



THE NORDIC MEDIA AND THE COLD WAR

Edited by
Henrik G. Bastiansen & Rolf Werenskjold

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Preface

This volume is one of the outcomes of the “Media and the Cold War” project at Volda University College, Norway, and its collaboration with several Norwegian, Danish, Swedish and Finnish scholars. The project is linked to the international project Nuclear Crisis at the Universities of Heidelberg and Augsburg. The relationship between Nordic media and the Cold War was the subject of a Temporary Working group during the Nordic conference for Media and Communication Research in Oslo, in August 2013. The editors of this book led the group, during which a number of papers with new studies were presented, many of them published here, but we have also included contributions from other researchers. In total, we are publishing 17 articles that shed new light on Nordic media during the Cold War.

The editors would like to thank all the authors for their contributions and for their patience as the preparation of the book took more time than expected. We would also express our gratitude to Volda University College, Norway, for its funding of the Media and Cold War project and its activities. Without the local funding, it would almost certainly not have been possible to accomplish such a project. Special thanks goes to Dean Sverre Liestøl, Thomas Lewé, Dave King, and to Ulla Carlsson and Ingela Wadbring at Nordicom for their kind interest in the book and its publication.

Volda, April 2015

Henrik G. Bastiansen and Rolf Werenskjold

Mapping Nordic Media and the Cold War

Henrik G. Bastiansen & Rolf Werenskjold

This book is about Nordic media and the Cold War. The Cold War was the great world conflict that emerged between East and West from 1945, which persisted – with varying degrees of tension and intensity – until the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, the German reunification in 1990 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. In those 46 years, the mass media also changed in most countries in the world, from a situation where the press dominated to a multimedia condition at the beginning of the 1990s. This means there is a longstanding correlation in time between the Cold War and what we consider to be the modern mass media and communications, but still we know actually very little about how this convergence actually materialized – for example in the Nordic countries. It is important therefore, to raise such a topic as a theme for scientific research, but it is far more difficult to answer it.

It is not difficult to view the United States and the Soviet Union as the main actors in the Cold War – and the divided Germany as its main hotspot – with the Berlin Wall as the conflict's foremost symbol. All this is true enough, but this also makes it easy to forget that the Cold War was going on everywhere, and that it affected all countries. The Cold War was global, all countries were involved in various ways, and it influenced almost all levels of society – even in small countries in a relatively peaceful corner of Northern Europe. Consequently, it is also interesting to study media in countries such as Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Norway during the Cold War: all stable social democratic welfare states with many commonalities, and with a common Nordic identity.

The Nordic Countries between East and West

These countries constituted an important geopolitical area between East and West during the Cold War: they lay at the intersection of the USA, Canada and Britain in the west and the Soviet Union and communist Eastern Europe in

the east and south of the region. Just south of the region was East and West Germany – with the divided Berlin – right across the Baltic Sea from Sweden and Denmark. A significant part of East Germany (DDR) was actually located west of the Danish capital, Copenhagen. At the same time further north, Finland was the closest neighbouring country to the Soviet Union, with only a short distance between the capital Helsinki to Leningrad – the scene of the Russian Revolution in 1917. Finland was also very close to the Baltic countries, with Estonia just across the Gulf of Finland – so close that it was within reach by Finnish TV signals. Denmark could control all shipping traffic in and out of the Baltic Sea – where the Soviet Union had its big naval bases located. Sweden controlled a lot of the Baltic Sea, with its long coastline to the east. And with its long coastline to the west, Norway controlled the Norwegian and Barents Seas – an important strategic area of the Soviet Union, since its submarines had to pass these areas to enter international waters and reach the United States with submarine-based nuclear missiles. As the only NATO country in Europe, Norway also had a 196 km long common border with the Soviet Union in the north. This border, together with the Finnish eastern border, was part of the Iron Curtain in Europe. The Nordic countries were actually located between London, Berlin and Moscow. How did it affect them?

Each of the four Nordic countries chose their own solution to national security after the Second World War in 1945: Finland developed a close relationship with the Soviet Union, regulated in a separate friendship agreement of 1948, Sweden pleaded neutral foreign policy and placed itself outside the two power blocs in East and West, while Denmark and Norway chose to enter the North Atlantic defense alliance NATO in 1949. These three solutions, later defined as the Nordic balance, came to be an almost permanent situation in the region throughout the period 1945-1991. The question we ask today is; how did these different solutions influence the mass media in the Nordic countries? Alternatively, to ask the question the other way around; how did the media in each of the Nordic countries respond to the Cold War?

The Nordic Media and the Cold War

The Nordic media had their national newsrooms in cities like Helsinki, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Oslo. What did that really mean? Can we really expect to find that Nordic media treated the Cold War in the same way as their colleagues did in London and Washington or New York? We believe that the answer to this is 'no'. That is why we need separate studies of how Nordic media was affected by the Cold War – and how the media affected the public understanding of the Cold War. Only then can we understand the special situation that also prevailed for the media when the tense East-West relationship

characterized world politics. Common to all contributions in this book therefore is the question to what extent the Cold War affected the mass media in the Nordic part of Europe.

The end of the Cold War contributed to a loosening of the cognitive ties that marked the media through more than four decades of Cold War. The media had in many ways contributed to the development of such ties, while the media itself was bound in a more or less basic consensus through almost 45 years. Some media scholars and historians have argued that the end of Cold War created a network disruption, i.e. the communities that previously had produced opinions on foreign policy issues were no longer as clear-cut as before, and the power elite and the few no longer reserved that power over the production of meaning. There is a general perception that the mass media in this resolution process gained greater power and importance. One does need, however, more methodical analysis of both media content and other data to get a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the role that the mass media played and of the system that mass communications was part of both before and after the Cold War (Entman 2003:120).

Today, with more than 25 years distance from the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War, it is interesting to raise questions about how the different security solutions chosen by the four Nordic countries came to influence the mass media in each country. Did the Finnish media act differently than the Danish and Norwegian because of the special relationship with the Soviet Union? Did the Swedish press perform dissimilarly from the media in the neighbouring countries because of the Swedish neutrality policy? Alternatively, will we find a pattern where the mass media in all Nordic countries were so influenced by the Cold War conflict that the consequences were a lack of transparency and a sort of public Ice Age in the media – with implications for the entire population of each country? Only thorough research may provide answers.

To answer these questions is far more difficult than one might think, for although there is a lot of research on the media's role and importance in Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Norway, the situation is completely different when it comes to the Cold War. Here we are perhaps talking more about handful case studies, rather than of larger, continuous research.

Earlier Research

Research literature about the Cold War is generally very extensive and it has developed through different phases and historiographical directions throughout the period. Common to both the Cold War in general and the role of media in particular, is that US scholars have dominated the field. The majority of studies reflects this fact. The Cold War studies in the Nordic Countries has especially

been concerned about the respective countries role in the big picture of foreign- and security policy and dealing with a long range of different topics on the political agenda. Denmark and Norway as part of the NATO alliances, Norway with its special interest in the high North, Sweden as a neutral country with special interest in the Baltic Sea, Finland with its special relations to the Soviet Union, and the importance of the Kekkonen line in Finnish foreign policy. Swedish research differs from the other Nordic countries by including culture and social movements as part of the Cold War studies.

Several international research networks are working in the Nordic Cold War field.¹ Rolf Tamnes and Thorsten B. Olesen have given a broad historiographic overview of Nordic Cold War studies both before and after the Cold War (Tamnes 1993; Olesen 2004; Olesen 2008). The end of the Cold War gave scholars access to archives both in east and west, which gave stimulus to interpret the recent and past history of the Cold War with a Nordic perspective in a new way (Autio-Sarasmo and Miklossy 2010; Autio-Sarasmo and Miklossy 2011). Only recently, scholars has started to study Iceland's role during the Cold War (Ingimundarson 1998; Ingimundarson 1999; Ingimundarson 2003; Ingimundarson 2012; Ingimundarson and Magnúsdóttir 2014).

In Nordic countries especially, the Norwegian historian Geir Lundestad (Lundestad and Westad 1993; Lundestad 2003; Lundestad 2004; Lundestad 2010) and the Danish historian Poul Villaume (Boel 2010; Loth 2010; Villaume and Westad 2010) proved themselves in Cold War research at a high international level. The Finnish historian, Jussi Hanhimäki, has also marked himself in the field (Hanhimäki 1997; Hanhimäki and Westad 2003). In Norway, Oddbjørn Melle has identified the connections between the Cold War, the West's global hegemony, and the meeting with communism, nationalism and Islamism (Melle 1973; Melle 2006; Melle 2007; Melle 2008). Wilhelm Agrell has written the history of the Swedish Intelligence and Swedish Security Policy during the Cold War (Agrell and Bergom-Larsson 1979; Agrell and Wiberg 1980; Agrell 1982; Agrell and Hult 1983; Agrell 1985; Agrell 1986; Agrell 1993; Agrell 1999; Agrell 2000).

The Norwegian historian, Odd Arne Westad (LSE, London), has been one of the most influential amongst current scholars. His global perspective on the period also includes the Third World and China (Lundestad and Westad 1993; Westad 1993; Westad, Holtsmark et al. 1994; Kolstø, Kalland et al. 1997; Westad 1997; Westad 2000; Moon, Westad et al. 2001; Hanhimäki and Westad 2003; Westad 2003; Westad and Quinn-Judge 2006; Westad 2007; Boel 2010; Leffler and Westad 2010; Loth 2010; Villaume and Westad 2010; Westad 2012; Westad 2013).

Although many of the historical studies have emphasized the role of the media, there are few empirical and media scientific studies of the media coverage of the Cold War. Historians who, with some honorable exceptions, have not had any in-depth knowledge of the media, journalism or the editorial processes that were part of the national and international news flow have largely

not dealt with research on media and mass communication during the Cold War. In many cases, media impact has been taken for granted, resulting in a lack of thorough studies of the role that the media and mass communications played in the various phases of the Cold War.

In the US and Britain, researchers have published widely on media's role during the Cold War (Aronson 1990; Rojecki 1999; Glander 2000; Rojecki 2002; Hampton 2008), while the topic is almost untouched in Nordic media research. The heaviest contributions about the media and the Cold War deal with the two first decades after the Second World War. Most of them deal with national print media and media as a dependent arena of representation of opinions about the big political issues of the time. There are several case studies dealing with different topics, but many of them are written in Scandinavian languages and therefore unknown for readers outside their own country. In Finland, the Finlandization as phenomena has been a big issue (Salminen and Campling 1999), while in Norway the role of the media and the process leading up to the Norwegian membership in NATO in 1949 and the 1950s has received attention from several scholars. (Eriksen 1972; Skre 2010; Fonn 2011). In Denmark, Palle Roslyng-Jensen has dealt with the Nordic media's attitudes to the Soviet Union during the initial phase of the Cold War, 1946 to 1948 (Roslyng-Jensen 2012).

In the recently released Norwegian Press History, foreign news journalism and the Cold War are almost absent as themes (Hjeltnes 2010). The same could be said about the press and media histories in other Nordic countries as well (Søllinge and Thomsen 1988; Tommila and Salokangas 2000; Jonsson, Engblom et al. 2002; Bastiansen and Dahl 2008; Gustafsson and Rydén 2010; Ottosen, Østbye et al. 2012).

There are no studies giving an overview of media and journalism of the Nordic counties during the last part of the Cold War. The period after 1960 has rarely been thematized and explored, with regard to media and journalism's role in the final phase of the Cold War. One exception is the American war in Vietnam. Several studies in both Sweden and Norway have dealt with how the war was covered by the different media during the late 1960s and early 1970s (Melle 1973; Melle 2006; Queckfeldt 1981; Bastiansen 1997; Andén-Papadopoulos 2000). Another exception is also the media coverage of the global protests of 1968 (Suominen 1996; Werenskjold 2011).

Nordic media and communication research on the Cold War seems to be characterized by three distinctive features: First, the studies has been most focused at dailies as research objects and thematically concerned about the major foreign and security policy issues in each country. Secondly, media research has primarily been directed towards the media production as production of meaning and the source material has often been newspaper editorials, commentaries, and debates. Print media has mostly been considered as an arena from a theoretical agenda setting perspective. There have been few analyses

of representations of news and visual effects, and more about *what* the press wrote than *how* it was written. The third characteristic feature is that research in film, radio and television has devoted less attention to the Cold War. Odd Arne Westad points out that some of the warfare during the Cold War “took place on screens or through the airways. The Cold War influenced all forms of popular culture, film, and television. By implicitly portraying their own societies as victors in a global struggle, US and Soviet films had a significant influence on the views of their own populations and those of people abroad” (Leffler and Westad 2010:16; Østerud 1995; Østerud 1999). By the 1980s, this soft war part of the struggle between the superpowers had been won by the US. Nevertheless, the Cold War is barely mentioned as a topic in several of the Scandinavian radio and television histories that provide an overview of the postwar period (Dahl and Bastiansen 1999; Djerf-Pierre, Weibull et al. 2001; Halse and Østbye 2003; Hjarvard 2006). This is different in the Finnish and Icelandic radio and television histories, which deal much more with the impact of the Cold War (Broddason 1996; Endén 1996:). With some exceptions (Evensmo 1955), neither Nordic film nor documentary histories pay any special interest in the Cold War as a topic for research (Brinch and Iversen 2001; Sørenssen 2007; Bondebjerg 2012).

With this background, we can now put this book into context. It has three main characteristics. Firstly, it is a study of the whole Cold War era. It includes the first two decades, but also the long Detente period during the 1960 and 1970’s, as well as the late period from 1980 to 1991. Secondly, the book is not limited to a single country but includes studies of the media in the four largest Nordic countries in parallel, ie an entire region. Thirdly, this book defines itself not only to study the press, but also include contributions about visuals (political cartoons) and sports events, magazines for men, feature and documentary films, as well as radio and television broadcasting. In this way, we seek to bind together eras, countries and media in Scandinavia between 1945 and 1991 crisscrossing a holistic, integrated field of knowledge – which we have chosen to call “The Nordic Media and the Cold War.”

The topic is so large that the research field is not exhausted with this book: we the editors are fully aware that even a book such as this can only illuminate a few topics: there remains much more for future research. The book does not pretend to give an exhaustive answer to the Nordic media’s role during the Cold War, neither as a dependent or an independent variable.

The Structure of the Book

This book treats the relationship between Nordic media and the Cold War both chronologically and thematically. That means we roughly distinguish between three periods during the Cold War, while we realize that both the Cold War

and the media itself has changed along the way. Therefore, we must nuance by introducing phases. The phase classification has also resulted in the division into three parts.

Part One: Soviet Influence?

The book's first part applies roughly to the period from the late 1940s until the early 1960s. This period includes the start of the Cold War after 1945, as well as Stalin and the subsequent thaw period during the Khrushchev era from 1956 until his downfall in 1964. This section contains six articles on Nordic media in this early phase of the Cold War. They all have in common that they relate Nordic media to the question about Soviet influence.

Morten Jentoft writes the first chapter, presenting for the first time in English new discoveries about Radio Moscow and its role after the Soviet Union began to direct their broadcasts towards Norway – in Norwegian from 1941. Radio Moscow continued their Norwegian-language broadcasts after 1945 and so they soon became part of the Cold War, and an important part of the propaganda war between East and West – with the Norwegian people as audience. The purpose of the broadcasts was to make the population more friendly to the Soviet Union, and more critical of the US and NATO. Radio Moscow criticized the Norwegian government's foreign policy and especially Norway's NATO membership from 1949 – but they also criticized NRK, NTB and the Norwegian press. Radio Moscow tried to connect to Norwegian listeners – and give them the Soviet Communist interpretations of news and current affairs. To some extent, they had some success. Evidence indicates that broadcasts succeeded to reach a number of Norwegian listeners across the country, particularly in the years immediately after World War II. The Labour government of Einar Gerhardsen considered Radio Moscow as a threat. The Foreign Affairs Department and the Intelligence Service therefore started a top-secret project: a systematic monitoring and reporting service of everything said by Moscow. The Foreign Minister Halvard Lange demanded transcripts of the broadcasts on his table – every single day. The contents of this article have been completely unknown in Norway, until Morten Jentoft published his book *Radio Moscow* in 2012. Jentoft uses a range of hitherto unused sources from a variety of archives. He is able to shed a completely new light on how Radio Moscow tried to influence Norwegian governments and their policies, but also on Norwegian media and thus public opinion – particularly about foreign policy and security policy issues, such as the U2 affair in 1960 and Khrushchev's visit to Norway in 1964. Jentoft's article thus goes straight to the essence of this book: the interaction between the media and the Cold War.

The second chapter, written by Raimo Salokangas, shows how Finnish broadcasting, Yleisradio, met pressure from the Soviet Union during the Cold

War. Finnish radio was established as a state-owned broadcasting institution in 1934, and Yleisradio remained the only radio channel in Finland for decades. When the Cold War began towards the end of the 1940s, Finnish radio came under tremendous pressure not to challenge Finland's official foreign policy. Salokangas shows how this pressure led to widespread self-censorship in Yleisradio during its treatment of controversial topics that affected the communist superpower right on the other side of the border in the east. This program policy was practiced by Finnish radio and television, in not only the 1950s and 1960s, but continuing through the 1970s and into the 1980s. The pressure was not relieved until the Soviet Union began to change its foreign policy during the Gorbachev era from 1985. By then the radio and TV in Finland had allowed the influence of news and current affairs by its neighboring country's strategic interests for more than a generation.

The third chapter is written by Lotta Lounasmeri. She studies how Finland's close ties to the Soviet Union – the foreign policy strategy called the Paasikivi-Kekkonen line – came to influence the Finnish press. Finnish newspapers were extremely cautious in their news coverage of the Soviet state. They sought to avoid controversial topics. Through a series of interviews with key journalists from the Cold War time Lounasmeri is showing what this meant for practical journalism: it was two truths: an official in the media and another in informal situations. This created many problems for Finnish news editors and foreign correspondents. This so-called "Finlandization" reached its highest level as late as the 1970s, but under Mikhail Gorbachev as the Soviet leader from 1985, the scope decreased. Nevertheless, some of the old self-censorship continued in the Finnish press until the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

The fourth chapter, written by Laura Saarenmaa, shows how Soviet influence penetrated into other parts of the Finnish media. She has studied a number of Finnish magazines for men, interpreted as an alternative public sphere during the Cold War. In these magazines, the standards were somewhat different from the Finnish press and broadcasting: where one could print things that would otherwise not be possible to publish in the general media. Saarenmaa therefore points to the men's magazines as a counter-cultural form of anti-communist political debate about war memorabilia from World War II, and not least for an opposition against the "Finlandization" that characterized the political debate and the government of President Uhro Kekkonen – which always characterized the great mainstream media during the Cold War in Finland.

The fifth chapter, written by Hans Fredrik Dahl, changes the attention to Sweden during the early stages of the Cold War. He studies the Wallenberg case – the biggest issue that affected the relations between Sweden and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. In January 1945 the Swedish diplomat, Raoul Wallenberg disappeared in Budapest, Hungary. He left town to negotiate with the Russians about the Jewish situation under the upcoming Soviet occupation.

It was during this mission that he disappeared without a trace. It was the start of a long lasting Swedish-Soviet affair, which was prolonged through the rest of the Cold War – and even beyond. In fact, the case was almost without end, because it remained unresolved. Therefore, it came to reflect the East-West conflict for decades. The new view within Dahl's chapter is that he considers Wallenberg case as a Cold War-affair – and he studies both the diplomatic and the public side of it in precisely this perspective. His analysis is based on a review of several thousand newspaper articles about the case in the Swedish press.

The sixth chapter is written by Birgitte Kjos Fonn, who studies a small Norwegian newspaper, *Orientering* (Orientation), started in 1952, and the significance it had for the emergence of the New Left in Norwegian politics in the 1950s and 60s. Norway had been one of the founding countries of NATO in 1949, and it was considered by many as the very basis of Norwegian foreign and security policy during the Cold War, with the ruling Labour party, supported by the bourgeois parties, fronting the NATO membership. Both the Labour press and the bourgeois press supported it: in fact, virtually all Norwegian newspapers supported Norway's membership in the North Atlantic defense alliance. This gave poor conditions for those who might disagree or who had divergent views on Norway's position in the world. Those who advocated "the third way" – between the two major power blocs in the East and West – had no newspapers to speak their case. This was the reason for establishing *Orientering*: taking that third point of view as its position. It argued for a non-alliance position and independence between the East and West, and therefore it came into conflict with all parliamentary parties – and their press. They were deviants, rebels – and deliberately began to challenge the consensus that prevailed between the Labour press and the bourgeois press in regards to foreign policy. What is unique is that although *Orientering* was a small newspaper, it came to have great influence: the newspaper actually gave birth to a new political party: *Sosialistisk Folkeparti* (The Socialist People's Party), which was established in 1961, entered Parliament in the same year and have been represented in the Norwegian Parliament ever since. During the years from 2005 to 2013, the party was a part of government together with the Labour party – but *Orientering* was the start of it all.

Part Two: Space, Sports, and Spies

The book's second part concerns Nordic media from the beginning of 1960 until the end of the 1970s. In Cold War context, this period was known for its so-called *Détente* policy: a policy aimed to reduce the level of conflict between East and West. US and Soviet Union ran lengthy disarmament negotiations, met in space and signed promises on human rights in the Helsinki Declaration in 1975. Events such as the space race and the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslo-

vakia in 1968 also belong to this era. Several of these issues are addressed in the book's second part, which contains three articles.

The seventh chapter is written by Patrik Åker, who studies how the Swedish press covered the space age, from the late 1950s through the 1960s until the mid-1970s. Åker refers to the theories of "media events" and he points out the importance of live television transmissions for the audience's first experience of the space age, during the race between the United States and the Soviet Union. He shows how the Swedish press interpreted the televised events in space from both superpowers. The main difference was that the American broadcasts were live, with the embedded risk that it could go wrong, while the Soviets did not announce their events to the world, events shrouded in secrecy, until afterwards and only if they proved successful. The Swedish newspapers could experience for themselves American openness and Soviet uncommunicativeness. In this way, it becomes clear what the differences were between the Soviet and the American communication strategies about how to communicate space age events to the rest of the world. These differences are also to be found, in the Swedish press comments as the contradiction between western openness and communist secrecy.

Peter Dahlen and Tobias Stark write the eighth chapter, where they underline the close connection between sports, politics and media in major international sporting events, and how sport was used in certain situations as an effective instrument of political protest and as a demand for change. They have also documented a direct correlation between the live television coverage and the subsequent protests against the Soviet occupation in the Czechoslovakian cities. Dahlen and Stark have analyzed the coverage of the ice hockey games between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia during the World Championship in Stockholm in 1969. Based on the Swedish and Norwegian newspapers *Dagens Nyheter* and *Aftenposten*, they show that both the Swedish and Norwegian dailies were influenced by recent Cold War events, but not to the same extent as one might think. Both *Dagens Nyheter* and *Aftenposten* to varying degrees and for different reasons played down the real political backdrop in the fighting between the two communist neighbours during the World Championship in Stockholm. Both newspapers provided a dramaturgical representation that emphasized the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia as antagonistic opponents on the athletic arena and they established a distinction between sports and politics. The discussion of the spontaneous protest actions in Czechoslovakia played a role only as a minor explanatory backdrop.

Marie Cronqvist, writes the ninth chapter, which discusses a number of individual case studies. The chapter gives an overview of the Swedish research on the media during the Cold War from 1970 onwards until today. She shows that none of the two major media research projects – about Swedish press history and Swedish radio and television history – have been very interested

in dealing with issues which Cold War influence on Swedish media actually raises. It has created a situation where there is still much work to be done. Her chapter points out some of the topics that will be interesting to explore in the coming years, and therefore has a slightly different character than others in this book: it is a discussion about earlier research and about in which direction it should go.

The tenth chapter is written by Paul Bjerke and is about media and espionage as an integral part of the Cold War history. Bjerke provides an analysis of how the Norwegian newspapers *Arbeiderbladet*, *Aftenposten* and *VG* covered the unveiling of Gunvor Galtung Haavik as a Soviet spy in 1977. The analysis is a study of how journalism in a big spy case related to the ethical guidelines adopted by the press in 1975, which emphasized the independence and watchdog function of the press in relation to the authorities. The chapter devotes special attention to the relationship between journalistic practice and journalistic ideals in matters involving national security during the Cold War. The study shows that journalism worked within a Cold War framework – using simple heroes and villains as themes, and that the press to a lesser extent lived up to their own ideals of a critical and investigative journalism. The critical element in journalism was directed against the political authorities and not against the police investigation that could have revealed the espionage at an earlier stage. The criticism against the government was particularly strong in the bourgeois press. The study also shows that the press was heavily dependent on police sources.

Part Three: Towards the End

The book's third part examines the period from 1980 onwards. The turn of the year 1979-1980 contained several incidents that increased tension between East and West: the NATO double track decision and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Questions about nuclear missiles in the east and west were once again on the agenda – along with an increasingly strong peace movement on both sides of the Iron Curtain. The new confrontation that characterized the years 1980 to 1985 also came to affect Nordic media before the new glasnost policy under Gorbachev again reduced tensions from 1985 onwards. The book's third part contains seven articles on various aspects of Nordic media and the Cold War during the 1980s.

The eleventh chapter is written by Oddbjørn Melle, who analyzes the public debate about the Norwegian boycott of the Olympic Summer Games in Moscow in 1980, across eleven Norwegian newspapers during the winter and spring of 1980. In the analysis of how the Norwegian newspapers dealt with the US appeal for a boycott of the Olympics in Moscow the author has divided the newspapers into two main groups, which can roughly be categorized as center-left newspapers and center-right newspapers. With the exception of the

Communist Party newspaper, *Friheten* (the Freedom), all the dailies condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. When it came to the question about a boycott, the different newspaper groups had dissimilar approaches. The center-Left newspapers opposed a boycott, while the center-right newspapers advocated boycott. The Maoist newspaper, *Klassekampen* (The Class Struggle), supported the boycott position. Almost none of the newspapers argued that it was possible to separate sport and politics, but they made different conclusions. While the center-left newspapers claimed that the situation after the Soviet invasion demanded increased dialogue and communication, the center-right newspaper claimed that Soviet expansionism should be met with a distinct reaction. In addition, they emphasized Soviet human rights violations. In these dailies, it was imperative to stand by the United States and our NATO allies in a common front against the aggressor.

The twelfth chapter, written by Palle Roslyng-Jensen, is dealing with the Danish newspaper's role in the debate on the NATO double track decision, and about the opposition against the deployment of the new nuclear missiles in Western Europe in the period from September 1979 to January 1980. The public mobilization and the media attention to the issue was stronger in Denmark than in many other European countries. This analysis is based on the newspapers *Berlingske Tidende*, *Politiken* and *Information*, as well as opinion polls on Danish foreign policy that were conducted during this period. The group of selected newspapers represent together the three Danish basic attitudes towards the NATO double track decision. In addition, comments from the dailies *Aktuelt*, *Land og Folk*, and *Jyllands-Posten* have been applied. The newspapers covered a large part of the security policy spectrum in Denmark. The opposition against the neutron bomb in 1977-1978 was a causative factor in the Danish newspaper debate, as was the increasing gap in the security policy between the bourgeois parties and the Social Democrats. The analysis shows clearer differences between the newspapers in their attitudes to the NATO double track decision and the deployment of nuclear weapons in Western Europe. The study also shows that there was a relationship between attitudes in the media and the development of public debate on these issues. The rearmament critical newspaper *Politiken* especially contributed to change the attitudes towards security policy in the Danish public against the deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe.

The thirteenth chapter is written by Terje Rasmussen. He analyzes how the Norwegian debate on the NATO double track decision and the question about the deployment of nuclear missiles in Western Europe were picked up by and handled in the two Norwegian newspapers, *Aftenposten* and *Arbeiderbladet*, during the fall of 1979. While *Arbeiderbladet* was a mouthpiece for the ruling Labour Party, the country's largest newspaper, *Aftenposten*, was linked to the conservative party Høyre. Høyre was the largest opposition party on the nonso-

cialist side. Both newspapers were leading in their respective groupings within the Norwegian party newspaper system until it was disbanded in the 1980s. Both *Arbeiderbladet* and *Aftenposten* had contributed through much of the Cold War to the political consensus that the Norwegian foreign and security policy was based on, since Norway becoming a NATO member in 1949. Rasmussen shows the dilemmas that both newspapers were facing when the Labour Party became divided on the question about the NATO double track decision and deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe. *Aftenposten* played a key role in selecting the arguments and sources in the debate leading up to the double track decision. Rasmussen points out the dilemma *Arbeiderbladet* faced by having to advocating two opposing views on the NATO decision. In the same way as in Denmark, the nuclear issue triggered an intense debate that partly went across party boundaries. The study shows how *Arbeiderbladet* and *Aftenposten* maneuvered and placed themselves in the heated Norwegian security debate at the beginning of the 1980s. *Aftenposten* accounted for the major part of news reporting on meetings and statements from participants, while *Arbeiderbladet* became an arena for debate based on *Aftenposten* news coverage. The extensive debate about the issue laid the foundations for a new openness in Norwegian defense and foreign policy debate in the years that followed.

