 1940.
32. Koht's diary, p. 77; Koht, Frå skanse til skanse, p. 138; RA, Koht's arkiv, pakke 6, minute for the legation in Stockholm May 27, 1940; UD, 34.4/99, j.nr. 2656/40, message from the legation in Stockholm to the UD, June 9, 1940, referring to a letter from Einar Maseng.
33. RA, FKA, Forsvarets Overkommando, boks 22, P.M. May 3, 1940.
34. RA, FKA, Forsvarets Overkommando, boks 26, P.M. om Den militære stilling, June 1, 1940.
35. *Ibid.*
36. Koht's diary, p. 99.
37. FO 371/24833, N 5430, as cited in Ivar Kraglund, Narvik-planen, unpublished thesis for the Department of History, University of Oslo 1979, p. 110.
38. Cf. general Ruge's instruction to the Norwegian negotiator lieutenant-colonel Wredholm when the latter set out to negotiate with general Dietl at Spionkop near Narvik on 9th June 1940. FKA, boks 198, mappe 2.

39. Alexandra Kollontay was a personal friend of Halvdan Koht as well as Johan Ludvig Mowinckel, a member of the cabinet who spent the first part of the war in Stockholm. Of special interest are Mowinckel's notes from his conversations with Kollontay in August and October 1940. UD, 34.4/99, without j.nr., message from the legation in Stockholm to the UD, July 30, 1940; and *ibid.*, P.M. by Johan Ludvig Mowinckel October 16, 1940.
40. The UD was kept informed of the Soviet attitude as expressed during general secretary in the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Erik Boheman's visit to Moscow in the summer of 1940. The reports of Molotov's assurances of Soviet support of Scandinavian independence made some impression in the UD in London. UD, 34.4/99, without j.nr., Colban's letter to Koht, August 3, 1940.
41. Koht's diary, various entrances, for instance June 17, 1940.
42. This is basically Arne Ordning's explanation of Koht's policy in a report for the Parliamentary Commission of Investigation. Ordning, to be sure, was in a position to know, though his remarks may have been influenced by his position as one of the leading critics of Koht's policy. UB, Ms4^o, 3061:1, Arne Ordning's report, March 11, 1947.
43. For this episode, cf. for instance Koht's answer to the memorandum of Fjelstad and Nielsen which will be mentioned below. Koht, For fred og fridom i krigstid, Oslo 1957, p. 281 et passim.
44. FO 371/29432, N 213/213/30, Dormer's minute, October 26, 1940.
45. The diary of Terje Wold are in the possession of his son, Einar Wold, who has kindly placed them at my disposal for the work on this study. The cited entrance is from October 26, 1940.
46. The memorandum is in the archives of the UD in Oslo. UD, 34.1/19, j.nr. 978/40, PM July 10, 1940.
47. RA, UK-1945, boks 13, mappe 1, Trygve Lie's report.
48. "The Atlantic Ocean policy" is given extensive treatment in the first volume of Olav Riste's two-volume work "London-regjeringa". Norge i krigsalliansen 1940-1945, Oslo 1973-1979. A presentation in the English language of the subject is given in Olav Riste, "The Genesis of North Atlantic Defence Cooperation: Norway's 'Atlantic Policy' 1940-1945", in Forsvarsstudier 1981, Oslo 1982.
49. This point of view is stressed by Arne Ordning as well as by Trygve Lie himself in their reports to the Parliamentary Commission of Investigation. UK-1945, boks 33, mappe 6, Arne Ordning's report; and UK-1945, boks 13, mappe 1, Trygve Lie's report.
50. *Ibid.*, Lie's report.
51. The historian Jacob S. Worm-Müller, in his preface to Arnold Røstad's book Europe and the Atlantic world, attributed the idea to Røstad. So did Wilhelm Keilhau, another member of the "brain trust" surrounding Lie in London. Cf. UK-1945, boks 33, mappe 2, Keilhau's report.
52. The following presentation of Røstad's views is based on Europe and the Atlantic world.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

