

Norway's Ongoing Struggle

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In Bulletin II Jon Grepstad reported on Norway's fight against new European nuclear weapons. Norway's status as a supposedly non-nuclear member of NATO is instructive in that her experience demonstrates how a country is still integrated into the Alliance's nuclear strategy, notwithstanding the non-nuclear status. Jon Grepstad critically analyses Norway's historical struggle for nuclear disarmament and finds some cause for optimism.

1. Norway's "Nuclear Policy" and its Shortcomings

In accordance with the Norwegian "nuclear policy", laid down in a parliamentary white paper in 1960-61, nuclear weapons (i.e. nuclear warheads) are not to be stationed on Norwegian territory in peacetime. However, Norway is involved in the nuclear arms race between the superpowers in mainly three ways:

- a) the Norwegian government has generally supported the nuclear dispositions of NATO;
- b) Norway provides its allies with military installations or facilities which contribute to the strategic use of nuclear weapons;
- c) there exist plans (and exercises) for the deployment and use of nuclear weapons on or from Norwegian territory in wartime.

The Norwegian government participates (as a rotary member) in NATO's Nuclear Planning Group and supports NATO's nuclear strategy, including the eventual first use of tactical or strategic nuclear weapons. There is no evidence that the Norwegian government has ever opposed a NATO proposal regarding nuclear weapons or nuclear strategy. On the contrary, the Norwegian government has supported all public decisions.

On the whole the Norwegian government appears a very "obedient" ally in the question of nuclear weapons and nuclear strategy. Thus the Norwegian policy of non-deployment of nuclear weapons in peacetime should probably be understood primarily as a domestic political compromise and convenient military posture, rather than as an arms control restriction.

Norway contributes to the nuclear strategy of the US and NATO through a number of strategic facilities and installations on Norwegian soil or in Norwegian territorial waters. Some of these have been built under the NATO infrastructure programme, while others have been introduced under bilateral agreements between Norway and the US. Among the best known and probably also among the most important is a series of navigation and communication stations established for military purposes over the last twenty years. Three of these bear explicit relation to the US Fleet Ballistic Missile (FBM) programme: Loran-C, Omega, and the Novika VLF communications stations. Loran-C and Omega are low-frequency radio navigation aids, Omega being also the only world-wide navigation aid which permits the updating of the internal navigation systems of nuclear submarines, and VLF communication stations are the major communication facilities for transmitting to fully submerged nuclear submarines. In addition to these stations there are a large number of strategic installations on Norwegian territory, some of which are also linked to nuclear weapon systems and nuclear strategy. Recently there has been some debate about Norway's heavy involvement in technical intelligence for US purposes.

Since the Norwegian policy of non-deployment of

nuclear warheads is confined to peacetime, plans for wartime deployment and use naturally exist. Whereas there were military exercises in the late 1950's and early 1960's where Norwegian troops simulated the use of tactical nuclear weapons against an enemy, the deployment of nuclear weapons on or from Norwegian territory today seems to rely mainly on allied forces fully trained and equipped for this purpose. Peacetime training of Norwegian forces in the use of nuclear weapons may be limited by the absence of a bilateral agreement between Norway and the US for the transfer of nuclear information in accordance with the US Atomic Energy Act. Delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons may be placed on Norwegian soil in peacetime (thus Honest John missiles with a range of up to 24km were stationed in Norway from 1959, at a time when this missile was only suited for nuclear warheads). Nuclear weapons can be transferred to the Norwegian war theatre by fighter bombers on carriers or from land bases. Interceptors are, moreover, NATO-integrated even in peacetime, and German-Norwegian squadrons were exchanged on an exercise basis as early as the beginning of the 1960's. Hence, what the Norwegian interceptor flight crews might lack in terms of training or equipment for nuclear warfare might not be decisive. Nuclear weapons can also be fired from platforms at sea (a variety of types are deployed and new ones will be added), and nuclear warheads can be fired by the NATO "fire corps" or from dual capable artillery already in the Norwegian inventory, such as 155mm howitzers. Since the use of nuclear weapons on or from Norwegian territory is to be permitted in wartime (if this proves "practical" from a military point of view), exercises (e.g. staff exercises) are being held which also simulate the transfer and use of nuclear weapons. The prohibition on deployment of nuclear weapons on Norwegian soil in peacetime is therefore to a large extent an empty provision from a military point of view. It certainly places no significant restraint on US use of nuclear weapons on or from Norwegian territory.