The fourteenth chapter is written by Rolf Werenskjold and Erling Sivertsen, who give a detailed study of how the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* used political cartoons to portray the Cold War, during the years from 1980 to 1984. These five years were characterized by new fears of nuclear weapons and nuclear war – indeed, the entire tension levels between the United States and the Soviet returned in a manner reminiscent of the early 1950s. In the pages of *Aftenposten* – which was the largest subscription newspaper – the new tensions came to characterize the foreign news reporting almost from day to day – and in parallel with this: the political cartoons published by the newspaper. Werenskjold and Sivertsen consider the political cartoons as an integral part of the journalism of the period, and discuss their relationship to the editorial processes in the newspaper. The central theme they are looking for is what kind of visual interpretations *Aftenposten* gave of the Cold War by using political cartoons. Where did the cartoonists come from? What kind of frames were used to portray the Cold War? The study is based on a systematic review of all the foreign cartoons in *Aftenposten* during the current five-year period, but the chapter puts special emphasis on the analysis of how the newspaper used cartoons to portray the Soviet and American leaders. The findings show that only the Soviet leaders were depicted by using Cold War frames, while American leaders were portrayed far more differentiated. The study documents the extensive use of various Cold War frames in *Aftenposten*. It also show that many of the cartoons were part of a common European view fabric – and the frames were not necessarily a distinctly Norwegian phenomenon.

The fifteenth chapter is written by Henrik G. Bastiansen. He gives, through a case study, an analysis of how Mikhail Gorbachev was portrayed in the news coverage in the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* during the first year as a new Soviet leader in 1985. The study is based on a systematic and detailed analysis of both news reports and comments throughout the year 1985. Bastiansen shows how the conservative newspaper *Aftenposten* considered the new Soviet leader's domestic political position and his foreign policy, before terms like "glasnost" and "perestroika" became known in the West. In his study, Bastiansen shows that *Aftenposten* in 1985 had a foreign news staff with extensive knowledge about the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and who were able to interpret the new developments in the Soviet state.

The Cold War was composed of, and proceeding at many levels, both politically, economically, and militarily. It also took place in the cultural field, and included both sports and music. In addition, the film was an integral part of the Cold War rivalries between East and West in the cultural arena. In Norwegian film, however, the Cold War-themes had been virtually absent during the period after 1945. An important exception was Orion's *Belt* from 1985.

In the sixteenth chapter, Bjørn Sørenssen has written about the two Norwegian films *Brent av Frost* and *Iskyss*, both made after the end of the Cold War by Knut Erik Jensen. Jensen has given a cinematic reflection on Norway's role in the Cold War and the relationship with the Soviet Union in the northern areas bordering the Soviet Union. The films *Brent av Frost* and *Iskyss* were both based on historical events and on Norwegians who, for various reasons, chose to take part in the Soviet intelligence operations in Norway during the Cold War. *Brent av Frost* was about the fate of the Norwegian partisans in Finnmark, who were in service to the Russians during the war and who, in different ways, were put under pressure to continue to report to Soviet intelligence in the postwar period. *Iskyss* was about Gunvor Galtung Haavik and her love affair with a Russian prisoner of war, which later led to the KGB catching her in its spy network. Paul Bjerke provides in his chapter an analysis of the press coverage of Galtung Haavik case in 1977, while Sørenssen has showed in his analysis that the films differ markedly from the traditional spy movie genre, and that the films have contributed to a new understanding that penetrates the simple black and white rhetoric of the Cold War. He shows how these films are part of Knut Erik Jensen's previously extensive oeuvre of documentaries and films about Finnmark's complicated relationship with both the Soviet Union and Norwegian society in the period after the Second World War. Sørenssen has also showed how Knut Erik Jensen's films separate from the ideals adapted by the requirements of the international commercial film industry.

The seventeenth and the last chapter is written by Jon Raundalen, who has written about three international films that in various ways treated the wide-

spread fear of nuclear war on both sides of the Iron Curtain in the 1980s; the American film *The Day After*, the British film *Threads* and the Soviet-produced movie *Letters from a Dead Man*. All the films were shown in Norwegian cinemas during the Cold War, and they appear in retrospect as iconic. Raundalen emphasizes in his analysis the importance of cinema as a reservoir for the collective memory and as a starting point for understanding of historical periods and events in our recent past. Raundalen provides a comparative analysis of the films, and he shows how these kind of films were received in Norway. Although the Norwegian film critics had objections to the different movies qualities, such objections were nevertheless offset by the impact these films had on the international debate on nuclear weapons and disarmament negotiations. Raundalen shows in his analysis that all these films in different ways challenged the contemporary perceptions whether a nuclear war could be won or not. The message reached out to large film and television audiences in the 1980s – and got them to think.

Notes

1. In addition to national research groups in each Nordic country, there are establish several Nordic international Cold War research networks.

The Finish Cold War Research Group (CWRG) at Aleksanteri Institute. The institute is an independent institute and the Finnish Centre for Russian and Eastern European Studies at the University of Helsinki. See <http://www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/>

The Nordic and North/Central European Network of Cold War Researches (NORCENCOW-AR) is funded by the Nordforsk (Nordic Council) and coordinated from the Saxo Institute at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. The network is led by Professor Poul Villaume and organizes more than 100 scholars in the field. See <http://norcencowar.ku.dk/>

Choices, Resources and Encounters in Russia and Other European Post-Socialist States (Ceres). The network is funded by Nordforsk (Nordic Council) and is located at the Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki. The network includes the following Nordic institutions: Aleksanteri Institute (The Finnish Centre for Russian and Eastern European Studies), University of Helsinki, Finland, Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES), Södertörn University, Sweden, Department for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), Norway, Institute of History and Area Studies, Aarhus University, Denmark. See <http://www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/ceres/index.htm>

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Part One: Soviet Influence?

Chapter 1

Radio Moscow Propaganda from the East – in Norwegian

Morten Jentoft

Abstract

While the Norwegian broadcasts from London during the Second World War have achieved legendary status, Radio Moscow's Norwegian editorial staff barely receives a mention in the history of the war, despite the fact that for long periods every day more was broadcast in Norwegian from Moscow than from London. The broadcasts from Moscow were also a vital source of information for the resistance movement in the German-occupied Norway. The enormous resources devoted by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Norwegian Intelligence Service in the post-war period to monitoring and analysing Radio Moscow also indicate that the broadcasts have played a crucial role in relations between Norway and the then Soviet Union. Radio Moscow helped to win World War II, but lost the Cold War. The article concentrate on the function and importance of Radio Moscow's Norwegian editorial staff during the coldest Cold War years from 1945 up until around 1970. Radio Moscow criticised the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK), the Norwegian news agency (NTB) and the Norwegian press – always trying to influence public opinion on foreign policy and security matters in Norway.

Keywords: Radio Moscow, USSR, World War II, Cold War, Cold War broadcasting, Soviet-Norwegian relations

*The weather was bad in Norway and Sweden, better in Finland
and excellent in the USSR.*

Those were the words of an enthusiastic Norwegian tourist to Radio Moscow's reporter, Kristian Haldorsen in July 1960.¹

Today we can perhaps afford a smile when we hear this type of example from our recent media past. But this also provides a good illustration of a polarised world, in which the small Norwegian language staff in the huge Soviet broadcasting corporation was a tiny pawn in a big game. My work is based on fresh source material from the National Archives of Norway and

from several Russian and Finnish archives, as well as interviews. In this article I shall concentrate on the function and importance of Radio Moscow's Norwegian editorial staff during the coldest Cold War years from 1945 up until around 1970, but I also say a little about the origins of the transmissions. It was in the period after 1945 that the Soviet authorities devoted huge resources to the propaganda war against the West, at the same time as the broadcasts from Moscow were followed closely, among other places in Norway, to try and interpret hidden signals or possible changes in the political course. The research questions are: What was Radio Moscow's real message and what did the Soviet authorities hope to achieve with these broadcasts? And who were the voices behind Radio Moscow?

This is Moscow Speaking!

As early as the end of the 1930s, way up north on the shores of the Arctic Sea, beneath the witches' mountain Domen in the far east of Finnmark, people huddled together to hear what was coming on the airwaves from Moscow. The radio club in Kiberg always had to meet late in the evening, because that was when it was possible to pick up the slight voice of a woman who announced that it was now time for the programmes in Swedish. "This is Moscow calling! Proletarians in every country unite!" With these words the young Tanja Sternina opened the broadcasts in the Scandinavian languages from Radio Moscow in the 1930s. She was to become a familiar voice to radio listeners all over Scandinavia. The Swedish broadcasts began on 11 February 1932, six years before the first modest attempts at broadcasting in Norwegian (Jentoft 2005).

"Govorit Moskva – this is Moscow speaking!" It was as if the listeners were being told simply to pay close attention and adhere to the slogans that were being presented. There was little room for discussion. Radio Moscow knew what was right and wrong in the world, and how proper communists or socialists were meant to behave. The official opening of the international broadcasts from Moscow was October 29, 1929, but long before that foreign languages could be heard from the ever-increasing number of transmitters that were being erected all over the new Soviet state. February 17, 1922 was the first time a concert was broadcast that could also be received by wireless sets abroad. The following year the "Comintern-transmitter" broadcast a concert to mark the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the world's first socialist state. On February 22, 1924 the Esperanto Association in Moscow had its own broadcast a month after the death of the founder of the Soviet state, Vladimir Lenin. Many hoped that the world language of Esperanto would become the first great disseminator of socialist ideas from Moscow, and much was invested in broadcasts in precisely this constructed international auxiliary language.²

However it soon became obvious that there were too few, not least among impoverished communists and poorly educated socialists, who had a command of Esperanto. Instead German became the first widely spoken language that was broadcast regularly from the Soviet capital. Lenin and the other leaders of the revolution in Russia were particularly concerned about the situation in Germany, and the German workers' movement was vehement in its demands for broadcasts in German from Moscow (Rønning 2010).

Officially it was the Communist International – Comintern – which was responsible for propaganda, even though this organization from the very outset was dominated by the Communist Party of Russia, later of the Soviet Union. On May 1, 1933 the Comintern transmitter opened a new station just outside Moscow. With an effect of 500 kilowatts it provided listeners all over Europe with excellent reception. In the polarized Germany where the Nazis had just taken control, the broadcasts from the Comintern transmitter were soon renamed "The will of the Red Army."³

From communist parties over the whole of Europe came the demand that Moscow should broadcast in more languages. The opening of the broadcasts set the tone; this was political propaganda in which the content was characterised by the current political programme approved by the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. And the tone was sharp during the dramatic years of the 1930s, with an ever-more aggressive use of language towards everyone who refused to follow the Stalinist line that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union adopted. Right from the very first broadcasts there was an emphasis on contact with the listeners, who were encouraged to write to the editorial staff in Moscow. The broadcasts were live, even though as early as that it was possible to record them in advance. But editing opportunities were poor, which explained the focus on live broadcasts. The artistic items were also live; sometimes an entire choir was present in the studio. When Stalin and the Comintern from 1935 moderated its tone towards social democracy and suggested the formation of a people's movement against fascism, this also resulted in broadcasts with a somewhat less hostile style.⁴

In the ten years up until 1939 Radio Moscow played a key role in the Communist propaganda apparatus. The world over there was an enormous interest in the new medium of radio. Both the Soviet leadership and not least their main opponents prior to the autumn of 1939, the Nazis in Germany, realized this fact. That is why the German section of Radio Moscow was given priority; to counteract the machinery of Hitler's propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels. In the winter of 1937 there were six German-language broadcasts a week. Transmitters were built in Kiev and Minsk to provide improved access to the whole of Germany for the propaganda from Moscow.⁵

After having led a roving existence in Moscow the Radio Moscow editorial staff moved in 1938 into their own office premises in a large four-storey

building at Putinkovsky Pereulok 2 in Moscow, not far from Pushkin Square and what was then known as Gorky Street. In a neighbouring building right opposite, premises were fitted out for broadcasting, with among other things a number of studios. A separate Russian central editorial team was established to prepare material for the various foreign language staffs. A special division for commentaries was also set up, led by Soviet citizens. Nadezhda Snezhko was appointed editor-in-chief for the broadcasts to countries in western Europe, and was to play an important role in keeping radio broadcasts going in the dramatic years ahead.

“I send greetings to all children in the Soviet Union. You can consider yourselves lucky that you live in a Soviet society.” Thus wrote a 13-year-old girl in a letter to Radio Moscow in autumn 1937, in connection with the 20th anniversary of the October Revolution sweeping aside the old regime in Russia.⁶

Letters to the editorial staff in Moscow were a source of great inspiration to those working there. And at the end of the 1930s Radio Moscow welcomed its first Norwegian voice. Anna Dalland from Bergen had arrived in Moscow in 1936 together with her husband Randulf Dalland, who was to study at the International Lenin School, run by the Comintern. In 1937, Randulf Dalland was sent to Spain to serve as an officer in the international brigades. Back in Moscow sat Anna Dalland and their 10-year-old daughter Eva. In 1938 Anna Dalland joined the Swedish editorial team of Radio Moscow, and gradually she was given simple tasks behind the microphone, mainly in connection with the announcing of concerts.⁷

Radio Moscow during World War II

The start of World War II was a difficult time for Radio Moscow. Overnight the large German editorial staff had to end their sharp criticism of Hitler Germany, after the Soviet Union and Germany signed a treaty of non-aggression (the Ribbentrop–Molotov Pact or Nazi–Soviet Pact) on 23 August 1939. But after Hitler on June 22 1941 initiated Operation Barbarossa with the aim of crushing Stalin’s Soviet empire, everything became very much simpler. Now the task at hand was to fuel resistance against the Nazis all over Europe. In June 1941 Anna Dalland was the only Norwegian member of the staff in Radio Moscow, even though she was not a member of a separate Norwegian editorial team or had her own Norwegian language broadcasts. On June 22, 1941 she announced that the Soviet Union was now at war with Germany. This was to mark the start of Norwegian language broadcasts from Radio Moscow, and now it was not difficult for Anna Dalland and other communists to see who the enemy was. Comintern leader Georgi Dimitrov had been told by Stalin that it was no longer a question of whether socialism and revolution were to be given prior-

ity. All available forces had to be mobilized in the struggle to save the Soviet state. Dimitrov took responsibility for starting radio propaganda aimed at the whole of Europe, and spent the next few weeks reorganizing the Comintern apparatus to this end (Banac (ed.) 2003).

Radio Moscow described itself as “The second front”, and divided up its work and broadcasts according to four principles: broadcasts to countries at war with the Soviet Union, to countries that were occupied, to those countries that were allies of the Soviet Union in the fight against Germany and to the axis powers, and broadcasts aimed at neutral countries.⁸

“This is Moscow speaking, welcome to transmissions from Moscow on wavelengths 41-49, 20 metres on the medium waveband.” These were the opening words of the broadcasts westwards towards Norway that could be heard every evening throughout the summer and autumn of 1941. These transmissions were to become an important part of the resistance struggle, even though few could hear them after having their radio sets confiscated in many of the German-occupied countries. Anna Dalland found herself in the front line of the battle against fascism, a struggle her husband Randulf Dalland had been waging since he went to Spain in 1937 to fight against Franco.

A special Soviet information bureau, Sovinform, was established and in the broadcast in Norwegian on March 24, 1942 it was the war reports from there that introduced the programmes. The broadcast on this particular day was typical of what Norwegian listeners could hear from Moscow during the war. They could also hear how the partisans in Yugoslavia offered the German occupants fierce opposition. This was a clear appeal to communists and anti-fascists in other parts of Europe to follow their example. That evening’s broadcast in Norwegian lasted from 18.35 to 18.58, and included a report that the Poles were resisting the German occupation. There was also a general appeal to all citizens of occupied countries to avoid working for the German weapon industry. In addition the broadcast contained brief announcements from the Soviet news agency TASS.⁹

Anna Dalland was then the only Norwegian member of staff at Radio Moscow at the outbreak of the war in 1941, but in a short space of time the radio managers succeeded in recruiting several others who could help to produce the transmissions. In summer 1941 Gilbert Furubotn, the son of the Norwegian communist leader Peder Furubotn, was appointed editor-in-chief of the Norwegian transmissions. Later in the war Haakon Sund, Solveig Berg, Gotfred Hølvold and Leonard Aspaas could be heard on air. Several of these had come to the Soviet Union as refugees from northern Norway. A number of Russians were also appointed to the staff, including Ksenia Aleksandrova Sund. Some of them worked mainly for a project that was called “People’s Radio for Norwegian Freedom” (Folkesenderen Norges Frihet), a so-called “black transmitter” that operated parallel to the official Soviet broadcasts and used a far stronger

and more aggressive language. The transmissions from Radio Moscow played a significant role in the Norwegian resistance right up until the German capitulation in May 1945, not least as a source of material for the illegal press.¹⁰

From Warm to Cold War

It must have been strange for the Radio Moscow staff members to be confronted with peace in 1945. What were they going to fill their broadcasts with now? It was no longer necessary to transmit lengthy reports that marshal Georgy Zhukov's forces had destroyed so and so many Panther tanks, or that countless tons of bombs had been dropped over Berlin. In the weeks immediately after May 9, 1945, which officially was Armistice Day in the Soviet Union, the main focus was on everything that had to be done to rebuild the country after the enormous destruction. But what should be the content of the broadcasts to free Norway, apart from the mandatory material about decisions taken by the Central Committee and the rebuilding of industry and agriculture?

The starting point was the very best. In Norway everyone wanted to listen to radio, after almost four years of confiscated wireless sets. Even though the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) quickly established normal transmissions from the new radio centre at Marienlyst in Oslo, there was plenty of room for other channels. And the craving for news about life in the Soviet Union was enormous, both because of the war effort and because many had made a closer acquaintance with Russians. Almost 100 000 prisoners of war and forced labourers were in Norway during the war, and many of them lived and worked closely with Norwegians. "How do I write letters to the editors in Radio Moscow?" was the question Ida Rustad from Halden posed to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in January 1946. None other than the press office's assistant secretary himself, Jens Schive, replied by telling her that if she marked the envelope "Moscow Radio Committee, Moscow", it would be delivered to the right address. During the first year after liberation, letters and greetings poured in from Norwegians who wanted to thank the editorial staff at Radio Moscow for all their efforts during the war years. And many of them wanted to know how the reconstruction of the Soviet Union was progressing after the war.¹¹

Could the staff in Moscow manage to meet the expectations that so many in Norway had of the transmissions now that there was peace in Europe? It was to prove very difficult. The lack of qualified staff was one reason. But the most important was probably the fact that the Radio Moscow managers never discussed how the broadcasts in all manner of world languages could engage their listeners. It must have been extremely frustrating for the intractable communist cadres back home in Norway to listen to the transmissions from Moscow and have to admit that they were not good enough, at the same time as they

knew that a great many Norwegians were positive towards the Soviet Union and interested in listening to Radio Moscow.

“No attention is being paid to what at the present time interests the population of Norway in relation to the life we are living here.” This is a quote from a man who signed himself “Truls” in a letter in October 1946 to Randulf Dalland, who by then had been elected to the Norwegian Parliament to represent the county of Hordaland as a member for the Norwegian Communist Party, and “Truls” thought that with a wife who was a former member of the Radio Moscow staff, he was the right man to whom to address constructive criticism of the transmissions. In 1946 there had been a great debate about Norwegian agricultural policy. In the opinion of “Truls”, Radio Moscow ought then to have made propaganda for and provided information about the collective farms and agricultural policy in the Soviet Union. At the same time he did not think that the editorial staff took sufficient notice of the huge interest in sport that existed in Norway, not least in the sporting achievements of Soviet athletes. At the end of October 1946 the Soviet football team Dynamo Moscow planned to visit Norway. In that connection it would be natural that Radio Moscow broadcast reports from the Soviet Cup competition, which at that time was at its most intense, wrote “Truls” to Randulf Dalland. “In the Norwegian transmission on October 15 there is a report about ‘Soviet mountaineers’ and not a single word about football. The Swedish editorial staff reported from the day’s matches the very same evening.”¹²

In the years immediately following the end of the war, many Norwegian newspapers published a run-down of the programmes broadcasted from Radio Moscow. These were printed alongside overviews of the programmes from NRK and the BBC, who had also continued their Norwegian-language transmissions after the war.¹³ In the first years after 1945 there was a desperate need for native speakers of Norwegian at Radio Moscow. It was not just “Truls” who reacted to the hopeless language skills of radio presenters whose knowledge of spoken Norwegian left much to be desired. In summer 1946 first Solveig Berg returned home, followed in August by Gilbert Furubotn. With his departure Radio Moscow lost huge expertise both with regard to the language and politics. In addition Gilbert was famous for his steady clear radio voice. The following year Mai Wesenberg joined the editorial staff, and in her role as translator she was to remain one of the lynchpins of the Norwegian broadcasts for several decades to come. Occasionally she could also be heard on air in culture programmes, especially when the topic was literature, a subject close to her heart. Ksenia Alexandrova Sund stayed with Radio Moscow from war to peace, and was to remain a member of the editorial staff for almost 50 years. Like Tamara Mayorova, she had learnt both Norwegian and Danish from the time she grew up in Norway. Even so, there were great difficulties in translating the Russian basic material into Norwegian. “The Soviet delegation was forced to adopt not few efforts” was one of the formulations that “Truls” could not help comment-

ing on when he in October 1946 decided that he would analyze the language that Radio Moscow presented to its Norwegian listeners. He thought that even with the best will in the world it was not possible to understand a formulation like “the decisions of the council of ministers that were not mutually agreed.”¹⁴

It did not take many months from the euphoria of the summer of 1945 until different and far colder winds were blowing across Europe. On February 29, 1948 the Norwegian prime minister Einar Gerhardsen characterized the communists as an enemy of “the people of Norway’s freedom and democracy”, a comment that aggravated the already tense relations between communists and Labour Party supporters at many workplaces. The general election in 1949 was a complete catastrophe for the Communist Party of Norway (NKP). As a quirk of the election system in Norway, a national vote of 5.8 percent did not give them a single seat in the Parliament, and in the hunt for scapegoats the inner tensions in the party came to the surface.¹⁵

In the space of just a few years what had seemed to be a Europe boasting greater cooperation and reconciliation transformed into a new area of tension. Norway joined the NATO alliance in 1949, and the Soviet Union consolidated its power and influence in those countries it had liberated from the Nazis during World War II. One by one the communist parties managed to seize power, with the support of the Red Army. The Yugoslavian communists led by Josip Tito chose in 1948 not to yield to the wishes of Moscow, which sent Stalin into a rage. Titoism thus became an alternative path to follow for the international communist movement, which was totally unacceptable to Moscow. Propaganda and insults rained down on Yugoslavia, and this was also reflected in Radio Moscow’s Norwegian editorial team. In their broadcast on August 31, 1949 warnings were given to beware of Tito’s agents who had attempted to revive nationalist tendencies. After the general election in Norway in October the Labour Party was accused of “a cruel witch-hunt against communists and workers who were actively fighting for their rights. With the help of deceptive methods right-wing social democrats have succeeded in removing communists from all positions of influence in the trade union movement”, said the presenter in the broadcast on October 19, 1949.¹⁶

In the Communist Party of Norway (NKP) the hunt for scapegoats was well under way. The main opponents were secretary general Peder Furubotn and the deputy leader of the party, Johan Strand Johansen. Both had spent a large part of the 1930s in Moscow and each was convinced he had the support of the Soviet Communist Party for his line. Johan Strand Johansen was among the communists arrested by the Germans and sent to concentration camps. His Jewish wife ended her days in the Nazi gas chambers in Auschwitz in 1942. So it was two former war heroes who were fighting for power in the NKP, and for many it was difficult to discern the differences of opinion between the two wings. But many felt that Peder Furubotn was concerned with developing a

national strategy and policy for the NKP, whilst Johansen maintained his support for more orthodox communist views that the goal was revolution and the overthrow of the established social order, and that the only way to achieve this goal was to stick together with Moscow in good times and in bad. The power struggle ended with Peder Furubotn's supporters being physically thrown out of party headquarters in Oslo and excluded from the party, in spite of the fact that after the annual conference in 1949 they had a majority of the members of the central committee. For Johan Strand Johansen, who suffered psychological problems after his imprisonment in Germany as a prisoner-of-war during World War II, this was a huge burden, and for a time he was a patient at Ullevål Hospital after a nervous breakdown (Halvorsen 1981).

At the same time as the party power struggle was at its height in autumn 1949, Johan Strand Johansen's sister Gerda was preparing to travel to the Soviet capital to work for Radio Moscow. In August 1949 "comrade Rozdopozhno" in the central committee of the Soviet Communist Party went through her file in the former Comintern-archives to see whether she could be approved to work on the radio. The initiative had come from Norway and the central committee of the NKP. Was this taken because the communists in Norway realized that something had to be done with the transmissions to avoid the sort of platitudes that "Truls" had referred to? Or was this an attempt by brother Johan and party leader Emil Løvlien to secure a loyal member of staff at Radio Moscow, in their struggle against Peder Furubotn?¹⁷

Gerda Strand Johansen was to be the first in a long line of Norwegian communists during the coming decades that were to move to Moscow and make their mark on the work in the editorial staff. She had little experience of journalism, but in the same way as her brother she had been politically active since her teens in Trøndelag. Like her brother, Gerda had spent three years attending the party school in Moscow around 1930, and under the cover name of Liv Nansen she was given excellent references by The Communist University of the National Minorities of the West KUNMZ when she graduated in 1932.¹⁸

Now she was travelling to Moscow to re-establish some of the popularity and trust that Radio Moscow had enjoyed during World War II. This was to prove to be an impossible task, but now at least there were two editorial staff members with ethnic Norwegian roots; together with Mai Wesenberg, Gerda Strand Johansen managed in the early 1950s to rid the language of Radio Moscow of its most glaring and embarrassing mistakes.¹⁹

Foreign Broadcast Monitoring Service

At the end of May 1951 the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' representative in the two-year-old Coordinating Committee for the Secret Services was able

to report that a monitoring service for the Norwegian language transmissions from Moscow had been established. One of the strangest and until then secret operations under the auspices of the official Norway after the war had started, with two of those who were to influence Norwegian sociological research and debate at its head. What was officially known as the Coordinating Committee of the Joint Committee on National Security was established autumn 1949, first and foremost to take responsibility for coordinating the contact between the work of the police and the Norwegian Intelligence Service. The members of the committee were the head of the Intelligence Service and the head of Special Branch, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the Office of the Prime Minister. Right from the beginning, Anders Andersen acted as committee secretary. He was later to become a key man in the Norwegian Civil Service by virtue of his position as assistant undersecretary of state at the Office of the Prime Minister.²⁰

As early as the war years the Norwegian authorities had already become aware of the fact that there were transmissions in Norwegian from Moscow, and during the first post-war years Radio Moscow's transmissions were registered, mostly out of curiosity. But the dramatic worsening of relations between the Soviet Union and the western powers which came to a head with the communist seizure of power in Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1948 meant that the radio broadcasts from Moscow became the subject of far more systematic attention. To begin with, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs signed an agreement with the Norwegian news agency NTB "to keep an eye on" what was being said. The former Yugoslavian prisoner-of-war Stanislav Savik, who now called himself Stein Savik, had his own "private" wireless interception of Radio Moscow while he was working for NTB. With his Slavic background Savik understood Russian without difficulty, but he also got into the habit of listening to the Norwegian transmissions from Moscow. His listening to the broadcasts from Moscow meant that NTB played a leading role in the Nordic region in picking up news from the closed Soviet Union. Among other things he was one of the first journalists to register the news of the death of Stalin in 1953, and was able via NTB to inform the rest of the world of this event.²¹

On June 25, 1950, when Communist leader Kim Il-sung issued the order to attack the southern part of the Korean peninsula, there were many who feared the outbreak of a new world war, just five years after the end of the previous one. In Norway there was hectic activity to strengthen the defences, especially in the northern part of Norway. On December 15 the 1st battalion of Infantry Regiment 14 was mobilized in Mosjøen. The plan was to practise moving forces north to Troms county to meet the threat of a potential Soviet invasion from the east. One of those who was present in Mosjøen was journalist Ole Rodahl. He was an eager radio listener, and he was not the only member of the regiment who tuned in to Moscow every evening. Among the

reservists that winter evening there were many who were amazed to register that the editorial staff in the Soviet capital were extremely well informed about the exercise in winter-dark northern Norway. The broadcasts in Norwegian announced not only that there was considerable military activity in the freshly appointed NATO member-country Norway. Exact details of the mobilization area and the time to report, the size of the force – getting on for 1000 men – the transport arrangements and destination were read out in Norwegian from Moscow, with great authority and in a form that left no doubt that in Soviet eyes this amounted to war hysteria staged by the USA. How could this be possible? According to Ole Rodahl, the announcements from Moscow were made just a short time after the transport from Mosjøen north to Balsfjord in Troms county had reached its destination. Rodahl decided to take the matter further to his contacts in the press and police, and thus the matter ended up on the table of the men who each week met at the office of Head of Intelligence, Vilhelm Evang, at Akershus Fortress in Oslo to assess the national security situation in and around Norway. Rodahl himself had heard nothing of the activities of the battalion via Radio Moscow. But the information announced on Soviet radio was a hot topic of conversation among the boys in the barracks. “The Russians are keeping tabs on us all the time,” was the refrain, according to Ole Rodahl.