54. Ibid., p. 103.
55. UB, Ms4^o, Arnold Røstad, "The World Crisis as seen by a Norwegian", speech held in the Canadian Club in Montreal on 15th December 1941.
56. UK-1945, boks 13, mappe 1, Lie's report.
57. Trygve Lie, Med England i ildlinjen, Oslo 1956, p. 298.
58. FO 371/29432, N 3999/3999/G, Eden's letter to Collier, July 23, 1941.
59. FO 371/32808, N 5097/978/G, Collier's letter to Eden, October 5, 1942.
60. See above, note 56.
61. UD, 34.4/99, j.nr. 7055/41.
62. UD, 4.01/10, j.nr. 7354/41, Maisky's letter to Lie, May 12, 1941.
63. Cf. Lie's own minutes in UD, 25.1/2.
64. During a conversation with Sir Stafford Cripps in the middle of June Lie remarked that "on the background of what we have seen of Russian behaviour during the last months, Russia is likely to yield and [...] agree to concessions, although these may be of a very humiliating character". UD, 25.1/2, j.nr.9519/41, Lie's minute, June 16, 1941.
65. RA, FD-London, 1325, P.M. fra H.O.K. 7. mai, 1941.
66. Cf. Winston Churchill's famous speech in BBC in the evening of 22nd June. The relevant passages are quoted in his The Second World War III, p. 332-333.
67. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 10179/41, Lie's minute, June 27, 1941.
68. The speech was printed in the July 11 issue of the government newspaper Horsk Tidend.
69. RA, UK-1945, boks 14, mappe 13, J.L. Mowinkel's letter to Johan Nygaardsvold, June 17, 1941.
70. Trygve Lie, Leve eller dø, p. 73.
71. The Soviet minutes from the conversation between Molotov and Sir Stafford Cripps on 15th July 1941 are printed in Sovetsko-angliiskie otnoshenja vo vremja Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny, 1941-1945: Dokumenty i materialy I, Moscow 1983, p. 84.
72. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 11483/41, Lie's minute, July 18, 1941.
73. Ibid.
74. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 11851/41, Colban's minute, July 23, 1941, with Norwegian translation of the text of the proposed treaty.
75. Ibid.
76. Trygve Lie, Med England i ildlinjen, Oslo 1956, p. 268; and FO 371/29432, N 3999/3999/G, Eden's letter to Collier, July 23, 1941.
77. UD, 4.01/10, j.nr. 12532/41.
78. FO 371/29432, N 3999/213/30, Eden's letter to Collier, July 23, 1941.

79. FO 371/29434, N 5091/213/30, Collier's letter to Eden, September 3, 1941.
80. Ibid.
81. FO 371/29360, N 5260/213/30, Collier's letter to Eden, September 13, 1941.
82. The Norwegian message is printed in Den norske regjeringens virksomhet under krigen fra 9. april 1940 til 22. juni 1945. Departementenes meldinger II, Oslo 1948, p. 55; the British in FO 371/29360, N 5404/201/56.
83. Ibid.
84. FO 371/29326, N 6589/201/56, Eden's letter to Collier, November 14, 1941.
85. See especially Lie's activity during his visit to Washington in the spring of 1943. Cf. Lie's report to Collier in FO 371/36888, N 2647/420/30; and his own minutes in UD, 25.1/2.
86. The Soviet decision of 8 May 1941 brought an end to such thoughts. RA, FD-London, 2623/443, j.nr. HOK 2400/41; and *ibid.*, j.nr. FD 648/41.
87. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 10180/41, Lie's minute, June 27, 1941.
88. RA, FD-London, 2663/610, FD j.nr. 1050/42.
89. Cf. Stalin's letters to Churchill, printed in Stalin's Correspondence with Churchill, Attlee, Roosevelt and Truman 1941-1945, New York 1958.
90. Sovetsko-angliiskie otnoshenia II, No 22, p. 83.
91. Stalin's Correspondence, No 3, p. 13, Stalin to Churchill, July 18, 1941.
92. Sovetsko-angliiskie otnoshenia I, No 24, p. 86, minutes from conversation between Churchill and Maisky.
93. S.W. Roskill, The war at sea I, in History of the Second World War. United Kingdom Military Series, London 1954, p. 486.
94. *Ibid.*, p. 488.
95. The Spitzbergen-affair is mentioned in S.W. Roskill, The war at sea I, p.488; and with some amusing details in Martin Kitchen, British Policy Towards the Soviet Union During the Second World War, London 1986, p. 84-89. Erik A. Steen, Norges sjøkrig VII, Oslo 1960, p. 157-223, gives a detailed account of the actual military operations which took place.
96. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 10179/41, Lie's minute, June 27, 1941.
97. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 11348/41, Lie's minute, July 16, 1941.
98. FO 371/29432, N 3999/3999/G, Eden's letter to Collier, July 23, 1941.
99. Martin Kitchen, British Policy Towards the Soviet Union During the Second World War, p. 85.
100. Johan Nygaardsvold, Norge i krig. London 1940-1945, Oslo 1982, p. 84-85.
101. RA, FD-London, 2929/1267, Lie's minute, July 24, 1941. This refers to the archipelago's status as a demilitarized zone according to the Paris-agreement on Spitzbergen of 1921.

