

FINNISH
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FINLAND'S SECURITY IN A CHANGING EUROPE

A Historical Perspective

Risto E.J. Penttilä

DOCUMENTATION

National Defence College Helsinki 1994

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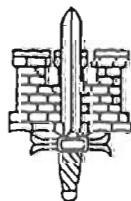
FINLAND

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Preface

Finland practiced a policy of neutrality from the mid 1950s to the beginning of the 1990s. This study explains why Finland chose neutrality after the Second World War and why it was ready, after the end of the Cold War, to give it up in favour of membership in the European Union.

In addition to looking at the past five decades, this study traces the roots of Finnish foreign and security policy to the 19th century. The argument is that the model of foreign relations that was used during the Cold War was developed in the 19th century when Finland was an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire.

Despite historical arguments the main bulk of the study deals with a fundamental change in Finnish foreign and security policy that took place from 1990 to 1995. The transition period began with a unilateral reinterpretation of Finland's postwar treaties (the Finnish-Soviet Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance Treaty of 1948 and the Peace Treaty of 1947) and ended with Finland's joining of the European Union in 1995.

Finland's accession to the European Union begins a new phase in the history of Finland. It solidifies Finland's position as a Scandinavian and as a European state. At the same time membership offers a new platform for cooperation with Russia and the Baltic states. In foreign and security policy membership in the EU combines old themes with new possibilities. Old themes included Finland's commitment to strengthening cooperative security in the context of the CSCE and the United Nations. New possibilities included the development of the Northern dimension of the Union's common foreign and security policy.

Future is unwritten. If the cohesion of the European Union develops favourably, then elements of common security are likely to be strengthened in Finnish foreign and security policy. If Europe remains fractured and geopolitically divided, then the importance of national defence will be emphasised. The course Finland chooses to follow will be important for Europe at

large. The reason is that Finland is the only member state of the European Union that has a long common border with Russia.

Helsinki, 6. December 1994

Risto E.J. Penttilä

1 THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF FINNISH FOREIGN POLICY

During the Cold War, neutrality was taken for granted in Finland. It was seen as a natural, historically determined position for a small country next to a great power. Contrary to this belief, the roots of Finnish neutrality did not go very far back in time. In fact, Finland did not aim at achieving neutrality during the autonomy period, nor was it the primary aim of the Finnish government between the wars, a time when those responsible for foreign policy did their best to seek support from practically anywhere, including the states bordering on the Soviet Union, the Nordic Countries, the League of Nations, Germany, and bilateral arrangements with Sweden.

A much more significant feature in the history of Finnish foreign policy has been the tug-of-war between two conflicting attitudes towards Russia, demands for compliance and loyalty on the one hand, issues most clearly formulated by J.V. Snellman (1806-1881), and elements of resistance and requests for outside help on the other. The most common pattern has been loyal separatism or restricted compliance. It should be remembered, however, that it would have been impossible to pursue a viable foreign policy or maintain the country's independence without occasional resistance.

Although neutrality did not establish itself as a guideline for Finnish foreign policy until 1956, ideas of this kind can be said to have been broached for the first time more than a hundred years earlier.

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First considerations of neutrality

Discussions on the question of neutrality were initiated in Finland in 1863, prompted by the change in the country's geopolitical position and the general emergence of the notion of neutrality in the Europe of the mid-19th century. This widespread talk of neutrality and the appreciation shown for the idea was surprising in view of the lack of respect for it during the Napoleonic wars, in the course of which there were numerous violations of the neutrality of states and the inviolability of sea traffic. Switzerland, for example, was forced to abandon its neutrality when first the French and then the Austrians conquered extensive parts of its territory.¹

The only neutral country which succeeded more or less in remaining aloof from the hostilities was the United States, which declared itself neutral in 1793. It is often forgotten that it was the example of the United States which led to the spread of the neutrality ideal in the 19th century.

All in all, the 19th century can be regarded as marking the codification of the notion of neutrality, the passing of the relevant laws and the formulation of declarations. Switzerland was declared permanently neutral at the Congress of Vienna in 1815,² Belgium in 1839 and Luxembourg in 1867, whereas Norway's desire for permanent neutrality was blocked by Sweden, with which it had an alliance at the time.³ More specific definitions of neutrality were also included in the maritime legislation.⁴

The fact that the 19th century notion of neutrality had seemed to offer small countries a chance to escape the miseries of war was a matter of some significance for discussions of Finnish 'foreign policy', in addition to which Sweden had assumed a policy of neutrality in the 1830's.

Another factor that contributed to the neutrality polemic in Finland was the Crimean War, as it reminded the Finns that they were liable to become involved in conflicts between the Great Powers. The post-war period was also important with respect to the social and intellectual atmosphere in the country, as it was then that Finland opened itself up to Europe and to European liberalism and ideas on the freedom of trade. Discussions were held on the relations between Finland and Europe and between

Finland and the Tsar of Russia, and on the principles governing Finland's relations with foreign countries.⁵ It can very well be claimed, in fact, that this opening up of the country to outside influences laid the foundation for the discussion surrounding the direction of Finnish foreign policy which has continued up to the present day.

One of the most important issues was the very existence of the Finnish nation. At one extreme, Finland was considered an 'internally sovereign' state which had laws of its own and occupied a position of its own among the nations of the world. This argument set out from the fact that the Tsar had issued a Sovereign Pledge in 1809 granting Finland the right to maintain its Swedish system of legislation, so that it could no longer be regarded as a province as it had been when part of the Kingdom of Sweden but rather as a state subject to the rule of the Tsar without actually being a part of Russia. The opposite, Russian viewpoint was that Finland was by no means a sovereign state but an autonomous area with privileges of its own which was nevertheless an integral part of the Russian Empire.

New political groupings were set up in the country which differed not only on 'questions of foreign policy', but also on nationality issues: the Fennomans, who emphasised the importance of connections with the Finnish people and expressed their relief at the country's release from Swedish rule, and the Liberals, who valued connections with Sweden and were indifferent towards the Russians.

This was the background against which neutrality was discussed in 1863, at the time of the Polish insurrection.⁶ The Liberals aimed most of all at increasing Finland's freedom of movement in relation to Russia and establishing a closer connection with Sweden, whereas the Fennomans, who espoused the ideas of J.V. Snellman, warned against taking advantage of the momentary weakness of Russia.

The discussion was initiated by the newspaper *Helsingfors Dagblad* in April 1863, with the suggestion that Finland should declare herself neutral. The article can be regarded as a daring and imaginative one, the latter on account of the comparison it made with Belgium and Switzerland, which had gained their neutrality through international agreements, and its suggestion that Karl XV of Sweden could make the proposal that Finland

should be declared neutral.⁷ It was also stated in the article that neutrality should involve a certain degree of demilitarisation, an idea evidently prompted by the demilitarisation of the Åland Islands in 1856.⁸ Although quite impossible to implement in practice, as Russia had just started to deploy more soldiers and military equipment in Finland to preempt any surprise moves that might arise from the tense international situation, the proposal attracted considerable attention in Finland, with comments appearing in a number of other newspapers, such as *Åbo Underrättelser*, which discussed conditions under which the 'neutralisation' of Finland would be a realistic target.⁹

The most prominent opinion on neutrality was expressed by J.V. Snellman in his famous article 'War or peace in Finland'.¹⁰ His message was clear: any aspiration towards neutrality would only lead to difficulties with the Tsar, which would ultimately destroy the entire country. Snellman maintained that for this reason Finland should prefer loyalty over neutrality.¹¹

Snellman's analysis of the situation proved correct in view of the historical background. Finland could not declare itself neutral, as it was under the rule of the Tsar of Russia and consequently had reason to assume that disciplinary measures would follow if any attempt was made to gain neutrality. It is interesting to note, however, that Snellman did not approve of neutrality for other nations either, so that he had nothing good to say about Switzerland, for example. Even the idea of a country in which three linguistic groups formed one nation simply lay beyond his criteria for a sovereign state. Snellman pointed out that a state should be a manifestation of one language, one ideology and one national ethos.¹²

Snellman's comment in *Litteraturblad* did not put an end to the neutrality discussions, however, and these continued in *Helsingfors Dagblad*, for example. The paper posed the rhetorical question 'Why could Finland not opt out of all wars and hostilities between foreign nations, as is the case with Switzerland and Belgium?'¹³ These arguments did not play any appreciable role once Snellman had emphasized the importance of loyalty to the Tsar, however, and the latter attitude was adopted as general policy in Finland.

The discussion was revived more than a hundred years later when President Urho Kekkonen took it up in his speeches,

stating that Snellman's ideas would serve as a basis for a modern neutrality policy to be adopted by Finland. What is surprising here is that President Kekkonen was referring to statements in which Snellman had in fact denounced neutrality and come out in favour of loyalty.

The loyalty suggested by Snellman was by no means to be practiced blindly, however. On the contrary, it was to be carefully considered and focused on the Tsar himself, not on Russia as such. The historian Jussi T. Lappalainen refers to Snellman as a 'separatistic loyalist', an expression that would seem to hold good in that he was indeed a separatist when it came to relations with Russia, wishing to separate Finland from that country both politically and economically, while his loyalism was restricted to good relations with the Tsar, as he felt that it was only in this way that Finland could advance its special status. He further stated that this position should not be endangered by practicing a 'conjunctural policy' at a time when Russia was weak or its attention was drawn elsewhere. In other words, the country's position could be improved through careful manoeuvring, but there was no reason to talk of neutrality or independence. A more important aim was to ensure continued autonomy and the maintenance of Finnish culture, a Finnish civil service and a Finnish school system, all of which were essential for cultivating a national spirit.

A change in compliance policy, 1890-1917

Snellman's ideas of Finland's relations with Russia were re-examined in the 1890's as a consequence of the Russification campaign launched by the Russian civil servants. An increasing number of Finns were now of the opinion that it was no longer sufficient to follow a compliance policy, and this led to a division between the supporters of constitutionalism and the supporters of compliance. The former favoured opposition, stating that one should not yield to Russian impositions but should resist them either actively or passively. One of the most prominent representatives of this wing was Leo Mechelin,¹⁴ whose book '*Précis du droit public du Grand-duché de Finlande*' (1886), later translated into German and Russian, made him known

internationally. The primary message of the book was that Finland was a state, not a province, as it possessed a separate legislation, constitution and economy. The publication aroused anger among civil servants in St. Petersburg and the Finnish advocates of compliance.¹⁵

The compliance wing, led by Yrjö Sakari Yrjö-Koskinen, felt that it was simply impossible for Finland to resist the superiority of Russia. Even if Finland lost its autonomous position, it would not disappear as long as its national spirit, culture and language rested on a solid foundation. The compliance ideas generated by Yrjö-Koskinen nevertheless began to lose their conviction towards the turn of the century as Russia strengthened its grip on Finland.

The increased Russian pressure provoked Agathon Meurman, E.G. Palmén and J.R. Danielson-Kalmari, leading figures in the Old Finns party, to distance themselves from the ideas of Yrjö-Koskinen, stating that compliance was impossible as long as the opposite side was aiming only at complete subordination.

The new doctrine of restricted compliance was formulated most explicitly by J.R. Danielson-Kalmari in his pamphlet 'In which direction?', published in 1901.¹⁶ He stated that negotiations could be continued only as long as Russia recognised Finland's special position and that if all Russian action was governed by an 'irrational desire to destroy', then compliance did not serve any 'reasonable purpose.' Danielson-Kalmari maintained that if any resistance measures were taken, they should not set out from the principles of law as the constitutionalists would claim, as it had been proved throughout history that all formal rights are relentlessly wiped away if they do not conform to the prevailing conditions.¹⁷

Danielson-Kalmari did not abandon loyal separatism, however, but stated that good relations should be fostered with the Tsar as it was only through him that Finland could regain her special position. The task of bridge-building in this direction should be assigned to the civil servants, who should act in such a manner that no bonds would be broken. The Finnish people in turn should not give in, but even resort to passive resistance if need be. At the same time, it was important to maintain ideological ties with Europe, as 'development within a small country requires

access to the intellectual resources possessed by large ones'. This was also justified by the fact that nationalism and the notion of being a Finn could constitute a philosophy of life only through close interaction with the culture of Europe and the traditions of education which existed there.¹⁸

Juho Kusti Paasikivi (1870-1956) can in many ways be regarded as an apprentice of Danielson-Kalmari. He spent a lot of his time at the state counsellor's summer villa at Vääksy, listening attentively to latter's opinions. As an emerging politician affiliated to the Old Finns, Paasikivi rejected Yrjö-Koskinen and accepted Danielson-Kalmari's principles of managing relations with Russia. In fact, when Paasikivi became Prime Minister after the Second World War, and eventually President in 1946, his actions were evidently based very much on the ideas put forward by Snellman and Danielson-Kalmari.

Independence and orientation towards the West, 1917-1944

The gaining of independence was followed by a great need for the country to stand on its own feet in the 1920's. The ideas of loyal separatism formulated by Snellman were now completely abandoned, since the Tsar was dead and there was no longer any need to express loyalty towards the new neighbour in the east - the Russians were mocked and the Bolsheviks despised. Relations with Sweden were not very good either, as people tended to scorn the maintaining of connections with the former mother country. The most complex issue of all, however, was relations with Germany, as many supporters of that former imperial power were shocked by its defeat in the World War and its transfer to the questionable democracy of the Weimar Republic. All in all, the order of the day in the 1920's was to be genuinely Finnish and capable of independent decisions.

A posture of standing alone in the shadow of an unpredictable Russia was not what the Finnish government would have wanted in the long run, and there was extensive cooperation with Germany during the Finnish Civil War, as indicated by the decision to crown a German as King. This decision was never implemented, however, as Germany lost the war and Finland finally opted for a republican constitution in 1919.

After that Finland tried to establish contacts with the Baltic States and Poland, but this line was rejected in the early 1920's, as Marshal Mannerheim, for example, was strongly against it. The reason for this opposition was that the government was afraid that such cooperation would raise problems between Finland and Russia which could otherwise be avoided.

Finland's next step was to seek the sympathy of the League of Nations, establishing connections which lasted up to the 1930's. It soon became evident, however, that this body was incapable of promoting Finland's security to any appreciable extent. This prompted a decision in the early 1930's to adopt a Scandinavian approach instead, which involved cooperation with Sweden, Norway and Denmark. This form of joint action was termed 'cooperation in neutrality', but it also possessed military aspects. The aim was to form the Nordic Countries into a neutral zone under military supervision, a zone in which the participating countries were so closely united that an attack on one of them would automatically imply an act of aggression against them all. It is a well-known fact that this cooperation was a total failure, for Stalin attacked Finland and Hitler invaded Norway and Denmark, so that it was only Sweden which succeeded in staying out of the war.

There is no need to look at the history of the Second World War itself in detail here, but there is one point which should be mentioned, that Finland resorted to German help during the Continuation War of 1941-44 and that it was this that enabled the country to defend itself successfully against the Russians. This cooperation terminated upon the signing of a temporary peace agreement in autumn 1944, resulting in the Lapland War, during which the Finnish troops forced the Germans in Lapland to retreat into Norway.

The return to restricted compliance, 1944-1955

The Finnish government was forced to change its national strategy completely after the Second World War. Support from the Nordic countries had not prevented involvement in the war, and cooperation with Germany had not provided success in it. Thus it was quite impossible to maintain an ideology of resistance

to the Soviet Union, and the only realistic possibility was to ensure the country's security and position in international terms in a spirit of mutual understanding with the Soviet Union, employing the philosophy originally formulated by Snellman.