The Norwegian "nuclear policy" seems to be an empty provision from a military point of view (acceptance by Norwegian authorities is a requirement for using nuclear weapons on or from Norwegian territory), but it has probably served the important function of helping pacify the Norwegian public opinion with regard to nuclear weapons and Norway's contribution to the nuclear arms race between the superpowers. Many Norwegians (perhaps even a majority of the population) may be under the impression that the Norwegian government has vetoed the deployment of nuclear warheads on Norwegian territory not only in peacetime but also in wartime and it is only in recent years that information has been revealed concerning strategic installations and services that link Norway more or less to the front of the nuclear arms race.

2. Movements for Nuclear Disarmament: What's Been Gained?

The first European wave of anti-nuclear protest, which developed at the end of the 1950's, reached Norway in 1960, about the time when the Easter marches climaxed in Britain. The campaign against the neutron bomb, which was organised in January 1978 (i.e. at a time when the campaigns in the Netherlands and Denmark were well advanced), marks the beginning of the second wave of anti-nuclear weapon protest in Norway. The initiative was taken

by the executive of the Norwegian Peace Council (affiliated with the International Peace Bureau, Geneva) and the first manifestation was a full page advertisement in a Christian daily newspaper on 27 December 1977, where the Norwegian section of International Fellowship of Reconciliation and the youth organisation of the Christian People's Party invited readers to sign an appeal to the Norwegian government urging the government to oppose the plans for the neutron bomb. On 25 January 1978 the campaign was formally launched, with the support of 20 Norwegian organisations. Later the number of member organisations increased to 22, comprising all major political youth organisations, except the Conservatives and the Marxist-Leninists, and a number of peace organisation. The platform adopted read as follows:

WE ARE PROTESTING AGAINST THE NEUTRON BOMB BECAUSE:

1. The neutron bomb will stimulate even further the nuclear arms race between the great powers. The arms race is in itself a threat to peace. We must work for disarmament.
2. The neutron bomb is a particularly inhumane weapon. Radiation will cause dreadful pain to civilians and soldiers who do not die immediately. In the long run radioactive radiation leads to genetic disturbances.
3. The neutron bomb will lower the nuclear threshold, i.e. make more likely the use of nuclear weapons in war.
4. Deployment of the neutron bomb in Western Europe will reinforce the tendency to rely on nuclear weapons in this region instead of relying on conventional weapons.
5. The neutron bomb may stimulate research for a number of new types of nuclear weapons. If the US produces the neutron bomb, this will as a reaction lead to the introduction of new Soviet weapons.
6. The introduction of the neutron bomb will increase the likelihood that countries which today are relying on conventional weapons will procure nuclear arms. The neutron bomb will therefore contribute to the further weakening of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which Norway in other contexts has wanted to strengthen.
7. If neutron weapons are introduced in NATO, this will poison the climate of international negotiations and create great difficulties for the existing negotiations about a comprehensive test ban treaty and on the reduction of forces in Europe. It may have a very adverse effect on the UN Special Session on Disarmament in May-June.

WE PROTEST AGAINST THE NEUTRON BOMB AND URGE THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT TO TAKE A CLEAR POSITION AGAINST THE PLANNED PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF NEUTRON WEAPONS IN EUROPE.

The activities of the campaign were favoured to some extent by the fact that the Norwegian government had fairly recently presented a white paper on disarmament and arms control, which was to be debated in Parliament some time during the Spring and was also strongly involved in the preparations of the UN Special Session on Disarmament to be held in May-June 1978. This helped bring disarmament questions to the fore, and the recognition that the arms race is counterproductive to security, which was endorsed by the Norwegian government, was beginning to take root in political parties and public opinion. Outright support for the production and deployment of neutron weapons would therefore be difficult to reconcile with the disarmament profile or image that the government seemed to be cutting for itself. On the other hand the Norwegian government has traditionally played a passive and reticent political role in NATO, and there is no evidence that it has ever opposed a US/NATO proposal in matters of nuclear policy. There also seems to be a fear that exposure of differences within NATO may be exploited by opponents of the alliance.

These factors probably go a long way towards explaining the ambiguous attitude of the Norwegian government from the Autumn of 1977 until 19 April 1978. Thus it took more than half a year to extract an unequivocal statement opposing the neutron bomb.