102. RA, FD-London, 2929/1267, Lie's minute, July 24, 1941.
103. S.W. Roskill, The War at Sea I, p. 488-489.
104. UD, 25.4/99, j.nr. 16252/41, message from the embassy in Moscow. In December 1941 Stalin proposed to Eden a joint British-Soviet operation in Northern Norway. Cf. Sovetsko-angliiske otnoshenia I, p. 192.
105. RA, FO-London, 61/1, B. Christophersen's minute, January 26, 1942.
106. RA, FD-London, 1325-1, HOK j.nr. 40/42, general Fleischer's letter to minister of defence Oscar Torp, January 10, 1942.
107. RA, FO-London, 61/1, without j.nr., Christophersen's minute, January 26, 1942.
108. RA, FO-London, 162, V/21, HOK j.nr. H 176/42, Ad angrep på Nord-Norge, February 9, 1942.
109. RA, FO-London, 162, V/21, HOK j.nr. H 230/42, Bemerkninger til HOK's operasjonsutkast for angrep mot Nord-Norge, February 9, 1942.
110. RA, FD-London, 1325/1, session of the Defence Council, January 15, 1942.
111. Roosevelt Archives, PSF Norway 1941-1945, Crown Prince Olav's letter to FDR, February 23, 1942, as cited in Olav Riste, "London-regjeringa" II, p. 291-292.
112. RA, FD-London, 1325/1, session of the Defence Council, February 27, 1942.
113. Cf. Olav Riste, "London-regjeringa" II, p. 162. The documentation may be found in the "Nagells arkiv", which is part of the archives of the former "Forsvarets krigshistoriske avdeling" in Oslo.
114. See RA, Torps London-arkiv, III/20, two letters from Finn Nagell, head of the Office of Intelligence in the Ministry of Defence, to minister of defence Oscar Torp, October 11, 1943 and February 18, 1944.
115. RA, FKA, Nagells arkiv, minute signed by Roscher Lund, Bull and Nagell, June 21, 1942.
116. UD, 34.4/99, j.nr. 18639/42, message from the embassy in Moscow, September 11, 1942.
117. RA, FD-London, 2663/610, UD j.nr. 21842/42, Steffen's report No 3, September 30, 1942.
118. RA, FD-London, 1113, Terje Wold's letter to Oscar Torp, March 19, 1943.
119. UD, 57.5/20, without j.nr., H.C. Berg's minute, December 11, 1941.
120. Olav Riste, "London-regjeringa" II, p. 292-294.
121. Trygve Lie, Oslo - Moskva - London, Oslo 1968, p. 107.
122. See above, note 119.
123. RA, HD, 22.03/7, j.nr. 2672/41, letter from the Ministry of Defence to the UD, December 15, 1941.
124. RA, HD, 22.03/7, j.nr. 21996/41, letter from the UD to the Ministry of Supplies, December 22, 1941.