Having maintained its independence and avoided occupation, Finland was not, of course, in an exactly comparable position to that prevailing during the autonomy period, but the situation in 1944 did resemble that of the last decades of autonomy insofar as the Allied Control Commission, which exercised supreme power in the country, was in practice a Soviet body whose leader, Andrei Zhdanov, was above all Finnish law and thereby in a position resembling that of a Governor General. This new ruler had access to military power beyond the border and stationed in Porkkala within Finland. There were no attempts at Russification on this occasion, however, but instead Moscow aimed at promoting the position of the communists. All this was backed up by a renewed isolation of Finland from the west, just as in the times of autonomy. As the British Foreign Office reminded its members of the Control Commission, the Finns now had to 'survive on their own'.¹⁹

A concrete return to the policy of compliance was marked by the selection of J.K. Paasikivi as Prime Minister and his later election as President, since, with the exception of a brief dallying with Germany, his basic inclinations and war-time actions had set out from the principle of compliance. He had demanded that negotiations should be continued even at the outbreak of the Winter War, when other politicians had already begun to favour resistance, and had endeavoured to establish relations with Stalin between the Winter War and the Continuation War.²⁰ Paasikivi had identified himself with the opposition in favour of peace as the Continuation War had drawn on, and had been among the first to point to the necessity for a new foreign policy.

After the restoration of peace, Paasikivi adopted Danielson-Kalmari's principles regarding geopolitics and Finland's relations with her neighbour in the east. The Finns again had to accept that their country could not escape the power of the Soviet Union through resistance or excessive emphasis on sovereignty. On the contrary, time, patience, and most of all, restricted compliance were now required. In the same way the ideas of legitimate security advantages fostered by President Kekkonen

in particular can be traced back to Danielson-Kalmari, who had suggested in 1901 that Finland would never be in danger as long as it was capable of maintaining good relations with Russia. As he stated: "...a cold historical survey inevitably leads one to suggest that it was purely military interest, that is, a concern for the security of their own northern boundary and capital, which made the Russians regard the occupation of Finland as such an important issue.²¹ Paasikivi's message 45 years later was practically identical, with the only exception that occupation was replaced by the ceding of Karelia and the leasing of the Porkkala Peninsula.

Paasikivi's conformity to a foreign policy model which was directly related to the one advocated in the earlier compliance period was so distinctive that Danielson-Kalmari, Yrjö-Koskinen and Snellman, who had known each other and passed the ideology on through personal friendship, can be regarded in a sense as having accompanied Paasikivi in his capacity as President. In particular, it can certainly be claimed that the doctrine of restricted compliance formulated by Danielson-Kalmari was reintroduced into the country's official policy when Paasikivi became president. This was quite natural, as it was Danielson-Kalmari himself from whom Paasikivi had absorbed his ideas on foreign policy within the Finnish Party in Helsinki and through visits to the state counsellor's summer villa at Vääksy.

Paasikivi's method proved a successful one, and Finland's freedom of movement in foreign policy matters increased step by step. The final peace agreement was signed in 1947, and the Control Commission left the country. This favourable trend did not continue, however, for it was at the beginning of 1948 that Stalin made his well-known proposal for a Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance.

Paasikivi considered the agreement as suggested by Stalin unnecessary and harmful for Finland, but had no choice but to enter negotiations, as it was essential to avoid any conflict with the Soviet Union. Finland's aim in the negotiations was to obtain an agreement which would provide the Soviet Union with a sufficient guarantee of the security of its north-western border without restricting Finland's freedom in terms of foreign policy.

This aim was achieved as completely as one could have hoped for under the circumstances, and the resulting agreement

became known, in Kekkonen's words, as 'the Paasikivi dictate'. It differed from corresponding agreements established between the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries in both the nature of the consultations required and the definition of the assistance to be offered, in both cases to Finland's advantage. It was, after all, more important for Stalin to establish a new network of agreements to cover his entire western border than to argue with Finland over precise formulations. Should the need ever arise to implement the agreement, the decisive question would in any case be the interpretation given to it by the more powerful party.

Kekkonen's loyal separatism 1956-1981

Paasikivi's successor, Urho Kekkonen, followed in his footsteps as far as foreign policy was concerned, emphasising the need for good relations in the east and restricted compliance, but his pattern of action differed in many ways from that of his predecessor. One of the major differences was that he exploited his country's good relations with the Soviet Union in order to gradually extend its freedom of movement first towards the Nordic Countries and later, through free trade agreements and the process initiated by the Conference on Cooperation and Security in Europe, towards more general interaction with Europe. Another major difference was that Kekkonen did not shun close, even exceptionally close, relations with the Soviet leaders. He was not afraid of this resulting in an increase in influence in both directions - from Helsinki to Moscow and vice versa - or else he must have reasoned that such close connections would be to Finland's advantage in any case. Finally, the third difference was that, while President Paasikivi in his time was inclined to play down the role of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (FCMA Treaty), Kekkonen used it as the cornerstone of his foreign policy, emphasising its importance on every occasion and making it into a symbol of Finland's 'loyalty' towards the Soviet Union.

Kekkonen's foreign policy was successful enough in the Khrushchev era, but things became more complicated when

Brezhnev took over and the Soviet Union ceased to recognise Finland's neutrality in the late 1960's and began to impose pressure instead. The situation required from Finland a similar attitude towards Moscow to that which had prevailed towards St. Petersburg during the autonomy period.

The approach adopted by Kekkonen can evidently be regarded as a new version of the loyal separatism endorsed by Snellman. In fact, all the characteristics of Snellman's foreign policy ideas were present in Kekkonen's thinking. Snellman had been a loyalist with respect to relations with the Tsar but a separatist with regard to the Russian state. Kekkonen, in turn, was loyal to the Kremlin but a separatist vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. In addition, where Snellman aimed at making a distinction between the positions of Poland and Finland, Kekkonen emphasised the contrast between Finland and all the Eastern European countries. Snellman and Kekkonen both argued for establishing personal relations with the leadership of their eastern neighbour, maintaining the confidence of that leadership and pursuing a unanimous foreign policy. They also shared a belief in the rise of the eastern nations, to the extent that Snellman had predicted as early as the 1840's that the Slavic peoples would eventually resume a dominant position in Europe. Kekkonen was likewise convinced up to the 1970's that the Soviet Union posed an extremely powerful economic and political challenge to the west.

In addition to personal ideologies, the above similarities also extended to elements of Finland's relations with the east, the most important aspect being perhaps that both were apt to cling to one agreement of particular significance to the nation. In the period of autonomy that agreement was the Sovereign Pledge issued in 1809, while in Kekkonen's era it was the FCMA Treaty.

The agreements themselves differed greatly, however, as the former was interpreted as favourable to Finland, promising that the country's position would not change, while the latter was regarded as an overtly oppressive factor liable to reduce freedom of movement in foreign policy. They shared just one feature in common: that they both served to regularise official relations between Finland and her eastern neighbour, and it was for this reason that they both came to occupy a prominent position in the country's foreign relations. The question was not what

was written in the documents but how they should be interpreted.

The Finnish people did not immediately recognise the opportunities associated with either of the agreements. In fact, Finland woke up to the realisation that it was a nation in the 1860's only after noticing that it possessed its own laws as confirmed by the Tsar of Russia in his Sovereign Pledge, just as it was not until the return of Porkkala that Finland could see its way to declaring its neutrality, even though according to President Kekkonen this 'concept of neutrality' was incorporated in the preamble to the FCMA Treaty.

The mere statutory opportunity to gain a new position was not enough, however, for there was disagreement between Finland and St. Petersburg at the end of the autonomy period over whether the Sovereign Pledge was sufficient to render Finland an 'internally sovereign state', the Russians claiming that Finland enjoyed no special status whatsoever. Similarly a debate arose a hundred years later, in the late 1960's, when the Soviet Union abandoned its unreserved recognition of Finland's neutrality and launched new discussions in which this was viewed as being in opposition to the Agreement. Finland saw no inconsistency between the two, but the Soviet Union did. In its opinion, the primary issue was the Agreement, while neutrality was no more than an "aspiration" on the part of the Finns.

These two periods were also both characterised by the appending of pseudonyms to published articles. The pseudonyms such as Komissarov, Liimatainen and Pohljobkin employed in the Kekkonen era resembled very much those of Kuoharinen, Kekäläinen and Katkov used in the autonomy period. In addition, it was customary in both eras to quote Finland as an example of a situation of two neighbouring countries living in peace and harmony, as the "showcase policy" of Alexander II and Brezhnev's idea of Finland as an example of peaceful coexistence were in the end quite closely related.

Urho Kekkonen has often been blamed for showing excessive compliance towards the Soviet Union, and there was even talk of this mode of behaviour spreading to other countries, a phenomenon known as 'Finlandisation'. In addition, the effects of such a brotherly attitude have been regarded as more harmful to Finland than was ever admitted during the Kekkonen era.²² Although these claims can be said to hold good to some extent,

one should not forget that Kekkonen set out to resist Soviet aims whenever these seemed to endanger Finland's international position. In fact he threatened to resign if the word 'neutrality' were not included in official statements in 1971, although he admittedly had to back down over this later. In addition, Kekkonen supervised the concluding of a free trade agreement with the EEC despite Brezhnev's opposition, dismissed the Soviet ambassador when he tried to interfere directly in Finland's internal affairs and rejected the Soviet Union's proposal for joint military manoeuvres in 1978. Finally, it should also be remembered that Kekkonen balanced his compliance with the east by establishing significant contacts with many western countries.

Koivisto as President, 1982-1994

Mauno Koivisto was elected president in 1982 under conditions which can be considered exceptional by Finnish standards: it was the first time since the Second World War that the Soviet Union made no attempt to influence the elections. It was generally known, however, that Koivisto as a candidate was not looked on very favourably by the Soviet leadership.

Mauno Koivisto's foreign policy at the beginning of his presidency was characterised by two features: a desire to preserve the political traditions of his predecessor and a gradual disengagement from person-centred foreign policy. Koivisto's talk of not allowing anyone to taint the heritage of Kekkonen and Paasikivi and his prompt action in renewing the FCMA Treaty in 1983, years before its expiry, were understandable in the light of the fact that at the time when he became President the Soviet Union was still led by Brezhnev, the very same person who had attempted to deprive Finland of her neutrality in the 1970's.

An entirely new approach was adopted to the problematic question of the relation between the FCMA Treaty and Finnish neutrality under Koivisto. In contrast to the reaction in the 1970's, when Finland still clung to the neutrality concept, the problem was denied altogether during the Koivisto era by stating that there was no inconsistency between the two. Ideas of the above

kind had been put forward earlier, but what was new was that there were no attempts in Finnish foreign policy to evoke any recognition of neutrality from the Soviet Union. The fact that the official statements issued between Finland and the Soviet Union still talked about neutrality as a goal to be aimed at, about the Paasikivi-Kekkonen policy and an active, peace-oriented neutrality policy did not worry Finland any longer, as neutrality was now on a sufficiently firm footing and was capable of withstanding even the most devious definitions proposed by the Soviet Union.

The main tenet of the doctrine created in the early 1980's was that neutrality and the FCMA Treaty were treated as strictly separate issues. The latter was regarded as a matter which only concerned relations between Finland and the Soviet Union, and any comments on it were to be restricted to documents drawn up by these two countries, while neutrality was a matter of the relations between Finland and other countries and was consequently not to be included in documents of the above kind. It should be noted, however, that in multilateral instances such as the Conference on Cooperation and Security in Europe the Soviet Union expressed its approval of Finland's neutrality. The new pattern of action gained extensive approval in Finland, where only the newspaper *Tiedonantaja* and a group of left-wing activists continued to insist that Finland's foreign policy should set out entirely from the FCMA Treaty.

The rise of Gorbachev to power was not enough in itself to solve this problem, nor those surrounding the credibility of Finland's neutrality policy in the eyes of the west. One indication of this is the doctoral dissertation published on this topic in 1988 by Paavo Väyrynen, several times foreign minister of Finland.²³ The issue was finally settled in October 1989, when President Gorbachev officially recognised Finland's neutrality and the continued importance of the FCMA Treaty. In a sense, he was resuming the practice initiated by Khrushchev in that he linked the two questions together, thereby "defusing" Finland's foreign policy doctrine of the 1980's, which was based on maintaining a distinction between them. This gave the Finnish government a chance to consider the formulation of a new doctrine.

President Gorbachev's visit to Finland epitomized the critical times that Europe was going through. The visit brought a

welcome message regarding Finland's neutrality, but it also raised serious topics for discussion by those responsible for her foreign policy. The problem was that, as far as both its mode of operation and its traditions were concerned, Finland's foreign policy was essentially based on the status quo, i.e. the country had grown accustomed to living and operating successfully in a world divided into two zones. The collapse of this world necessitated a complete re-evaluation of relations with the Soviet Union and with other nations.

The results of this re-evaluation were made available to the public for the first time on 5th September 1990,²⁴ when President Mauno Koivisto, who habitually replaced formal policy declarations with informal interviews, presented the basic outlines of a new doctrine in a TV interview. He stated that the international environment in which Finland was operating had changed: the former divided world no longer existed and the Great Powers were on the same side. As far as Finland's principles of action were concerned, Koivisto observed that there was now more freedom to identify with global issues. The first concrete example of the mutual understanding which prevailed between the Great Powers in the international arena was seen following the Iraqi attack on Kuwait, and it was by virtue of this mutual understanding that Finland was able to offer its representative to the UN Security Council when a committee was being set up to supervise the implementation of sanctions on Iraq.

Measures were also initiated to apply the new doctrine to the basic structures of Finland's foreign policy. Where the country's freedom of action had earlier been expanded by means of new initiatives, the Finnish government now decided to turn its attention to the basic institutional elements of its policy: the Peace Treaty of Paris and the FCMA Treaty. It declared unilaterally in September 1990 that the military restrictions contained in the peace treaty could no longer be regarded as valid and that the references to Germany in the agreement were obsolete. The timing of this move was selected carefully, for the declaration was made after Moscow had agreed on the unification of Germany but before the actual unification date. If Finland had waited any longer, it would have been the only European state whose sovereignty was still restricted by a post-war peace treaty. It was important from the point of view of the relations between

Finland and the Soviet Union that Finland should act alone, without consulting Moscow first, as if to emphasize that it was no longer necessary to do so.

The earlier principle of compliance was not abandoned entirely, however, as Finland adopted an extremely cautious attitude towards the independence process in the Baltic States, as indeed in other matters related to the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. Efforts were made up to the very end to renew the Friendship Treaty, as it was believed that it was only through contractual loyal separatism that Finland could ensure her scope for action in the future. It was also believed that the new doctrine should be constructed with a view to a world in which it would be the Soviet Union and the United States rather than Europe that would control developments taking place in Finland's operative environment.

The Finnish government could perhaps be criticised for the slowness of its reactions, but it should be borne in mind that the basic concept in its foreign policy, the neutrality of the Cold War era, had by no means proved an unsuccessful one. For the first time in its history as an independent country, Finland was now in a situation of having to change its foreign policy despite the fact that its national strategy had proved correct, a decision which was understandably difficult to make.

One slight touch of historical irony in all this is that the neutrality emphasized during the Cold War era resembled autonomy in that once it had been achieved to the full it was not sufficient for the Finns any longer. It was time to look for a new national strategy and a new pattern for the country's foreign policy.

2 TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN UNION

The radical changes in Europe and the Soviet Union in 1989-91 compelled Finland to alter its national strategy and foreign policy. Restricted compliance was no longer valid as a strategy, as Russia was no longer interested in Finland but was concentrating its efforts on establishing direct relations with Europe and the United States. Loyal separatism was similarly out of the question, as the disintegration of the Soviet Union (which took place formally in December 1991, but was a fact some time earlier) also demolished the political structures to which Finland had been loyal. Moscow no longer tried to hamper Finland's integration with the western countries, but Finland alone now had to decide whether or not to follow the example of the other EFTA countries and apply to join the European Community.