Ole Rodahl’s expressions of concern were to have consequences for the Norwegian Intelligence Services’ relations with Radio Moscow. It was no longer simply a centre for propaganda often expressed in a hopeless language and without any great significance for public opinion in Norway. The radio broadcasts could also disseminate information that could create confusion and break down the morale of the Norwegian forces. How should the Norwegian authorities meet this threat? Andreas Andersen believed a number of measures were necessary. To begin with, it was important to find out how detailed and secret information about a military exercise had found its way in such a short space of time from Helgeland to the editorial staff at Pushkin Square in Moscow. Could a possible correspondent have sent it by plane? For his own part he explained his interest in the matter by saying it was important to communicate the mood in the battalion during the exercise, and the disquiet that the reports from Radio Moscow had caused both in the ranks and among officers. Andersen was clearly worried that this type of propaganda transmitted by radio could create anxiety and thereby weaken the morale of the Norwegian forces. Could Radio Moscow on its own initiative have been able to gather this information through contact with the soldiers and officers who were taking part in the exercise, or had it snapped up the details via the Norwegian media? Whatever the case, Andersen felt that what had happened necessarily must have consequences. “Radio Moscow has had confirmation that material of this nature has a distinct effect,” he wrote, referring to what had taken place during the exercise in northern Norway.²²

On the basis of Andreas Andersen's note it was decided that it was necessary to establish a systematic open source intelligence gathering service for the Norwegian broadcasts from Moscow. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs's press office was given the task of organizing the monitoring service, in collaboration with the Military Intelligence Corps department F.st II. The argument was precisely the reports that the Russians had so rapidly broadcast information about troop movements and exercises. This matter was of such grave concern that the Norwegian Intelligence Service and Vilhelm Evang promised to investigate whether there could be sleeper agents in the system.²³

The decision was made to obtain two modern tape recorders from the USA. The embassy in Washington and the Norwegian Information Office in New York were engaged, and on 20th April two recorders, Brush Sound Mirror and Reelest, were shipped to Norway on the steamship *Stavangerfjord*, together with 40 reels of tape.²⁴ At the same time work commenced to find out who were to sit every evening all the year round listening to the three evening transmissions from Moscow. Through professor Arne Ording's contacts at the University of Oslo the two students Knut Dahl Jacobsen and Henry Valen were recruited, and it was also decided that the broadcast monitoring was to take place for three hours each evening from an office in the press service's headquarters at Solplassen 1.²⁵ Knut Dahl Jacobsen and Henry Valen were for decades professors at the forefront in the field of political science; Valen was among other things a high-profile election analyst in the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, NRK. But neither mentioned the fact that at the start of their academic careers, they sat evening after evening in a tiny office in the Foreign Ministry behind the red-brick City Hall in Oslo and wrote down whatever came crackling through the air from a radio studio in Moscow.²⁶

Occasionally the students in the monitoring service personally had to make their way to Smestad, where the analysis division of the Intelligence Service had its headquarters. There they were received with great respect, and then together with the officers began analyzing the content of the transmission: how much involved northern Norway? Why is there so much talk of the situation of teachers? The members of the intelligence staff noted down the length of the various features and produced detailed analyses on the basis of the material they were given by the students down at Solplassen.²⁷

The same autumn this systematic broadcast monitoring made it possible to control the rumours that were passing around in certain military divisions in northern Norway. For the Finnmark Home Guard had heard that Radio Moscow's evening broadcast on October 29 was said to have reported on the work on a fortification that had been commenced that very morning. But in the minutes of the meeting of the coordinating committee some weeks later it is stated that these reports should be met with a degree of scepticism, even though it was necessary to check whether the rumours were true. The systematic monitoring

of Radio Moscow's transmissions thus helped to have a subduing effect on the most extreme examples of Cold War hysteria.

The Work of the Editorial Staff

At Radio Moscow the work of the editorial staff followed strict routines that were drawn up during the war. The Russian editors on the central editorial board produced long sheets of paper containing the material that was to be included in the broadcasts. In turn these were cut into shorter reports, and then translated into Norwegian, often by Ksenia and Marianne Alexandrova, after which the translations were proofread by Gerda Strand Johansen and Mai Wesenberg. Like Ksenia, Marianne Alexandrova had lived for a while in Oslo before the war, and both spent many decades as faithful members of the Radio Moscow Norwegian editorial staff. When the manuscripts were complete, they went to the studio across the street from the old building at Putinkovsky 2. Here there was always a so-called controller present outside the studio, whose job was to check what was recorded on tape. One of those who had the job of controller over a long period of time was Julianne Janovna Kazhanenka. She was originally from Latvia but had an excellent command of both Swedish and Norwegian. Like so many other Latvians, her father had been the victim of terror in the 1930s, and when Julianne got married, she was happy to be rid of a surname that showed that she was the daughter of an enemy of the people. Julianne was a good-humoured lady, but she admitted before she died that she had also been the secret police KGB's contact on the editorial staff. Perhaps it was to save herself and her family that she agreed to collaborate with the secret police.²⁸

Tamara Mayorova was for many years a key person at Radio Moscow, where the Norwegian and Swedish editorial staffs continued to work closely, and for a period also with the Indonesian section in the same crowded offices. When the later well-known historian Aleksander Kan arrived on the editorial staff in 1949, Mayorova was in charge of the Norwegian team. Aleksander Kan was to be just one of many gifted Russians who spent the early years of their professional careers as members of Radio Moscow's Scandinavian editorial staff. He was to conclude his professional career as a professor at the University of Uppsala in Sweden.²⁹

There was a big difference between being an editorial writer and a simple translator. Mai Wesenberg knew all about that; for long periods she was paid by the piece for whatever she translated, and was fully dependent on working systematically and hard to make a decent living wage. But as she became more experienced, she was able to manage 15-20 pages daily, which gave her a tidy sum of roubles.

Even in the poor Soviet society, where there was more than enough to spend money on after World War II, the Communist Party still chose to devote considerable sums of money to maintaining radio transmissions in many of the world's languages. The theory must have been that these broadcasts, along with a massive military force, would help to demonstrate that the Soviet Union had now really become a superpower with interests in every corner of the globe.

The fact that people were living on top of one another, with shortages of food, clothes, furniture and not least consumer goods, was something that simply had to be accepted, for the time being. At the radio station the staff was also characterized by the fact that they had helped to win the war. If they were just patient, things would soon improve. At the top of society Josef Stalin still sat in power, in his role as the totally unassailable leader and helmsman. There was barely a single broadcast in which his name was not mentioned, in panegyric terms. But then a Norwegian appeared on the scene in the editorial offices who started asking questions about the whole truth.

The 32-year-old Martin Gunnar Knutsen joined the Scandinavian editorial staff in Moscow like a breath of fresh air early in the new year of 1952, with very clear opinions about what type of programmes and not least what forms of language the listeners back home in Norway expected. "To compose programmes on literature on the basis of how many times the author mentioned Stalin – that would defeat its own purpose," wrote Martin Gunnar Knutsen 30 years later when he was summing up his three years at Radio Moscow, and added: "It wasn't the Stalin songs that touched the hearts and minds of Norwegians after the war, but the simple tones of 'Enstonig ringer den lille klokke', (originally a Russian folk tune entitled 'Odnovuzhno gremit kolokolchik')."

Nobody doubted Martin Gunnar Knutsen's fundamental political beliefs. In addition to gently questioning the references to Stalin, he could also tell his colleagues that a lot of good things were happening in the Soviet Union, but that housing standards were miles below those of Norway. And that was against the background of his having recently lived in Finnmark and seen the problems that the war had caused for the population of this northernmost county.

When Martin Gunnar Knutsen and his wife Edith Halvari in autumn 1952 received a visit from Edith's father Alfred, the alarm bells started ringing at the secret services in Moscow. The former so faithful communist Alfred Halvari had resigned as a member of the Communist Party as a result of a relationship with a woman that some of his party comrades looked upon as suspicious. At the same time there were suspicions that he had been in touch with the "leprous" Furubotn-clique, three years after the split in the Norwegian Communist Party.³⁰

Simultaneously Knutsen had annoyed a lot of people by criticizing a photo in which Stalin was depicted standing in the sunset amid a landscape of joyful

people and a town that looked like a picture postcard. He was called in for interrogation by the editors-in-chief of the radio, but stuck to his opinion that the transmissions to among other countries Norway were characterized by a language that did not sound right in the ears of the Norwegian people. He offered to resign and said that he was ready to return to Norway at any time.

Martin Gunnar Knutsen left the meeting room on one of the top floors of the radio building without any idea of what was going to happen. But he heard no more, and spent a further two years in Moscow. The following year he was to witness world history at first hand (Knutsen 1983).

At 3 o'clock on the morning of March 6, 1953 Moscow time, one o'clock in the morning Norwegian time, the radio legend Yuri Levitan went on air. People understood that grave news was about to be announced. But for the majority it came as a huge shock: Josef Stalin had passed away at the age of 74.

"But in these dark days all the people of our country have been united into one brotherly family led by the Communist Party, founded and led by Lenin and Stalin." Yuri Levitan read the announcement with the pathos he had adopted during the war years, and throughout the morning people gathered round their radio sets to hear the news.³¹

Soon it was Martin Gunnar Knutsen's turn. "Never before nor since have I felt so intensely the significance of something I was reading aloud," wrote Knutsen many years later. Along with millions of Soviet citizens Norwegians shared in the collective grief, despite their criticism of the glorification of the country's leader (Knutsen 1983).

Josef Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili had drawn his last breath shortly before 10 o'clock on the evening of March 5, surrounded by all his immediate family. Soviet society was in a state of shock, the invulnerable demigod Stalin was no more (Montefiore 2003).

Martin Gunnar Knutsen had met colleagues in tears in the radio building in Pushkin Square. Millions of people created an enormous crush as they crowded in to get a final glimpse of the little Georgian lying in state in the Palace of Unions on Revolution Square in the centre of Moscow.

Radio Moscow's broadcasts were concerned with nothing other than the ways in which Stalin had benefitted mankind. "To what extent has not he, our best friend and wise teacher, ensured that Soviet art achieved such a high level, full of content and with an understanding of what is happening among the people." This was part of the content praising Stalin's influence on art, which was transmitted by Radio Moscow in Finnish on March 19, 1953. No doubt the Norwegian broadcasts contained much of the same, accompanied by lavish amounts of classical music in a minor key, by both Peter Tchaikovsky and Edvard Grieg.³²

Radio Moscow Demystifies and Builds Bridges

Both in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the Intelligence Service the reports from Radio Moscow were studied with a magnifying glass. After the listening conditions during the months before the new year 1952-1953 had been so poor that at times it was difficult for the students at Solplassen 1 to pick what was being said, in the following three months the intelligence staff carried out a detailed analysis of Radio Moscow's transmissions in Norwegian.

"The analysis aims first and foremost to establish quantitative measures for the various conflicts of interest that are mentioned in that part of the propaganda that directly concerns the Nordic region." Behind this rather cryptic wording lies a strong belief that by analyzing the "relative amounts of material of a particular type" (political conditions, economic, military conditions etc) it would be possible to assess eventual fluctuations in the direction and purpose of the propaganda. "Is it possible to say anything definite about the sender's objectives and so on with regard to the Nordic area and by so doing find out something about their future actions?"³³

In winter 1953 this work was commenced with great zeal, even though the intelligence staff admitted that "the theory that applies to methods in this field is, however, not highly developed, so for the time being one will be working on the theoretical foundation in this area."³⁴

According to the Norwegian intelligence staff, virtually all the reports on domestic politics in Norway concerned Norwegian compliance with the membership in NATO. The conclusion in Moscow was that NATO membership was contrary to the Norwegian Constitution. In the broadcasts it was emphasized again and again how Norwegian rearmament was leading to a reduction in living standards and an increase in unemployment. Radio Moscow was also critical of the NRK. They are broadcasting "standardized propaganda to the population of Norway on behalf of the Americans", thundered the Norwegian-speaking Soviet commentators, according to the transcripts written down in Oslo. The Norwegian news agency NTB was criticized because they had misrepresented a report from Radio Moscow in a deliberate attempt at worsening relations between the Soviet Union and Norway. As an exception to the rule, one programme that was spared criticism of Norwegian compliance with the terms of NATO membership was a programme commemorating the Norwegian author and collector of fairy tales and legends Peter Asbjørnsen.

Otherwise the transmissions in January 1953 were dominated by interviews with various Norwegian visitors to the Soviet Union and comments on letters the editorial staff had received from Norway. A recurring theme was joy over the ever-increasing level of production and the improving standards of living in the Soviet Union. Almost half of the material broadcast in Norwegian during this period was linked to direct contacts with Norwegians, and in the vast

majority of cases this involved their praise of Soviet society. 15 per cent of the material concerned the construction of American military bases in Norway and the Americans' dictatorial policies and bad behaviour.³⁵

However, the death of Stalin was soon to be reflected in Radio Moscow's transmissions; even though, according to the Norwegian broadcast monitoring service, they continued "to vilify the actions and intentions of the Americans", the strongest language became a thing of the past. There was also an end to what Norwegian intelligence regarded as "attempts to turn broad sections of the population against the government."³⁶ One of the most important tasks for Radio Moscow now was to demystify what was going on in the Soviet Union. It was not the way many people in Norway imagined, that the minute you set foot on Soviet soil, you were being shadowed and kept under scrutiny.

This was happening at the same time as the radio propaganda in the opposite direction, from the west targeting inhabitants of the Soviet Union and the Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe, was increasing in force. From 1950 Radio Free Europe transmitted in a number of languages to countries in the Eastern Bloc; in 1953 a special editorial team, Radio Liberty or Radio Svoboda, began broadcasting to the Soviet Union. There was now a full-scale radio war raging in Europe.³⁷

Ever more frequent interviews with members of Norwegian delegations visiting the Soviet Union were important in order to change the general impression. But replies to letters from listeners were also a way of explaining what the situation was really like in socialist Soviet. The Norwegian press was again heavily criticized for its hostile attitude to the Soviet Union, and among others *Arbeiderbladet* was accused of not knowing what they were talking about, when they wrote that many of the members of delegations were not allowed to see what they wished. Radio Moscow repeatedly mentioned the name of *Arbeiderbladet's* commentator, later head of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, John Sannes. He was accused of being a warmonger with his extremely negative view of what was happening in the Soviet Union. His "scribbles" about the Soviet budget were not worth the paper they were written on, according to Radio Moscow.³⁸

In autumn 1953 there was a general election in Norway, which of course was a natural topic for the transmissions from Moscow. For Soviet propaganda it was important to broadcast the claim that all parties in the campaign, "under pressure from the electors", had rejected the plans to station foreign troops on Norwegian soil.

Norwegian policy regarding military bases and every possible attempt to undermine it was discussed in almost every broadcast from Radio Moscow at this time. Due to a change in the election system the Norwegian Communist Party (NKP) was again represented in the Norwegian parliament, in spite of the fact that support for the party declined slightly compared to the election

on 1949. Even though NKP had no key positions in Norwegian politics, Radio Moscow announced that political developments in Norway were now moving in the right direction. The fact that support for the Norwegian Labour Party reached new heights with a 46.7 % share of the vote was explained by saying that the party had made “beautiful promises of full employment and improved standards of living.”³⁹

Stalin’s death led to a marked increase in the number of Norwegian delegations travelling to the Soviet Union. And the Norwegians had barely crossed the border before being met by eager staff members from Radio Moscow who wanted comments on the conditions in the Soviet state. “It would appear that Moscow and Leningrad are attempting to outshine each other in beauty,” said Georg Rønnestad from Ålesund and Rolf Antoniussen from Porsgrunn to Radio Moscow on Tuesday September 28, 1954. But this friendly competition was, according to these two, based on “friendship and mutual help and had one clear purpose, to satisfy the needs of the people.” In the same programme it was reported that senior rector Karl Pettersen from Vardø had attended a Baptist meeting in Leningrad, where the harvest festival was being celebrated.⁴⁰

In the broadcast on August 7, 1953 Ernst Sverd from Trondheim told Radio Moscow’s reporter of his impressions of the development in the Soviet Union. Among all the enthusiastic rose-coloured accounts presented by these visitors to the Soviet state, his was by far the most high-sounding. Sverd was able to tell how they had developed a technique for moving houses, and that a dwelling had recently been moved 75 metres while its occupants were asleep. He had also visited the new university complex high up on what had now become known as Lenin Heights, and was extremely impressed over what he had seen. Among other things there were plans to build 340 metre-high “express lifts” that were to travel at a speed of 3.5 metres per second. Sverd was probably never told that even at that time Soviet lifts were “renowned” for their unreliability.⁴¹

“This Week’s Mailbox” and the Contact with the Listeners

Before World War II, Anna Dalland had encouraged listeners in Norway to write to Radio Moscow, and during the 1950s the programme known as “This Week’s Mailbox” became one of the most popular parts of the broadcasts. On Wednesday December 15, 1954 a listener in Narvik wanted to know whether foreign seamen who visited Soviet ports were allowed to move around freely. The Radio Moscow presenter was able to report that naturally this was perfectly possible: “One is hospitably invited to come ashore and take a look round. Visitors are also shown around.” He also made reference to the situation in Leningrad, where conditions were particularly well organized for overseas seamen. The international seamen’s club had among other things television sets,

beside which interpreters sat, ready to translate anything the viewers needed. There were also opportunities to go dancing, see a film and sign up for guided tours round the city.

Radio Moscow's editorial staff had noted that Norwegian listeners were interested in more sport in the broadcasts. On this December evening there was a letter from listener Erling K. from Trondheim, who wondered who held the world record in hammer-throwing. Radio Moscow was able to inform listeners that two Soviet athletes, Mikhail Krivonosov and Stanislav Nenasyev, in the space of two months had broken Norwegian Sverre Strandli's record set the previous year, and that the new record was now 64.05 metres.⁴²

Neither Gerda Strand Johansen, Mai Wesenberg nor Martin Gunnar Knutsen was particularly interested in sport, but they all knew that this was material that was really popular in Norway. Knutsen made his debut as a skating reporter during the international competition between the Soviet Union and Norway in the Dinamo Stadium just before the New Year in 1953. He was able to transmit a lengthy interview with the Norwegian skating legend Hjalmar "Hjallis" Andersen just hours before the final 10.000 metre event. The interview was made with a hand-powered tape recorder operated by technician Vitaly Kobysh. This same Kobysh was later to become one of the chief editors of the Scandinavian editorial team.

"Hjallis talked uninterrupted for almost half an hour (...) while Kobysh turned the handle until he was blue in the face," wrote Martin Gunnar Knutsen when he 30 years later recalled his best memories from his time at Radio Moscow. Hjallis won both the long-distance events on his comeback after resting during the 1952-53 season. Nevertheless this international competition represented a breakthrough for Soviet skating. Names like Boris Shilkov and not least Oleg Goncharenko were to provide Radio Moscow's sports journalists with masses of good broadcasting material for years to come (Knutsen 1983).

Radio Moscow also tried its hand at organizing listeners' competitions about sport, where the task was to tip who won the medals in a world skating championship. The rule was that the letters should be postmarked before a certain date prior to the actual championship. But in this case the editorial team had miscalculated the ingenuity of a group of creative young skating fans in Sør-Varanger in Finnmark. Up there in Pasvikdalen they allied themselves with the local postmaster, who was only too willing to turn back the date on the postmarking machine the necessary number of days. But one of the boys went just a bit too far when he even wrote down the times of the winners.⁴³

Listeners' letters and sport were the material that ensured that Radio Moscow during this period managed to attract listeners from outside the ranks of the hard core of Communist party faithful. But it was other reports that interested the Norwegian Intelligence Service stationed in Oslo. In June 1954 the Norwegian editorial team in Moscow forwarded the news from the official party

organ *Pravda* that two spies sent across the border from Norway with the aid of the Norwegian border authorities had been captured and commuted to long jail sentences.

This was sensational information which for the first time allowed Norwegians a glimpse of the secret war that was being waged in the sensitive border area in the far north of the country. The news of the arrest of the two former Russian soldiers Yuri Khramtsov and Vladimir Galai was so detailed that it was difficult for Norwegian authorities to deny it, even though both the police and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs claimed that they knew nothing about the matter.⁴⁴

Almost three years after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Intelligence Service established the broadcast monitoring service, it proved then that this project was extremely useful in keeping a check on what the Russian authorities knew and thought about Norwegian security policy. But often months passed between each time something of real interest turned up in the transmissions. Just a week before the comments on the airports in northern Norway were broadcast, the coordinating committee for the secret services had discussed the future of this very expensive open source intelligence gathering service. The conclusion was that the reports ought to be simplified and produced using far less labour-intensive methods than had been the case so far.

"The focus must to a far greater degree than earlier be placed on an objective and qualitative assessment of the political reports in the broadcasts," wrote the coordinating committee's secretary Andreas Andersen in his minutes from the meeting. The problem was that there were not really many other ways of doing this than by listening to all the transmissions and then writing down the content. Often the most interesting information cropped up when it was least expected. And it was rarely the case that the news that was of the greatest interest headlined the broadcast. An interesting piece of news could be aired just once, never to be heard again, for some unknown reason.

In order to register everything, it was therefore necessary to have a person on duty every single evening every day the whole year round. And although the value of the service was questioned on a regular basis, it continued along the same lines for almost ten years.⁴⁵

The broadcast monitoring service had first and foremost been established based on the desire to check whether there were "leaks" from the Norwegian military services, and in order to make it easier to interpret changes in Soviet policy. The first three years of active listening produced no conclusion in the case of the first question; on the contrary it helped to stifle any rumours regarding what had been or not been said by Radio Moscow. Therefore no particular "counter-measures" against the transmissions had been instigated, wrote adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ole Ålgård in a note in November 1951.⁴⁶

In spring 1953 the Norwegian Intelligence Service received 15 reports stating that Radio Moscow had broadcast reports about various military manoeuvres

in Norway. But with the help of the transcripts from the monitoring service, Head of Intelligence Vilhelm Evang was able to confirm to the Coordinating Committee on May 22 that nothing of the sort had taken place. The Coordinating Committee therefore was of the opinion that one was faced with a case of individuals who were spreading rumours “for specific psychological purposes”, especially in northern Norway.⁴⁷

Radio Moscow and Surveillance

Radio Moscow introduced listener competitions, and on January 12, 1955 the presenter was able to announce that a listener with the initials G.T. had won an LP record because he had managed to answer correctly all the questions in a music quiz. H.P. from Trondheim came in a good second, but he had written that *The Sword Dance of the Young Thracians* was composed by Tchaikovsky and not Khatchaturyan. On the same programme G.T. was able to hear the music of his choice and enjoyed “Sangen om Leninhøydene.”⁴⁸

These two eager competitors were identified by their initials, and one cannot help wondering whether the others who signed their letters to Radio Moscow with their full names knew what a risk they were taking. Apparently they were living in the naïve belief that this could not in any way be dangerous. It was fun to hear your name on the radio, at a time when NRK’s music request programme every Sunday was the only opportunity to get on the air.

Naturally they knew nothing of the fact that the students “on duty” at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs were accurately making a note of everything that was said on Radio Moscow, and that the written transcripts ended up on the desk of the security police.

Perhaps G.T. and H.P. had a vague idea of what was going on, and asked that only their initials were used during the broadcast. But in the same transmission as the music quiz Maren Mikkelsen from Kragerø asked whether there was freedom of religion in the Soviet Union. It was normal that the presenter gave the full name and home town of those who had written letters to the editorial staff. Nor did the staff at Radio Moscow have the slightest idea of how their broadcasts were being monitored in Norway, and that the fact that they read out the full names of their contributors also exposed them to a security risk. But perhaps they felt that it was necessary in their efforts to normalize and demystify the transmissions. By only using initials and pseudonyms they would have created even greater distance between themselves and their listeners.⁴⁹

What opportunities did the Norwegian Intelligence Service itself have to make use of the “Mailbox” to extract information? We know little about that question, but a report from Harald F. in Tromsø became the focus of great interest to the intelligence gathering service at the Foreign Office. He wished

to know more about the research that Soviet scientists were carrying out in the North Pole region. These were sensitive issues since the Cold War had also moved further north. Nevertheless it was clear that Radio Moscow had done some very thorough research before answering the question from Tromsø, and Harald F. was informed that the two Soviet expeditions North Pole 3 and North Pole 4 had drifted across the ice in the Polar Sea for nine months, and that their assignment was to find out what could be done to make ships' traffic through the Northwest Passage north of Siberia easier. This was a comprehensive project involving a whole range of different scientists, according to Radio Moscow.

For Norwegian authorities, not least the armed forces, this was interesting and the information from the broadcast is clearly highlighted in the transcript that was handed over to the Ministry. At about the same time Radio Moscow reported that a Soviet radio station had been established on White Island due east of Svalbard, a piece of news that was also noted and investigated by the Norwegian Intelligence Service.⁵⁰

Was Harald F. someone who was acting on behalf of the Intelligence Service, or was this information that the Soviet authorities deliberately leaked via Radio Moscow, to demonstrate that they were increasing their presence in the evermore strategically vital northern regions? Whatever was the case, "Mailbox" was by far the most interesting programme on Radio Moscow. The editors were free to choose which letters they wished to answer, and they were clear in their choice of topics that reflected how good life in the Soviet Union was.

It was not just Soviet architecture that was presented as an example to the rest of the world. Seaman Gunnar Hansen wrote to the editors from ports around the globe, and on March 16, 1955 he wanted to know more about the Soviet Union's attitude to criminals, a topic which, in addition to the Soviet freedom of religion, was the focus of considerable interest in the West. Hansen's own opinion was that criminals ought to be punished, and the Radio Moscow presenter agreed completely. "But in the Soviet Union the most important thing is to turn him into an honest person!" Each individual must be seen as "a worthy human being who can and must be converted into a respectable member of society."

Radio Moscow mentioned a number of examples of how people had shown regret and become better human beings and good citizens of the country. One Pavlov had twice been arrested for theft and sentenced to five years in prison. But after having spent four years in a labour camp he was released because he had trained to be a driver and made a complete break with the past. According to Radio Moscow he had now got married and had a permanent job as a driver.⁵¹

Some of the answers to the letters from listeners must have seemed very strange to the Norwegians who had come to work at Radio Moscow, and as a

rule it was the Norwegian-speaking Russian editorial staff whose responsibility this was. Many of the Norwegians who travelled to Moscow to work as journalists might well be die-hard communists back home in Norway and eager in their defence of the peace-loving Soviet Union. But they understood that pure propaganda like this would not wash with the Norwegian people.