125. FO 371/32828, N 153/106/30, Keenlyside's letter to Harvey, January 1, 1942.
126. RA, HD, 22.03/7, without j.nr., Draft 24th December, 1941.
127. RA, HD, 22.03/7, j.nr. 139/42, Aide-Memoire, January 12, 1942.
128. UD, 57.5/20, without j.nr., Lie's minute, January 5, 1942. Cf. also FO 371/32828, N 106/106/30, Eden's letter to Collier, January 5, 1942.
129. UD, 57.5/20, without j.nr., Lie's minute, January 5, 1942.
130. There never was made any such arrangement.
131. RA, HD, 22.03/7, j.nr. 214/42, Lie's minute, January 16, 1942.
132. RA, HD, 22.03/7, Eden's letter to Lie, January 24, 1942.
133. UD, 57.5/20, j.nr. 1935/42, J.G. Rader's minute, January 30, 1942.
134. RA, Referat fra regjeringskonferanser 1940-1945, March 3, 1942; hereafter referred to as Cabinet minutes.
135. The BSSC was established in the autumn of 1941 to supervise the shipments of British protocol-supplies to the Soviet Union.
136. Eden finally accepted to extend the authority of the BSSC in a letter to Maisky on 21st February. Cf. FO 371/32828, N 1073/106/30.
137. UD, 57.5/20, j.nr. 4488/42, Lie's minute, March 5, 1942.
138. UD, 57.5/20, j.nr. 1749/43, Aide-Mémoire, August 5, 1943.
139. FO 371/30891, N 4541/3927/30, Collier's letter to Eden, August 7, 1943.
140. UD, 57.5/20, j.nr. 20124/43, Lie's minute, September 11, 1943; and *ibid.*, j.nr. 21540/43, Lie's minute, September 29, 1943.
141. FO 371/30891, N 5453/3027/30, Collier's letter to Eden, September 17, 1943.
142. *Ibid.*, various minutes.
143. Not all of Lie's views were made explicit during the discussion, and the above remarks ought to be treated partly as a logical reconstruction of Lie's thinking. See the minutes from the meeting; UD, 57.5/20, j.nr. 01516/44, January 20, 1944.
144. UD, 57.5/20, j.nr. 24254/44, Lie's telegram to London, November 13, 1944; and *ibid.*, j.nr. 29227/44, Lie's minute, December 29, 1944.
145. UD, 57.5/20, letter from the UD to the Ministry of Shipping, January 20, 1945.
146. UD, 27.7/7, j.nr. 4911/42, Arne Ordning's minute, March 12, 1942.
147. UD, 27.7/7.
148. UD, 25.4/99, j.nr. 26927/43, message from the embassy in Moscow, December 10, 1943.
149. RA, FO-London, 1325-1, session of the Defence Council, December 6, 1943.
150. Olav Riste, "London-regjeringa" II, p. 162-163.
151. Paul Hartmann, Bak fronten. Fra Oslo og London 1939-1945, Oslo 1955, p. 159; Olav Riste, "London-regjeringa" II, p. 163; Trygve Lie, Hjemover, Oslo 1958, p. 123.

152. According to Arne Sunde it was generally held that it would prove difficult to get the Russians out of the country if they was allowed to establish themselves in Norway. See RA, UK-1945, boks 29, mappe 8, Arne Sunde's report, March 6, 1947.
153. UD, 25.1/2, without j.nr., Lie's minute, January 5, 1942.
154. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 27777/43, Lie's minute, December 22, 1943.
155. RA, Cabinet minutes, January 25, 1944; Trygve Lie, Hjemover, p. 124-25; UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 2523/44, Lie's minute, February 3, 1944.
156. UD, 25.1/2, without j.nr., Lie's minute, January 17, 1944.
157. RA, Cabinet minutes, January 25, 1944.
158. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 2523/44, Lie's minute, February 3, 1944.
159. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 2625/44, Lie's minute, February 4, 1944.
160. UD, 27.5/36, without j.nr., Lie's minute, February 19, 1944; and UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 3750/44, Lie's minute, February 18, 1944.
161. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 4277/44, Lie's minute, February 26, 1944.
162. UD, 38.2/2, without j.nr., message to the Embassy in Moscow, January 28, 1944.
163. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 5168/44, Lie's minute, March 7, 1944.
164. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 5226/44, Lie's minute, March 8, 1944.
165. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 9012/44, Lie's minute, April 24, 1944.
166. UD, 38.2/2, j.nr. 9066/44, Lie's letter to Lebedev, April 25, 1944.
167. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 10163/44, Aide-Memoire, May 13, 1944.
168. See for instance Sargent's letter to Erik Colban on 9th May 1944, in UD, 38.2/2, j.nr. 09939/44.
169. FD-London, 2664/610-1, UD j.nr. 04370/44, Steffens' report No 3, January 31, 1944.
170. RA, Cabinet minutes, March 7, 1944.
171. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 5614/44, Lie's minute, March 13, 1944.
172. UD, 27.5/36, j.nr. 06317/44, minute from a conference in the Ministry of Defence; and FD-London, 24/21, FD j.nr. S.H. 27/44, letter from the Ministry of Defence to the UD, March 21, 1944.
173. Olav Riste, "London-regjeringa" II, p. 340-347.
174. UD, 27.7/7, j.nr. 4911/42, diverse minutes.
175. Cf. p. 45 et passim.
176. See the article "Russland og vi", Norsk Tidend, July 11, 1941; and the editorial "Sovjetsamveldets nasjonaldag", November 7, 1942.
177. Norsk Tidend, July 8, 1941, "Tyskland, Sovjetunionen og de nordiske land".
178. Norsk Tidend, September 27, 1941, "Sovjetsamveldet, den internasjonale situasjon og de nordiske land".