This decision was not so much a question of security policy as a change of orientation in which all the factors contributing to the welfare and success of the Finnish people required re-evaluation. Questions of the ability of a small nation to influence the affairs of a vast community and questions of democracy, regional policy, agriculture, environmental effects and development within the EC were all of major significance when making the final decision. It is nevertheless obvious that no such decision would have been made at all had the analysis been that membership of the EC would be harmful to Finnish security. Identification of the factors which enabled Finland to consider joining the EC and suggested that membership was indeed the best alternative requires a further examination of Finland's integration policy from 1989 onwards.

Finland and the new Europe

The changes in Central Europe and the Soviet Union were on balance favourable ones for Finland. The sudden drop in trade with the Soviet Union (from nearly 25% of total foreign trade in the 1980s to 3-4%) was more than compensated for by

the transformation in the political situation, the most advantageous political development being that Finland's freedom of movement in foreign policy increased significantly. The problem was that Finland was a status quo nation which had found its place in a divided Europe but suddenly realised that it did not know how to react to the radical changes taking place in the world. Even though measures were being taken to modernise the country's foreign policy (see end of previous chapter), it was still characterised by an emphasis on continuity. Finland was obviously prepared for détente proving to be no more than a passing phase and considered a return to the earlier confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States to be merely a matter of time.

This reliance on continuity was hampered by the fact that, in addition to Eastern Europe, enormous changes were also taking place in the west. The advocates of integration declared that the old nation-centred international system established in Western Europe in 1648 was being replaced by an entirely new kind of system which involved interaction at three levels: cooperation between regions and between nations, together with a stratum of supranational decision-making. Declarations of the above kind were looked on sceptically in Finland, the general opinion being that integration was something which would take place in Central Europe but in the end would not concern the north. The only thing which was considered really important was to ensure that Finland's own products would have access to the internal markets which were being widely publicised and planned in Europe.

The attitude of Finland towards Western European integration proceeded through distinct stages. The first major boost to the integration policy was the proposal made in 1989 by Jacques Delors, Chairman of the EC Commission, for the establishment of a European Economic Space. The aim was to grant extensive economic advantages to the EFTA countries so that these would not apply for membership but would remain outside the EC proper, which would become, as it were, the nucleus of Europe. The proposal was just what Finland needed: it implied participation without taking part, guaranteeing free entry to the internal markets of the EC for Finnish products, people, services and capital without involving any of the political challenges posed by actual integration.

Unfortunately, Delors' proposal failed to prevent the EFTA

countries from submitting membership applications. The first country to break ranks was Austria, which made its application to Brussels in summer 1989. This decision was prompted by economic pragmatism, as the country's economy was extremely dependent on internal markets, but also by a great deal of political idealism, since it believed that as a member of the EC it could act as a major link between east and west. It is also possible that Austria's application was promoted by a desire to gain a competitive advantage by taking action before the other EFTA countries.²⁵

This move did not arouse any particular concern in Finland. Austria occupied a strategically less exposed geographical position, and one which was further eased by the gradual disintegration of the Warsaw Pact. Finland's situation was quite different, as it shared a border with the Soviet Union, which did not look favourably on Austria's EC application. An indication of Finland's indifference to Austria's decision was that no serious proposals were made for any discussion on issues related to possible Finnish membership of the EC until the Swedish Parliament decided on 12th December 1990 to authorize its government to make such an application, which it did in June 1991.

Sweden's decision to apply for membership of the EC was accompanied by a suggestion by its Foreign Minister, Sten Andersson, that Finland and Norway should make similar applications at the same time. This proposal had apparently not been negotiated at all at the diplomatic level and was rejected out of hand in Finland. President Mauno Koivisto was clearly annoyed at it and did not even try to hide his disapproval, pointing out in interviews that this was by no means the first time that Finland had been humiliated by Sweden. The reasons for such an emotional reaction on part of the President must be sought in the age-old feelings of Finnish inferiority relative to the Swedes, and even in the bitter experiences with the NORDEK project in the late 1960's, an ambitious attempt to launch an integrated Nordic economic area. Koivisto had been Prime Minister at that time, and had had the thankless task of opting out of the project, a decision which had aroused anger among the Swedes. It is evident, however, that the President's reaction was above all based on a profound analysis of the effect of the Swedish

action on Finland's international position.

It had been a basic principle in integration policy after the Second World War that Finland could not afford to remain outside any economic region which already involved both Sweden and all Finland's major customers, i.e. Germany, Great Britain and the other Central European countries. The justification given for this was that the Swedish paper and metalworking industries would otherwise conquer the markets formerly commanded by Finland. It was this principle that had drawn Finland into the EFTA arrangements and the EEC free trade agreement in the wake of Sweden.

As far as foreign policy issues were concerned, Finland's post-war success story had rested on two mutually supportive pillars: skilful management of relations in the east and the fact that Finland did not stand alone in geopolitical terms. An indication of this is the fact that during the Cold War era Sweden and Finland formed a neutral buffer zone which was sufficiently convincing both militarily and politically to guarantee predictability and stability in the Nordic area. The decision of Sweden to abandon this for the EC thus marked an end to the joint security zone. Sweden could be expected to align itself with the other EC countries in the case of a new confrontation between east and west, whereas Finland would be left as an isolated buffer between two major powers. A trend of this kind would have been difficult for Finland to accept, as the country would have had to compensate for Sweden's disengagement from the neutral zone by improving its own defences, particularly its air defences. On the other hand, Swedish membership of the EC without Finland would have marked an end to the Nordic orientation, as Sweden would most likely have focused its attentions on European affairs. The Nordic Council might have been kept alive as a kind of historical relic, but Nordic cooperation would have lacked any content at the practical level. This would have compelled Finland to look for new groups with which to identify in the international arena. There would not have been very many alternatives available, in fact, for the position of Switzerland as a neutral country outside the EC would not have profited Finland in any way, due to the extreme geopolitical and geoeconomic differences between the two, while the anchoring of Finland's security policy to that of Norway, a NATO country,

would also have been out of the question. All that was left was either closer economic and political cooperation with the Soviet Union or reliance on the independence of the Baltic States and the establishment of a new pact between the nations bordering on Russia. It is evident that Finland found neither of these alternatives very attractive, for historical reasons.

Sweden's decision to apply for EC membership can thus be regarded as having demolished Finland's post-war economic integration policy and undermined the foreign policy which had been practiced consistently over the years. It was thus no wonder that the Finnish foreign policy leadership was annoyed. There were a number of reasons why they simply could not yet follow Sten Andersson's advice to board the EC train. First and foremost, it was still impossible to say what direction trends in the Soviet Union would take, so that the possibility of a return to traditional communism maintained by military means could not be excluded. Another reason was that no serious thought had been given to Finnish membership of the EC, and this lack of discussion in itself hampered evaluation of the consequences for the country and its neutrality. Thirdly, Finnish industry still held out hopes for a reintroduction of the special trading arrangements which had applied with the Soviet Union. EC membership would not have allowed any return to these familiar, safe market shares established on political grounds, as the EC countries had a joint policy regarding external trade. Participation in the European Economic Space still offered a chance of resuming these special arrangements.

Finnish integration policy took its next step when the centre-right coalition government led by Esko Aho came into power. It was stated in the government's programme²⁶ that Finland still hoped to sign the EES agreement, although without precluding any other alternatives. This bold opening gambit from a government led by the Centre Party may be attributed to the fact that either the opponents of EC membership had not yet organised themselves or that such opinions simply did not yet exist (Gallup polls indicated that more than 60% of the population were in favour of EC membership and that many people thought that Finland already was a member). Thus discussions began over the remote possibility that Finland might one day consider applying for EC membership. On the one hand there was a fear

of Finland finding itself in the role of an eastern outpost of the West, while on the other hand it was pointed out that living alone beside an unpredictable eastern neighbour had never been a bed of roses either.

The unsuccessful coup of August 1991 in the Soviet Union provided the final major impulse for Finland's integration policy. The first reports of the coup seemed to verify the Finnish fear that rapprochement was only a temporary phenomenon and to suggest that the Soviet Union would inevitably slide back into its former ways. Discussions were initiated in Finland on a return to the earlier compliance policy, and satisfaction was expressed that the political leadership was already personally acquainted with Yanayev.

It was not long before influential people emerged in the economic sector who were eager to draw up plans for a new flourishing of trade between Finland and the Soviet Union, for prospects were now opening up for Finland to benefit from the expertise in politically regulated business relations that had been gained during the Cold War era. This opportunity came to nothing, however, as the communists failed to resume power. If the coup had succeeded, Finland would have been still more closely aligned with the western countries than during the Cold War, since the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact meant that the East had moved further eastwards and Finland was losing its position as an outpost.

Finland was quick to react to the successful counter-revolution mounted by Boris Yeltsin. Where ministers had earlier been advised not to comment on Finland's EC membership, Prime Minister Esko Aho, in a speech in September 1991, dropped the bombshell which had been expected for a long time: he revealed that a committee had been set up to examine the pros and cons of EC membership.²⁷ Aho stated that particular attention should be paid to the implications of membership for Finland's economy and security.

One of the most difficult tasks for the government regarding Finland's EC membership application was to formulate an idea of the defence policy dimensions involved. Quite disparate opinions were expressed on this point within the EC at the end of 1991, a trend which also continued later. On the one hand there was the Continental school of thought that put its faith in

development of the Western European Union and the Common Foreign and Security Policy, and on the other there was the Atlanticist school, which emphasised the importance of NATO and the traditional links between the United States and Europe. In addition to their reliance on different defence organisations, their argumentation set out from different premises and employed different logical structures. The Continentals accepted the neo-functional logic of ever-deepening integration which will naturally extend into the field of military security, while the Atlanticists tended to take a more pragmatic, and at the same time more neo-rationalist approach to questions of security. This was an entirely new situation for Finnish decision-makers. Finland had mastered the realist approach during the Cold War by making a virtue out of the necessity of having to deal with the Communist leaders in the Kremlin. Now her politicians and civil servants were being asked to forget the old realist paradigms and to enter the world of the neo-functionalists and neo-realists. This certainly required some degree of acclimatisation.

Reaching a decision

Once the Maastricht summit had been concluded, all the major elements were at hand for Finland's EC decision: the far-reaching changes which had taken place in Europe had also altered its geopolitical map, and the attempted coup in Moscow in August had made it impossible for the Soviet Union to return to the obsolete system maintained by the combined forces of the KGB, the Communist Party and the army. The Maastricht summit had created a new framework for the future development of the European Community. There was nevertheless one further historical change which took place before Finland made its final decision and which facilitated assessment of the situation: this was the transfer of power in Moscow to Boris Yeltsin in December 1991. With both Gorbachev and the Soviet Union forced into retirement, it was clear to each and every person in Finland that they were really witnessing a historical turn of events. It was now necessary to take prompt action to ensure that Finland would come to occupy a maximally favourable position in the restructured international system which was emerging in Europe.

The EC report submitted to Parliament by the Finnish government in January 1992 marked a major step towards Brussels and a new national strategy. Where it had been emphasised in earlier integration reports that EC membership could not be combined with Finland's policy of neutrality, the government now felt that such a combination was in fact possible, thanks to the change in the neutrality concept brought about by the altered situation in Europe. This suggested that the very essence of neutrality, non-participation in military alliances, could be combined with EC membership. The general security policy conclusion reached in the report was that the EC would not cause any insurmountable security problems for Finland, so that the country could be a member without being regarded as a military outpost of the West on the borders of Russia. On the other hand, it was also stated that any need for the EC to resort to coercion measures might involve Finland in a difficult situation.

The presentation of the EC report was followed by a short but intense discussion on the security implications of membership, a discussion in which the Ministry of Defence and the Commander-in-Chief played a central role. The reason for the high profile maintained by the defence establishment was that neither the President, the Foreign Minister nor the Prime Minister was ready to reveal his own position regarding the EC issue following the publication of the government's report, nor was any of them willing to discuss the manner in which membership would affect Finland's security status. There were no such hindrances in defence circles, however, as the Minister of Defence, Elisabeth Rehn, had expressed her support for EC membership much earlier and now stated openly that the common interest required that she should contribute to these discussions which were so crucial from the point of view of Finland's international position. The Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces, Admiral Jan Klenberg, and the Chief of General Headquarters responded to the wishes expressed by the President and Prime Minister for general public discussion on this topic by putting forward their own opinions, and the officials of the Ministry of Defence also took part. In actual fact, the active role played by the Ministry of Defence would probably have escaped unnoticed if the President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister had themselves been prepared to speak out on the possible foreign and security policy

consequences. It was the silence prevailing elsewhere that drew most of the attention to the opinion of the military.

Speaking at the opening of a national defence course in January 1992, Rehn and Klenberg discussed the EC question from the point of view of security policy. The message was that Finland's defence would remain in the hands of the Finns themselves, according to the principle established by August Ehrensvärd in his time, so that no foreign troops or bases would be allowed and Finland would continue to maintain a credible defensive capacity relative to its international environment. In addition, both of them made it clear that applying for EC membership would not entail seeking any kind of military security, even though Klenberg did state that 'the community as such could greatly enhance the security of its member countries.'

Elisabeth Rehn discussed in her speech the possibilities of the EC contributing to the security of its member countries in terms other than military ones, taking it for granted that Finland would do better by joining the EC than by operating outside it "isolated from our traditional interest groups, that is the neutral countries and the Nordic Countries". She also stated that EC membership would enhance Finland's security in two ways: firstly, "being a part of a larger political community would reduce the probability of the country being subjected to pressures that would detract from its security", and secondly, "it would enable the country to exercise a direct influence on decisions made in the EC's ministerial meetings regarding the security of the whole of Europe".

The Finnish Prime Minister, Esko Aho, and the Foreign Minister, Paavo Väyrynen, reported some weeks later that they were in favour of EC membership. In his own comments, Väyrynen ended up with the same evaluation of Finland's security policy as Rehn and Klenberg, emphasising the importance of not entering into any military alliance and of maintaining an independent defence. In his capacity as Foreign Minister, Väyrynen nevertheless stressed the significance of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe as a process which united the entire continent and which could in the long term be fashioned into a 'collective security system'. This emphasis on the role of the CSCE was important in order to avoid giving a picture of Finland as aligning itself only with Western Europe, as the aim

was also to maintain good relations with the east and to foster the vision of a security framework covering the whole of Europe.

The President, Mauno Koivisto, expressed his opinions on the EC in a speech given at the opening of Parliament in January 1992. He emphasised the significance of Finland's EC decision and the fact that "no report or discussion can provide any unanimous, entirely acceptable idea of what the right decision should be". Personally, he was in favour of EC membership on economic grounds, as he regarded Finland as having become highly dependent on other countries as far as energy supplies and the functioning of the agricultural sector were concerned. "As long as we are dependent on foreign trade we will also be dependent on decisions made elsewhere. This being the case, I feel that it is better to have a vote where such decisions take place."

The fact that Koivisto did not comment on the effects of EC membership on Finland's foreign and security policy attracted considerable attention in public. His omission of these issues in fact left a clear message: by specifically not discussing them, Koivisto was suggesting that Finland's decision did not set out from security speculations. In other words, as the EC's aims were not military but purely political and economic ones, there was simply no need for Finland to emphasise military issues or questions of security policy. This approach was in line with the general contention within the EC that the gulf between east and west should be bridged through political and economic cooperation.