Apart from the frequent press reports on the debate in other countries (e.g. in the FRG, the Netherlands and the US), and the activities of the campaign itself, perhaps three particular events influenced to some extent the development of the neutron weapons issue in Norway:

On 4 March 1978 the Dutch Minister of Defence, Mr Kruisinga, resigned from his post as a Cabinet member because of his opposition to the plans for neutron weapons. On the day of his resignation he sent a letter to the leader of the Norwegian Christian People's Party, a personal friend of his, where he stated his views on the enhanced radiation weapon. It is not unlikely that the letter, which also received publicity in Norwegian news media, carried some weight in this rather important opposition party. (Perhaps equally important was a statement from the Spring Meeting of the Bishops which warned against a continued nuclear arms race).

A second important event during the Spring was Daniel Ellsberg's visit to Norway on 3 and 4 April 1978, as a guest of the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) and the Norwegian campaign against the neutron bomb. Ellsberg gave a seminar on nuclear strategy and enhanced radiation warheads, and had talks with party leaders. The visit received extensive news coverage and Ellsberg's background gave his analyses considerable weight.

The third event was the news report that President Carter had deferred a decision on the production of the neutron bomb. This news was received at noon on 4 April 1978 when Parliament debated the government's white paper on arms control and disarmament, a debate which was dominated by the issue of the neutron bomb. The news of the American President's decision probably made it easier for some MPs to pronounce their uneasiness about the proposed radiation warhead.

Another decisive event for the Norwegian debate was the statement from the Norwegian government's advisory Committee for Arms Control and Disarmament, on 10 October 1977, which emphasised the negative effects of production and deployment of this weapon. This statement provided significant support to those arguing against the neutron bomb, and could not easily be ignored by the government.

In the parliamentary debate on 4 April 1978 a majority of the MPs who spoke pronounced themselves against the production of the neutron bomb, and the chairperson of the Committee of Foreign Affairs (and chairperson of the governing Labour Party as well), Mr Reiulf Steen, stated that "a decision not, under any circumstance, to produce the neutron weapon will give the Carter administration an offensive position in the efforts of disarmament", thus explicitly rejecting the neutron bomb as a bargaining chip.

However, it was only two weeks later, in the weekly Question Time on 19 April, that the Foreign Minister gave an unambiguous statement rejecting the plans of the neutron bomb: "... it should be clear what is the government's view, that it is negative to the production of neutron weapons". In the same speech the Foreign Minister expressed expectations that the US decision would meet with an accommodating attitude on arms control and disarmament.

The campaign was fully aware that the neutron bomb had not definitively been abandoned by the US, a fact which seemed to elude news media to a large extent, and was also aware of reports that France was planning to develop enhanced radiation warheads.

The beginning of 1980 was dominated by the shadow from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The international

situation was grave, the prospectus of disarmament negotiations dark. The Soviet invasion – a tragedy to the Afghan people as all occupations are – might appear an invaluable present to western hawks and cold warriors. Against the background of the East-West deadlock, the Swedish social democrats at the end of January urged that the process of detente must be carried on and proposed a European disarmament conference to be held in Stockholm. Similar proposals aiming at detente and disarmament negotiations were made by the Nordic conference of social democratic women. But the proposals received little attention. In Norway the leader of the social democratic youth organisation argued that the Brussels decision must be cancelled in order to open the way for negotiations.

A new platform and a constitution were adopted by the steering committee of the campaign No to New Nuclear Weapons on 29 January, the platform being in part based directly on articles 18 and 11 in the Final Declaration of the UN Special Session on Disarmament:

Mankind is confronted with a choice: we must halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament or face annihilation.

Existing arsenals of nuclear weapons alone are more than sufficient to destroy all life on earth. Failure of efforts to halt and reverse the arms race – in particular the nuclear arms race – increases the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons. In spite of this the arms race continues. Military budgets are constantly growing, with enormous consumption of human and material resources. The increase in weapons, especially nuclear weapons, far from helping to strengthen international security, on the contrary weakens it and represents a threat to peace.

This situation both reflects and aggravates international tensions, sharpens conflicts in various regions of the world, hinders the process of detente, exacerbates the differences between opposing military alliances, jeopardises the security of all states, heightens the sense of insecurity among all states, including the non-nuclear-weapon states, and increases the threat of war.