179. The reports are in the archive of the UD, file 25.4/99.
180. The speech is printed in Norsk Tidend, January 11, 1941.
181. Louise W. Holborn, War and Peace Aims of the United Nations I, Boston 1943, p. 495.
182. Cf. for instance Norsk Tidend, November 29, 1941, editorial "Norsk utenrikspolitikk idag".
183. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 20068/41, Lie's minute, November 28, 1941.
184. FO 371/29422, N 7205/87/30, Eden's letter to Collier, December 2, 1941.
185. Festskrift til Arne Ordning, Oslo 1958, p. 121-123, letter from London, December 8, 1941.
186. RA, FO arkiv H, XX-1-B-XIV, Redegjørelse fra FO's utvalg III, as cited in Olav Riste, "London-regjeringa" II, p. 348.
187. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 20405/41, Lie's minute, December 2, 1941.
188. FO 371/29422, N 6510/87/30, Sir Orme Sargent's minute, November 14, 1941.
189. UD, 25.1/2, without j.nr., Lie's minute, January 5, 1942.
190. "Hovedlinjer i norsk utenrikspolitikk", document No 414 in Norges forhold til Sverige under krigen 1940-1945 III, Oslo 1950, p. 158 et passim.
191. Cf. p. 45 et passim.
192. RA, UK-1945, boks 21, mappe 6, Nils Hjelmtveit's report; and AAO, Frihagen's arkiv, boks 5, with a copy of the draft containing Hjelmtveit's minutes from the discussion in the Cabinet on 24th April 1942.
193. A copy of the document is in UD, file 34.1/2.
194. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 20220/42, Lie's minute, October 2, 1942.
195. FO 371/32808, N 5040/978/G, Eden's letter to Collier, October 1, 1942.
196. FO 371/32853, N 5097/978/G, Collier's letter to Eden, October 5, 1942.
197. *Ibid.*
198. UB, Ordning's diary, September 25, 1942.
199. *Ibid.*, October 28, 1942.
200. Regjeringen og hjemmefronten under krigen, Oslo 1948, document No 21, letter from the Norwegian legation in Stockholm to the UD, July 18, 1942.
201. Regjeringen og hjemmefronten under krigen, document No 28, the Home Front to Lie, August 23, 1942; and No 29, the legation in Stockholm to the UD, September 2, 1942.
202. UD, 25.1/2, without j.nr., Aide-Mémoire, September 5, 1942.
203. UD, 34.4/99, j.nr. 18659/42, message from the embassy in Moscow, September 11, 1942.
204. Rowland Pilsudski, The Baltic, Britain and Peace, London 1942, p. 24.