The final touch was put to Finland's preparations for the EC membership application process by a declaration made to parliament by the government in March 1992 which noted that "Finland's national interests seem to be best secured through entering the European Community". No conditions were placed upon membership, but rather attention was paid to the aims and ideas fostered by the government in this respect.

It was also mentioned in the statement that "Finland supports the strengthening of human rights, democracy and constitutional government and the construction of a united Europe, as laid down in the principles of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe." This confirmed that EC membership would not change Finland's foreign policy aims, as

the EC's own objectives in any case set out from the principles formulated by the CSCE.

Disagreement had arisen within the government on the use of the word 'neutrality' when preparing their official declaration. The word was included at the request of the ministers belonging to the Centre Party, however, it being stated that 'in the new Europe in which no cold-war division into two camps exists any longer, the essence of Finland's neutrality can be characterised as abstention from joining any military alliance and the maintaining of an independent defence.' This formulation was almost identical to that submitted to the Swedish parliament by its government in summer 1991, the expression 'the hard core of neutrality' being borrowed from the Swedes. The difference between Finland and Sweden in this respect was that Sweden had given up the term for two reasons when Carl Bildt became Prime Minister. Firstly, it was thought in Sweden that it would give rise to unnecessary misunderstandings within the EC, as it could be taken to imply a desire to avoid any close cooperation or interaction with the EC countries. Secondly, Swedish foreign policy had undergone such a profound change at the end of the Cold War era that the term was no longer considered justified. Instead of neutrality, Sweden began to emphasise the country's European identity and independent defence system.

The Finnish government published its EC declaration on 27.2.1992, i.e. three weeks prior to discussion of the question in Parliament. This procedure was necessary owing to the schedule adhered to in the EC, for had Finland not communicated its desire to apply for membership before the meeting of EC foreign ministers held on 2.3.1992, measures could not have been taken to begin handling its application before the EC summit in Lisbon in June 1992. And if Finland's application had not been discussed at the Lisbon meeting, membership could not have been achieved until some time after 1996. This would have been against Finland's interests, as the EC had decided that its major defence policy decisions would be taken in that same year. It was important for Finland to be able to contribute to this developing defence dimension, especially since a unanimous decision was required, so that a small country such as Finland would have a relatively powerful say in the final outcome.

Discussion of the foreign and security policy effects of EC

membership did not commence at once in 1992, although it is possible to gain a general understanding of the government's viewpoints on this matter by analysing its EC report and declaration, both published at the beginning of 1992. In simplified terms, it can be stated that the documents contained a model consisting of three elements: (1) active participation in the EC, (2) maintenance of stability in the north and (3) an independent national defence capability.

The first element in the triangle was defined in the government's EC declaration in the following manner: "EC membership entails the acceptance of existing EC regulations and procedures, the level already achieved in political cooperation and the aims set out in the community's charter." In other words, Finland could not join the EC and simply choose the types of activity in which it wished to participate but would have to accept the fact that "the member countries are united by mutual solidarity and the promotion of common interests". The assumption that Finland would adopt an active role within the EC was admittedly based not so much on the government's declaration as on the country's custom of devoting itself wholeheartedly to the work of those international organisations in which it has been engaged, as has been evident in the United Nations, the CSCE, EFTA and the Nordic Council.

The second basic element, stability in the Nordic area, was defined in the following manner: "The fundamental aim of [Finland's] policy is to maintain and promote stability and security in Northern Europe. This aim can be enhanced by developing relations with Russia, reinforcing cooperation with the Nordic Countries and creating a pattern of cooperation in the Baltic area".

As far as the third element is concerned, it was said in the declaration that: "As a member of the EC, Finland would maintain an independent defence system which is credible in relation to the country's security needs and its environment."

The decision to apply for EC membership marked a historical change in the orientation of Finland's foreign policy, a change which verified Paasikivi's basic opinion of Finland as having to conform to the radical changes taking place in the balance of power in Europe. Being a small country, it simply could not proceed upstream but had to find its own course

through skilful downstream navigation, holding on to those things that were vital for its existence.

The decision could have been expected to be an easy one as far as commercial policy was concerned, and in the end it was. It is interesting to note, however, that Finnish industry reacted to the application for EC membership in the same manner as it had done when Finland gained independence in 1917. It was evident then, for instance, that industry began to show support only when the Bolshevik revolution had made it impossible to continue trade with Russia, and 75 years later support for EC membership began to emerge only when the disintegration of the Soviet Union had undermined the old system of bilateral trade between the two countries. In their commercial report issued in January 1992, the Confederation of Finnish Industries and the Federation of Finnish Employers communicated that they were in favour of EC membership on the grounds of competitive ability and export potential, for Finland faced severe competition on European markets and could obviously not rely on a revival of trade with Russia.

The elections of 1994

The presidential elections of 1994 took place during the time of transition in Finnish foreign and security policy. Finland had applied for membership of the European Union but had not yet concluded negotiations on the exact terms. Consequently the elections were expected to centre around this membership question. Politicians, newspapers and political analysts predicted that the final battle would be fought between a candidate who was a strong supporter of joining the European Union and one who was either opposed to membership or at least highly critical.

This was not to be. The two candidates who advanced to the second round were both firmly committed to membership of the European Union and regarded full participation in European integration as the most appropriate response to changes in Finland's geopolitical circumstances.²⁸ Elisabeth Rehn, the Minister of Defence, who captured 46% of the decisive second round vote, argued that membership of the European Union was

a natural continuation of Finland's historical Scandinavian orientation,²⁹ while Martti Ahtisaari, a career diplomat, who eventually won the election, declared repeatedly that he did not want the border between Finland and Sweden to become the eastern frontier of the European Union. The one candidate who built his entire campaign on opposition to membership of the European Union, Keijo Korhonen, gained only a few percent of the votes in the first round, and Paavo Väyrynen, the former Foreign Minister, who advocated neutrality and made acceptance of membership conditional upon successful conclusion of the negotiations (and who later came out in opposition to membership because of the burden it would impose on Finnish agriculture), finished third and thus failed to make it into the second round.

Once installed as President, Martti Ahtisaari continued to speak out strongly in favour of membership of the European Union. He stated unequivocally in his inaugural address that "enlargement of the European Union will promote our national well-being and security,"³⁰ and during the seven months that preceded the referendum he took up the question of membership in his monthly visits to different parts of the country and in his meetings with foreign heads of state. His arguments for joining the European Union were concisely presented in a speech he made during his first state visit, to Sweden in April 1994.

Speaking at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Ahtisaari stated that "European integration and the collapse of communism have opened the way for the evolution of a continent based on shared values and co-operation." As far as Norden was concerned, Ahtisaari hoped that "all the Nordic countries seeking membership will be able to enter the Union at the same time." He noted further that "Finland and Sweden share the assumption that, by developing the common foreign and security policy of the EU, we will create the best environment for closer cooperation between the Nordic Countries and northwestern Russia." And he added that "EU membership would mean the step which, in my opinion, would best ensure the permanent historical closeness of Finland and Sweden."³¹ The fact that Finland and Sweden signed the framework document of Partnership for Peace at a joint ceremony in May 1994 underlined that the two countries had indeed come very close to each other in matters of foreign and security policy.

Related to the issue of membership of the European Union was the question of who would represent Finland in the European Council. Two opposing camps formed on this question, those who thought that the President should represent Finland, in view of the stipulation in the constitution that the President shall be responsible for the conduct of Finland's foreign relations,³² and those who supported the Prime Minister, arguing that President Koivisto (1982-1994) had consistently sought to strengthen parliamentarism at the expense of his own presidential powers. He had been fully backed by the political parties in this pursuit, and from this point of view, the argument ran, any decision to the contrary would mean recourse to the rigid presidential system of the past.³³

Although most of the political elite, including the Prime Minister, Esko Aho, were in favour of prime ministerial representation, the President was of the opinion that he would decide in each case whether he himself or the Prime Minister would lead the Finnish delegation. A compromise was finally offered by Max Jakobson, who as a result of his long, distinguished diplomatic career enjoyed the status of an elder statesman in Finnish political debate. Writing in *Helsingin Sanomat*, the leading Finnish daily, Jakobson argued that Finland should send both the President and the Prime Minister to the European Council. While he conceded that it would be pragmatically convenient to give the lead to the Prime Minister, he rejected this conclusion for historical and psychological reasons. "The change ahead of us is so great that it will try the psychological adaptability of the people. The world situation is chaotic and the future uncertain. It is not wise to start dismantling our traditional decision-making structure in foreign policy, for the people are used to it." In his view the President could direct foreign policy through the government, as President Koivisto had suggested, even if he himself attended meetings of the European Union.³⁴ Constitutional experts restricted themselves to pointing out that membership of the European Union would in any case necessitate a comprehensive review of the pertinent parts of the Finnish constitution.

The debate lost some of its edge following Jakobson's intervention, possibly in response to opinion polls which showed that the people were reacting adversely to the sight of a squabble

over who would represent Finland in the EU before they had decided whether or not to join. After the referendum the compromise suggested by Jakobson was accepted as the starting point for Finnish representation.

On 16th October 1994 the Finns voted in favour of membership of the European Union, although the result, 57% in favour and 43% against, was less emphatic than most of the newspapers had predicted. Nevertheless, it gave a strong enough mandate to Parliament to ratify Finland's membership with the required two-thirds majority.

3 FINLAND'S NEW GEOPOLITICAL POSITION

Geopolitics has for a long time been an essential part of any discussion of Finland's international position. Towards the end of the 19th century statesmen sought to explain the country's autonomous status within the Russian Empire by resorting to geopolitical arguments, and in the 1920s and 1930s the Finns debated their foreign policy in terms of either a "border state" or a Scandinavian orientation. Correspondingly, it was the presumed permanence of the geopolitical circumstances that formed the rationale for Finland's policy of neutrality during the Cold War era. Against this background, it was only natural that a polemic on the new geopolitical realities should begin after the radical changes of 1989-90.

The debate had already begun in 1990, with considerable discussion over the role of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, but it was only after the collapse of the Soviet Union that leading politicians began to allude to geopolitical arguments. The discussion was initiated on the political level by the Minister of Defence, Elisabeth Rehn, during her visit to Washington, when she stated in a speech to the National Press Club that Finland had reacted to the changes in her geopolitical position by applying for membership of the European Union.³⁵ This statement sounded harmless enough, but it was not accepted by everyone. Paavo Väyrynen, self-appointed guardian of Finland's policy of neutrality and still serving as Minister of Foreign Affairs at that time, did not agree with his colleague at all, and made it very clear to journalists that in his view Finland's geopolitical position had not changed.³⁶

Väyrynen's view was presumably based on the observation that the crucial factor in Finland's geopolitical position, her common boundary with the superpower Russia, had not altered in any way, whereas Rehn was setting out from the fact that such significant changes had taken place in political circumstances and the military balance of power that one could well assume that some geopolitical alteration had taken place. In a later speech she laid more stress on the magnitude of the change by noting that only three events within the last 150 years had had the same

impact, the Crimean War and the two World Wars.

In order to determine the extent of the geopolitical change in the aftermath of the Soviet break-up, it is necessary to make a short excursion to the Cold War situation, after which it will be useful to establish the fundamentals of Finland's geopolitical position in the new era.

Exit the Nordic Balance

Security in northern Europe during the Cold War was often discussed in terms of the Nordic Balance, a concept developed in the 1960s by a Norwegian researcher, Arne Olav Brundtland. The idea was that there existed a military balance made up of qualified Norwegian and Danish participation in NATO (which meant no foreign bases and no nuclear weapons in peacetime), Sweden's neutrality based on strong defences, and "the special Soviet restraint in dealing with Finland". According to this theory, comparable possibilities existed for both the US and the Soviet Union "to neutralise any increased involvement by the other superpower, thus removing the incentive for any initiatives leading to increased tension in Northern Europe."³⁷

The concept of a Nordic Balance had been harshly criticised from various perspectives over the years.³⁸ The Finns, for example, never accepted the theory because it seemed to equate Finland's Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with the affiliation of Norway and Denmark to NATO. Nevertheless, the theory survived for decades as an important frame of reference for discussions of security in the region.

The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and of the Soviet Union and the independence of the Baltic States effectively annulled the Nordic Balance theory. The international system of the Cold War, of which the Nordic Balance had been a subsystem, collapsed. Finland dissociated itself from the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, and the Soviet Union was replaced by the Russian Federation. Sweden became eager to establish herself as a European power rather than a Scandinavian one, Norway began to keep a wary eye on the United States as its government started restructuring its military commitment to

Europe, and, most significantly, new stars emerged in the Nordic constellation: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - and even Poland.

The new geopolitical situation in the Nordic-Baltic region began to bear a resemblance to that of the 1920s and the 1930s. Firstly, Russia had become unstable, as had been the case in the interwar period, secondly, the independence of the Baltic States was a direct reminder of the interwar situation, and thirdly, the unification of Germany meant its return to the area of the Baltic Sea as a significant economic and political force. Fourthly, the collapse of the Warsaw Pact together with the independence of the Baltic States shifted the centre of gravity in the Baltic Sea area from the southern part, around the Danish Straits, to the north, towards the Gulf of Finland, where it had been during the interwar period. Lastly, the dissolution of the special Cold War relationship between the Soviet Union and Finland (symbolised by the FCMA Treaty) meant that Finland and Sweden found themselves in similar international positions.

These changes revived a number of controversial issues from the interwar period. The Commander of the Finnish Navy, Admiral Sakari Visa, called for the remilitarisation of the Åland Islands, which had been demilitarised after the Crimean War in 1856, and whose status had been debated anew every time the geopolitical situation had changed. In this sense the islands could be regarded simply as a barometer of geopolitical changes in the region. The Finnish government responded to the Admiral's suggestion by stating that it did not see any reason to alter the legal status of the Åland Islands. It is nevertheless notable that during his visit to the islands, President Koivisto left the door open for possible changes in the context of European integration by observing that this had a clear security dimension, in the light of which the status of the Åland Islands would undoubtedly have to be reviewed.³⁹ It is also worth mentioning that the Finnish armed forces are obliged to defend the Åland Islands in the same manner as all other parts of Finland, which means that adequate troops would have to be transported there in the event of a crisis.

Another debate which harked back to the 1930s concerned the merits of Swedish-Finnish defence cooperation. Wilhelm Agrell, a Swedish researcher, and Bengt Gustafsson, the Commander-in-Chief of the Swedish defence forces both argued in favour of close military cooperation, while Elisabeth Rehn, as

the Finnish Minister of Defence, also spoke in favour of security and defence policy cooperation but refrained from suggesting any military alliance. The most detailed proposal came from Paavo Väyrynen, who left the government in 1993 to concentrate on running for the presidency. After failing in his attempt, he began to oppose Finland's plans to join the European Union, and as the de facto leader of the "No to the EU" camp, he wrote an article in the journal *Nordisk Kontakt* in which he outlined his proposal for a Nordic Community as an alternative to the European Union. His idea was that Sweden and Finland should remain neutral and that NATO should undertake to defend the air space of these countries in the case of war.⁴⁰ How this arrangement could be implemented was not explained. The proposal has nevertheless lost its rationale as both Finland and Sweden have opted to join the European Union.

Despite the similarities between the 1990s and the 1930s, the new geopolitical constellation was not a reproduction of the prewar situation. Instead of an expansionist Soviet Union, there emerged a Russian Federation that was committed to cooperation with the West, and instead of the weak, internally divided Finland that saw itself as a lonely outpost of Western civilisation in the 1920s and 1930s, there was a politically stable nation beginning to seek closer links with Western Europe. At the same time, instead of an isolationist America we heard clear statements from the United States indicating that there was no intention of making a full withdrawal from Europe. And finally, instead of a fragmented and unstable Western Europe there emerged an integrated community that sought to project its political and economic stability eastward.