A short while after he had started working at Radio Moscow, Eivind Svendsen was in sharp conflict with the management in connection with a series of programmes about the situation in the Baltic countries. While Radio Moscow's line was to emphasize the harmony that existed between the peoples of the Soviet Union, Svendsen realized, especially after a visit to Lithuania, that there were differences of opinion and antagonism. He was keen to highlight the national characteristics, but fell out with the Russian members of the editorial staff over the issue. The Baltic countries had been independent from 1920 to 1940, but were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union against their will after World War II. Thousands of people were imprisoned or deported, but the Soviet authorities never managed to break down the resistance towards a deeper integration with the Soviet state.⁵²

During the 1950s the Scandinavian editorial team experienced a steady stream of young, well-educated Russians who were all a product of the Soviet education system, and who viewed the work on the editorial staff as an opening towards the world outside. In May 1956 Radio Moscow's staff member Lev Kapitonov accompanied the first group of Soviet "tourists" to visit Norway, where skating star Oleg Goncharenko's beautiful wife Aleksandra soon became a favourite with Norwegian press photographers. Kapitonov, who was later to return to Oslo as press and cultural attaché at the Soviet embassy, was characterized by the Norwegian press as "a dangerous element" in the group.⁵³

In May 1957 Vitaly Kobyshev came to Oslo, along with his colleague Viktor Shragin, as guests of the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, NRK. This was a return visit after NRK's own Hartvig Kiran had visited the Soviet Union the year before, and Kobyshev made a number of programmes about Norwegian society for Russian radio. Some of this material was also broadcast in the Norwegian language transmissions, among other things a lengthy interview with Thor Heyerdahl. Heyerdahl had made a name for himself in the Soviet Union after the Kon-Tiki expedition across the Pacific Ocean in 1947. The two Soviet journalists were also impressed over Norwegian technical colleges, and in particular the domestic science schools. "We really want to tell our listeners about them. They will be more like lectures than radio reports," they told journalists from *Dagbladet* during an interview in connection with their visit.

The ambitious 29-year-old Kobyshev, originally from Poltava in the Ukraine, was a key figure at Radio Moscow, and one of the leaders of the Scandinavian editorial office. To *Dagbladet* he explained that he was happy with the way he had been received in Norway, and he added that all his requests with regard to

reporting had been met in full. The visit of the two eager radio reporters was monitored closely by the Norwegian authorities and the Intelligence Service, and Kobysh was given his own place in the file drawn up to register those who were working at Radio Moscow.⁵⁴

The reporting trip by the two Radio Moscow staff was later to cause reactions, also internationally. Kobysh and Shragin had been allowed to visit Tandberg's Radio Factory in Oslo, where they had interviewed the colourful, but also autocratic managing director Vebjørn Tandberg. In reply to a question about whether there was any union at the company that was protecting the rights of the workers, he had replied a brusque no. He had also refused the two Soviet reporters permission to speak to the workers on the factory floor.

Tandberg was quoted as saying that there was no point in increasing production because this would only result in a fall in the prices of all the products from the factory.⁵⁵ The programme from Oslo was broadcast on July 6, 1957, and was registered by the Danish news agency Ritzau. The descriptions of Norwegian working conditions on Radio Moscow hit the headlines internationally and NRK's Director of Broadcasting Kaare Fostervoll felt he had to react. In a telegram to the head of Radio Moscow he claimed that the quotes in the programme were "strongly misleading." He requested that Radio Moscow corrected the errors in the programmes that had been aired.⁵⁶

The two Soviet reporters were severely chastised by NRK and Norwegian business leaders, but it is not easy to see what they had done wrong. The form of and formulations in the programme were naturally influenced by the fact that they were representatives of the Soviet propaganda apparatus. When NTB contacted Vebjørn Tandberg, he admitted that he had refused to allow the two Soviet journalists to speak to the workers because "the management never usually allows visitors to move around between the machines where they would only be in the way." The factory had some Hungarian refugees among its employees, and this was one of the reasons why the journalists were refused entry to the factory hall, according to Tandberg. He also confirmed that there were no unions at the company, but that all the employees were represented on the personnel committee.⁵⁷

The two young reporters from Radio Moscow had poked their noses into something that was a very sensitive issue in Norway. In 1957 it was controversial that at Norwegian companies it was not possible to form unions, in spite of the fact that the Norwegian Labour Party had been in power for more than 20 years. What Radio Moscow probably said nothing about was that the working conditions at Tandberg's Radio Factory were very special, and that the employees there enjoyed a number of benefits not offered to other Norwegian workers in 1957, among other things a five-day week in the summer. Nor was any emphasis placed on the fact that the Norwegian trade union movement had fought a fierce battle to establish "normal conditions" at the company.

The “harmony of interests” that Vitaly Kobyshev and Viktor Shragin met at Tandberg’s Radio Factory was very reminiscent of the relations between Soviet unions and business management. In Soviet workplaces of the 1950s there was little talk of differences of opinion, conflicts, or wage demands. According to the Soviet authorities, this was completely unnecessary, given the fact that the workers themselves controlled the means of production.

In spite of the uproar about Tandberg, in 1957 relations between Norway and the Soviet Union were characterized by a quite different openness and curiosity than was the case just a few years earlier. This openness was also reflected in the broadcasts from Radio Moscow. From Moscow’s point of view, the most important event happened on October 4. The successful launch of the world’s very first satellite Sputnik 1 was a prestigious victory for the Soviet authorities, and naturally dominated Radio Moscow’s transmissions. But when it was mentioned for the first time on October 5, it was only news item number two, following a report on the situation in Syria.

This had been the normal routine in Radio Moscow’s news bulletins for many years. You often had to wait until news item number two to hear the most interesting piece of news. During the next few days the news of Sputnik dominated the bulletins, and not least the emphasis on the “amazement” the launching had caused to their arch rival, the USA. On October 8, Radio Moscow headlined a statement in the Norwegian press which claimed that “‘the artificial moon’ has opened a new era for science.”⁵⁸

The Official Norway and Radio Moscow

Norwegian authorities never introduced restrictions preventing ministers and civil servants from speaking to the Norwegian editorial staff, but thanks to the monitoring service, most leading politicians were aware of the main content of the broadcasts. And the general impression in leading political circles in Norway was that this was pure propaganda that served nothing other than Soviet interests.

In connection with the visit of Norwegian naval units in Leningrad in August 1956 Eivind Svendsen asked the Norwegian embassy’s representative Per Borgen whether it would not be of interest for the Norwegian ambassador Erik Braadland to address Norwegian listeners by way of Radio Moscow. But what at first seemed to be an outstretched hand was rejected by Norwegian authorities. “We are simply not prepared to be a part of this,” wrote ambassador Erik Braadland when he later in the autumn sent a diplomatic note to Oslo. By then, Permanent Secretary Gustav Heiberg in the Foreign Ministry had already acquainted himself with the matter and recommended that Erik Braadland decline the approach in polite but no uncertain terms.

The affair ended up on Foreign Minister Halvard Lange's desk, and also he turned down the idea of the Norwegian ambassador taking part in Radio Moscow's broadcasts. The plan was that Braadland was to speak on the radio in connection with a Norwegian-Soviet friendship evening. But Braadland was petrified that this would be interpreted as a tacit Norwegian acceptance of the activities of Radio Moscow's Norwegian editorial staff.

"It is far better that we put it bluntly. We quite simply disapprove of Radio Moscow's transmissions," wrote Erik Braadland to the Norwegian editorial staff at Radio Moscow, after he had turned down the offer of taking part in their broadcasts.⁵⁹

In other words, the Norwegian ambassador boycotted Radio Moscow, which was not the case for Braadland's Finnish counterpart Eero A. Wuori. On April 5 he made a speech as part of Radio Moscow's Finnish transmissions. The position of Finland was different from that of NATO-member Norway, and from 1956 Urho Kekkonen had taken over as president with a firm grasp of everything that involved relations with their powerful neighbour in the east.⁶⁰

During the summer of 1959 it was to prove very useful for the Norwegian authorities to monitor what Moscow was thinking from day to day. Prime Minister Einar Gerhardsen had visited the Soviet Union in 1955, and it was time for the return visit of Nikita Khrushchev. However, in the early spring of 1959 the tone of the comments from Radio Moscow regarding relations between Norway and the Soviet Union was relatively sharp. In the broadcast on April 6, commentator Boris Sergeyev again reiterated the argument from NATO supporters in Norway that membership was necessary "to protect ourselves from the danger of attack from the east. This accusation is made against a nation that lost 11 000 of her sons during the battle to liberate Norway."⁶¹

Many people in Norway welcomed the visit of Nikita Khrushchev, but felt that it was necessary to confront the Soviet leader both with the lack of democracy in his own country and with the suppression of the opposition in countries like Hungary and Poland. The newspapers *Norges Handels og Sjøfartstidende*, *VG* and the conservative *Morgenbladet* were all harsh in their criticism of Soviet policy.

The plan for Khrushchev was to visit all the Nordic countries, but on July 19 the Soviet Foreign Ministry summoned the acting heads of the diplomatic missions at the Norwegian, Danish and Swedish embassies in Moscow and informed them that the planned visits would not now take place, due to what was referred to as a "campaign of slander" against the Soviet Union. It was Radio Moscow that broadcast the full explanation of why the visits were cancelled, and in the days that followed there were a number of comments that explained the background to what had happened.

A planned visit to Finland was also cancelled. But Radio Moscow was able to announce in its second broadcast on August 19 that this had happened as a

consequence of the cancellation of the visits to the other Nordic countries and was not due to any Soviet displeasure with regard to Finnish government policy.⁶²

Throughout the autumn of 1959 Radio Moscow continued its aggressive campaign against those who had made sure that Khrushchev did not visit Norway. On November 12 the point was made that the Soviet leader was to travel to France in spring 1960 and that Parisian newspapers had described the visit in very positive terms. They wrote that the Soviet leader could pick and choose among offers of visits to cities and factories all over France. At the same time the union leader at the leading Norwegian shipyard Aker Mekaniske Verksted, Ragnar Kalheim, was interviewed on Radio Moscow in connection with a visit to Riga. The former communist and Furubotn-supporter Kalheim did not pull his punches and said that “the reactionary forces in Norway that had run an active propaganda campaign against Nikita Khrushchev’s visit had failed miserably.”⁶³

The many reports and comments on Radio Moscow concerning Khrushchev’s cancelled visit were closely read and analyzed in Norway. Significance was also attached to the fact that Radio Moscow offered far more detailed and often differing explanations of what had happened than did the news agencies, which again emphasized the importance of the open source monitoring service. Also on earlier occasions, announcements had been made during these broadcasts that sounded innocent enough, but which later turned out to be important political signals.

Even though all the members of staff who were recruited to Radio Moscow from Norway were active communists and more than favourably disposed towards the Soviet Union, the reality that met them in Moscow was quite different from what they had imagined would be the case. In September 1958 Berit and Kristian Haldorsen sent a letter home to Norway in which they confirmed that “working at Radio Moscow was certainly not just a piece of cake.” In the letter, which was opened and copied by the Norwegian secret police, it said that both of them were sick and tired of the whole caboodle, and that they were happy whenever they were not at work. The leaders of the Communist Party of Norway (NKP), back home in Oslo were worried about what would happen to the two new staff members that they had recommended to Radio Moscow via the Soviet embassy in Oslo.⁶⁴

NKP felt a special responsibility for the Radio Moscow transmissions. The problem was that they never managed to convince the editorial staff that the target group was Norwegian listeners in Norway and not Russian controllers or the leadership in Moscow.

It had been an endless struggle ever since “Truls” in 1946 sent his complaints to Randulf Dalland regarding the hopeless standard of the language in the broadcasts in Norwegian from Moscow. Dalland was one of a number of communists who later took up the issue with the leadership of Radio Moscow.

“The material must not be broadcast in a tone that perhaps suits the Russian people, but is not appropriate for the country that the broadcast is targetting,” said the former veteran of the Spanish Civil War when he was in Moscow in 1956. Even though Randulf Dalland was given every assurance that the material received by the Norwegian editorial staff would be translated and “tuned in” to a tone that best suited the Norwegian listeners, it seemed as though this was soon forgotten.⁶⁵

Kristian Haldorsen also reacted to the fact that Radio Moscow also broadcast over the radio a fictive decision from a trade union meeting. The radio management succeeded in this way in killing much of the enthusiasm that he had felt when he first arrived in Moscow. “We could have made so much more out of it if we had had more freedom to develop the programmes ourselves,” said Kristian Haldorsen.⁶⁶

U2 – A Good Affair for Radio Moscow

Before they returned to Norway in 1962, Berit and Kristian Haldorsen were to experience one of the most dramatic episodes in relations between Norway and the Soviet Union. In May 1960 an American U2-spy plane took off from a base in Pakistan. The aim of the mission was to fly over the Soviet Union, photograph military bases, among others the Plesetsk-base south of Arkhangelsk, and then land at Bodø airbase in northern Norway. But the Americans had underestimated the Soviet air defences, and U2 was shot down or forced to land close to a town which in those days was known as Sverdlovsk.

This was a good affair not just for the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, but also for Radio Moscow. After the American authorities for several days had issued reports that a weather observation plane had disappeared north of Turkey, the Soviet leader announced that the Soviet air force had shot down an American spy plane. On May 6 it was reported on Radio Moscow, but the American authorities continued to attempt to wriggle out of the accusation and stick to their story that it was a plane that had lost its way. Khrushchev must have rubbed his hands in glee when he heard this. The next day he told the disbelieving members of the Supreme Soviet not just that the plane had been shot down, but that the pilot Francis Gary Powers had survived and was now in Soviet detention. And he had said that he was heading north and planned to land at Bodø in Norway. Powers had with him 7500 roubles, jewellery as a bribe and a pistol. Now Radio Moscow rolled out the verbal big guns, well aware of the fact that they had a good story. On what was known as Radio Day in the Soviet Union, Norway, together with Turkey and Pakistan, was accused of being a part of aggressive actions against the Soviet Union. On May 10, Radio Moscow followed this by announcing that countries that hired out

bases to the USA could themselves become the targets of reprisals from the Soviet Union. This could be interpreted as a threat that the Soviet Union was considering an attack on the air base at Bodø. In the USA, president Dwight D. Eisenhower and CIA-director Allen Dulles had to beat a retreat and admit that it was necessary to run this sort of spy mission in order to map the striking power of the Soviet armed forces.⁶⁷

For Kristian Haldorsen and his colleagues at Radio Moscow, the U2 episode was an example that proved they were right in their claims that they in broadcast after broadcast disseminated the Soviet view of Norway as a passive pawn in the power game of the imperial superpower America. The use of language became no less strong after an American RB-47 plane was shot down in the east of the Barents Sea on July 1. When a delegation from the Norway-Soviet Union Association was on a visit to Moscow some days later, Kristian Haldorsen took the opportunity to allow one of the participants to support the Soviet view: “It was a little depressing to hear about this plane that had been over Soviet-Russian airspace. We would rather have seen that this sort of thing did not happen,” was the answer he must have placed in the mouth of the Norwegian guest. “But the episodes concerning these planes has not affected the Soviet hospitality?”, enquired Haldorsen, and was assured that “we have been given a wonderful reception in every possible way.”⁶⁸

Radio Moscow was not renowned for its humour or experimentation with form, but the U2 affair revealed new talents of the editorial staff. On Friday August 19, two days after the trial against Francis Gary Powers had started in the Palace of Unions, Radio Moscow’s Norwegian staff presented a radio theatre drama entitled “The kind sports pilot Francis and his good uncle Shelton.” In the title roles Kristian Haldorsen played the good uncle and the newly-arrived Radio Moscow staff member Per Lind was the sports pilot Francis.

The radio play created a stir among the “listeners” in the Norwegian Foreign Office, who characterized the whole thing as “rather strange.” But for the Norwegian editorial staff in Moscow this was both an exciting and amusing time. They were able to present real news, and they had good cards in their hand in the propaganda war between East and West.⁶⁹

Its Time as a Superpower is Over

At the end of the 1950s the Soviet Union stood at the height of its powers, not least militarily and in its influence in the third world. In several fields, first and foremost in space travel and weapon development, they were able to offer the West real competition. The USA and the other NATO countries were fighting with the Soviet Union for influence in the many countries that had been liberated from the colonial empire, and in this struggle Radio Moscow

was an important factor. On April 19, 1958 special transmissions in French and English started with the aim of targeting Africa, and from 1960 there were also broadcasts in Swahili. Radio Moscow was granted considerable resources that made it possible both to hire outside forces to strengthen the broadcasts and to give the various editorial teams new and more modern offices. At the beginning of the 1960s the move started away from the dilapidated premises at Putinkovsky Pereulok 2 to a new 10-storey building on Pyatnitskaya street south of the Moscow River. With stronger financial muscles, large editorial teams were built up to transmit to the Third World, at the same time as the Scandinavian editorial team was able to continue at the same level as earlier, with addition of fresh resources from Norway, Sweden and Denmark. A fresh addition to the Norwegian editorial team was Per Lind, who satisfied two requirements made of staff at Radio Moscow. He was a member of the Norwegian Communist Youth Movement, and he had a minimum of general education having successfully graduated from high school. Moreover, 23-year-old Per Lind had work experience as a teacher. Per Lind was offered a monthly wage of 240 roubles for the job of announcer. In addition he was to be paid extra for translations and reports. For the flat he was offered after a while in a newly-developed area on the Lenin Prospect in south-west Moscow he paid a symbolic rent of 12 roubles a month.

Like Kristian and Berit Haldorsen, he also was promised that some of his wages would be paid out in Norwegian kroner, which could then be sent home to Norway. According to the official rate of exchange, wage conditions at Radio Moscow were comparable with a teacher's wage back in Norway. It was certainly no holiday camp he travelled to; he was aware of that from the reports from the other Norwegians working at Radio Moscow. There was a six-day week, with working hours from 12 noon to ten at night, or from four in the afternoon until midnight. He could choose whether he wanted Saturday or Sunday off, and Per Lind said that Saturday would suit him best. When he arrived in Moscow, the decision had been taken that there was to be a broadcast early in the evening specially targeting northern Norway. The other transmissions were at 9 pm and 11 pm, and everything was now recorded on tape, to guard against possible "slips of the tongue."

However, Per Lind was surprised over what the job entailed. Even though he came to Moscow during the period of Khrushchev's "thaw", he experienced that most of what was presented on the radio was pure propaganda. "We didn't really have editorial meetings to discuss what to broadcast. Most of the material was simply dictated to us from above," says Per Lind. He also noticed that this was radio that did not attract listeners, and the sinking response in the form of letters from Norway was a sign that they were losing their audience. It was extremely difficult to soften up the broadcasts, even though he and the other staff members from Norway did their best.⁷⁰

The worship of Nikita Khrushchev was suspiciously similar to the Stalin-worship that Khrushchev himself had so roundly condemned. In broadcast after broadcast references were made to things the apparently so popular Soviet leader had said, and sometimes Per Lind was called in from home earlier in the day because it was necessary to prepare excerpts of the party leader's speeches.

The drama at the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party in October 1961, which was concluded with the huge nuclear bomb test on Novaya Zemlya east of Vardø, was only to a small degree reflected in the transmissions. The congress marked the final break between the two communist superpowers Soviet Union and China, but Radio Moscow did its best to cover up these differences of opinion, even though everyone with an interest in politics was talking about what was happening. The former GULag-prisoner Alexander Solzhenitsyn's books were also overlooked in silence. It was so much easier to talk about house-trained Soviet authors like Nobel Prize winner Mikhail Sholokhov, the harmless classics of Pusjkin and Dostoyevsky, or the politically correct Nordahl Grieg, who for years featured on a regular basis in Radio Moscow's broadcasts.

On August 20, 1960 the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation NRK's television broadcasts were officially inaugurated. Norwegian media habits entered a new era. The radio had to compete with live pictures. In the 1950s the radio had enjoyed a monopoly as evening entertainment. In many homes they also turned the dial to foreign stations, which were often marked in the window that decorated the front of wireless sets. But now television commanded more and more attention, even though to begin with, NRK only broadcast eight hours a week.

The employees at Radio Moscow had then to fight a battle on a number of fronts to reach their listeners. Now they were not simply, like Per Lind, frustrated over how difficult it was to adapt their programmes to the tastes of a Norwegian audience. Now they could not expect to the same degree as in the 1950s to be able to snap up the curious listener who switched to their broadcasts because there was not so much else of interest to listen to. Radio Moscow became more and more marginalized, in the same way as Norway's Communist Party became reduced to a mini-party with no real influence. These were also important reasons why the early 1960s witnessed the end of the broadcast monitoring service under the auspices of the Norwegian Intelligence Service and the Norwegian Foreign Ministry.

It was as if all the tension surrounding these transmissions was dispelled along with the ever more rigid political development in the Soviet Union. After his visit to Norway in 1964, Nikita Khrushchev was removed from his post as prime minister and first secretary to the Central Committee of the Communist Party. With Leonid Brezhnev as the new strong man at the helm the period of so-called "thaw" came to an end, and Soviet society entered a sort of slumberous Sleeping Beauty sleep, during which you could live a good life if you kept quiet and accepted things the way they were.⁷¹

Radio Moscow's broadcasts in Norwegian continued as before, but with fewer and fewer listeners. What was said was barely registered by Norwegian authorities. The contrast was great compared with the period ten years earlier when Foreign Minister Halvard Lange demanded to see the transcripts of the broadcasts on his desk as the first thing every morning.

From the end of the 1960s the arrangement by which Norwegians were offered a job at Radio Moscow via the Communist Party of Norway virtually came to an end. Gerda Strand Johansen held out the longest of everyone and did not return to Norway until the early 1970s after 20 years on the editorial staff. Now and then she sent her niece Helene to the Soviet embassy in Drammensveien to pick up her modest pension from Radio Moscow.⁷²

Even though the Soviet Union from 1960 gave priority to the struggle for the souls of people in the Third World and more or less gave up trying to win sympathy among Norwegian radio listeners, the broadcasts from Radio Moscow have continued right up until the present time, also after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. In the 1970s and 1980s working on the Scandinavian editorial team offered opportunities for young, ambitious Russian journalists.

Among these was the Norwegian-speaking Dmitry Kiselyov, and having been Radio Moscow's correspondent in the Nordic countries he has made a lightning career in Russian television and is today deputy head of the TV-channel Rossiya. Another name is Alexander Lyubimov from the Danish editorial team, who was to become one of the most hard-hitting political commentators during the chaotic years of the 1990s.⁷³

Conclusion

Hardly any of those who worked on Radio Moscow's Norwegian editorial staff have revealed much about what they have experienced, not even to their nearest and dearest. One exception is Martin Gunnar Knutsen, who in 1983 in his memoirs *Mot strømmen* provided a glimpse of what it was like to work there in the early 1950s. Nor has the fascinating material concerning the Norwegian intelligence gathering service's work with Radio Moscow aroused the interest of historians, not until now. Based on the resources that the Soviet Union had at its disposal, Radio Moscow and the Norwegian editorial team represented a fairly highly prioritized part of the propaganda war between East and West. Maintaining transmissions in Norwegian several times a day throughout the year required enormous resources, and it cost money to recruit Norwegians to Moscow. Although no systematic study has ever been done of how many people listened to the broadcasts from Radio Moscow, it is reasonable to assume that the numbers were considerable, at least up until 1960. The interest shown by the Norwegian authorities in establishing an open

source intelligence service in 1951 also indicates that the broadcasts played a not insignificant role in constructing a picture of what was happening in the Soviet Union and perhaps also for the drawing up of Norwegian policy. However, even though attempts were made by among others the Norwegian staff members to make the broadcasts more listener-friendly to a Norwegian audience, the whole time it was an obstacle that the transmissions bore the characteristics of pure propaganda, with a use of language that was foreign to the vast majority of listeners in Norway. Nevertheless, what was broadcast from Moscow in Norwegian acted as a counterbalance to much of what was presented on the radio both in Norway and the rest of the western world during the Cold War. And there is certainly no doubting the fact that both the content of the transmissions and the stories of the individuals that worked there give us a unique insight into what perhaps for most of us is a little known part of the Cold War history in Norway.

Notes

1. PST: Kristian Haldorsen's dossier passed down from innsynsutvalget 15.12.2001. Transcript of broadcast from Radio Moscow 17.7.1960.
2. *My govorim so bsem mirom*. Information pamphlet published by Golos Rossii, Moscow 1999.
3. *My govorim so bsem mirom*. Information pamphlet published by Golos Rossii, Moscow 1999.
4. *Golos, kotorij znakom bsemy miry*, Moscow 2009. Jubilee anthology published on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the first broadcasts in foreign languages from Moscow.
5. GARF: Fond 495, opis 12, case 135. Note by editor of radio broadcasts in foreign languages at Komintern, «Fonstein».
6. GARF: Fond 495, opis 83, case 47.
7. Letter from Anna Dalland to her family in Bergen 2.8.1937. The letters from Anna Dalland to relatives in Norway provide a unique insight into life in Moscow at the end of the 1930s. They have been made available by her grandson Arne Bernhardsen.
8. *Golos, kotorij znakom vsemy miry*, Moscow 2009. GARF: Fond 495, opis 12, case 135. Undated note from 1937 to Ercoli (Palmiro Togliatti).
9. GARF: Fond 6903, opis 24, case 2184. Transcript of broadcast in Norwegian 24.3.1942.
10. <https://digitalt.uib.no/handle/1956.2/2914>. Hans Luin: *De illegale avisene*, Oslo 1960.
11. RA: UD 1940-1949, 11323, box 40.12.1.
12. Letter from "Truls" to Randulf Dalland 18.10.1946.
13. *Verdens Gang* in 1946 and 1947, regularly published programme schedules for Radio Moscow.
14. Letter from "Truls" to Randulf Dalland 18.10.1946.
15. http://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stortingsvalget_1949
16. RA: SMK – minutes of meetings in coordinating committee 1949-1953. Minutes of meeting 19.10.1949.
17. RGASPI: Fond 495, opis 247, case 139. This is Gerd Strand Johansen's personal dossier in the Komintern-archive, where it states that the dossier was examined 4.8.1949.
18. RGASPI: Fond 495, opis 247, case 139. Note 9.6.1951.
19. RGASPI: Fond 495, opis 247, case 6. Note 25.5.1951.
20. <http://www.stortinget.no/Global/pdf/Dokumentserien/1995-1996/dok15/kap4.pdf>
21. NTB 26.8.1992: The article *NTB fortalte verden at Stalin var død*. (*NTB told the world that Stalin was dead*)
22. RA: SMK – protocols from coordinating committee for the secret services, henceforth abbreviated to KU, from 1949-1953. Note enclosed with minutes of meeting for 22.2.1951.