205. For the best treatment in English of the affair, ref. Olav Riste, "An Idea and a Myth: Roosevelt's Free Port Scheme for Norway", in Americana Norvegica IV: Norwegian Contributions to American Studies, Oslo 1973, p. 379-397. Some interesting newly released documents from the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs are printed in Sovetsko-amerikanske relasjoner i tiden for den andre verdenskrig, 1941-1945: Dokumenter og materiale I, Moscow 1984, documents No 66, 67 and 73. According to these documents, Roosevelt presented the idea to the Russians already in January 1942.
206. Message from the embassy in Washington to the UD, March 14, 1943, as cited in Olav Riste, "London-regjeringa" II, p. 289.
207. Lie's telegram to the Prime minister, March 12, 1943, as cited in Trygve Lie, Hjemover, p. 86-87.
208. UB, Ordning's diary, March 15, 1943.
209. Trygve Lie, Hjemover, p. 91-93.
210. UB, Ordning's diary, March 17, 1943.
211. The best treatment of the last matter is still Piotr Wandycz, Polish-Czechoslovak Confederation, Bloomington 1956. The general policy of the Polish Government is treated in George W. Kacewicz, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the Polish Government in Exile, the Hague 1979.
212. Within the framework of this study there is no space for providing a more complete documentation of the Norwegian Government's attitude and reaction to the activities of the Poles. The same is true about the following paragraphs discussing the plans for post-war Nordic cooperation. Interested readers are referred to the relevant passages in my thesis for the Department of History, University of Oslo 1988, Mellom "russerfrykt" og "brobygging". Sovjetunionen i norsk utenrikspolitikk, 1940-1945.
213. Jan Ciechanowski, Defeat in Victory, Garden City 1947, p. 102.
214. Arne Ordning in Norges krig II, Oslo 1948, p. 229.
215. Regjeringen og hjemmefronten under krigen, document No 80, "Politisk oversikt", February 8, 1943.
216. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 2698/42, R.B. Reusch's minute, February 8, 1942.
217. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 3623/42, Lie's minute, February 21, 1942.
218. UD, Lie's arkiv, boks 1, mappe 11-20/57, Andvord, Rolf, Lie's letter to Andvord, June 30, 1942.
219. FRUS 1942 III, Biddle's letter to the Department of State, February 20, 1942.
220. FO 371/30871, C 2230/1543/62, minutes from a conference in the Foreign Office February 26, 1942.
221. FRUS 1942 III, Biddle's letter to the Department of State, February 20, 1942.
222. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 4488/42, Lie's minute, March 5, 1942.

223. Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations 1939-1945 I, No 187, minute from a conversation between Bogomolov and Morawski, March 2, 1942.
224. UD, 34.4/99, j.nr. 09070/43, Hartmann's minute, April 12, 1943.
225. UK-1945, boks 3, mappe 6, Ordning's report, March 11, 1947.
226. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 10430/44, Lie's minute, May 22, 1944.
227. Paul Hartmann, Bak fronten, p. 202.
228. UD, 38.2/2, j.nr. SH 253/44, Wold's letter to Nygaardsvold, May 25, 1944. The letter was not sent, but shown to Trygve Lie.
229. Paul Hartmann, Bak fronten, p. 207.
230. RA, Cabinet minutes, June 13, 1944.
231. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 11506/44, Aide-mémoire, June 15, 1944.
232. RA, FO-London, 24/20, FO j.nr. H 1580/44, June 20, 1944.
233. RA, FO-London, 24/20, HOK j.nr. SH 205/44, June 24, 1944.
234. RA, FO-London, 24/20, FO j.nr. SH 400/44, June 27, 1944.
235. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 18612/44, Lie's minute, September 11, 1944.
236. RA, FO-London, 1325-1, September 4, 1944.
237. UD, 27.5/36, j.nr. 19823/44, message from the legation in Stockholm, September 26, 1944.
238. UD, 27.5/36, j.nr. 20344/44, Terje Wold's letter to the UD, September 28, 1944.
239. RA, FO-London, 1207, j.nr. 19825/44, message from the embassy in Moscow, about September 26, 1944.
240. UD, 38.2/2, j.nr. 20395/44, message to the legation in Stockholm, October 3, 1944.
241. RA, FO-London, 26/32, without j.nr., unsigned minute, October 2, 1944.
242. Ibid.
243. RA, FO-London, 26/32, without j.nr., message to the embassy in Moscow, October 14, 1944.
244. RA, FO-London, 26/32, UD j.nr. 22051/44, message from the embassy in Moscow, October 18 (19?), 1944.
245. UD, 34.4/99, without j.nr., delivered to Lebedev on 26th October.
246. Paul Hartmann, Bak fronten, p. 281.
247. Trygve Lie, Hjemover, p. 133.
248. RA, FO-London, 26/32, FO j.nr. SH 789/44, minutes from a conference October 20, 1944.
249. The minutes from a meeting in the Defence Council on 8th December 1944 present the views of the principal actors. RA, FO-London, 61/3.