Against this background, which was emphasised by the UN Special Session on Disarmament in 1978, the campaign “No to new nuclear weapons” will work for the following objectives:

1. The campaign will oppose new nuclear weapons in East and West and will work for the reduction and abolition of the existing nuclear weapons.
2. The campaign will work for the objective of halting proliferation of nuclear weapons and will also view proliferation in the context of the continual nuclear build-up of the great powers.
3. The campaign will work for the objective of ensuring adequate information to the Norwegian people on questions of armaments and disarmament, and for active participation of the Norwegian people in the efforts for disarmament.

The campaign does not take a stand on whether Norway should retain a conventional military defence, or on the level of conventional armaments. Nor does the campaign take a stand on whether NATO and WTO should be maintained or dissolved. These are questions that lie outside the scope of the campaign. Thus in a leaflet presenting the campaign is described as a forum where “pacifists, adherents of NATO and opponents of NATO may unite in a common cause: Resistance against nuclear weapons”.

Another statement giving direction to the work is an appeal adopted on 22 April and presented to the Norwegian government on 7 May:

NO TO NEW NUCLEAR WEAPONS!

In December 1979, NATO decided that production of long-range missiles to be deployed in Europe was to be started. The Soviet Union, in its turn, continues the deployment of the SS-20 missile.

– Norway must do the utmost to stop the deployment of

these weapons. Deployment of long-range nuclear missiles will lead to new and uncontrolled increases in the nuclear armaments and will increase the risk of war.

- Norway must work actively for the abolition of the nuclear forces of the Warsaw Pact and NATO in Europe. The European countries have a common interest in removing the nuclear weapons. Defence with nuclear weapons makes no sense: There will be nothing left to defend.
- Norway must not contribute to increased confrontation between the superpowers in the North. We must not allow Norway to become a battlefield in a nuclear war.

(The last paragraph of the statement refers to the current debate on the possibility of pre-positioning heavy US military material in Norway to be used by the US Marines as a contingency).

The constitution adopted on 29 January states that the campaign is to be led by a steering committee, assisted by a council, which is to meet once a year or whenever the need arises. The council has an advisory function, and the council members do not formally represent organisations or political parties of which they may be members, but are members of the council as private persons. The constitution further states that local groups are to be established, and that the campaign is not to be a membership organisation. The campaign cannot join any other organisation, political parties etc.

During the spring and summer the campaign has given priority to the establishment of local groups (12-14 groups existed by September 1980), and preparing information material (the first issue of a newspaper has been published).

In a letter (16 June) to the Foreign Minister before the NATO Council Meeting in Ankara, the campaign expressed its concern that negotiations regarding production and deployment of new nuclear weapons in Europe had not yet started, and referred also to the concern expressed by the Socialist International in its communique of 13 June. The letter from the campaign states further:

We wish to call attention to the fact that the Norwegian Government at the NATO Council Meeting in Brussels assumed that negotiations were to start as soon as possible. It was also a definite precondition, expressed by the Government, that negotiations should lead to results that made unnecessary the deployment of NATO's new nuclear weapons and that the level of nuclear armaments that existed in December 1979 might be reduced as well.

“No to new nuclear weapons” asks the Foreign Minister to do his utmost that the above precondition can be realised. If they are not, Europe may be exposed to the risk that both parties continue the nuclear build-up and that it will prove impossible to arrive at real disarmament with regard to the European long-range nuclear missiles.

In his reply to the letter (dated 2 July) the Foreign Minister stated the urgency of commencing negotiations, that the next three years (before the beginning of deployment in late 1983) must be used for negotiations, that NATO had obliged itself to consider the need for theatre nuclear forces in the light of the concrete results of negotiations (SALT) and that one should “achieve as low a ceiling as possible, and that one should aim at the ‘zero option’.”

In connection with the current debate on the possibility of pre-positioning (pre-storing) heavy US military material for the use of the US Marines in war, the campaign sent the following statement to the government:

The objective of the Norwegian bases and nuclear-weapon policy has been to safeguard low tension, particularly in the North.

A large-scale design for storing of heavy material in North Norway cannot serve this purpose. On the contrary there is reason to fear that enterprises of this kind will increase the tension in the region, and as an ultimate con-

sequence also increase the risk that nuclear weapons will be used.

To prevent nuclear war in Norway must be an overriding objective of all Norwegian politics.