23. RA: SMK – KU 1949-1953. Minutes of meeting 19.2.1949.
24. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2272. Letter from the Norwegian Information Office in New York to the Foreign Ministry 20.4.1951.
25. RA: UD 1950–1959, box Dzb 2272. Note from Fridtjof Jacobsen 22.6.1951.
26. RA: SMK – KU 1949-1953. Minutes of meetings 2.5.1951 and 28.5.1951.
27. Interview with Georg Krane 3.3.2011. Interview with Normann Vetti 3.5.2011. Vetti took over when Henry Valen after a time had to apply for leave of service from the wireless interception service.
28. Interview with Tore Jarl Bielenberg 3.4.2011.
29. E-mail from Aleksander Kan 29.8.2011.
30. Jentoft 2005. Here there is more about the Halvari-family's dramatic story in the warm and cold wars.
31. <http://century.guardian.co.uk/1950-1959/Story/0,,105154,00.html>
32. Ibid. FUA: UM 41 Radio/Neuvostoliitto. Report of broadcast in Finnish 17.3.1953.
33. RA: SMK – KU 1949- 1953. Protocol from meeting 2.3.1953.
34. RA: UD 1950–1959, box Dzb 2272. Content analysis of radio broadcasts in Norwegian from Moscow January 1953.
35. Ibid.
36. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2272. Content analysis of radio broadcasts in Norwegian from Moscow in April and August 1953.
37. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radio_Free_Europe/Radio_Liberty
38. Ibid.
39. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2272. Content analysis of radio broadcasts in Norwegian from Moscow in October 1953. http://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stortingsvalget_1953
40. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2272. Transcript of broadcast from Radio Moscow 28.9.1954. Jentoft 2001.
41. Ibid.
42. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2272. Transcript of broadcast from Radio Moscow 15.12.1953.
43. Interview with Steinar Wikan 2.3.2012.
44. RA: UD 1950–1959, box Dzb 2272. Content analysis of radio broadcasts in Norwegian from Moscow in June 1954. More on arrest of Galai and Khramtsov in Jentoft 2008
45. RA: SMK – KU 1954-1965. Minutes of meeting 29.3.1954.
46. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2273. Note from Ole Ålgård 30.11.1951.
47. RA: SMK – KU 1954-1965. Minutes of meeting 22.5.1953.
48. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2272. Transcript of broadcast 12.1.1955.
49. Ibid.
50. RA: SMK – KU 1954-1965. Minutes of meeting 5.1.1955. RA: UD 1950–1959, box Dzb 2272. Transcript of broadcast from Radio Moscow 12.1.1955.
51. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2272. Transcript of broadcast 16.3.1955.
52. Interview with Erna Fossum Svendsen 8.9.2010.
53. VG 26.5.1956.
54. Dagbladet 9.5.1957.
55. RA:UD 1950-1959, box Dzc 2456. Report from NTB 8.7.1957.
56. RA:UD 1950-1959, box Dzc 2456. Telegram from Kaare Fostervoll to director of Radio Moscow 8.7.1957.
57. RA:UD 1950-1959, box Dzc 2456. Report from NTB 8.7.1957.
58. FUA: UM 41 Radio/Neuvostoliitto. Transcript of broadcasts 5.10., 7.10. and 8.10.1957.
59. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzc 2456. Note from Gustav Heiberg 14.8.1956. Note from Erik Braadland 16.10.1956.
60. FUA: UM 41 Radio/Neuvostoliitto. Transcript of broadcast 5.4.1957.
61. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2273. Transcript of broadcast from Radio Moscow 6.4.1959.
62. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2273. Transcript of broadcast from Radio Moscow 19.7.1959.
63. RA: UD 1950-1959, box Dzb 2273. Transcript of broadcast from Radio Moscow 12.11.1959.
64. PST: Kristian Haldorsen's dossier. Note 15.9.1958.

65. PST: Randulf Dalland's dossier. Note from Bergen Police District to Asbjørn Bryhn 28.11.1956.
66. Interview with Kristian Haldorsen 7.4.2011. PST: Kristian Haldorsen's dossier. Notes from 30.5.1958 and 10.11.1958.
67. FUA: UM 41 Radio/Neuvostoliitto. Transcript of broadcasts 6.5., 7.5. and 10.5.1960.
68. PST: Kristian Haldorsen's dossier. Transcript of broadcast from Radio Moscow 17.7.1960.
69. PST: Kristian Haldorsen's dossier. Excerpt from broadcasts from Radio Moscow 21.8.1960. Interview with Kristian Haldorsen 7.4.2011.
70. Interview with Per Lind 8.3.2011.
71. Interview with Mari Olsen 5.10.2011. She is the daughter of Ragnar Wiik and Laila Olsen.
72. Interview with Helene Strand Johansen 17.6.2011.
73. *Golos, kotorym znakom vcemy miry*, Moskva 2009.

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Chapter 2

The Shadow of the Bear

Finnish Broadcasting, National Interest and Self-censorship during the Cold War

Raimo Salokangas

Abstract

The Finnish public service broadcaster Yleisradio's position in the Cold War world was largely the same as the position of the nation itself. The colder the war, the more careful the company. In the first phase, from 1945 till mid-1960s, Yleisradio consciously avoided controversial issues in general, and avoided foreign policy issues in particular. Its highest decision making body, the Administrative Council, was appointed by Parliament and reflected its political composition, and the leadership of Yleisradio was careful not to rock the boat. In the second phase, from around mid-1960s till mid-1980s, Yleisradio was active in its news coverage, but its leadership took a keen eye on the country's "official foreign policy." It was only in the late 1980s, as the Soviet Union started to crumble and Cold War pressures consequently eased up, that Yleisradio's foreign news coverage was liberated from self-appointed political responsibilities.

Keywords: broadcasting, Finland, Cold War, self-censorship, foreign news

To understand the performance of Finnish media during the Cold War it is useful to look at the early years. A specific historical context characterized the beginning of the Cold War, and later events took place as parts of a historical continuum. This article focuses on the Finnish Broadcasting Company, Yleisradio, and how the state owned broadcaster dealt with the delicacies of "official foreign policy" and informational journalism between the late 1940s and the 1980s, when the Soviet Union existed. Yleisradio's basic solution was to give national interest a high priority, but not to be totally silent about delicate matters. In the 1980s there was a distinct change in a new historical context.

In 1941-1944 Finland was an ally of Germany. The reason was pragmatic: these two nations had a common enemy. As a consequence of the German-Soviet pact of 1939, the Soviet Union invaded Finland and annexed parts of Finnish Karelia. When Germany turned against its recent ally, Finland sought cooperation and joined the campaign in 1941 to recover the lost territories. In

the summer of 1944, during the Continuation War, Finland managed to halt the advance of the Red Army, then made an interim peace treaty. In accordance with the terms of the treaty, the Finnish army turned its weapons on German troops in Lapland.

Despite losing the Continuation War, Finland was never occupied and its democratic structures were preserved. The final Soviet Union and Finland peace treaty numbered among the Paris Peace Treaties (1947), and the next year Finland and the Soviet Union signed a treaty of "Friendship, cooperation and assistance" (YYA), which was to be the guideline for Finland's foreign policy during the Cold War decades. In 1956, Urho Kekkonen succeeded J.K. Paasikivi as president and held the office through four re-elections until 1981. His policy was to be trusted in the East in order to gain broader leeway in the West.

In 1955, during the "Khrushchev thaw" following Stalin's death, Finland joined the Nordic Council and the United Nations, and the Soviet Union surrendered the military base in Porkkala, within artillery range of central Helsinki. In 1961, Finland became an associate member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), established by countries that chose not to join the European Economic Community (EEC), the members of which, unlike Finland, were also members of NATO. In 1974, Finland made a free trade agreement with the EEC, and to emphasize its neutrality, signed a consequent trade agreement with the Soviet Union and some of its allies. In 1995 the three former neutral countries, Finland, Sweden and Austria, became members of the European Union, the updated version of the EEC.

During the Cold War years Finland's position was sensitive because the Soviet Union counted it in its sphere of interest, which is where the West also placed it. However, Finland was a democracy, managed to strengthen its economic ties with Western Europe and gradually built up a Scandinavian welfare state.

In broadcasting a significant change had taken place in 1934, when the state nationalized the institutionally owned Yleisradio, just as the BBC had been nationalized in Britain in 1927. Yleisradio served the nation in Finnish and Swedish on AM frequencies. In the 1950s Yleisradio adopted FM technology, and a parallel network became possible. Television broadcasting was initiated in 1956 as a private enterprise, and Yleisradio's television channel started regular broadcasts at the beginning of 1958. The private channel was close to bankruptcy when Yleisradio bought it in 1964 and turned it into TV channel 2.

Phase 1: Self-censorship for Self-protection

The immediate post-war political reorientation brought in 1945 a new Director General (DG) for Yleisradio, Hella Wuolijoki, an Estonian born leftist cultural personality and business-woman. A handful of communists were employed in

programming, and some thematic programme slots were particularly aimed at the working class. A significant novelty programme was “Miniature Parliament”, a monthly broadcast where outstanding politicians of all parties discussed topical issues – excluding foreign policy. The change of hue in Yleisradio was sufficient for the majority of the political sphere to give “Hellaradio” a red label (Tuomioja 2006:323-327, 336-341).

In 1948, Parliament passed a law on the administration of Yleisradio. The key point was that responsibility for electing members of the company’s highest decision making body, the Administrative Council, passed from the shareholders’ annual meeting to Parliament. This shift meant that no longer was the “owner” represented only by the government, but now even the opposition parties had representation in proportion to their parliamentary strength (Vihavainen 1996:295; Salokangas 1996:13).

The 21 members of the Council were nominated for the duration of the Parliamentary term. They were mostly MPs, and the Chairman was a leading figure in his political party. The Administrative Council in its turn nominated a Programme Council to examine and approve the programming plans made for the next month or fortnight, and review the programmes sent after its previous meeting. In 1950, a Council for Swedish language programming was established, and in 1964 a similar Council for television. Without exception the members had political earmarks, and while the Administrative Council consisted of political heavyweights, the Programme Councils were training grounds or entry points for aspiring politicians (Salokangas 1996:20-21).

The first decision of the new Administrative Council in 1949 was to sack DG Wuolijoki and replace her with the company’s Economic Director Einar Sundström, who was not a political person and was actually not interested in programming. In matters of content, his era (1949-1964) was more the era of Director of Programming Jussi Koskiluoma, a cultured liberal who was very careful not to rock the boat. The most characteristic feature of Yleisradio in the Sundström – Koskiluoma era was its reticence. The medium for the whole nation was to reflect harmony, not discord, and certainly not discord on “official foreign policy” (Vihavainen 1996:295-296; Salokangas 1996:13).

Just to Make Sure...

Yleisradio’s concession stated that the programmes “must be examined and approved before being transmitted” in conformity with instructions from the relevant ministry, and as ordered by the Administrative Council. Pre-examination was the task of chiefs of programme sections or persons authorized by them, and when in doubt about the dignity, relevance or impartiality of a programme, the manuscript was to be submitted to the Director of Programming (Salokangas 1996:39).

Koskiluoma's caution was summarized in a lecture for Yleisradio's reporters in 1960. The title of his presentation was "What one is not allowed to say on the radio", and he said among other things:

It is evident that one must not say anything to gnaw the roots and grounds of lawful society, let alone that one would on the radio provoke citizens to break the law or go round it. ... Circumstances in countries with friendly relations to Finland, and their leading personalities, must not be scorned. Matters touching foreign policy are generally so sensitive that most particular consideration must be observed in speaking about them. ... Criticism is not forbidden, but it must be presented in positive spirit.¹

In the early 1950s, Koskiluoma was horrified on several occasions when, despite all the care that had been taken, the Soviet Union was potentially offended. After the war anti-Soviet and anticommunist books were taken from the shelves of public libraries and stored away in poisons cabinets (Ekholm 2000), and a similar procedure took place with "improper" records at Yleisradio. However, occasional slips occurred, and in the most severe example the accident caused Yleisradio to launch an extensive explanatory operation.

A Finnish cover version of a German march was played to fill the interval between two programmes, but the record was swiftly interrupted halfway through. Koskiluoma was notified. He rushed to the record archive, listened to the song and verified that the lyrics were "blatantly anti-Russian". He gave orders for that side of the disc to be destroyed and for the archives to be thoroughly re-checked. Then he went to the DG and suggested that Yleisradio might inform the Soviet Embassy and apologize before the information reached them by other channels. At the DG's request he contacted the Foreign Ministry, where none less than the Minister was consulted, and finally the Head of the Press Bureau was made to call his contact in the Russian Embassy. As it turned out, the apology came through first. The press had also been hushed up, as Koskiluoma had arranged with the Foreign Ministry that Yleisradio should notify the editors of the newspapers via Suomen Tietotoimisto (STT), the Finnish national news agency. The notice was a joint product of Koskiluoma, his Swedish language counterpart, the DG and the Head of the Foreign Ministry Press Bureau, and it was even checked by the Chairman of Yleisradio's Administrative Council before it was handed over to the DG of the news agency. The cover-up was successful; there was not a word about the incident in the next day's newspapers.²

Official caution was also observed in relation to war memories and the key reason for this was that the Soviet doctrine of historical events was in sharp contrast with Finnish understanding and Western historiography. In the Soviet version Finland had provoked and actually started the Winter War of 1939-1940, and the war was certainly not a consequence of the "non-existent" Soviet-German pact.

In late 1954 the 15th anniversary of the beginning of the war was given a very low profile on the radio. Parts of a novel were read out, describing the first days of the war in the Karelian Peninsula and a journey in an evacuee train, and the daily newspaper review quoted the only two editorials about the war. A lecture on “Factors of National Unity” had been commissioned from a history professor, but Koskiluoma banned it after reading the manuscript. The professor obviously referred to the Soviet-German pact and other delicate matters, and, as Koskiluoma put it, one should “avoid anything that especially on the other side of the eastern border might arouse negative attention.”³

Reference to what the Finns call the Continuation War (1941-1944) was even more delicate, because at that time Finland had been an ally of Germany and had joined the offensive. Yleisradio had commissioned a lecture titled “Ten Years from the Ceasefire in the Eastern Fronts” from a general, and his superiors had approved the text, but the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Government forbade him to present it. Koskiluoma had had telephone conversations with the Prime Minister and other dignitaries and had got the impression that such anniversaries were better left alone. However, twenty conservative MPs put a Parliamentary question about why Yleisradio had neglected to commemorate the anniversary and inquired about whether, even in the future, Yleisradio intended to be equally negative about decisive points in national history.⁴ The matter also provoked discussion in Yleisradio’s Councils, and many members emphasized the need to properly commemorate the approaching anniversary of the end of the Winter War. As a result Koskiluoma himself prepared a programme for the day, and the communist members of the Administrative Council insisted on an extraordinary meeting to listen to the tape and to forbid transmission. A vote was cast, once again the communist members got no support from other Council members, and the programme was broadcasted. In the Programme Council a communist member condemned the day’s programming as “unsuitable for Yleisradio, which should represent will for peace”. She was not seconded, but when Koskiluoma asked the Council to give permission for a rerun that was regarded “not appropriate.”⁵ On the 20th anniversary in 1960 it was Koskiluoma again who made the memorial programme, taking care to ensure that even the expert speaker’s wording was rounded enough.⁶

Delicate Current Affairs

Up until 1965 all news bulletins on Finnish radio were provided by the news agency STT. Throughout the 1950s there were five news reviews every day, in both Finnish and Swedish, and by the early 1960s the number had increased to seven. Yleisradio was not allowed to broadcast “news” of its own, but it had current affairs programmes with a few news items in each programme. By the mid-1960s the annual number of stories in all the Finnish language current af-

fairs programmes was around 3500–4000 (Salokangas 1997:125–126). Reviews began on the television news in 1959, and eventually they began to use their own material in addition to STT's. The news broadcasts also included a "camera round-up" in the film theatre newsreel style. In the early 1960s Yleisradio entered into agreements for news footage with a number of foreign companies, like UPI, Visnews and CBS-ITN (Pernaa 2009:15–16, 20–22, 50–54). For many years Yleisradio had had a network of stringers abroad, some of them professional journalists, some not. They were working on sensitive ground, and their reports revealed some sensitive issues.

In the late 1940s some reports from the Soviet Union caused problems: the reporter was a Finnish communist employed by Radio Moscow; his perspective was Soviet, and his actual masters were the NKVD (Rentola 1994:41–43, 65–68, 260–261; Vihavainen 1996: 269). DG Wuolijoki's motivation for using Radio Moscow's man was the fact that Yleisradio also relayed programmes by the BBC and the British Council, and a reporter at the BBC's Finnish section in London was also a stringer for Yleisradio.⁷ When this journalist – Max Jakobson who later became a renowned diplomat – resigned from the BBC, Jussi Koskiluoma was happy "because this helps our position regarding the corresponding review from the east"; the making of the Soviet reviews could now be undertaken in Helsinki. When Jakobson soon started to give his reports again from London, but no longer as a BBC employee, Koskiluoma warned him not to touch foreign policy issues.⁸ In 1950, the reason why Yleisradio could not employ a stringer in Paris was to keep Moscow at an arm's length – the stringer's voice was heard in the few Finnish broadcasts of French radio's foreign service.⁹ However, a few years later in a milder political climate, Yleisradio used reporters from the BBC's Finnish section – and eventually a journalist from Radio Moscow as well.

The British and Soviet foreign services could be regarded as an acceptable and balanced pair, but in the 1960s the West German Deutsche Welle was another matter, as it was the voice of one of the two Germanies, and Finland recognized neither. It was also a problem that the stringer had become acclimatized to West Germany and did not understand the realities of Finnish foreign policy. In 1960 a report on East Germans leaving the German Democratic Republic (GDR) for the West was shelved, and the section chief explained: "Our country has not officially recognized either Germanies. So we have no reason to interfere with East German matters by words of our correspondent in West Germany." During the Berlin crisis in 1961 he shelved the stringer's story, because "publishing it in a programme of Yleisradio would have caused a conflict on a fairly high level"; the nation's official policy was cautious, and therefore commentaries had to be made in Helsinki.¹⁰

A Reticent Public Broadcaster

In the 1950s and 1960s Finnish self-censorship was practiced mostly by a generation who were alive during the war and remembered that Finland had lost it and that their big communist neighbour demanded certain behaviours to prove the new friendship. For most of the war generation the mind did not follow the words, but for the responsible political leaders it was crucial to make sure that the press and Yleisradio behaved properly.

Yleisradio was Finland's only radio channel and the only medium covering the entire population. It was owned by the state, and its administrative structure made it possible for politicians to try to steer it. In the Soviet Union radio was the mouthpiece of the communist party and the government, and it was therefore difficult for the Soviets to understand that the situation was not similar in Finland. Self-censorship meant that Yleisradio itself had to decide to be cautious.

Those who did have influence on Yleisradio were the most eminent politicians, particularly Urho Kekkonen. He was Prime Minister in five different coalitions between 1950 and 1956, and then President. He and Jussi Koskiluoma knew each other from the 1930s, but after the war their contacts appear not to have been face to face. When I interviewed him in 1994, Koskiluoma's deputy, Ville Zilliacus, said that while standing in for Koskiluoma he got angry calls from Prime Minister Kekkonen. However, another interviewee, Pekka Silvola, who was close to Kekkonen from the 1950s, remembered Kekkonen as Prime Minister telling him that his "only" contacts in Yleisradio were his trustees in the Administrative Council and the Programme Council.¹¹

Compromises were made in daily current affairs programmes, and anniversaries of events in the war were indeed commemorated, but with the lowest possible profile and avoiding difficult official Soviet truths – but programmes were made and they were broadcasted.

Phase 2: Balanced Journalism with a Purpose

One of the first things that the newly appointed DG Eino S. Repo (1965-1969) did was to launch preparations for Yleisradio's own radio news section, and simultaneously, a network of staff correspondents was built up. Repo's appointment was a sign of changing times: he was the kind of cultural personality that many had wished would take over the role of DG, and he was a guaranteed supporter of President Kekkonen's foreign policy.

A new post of Chief of News was established, and the young bilingual journalist, Ralf Friberg, was appointed to plan and reorganize Yleisradio's news services. He made several trips abroad, studying journalistic culture and

practices especially in Sweden, Britain and the United States. His immodest evaluation in my interview in 1994 was that Yleisradio's culture had reached the Western and Scandinavian level with regard to its professional approach to news and current affairs.¹²

Staff Correspondents

In 1965 Yleisradio had 12 stringers in Europe and one in the United States. The number of television licenses boomed in the 1960s, public service television required news and current affairs programmes, and the radio was moving towards "real" news coverage – STT news seven times a day was not enough. DG Repo remarked in the first meeting of correspondents in 1966 that a change had taken place in the possibilities for individuals to expand their views of the world, and foreign correspondents had an important role to play in providing those possibilities.¹³

The process had already started under the old regime, as in 1964 Yleisradio's board decided to establish staff correspondent posts in New York (UN), Moscow and Paris. The stringers in New York and Moscow were made full time, but the Paris post was postponed. When planning the rest of the network, Washington, Stockholm and London were regarded most important, followed by Bonn (also covering the EEC in Brussels) and Vienna (also covering Eastern Europe).¹⁴

For financial reasons the plans were not fully implemented. In 1966 correspondents started to work in Stockholm, Paris, Washington and London, but not until 1969 was a stringer working in Germany sent to Belgrade (instead of Vienna) to cover Eastern Europe. In the summer of 1969 Yleisradio had the seven staff correspondents, two "almost full time" stringers (Berlin and Tokyo), 12 "half time" stringers (Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oslo, Prague, Brussels, Vienna, Geneva, Warsaw, Madrid, Rome, Athens, Montreal) and 13 "temporary or standing in" stringers. In addition, the Swedish language section had access to Swedish radio's network of foreign correspondents (Salokangas 1996:190).

There was a pattern: Moscow and Washington were the two poles of the polarized world; and New York was the site of the United Nations, an important platform for Finland; Stockholm was a natural post in the culturally close neighbouring country, and Paris and London were capitals of major European powers. However, Germany and Eastern Europe were also more delicate in terms of foreign policy. The Belgrade post was decided by the Administrative Council – it required that a correspondent be stationed in a socialist country. There were practical reasons for the post in Bonn – the West German Government was there, and Brussels was not far – but political symmetry required at least a stringer in East Berlin. In 1974 a staff correspondent was even sent there, but there was not enough to do, and in 1981 the resource was moved over to strengthen the Moscow post.¹⁵

Radio News Tested

Major crises in international politics were tests for the new organization, and the very first test was the occupation of Czechoslovakia on August 21st, 1968.

In the 1994 interview Ralf Friberg's recollections were clear. At 4.30 am he had phoned DG Repo and they agreed that extra news bulletins be broadcast if necessary; from 8 am there were bulletins every half hour during the hottest phase of the crisis. Later in the morning Friberg met Prime Minister Mauno Koivisto and advised him that if the Government was pressured on account of Yleisradio, he should say that it was Parliament's radio, and it could not be dictated to by the Government. In the interview Friberg's assessment was well prepared: radio and television were the quickest media the Government had access to, and it would be catastrophic in an extremely uncertain situation, if the population did not trust those two media, and the only way to gain the trust of the people was to be completely open from the very beginning.

However, Koivisto (1994:48-49) wrote in his memoirs that at that time he tried to maintain control of the media by inviting journalists to government premises and asking them to be calm. However, he felt, "the radio actually seemed to provoke citizens to demonstrations." Friberg's recollection in 1994 was that Czechoslovakia was such a big event that he had looked forward to: Swedish radio had passed a similar test in 1956 with the crises in Suez and Hungary, and now Yleisradio could do the same.

The most memorable details in the coverage were the reports from Yleisradio's stringer in Prague, Lieko Zachovalová. She was married to a Czech, spoke the language and had contacts. She reported what she saw and heard, and the result was not flattering for the Soviet Union. Later she said, and also wrote in her memoirs, that presenting a balanced view was not her job but Helsinki's.¹⁶

Getting balancing from Moscow was difficult. The correspondent was a communist with the inclination to take the Soviet view for granted, and official Soviet information was scarce and slow to arrive. Eight days after the occupation the head of the Helsinki bureau of the Soviet telegraph agency TASS presented the Soviet view to Yleisradio's leadership, and they noticed that although he condemned Western news coverage as propaganda, he avoided criticizing Yleisradio and even to some extent thanked its Moscow correspondent for his reports. Friberg's deduction was that the correspondent could have been more analytical and could have spoken more freely.¹⁷

There was also a final chapter that tested Yleisradio's trustworthiness. The Soviet Union had neglected to inform President Kekkonen of the occupation in advance, he was offended and wrote a letter to his Soviet colleague, Alexei Kosygin. To repair the situation, Kosygin sailed in secrecy on a warship to meet Kekkonen in Finnish waters. Yleisradio's news desk got a tip, and Friberg sent a reporter to Hanko harbour, where the presidents had

boarded a Finnish icebreaker. Soon the office in Helsinki knew the identity of the negotiating partners, but DG Repo forbade Friberg from publishing the news without his permission. After contacting the Foreign Ministry and Prime Minister Koivisto, they agreed not to run the story until there was an official communiqué. What worried Friberg was the possibility that some other organization might publish first and Yleisradio would lose its credibility by having sat on the news. DG Repo's position was that the primary national interest was to let the meeting go undisturbed, and that Yleisradio would have to wait. The communiqué was released in time, and Yleisradio was the first to publish the news in Finland.¹⁸

There was a leak, though. Swedish radio, which was commonly listened to in the Swedish speaking areas of the Finnish west coast, knew about the meeting, and published the news at 7.30 pm. Their source was Yleisradio's Swedish language news section, and Friberg assumed that they had publicized it first in Sweden to be able to quote it. This was the standard method used by Finnish newspapers in the era of self-censorship: if something was too delicate, tell the Swedes, quote them, and the responsibility is theirs.

When discussing these events Eino S. Repo emphasized in his memoirs and in my interview, that he and Friberg had different views on news criteria. For Repo, Friberg the journalist was too keen on speed, a Western criterion, while he himself thought that it was not always necessary to be the first but to act correctly. Repo said that he was always cautious in matters of foreign policy, and not just about the Soviet Union, and that he "somewhat willingly" obeyed instructions from the Foreign Ministry: "I took the stand that Yleisradio were an official institution."¹⁹

An Instrument of Foreign Policy?

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) was Yleisradio's main international playground, but during DG Repo's term and later the company was also active in the Eastern counterpart the OIRT (Organisation Internationale de Radiodiffusion et de Télévision). For bilateral interactions with the Soviets it was typical to have formal frame agreements, and one was signed between Yleisradio and the Soviet radio and television committee in 1967, and later with five other communist bloc countries (Salokangas 1996:206).

The frame agreement was complemented with annual action protocols, and the making of every single programme required extensive and time-consuming preparations. The most delicate matters were the annual commemoration of the October revolution and Finland's independence, as well as one-off anniversaries like the 20th anniversary of the YYA pact in 1968 and especially the 100th anniversary of the birth of Lenin in 1971. In the 1994 interview Ralf Friberg emphasized that in an OIRT meeting with his colleagues he had not

accepted that Lenin should be the coming year's most important news item, and after several hours' discussion his opinion was registered in the minutes.

An active move by Yleisradio was to make informative programmes about life in the Soviet Union in order to enhance a correct image of the world, which was the explicit goal of the company's broadcasting ideology (Salokangas 1996:169-174). This was not an easy task in the atmosphere of the 1970s, and in reality official Soviet truths tended to characterize those programmes.

Part of Finland's "official foreign policy" discourse was to build bridges between the East and the West, and DG Repo was a Kekkonen man. When his Eastern colleagues contacted him in 1966 about the possibility of him becoming OIRT's chairman or vice chairman, he discussed the matter with the President, the Foreign Minister and the Speaker of Parliament who was also chairing Yleisradio's Administrative Council, and they all urged him to run for the chairmanship. In the 1995 interview Repo told Kekkonen having said that the matter must be taken care of but one has to be cautious. Repo also emphasized that he always had the President's silent support in his dealings with both the OIRT and the EBU.²⁰ After consulting his colleagues in the Nordic countries and Great Britain, and EBU's Dutch chairman, he decided to decline the offer to become chairman of the OIRT, but two years later, after the occupation of Czechoslovakia, he accepted the offer. His motivation was in accord with Finland's self-designated role: "to try to build bridges over the ravines which now exist between broadcasters in Europe."²¹

After Repo it was primarily Pekka Silvola, a seasoned politician before becoming Director of Programming (1970-1985), who took care of the Eastern contacts. In the 1994 interview he said: "In a way we knew that we were serving the purposes of these socialist countries, but even more we knew that we were serving Finland's official foreign policy as one small part of it." About the bilateral talks with Soviet broadcasters he said that in negotiations about programmes Yleisradio pointed out that it was not a Government broadcaster but a Western provider of information, and therefore other viewpoints could be presented in addition to Finland's "official foreign policy."