250. Ibid.
251. UD, 27.5/36, without j.nr., Lie's letter to Torp, December 18, 1944.
252. UD, 27.5/36, without j.nr., Lie's letter to acting minister of defence Sven Nielsen and general Hansteen, February 9, 1945.
253. Ibid., Lie's letter to Hansteen, February 14, 1945.
254. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 29227/44, Lie's minute, December 29, 1944.
255. RA, FO-London, 26/32, UD j.nr. 24150/44, message from the embassy in Moscow, November 8, 1944.
256. RA, FO-London, 26/32, UD j.nr. 26741/44, letter from the UD to the Ministry of Defence, December 6, 1944.
257. Cf. Lie's talks in Moscow, referred above. Andvord got the similar impression from a conversation with Molotov, cf. RA, FO-London, 26/32, UD j.nr. 27082/44, message from the embassy in Moscow, December 1944.
258. Cf. Stalin's correspondence, p. 265.
259. UD, 27.5/36, j.nr. 09156/45, Dahl's report, March 12, 1945.
260. RA, FO-London, 26/Operasjon "Crofter", major Rolstad's report No 4, November 18, 1944.
261. RA, FO-London, 26/32, without j.nr., Dahl's report, November 30, 1944.
262. RA, FO-London, 2664/610-1, UD j.nr. 8888/45, message from the embassy in Moscow, March 1945.
263. The speech is printed in L.W. Holborn, War and Peace Aims of the United Nations II, p. 712-719.
264. Norsk Tidend, editorial "General Smuts tale", December 11, 1943.
265. FO 371/36889, N 7401/421/30, Collier's letter to Coote, December 10, 1943.
266. FO 371/36889, N 7401/421/30, diverse minutes, December 1943 and January 1944.
267. FO 371/36868, N 7700/219/63, Collier's letter to Warner, December 17, 1943.
268. Ibid., Warner's letter to Collier, January 2, 1944.
269. Norsk Tidend, editorial "Cordell Hulls tale", April 15, 1944.
270. See Norsk Tidend, October 14, 1944, editorial "Sikkerhetsorganisasjoner"; and ibid., January 6, editorial "Veien mot demokrati og internasjonalt samarbeid"; and Norseman, No 2/1945, Arne Ordning's article "From Geneva to San Francisco".
271. Olav Riste, "London-regjeringa" II, p. 344.
272. UD, 25.1/2, j.nr. 22241/44, Lie's minute, October 20, 1944.
273. The treaty on Spitzbergen (Norwegian: Svalbard, Spitsbergen being the name of the dominant island in the archipelago) envisaged complete demilitarization of the archipelago. Though the islands were under Norwegian sovereignty all the signatory powers, among them the Soviet Union, enjoyed equal rights of economic exploita-

tion of the area. Only Norway and the Soviet Union, however, had sizable populations on Spitzbergen.

The Spitzbergen affair is given extensive treatment in the second volume of Olav Riste's "London-regjeringa", and until the files on the affair in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs are made accessible, there are only small chances of making new revelations. The following remarks are based on the text and the documents printed in Riste's work.

274. UD, 25.3/99, j.nr. 06046/45, Andvord's letter to Lie, February 5, 1945.
275. UD, 25.4/99, without j.nr., Andvord's letter to Lie, April 14, 1945.
276. Ibid.
277. Referring to the talks with the Belgians and the Norwegians about forms of Atlantic cooperation, the Dutch minister of foreign affairs told an officer in the Foreign Office in November 1941 that "they felt the Eastern European problems were outside their purview". FO 371, W 13233/5766/49, Ronald's minute, November 3, 1941.
278. Peter Ludlow, "Britain and Northern Europe 1940-1945", in Scandinavian Journal of History, No 2, 1979, p. 141.

Between "russophobia" and "bridge-building"

Strong elements of traditional Scandinavian "russophobia" continued to influence the evolution of Norwegian-Soviet relations during the second world war, even when the Norwegian government gradually redirected its official foreign policy doctrine from strong commitments to North Atlantic military cooperation towards a doctrine of "bridge-building" between the great powers. The change from "Atlantic policy" to "bridge-building" might be expected to have influenced Norway's relations with the Soviet Union. One of the aims of this study is to give a general presentation of Norwegian-Soviet relations during the war. On this background the study further examines how the redirection of Norway's foreign policy line made itself felt in the various fields of Norwegian-Soviet relations. The study tends to emphasize the continued presence of a skeptical attitude towards the Soviet Union in Norwegian government circles. This factor made itself felt when the two countries set out to lay the foundations of war-time cooperation, and also influenced Norwegian long-term foreign policy and security planning.

Sven G. Holtmark received his degree in history from the University of Oslo. He is currently engaged in research into Soviet foreign policy, specializing in Soviet-Polish relations. The present study was written while he held a scholarship from the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies.