The fundamentals of Finland's new position

Although the significance of geopolitics depends on political, economic, social and technological developments, it may be useful to try and identify the most important geopolitical factors present in the post Cold War situation. Starting out from a wider, continental perspective, the Nordic-Baltic region forms the only area that directly links Russia with Western Europe. The only

alternative land and sea connection was through the Black Sea and Turkey, but this is less useful from the Russian point of view as Turkey is not likely to be as integrally linked with Western European institutions as the Nordic states.

The second important geopolitical factor is that the Nordic-Baltic region is situated between the Western geoeconomic area and the Eastern geopolitical one. In addition, the Western geoeconomic area is one in which traditional geopolitical issues such as the location of borders, access to the oceans, the ownership of raw materials and the sizes of populations no longer play very significant roles, having been by and large overcome by the creation of the Common Market and the establishment of the EU. In the absence of geopolitical considerations, geoeconomic issues become important: who has the shortest routes to the main markets, who can make best use of the proximity of low-wage countries, and so on.

Traditional geopolitical issues still occupy a predominant position in the East. There are countless unresolved border questions within the territory of the Commonwealth of Independent States, there has been intense debate between Russia and the Ukraine over access to the Black Sea, and control over oil, gas and other resources is a constant subject of debate between the central power in Moscow and the regions. One consequence of this division into a geopolitical area and a geoeconomic one is that Finland's international position is "more geopolitical" than that of other western European countries.

The third significant geopolitical factor in the Nordic-Baltic region has to do with great power spheres of influence and/or interest. These two concepts may coincide, but they are not the same thing. A sphere of influence refers here to political (pre)dominance, while a sphere of interest simply means that a great power has economic, political, security or other interests in the region. From the perspective of the great powers (or "influential international actors", which may be a more apt term) it can be argued that the Baltic-Nordic region is divided into three spheres of interest/influence. Firstly, there is the Russian sphere of interest and influence, which continues to be strong in the three Baltic States. In addition to the remnants of Soviet forces, such as retired officers or special troops remaining in these countries, the most conspicuous and most important

manifestation of this is the Kaliningrad area situated between Lithuania and Poland, which extends the sphere of military influence to areas that Russia would not otherwise have access to.

Secondly, there is the EU sphere of interest/influence, which most obviously encompasses Sweden and Finland but has also extended to the Baltic states to a lesser degree. The future of this sphere of interest will depend on the development of a common foreign and security policy within the EU and on the progress made in trade relations between the European Union and Russia. It should be noted that of the members of the European Union, it is Germany that has the strongest geopolitical interest in the Baltic region, especially in the enhancement of Poland's geopolitical position. Great Britain, on the other hand, has the closest interest in the Atlantic coast of Scandinavia.

Finally, there is the Atlantic - or American - sphere of interest/influence, which is felt most strongly in Norway on account of that country's membership of NATO, but also extends to Sweden and Finland and to some extent to the Baltic States as well. There is naturally also a strong American interest in Russia as such. This interest is based on the one hand on the existence of a substantial Russian nuclear arsenal in the Murmansk region and the question of how to prevent nuclear proliferation, and on the other hand on the interest of the United States in supporting reform in Russia for the sake of strengthening democracy and freedom.

The fourth fundamental geopolitical consideration in the region is the fact that no Western country is ready to extend military guarantees to the Baltic States in the foreseeable future. In this sense one can argue that they have inherited Finland's postwar geopolitical position, although with a few qualifications. Firstly, postwar Finland enjoyed a degree of "deterrence credit" vis-à-vis the Soviet Union because it had successfully repelled Soviet attempts at occupation during the war. No such deterrence credit exists in contemporary Russian-Baltic relations. Secondly, while Finland was left outside Western institutions after the war (Finland could not receive Marshall Aid, for example, because of Soviet objections), the Baltic States are included in numerous European cooperative structures.

It should be noted in addition that the individual Baltic

States differ significantly one from another in many respects: language, traditions, speed of reforms etc. There are even differences in their strategic positions, as Lithuania is affected by developments in the Kaliningrad region, whereas Estonia's position is determined more by its proximity to St. Petersburg.⁴¹ Even so, looked at from the point of view of geopolitical development in the USA-EU-Russian Federation context, they may be treated as forming one geopolitical region.

The Baltic connection

Estonia is the closest of the Baltic States to Finland in terms of geography, culture, language and history. In fact it is often the case that when a Finn speaks about the Baltic States in the plural he actually means Estonia alone. This is natural, since Tallinn is only approximately 80 km (50 miles) away from Helsinki across the Gulf of Finland, so that on a good day it takes just over an hour by hydrofoil to travel from the capital of Finland to that of Estonia.

This has not always been so, for there were no speedy ferries or air connections between Finland and Estonia during the Cold War, visas were difficult to obtain and official ties were non-existent. Although the Finnish government accepted Estonia's incorporation into the Soviet Union as a fact, it had never withdrawn its recognition of the independent Republic of Estonia as declared in 1919. This is nothing for the Finns to feel proud about, of course, for if the Soviet Union had demanded that Finland retract her earlier recognition of Estonia, she would undoubtedly have complied. Nevertheless, the fact that there was an unrevoked declaration of recognition for Estonia in the archives of the Foreign Ministry meant that Finland did not have to recognise the country's independence in 1991. It was sufficient for the government to state that *de facto* relations between Finland and Estonia now corresponded to the *de jure* relations that had always existed.

The struggle for the independence of Estonia had an impact on the way in which the Finns discussed their own history. The fact that Finland had been able to avoid the fate of its Baltic

neighbours in 1939 and 1944 was contemplated once again in newspapers, books and even films, and a film entitled *The Winter War* drew the largest crowds to Finnish cinemas at that time. From a historical point of view, it became increasingly clear that Finland's ability to distance herself from the Baltic States had been one of the key determinants of her independence and security. This differentiation had already taken place during the 19th century, when Finland was an autonomous Grand Duchy of Russia while the Baltic States were fully incorporated into it. During the Cold War, Finland again found herself in a radically different position from her southern neighbours.

Finland's policy towards the Baltic States during the late 1980s and early 1990s hinged upon three main principles: to promote their independence (this emerged as a conspicuous policy goal only after the failed Moscow putsch of August 1991), to avoid harming Helsinki-Moscow relations, and to prevent conflict between Moscow and the Baltic States themselves. To admit that the second of these principles was the overriding one does not mean that the other two did not exist. They certainly did, even though Finland was not as vocal in its support for the Baltic States during their struggle for independence as some other countries were.

Sweden, for example, adopted much more vociferous tones both during the Baltic struggle for independence and during the debate over the withdrawal of Russian troops in 1992-1994. The Swedish Prime Minister, Carl Bildt, went as far as to state that it was not altogether clear that Sweden could remain neutral if the Baltic States were attacked. He indicated that Sweden would not intervene militarily, but that the Swedish government would use strong political and economic instruments to help the Baltic countries.⁴² This statement was heavily criticised by the leader of the opposition, Ingvar Carlsson. After the change of government in October 1994, Carlsson stated that, contrary to what Carl Bildt had said, Sweden would remain neutral in the case of a crisis in the Baltic Sea area.

Finland, on the other hand, never gave the Baltic States any reason to believe that it would help them significantly if a crisis were to arise. The tacit argument was that Finland was not strong enough to guarantee the security of Estonia, not to mention the other Baltic States, and to try to do so would only worsen its

own security. Consequently, the most Finland could do was to help Estonia to integrate itself economically and politically with Western Europe.

Even though Finland was not interested in any form of active military cooperation with the Baltic States, it began to contribute to the training of Estonian officers. In the same vein as Finnish officers attend military academies in foreign countries, Estonian officers started to attend Finnish military schools. Thus there were altogether about thirty officers and non-commissioned officers in training in Finland each year.

In addition to Estonian officers being trained in Finland, a number of retired Finnish officers and reserve officers travelled to Estonia in the early and mid-1990s to work in advisory roles, having no connection with the Finnish government. In addition, members of Finnish officers' clubs went to Estonia in groups of between three and five to provide basic training.

It is very likely that Finland's close ties with Estonia will develop even further as the result of Finland's joining the European Union, and the link between Helsinki and Tallinn in particular is likely to become a very dynamic cultural and economic connection.

Russia - Finland's 'new' neighbour

When speaking of the significance of Russia for Finnish security, most Finns are reminded of the advice given by President J.K. Paasikivi (1946-56): "Gentlemen, please take a look at the map!" The geographical map still looks much the same, but the political landscape has changed entirely. Instead of an expansionist, Communist neighbour, Finland now shares a border with a Russia that is struggling towards political reforms and a market economy.

Although the reforms are well on their way, Russia has plenty of rough waters lying ahead. We may yet see further fragmentation, a move towards a more authoritarian form of government, or step by step progression towards economic stability and a democratic form of government. In any event, it will take decades, not years, for Russia to settle comfortably into

its new role, whatever this may prove to be.

The fact that the reconstruction of Russia will take a long time (it took about 20 years after the revolution of 1917 before the new political order was firmly installed) poses a problem of analysis for the Finnish government. This problem is that one cannot draw any far reaching conclusions from the situation in Moscow on any particular day. One has to rely on a broader interpretation of what is and is not possible in post-Communist Russia.

Gradual progress towards democracy and a market economy is certainly a possibility, and if this trend continues it will place Finland in a favourable position politically and economically, as her geographical location (with a common boundary of 1300 kilometres) and long history of successful trade relations will give her an advantage over other Western countries. In this positive scenario it would be possible for Finland to regain some of the Russian markets that she has lost as a consequence of the collapse of the Soviet economy. But even under favourable conditions it will take a long time to bring Finnish-Russian trade to anywhere near the level at which it was during the Cold War, when the Soviet Union accounted for almost a quarter of Finland's external trade. The proportion had fallen to only about three percent by 1993, although it began to grow again in 1994.

The economic well-being of Russia is not merely a question of trade for Finland, however, as a lowering of the vast economic and social divide that currently exists between the two countries is badly needed for reasons of stability. This divide is not visible to people visiting the frontier region because there are vast areas on the Russian side of the border that are almost entirely uninhabited, but it is evident that the border still signifies an abrupt change in terms of political systems, economic situation, religion, language and size of population. Unless this divide is alleviated in the long run, it may turn out to be a cause of instability in the region.

Other, less optimistic scenarios are also possible. These include the eventuality of a deterioration in relations between Russia and the West (either the EU or the United States or both). In such a case Finland's geographical position would be a less comfortable one. This possibility calls for a further look at

Finland's geopolitical location.

Questions of military strategy are not decisive in the northern part of Europe at the present moment. Non-military issues and threats are more central to the development of the Baltic Sea region than are the deployment and structures of military forces. These non-military uncertainties include environmental threats, the possibility of a nuclear accident and the theoretical (although very unlikely) possibility of mass migration. These risks cannot be overcome without cooperation between Russia and the West. This is why Finland has a national stake in helping to construct a new code of East-West relations.

The military situation in the Baltic has changed radically. The Russian navy has withdrawn from the Baltic States and will have to patrol the Baltic Sea from two points in the future: Kaliningrad and Kronstadt (near St. Petersburg). These naval bases are separated by a distance of approximately 540 nautical miles (1000 km or 625 land miles). Russian air defences and their early warning system are being relocated east of Estonia, while at the same time Germany has taken over the naval bases in the former area of East Germany and has the potential to build up a more prominent presence in the Baltic.

The Baltic States are working very hard to establish credible control over their territorial waters and air space. There are visible improvements, e.g. in the control of Estonian territorial waters, but all three states are having great difficulties in establishing an air control system which will serve both civilian and defence purposes.

The most sensitive security issue in the Baltic region is the relationship between Estonia and Russia. In addition to the two remaining military installations, Skrunda radar station in Latvia and the Paldiski nuclear submarine reactor in Estonia, the dismantling of which was begun in early 1994, there is an unresolved question concerning the rights of Russian nationals in the Baltic states. Unless this question is resolved to the satisfaction of all parties it may have repercussions for the stability of the region.

The long border with Russia has not caused any special problems for Finland. The adjacent Russian areas are among the most stable in the whole of Russia. There are no civil wars, nor autonomous areas seeking independence, and the control

maintained by the Russian border guards is good. The strategically important Murmansk region, which is located next to Finnish Lapland, is also a very stable area.

Nevertheless, there has been a numerical build-up of Russian troops along the Finnish border as a result of the withdrawal from the former Warsaw Pact countries and from the Baltic States. At the moment there are more than 300 000 men stationed in the Leningrad military district, although not of them all under the command of that district, since the figure includes all categories of troops (army, strategic air force, air defence, navy and marines), some of which are directly responsible to the supreme command of the Russian defence forces and others are under navy command.

The quantity and quality of the military hardware located close to the Finnish border has also increased. In 1994 there were approximately 800 combat aircraft in the Leningrad military district and just over 500 helicopters (excluding those of the border guard detachments), while the number of tanks was around 1500. The improvement in the quality of the material located here has been a result of both the CFE agreement and the withdrawal of the forces from Central Europe. Given an abundance of equipment, it was natural to place the best of it in the strategically important Leningrad district.

Although these Russian troops do not constitute a threat to Finland, it is quite clear that in the long run Finland would not like to see such a dense concentration of military power along its borders. The Russians have stated that the new troops are there only on a temporary basis, and an official exchange of information concerning them has started between the two governments.

The status of Karelia (the area that Finland had to cede to the Soviet Union at the end of the last war) was debated to some extent in the early 1990s. The most active participants in this were largely elderly people who had had to leave their homes in the area as a result of the war. The idea did not catch on, however, and various opinion polls conducted between 1992 and 1994 showed that only about 25% of the Finns were in favour of opening official negotiations on the subject. Consequently it seems unlikely that the question will be taken up officially, and the Presidents of both Finland and Russia have denied the existence of such an issue. From a political point of view it would make no

sense whatsoever to try and open negotiations on these ceded territories. Firstly, the Russians would be sure to refuse to make any concessions, and secondly, Finland has succeeded in distancing herself from all countries that have open border questions and/or difficult minority problems and it would be unwise voluntarily to rejoin the group of those that have such problems.

Finland's decision to join the European Union has not been questioned by the Russians. Indeed, some of the leading politicians have openly encouraged it, provided that the enlargement of the Union does not lead to a new division in Europe in which Russia would become an outsider. On the other hand, Russian opposition to the enlargement of NATO into eastern Central Europe and the Baltic States is quite unambiguous. There are some Russian nationalists, however, who have called for a return to pre-First World War boundaries, which would mean annexation of the Baltic States, Poland and Finland, for example, but fortunately these views represent a small minority in the Russian political establishment.

All in all, it must be remembered that Finland's relations with post-Communist Russia now stand on a firm basis and that political, cultural and economic relations have developed favourably. This is important, as Finland's border is also the eastern border of the European Union.

4 FINLAND'S FOREIGN AND DEFENCE POLICY AFTER NEUTRALITY

Finland's accession to the European Union began a new phase in the country's history, consolidating its position in Scandinavia and Europe. At the same time, membership offered a new platform for cooperation with Russia and the Baltic States. In terms of foreign and security policy, membership combined old themes with new possibilities. The old themes included Finland's commitment to strengthening cooperative security in the context of the CSCE and the United Nations, and the new possibilities included the development of the northern dimension of the Union's common foreign and security policy.

Ahtisaari as President, 1994-

During the Cold War, Finland had repeatedly emphasised the predictable and stable nature of its foreign policy, to the extent that instead of using the simple term "foreign policy", most Finns preferred to speak of a "line in foreign policy". The purpose of this was to hint that Finland's external policies were not affected by temporary fluctuations in international relations. This meant, of course, that after the Cold War was over many Finns were in a state of considerable consternation because of the loss of these clear definitions and predictable patterns. They demanded to know whether Finland was neutral, non-aligned, politically aligned or what was the proper description of their country's foreign policy.