Pressures Countered

The 1970s was the decade when "Finlandization" was at its deepest. The Soviet Union was indisputably one of the two superpowers, and in its small neighbouring country this fact was taken seriously, including by its public service broadcasting company. An example is a resolution of the television's Programme Council in 1973. A communist member pointed out that a current affairs programme had given too much time to an MP's unorthodox views on foreign policy, and after a lengthy discussion the council reached consensus on a statement including the necessary keywords but not to label any party as

“undemocratic”: “The Programme Council obliges that in the future both current affairs programmes and other programming emphasize and sufficiently, correctly and convincingly present the positions on foreign policy which are based on the Paasikivi-Kekkonen policy of neutrality, the essential part of which is uncompromising compliance to the YYA pact and the Paris peace treaty.”²²

Furthermore, when, in 1973, the Government granted Yleisradio’s concession for the next two years, it obliged “that the company considers Finland’s endeavours to maintain good relations to all countries, especially to neighbouring countries.” In relation to this the Director of Programming, Silvola, advised the heads of news sections and foreign correspondents: “In this respect it is good to be cautious, although the company cannot pledge to be a voice of official foreign policy, but let different opinions and facts come through.”²³

It is not clear whether specific instructions were ever put on paper. For instance a chief of Swedish language radio discussed the matter in 1977, acknowledging that there were oral instructions and bans from superiors, and summarized that Yleisradio did have a responsibility in issues of foreign policy, but the limits and contents had never been defined. “The burden of responsibility has not been eased on any particular level within the company, but it overcasts everybody.”²⁴

A revealing case was “Sodan ja rauhan miehet” (The men of war and peace), a drama documentary written and directed by Matti Tapio for the Theatre section of TV 2. It consisted of ten episodes and was broadcast between December 1978 and February 1979, getting high viewer ratings and causing an extensive discussion about history – in the contemporary atmosphere it was on the fringes of acceptability with regard to official foreign policy. The subject of the drama documentary was the road to the Winter War and the consequences of the war. The time period covered was from the emergence of Stalin’s secret emissary in the summer of 1938 to June 1941, when Finland joined the German offensive. What made it delicate was the fact that the Soviet Union denied its pact with Germany and their agreement on spheres of interest. They also denied having been the aggressor in 1939, although the consensus among serious historians was, and is, that the Winter War actually was a direct consequence of the pact.

The series was based on extensive documentary material, and it was a mixture of dramatized scenes with about a hundred professional actors, and talking heads of eminent historians and other experts. One of them was an eye witness, a man who had assisted Paasikivi in the negotiations in the Kremlin. Finns gathered in front of their television sets, and the press response was generally positive. The main organ for negative comments was the newspaper of the communist party’s minority fraction, *Tiedonantaja*, which usually reflected the views of Moscow (Salokangas 1996:328-329).

Matti Tapio started to prepare the series in 1972, and although Yleisradio’s management was not enthusiastic, he got the resources. Urho Kekkonen had

been the Minister of the Interior in the late 1930s, and Tapio prepared a list of questions for him in 1975. The President never got them, but he was aware of the project, and according to the Director of Programming, Pekka Silvola, he once again had urged Yleisradio “to be careful.” (Salonen 2014:27). The Soviet ambassador Vladimir Stepanov also appeared to be interested in the programme: in 1976, in a meeting with prominent social democrats, he demanded that the series should not be made, and continued to be active (Lipponen 2009:459; Salonen 2014:32).

When Yleisradio started broadcasting the series, Stepanov’s indignation was voiced indirectly in Tiedonantaja and directly to Yleisradio’s leadership. In January 1979, Silvola had to admit in a press interview that Stepanov had contacted him, assuring that “pressure or involvement” had not occurred. In the 1994 interview Silvola said that cassettes of the series had been sent to Moscow in advance so that they would know what to expect, and the Director of the Soviet radio and television committee had aired his discontent to him (Salokangas 1996:329-330). However, even though ambassador Stepanov actively tried to prevent the series from being transmitted and even wrote a memo about it for the central committee of the Soviet communist party, other Soviet representatives took it more calmly. Another director of Yleisradio had handed the manuscript to the KGB resident in Helsinki, Viktor Vladimirov, who just stated that friends were making a television programme. In Moscow the relevant office in the Soviet Foreign Ministry finally concluded that it was an internal Finnish affair (Salonen 2014:51).

Conclusion: Towards Programming as Usual

During the Cold War Yleisradio was a state company basically steered by Parliament via the Administrative Council. In the 1970’s Finland was at its most “Finlandized”, and at the same time Yleisradio was at its most politicized. All the directors, and there were many of them, had a political background, the councils watched programming with a keen eye, and politicization even reached the level of employing ordinary reporters (Salokangas 1996:259-270; Pernaa 2009:120-134).

There were many levels to consider. At the level of international politics the Cold War was at times colder than usual, and after WWII Finland was actually in a difficult position. A liturgy of friendship with the Soviet Union was in use, but, at the same time, Finland gradually integrated into Western structures. Yleisradio tried not to rock the boat. Another level was that of bilateral relations and competition between domestic actors in the field. In the 1970s there was a possibility that many begun to take the friendship liturgy seriously, and also Yleisradio was affected by this. However, as the 1980s progressed, Soviet

pressure towards Finland reduced because of its internal problems, and this made life easier even for Yleisradio.

After a decade without a correspondent, in 1981 Yleisradio re-established the post in Washington, but even more of a sign of a new era was that the East Berlin vacancy was transferred to become a second post in Moscow – and the journalist appointed, Yrjö Länsipuro, was not a communist as all the previous Yleisradio correspondents had been (Salokangas 1996:312). Interviewed in 2011 by Lotta Lounasmeri, Länsipuro recalled that his superiors who perceived that changes were going to happen in the Soviet Union, considered that Yleisradio should have a journalist in Moscow, not a correspondent who reported in the way that the communist correspondent did. He was told that even the Soviet Embassy in Helsinki was signalling that it would be good for Soviet-Finnish relations if the reporting was more realistic. As chief of news in Helsinki, Länsipuro had actually shelved many of his colleague's reports for being too Soviet.²⁵

Länsipuro stated that the restrictions for correspondents in Moscow were still valid in the early 1980s, but they were not necessarily applied as conscientiously as before. Correspondents knew about problems of Soviet life and they were told about them off record, and their task was to find a quotable source. In his words, little by little it was possible to steer reporting towards objectivity, but still at the same time be cautious. The principle was the same as in earlier decades, “not to write oneself out” (Uskali 2003), but the environment was changing. Länsipuro said that Yleisradio had to be more wary than other Finnish media because it was the national broadcasting company, but also because it was “cross-national” – it was watched in Soviet Estonia and provided a window to the West for Estonians. Also he noted that the Finns always pointed out that Yleisradio was not a state medium, but the Soviets thought that it represented official policies, and, according to Länsipuro, the socially skillful and politically experienced Director of Programming, Pekka Silvola, was a good bumper against Soviet criticism.

When the Soviet empire and the Union itself started to crumble, Yleisradio was active in covering the events in Eastern Central Europe and in the Baltic States, especially in Estonia (Pernaa 2009:271-272, 312-328). It was these developments that finally helped Yleisradio's foreign news coverage become objective and politically independent.

Notes

1. J. Koskiluoma, *Mitä radiossa ei saa puhua*. Meeting of reporters, Feb. 2, 1960. File YLE Sel-ostusosasto 3, ELKA.
2. Koskiluoma's PM, Dec. 11, 1950. File YLE H1:43, ELKA.
3. Yleisradio Board Minutes, Dec. 23, 1954 and Appendix 128, YLE.
4. A copy of the Question by Matti Raipala, MP, et al., on Dec. 10, 1954 in File YLE 2267, ELKA.

5. Minutes of the Finnish language Programme Council, Dec. 7 and 13, 1954 and Appendix 110, (ELKA), and Minutes of Yleisradio's Board, March 11, 1955, YLE.
6. Koskiluoma's plan "Talvisota", and his markings in the manuscript "Talvisotaan johtanut kehitys" by Wolf H. Halsti. File YLE Puheohjelmien osasto 29, ELKA.
7. Information Office, British Legation in Helsinki, Quarterly Report Jan/March 1947, E1/681, and J.W.T. Eyton 19.6.1948 / Letter from Miss Sampson concerning Yleisradio, E1/683, BBC WAC.
8. Correspondence between Koskiluoma and Jakobson in 1949 and 1950 in File YLE Kansainvälinen kirjeenvaihto 5 and 6 ELKA.
9. Aimo Sakari 30.8.1951 to Koskiluoma and Koskiluoma 4.9.1951 to Sakari, File YLE Kansainvälinen kirjeenvaihto 6 ELKA.
10. Correspondence between Leo Meller and Anna-Liisa Fenske in 1960-1961, File YLE Puheohjelmien osasto 42 ELKA, and with Ralf Friberg and Fenske in 1966, File YLE Kansainvälinen kirjeenvaihto 11 ELKA.
11. Interviews with Ville Zilliacus 11.11.1994, and Pekka Silvola 14.11.1994.
12. Interview with Ralf Friberg, 29.8.1994.
13. Minutes of correspondents' meeting 14.9.1966, File YLE H13:1 ELKA.
14. Minutes of Yleisradio's Board, 22.7. and 29.9.1964 plus Appendices by Leo Meller; A memo on the network by Ralf Friberg, Erkki Hatakka and Pasi Rutanen, dated 23.8.1965, File YLE H13:3 ELKA.
15. Minutes of meetings of Yleisradio's foreign correspondents, 21.-24.1.1969 (File YLE H13:3), 26.2.1974 (File YLE 1687), 3.-4.2.1977, 8.-9.2.1978 and 13.2.1979 (YLE 1688 ELKA).
16. Manuscripts of her reports are printed in Zachovalová 1998: 315-345, and some of them are in audio or video in http://yle.fi/elavaarkisto/artikkelit/lieko_zachovalovan_raportit_miehiteytysta_prahasta_10372.html#media=10379 .
17. Friberg's memo 30.8.1968 on discussion Michail Kozov of TASS, File YLE Tv-osasto 23 ELKA; Interviews with Friberg 29.8.1994 and Eino S. Repo 11.5.1995.
18. Repo 1975:227-228; Koivisto 1994: 50: Interviews with Friberg 29.8.1994 and Repo 11.5.1995.
19. Repo 1975:226-227; Interview with Repo 11.5.1995.
20. The contacts are named in Repo's letter 17.1.1967 to Sir Hugh Greene (BBC), File YLE 1739 ELKA.
21. Salokangas 1996:210; The quotation is from Repo's letter 12.5.1969 to Hans Sölvhøj (DR), and substantially similar letters were sent also to the DGs in Sweden and Norway, File YLE 1744 ELKA.
22. Minutes of television's Programme Council 15.12.1972 and 12.1.1973, YLE ELKA.
23. Minutes of meeting of correspondents 26.2.1974, File YLE 1687 ELKA.
24. Minutes of the Swedish programme council 20.4.1977, YLE ELKA.
25. Lotta Lounasmeri's interview 8.3.2011 with Yrjö Länsipuro. (The author thanks LL for the transcript.) – Also Pernaa 2009: 273-275.

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Chapter 3

A Careful Balancing Act

Finnish Culture of Self-censorship in the Cold War

Lotta Lounasmeri

Abstract

This chapter analyzes the Finnish newspapers' reporting of the Soviet Union during the last decades of the Cold War. As Finnish foreign policy was based on official neutrality, even the press was obliged to take responsibility for good neighborly relations. The chapter discusses how the phenomenon of self-censorship in Finland affected the possibilities to write critically, using media texts and interviews of editors-in-chief of the time as empirical material. It is concluded that the common national interest was the first priority for Finnish journalism, whereas idealism and the pursuit of the higher, democracy-related goals of journalism took second place.

Keywords: Finnish newspapers, self-censorship, Soviet Union, Cold War, foreign reportage, political culture

Compared to its Nordic neighbours, Finland was situated in a dramatically different way in the Cold War: geographically and historically, and consequently also politically. After World War II, Finland made peace with its eastern neighbour Soviet Union after fighting it in two wars. This meant a changing foreign policy toward Finland's neighbour as well as a changing political atmosphere domestically (see Meinander 1999:249-254, Alasuutari 1996:112, 263). The Finnish foreign policy doctrine was based on neutrality and what was called by contemporaries the Paasikivi-Kekkonen doctrine: there could be no side-taking in the Cold War. Instead an official image and role as a bridge builder between east and west was constructed in Finland. In the present article, attention is paid to Finnish newspapers' foreign reporting about the Soviet Union, especially in conflict situations during the last two decades of the Cold War.

The chapter describes and analyzes how the phenomenon of self-censorship affected the critical reporting of different newspapers. The empirical material informing the analysis consists of newspaper texts on certain major events during the Soviet era as well as interviews with Finnish key editors-in-chief of the time. The events include the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 (n=52),

the nuclear accident in Chernobyl in 1986 (n=134) and the attempted coup by Yanayev in 1991 (n=191)¹. The different newspapers looked at include the chief organs of the most significant Finnish parties: the Centre Party paper *Suomenmaa* (SM), the *Social Democratic Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* (SS), the Communist and Left Alliance (Finnish People's Democratic League) paper *Kansan Uutiset* (KU) and the right-wing National Coalition Party's paper (until 1976) *Uusi Suomi* (US) as well as the major Finnish daily paper *Helsingin Sanomat* (HS). Six editors-in-chief of newspapers, but also two directors and one foreign correspondent of the public broadcasting company YLE were interviewed². The semi-structured interviews were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. It must be noted that the interviews represent recollection from the part of the interviewees and offer the editors' interpretation of certain historical themes and events. The analysis has been presented also in a Finnish language book *Näin naapurista* (Lounasmeri 2011). An article concentrating on empirical media analysis of Finnish Soviet reporting between 1968-1991 has been published in *Nordicom Review* (Lounasmeri 2013). In the present text, more attention is paid to the underlying contextual factors affecting the political culture in which the reporting was carried out. The media material will therefore be discussed rather briefly.

Political Situation in Cold War Finland

In post-war Finland, the threat experienced from the direction of the Soviet Union demanded political unanimity, and it also worked as a way to uphold internal political control. The new slogan in Finnish governance became "acknowledging the facts is the path to wisdom," as presented by President J.K. Paasikivi, who represented a realistic attitude toward the Soviet Union (see, e.g., Kantola 1997; Meinander 1999:249-269; Suomi 2001:27-33; Rentola 2010:285-294). The Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (the YYA Treaty) formed the basis of Finno-Soviet relations from 1948 until the collapse of the Soviet Union.

During the war and shortly after, the press was heavily influenced by restricted freedom of speech as the war censorship was in place during 1939-1947. This period served as educating the Finns to exercise caution in reporting foreign affairs. In 1948, the criminal law was amended by making it an offense to publish material libeling a foreign nation or jeopardizing Finnish foreign affairs (in practice this implied the Soviet Union). This was a clear sign of the necessity of self-censorship at the dawn of the Cold War, even though no one was ever convicted (Tommila and Salokangas 1998:231-233, 239). The law remained in force until 1995, and it is obvious that it expressed the Finnish government's attitude toward the limits of free speech in the country.

It is said that certain practices in reporting about the Soviet Union emerged in the communication between the Finnish political leadership and the media (see, e.g., Jaakkola 1992:24; Alasuutari 1996:155-184; Luostarinen and Uskali 2006:181-182). In Finnish political life the position of the president was strong, especially that of Urho Kekkonen (1956-1981), who during his time developed tight relations with the Soviets and became a kind of “personal guarantor” of good relations. His presidency lasted for 25 years and he became a central power figure in Finnish society. His style of leadership was characterized by performativeness, creating direct contact with the common people and building a wide network at different levels of society based on personal loyalties (Rentola 2013).

What evolved gradually was a culture of self-censorship in public communication. Hans-Peter Krosby concluded in 1978 that Finnish self-censorship was more due to psychological training and an evolving tradition than to direct pressure from the neighbour (one must however realize this could not be verified at the time. Archives of the Finnish Foreign Ministry prove that pressure was also put). The most “visible” coaches were the presidents Paasikivi (1946-1956) and Kekkonen (1956-1981), who directed the Finnish media toward their own line of foreign policy publicly and also in private communication (Krosby 1978). Contemporaries have often underlined that it was a matter of conviction and patriotism: foreign relations were not to be damaged by negative or critical press coverage. However, in later research drawing a line between acting in the nation’s interest and tactical self-censorship motivated by power politics in internal affairs has proved difficult.

In the Western world, Finland was seen to be under heavy influence of the Soviet Union. The term “Finlandization”, referring to a small state too weak to challenge or resist the influence of a more powerful neighbour, having to give up portions of its sovereignty and neutrality, became known through West German political debate in the late 1960s and 1970s. The phenomenon of Finlandization has been analyzed by Finnish historians Timo Vihavainen (1991), Hannu Rautekallio (1991, 1999, 2001), Seppo Hentilä (1998, 2001), Mikko Majander (1999, 2001) and Aappo Kähönen (2001). The official Finland emphasized its role as a bridge builder between the two worlds of the Cold War, and for Finland it was paramount to maintain good connections also to the West. Thus an image as a vassal was something to be avoided at all cost. This resulted in a careful balancing act both in the spheres of politics and the media.

Finnish Newspapers’ Motives for Careful Soviet Reporting in the 1970s and 1980s

The significance of political or party newspapers in Finland has diminished gradually over the past several decades. In the 1970s and 1980s however, the

party newspapers were still numerous and relatively strong in Finland; their circulation numbers though, were relatively low (see Tommila and Salokangas 1998). They still represented important channels in politics and societal affairs, and were being carefully read by the Soviets in the Embassy in Finland and looked upon as if they were official papers. As editor-in-chief of *SS* Seppo-Heikki Salonen (1984-1988) describes:

...they read our paper like they did Pravda [---]. But our paper was not Pravda, it was extremely small...we did nothing that could have been interpreted as a shift in politics.

Party papers were more or less mouthpieces for the organization they represented, and those in power had a special responsibility for good neighbour relations. This was quite obvious in President Kekkonen's Centre Party paper *SM*. *SM* was originally established in 1909 under the name *Maakansa* and became the official chief organ of the Centre Party (until 1965 the Agrarian League) in 1967. The party itself settled as one of the four major political parties in Finland after the 2nd World War. In the interview, the editor-in-chief Seppo Sarlund (1977-1985) described the political leaders' as well as the paper's role as a "bridge builder" between East and West (as mentioned, a traditional role adopted by the Finns). The paper had adopted the Kekkonen-Paasikivi doctrine as early as the 1950s. Sarlund also emphasized the mutual understanding of not interfering in each other's internal affairs – according to him; this gave Finns the moral right to defend their sovereignty. However, for example, Salminen has argued (1996, 67-68) that the paper's policy was also part of a tactical power play, as it offered a very positive picture of the Soviet Union, especially during Sarlund's time.

As for the Social Democratic paper *SS*, the editors-in-chief Pauli Burman (1968-1974) and Seppo-Heikki Salonen (1984-1988) emphasized the special responsibility of the party papers, especially when the party in question was in government.

Two basic pillars were always the paper's relationship with Kekkonen and politics in general and the relationship with the Soviet Union. Every editor-in-chief had to figure out these two... and there was a clear difference between political papers and the rest, as there were always affiliations.³

The Social Democratic Party was founded as the Finnish Labor Party in 1899. The chief organ *SS* was first published in 1918 and was able to compete with the major Finnish daily *HS* in the capital until the end of the 1920s. Little by little, *SS* became more and more a party paper than a journalistic product.

These papers experienced pressure from the Soviet side, mostly from the embassy in Finland. In general, the party paper editors (excluding the right-wing *US*) had rather similar stances towards the Soviet Union, and they also had rather open communication between each other about the subject. At

the same time, they did draw a line between themselves and the Communist papers, which they saw as receiving much more direct advice and pressure from the Soviet side. The Communist papers' position was seen as special for ideological reasons. KU, the chief organ of the communist party, was established in 1956 when the chief organs of the Communist Party and the Left Alliance were merged. Yrjö Rautio (1988-2004), the editor-in-chief of the paper, underlined self-censorship as a nationwide phenomenon. He also concluded that the Centre Party papers were the ones most affected.

Self-censorship has definitely played a very important part in Finnish journalism...and it did not involve only socialist or that sort of papers...but almost all the media in Finland. ...I would say that in a way we practiced less self-censorship than, for example, the Centre Party papers, where you can find a long period with no critical remarks [about the Soviet Union].⁴

He did recognize the ideological solidarity between communists, but pointed out that the general stance of the majority on the Soviet system was critical. As for the right-wing US, editor-in-chief Johannes Koroma (1976-1989) drew a clear distinction between both the ruling party papers as well as the communist and socialist ones:

The correspondents of our paper had in a way greater freedom of opinion and acquiring information...than those who were in some way dependent on the Soviet Union or the official foreign policy.

In addition to political and ideological motives, economic motives were also strong in explaining the carefulness of Soviet reporting. The economic angle can also be seen as connected to national interests, as trade was bilateral and state driven. For example, in Uskali's research (2003:316), trade was seen as a much more important element in Finno-Soviet relations than has previously been realized in historical research or contemporary journalism. HS and US in particular were approached by "red" captains of industry⁵ when they were unhappy about the way the Soviet Union was presented in the papers (see, e.g., Uskali 2003).

Apart from the party papers, *Helsingin Sanomat* (HS) represented an independent and powerful paper in the Finnish media scene, and it is still today the biggest paper in the country. HS was established originally in 1889 as *Päivälehti* and became the biggest newspaper in Finland quite quickly. The newspaper detached itself rather early on from party politics and concentrated on developing the paper as a journalistic product that was able to address the majority of the people. The paper's stance on the Soviet Union is difficult to describe, as the editors-in-chief of the paper have traditionally been very silent regarding their official policies. In the interview the editor-in-chief Heikki Tikkanen (1976-1990) wanted to emphasize that there were no ties – political or otherwise: "I

was very neutral...and luckily so.” He also evaded the question about *HS*’s role as the biggest paper with more resources than the other newspapers and the power to reach its own decisions regarding Soviet reporting. Around the time the powerful owner Eljas Erkko passed away in 1965 and his son Aatos took the reign, the paper did change its attitude to international politics more critical towards the Americans and more understanding toward the Russians, stated Eskola in 1985 in Kanava (273-274). Generally speaking, societal stability and the promotion of harmony have been seen as important to *HS*, as the paper has not striven to bring societal conflicts into view. Critique has been represented through apparent diversity, and the reader has had to read between the lines for the paper’s viewpoint. Moreover, the paper has traditionally tended to back the powers that be (see more in Klemola 1981, Pietilä and Sondermann 1994, Holmberg 2004, Lounasmeri 2010).

1970s: an Era of Heavy Self-censorship in the Finnish Press

The 1960s represents a period during which it was possible to handle Soviet matters with a rather critical approach in the Finnish press. After Nikita Khrushchev was toppled in 1964, however, a new period began in the Soviet Union, which also affected the cultures of politics and communication as well as foreign relations. By the end of the 1960s, the Communist Party’s policy became much more rigid and inflexible (Freeze 1997:363-377; Ruusunen 2008:22). The end of Leonid Brezhnev’s leadership (1966-1982) in particular has been called an era of stagnation in the Soviet Union. When the occupation of Czechoslovakia occurred in 1968, the attitudes of the Finnish government and the press were still clearly separable (Lounasmeri 2011, 2013).

The clear difference between the policies and views of the newspapers and political elite in the 1960s changed in the 1970s, as the media strongly imitated the practices of the politicians. During this decade, writing between the lines and presenting critique through Western sources increased. The 1970s thus represents a period of heavy self-censorship, and also tense relations between the two countries. This self-censorship weakened only with the coming of glasnost in the 1980s and even more dramatically after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

A turn in Finno-Soviet relations occurred starting in 1969, when Finland’s neutrality policy was questioned by the Soviet Union and the country started to place more emphasis on the YYA treaty (Suomi 1996; Alholm 2001:123-124). In 1973, a communiqué was signed between the two countries which stated that the press had a special responsibility to uphold friendly relations. The Soviets also appealed to this paper in their complaints about the Finnish press, which grew more numerous to the Finnish Foreign Ministry. In addition, the general

atmosphere was affected by leftist radicalism and a conforming attitude toward the Soviet Union (see, e.g., Vihavainen 1991; also Kolbe 2008; Relander 2008). The culmination of Finlandization and self-censorship has been situated in the 1970s by, for example, Vihavainen (1991) and Salminen (1996). During this period, the media began to cooperate with the state and its political aspirations in relation to the East, and even independent papers started assuming responsibility for the country's foreign policy agenda. What was deemed to be the national interest became a guideline for journalistic work as well (Salminen 1996:264; Kantola 2002:295).

In the 1970s, the leading party papers experienced changes in their editorial leadership, and the papers were directed to a more Soviet friendly line (see Salminen 1996:84). This was also a question of political power. It was impossible to reach the core of Finnish politics unless one had good relations with Kekkonen as well as the Soviet Union. Burman, the editor-in-chief of *SS* (1968-1974), described in his interview how the Social Democrats bowed to Kekkonen's wishes, as they realized that it was not possible to reach the core of Finnish political power without his consent.

We concluded in the party that we could never beat Kekkonen, we would have to become allies...and later came to learn the fact that he was after all the only force that was able to control the aspirations of the CPSU here.⁶

Already in Burman's time, the paper had changed its stance on the Soviet Union and shunned critical writing. This continued more heavily during the editorship of Aimo Kairamo (1974-1984), who even sacked the columnist Simppa because of the paper's alignment with Kekkonen. Also, Salonen, the editor-in-chief during the period 1984-1988, said that his paper published material critical of the Soviet Union only through external sources. In the case of *SM*, Kekkonen did not need to worry, as *Sarlund* was strictly Soviet friendly:

Me of course, and us, we backed Kekkonen's politics. It was in a way a built-in world of my generation and still is. We were Kekkonen's boys.

The neighboring nation was happy with the paper and even awarded *Sarlund* for his journalistic efforts in 1983 (see also Salminen 1996:66-67).

As for *US*, it was forced to change its critical policy, as it was heavily criticized by the Soviets in the 1970s and was also experiencing financial difficulties (see, e.g., Salminen 1996:75-77). The paper became independent in 1976, and a new editor-in-chief, Johannes Koroma, was appointed. In the interview he stated that he had been chosen to change the course of the paper to be more constructive and neutral regarding Finland's neighbor. This would satisfy the party as well as the industrial circles to which trade with the Soviet Union was important:

My mission was unambiguous, as the former editor-in-chief and his political columnists had become a liability in the relationship between business life

and the Coalition Party with the Soviet Union... the paper was to consider the Soviet Union in a constructive and neutral manner.

As for *HS*, the paper's relations to the East had been cool during Elias Erkko (owner of the paper and foreign minister of Finland before the war), a well-known friend of the United States (see, e.g., Manninen and Salokangas 2009), but they improved when Aatos Erkko became active in the matter (see Salminen 1996:71). After the war, the paper did not hire its first Moscow correspondent until 1975, while US had already employed one in 1958. The primary reason was that E. Erkko was reluctant to establish one (Manninen and Salokangas 2009:540-541), but the paper probably was not able to secure an accreditation in E. Erkko's time (see Uskali 2003:325). This was however denied in the interview with Tikkanen. Finding a correspondent that suited both parties was, however, a long process. All in all, the Soviet relations of the paper took a turn for the better in the 1970s, and A. Erkko had a contact in the Soviet embassy, as was customary (Salminen 1996:71). The paper's relations to Kekkonen have been described as cool but functional, which was corroborated by Tikkanen (in E. Erkko's time, critique of the president was even harsh, see Manninen and Salokangas 2009).

As for the political atmosphere of the 1970s, the editor-in-chief of *HS* kept a distance from the issues and saw the paper as an objective and neutral outsider. When asked in the interview about the strengthening of self-censorship in the 1970s, he was very careful in his comments and mostly talked about not leaving out essential information. He did not want to comment on the manner or style of writing. What he did admit to was the difficulty of criticizing Kekkonen and the official foreign policy.

The military coup in Afghanistan in 1979 is an example of extremely cautious and also Soviet led reporting in the Finnish press. The coup was carried out with the help of Soviet troops, and the Soviet-backed Babrak Karmal was elevated to power. This caused widespread criticism internationally about interfering in Afghanistan's internal affairs. In all the analyzed newspapers, reports on the coup were perceptibly few, and did not include any editorials or other commentary pieces, where presenting opinions is expected. In the party papers, the use of Soviet sources was emphasized along with Afghan radio, which led the reporting to look at the matter through Soviet eyes. All comments were presented either through Western sources or hidden between the lines. The editor-in-chief of US said in his interview that the papers' Moscow correspondent's position was difficult, and it was decided that he would not touch the subject. All in all, little reporting was carried out, and it was much more careful than in the case of the occupation of Czechoslovakia some ten years earlier. Also, the Finnish political leadership saw fit to remain silent (Salminen 1996:108-109, 144).