As regards the Non Proliferation Treaty, the campaign has argued (with reference to a proposal made by Ms Alva Myrdal, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, April 1980) that neutral and neutral-weapon-free states in Europe should act as forerunners and exploit the promises made by nuclear powers ("negative assurances") and call for well-publicised confirmations that these pledges not to use nuclear weapons against states that have fore sworn such weapons, specifically apply to their cases. Confirmations may take the form of bilateral agreements or diplomatically channelled government-to-government communication.

The nuclear weapon debate in the autumn of 1979

seems to have made a lasting impression on public opinion and on Norwegian politics. The debate had considerable educational and consciousness raising effects. It is evident that the disarmament forces in Norwegian society were strengthened by the events in November-December 1979. In spite of dangerous developments on the international scene, not least with regard to nuclear weapons and nuclear doctrines, the new consciousness that seems to be emerging both at the grass roots and, to an interesting extent, also within political parties, gives reasons for a certain optimism: Now is the time to build a massive and lasting movement for nuclear disarmament!

The address of "No to new nuclear weapons" is:
Nei til nye atomvåpen, Keisersgt. 1, Oslo 1.
Tel: (02) 20 97 86.

A WARNING:

As doctors of medicine and scientists in health-related fields from many countries present at the 30th Pugwash Conference including: Brazil, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Finland, France, Kenya, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, UK, USA, USSR, and Venezuela, we issue a warning, based on medical and other scientific data, that should become widely known:

1. That Medical Disaster-planning for a Nuclear War is Futile

A nuclear war would result in human death, injury, and disease on a scale that has no precedent in history, dwarfing all previous plagues and wars. There is no possible effective medical response after a nuclear attack — in one major city alone, in addition to the hundreds of thousands of sudden deaths, there would be hundreds of thousands of people with severe burns, trauma, and radiation sickness — all demanding intensive care. Even if all medical resources were intact, the care of these immediate survivors would be next to impossible. In fact most hospitals would be destroyed, medical personnel among the dead and injured, most transportation, communication and energy systems inoperable, and most medical supplies unavailable. As a result, most of the people requiring medical attention would die.

Medical problems that would be minor and curable in normal times — infections and fractures for example — would prove fatal for many. Numerous deaths would also occur from the interaction of multiple, simultaneous injuries which would be trivial if each occurred singly. Large numbers of those who escaped an acute death would suffer mutilating injuries. Furthermore, under the conditions of rampant chaos and terror, the incidence of psychiatric disorders would sharply rise. The risk of long term effects, such

as cancer, would increase during their entire lifetime for many survivors, and possibly for their offspring as well.

2. That Effective Civil Defence Against a Nuclear Attack is Impossible

Bomb shelters in cities under nuclear attack would be useless owing to the blast, heat, and radiation effects. Shelters as far as ten kilometres from the centre of even a one megaton surface nuclear explosion would become ovens for their occupants — the great surface fires would cook and asphyxiate them. At greater distances, shelters would provide only temporary protection against the high levels of radioactive fallout. In a nuclear war, one would emerge from a shelter into an environment that was a nightmare — water would be undrinkable, food contaminated, and the economic, ecologic, and social fabric, on which human life depends, destroyed. For the survivors, the risk of epidemics would be great, as a result of: the unburied human and animal corpses everywhere; multiplication of viruses, bacteria, fungi and insects, which are highly resistant to radiation; and the high sensitivity to radiation of the human body's ability to fight infection.

In sum, there are no defences against the lethal effects of nuclear weapons, and there is no effective treatment for those who initially survive a nuclear attack. Under all conditions, medically, nuclear war would be an unparalleled catastrophe.

As doctors of medicine and scientists in health-related fields, we conclude, therefore, that nuclear weapons are so destructive to human health and life that they must never be used. Prevention of nuclear war offers the only possibility for protecting people from its medical consequences. There is no alternative.

END Takes Off in Greece

An influential body of opinion in Greece, which includes the poet and Nobel Laureate Odysseus Elytis and the famous archeologist from the excavations at Vergina Professor Manolis Andronicos, as well as Andreas Papandreou, parliamentarian and Chairperson of PASOK (Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement), supports the call for a European Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. Dimitris Fatouros, Professor of Architecture at the University of Thessaloniki,

is now working to establish a national liaison group in Greece which will campaign for European Nuclear Disarmament within the country, and will also make and support lateral links with movements in other countries. It is with this kind of enterprise in mind that moves are under way in several other European countries to establish national committees.