The government responded to these pressures by emphasising the transitory nature of international relations and by introducing two key concepts: "military non-alignment" and "credible national defence". However, instead of talking about remaining militarily non-aligned indefinitely, it insisted that Finland was "not looking for external security guarantees". The message was that while Finland was willing to participate in security integration, this participation was not to be viewed in

traditional terms. The debate was not between neutrality and military alignment but between participation and non-participation in the development of a system of common security.

Finland's new foreign policy "line" began in the autumn of 1990, with a unilateral reinterpretation of two post-war treaties which had been the cornerstones of her foreign policy, the FCMA Treaty and the Paris Peace Treaty. Since then steps have been taken towards participation in the pursuit for a common, cooperative security arrangement. Finland became an observer in the NACC in 1992, applied for membership of the European Union in March 1992, began a dialogue with the WEU in 1993 and joined the Partnership for Peace Programme in the spring of 1994. The announcement by Prime Minister Esko Aho in October 1994 that Finland would join the Western European Union as an observer as soon as she became a member of the European Union was in line with this new emphasis on participation and cooperative security. At the same time, however, he restated the fact that membership of a military alliance was neither a goal of Finnish foreign policy nor a necessary outcome of the country's observer status in the WEU.⁴³

Most of the steps to establish Finland's new foreign policy were taken during President Koivisto's term of office, but it was only during the Ahtisaari presidency that a clear foreign and security policy doctrine began to emerge. Central to this doctrine was a set of assumptions concerning the nature of security and the dynamics of international relations.

One of the first premises in President Ahtisaari's foreign policy doctrine was that the time of static security models was over. Instead of trying to prevent change, the proper goal was to control it, to move from static to dynamic stability. This theme was common to most of his recommendations, ranging from the need to enlarge the membership of the European Union to the constructive management of worldwide economic competition.

The second assumption behind Ahtisaari's foreign policy thinking was that the concept of security had broadened to include economic, social and environmental questions. Speaking at the annual meeting of the National Defence Courses, he stated that "economic and technological competitiveness will largely decide how well each country will succeed in this new order. The more conventional idea of the prime importance of military might in

assessing relations between states must be set against this historic change."⁴⁴ A few months later he noted that membership of the European Union would require a readiness "to develop security as a broad concept, to weigh its alternatives and to define it."⁴⁵

The third premise behind Ahtisaari's doctrine was that the end of the Cold War and the intensification of European integration had together transformed international relations in Europe and worldwide. This transmutation had implications for the nature of international relations and for the division of labour between large and small nations.

As far as the nature of international relations was concerned, Ahtisaari saw the end of traditional power politics. "In fact, this century has been one major upheaval following another, of breaking free from the system of national states, the system that bred power politics." The goal was to prevent "a return to a Europe of national states where disputes were settled by wars and power politics."⁴⁶ Instead, Europe should "gradually form a security area in which the defence systems would make war between the countries in the region or threats of military action impossible." This was a distant goal, however, since "the significance of geopolitics will not disappear as rapidly as the media would have us believe."⁴⁷

If the withering away of the national state was one side of Ahtisaari's coin, then the growing importance of European integration was the other. On the European level he saw integration as the best guarantee of national and common security. Speaking to foreign diplomats at his inauguration on 1st March 1994, he noted that "the enlargement of the European Union is essential in the pursuit of greater stability in Europe as a whole." Later he developed the theme further. Speaking about European and Finnish security, he noted that "it is the enlargement of the European Union that can best safeguard the development of the European lifestyle in a more human direction. Enlargement will prevent protectionism, isolationism and military competition. Integration as such will create a new kind of security guarantee, which membership of the EU will be able to offer us immediately."⁴⁸

The end of the Cold War had in Ahtisaari's view altered the division of labour between small and large states, and had created a multilayered network of international relations

consisting of new centres of power and new levels of political authority.⁴⁹

On the division of labour between states of different sizes, Ahtisaari pointed out that "no single state today wishes to carry the burden of the world on its shoulders like Atlas in Greek mythology. Now the burden has to be shared between big and small states alike, so that none of them tires or is exhausted under the weight."⁵⁰ Speaking specifically about Finland in this new context, he noted that "most international problems can only be solved through strengthening cooperation between states and peoples... In these efforts there are neither big nor small states; there are only states that are willing or unwilling to cooperate. My country wishes to act strongly among those willing to cooperate."⁵¹

In Ahtisaari's view there already existed four centres of economic and political power: "The development of the world economy is drastically reforming the world economic and political order. In addition to the United States, Japan and the European Union, south-eastern and eastern Asia is emerging as a significant economic power." This was not the entire picture, however, because "the Russian economy will inevitably improve at some point." The new situation posed challenges for the international community. In Ahtisaari's view the most important task on the global level was to manage the economic, cultural and political competition between new centres of power in such a fashion as to prevent it from becoming military in nature.⁵²

In addition to global relations, Ahtisaari saw two other levels of political authority: continental and regional. In the continental context, European integration and the building of a European security area based on cooperation and common security were the main ingredients of his vision. In the regional context, cooperation with Sweden, the Baltic States and Russia formed the framework for Finland's activity.

The central theme in Ahtisaari's regional vision was a strong emphasis on Russia. While relations with the Soviet Union had been conducted between two centres, Moscow and Helsinki, Ahtisaari wanted to emphasise the new regional aspect of the Russian-Finnish relationship. "Russia is also a Russia of regions. St.Petersburg and its surrounding areas, Karelia and Kola will have greater opportunities for economic and cultural ties with

the Nordic Countries.”⁵³ During his visit to Oslo in October 1994 he returned to this theme, noting that Norwegian initiatives in furthering regional cooperation with Russia in the context of the newly formed Barents Sea Council were highly commendable.⁵⁴

In a visit to Tartu University in Estonia, he spoke extensively about the role of small states, observing that “each state today must find its place within a regional, continental and global context. It is increasingly clear that the smaller countries of the Baltic Sea region share the same kind of position in world politics.” Furthermore, he was prepared to state that “the Nordic Countries have a well-established tradition and long experience of their own successful cooperation to offer the Baltic Sea region as a model.”⁵⁵

Part of Ahtisaari’s regional and continental vision was close cooperation between Finland and Sweden. As previously noted, Prime Minister Carl Bildt of Sweden and President Ahtisaari had agreed that “the basic requirements of the foreign and security policies of both Sweden and Finland are closer today than ever before in the modern era.” The question that they left unanswered was what these basic requirements were.

One can deduce from an analysis of Ahtisaari’s foreign policy statements that there were three or four basic requirements that brought Finland and Sweden into ever closer cooperation in the post-Cold War era. Firstly, there was their common desire to maintain stability in the Nordic area, for which membership of the European Union was seen as an essential precondition. Both Ahtisaari and Bildt argued that once inside the European Union, Finland and Sweden would strive to attract EU interest to issues affecting northern Europe and to channel EU resources there - i.e. to give the Union a northern dimension.

Secondly, there was the wish to help the Baltic States approach Europe. Both Sweden and Finland stated repeatedly that they advocated EU membership for Estonia and the other Baltic countries at the earliest possible moment. According to Ahtisaari, a realistic timetable might be the early years of the next century. Much would, of course, depend on internal developments in the Baltic States; and much would also depend on the Russian-Baltic relationship. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that if Finland and Sweden had not become members of the European Union they would not have been able to promote

Baltic links with the European Union.

A third requirement that brought Finland and Sweden closer to each other was the historical mission to contribute to the building of a new relationship between Russia and Europe. President Ahtisaari stated that "supporting change in Russia, cooperating with the Russians, and linking Russia firmly into a common European security region are objectives that Finland and other Nordic countries can help to attain." The new Swedish Prime Minister, Ingvar Carlsson, signalled agreement with this view.

Lastly, Sweden and Finland have declared an interest in cooperating on environmental issues. In 1994 there were still ten old Soviet-built nuclear power plants, two research reactors and roughly two hundred reactors in submarines and ice-breakers in the vicinity of Finland. Guaranteeing the safe operation of these was seen as a formidable challenge for Russian specialists, and it was clearly in the interests of Sweden and Finland, and indeed of the entire EU, to assist the Russians in their efforts.

Another environmental project for which joint efforts by members of the European Union was a necessary precondition was cleaning of the Baltic Sea. Planning for such an effort had began long before Finland's accession to the European Union. The White Paper of the European Commission published in 1993 indicated that this environmental rescue operation could qualify for substantial support from the budget of the European Union. If successful, it could make the beautiful beaches of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania very attractive to tourists from Central Europe - not to mention the intrinsic value of a cleaner environment.

During the Cold War period Sweden and Finland had played exaggerated international roles relative to their size and population. Now these countries are seeking to find new roles in a changed international environment. Because of their geopolitical position next to Russia and the Baltic States it may turn out that they will again adopt significant positions. Much will depend on how well they can seize the opportunities offered by the common foreign and security policy of the European Union.

Finland's defence policy

Joining the European Union did not alter the role of the Finnish defence forces, but it did provide a new political and geopolitical framework for the planning of defence policy. In the new situation this consisted of two collateral aspects: the continued importance of a credible national defence and the opening of the door to participation in international operations aimed at strengthening common security.

In order to explain the changes in Finland's defence policy between the Cold War and after, a short reiteration of the Cold War situation is required. Finnish defence policy at that time consisted of two layers. Firstly, the country emphasised its commitment to the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance. This meant that the threat scenario described in the Treaty, "an attack by Germany or a country allied with it", was accepted as part of Finnish defence policy doctrine. This declaratory level (together with such arrangements as signalled support for it) formed a dimension that can be termed "modernist defence policy". It was modernist because it was not based on the traditional view that only the Soviet Union posed a threat to Finnish security. This declaratory policy had gradually developed over the years, so that by the 1980s it had come to represent a state of "symmetrical defence" in which both the eastern and western threat scenarios were taken into account - even though no concrete threat scenarios were mentioned in Finnish foreign or defence policy statements. On the level of military planning the threat scenario was entirely different. Here the starting point was an attack by the Soviet Union with the objective of occupying the country, a line of thinking which, on account of the obvious connection with the age-old view that the only possible enemy is Russia, can be termed "traditionalist". As time went by, defence planning came to be more in harmony with the declaratory policy, however, as Finland developed its capabilities to defend itself against western attacks. Improvements were made in air defence and surveillance, in the defence of Lapland and in the surveillance and defence of Finnish territorial waters.⁵⁶ But even so, the greatest emphasis was always placed on the army and its capabilities for defending the country in accordance with the traditional threat scenario.

When the Cold War came to an end, Finland was compelled to change its declaratory defence policy. With the FCMA Treaty gone, the same arguments no longer applied, and with the threat of a great European war gone, the defence forces had to change the foundations of their planning. It was no longer possible to build on the concept of marginal defence - the idea that Finland could be drawn into hostilities only in the context of a major European war, a situation in which the enemy would only have marginal forces available with which to attack Finland. Nor was it possible to rely on the functioning of the nuclear deterrent between the superpowers.

Finland began to react on the declaratory level in 1990. The first indication of a change was a statement by Vice-Admiral Jan Klenberg at the CSCE doctrine seminar in Vienna. Instead of repeating the old formulae, Klenberg stated that the planning of Finnish defence was based on three threat scenarios: an attack aimed at occupying the country, an attack aimed at making use of part of the territory of Finland, and an attempt to subjugate the leadership of the state.⁵⁷ The second step in the transformation of the declaratory defence policy was an analysis by the leading generals that joining the European Union did not endanger Finnish security.⁵⁸ As soon as Finland applied for membership, the President, as supreme commander of the defence forces, declared that the country was ready to accept the Maastricht Treaty, including its provisions concerning a common foreign and defence policy. Since the goal of the European Union was the development of a common defence system, this statement meant that Finland was ready to abandon the notion of symmetrical defence. The third declaratory step was an Order of the Day issued by the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Klenberg, in the summer of 1993, in which he emphasised the need for a credible national defence but left the door open to international military cooperation. "An independent defence cannot be based on foreign help even if it must be capable of international cooperation on an equal footing."⁵⁹ This statement was only natural, since Finnish officers were already taking part in seminars in the context of NACC. Cooperation was further intensified later when Finland joined the Partnership for Peace programme.

At the same time as these changes were taking place, the role of the Ministry of Defence was becoming much more

important than it had been during the Cold War. Elisabeth Rehn, who started as Minister in June 1990, was instrumental in bringing this about. Rehn was not the prime mover in effecting changes to Finnish security policy - credit for that must be given to the President at the time, Mauno Koivisto - but she was undoubtedly a powerful force acting in that direction. It was she who outlined Finland's new position in the changing world, established high-level international relations and set in motion numerous reforms within the defence administration. But most important of all, she altered Finland's whole defence policy culture, 'demystifying' the discussion of defence and security affairs and demonstrating that a person coming from outside the security establishment could understand questions of the mobilization of forces, peace-keeping operations, fighter aircraft and disarmament treaties and could carry on an intelligent discussion on these subjects and make up her own mind on what was the best alternative from the perspective of Finnish defence policy. This meant in turn that she was able to raise the interest of the general public in defence matters.

Prior to this facelift brought about by Elisabeth Rehn there had been few politicians interested in the defence portfolio, certainly not from the major parties. The reason was quite simply that the position was not regarded as a significant one. It was the permanent undersecretary who controlled defence spending and day-to-day affairs and the generals who were responsible for the country's defence and for briefing politicians on the military's most urgent needs. High-level policy decisions had been taken at the President's office, in his home or at the Foreign Ministry, while the security of the country's borders was the province of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. A Minister of Defence was needed chiefly for making official visits and inspections and for answering questions in Parliament - but for little else.

Rehn's appointment did not transform the position overnight. The parliamentary defence committees first set up in the 1970s had created a foundation for the long-term development of defence policy, and participation in the CSCE process required a high level of knowhow on the part of officers, thus bringing the defence forces closer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Changes in the status of the Ministry of Defence had begun to be apparent in the 1980s, however, as it adopted a more open, consultative

attitude. Thus, when Rehn arrived at the Ministry of Defence in summer 1990 all the ingredients for a raising of the ministry's profile already existed.

From the very beginning Elisabeth Rehn's numerous speeches constituted an important part of Finland's new foreign and security policy. In her very first official speech, in June 1990, she raised the question of women taking part in peace-keeping missions. This topic was by no means a new one, but had been discussed on and off for about ten years to no avail. A report on the subject had been produced by the Ministry of Defence in 1982, and the government had proposed in 1983 that the word "man" in the law on the defence forces' peace-keeping operations should be altered to "person". This change had been approved by Parliament the following year, but no further measures had been taken up to the time of Rehn's speech. Her recommendations nevertheless met with an enthusiastic response in the form of letters to newspapers and statements by voluntary organizations. Eventually six thousand women applied for entry to the peace-keeping force, and 34 were accepted.

Once this step had been taken, new discussions arose on the possibility of voluntary national service for women. Rehn was not in favour of this at first, as, having commissioned an investigation into the subject, she noted that it was difficult to find any reason why women should be prevented from making a career in the defence forces if they were so inclined. The existing situation was that there were some three thousand women already serving in various expert capacities who had no prospects of advancement.