1980s as the Era of Glasnost and Changes in Soviet Reporting

The tradition of self-censorship started to show signs of weakening by the end of the 1970s (see, e.g., Vihavainen 1991:115, 251-263, 289-290). What characterized Finnish political journalism in general until the end of the 1970s were the markedly close relations between political editors and politicians. Journalists are said to have identified with the viewpoints of the political elite (Pernaa and Pitkänen 2006; Pitkänen 2009). The elite set the boundaries for valid journalism, which included refraining from criticizing the Soviet Union (Pitkänen 2009:84). The 1980s marked the beginning of more critical and independent journalism (see Aula 1992:25 Salminen 2006:91-92; Pitkänen 2009:84). Journalists distanced themselves from party politics and started to develop a more professional attitude, relying on their own ethical codes. A great turning point for the Finnish press was when Kekkonen stepped aside in 1981. The same year a political pamphlet called “Tamminiemen pesänjakajat” was published by the political editors of HS under a pseudonym, and this marked the start of a process during which the relationship between journalists and politicians became less respectful (see Aula 1991). The new president Koivisto continued the official foreign policy, but comments on the press concerning what was published about the Soviets ceased almost completely (Salminen 1996:173-6, 180). The Soviets, however, continued to criticize and comment on the press, as became apparent in the interviews and the archive material of the Finnish Foreign Ministry. The new decade meant a gradual shift in attitudes and a subsiding fear of the neighbour in journalism as well (Salminen 1996:190).

For the Soviet Union, the 1980s meant a decade of great upheavals. Social changes had already begun during Yuri Andropov’s leadership in 1983-84, but after Mikhail Gorbachev took the lead in 1985, the country saw a massive reformation. Starting in 1986 this reformation was called *perestroika*, another slogan being *glasnost*, which meant open access to information and citizens’ right to freedom of expression within certain limits (McCauley 1997:381-393; Seppänen 2010:89, 92). This had effects across the borders, and the editors I interviewed felt that reporting became much more liberal by the end of the 1980s, and writing about the Soviet society’s evils started to become a genre in itself:

Gorbachev actually imposed a new way to communicate about the Soviet Union, this glasnost was in a way a proclamation: tell everything and put the record straight about this country... [W]hen one was to tell about the failures and flaws of a society – that’s what we did too.⁷

Uskali (1990:37-38) and Eberwine et al. (1991) have stated that prior to glasnost, the focus of Finnish as well as international reporting was on international

politics and Soviet foreign relations. Along with glasnost, it shifted to the thus far hidden internal state of the country. Also ordinary Soviet people appeared in the news alongside officials. According to the public broadcasting company YLE's Moscow correspondent (1981-1987) Yrjö Länsipuro, his superiors Pekka Silvola and Jarmo Virmavirta had an idea of the coming changes early on, and they wished to gradually change the nature of reporting and have a "real" journalist reporting on the developments in the Soviet Union:

– it was a very clear mission for me to go over there and gradually change... the reporting, which up until then had been very [...] I remember having to shelve various stories that Nojonen [YLE correspondent] did over in Moscow, they were so horrible. – they told me that even Tehtaankatu [the Soviet Embassy in Finland] felt that it would be good for the Finno-Soviet relations, if one would not paint a paradise picture but instead report realistically.

In spite of everything, it was only after the attempted coup in 1991 in the Soviet Union that most of the correspondents seemed to be clearly free of the burden of self-censorship. Many Finnish correspondents in Moscow wrote statements criticizing Gorbachev for the first time in 1988. (Uskali 1994:125).

The Chernobyl disaster was the first real test of openness for glasnost. Even ten days after the accident, Soviet reporting on the issue was typical of Brezhnev, according to McNair. Drawing on Kagarlitski (1992), he concludes that, after Chernobyl, glasnost became a concrete practice instead of a mere slogan, as news about accidents started to appear in Soviet papers (McNair 1991:66). In the Finnish papers, three broad themes emerged: the failure of Finnish official communications about the accident, nuclear safety and Finnish energy solutions (see also Timonen et al. 1987; Salminen 1996:209, 212). The role of the Soviet Union in the accident was not central, and this also led the reader to see the country more as a location for the accident than as an active operator. It seemed almost as if Chernobyl could have happened anywhere.

Even if the reporting in Finland became more liberal during the 1980s, the official foreign policy or Soviet relations were still not directly criticized. This was first apparent in the case of the 1991 Yanayev coup, where a clear change in the Finnish papers' reporting on the Soviet Union can be seen compared to Chernobyl in 1986. For example ordinary people were represented in an entirely new manner. The attempted military coup by Gennadi Yanayev and his conservative Communist associates in August 1991 lasted only three days. The coup failed as Russia's president Boris Yeltsin and civil resistance based mostly in Moscow actively opposed it, and led to the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991. The coup was the first case in the empirical material, where newspapers other than *US* and *HS* had openly critical reports. The only paper to refrain from open criticism on the first day was *SM*. All of the papers wrote about the situation in the Baltic countries on the first day: the Estonian

leaders as well as ordinary Estonians traveling in Finland were interviewed. They were able to speak about their fears and memories of the totalitarian system in *HS*, *US* and *KU*.

Reporting about Estonia was one theme to be avoided during the Soviet era, but now it became an open topic. Also, Soviet sources were available in a wholly new manner as new information was becoming available. All of the papers also noted the traditionally careful reactions of the Finnish political leadership: party papers with their cautious analysis or between the lines reporting, *US* openly and *HS* more indirectly commenting on the foreign policy line. Viuhko (1994:11, 85), who has analyzed the reportage over several days, concluded that there occurred no return to the old times of extreme carefulness; however, the comments in the papers became sharper only when it was certain that the coup had failed. The editor-in-chief of *KU* Yrjö Rautio spoke about the reactions in his paper: "The reaction was very clear, the junta was condemned. ...And we did not believe...that we should in any way prepare ourselves that this would be the new regime."

Official Liturgy: on the Realities and Boundaries of Soviet Reporting

It has been claimed that due to self-censorship, giving an accurate or real picture of the Communist neighbour was impossible. This was also because securing reliable information from the country was not an easy task (Uskali 1994, 98). From the turn of the 1960s and 1970s onwards until the end of the 1980s, an official, liturgical image of the Soviet Union was emphasized in the Finnish media. Salminen (1996:190-194), among others, has described the official discourse as an orthodox and harmless 'YYA discourse'. When things could not be called with their proper names, euphemisms were invented instead. Also Kaisa Kinnunen (1998:269-270) has written about the so called "official liturgy of friendship" that was based on the repetition of certain basic statements of foreign policy. Topics like President Kekkonen and his foreign policy, the position of Estonia and the Baltic countries as part of Soviet Union or the Karelia question were only discussed from a harmless or non-critical perspective in the Finnish newspapers, if at all. One could describe it as two separate realities prevailing in the relationship with the neighbouring country. The official discourse was widely represented in media texts; whereas the unofficial was mostly present in colloquial language. This dualism (see also Immonen 1987) was also present in the visits to the Soviet Union as well as the work of Moscow correspondents. In the Soviet Union, the "real" and the "staged" reality lived side by side. In Russian it was called *pokazuba*, that is a performance or act. All of the Finnish Moscow correspondents who Uskali

(1994, 2003) interviewed in his research had ran in to it. Also my own interviewees described the phenomenon:

– we also ran into this kind of typically Soviet situations – and I believe people had internalized this pretty well, that there were two ways of speaking – you have the official truth, which is told at ceremonial occasions and especially when interviewed by Western media – “we don’t have any problems”, – this myth of the happy Soviet regime.

These efforts to make things look good decreased during Gorbachev’s glasnost, but as late as in 1993 a few correspondents had still ran into the phenomenon (Uskali 1994, 87).

Upholding the official image was monitored and controlled also in Finland by the Soviet representatives. The Embassy had regular contacts with the editors-in-chief of the big party papers as well as larger independent ones (see Salminen 1996:41–42 and Uskali 2003:55, 323, 414). According to Salminen (1996), the CPSU observers of Finland watched over carefully the Finnish press in co-operation with the Embassy in Helsinki, and also Finnish actors like the communist *Tiedonantaja* newspaper and the SNS (Finland-Soviet Union Association) between 1968 and 1991. Finnish communists and SNS, those who wanted to please Moscow, would also energetically label writers anti-Soviet if they presented any kind of criticism. President Kekkonen’s policy was to comment on the activities of the Finnish press by sending them (editors-in-chief and other important players) so-called “Mill letters” (see e.g. Salminen 1996, 38). Another important channel was between diplomats, as feedback was given through Finnish Foreign Ministry. The ministry officials would usually reply by pleading to the freedom of expression in Finland, but still oftentimes letting the editors know a certain piece in their paper had been discussed.

As for topics, reporting about the Soviet Union during the later phase of the Cold War in the Finnish press was rather concentrated on super power politics and bilateral relations between the two countries, whereas issues relating to everyday life and culture or democracy and civil rights were almost absent. This was evident in cases like the author Solzenitsyn’s Nobel prize in 1970 and the defection of the violinist Viktoria Mullova in 1983, as reporting about them was extremely scarce and apolitical (Lounasmeri 2011). Especially delicate were the questions of civil rights and the dissidents:

...many editors-in-chief would contemplate whether they would achieve anything good by...for example giving a lot of space and openly discussing something like...the Soviet dissidents in the 1970s (Yrjö Rautio, editor-in-chief of KU).

In fact, as Rautio and the other editors concluded, journalism was not able to bypass the official relations: “Yes, the reporting did oftentimes relate to [super

power politics] and these rather official matters, related to the Soviet leaders, very little journalism was connected in some way to the lives of ordinary citizens (Yrjö Rautio, editor-in-chief of KU). Seppo Sarlund, editor-in-chief of SM, noted: "It was pretty much about this normal top-level politics, or bilateral, that's what it was mostly."

The practices and topics of reporting find their explanation also in the practices of the state and politicians, especially in connection with official state visits. During these visits not much information about the discussions themselves was given; instead the politicians would stick to the official, liturgical statements. The press had to describe mostly superficial issues like processes and conditions. Because of liturgical news practices the image of the Soviet Union appeared one-dimensional:

I believe we didn't communicate a very versatile image to the Finnish public, maybe exactly because – the relations between the states were concreted, they were so static. Especially at the end of Breznev's era, it did start to change into something different during Gorba's time.⁸

The everyday life in the Soviet Union was however extremely difficult to report, since establishing connections to the ordinary people was difficult: "Very few were able to establish relationships there...it was very rare in all of Soviet Union, also in Estonia. People were scared stiff" (Seppo Heikki Salonen, editor-in-chief of SS). Also Johannes Koroma of *US* described this:

...the conditions themselves... for reporters were pretty much restrictive. During that time the possibilities to act on one's own were quite small, even talking to ordinary people.

The Soviets tried to stage also the everyday life according to the socialist ideal. This created problems especially for the television productions of the public broadcasting company Yleisradio:

...it was a question of how we would be able to do our "own stories"...usually after lengthy discussions...we did have all kinds of overseers with us... and they did sometimes interfere in things (Yrjö Länsipuro, YLE).

Television productions in the Soviet Union, especially in the 1970s, were extremely regulated and controlled (Uskali 1994:92). A representative of the Soviet censorship would always accompany a television crew. After the year 1988, part of the regulations considering TV shooting and photographing were considerably reduced, but still from time to time, the Moscow correspondents had difficulties illustrating the news, especially about the everyday life of Soviet citizens (Uskali 1994:93-94).

“This Is About Larger Issues”: Critical Reporting Had no Value in Itself

In the present chapter, the Finnish phenomenon of self-censorship in Soviet reporting during the last two decades of the Cold War has been analyzed. The chapter draws on interviews of contemporary editors-in-chief, empirical media material as well as historical research literature. As a conclusion, the degree and motives for self-censorship varied between different media and over time. In general, the motive for careful Soviet reporting in Finnish newspapers was to be found in the rather pragmatic national interests, be they political or economic, more than in ideology or idealism. A common feature across the board was that critical reporting did not have enough intrinsic value to overshadow the national interest. It was therefore not expedient to willfully write critically about the Soviet Union if this did nothing but cause problems. A representative of the Finnish media was supposed to think of the common good:

[I]n some form Simppa [the columnist] stated that there is a dictatorship in the Soviet Union – I told Simppa – well, we all agree that the Communist system sucks big time but – it won't break or become better if we comment on it – these are such delicate matters, these relations, that it is not worth being brave, this is about larger issues.⁹

The ethics of Finnish journalism appeared to have been teleological, concentrating on the consequences of actions. Pragmatism and realism were central in reporting, whereas idealism and the pursuit of the higher, democracy-related goals of journalism took second place. These characteristics were connected to the idea of the common national interest, which was also the first priority of Finnish journalism. It is impossible to say at which point the public interest became private, as it is also difficult to say how many of these traits have carried on to the present day.

Notes

1. The first three news days after the events were included, except for the Yanayev case where only the first news day is included. The articles were classified into news, commentary pieces, background stories and others. The tone in the articles was classified into directly and indirectly supportive, neutralizing/objectifying, analytical, and directly or indirectly critical towards the Soviet Union.
2. Editors-in-chief interviewed in spring 2011 were the ones still available for interviewing:
 Burman, Pauli, editor-in-chief of *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* 1968-1974, 24.2.2011
 Kiuru, Sakari, programme director of TV1 1974-1980, director general of YLE 1980-1989, 25.2.2011
 Koroma, Johannes, editor-in-chief of *Uusi Suomi* 1976-1989, 2.3.2011
 Lämsipuro, Yrjö, YLE's Moscow correspondent 1981-1987, 8.3.2011
 Paasilinna, Reino, YLE's reporter and managing editor 1964-1974, press attaché in Moscow

- 1974-1978, director general of YLE 1990-1994, 8.3.2011
 Rautio, Yrjö, sub editor and managing editor of *Kansan Tahto* 1978-1983, editor-in-chief 1983-1988, editor-in-chief of *Kansan Uutiset* 1988-2004, 4.3.2011
 Salonen, Seppo Heikki, YLE's reporter 1970-1979, second editor-in-chief of *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* 1979-1985 and editor-in-chief 1986-1988, YLE's director of communications 1990-1994 and special attaché to the director general 1994-2001, 25.2.2011
 Sarlund, Seppo, editor-in-chief of *Suomenmaa* 1977-1985, 2.3.2011
 Tikkanen, Heikki, reporter for *Helsingin Sanomat* 1954-1961, editor-in-chief of *Ilta-Sanomat* 1961-1966, the second editor-in-chief of *Helsingin Sanomat* 1966-1976 and editor-in-chief 1976-1990, 1.3.2011
3. Editor-in-chief Pauli Burman, *SS*
 4. Editor-in-chief Yrjö Rautio, *KU*
 5. The Soviet Union was an important bilateral trading partner for Finland, and the industrial circles also wanted to maintain good relations in order to support business.
 6. Editor-in-Chief Pauli Burman, *SS*
 7. Editor-in-chief Johannes Koroma, *US*
 8. Seppo Heikki Salonen, editor-in-chief of *SS*
 9. Editor-in-chief Pauli Burman, *SS*

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Chapter 4

Political Nonconformity in Finnish Men's Magazines during the Cold War

Laura Saarenmaa

Abstract

The article approaches cold war media culture from the perspective of gendered popular media: men's magazines published in Finland from the mid-1940s onwards. In Finland, in addition to erotic entertainment, men's magazines functioned as public forums for controversial political views, such as anticommunist political opinions in the 1940s and 1950s. In the 1960 and 1970s men's magazines served as forums for war time recollection, carefully avoided in the mainstream media during the cold war period. As a case study from the cold war decade of the 1970s the article discusses the voices of the opposition objecting the re-election of Urho Kekkonen as the president of Finland without the election in 1973.

Keywords: men's magazines, Finland, war time remembrance, political nonconformity, political causeries

In this Country They don't Have the Guts to Speak out Anymore

The cultural history of the Cold War period in Finland is dominated by two parallel narratives: The first involves the particular position of Finland as a militarily and politically neutral bridge-builder and peacemaker between the East and the West. The other narrative deals with the level of self-censorship and "Finlandization" practiced by political authorities and media institutions to conform to the explicit and implicit (and imagined) expectations of the Soviet Union. Esko Salminen (1999) has gone farthest by arguing that the Kremlin regarded Finland as belonging to the Soviet sphere of influence, and that there was a long-term campaign to Sovietize Finnish media. In later discussions, Salminen's claims have been questioned. It has been argued that the emphasis of the Soviet pressure on the media was rather part of a domestic political power play (Kähönen 2001:104; Luostarinen 2001:210), and that despite some biases the Finnish news media was relatively neutral after all (Nordenstreng 2001:219-223).

In the latest history writing, some historians have begun to problematize Finlandization altogether as the dominant narrative of the Cold War decades in

Finland. After all, conforming to the interests of the Soviet Union and playing the “Moscow card” were not the only trends in Finland during the 1960s and 1970s. Vesikansa (2004) describes forms of unofficial, non-socialist political activity: foundations, institutions and societies developing and promoting Finland as a Western democracy and a capitalist market economy. Another instance of this can be seen in the Americanization of the Finnish popular media from the 1950s onwards: TV advertisements (Kortti 2007), TV programs (Keinonen 2012), cartoon strips (Kauranen 2008) and popular music (Kärjä 2005). As Nordenstreng (2001:220) states, while the state’s political attention was strongly focused on Soviet relations, from the perspective of popular media culture the Soviet Union might as well have been on the Moon.

Thus, the third narrative of the Cold War period in Finland emphasizes the mental distance between the official state-level political doctrine and the people’s opinions, attitudes and everyday experiences. While existing international literature on the cultural Cold War (e.g. Day 2012; Starck 2010; Stonor Saunders 1999) demonstrates the cultural turn in the research on the Cold War period in different national contexts, relatively little work has been done on the cultural Cold War in the Nordic countries. As Rentola (2010:317) has remarked, Cold War history writing in Finland has concentrated on political party leaders, public institutions, organizations and foreign policy professionals. Regarding the media, historical work on the period has focused on the programming policies of the national broadcast company (YLE) (Salokangas 1996) and the national daily newspapers’ attitudes towards the Soviet Union (see Lounasmeri 2013; Uskali 2003; Salminen 1996; Suistola 1994; Vihavainen 1991). This chapter expands the perspective on the popular public sphere by bringing forward Finnish men’s magazines as counter-public spaces in Cold War Finland. It is argued that while men’s magazines were distinct from the mainstream media, they coincided with the Cold War political conditions and official political dogma by emphasizing alternative views and opinions.

The academic research conducted about men’s magazines has primarily focused on male sexuality and heteronormative, masculine identities. The more historically-oriented analyses of men’s magazines have focused on aspects of gendered consumer culture and the development of middle class lifestyles (Osberg 2001; Conekin 2001). Men’s magazines and their sexual imageries have also been referred to in a general manner in studies of pornography (Kipnis 1996; Dworkin 1989) and studies of the social and cultural construction of masculinities (Kimmel, Hearn and Connell 2005; Connell 1995; Seidler 1994; Ehrenreich 1984).

There is a long tradition of men’s magazine publishing in the Nordic countries. In Sweden, there have been popular magazines with distinctive masculine emphases since the 1890s (*Förgät Mig Ej* from 1895-1926; *Hvar 8 Dagar* from 1899-1923; *Lektyr* since 1923; and *Levande livet* since 1930) (Haf-

strand 2009:95-96). In Norway, there has been a magazine for men (*Vi Menn*) since 1951, combining articles about adventure, war, travel, hunting, sports, cars and women.¹ Compared to Swedish and Norwegian examples, Post-War and Cold War Finnish men's magazines have been somewhat exceptional in including references to domestic politics and current issues. Men's magazines were marginal media in terms of their low cultural status, short-lived titles and – until the early 1970s – their relatively modest circulation. Yet, in this article it is argued that their controversial stance makes them noteworthy in discussing the contradictory political discourses circulating in the public sphere during the Cold War decades. In what follows, the argument is elucidated by drawing examples from men's magazines *Aatami* (1944-1954), *VIP* (1968-1974) and *Urkki* (1974-1983) from the mid-1940s to the late 1970s.²

Anticommunist Tendencies and War Time Remembrance

The first major theme in Post-War Finnish men's magazines was the demobilization process after WWII and the adjustments in the social and political situation, which remained tense during the early Post-War years because of the constant threat of occupation by the Soviet Union. The first Finnish magazine for men, *Aatami*, launched in December 1944, addressed its readers as fellow soldiers returning home from the front and subsequently working for peace and a well-organized, civilized society. The late 1940s issues also reflect the spirit of the Post-War "years of danger." In 1949, the magazine wrote about the 1948 "occupation alert" and "the threat of the way of Czechoslovakia."³ The title referred to the Soviet invitation addressed to Finland to discuss the "Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance" (YYA Treaty) right after the communist coup d'état in Czechoslovakia. The invitation provoked restlessness, fear and rumors in Finland.

Throughout the late 1940s and 1950s there was political coverage in *Aatami* in which anticommunist political attitudes and the voices of non-socialist thinkers dominated. During the 1950s, several articles criticized the immoralities of the Finnish Communist Party. In 1953, the magazine published a piece written by a former reporter of a communist daily newspaper, *Vapaa Sana* (Free Speech), revealing the paranoid working conditions of the paper; the constant pressure to spy on one's own colleagues and report everything to the Finnish Secret Police (Valpo), overseen by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.⁴

Aatami established itself as part of the wave of literature critical of the Soviets published in Finland in the 1950s, critiquing the political system of the Soviet Union; Communist Party organization and ideology; the repressive methods of prisons and prison camps during Stalin's regime, and its atmosphere of interrogation, fear and hunger (Klinge 2001:26-27). The flow of critical literature

awakened indignation at the Soviet government and in 1958 led to an official note sent by the Soviet Union to the government of Finland concerning the negative public discourse. As a consequence, media culture in Finland took a step towards self-control – and even self-censorship (Klinge 2001:27-29).

Hence it could be suggested that men's magazines served as an alternative public forum for subjects, views and voices that were not favored in the mainstream media. In the 1960s and 1970s, men's magazines covered subjects carefully avoided elsewhere in the public sphere: the SS-training of the Finnish officers in Germany during the Continuation War (1941-1944)⁵, memories of Adolf Hitler visiting Finland in 1944⁶ and the numerous anecdotes, stories and memories from the war zone. The focus of the stories was not so much the heroism as the horrors of the war. A striking example is an article about a military police veteran whose duty was to eliminate the Finnish fellow soldiers deserting the front (Nyrkkiposti 9:1969).

Thus, in contrast to the standard narrative presented by Finnish war historians (e.g. Hoppu 2012; Sulamaa 2006), WWII and the memories and experiences of war veterans were shared and circulated in the popular public sphere throughout the Cold War decades. Previous research has emphasized the significance of war-related literature. In the 1970s, every sixth title published in Finland dealt with the Second World War in some way (Niemi 1988). Again, the growing number of war-related books was noticed in the Soviet Union, where it was interpreted as "fascist" activity (Vesikansa 2010:143).⁷

In addition to the extensive amount of war-related fiction and non-fiction (Martikainen 2013; Niemi 1988) and the monthly magazine *Kansa taisteli* (Folk Fought) (1957-1986) that specialized in wartime remembrance, Finnish men's magazines contributed to this production by circulating archived pictures and material on the events on the front and veterans' accounts of their experiences. According to literary scholars, the war fiction served as catharsis and ritual purification of the national subconscious. Furthermore, in the Finnish context, it questioned the internal consensus of the nation and counterbalanced the restrained official credos of the post-war Soviet-friendly foreign policy (Niemi 1988:216). Men's magazines therefore represented the voice of the war experienced, politically right-wing patriots, who did not adjust themselves to the Cold War leftist political order and the Soviet-friendly official doctrine. Recent research has highlighted the importance of sharing magazines, sex-related stories, letters and pictures in the process of developing camaraderie between the soldiers on the front (Kivimäki 2013:224). In addition to the symbolic connection with the brothers-in-arms spirit, men's magazines reflect the gendered characteristics of the Cold War media culture: the intertwining of politics, sex and violence.

Nonconformist Voices

In the 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s, men's magazines reflected the non-socialist and anticommunist political attitudes of the war generation. Younger generations, however, had different political ideas and opinions. The change was seen in the universities and political parties from the mid-1960s onwards. In the late 1960s, politically active university students turned to socialism and supported the minor, radical left wing of the Finnish Communist Party (SKP). Voices of the political left also strengthened in the public broadcasting company YLE, in the commercial television company MTV, in journalist organizations, cultural life and academia (Vesikansa 2004:228).

Historians have treated the early 1970s as the turning point in generating a positive attitude towards the Soviet Union in domestic and cultural politics in Finland. The foreign political basis for this was the 1968 crisis in Czechoslovakia and Moscow's rising interest in tying Finland closer to the Soviet power regime. At that time, there were very few voices in the national public sphere criticizing the sovereignty of President Kekkonen and the dominance of Soviet relations in the foreign policy. There was little space for nonconformists to get their opinions heard (Kujala 2013:337-341). However, in the 1970s, men's magazines frequently made critical references to media self-censorship and the constrictive political climate. These were the voices of the right wing opposition, considered the nonconformists of the time. These voices were heard in men's magazine *VIP* (1968-1974), spectacularly launched in 1968 as the Finnish counterpart for the American *Playboy*. With a combination of stylized nude girl covers and center-folds, the magazine was a gutsy commentator on contemporary international and domestic politics. The daring touch is seen in the magazine's approach, bringing up views and perspectives that were not favored in other formats.

The tense domestic political climate of the early 1970s is captured in the interview of Colonel Veikko Vuorela, representative of the patriotic veteran organization in Finland. Vuorela defines Finland as a dictatorship: "[H]e wished Finland would become a democracy again, instead of a sort of dictatorship Finland was now."

There are the communists, the Maoists, the hippies, the radicals. The young people are being brainwashed. Political parties, organizations, the media who do not accept the state of affairs, have been silenced or have silenced themselves. -In this country they don't have the guts to speak out anymore. If one speaks, he is attacked.⁸

Another nationally known nonconformist, Georg C. Ehrnrooth, MP of the Swedish Folk's Party, was introduced in the magazine as "openly in opposition to [President] Kekkonen and communism." Ehrnrooth had been nationally recognized for his anticommunist views from the 1950s onwards. In the

interview with *VIP* magazine, he claims that his opponents have frequently tried to silence him because of his opinions. He also states that the domestic policy of Finland was not conducted in the spirit of democracy: "There were even remarkable changes in the result of the election; there are always the same parties chosen in the government."⁹

This was also true. The non-socialist national coalition party was held in opposition from 1966 to 1987, despite the grand support the party received in the parliamentary elections in 1970, 1975 and 1979. Moreover, Ehrnrooth's criticism was directed towards the overbearing power of President Kekkonen over the Parliament.¹⁰ In the early 1970s, Ehrnrooth was among those who took an oppositional stance to enacting the emergency law that would extend President Kekkonen's reign for another four years without an election.¹¹ The social democrats initiated emergency law in 1972 on the grounds of the danger of instability that the presidential election would bring to Finnish foreign policy. President Kekkonen had announced earlier that he was no longer willing to run for reelection, but that he was prepared to continue his term in office. Kekkonen was trusted by the Soviets, and the contemporary understanding was that keeping Kekkonen in power was necessary to guarantee the ratification of Finland's European Economic Community (EEC) membership. EEC membership was crucial for the competitiveness of Finnish industries, and so the national coalition party agreed to support the emergency law.

A group of individual MPs, including Ehrnrooth, objected to the emergency law and insisted that the democratic rights of the Finnish people not be trampled. They also filibustered the legislative procedure at the Committee for Constitutional Law. The Prime Minister Kalevi Sorsa labelled the nonconformists extreme right-wingers and stated publicly that "he was convinced that the people in Finland will convict this foreign politically suspicious, reactionary alliance and deprive their support in the next [parliamentary] elections."¹²

In the *VIP* magazine interview, Ehrnrooth claimed that the power of the presidency should be substantially decreased for the benefit of the parliament. In addition, he hoped that "the relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union would normalize so that we did not have to talk about them [Soviet relations] all the time." At that point, Ehrnrooth's hopes were not fulfilled. The emergency law was enforced in 1973, and Urho Kekkonen was elected President of Finland for another four years (from 1974 to 1978). Protesting its support of the emergency law, Ehrnrooth resigned from the Swedish Folk's Party and established a new bilingual party, the Constitutional Right Party.