Another theme which aroused discussion was the place in the nation's memory afforded to those officers and civilians who had been involved in establishing caches of arms after the last war. Rehn took up this subject in her speech at the opening of the National Defence Course in March 1992, when she began by observing that the general increase in openness in Finnish society allowed this episode to be recalled to mind. "The issue of the arms caches led to the questioning and arrest of thousands of ordinary, patriotic citizens. In order to demonstrate their guilt, a retrospective law was passed of a kind that was without precedent in our judicial system, and the outcome was that almost 1500 people who had lived blameless lives up to that time were

committed to prison." Since the planning and implementation of the arms cache operation had been a purely military precaution, Rehn was of the opinion that these sentences could in no way be justified. "As I understand it, those who helped to hide the arms were doing no more than what was their duty at the time. I don't see that bringing the matter up at the present time is a question of restoring their reputation but simply of acknowledging the facts."

National defence and participation in common defence

Although rapid changes took place in Finland's foreign and security policy in the early 1990s, the pace of change in the armed forces was much slower. Modernization of its command systems and communications was undertaken in the early years of the decade, when a new division of the country into military areas was introduced, and purchases were made to improve the army's fire-power and mobility, but the basic tenets of territorial defence remained as they were. A new fleet of F/A 18 Hornet fighter aircraft was purchased to replace the ageing Draken and MIG-21 planes, and some garrisons were merged to improve efficiency. The overpowering theme for the period was nevertheless the lack of money.

The Finnish defence budget has traditionally been around 1.5% of the GNP, and this amount had been sufficient throughout the 1980s since the economy was growing rapidly. Then, by 1991, the country was hit by the worst economic recession in peacetime history. This meant that the defence budget contracted for three consecutive years, the cumulative drop over the period 1992-1995 being about 10%. At the same time a large proportion of the defence budget was tied up in the purchase of the new fighter aircraft. The end result was that considerable savings had to be made in operational expenses and in other purchases. In fact the army's situation would have been very difficult indeed without the opportunity to buy relatively inexpensive material, including artillery pieces, tanks and ammunition, from the stock of the now defunct East German army.

One of the most problematic areas in which savings had to

be made was refresher training. The annual numbers of reservists called up for these exercises had to be reduced from 50 000 to 30 000, which had an immediate impact on the level of preparedness of the territorial defence system.

Finland has a trained reserve of about one million men, although the wartime strength of the armed forces is about half that amount, the army consisting of 460 000 men, the air force 30 000 and the navy about 12 000. The peacetime strength of the army is 28 000 men, of whom 22 000 are conscripts, that of the navy 3000 (1500 conscripts) and that of the air force 4500 (1500 conscripts). A new addition comprises women officers and non-commissioned officers, whose wartime duties are not restricted by law.

The decision to purchase the new fighter aircraft was a significant one from two points of view. Firstly, it was the first time that Finland had procured American interceptor aircraft since the Winter War, and secondly, the government decided to go through with the deal despite the serious economic depression.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs commissioned a book on the history of Finnish peacekeeping to be published in 1995. The book is symbolic for two reasons. Firstly, peacekeeping was a very central element in the Finnish policy of neutrality during the Cold War, and secondly, by the time of publication both the Finnish policy of neutrality and traditional peacekeeping had come to an end. Finland was preparing to join the European Union and the United Nations was searching for new ways and means to resolve world crises.

Much had changed since the Cold War. In those days the division of labour between small states and major powers was a clear one: the latter took care of grave issues such as the nuclear deterrent and massive retaliation and the small states were responsible for national defence and peacekeeping under the auspices of the United Nations. By the mid-1990s this tidy division no longer existed. NATO was moving into peacekeeping, and peacekeeping itself was in search of a new character.

Culture and attitude are extremely important in questions of peacekeeping and crisis management. Indeed, it seems that in peace support missions the great divide does not run between NATO members and non-members but between countries of different cultures and with different attitudes concerning the use

of military force. This culture and attitude is very often a function of the size of the country, but not always. On the other hand, it is very much a product of historical experiences. One good example of this is Denmark. A comprehensive study of Danish foreign policy over two centuries⁶⁰ shows quite convincingly that, as a once great European power that had suffered bitter experiences in continental wars, Denmark had developed an aversion to entanglements in military affairs not directly linked with its own national security. This, the author claims, explain Danish foreign policy during the Cold War, a policy that sometimes sought to distance the country from the hard core of the military guarantee that NATO was offering. Some observers have suggested that the same historical experiences explain the Danes' reluctance to accept the common foreign and security policy goals of the Maastricht Treaty.

Other Nordic countries have had similar historical experiences. Sweden decided after the Napoleonic Wars that it was wise to be content with defending her existing territories, and Finland and other countries learned this lesson as a result of the last war. An attitude of 'defensive' defence was created, in which preservation of the national territory was justifiable but no other use of force. Finland was not alone in this thinking, of course, for a similar defensive, non-provocative attitude existed in most small NATO countries, despite the fact that they had opted for collective defence rather than neutrality as their main orientation.

Finnish attitudes to peacekeeping have been coloured by this general aversion to the use of force outside one's own territory. In this tradition peacekeeping was understood as a definitely peace-oriented process best described by the words once used by Dag Hammarskiöld: "Peacekeeping is not a job for a soldier. But only a soldier can do it."

This attitude became clear at the beginning of the Finnish debate on peace enforcement in 1993-94, in which the military leaders were quick to point out that Finland had neither the tradition, the capabilities nor the required professional army to participate in missions beyond its borders. The message was that we would be happy to continue with traditional peacekeeping but were not ready to go into anything more adventurous. This attitude did not last very long, however, for both Finland and the

great powers were forced to rethink their positions.

The United Nations and the United States had encountered severe difficulties in Somalia, and there was a growing recognition in Finland that peacekeeping missions of the old kind hardly existed any longer. General Gustav Hägglund, who took over as Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces in November 1994, had already been arguing in 1993 that a modern war zone does not easily allow for the traditional positioning of peacekeepers between the two warring parties. Instead of there being clear lines of demarcation, today's missions are being conducted within countries afflicted by a domestic war or insurgency situation. This generates friction and consequently increases the need to protect oneself against both direct threats (hostile acts aimed at the peacekeepers themselves) and indirect ones (residual mines, crossfire, incursions, etc. and the possibility of a recurrence of war).⁶¹

In 1993 the Ministry of Defence attempted to change the law on peacekeeping with the intention of allowing the troops to defend themselves better, although participation in peace enforcement was still clearly excluded. The proposal nevertheless met with such a degree of popular outcry that the government did not bother even to place it before Parliament. The feeling was that this was the first step towards sending Finnish soldiers to die in foreign countries. In view of the emotional response, the government decided to leave the whole question of revising the law on peacekeeping operations in abeyance until after the dust had settled.

Meanwhile the military leaders were preparing the Finnish people for a more active role in international crisis management. General Hägglund stated in a speech in August 1994 that "there may be a situation in which Finland would, for reasons of its own security, consider it necessary to participate in crisis management functions outside our own borders."⁶² This statement shows that the Finnish leaders have come a long way from their initial conservative response to the new challenges of international security. They are now ready to participate constructively in both crisis management and new forms of peacekeeping.

NOTES

1. See Per Cramer, *Neutralitetsbegreppet, Den Permanent Neutralitetens utveckling*, Stockholm 1989, pp. 35-36. For a comprehensive discussion of the history of Swiss neutrality, see Bonjour, *Geschichte des Schweizerischen Neutralität*, Vol. I-VI, Basel 1967-1970.
2. The Great Powers decided in the "Switzerland Committee" to recognise Switzerland's neutrality. The decision was entered in the minutes appended to the Treaty of Paris, in which Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia and France undertook to guarantee that Switzerland would remain neutral at all times.
3. See Olav Riste, *The Neutral Ally. Norway's Relations with Belligerent Powers in the First World War*, Oslo 1965. pp. 29-32.
4. The neutrality regulations contained in the maritime legislation were defined in more detail in the Paris Congress arranged after the Crimean War in 1856. All the Great Powers, including Britain, approved the principle according to which "a neutral flag applies to an enemy's merchandise, excluding contraband". The earlier practice was that neutral ships were not allowed to transport any goods from countries engaged in war.
5. See Juhani Paasivirta, *Suomi ja Eurooppa. Autonomiakausi ja kansainväliset kriisit (1808-1914) (Finland and Europe. The Period of Autonomy and International Crises (1808-1914))*, Helsinki, pp. 189-216. Osmo Jussila, *Maakunnasta valtioksi (From a Province to a State)*, Juva 1987, and Heikki Viitala (ed.), *Snellman, valtakunta ja keisarikunta (Snellman, nation and empire)*, Publications of the Snellman Institute 10, Jyväskylä 1990.
6. Paasivirta, *ibid.* p. 227
7. *Helsingfors Dagblad*, 15th April 1863, Editorial
8. 'We cannot see how Finland could resist one large army or even two armies. Finland's extensive coast in fact requires a considerable number of troops for its defence. The only possibility of saving the country from enormous, aimless suffering would be for both the confronting powers to declare Finland neutral, including its merchant fleet, with the exception of 'contraband' goods, of course. *Ibid.*
9. *Åbo Underrättelser*, 18.4.1863, Editorial, *Åbo Underrättelser*, 30.4.1863, "Finlands Ställning" (The position of Finland) and *Åbo Underrättelser*, 9.5.1863, "Helsingfors Tidningar och Finlands neutralitet" (Helsinki Newspapers and the Neutrality of Finland).
10. J.V.Snellmann, "Krig eller fred för Finland" (War or peace for Finland), *Litteraturblad* 1863, No. 5 (May), 9.7.1863.
11. Excerpt from Osmo Jussila's article "J.V.Snellmanin suhde Venäjän valtakuntaan ja valtaistuimeen" (J.V.Snellman's relations with the Russian Empire and throne) in Heikki Viitala (ed.) *Snellman, Nation and Empire*. p. 24.

12. "Suomen valtiollinen tila" (The constitutional status of Finland), Suometar 8.9.1863
13. Jussi T.Lappalainen, "Venäjä vai Skandinavia" (Russia or Scandinavia) in Heikki Viitala (ed.) Snellman, valtakunta ja keisarikunta (Snellman, Nation and Empire), p. 38.
14. See Juhani Paasivirta, "Nuoren Leo Mechelinin näkemyksiä diplomaatiasta ja ulkopoliittikan hoidosta" (The young Leo Mechelin's ideas of diplomacy and foreign relations), offprint.
15. See Osmo Jussila, Maakunnasta valtioksi (From Province to State), p. 137, 143.
16. J.R.Danielson-Kalmari, Mihin suuntaan ? (In which direction ?), Porvoo 1901.
17. Tuomo Polvinen, Paasikivi I, 1989, p. 51.
18. Jukka Tervonen, J.R.Danielson-Kalmari, historiantutkija ja -opettaja (J.R.Danielson-Kalmari, historian and teacher), Helsinki 1991, p. 45.
19. "The ultimate aim of our policy is to establish a free, independent Finland. We should not forget, however, that Finland has suffered a defeat in military terms and now has to survive on its own". Instructions issued from the British Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the British members of the Control Commission, 12.10.1944. A copy of the document is contained in J.H.Magill's book Tasavalta tulikokeessa (The Republic in an ordeal by fire), Mikkeli 1981.
20. If the opinions of Tauno Jalanti, an acquaintance of Paasikivi (who had anything but a good impression of him), can be relied on, he went extremely far in Moscow in 1940. According to Jalanti, Paasikivi had stated that "We used to be part of Russia once and felt happy about it. I wouldn't consider it impossible even now." Jaakko Paavolainen, Väinö Tanner - patriootti. Elämäkerta vuosilta 1937-1966 (Väinö Tanner - a patriot, biography of the years 1937-1966), Helsinki 1989, p. 442.
21. Tuomo Polvinen, J.K.Paasikivi, Valtiomiehen elämäntyö I, 1870-1918 (J.K.Paasikivi, The life's work of a statesman, 1870-1918), 1989.
22. See Timo Vihavainen, Kansakunta rähmällään. Suomettumisen lyhyt historia (A Nation on its Knees - Brief History of Finlandisation), Kerava 1991.
23. Paavo Väyrynen, Finlands utrikespolitik - den nationella doktrinen och framtidens mänsklichetspolitik (Finland's foreign policy - the national doctrine and future human affairs policy), Juva 1988.
24. See Risto E.J.Penttilä, "Uuden ulkopoliittikan alku" (The beginnings of a new foreign policy), Kanava, 9/1990.
25. See Risto E.J.Penttilä: "Itävallan integraatiopoliittikka: "taloudellisen pragmatismen ja poliittisen idealismin ehdoilla" (Austrian integration policy: economic pragmatism and political idealism), Ulkopoliittikka, 2/1990.
26. Programme of the Finnish government led by Prime Minister Esko Aho, 26.4.1991, Helsinki 1991.
27. "Suomi Euroopassa" (Finland in Europe). UKK commemorative lecture given by Prime Minister Esko Aho at the Paasikivi Society, Helsinki 3.9.1991.
28. These were the first direct presidential elections in the history of Finland.

- Previously the president had been chosen by an electoral college.
29. "Historically Finland's possible membership of the European Union can be seen as a continuation of the Scandinavian orientation that we chose in the 1930s. After many reverses in history, we are now in a situation where we have achieved Nordic unity and security, which we had already set as our goal in the interwar era. Now it is natural that we should strengthen this unity and security by establishing closer links between Central Europe and the North. For this purpose membership of the European Union is required." Elisabeth Rehn in *Helsingin Sanomat* on 25th October 1993.
 30. President Martti Ahtisaari in his inauguration speech before the Finnish Parliament on 1st March 1994.
 31. Speech by President Martti Ahtisaari at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs in Stockholm, April 14th, 1994.
 32. Article 33 of the Constitution stipulates that the President shall determine Finland's relations with foreign powers, although state treaties must be ratified by Parliament. Similarly, it is the President who is empowered to declare war or peace, with the consent of Parliament.
 33. One of the most vocal proponents of representation in the person of the Prime Minister was the former vice chairman of the Centre Party and Member of Parliament, Olli Rehn. See, for example, "Vaikutusvalta turvattava EU:ssa" (Influence must be ensured in the EU), *Helsingin Sanomat*, 20.8.1994.
 34. Max Jakobson, "Suomen malli Eurooppa-neuvostossa", *Helsingin Sanomat* 18.8.1994.
 35. Elisabeth Rehn, "Finland in the New Europe", a speech at the National Press Club in Washington on 16th October 1992.
 36. See *Helsingin Sanomat* 13.11.1992 and *Ilta-Sanomat* 5.12.1992.
 37. See Arne Olav Brundtland, "The Nordic Balance, Past and Present", *Cooperation and Conflict*, II/1966.
 38. The weaknesses of the theory were numerous. Firstly, there existed no balance in terms of an equality of forces in the Nordic region during the Cold War, since the Soviet presence in the Murmansk area was far in excess of any Western presence in Norway or Denmark. Secondly, the concept does not take into account the different strategic positions of the Nordic countries. While Norway's strategic significance is of a maritime nature, Finland's importance lies in the fact that it can constitute a potential corridor between the two military alliances. Thirdly, the theory implies that the Nordic countries are somehow posed against each other, while in reality there is no such juxtaposition. Fourthly, the Finns have found the concept unappealing since it implies that any increase in NATO's military presence in Norway could be "neutralised" by an increase in Soviet military influence in Finland. Lastly, the concept was criticised by the Finns because it equated the Finnish-Soviet FCMA treaty (which does not constitute a military alliance) with Norwegian and Danish membership of NATO. See Risto E.J. Penttilä, *Finland's Search for Security through Defence, 1944-89*, London 1991, p.108.
 39. Speech by Koivisto when visiting the Åland Islands in summer 1993.

40. Paavo Väyrynen, "Europeisk union eller Nordisk gemenskap?" (European Union or Nordic Community?), Nordisk Kontakt 7-8, 1994.
41. See E. Nordberg, *The Baltic Republics: A Strategic Survey*. Finnish Defence Studies 6, National Defence College, Helsinki 1994.
42. Prime Minister Carl Bildt "Sverige och de Baltiska Länderna". Speech at the Swedish Institute for International Affairs, 17 November 1993.
43. Prime Minister Esko Aho in a speech given to the National Defence Course on 11th October 1994. See *Helsingin Sanomat* 12th October 1994. It is significant that Aho chose to clarify Finland's position vis-à-vis the WEU a week before the referendum on membership of the EU.
44. President Ahtisaari at the Annual Meeting of the National Defence Courses in Helsinki on 16th May 1994.
45. At the autumn meeting of the Federation of Finnish Trade Unions at Kiljava on 18th August 1994 (marking the centenary of the first national trade union in Finland, the Finnish Association of Typographers).
46. Martti Ahtisaari, "The Baltic Sea Region within an Integrating Europe", at the University of Tartu, Estonia, 1st June 1994.
47. Martti Ahtisaari, "Relations between Finland and Sweden in a Changing Europe", at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs on 14th April 1994.
48. Martti Ahtisaari at Kiljava on 18th August 1994, the centenary of the first Finnish trade union.
49. "A global community of states and coalitions of states is taking shape, based on a number of centres of power and influence." "We should evaluate our foreign and security policy in terms of its regional, European and global implications and contexts." President Ahtisaari at the Annual Meeting of the National Defence Courses in Helsinki on 16th April 1994.
50. Martti Ahtisaari, "The Baltic Sea Region within an Integrating Europe", at the University of Tartu, Estonia, on 1st June 1994.
51. Martti Ahtisaari, in his speech to foreign diplomats on 1st March 1994.
52. "There exists competition between these economic centres of power. The management of this competition in every respect will be the most challenging security issue at the turn of the century." All the quotations are from Ahtisaari's speech at Kiljava on 18th August 1994, the centenary of the first Finnish trade union.
53. Martti Ahtisaari, "Relations between Finland and Sweden in a Changing Europe", at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs on 14th April 1994.
54. Martti Ahtisaari, "The Nordic Countries in a changing international community", at the Oslo University, 19th October 1994.
55. Martti Ahtisaari, "The Baltic Sea Region within an Integrating Europe", at the University of Tartu, Estonia, 1st June 1994.
56. See Risto E.J. Penttilä, *Finland's Search for Security through Defence 1944-1989*, London 1991.
57. *The Military Doctrine of Finland*. Statement by the Chief of the General Headquarters of the Finnish Defence Forces, Vice Admiral Jan Klenberg. Seminar on Military Doctrine, Vienna, 17 January 1990. Finnish

- Defence Studies 1, Helsinki 1990. pp. 85-91.
58. Admiral Jan Klenberg at the National Defence Courses in Januar 1992.
 59. Admiral Klenberg, "Order of the Day of the Commander-in-Chief", 4th June 1994.
 60. Carsten Holbraad, Danish Neutrality. A Study in the Foreign Policy of a Small State, Oxford 1991. (ISBN 0-19-827356-8)
 61. See Gustav Hägglund, Peacekeeping in a modern war zone, Survival, vol XXXII, no 3., May/June 1990, pp.233-240.
 62. General Hägglund in Joensuu on 19th August 1994.

DOCUMENTATION

THE COMMAND AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM OF THE FINNISH DEFENCE FORCES

Statement by the Defence Staff

The fundamental task of the Finnish Defence Forces is to repel an armed attack against the country in all conceivable situations. This task prioritizes the demands placed on the organizational structure. It also means that the operational activities assume a supervising and dominant position in relation to other activities.

The command and administrative system of the Finnish Defence Forces provides the framework for the territorial defence system. Primarily, the command system and the administrative organizations are designed to meet the demands of crisis and wartime situations, but they also have peacetime responsibilities. The total tasks of the system could well be divided into peacetime, stepped-up readiness and wartime tasks.

The same organization cannot, however, operate in an optimal way in all situations. In normal times it has to be effective and function within acceptable economic constraints. At the same time it must be capable of expanding and of functioning, if necessary, as an efficient instrument in extreme circumstances.

Planning for the latest reorganization of the Defence Forces was begun in 1986. The most important objectives in the reorganization were:

- To preserve the territorial defence system and mobilization readiness covering the whole country;
- To change the organization to correspond with the development that has taken place in the rest of society;
- To exploit the benefits of rationalization that can be achieved with modern systems;
- To organize personnel in a more efficient way;
- To centralize materiel administration;
- To delegate decision-making powers and resources and to reduce centralization; and

- To secure the command system in a crisis.

After much planning and legislative work the new command and administrative system entered into force at the beginning of 1993. The changes regulating its line of action, modernisation and the reorganization of personnel training are still going on. A major innovation was the introduction of a system of management by objectives. Tasks and economic decision-making powers have been delegated to lower organizational levels. The new command and administrative system is estimated to function smoothly by the late 1990's.

Essential changes in the organizational structure were:

- The reorganisation of the Defence Staff and the establishment of the Army Staff within it;
- A reduction in the number of operational areas of responsibility by dividing the country into three commands and further into 12 military provinces;
- The centralization of materiel management, covering the lifespan of the materiel, on one echelon, and the setting up of the Defence Materiel Establishment; and
- Focusing the responsibility for training regular personnel mainly on the National Defence College and the National Defence Institute.

The Defence Staff is the supreme headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces and at the same time the military headquarters of the President of the Republic of Finland. Due to the dominance of the Army in the Finnish Defence Forces, the Defence Staff controls the armed forces on the ground through three commands. Thus the Army Staff within the Defence Staff is not an operational headquarters of the Service.

The main role of the three commands is on wartime planning and leadership. Each commander coordinates the operation of the Air Force and Navy elements within his command. As a headquarters responsible for operational preparations for crisis situations, the command is in charge of the operations, training and personnel planning of its headquarters and troops, and overall guidance of other activities as well.

The Air Force Headquarters and the Naval Headquarters command their respective service units on a national level. Both services focus their activities in the area considered most

important at the moment. Each is responsible for the operations, personnel, training and special logistics of its own Service.

The military province headquarters are charged with the defence of their areas. In peacetime they develop the mobilization system and logistics system of the provinces and undertake defence planning. The military provinces also form a co-operative network which coordinates civil administrative plans with national defence measures. The boundaries of the military provinces therefore coincide with those of civil provinces. The metropolitan area, however, forms its own military province, different from the civilian one.

The peacetime units are responsible for the training of both conscripts and reservists. They will be expanded, if necessary, to form wartime units and they mobilize a part of the wartime troops. A military unit receives the national norms from the Defence Staff, and the guidance needed for personnel training from the commands. In operation and logistics the unit is primarily commanded by the military province.

The new command and administrative system has reduced the number of regional headquarters by half, resulting in the merger of units and establishments and a more efficient use of personnel. Full advantage can be taken of the system as the new method of leadership by objectives has been introduced.

The renewal of the Defence Forces' command and administrative system was carried out shortly before the radical savings plan was implemented in the Finnish state administration. We have been compelled to use some of the resources released by the reorganization to achieve savings objectives, and only a part of the resources have been directed to improved efficiency. Nevertheless, the reorganisation has proceeded well during the first years: the new organization has substantially increased flexibility and efficiency of the Defence Forces. The changes that have taken place in Finnish society and around us have been taken into consideration. Finally, a sound basis has been created for efficient and modern lines of action as well as continuous development of the Finnish Defence Forces.

FINLAND'S NEW SYSTEM OF OFFICER EDUCATION

Statement by Major-General Antero Karvinen, Rector of the National Defence College, 1988-1994.

In days gone by, it was very often the family background of a young man that persuaded his choice to become an officer, if indeed he had the chance to choose his career at all. For the education of a soldier began at a very young age. The military career of a modern Finnish officer is determined in quite a different way. The first prerequisite for a military career is a sound secondary school education and the matriculation certificate. The second is to perform well as a conscript and to complete the Reserve Officer Course with good grades. In other words, a young man must demonstrate his excellence when serving as a conscript. This procedure has several advantages:

- all officers will have had a similar and solid basic education,
- all will have demonstrated their abilities early, by standing out amongst other conscripts,
- future officers will have become familiar with the Finnish conscription system through personal experience.

The above arrangement will continue to be the foundation for career officers trained under the new system, which came into force on 1 January 1993. Some observations about the new system can already be made.

The restructuring was carried out with the following considerations in mind:

1. The training of career officers was to be organized into larger and more coherent units, in place of the many shorter courses and training sessions of the past. It was decided that the training should be divided into two levels: a four-year period of cadet training leading to the degree of officer and a two-year period leading to the degree of general staff officer. At both levels students are selected through an entrance examination. The total length of studies is about 6 years. This, then, is the basic price to be paid for a professional officer capable of shouldering responsibility at the highest level.

Training for the officer degree stresses practical knowledge and mastery of the peacetime tasks of a junior officer. However, cadets also receive sufficient instruction in tactics to be able to assume the command of a battalion in wartime. In the new system cadets are allowed some freedom to select subjects and thus influence their own study programme. Each cadet will nevertheless receive a definite amount of basic training in core military subjects. Moreover, the cadet study programmes take account of the special needs of all the services and their branches, to ensure that junior officers are capable of performing a variety of duties, ranging from infantry training officer to pilot of a military aircraft.

By statutory degree, the officer's degree is now equivalent to a university degree at master's level and fully comparable to other master's degrees awarded in Finland.

The postgraduate programme leading to the general staff officer's degree is begun only after 5-6 years of practical service and experience and is completed in two stages. All officers will attend the Senior Staff Officer Course, and on the basis of this some will be selected to continue in the General Staff Officer Course. This second course will be divided into several areas of concentration appropriate for the training and education of specialists. Although the decision to become a general staff officer is a voluntary one, recent years have shown a clear increase in the desire to do this.

2. Concurrent with the reorganization of education, the National Defence College, which bears the responsibility for instruction, was itself reorganized (Figure). Institutions of military training that earlier had been administered and organized separately were brought together under a single administration. Instruction and research were combined into departments organized along subject lines and responsible for instruction at all levels. At the same time, the lecturer and instructor organizations, until then separate, were coordinated. Administration and logistics were combined into a single unit, allowing clear savings and a simpler operation.

3. The standard of instruction has noticeably improved as a result of the modernization and centralization. The departments have been able to focus their resources on certain courses and exercises as needed. Good results have been attained in several

exercises.

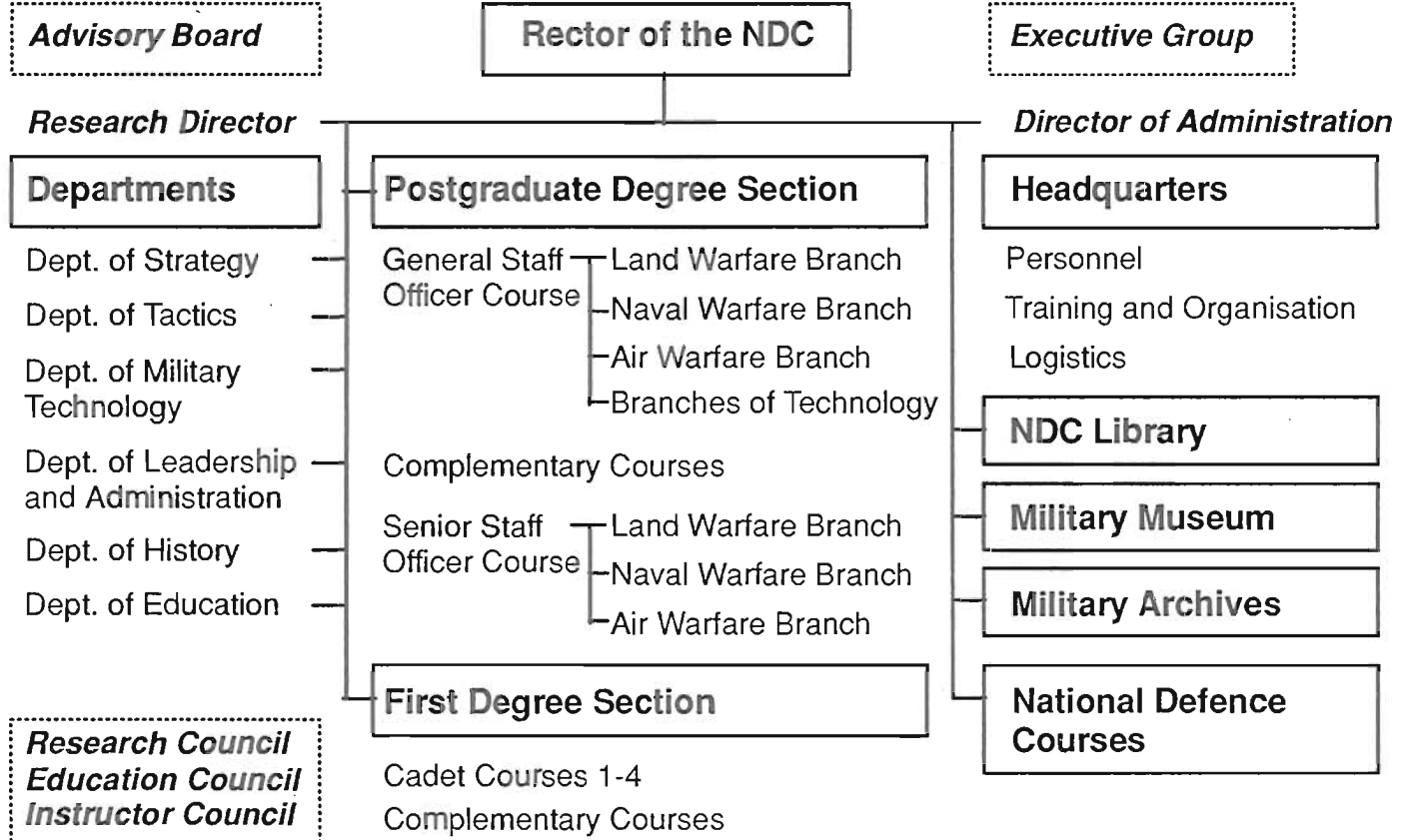
4. The new organization has made it possible to commence military research in fields that until now have suffered from lack of personnel resources.

5. Uniting the three old military training institutes into one has also made it possible to cut back on personnel and reduce operating expenses.

The new College begins its work well aware of the hopes placed on it, but the experiences accumulated thus far encourage us to move persistently forward. It will be some time before the reorganization is complete: before the first officer, starting as a cadet, has attended all the courses at the College, we will be well into the 21st century. The other universities in Finland have supported the College from the start, which speaks well for fruitful cooperation in the future.

The improved educational programmes offered by the National Defence College, and effective instructors, are ensuring the success of the new system of educating Finnish officers in spite of the cuts in defence appropriations.

NATIONAL DEFENCE COLLEGE



FINNISH DEFENCE STUDIES

- 1 *Evolution of the Finnish Military Doctrine 1945-1985*
Pekka Visuri, 1990.
- 2 *Flank or Front: An Assessment of Military – Political
Developments in the High North*
Tauno Nieminen, 1991.
- 3 *Non Offensive Defence: A Criteria Model of Military Credibility*
Arto Nokkala, 1991.
- 4 *Development of Military Technology and its Impact
on the Finnish Land Warfare Doctrine*
Markku Koli, 1992.
- 5 *The Impact of Arms Technology on Military Doctrines*
Pertti Salminen, 1992.
- 6 *The Baltic Republics: A Strategic Survey*
Erkki Nordberg, 1994.