In *VIP* magazine, the peculiar political situation was addressed seriously as well as in a humorous light. In addition to comments and light essays, the magazine published an "arts and crafts exercise" in which the task was to cut out the photo of a suitable candidate for the president of Finland from the accompanying picture gallery and attach it to the enclosed "voting ticket." The

entire page was filled with passport photo-sized laughing faces of President Kekkonen. "Thus you have participated in the election of the president, and can feel free and careless again,"¹³ the piece quipped. It was suggested that, should a citizen of Finland feel the sudden desire to vote, he would just be guided into some private space, a toilet for instance, with a pencil and a piece of paper and allowed to vote there: "The most important thing is, that despite what the politicians decide, we get the feeling that we vote, anyway."¹⁴

Despite relatively good circulation numbers,¹⁵ VIP magazine was suddenly suspended at the beginning of 1974. According to interviews with the journalists and editors working for the magazine, the decision to suspend was made on economic grounds, because of declining circulation, and there were no political motives involved.¹⁶ Several sources mentioned that top politicians read and appreciated VIP magazine, including Kekkonen himself.¹⁷

Urkki and the Blue Duck

Urkki magazine (1974-1983) was a Nordic format magazine published in Denmark under the title *Ugens Rapport* (1972-present). The magazine was launched in Finland in 1974 with the subtitle "the world's magazine." Urkki focused on international news footage and reporting edited and translated in Finnish. At first, the percentage of sex content was small, consisting of a portrait of a nude girl on the cover and a photo series of anonymous female models posing nude in stockings and pearls in the middle section.

Urkki covered shocking news topics from around the world: logging in Brazilian rainforests, famine in Ethiopia, the genocide in Biafra and the monstrous dictator Idi Amin of Uganda. The emphasis was on visual reporting: images displaying terror, bloodshed and brutal violence. Furthermore, Urkki followed the Post-War Finnish men's magazine tradition in including sarcastic commentaries on domestic politics. In 1975, Urkki published a series of essays ridiculing the Finlandized political climate, the official political position of groveling to the Soviets and the extension of Urho Kekkonen's reign with the emergency law. The articles were signed by "Ahti Johannes Sinisorsa," a pseudonym combining elements of the names of the then-leading party politicians and ministers: Ahti Karjalainen, Johannes Virolainen and Kalevi Sorsa.¹⁸ The magazine title "Urkki" was itself a wink at President Urho Kekkonen: "Urkki" was a popular public nickname for Kekkonen. Kekkonen was an apt reference for a men's magazine combining sexy girls and hard-boiled news reports: despite his relatively advanced age, the hypermasculine President Kekkonen was considered a sexual as well as political hero (Wuokko 2011).

The first Blue Duck column jeered at the "internationally noted," "sophisticated form of self-censorship" in the Finnish news media, such as its tendency

to circulate and “disapprove” of content critical of the Soviet Union published by papers in other countries (e.g. Sweden or the UK).¹⁹ In the next piece it trumpeted that Finland had – “in co-operation with its dear neighbor” – given up some “unnecessary and time consuming political procedures” such as elections.²⁰ The same theme was continued with the remark that “there was a new article in the constitution law and that from now on, one and only one person will be the president of Finland forever [:] It is now comforting to think 30 years ahead because we can be sure that there will be the same familiar and reliable man as our president.”²¹ It also stated that there was an undemocratic government in the country and that voting did not mean anything because the President decided everything by himself anyway.²² The last piece dealt with the arrangements of the CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) in Helsinki. Helsinki was written as “Helsinki,” mocking the Soviet-friendly mentality of the country.²³

After the September 1975 issue, the Blue Duck column was suspended. Again, according to interviews, political motives were not behind the suspension. Rather, the political column was not considered sufficiently interesting content for the magazine’s readers. Instead, the magazine invested in more sexual content. The sex section was extended with readers’ letters recounting their sexual fantasies and experiences. The pages were filled with rough stories on adultery, group sex, incest, unique sexual maneuvers and the masturbation practices of elderly people. Many of the stories were written from a woman’s point of view. The letters pages became extremely popular and were also printed and sold as separate editions (Korppi 2002:76).

In addition to sexual stories, the magazine sought to shock readers with archival documents on the experiences of the Second World War in Finland. In 1979, the magazine published a yearlong series on “Finnish war heroes” and “the moments of destiny,” reminiscing about the 40 years since the beginning of the Winter War (1939-1940). Again, the issue of the close combat relationship with Germany and the Finnish SS-officers was exhaustively explored.²⁴ In addition, the magazine commented on the current debate about the war pensions of SS-trained officers. *Urkki*’s articles seemed to counterbalance the critical attitudes towards the issue. In 1979 an *Urkki* writer stated,

Even today some people try to give us the impression that there was something evil about the past and actions of the Finnish SS-officers. In fact, all the Finnish soldiers trained in Germany fought in the [Finnish] front with our mutual enemy [the USSR]. So let us put it straight, once and for all. Finnish SS-volunteers had absolutely nothing to do with the holocaust or death camps and other horrors revealed after the war.²⁵

The quote reflects the critical climate of the 1970s and the negative attitudes of the younger generations towards Finnish war veterans and their coopera-

tion with Hitler's Germany. The magazine approached the war from various, contradictory and even scandalous angles. In July 1979, *Urkki* published an article with "the list of people the state police Valpo in Finland delivered to Germany, and who therefore ended up in the death camps in the 1940s." The provocative title of the article was "These people we sent to be burned."²⁶ The article was probably inspired by the American TV miniseries *Holocaust* (1979), broadcasted on Finnish television in March 1979. In 1980, *Urkki* published a piece on the massive number of Finnish political prisoners being killed at the construction site of what was called "Stalin's canal" (from the White Sea to the Baltic Sea) in the Soviet Union during the early 1930s.²⁷

Within the framework of this chapter, it is not appropriate to evaluate the truth-value of the scandalous claims presented in the pages of *Urkki*. Rather, it is suggested that the purpose of the war-related articles based on various "historical archive documents" was to shock audiences and assume a perspective carefully avoided in other public forums. The war coverage served the countercultural stance of men's magazines, striving to shock and appall the establishment and break the official code of political correctness. However, *Urkki's* sub-editor and the editor-in-chief both deny the political dimensions of the magazine, insisting that the stories were written first and foremost for money and that there were no political motives involved in publishing or contributing to the magazine. They do confirm that there were freelancers who specialized in the more controversial subjects, such as patriotic war remembrance, and there was thus plenty of material available on the subject. Moreover, the editors admit that in men's magazines "the publishing standards were a bit different," that "in a men's magazine it was possible to say things you could not say in mainstream media."²⁸

Conclusion

In this chapter it has been suggested that during the Cold War period, Finnish men's magazines served as a countercultural forum for anticommunist political discourse, the remembrance of war, and resistance to the 'Finlandized' political climate and the autocracy of President Kekkonen. With these characteristics, men's magazines such as *Aatami*, *VIP* and *Urkki* set themselves against the publishing policies of the public broadcast company (YLE) and the major national and regional newspapers. According to Salokangas and Lounasmeri (in this volume), the publishing policies of the national media were characterized by cautiousness, careful consideration and extreme political correctness. By contrast, magazines such as *Aatami*, *VIP* and *Urkki* provided views that were openly nonconformist or otherwise against the official code of political correctness characteristic of the Cold War period.

Another feature mentioned here is the montage of coverage of brutal, topical international issues and national archival documents, revealing various scandalous wartime incidents avoided by the mainstream media during the time. Furthermore, unlike remembrance of the war in other forums, men's magazines juxtaposed the war-related material with relatively rough sexual short stories and sophisticated, rather prudish sexual images of naked women. According to Barbara Ehrenreich (1984), sexy images of women have, historically, functioned as a confirmation of the heterosexuality of the men's magazine framework, and thus as a legitimization of male pleasure in lifestyle consumption and homosocial bonding. Further, as argued by Kivimäki (2013), sharing violent and sexual images and stories was key to creating wartime comradeship, an affirmation of brotherly alliance and trust between men that evidently also had political consequences (Saarenmaa 2014). It could be suggested that the brutal, excessive violence and sex shielded the political content of the magazines by situating them in the categories of popular culture and insignificant entertainment. In comparison to literary fiction, men's magazines with sexy images of girls posing naked probably could not be officially overseen and publicly judged. As stated in interviews, the publishing standards were different for men's magazines, and they were thus freer than the mainstream media to publish politically incorrect content.

However, according to the material examined in this study, it cannot be argued that there were political motives involved in the publishing or writing in men's magazines at the time. As there is still relatively little work on the public sphere constructed by the popular magazines in Finland, it is difficult to say to what extent the political coverage in men's magazines was exceptional or politically significant. But at least they bring forward one example of the range of parallel and contradictory voices that were present in the public sphere during the Post-War and Cold War decades, complicating our simplistic understanding of the cautious, conservative, politically correct and silent media of Cold War Finland.

Notes

1. On Vi Menn see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vi_Menn. In the case of Denmark respectively, Sören Anker Madsen (2010) has written about the success of Ugens rapport in the 1970s.
2. The article draws on the material collected for the research project on the Finnish men's magazines from the 1940s to the 1980s funded by the Academy of Finland (2012-2015).
3. The night of the Red Alert – What happened in the night before 27th of April (Hälytysvalmiusyö – Mitä tapahtui huhtikuun 27. päivän vastaisena yönä) (Aatami 7:1949).
4. SKP-läisen politiikan moraali (the morals of the communist party policies) (Aatami 2:1953); Avoin kirje suomalaiselle kommunistille (Open letter for the Finnish communist) (Aatami 3:1953); Olin Vapaan Sanan herra toimittaja (I was the reporter of Free Speech) (Aatami 6:1953).
5. E.g. Nyrkkiposti 11:1971.

6. VIP 3:1973.
7. The popularity of war literature was not particularly a Finnish phenomenon. On the contrary, war literature was very popular around the Western world (Niemi 1988:13-18).
8. VIP 5:1972.
9. VIP 7:1972.
10. In 1972, Ehrnrooth launched a Swedish-language news magazine, *Express*, to promote his nonconformist views. According to Helsingin Sanomat (HS 4.3.1972), *Express* was a right-wing magazine that basically focused on criticism of President Kekkonen and his political actions.
11. President Urho Kekkonen served as the president of Finland for over 25 years straight from 1956 to 1981. After the third term (1968-1978) extended with four years (1974-1978) on the grounds of the emergency law, Kekkonen was elected once again from 1978 to 1982 with the support of 82 per cent of the votes of the electors. Kekkonen retired before the end of the term in 1981 because of his weakening health and died in 1986.
12. Helsingin Sanomat 18.11.1973.
13. VIP 1:1973. The causerie was signed by journalist Juhani Mäkelä.
14. VIP 1:1973.
15. The circulation of *VIP* magazine from 1968 to 1972 was growing steadily. In 1972, the circulation decreased slightly, but was still quite substantial, with 80,000 copies. In 1973, the circulation of the magazine was not measured (Source: The Finnish Bureau of Circulation). It is thus difficult to verify the dip in circulation and economic failure of the magazine.
16. Phone interviews: Kalevi Kalemaa 22.1.2013; Eero Savisaari 22.1.2013; Unto Kivelä; 25.1.2013; Klaus Bremer 12.7.2013.
17. Bremer, interview 12.7.2013.
18. The sub-editor of the magazine refused to reveal the name/names behind the column, but assured that the writer/writers were professional journalists and not representatives or members of any political parties. Jaakko Kerkkonen, phone interview 24.5.2013.
19. Urkki 3:1975.
20. Urkki 4:1975.
21. Urkki 7:1975.
22. Urkki 8:1975; Urkki 9:1975
23. Urkki 9:1975.
24. Mitä tuli suomalaisista SS-upseereista (What became of the Finnish SS-officers) (Urkki 12:77); Jouduimme saksalaisten SS-miesten maalitauluiksi (We were the targets of the German SS-men in Lapland) (Urkki 10:78).
25. Suomalaisen SS-pataljoonan vaiheita yhden mukana olleen kertomana (The experiences of the Finnish SS-platoon according to one participant) (Urkki 11:1979).
26. Nämä ihmiset me lähetimme polttouhreiksi. Valpo luovutti Gestapolle ainakin nämä 76 henkilöä. (Urkki 7:1979.)
27. Urkki 2:1980.
28. Jaakko Kerkkonen, phone interview 24.5.2013. Timo Korppi, several phone discussions and e-mail correspondence between 25.5.-27.5.2013.

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Chapter 5

The Wallenberg Case as a Cold War Issue

Hans Fredrik Dahl

Abstract

The Wallenberg Case is a treefold drama. First the fate of the poor man himself, in Soviet prison after being arrested in Budapest in January 1945 while busy rescuing Hungarian Jews from their terrible fate in German camps. Second, the role played by the unsolved affair between Soviet and Sweden in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, a diplomatic knot if ever there was one. Third, Mr Wallenberg as an international hero at the end of the Cold War and after, honoured for his bravery and compassion during the war, as well as for his standing as a Cold War victim. The present article goes into all three aspects of the story.

Keywords: Wallenberg case, Sweden, the Cold War, Soviet prisons, Stalin, Khrushchev

The Wallenberg case is one of the most persistent Cold War issues in the whole of European history of the 20th century. The mysterious disappearance of the WW2 hero Raoul Wallenberg in the Soviet Union in 1945, and the way in which his fate influenced the relationship of Sweden and the Soviet Union and even the relationship between Moscow and the Western world right up to 1990, is indeed central to any understanding of the east-west relations of the era.

In fact, the story of the Swedish aid worker and diplomat Raoul Wallenberg has no end, in as much as the case is not definitely closed even today, although Wallenberg would by now be well over 100 years old. As long as he reasonably could be presumed to be alive, however, his case was definitely open. All through the Cold War – from 1945 to the fall of the Iron Curtain – the Wallenberg case was an open wound in the relationship between Sweden and USSR. After the fall of communism a joint Swedish-Russian historical commission was established to find out what happened, working together 1991-2001 to solve the case; but even that commission, called *Arbetsgruppen*, found no conclusive evidence of what became of the former prisoner. We simply don't know for sure what happened to him or when Wallenberg actually died.

Still the case rests in peace now, compared to the situation in the 1950s, 60s-, 70s or 80s, as its influence on the Swedish-Russian relations today is almost zero. No one today sees Wallenberg as a disturbance between the world powers or playing a role between nations. Considering this recent situation one has to ask whether that quietness is due to the end of the Cold War, or whether new facts about Mr Wallenberg's fate have been produced so as to mitigate the former tensions. In particular one might ask about new interpretations or new understandings of the case, such as it has emerged in the mass media, and fostered a new view of the man and his deeds. Or should one be content with the working of biological facts, that a man borne in 1912 would have passed away anyway – which is to say that the possibility of him being alive in some Soviet prison camp is vanished by itself? Faced with such possibilities it is tempting all the same to retell the story of this man and his fate, a story embedded in the Cold War and therefore shedding some light on that war itself. In the following we shall do so, based on the facts and findings of the most recent official report, that was given to the Swedish Foreign Office in 2003.¹

Diplomat and Saviour

We have to do with a young architect from the well known Wallenberg family, a nephew of the famous investor and bank tycoon Marcus Wallenberg, who by American initiative was attached to the Swedish legation in Budapest late in 1944 as an *envoie*, and who under protection as a diplomat was secretly commissioned to save as many Jews as possible from the German grip before they were sent to annihilation camps. Hungarian authorities were at this moment of the Second World War ordered by their German masters to hand over their Jewish population, of which almost half a million were deported from the eastern part of the country to Auschwitz and a similar number awaited deportation from the Budapest area during the spring of 1944, at which time young Wallenberg arrived. Joint efforts of neutral legations in Budapest – Switzerland's and Sweden's – together with diplomats from the Vatican and representatives from the Red Cross, had at that time established a diplomatic and humanitarian project to save as many Jews as possible, as it was clear at that time that the ultimate goal of the Germans was to kill them all, the "Entlösung" being obvious. Provisional passports comparable to the "Nansen passports" from The Great War seemed useful in this respect because the Hungarian authorities at that time agreed to consider persons with such passports as foreigners and therefore not included in the SS deportation project. Still the Jews in question, temporarily sheltered by thousands in neutral legations' offices and in flats around the town, had to be transported out of the country; efforts in this respect were hampered by

sudden shifts in the government's position as against the Germans. From the East, Soviet army forces were approaching the Hungarian borders, threatening both the local Arrow-cross fascists and their German masters who both were facing defeat. Every day new Jewish lives could be saved in this chaos, and young Wallenberg participated wholeheartedly in these efforts.

By January 15th 1945 he drove out of Budapest to reach Debrecen, town quarter of the approaching Soviet forces, to negotiate with them about the situation for the Jews in the forthcoming Soviet occupation. On this mission he disappeared.

Initially Soviet authorities ensured that they had taken care of him, which seemed both reasonable and reassuring. He was temporarily in their custody, they said. As soon as the Swedes started investigating the matter after the end of war however, uncertainty arose. The Russian ambassador to Stockholm, Mme Kollontaij, let understand that the less one asked the better, implicitly stating that Mr Wallenberg would be handed over in due course. However, diplomats in Budapest soon arrived at the conclusion that in fact he was dead, some said by a road accident, other that he was killed by Hungarian fascists on the way to Debrecen. This view was passed on to the Swedish ambassador to Moscow, Staffan Söderblom, who apparently felt sure that Mr Wallenberg was no longer alive, which he also told his Russian opposite number in the Soviet Foreign Office. Rather surprisingly he even said so to Joseph Stalin himself, in an interview he was granted in connection with his final departure from Moscow in June 1946. It was his own "personal view", he told the generalissimo, that Mr Wallenberg was no longer alive, whether he was killed by accident or had been slain by robbers.

Much has been pondered over the reasons why Mr Söderblom told this to the Soviet head of State. He died soon thereafter and could not explain. But an explicable reason could have been that he wanted to help the Soviets out of an awkward situation, being himself absolutely sure that the young diplomat had passed away. Still it was inappropriate in a case like this for a diplomat to state any "personal view" running contrary to the official statement of the other part – that Mr. Wallenberg was in the custody of the Soviet authorities, a version the Swedes had to cling to formally, of course, in their many requests of what had happened to their man in Budapest.

The answer came by August 1947, when deputy foreign minister Vysjinskij declared that all Russian efforts to investigate the case had been in vain. Mr Wallenberg was "unknown by us", he explained to the hapless Swedes of the mission in Moscow. "Enough is to say that he apparently died during the battle of Budapest or was captured by Szalasi's people."

This was in itself a mystery. Why had the Soviets lingered so long in stating this? If Mr. Wallenberg had slid out of their hands during the final battle of Budapest spring 1945, why did it take them 2 ½ years to tell so? Something

must have happened between the two messages, that of January 1945 and that of August 1947, but what? Moreover; "unknown by us", what did that mean; did they know he was dead, or what? Could that message be trusted at all? Diplomats, journalists, politicians in Stockholm, all were bewildered. Soon however the opinion spread that this was a Russian cover story, veiling the fact that he was still alive in some camp to be used as a human pressure whenever it suited the Soviets to let him appear again to be exchanged for some benefit in the future.

Not only diplomats thought so. A broad popular movement, originally in support of Mr Wallenberg's mother, Mrs Maj Dardel, had already demanded his return and even asked Mr. Stalin directly to free Mr. Wallenberg. The plea was controversial among diplomats, who thought the movement contrary to their efforts; the Swedish foreign minister even warned that such demands could hamper the government's work to solve the matter. But the popular movement's leadership continued, after the Vysjinskij declaration, by assuming that he was alive and demanding his release. And soon they were followed by the press who did not trust the Soviet version at all; the Swedish newspapers became prime spokesmen for the opinion that Mr. Wallenberg was still alive and that, consequently, the Soviets lied. Witnesses stepped forward confirming this version; foreign newspapers soon picked up the Swedish version and the Wallenberg case was turned into an international scandal.

And it grew. The story of Raoul Wallenberg's fate swelled from one of the innumerable missing persons in the maelstrom of war, to the history of an outstanding person, one of the few who had dared to act in favour of Jews, whose fate at the same time became the object of innumerable speculations and foreign supporters alike. International committees and foreign governments cast their eyes on the unhappy Swede who apparently suffered hard times in a Soviet prison camp, a victim of the Cold War if there ever was one.

Exit Stalin

In 1953, with the death of Stalin, new hopes were lit. Then in February 1957 a new version was launched by the Soviets. In fact, Moscow stated, Wallenberg was not unknown at all. He had passed away in a Soviet jail in 1947, just ahead of the Vysjinskij message. Sorry for the misinformation, but this was it; the first message in 1945 had been correct, the 1947 one was false, now in 1957 this was all adjusted by the finding in some archive of a ten years old physician's certificate (in fact a two-line letter without recipient) that Mr. Wallenberg had just died of heart failure.

But could it be believed? The paper from 1947 handed over now, was no proper death certificate, formally speaking. If fabricated now it thickened the

mystery even further. Why was it made, now? If correct it opened up for many more questions – about its medical content, about the alleged cremation, and above all about the role of the secret police, 1947, in 1957, or whenever. Even more witnesses appeared who told they had encountered him, as time passed and many a former prisoner returned from the east telling they had seen him. Witnesses abounded especially after 1955 when the general agreement of prisoners release between Soviet and Germany swelled to numbers of Europeans with a past time in Soviet camps. Soviet authorities however stuck to their version. He had passed away in 1947.

In the 1960s, the Swedish prime minister Tage Erlander and his foreign secretary was encountered by a very reliable witness, a professor of medicine who told them that in the course of a conference in the Soviet Union, she has been hooked by a Russian colleague who clandestinely informed her that Mr. Wallenberg was alive and locked up in a Soviet mental hospital. Mr. Erlander immediately trusted her, bid her to remain silent about the sensational disclosure and started to investigate into the matter. Very soon he was able to ask the Soviet head Nikita Khrushchev, first through his ambassador and then in a personal letter to Mr Khrushchev. The letter was never answered, the charges however vehemently opposed by the Soviet Foreign Office, and even more so when they were renewed in 1963 and 1964 when the allegations were raised to Foreign Minister Gromyko. The Russians flatly denied. The professor's informer himself denied the story and said the whole thing was a misunderstanding. Erlander however continued to demand an answer and laid the question before Prime Minister Khrushchev when the Soviet leader himself visited Sweden in the summer of 1964. Khrushchev nearly exploded with rage and shouted he would never have come to Sweden had he known that the Wallenberg case would be raised. Two years later, Erlander tried for the last time to rise the question when visiting Khrushchev's successor Kosygin. This time conversations were polite but Kosygin could but repeat the 1957 version: Wallenberg had died in 1947, when he was "rightly or wrongly jailed" in a period of Soviet history which was "shed in darkness and failures" – indeed a confession which indicated that the Russians now understood how important this case was to Sweden and to the world. In 1967 the same message was conveyed, and again in 1979, but now as a formal apology: all one knew was that he died in 1947, "in evil and difficult times."

The press however would not let "the Wallenberg riddle" go. New witnesses appeared, giving food to headlines such as "Wallenberg still alive", "I saw him". Proofs however were scarce. "Since 1965 nothing has appeared which has provided the Swedish government with an opportunity to approach the Russian government in this matter", foreign minister Sten Andersson stated in 1974, in connection with a TV series, in three parts this time. Public interest however demanded an answer. So did the Wallenberg family assisted by the

Wallenberg committee, supported by a large number of influential, mostly non-socialist newspapers who kept flames high regardless of official Soviet views. Their attitude was not welcomed by the Foreign Office. In fact the media and the Foreign Office officials worked very differently on the matter. Where the latter had to stick to thoroughly combed allegations besides listening to the information given by the Russians, the media had no such limitations and favoured openness all the time. No wonder the Swedish authorities worked under heavy media pressure.

Criticisms moreover often carried political overtones, aiming and shooting at government targets. In depth however the case was moral rather than political, relating to Swedens position of international neutrality. Could one really remain neutral in the Cold War when a neighbouring country behaved like that?

Internationalization

So far the Wallenberg case had been an internal Swedish affair and even a somewhat party-ridden issue, in as much as it carried a taste of government versus opposition. The government was all through a social democratic one, meeting criticism from the press and the Wallenberg committee as a critique from the right, a pattern rather strange to foreign observers. This however changed in the 1970s when the Wallenberg issue was spreading to a wider international attention; the whole case was internationalised to a degree that whenever it was raised in the Swedish parliament or the media, it was with a glance to the fact that it now awoke international attention, thus increasing its importance both to the Swedes and to the world.

It is sometimes assumed that Mr Wallenberg's fate was drawn into the world's attention by President Jimmy Carter and his programme of international human rights. True, the Carter administration engaged itself deeply in the Wallenberg case and raised the issue on the President's own initiative during a summit meeting with president Brezhnev. The idea of promoting Mr Wallenberg to US citizenship was also his, and it was accomplished by September 1981. For Swedes however, the issue came to international attention earlier on, above all with the famous Austrian Nazi-hunter and human rights activist Mr Simon Wiesenthal, head of the Jewish Documentation Centre in Vienna, who entered the Wallenberg debate in 1974. Suddenly the world famous Nazi hunter presented himself by telling the Swedish public that he had been engaged by the Wallenberg family for four years to solve the mystery, and seemed full of ideas as to how one should go ahead. He would personally nominate Mr Wallenberg to the Nobel Peace Prize, he told the Swedish press, and he would call on Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, author of the famous *Gulag-Archipelago* now living in exile in Norway, to hear about his knowledge of the unhappy Swede

from his time in the Ljubljana prison in Moscow. (He actually raised this issue somewhat later at the so-called Sakharov-hearing in Rome). US newspapers as well as the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, told by December 1977 that Mr. Wiesenthal was on his way to Israel to meet a witness who ensured that he had met Mr. Wallenberg as late as in 1975, a most sensational information that had to be confirmed by him personally; later that was brought forward in the Swedish parliament. With Wiesenthal and his restless energy new perspectives were certainly brought into the case, and new initiatives taken to help it solved. August 1978 Wiesenthal suggested that Sweden withdraw from the coming Olympics in Moscow unless the Russians revealed all things about the case. Swedish newspapers all referred this suggestion although somewhat reluctantly, as such a step would scarcely harmonize with a neutral country's values. Wiesenthal also could explain why so many unreliable witnesses appeared assuring that they had met Wallenberg; this, he told, was due to the wealth of the family who tempted swindlers to try to grab pieces of the fortune, a point hitherto neglected by the Swedish media.

In January 1979 the Swedish government revealed that it had secretly prepared and now delivered a new diplomatic note identifying by name new witnesses who testified he could be alive as late as 1975. Soviet authorities however declined the question altogether stating that "no new informations exists or could possibly exist concerning the fate of R. Wallenberg." Swedish diplomats believed this to be true, but they officially continued to work under the hypothesis that he "might be alive", as the media and the public certainly believed so.

Still the Soviet response shed some hopes into the matter. The messages from Moscow were not wholly negative, and certainly not insulting as before. On the contrary, the Soviets showed a certain degree of sympathy with the Swedes and in this way signalled a will to continue the dialogue. Quite obviously the tone of the 1979 answer was influenced by the Carter administration's engagement in the matter. The Wallenberg case was no longer a Swedish-Soviet matter, it was becoming truly international. Witnesses stood forward in the US congress' hearings and even Wiesenthal interrogations brought forth numerous references to foreign matters. The Swedes themselves helped promote international interest by making public all dossiers from the handling of the case, by huge publications in 1980 and 1982 respectively.

The Need of Honours

But now a new problem emerged to the Swedes: how to pay homage to a person whom might be alive under such circumstances as Wallenberg's? The need to honour him clearly was an aspect of the international engagement, as

one scarcely could be less generous than foreign powers who planned make him honorary citizen. An international prize carrying his name was suggested, or a monument in Stockholm or perhaps a postal stamp. When such things were discussed in the Swedish parliament, the government often was criticised for being too passive, which could lead to the following answer from the minister in charge:

In our country we adhere to the principle of not honouring persons with monuments or postal stamps as long as they are alive. This means that it would be contrary to our interests in relation to the Soviet Union in the matter to engage in such projects. To do so would indicate that we regard Raoul Wallenberg as dead. Do the Honorary Member who rises this question really want the government to close down the case and thus indicate that he is no longer alive.²

International solutions were however a different matter, and the Swedish government tried several such channels apart from continuing the direct bilateral one with the Soviets. The issue was taken to the European Security and Cooperation Conference in Madrid 1980, besides being pivotal at the international hearing in Stockholm 1981, where the government said it would “welcome any effort” of an international character which could help solving the matter. In parliament several more steps were suggested – an international research commission among them, or rising the issue at the big Stockholm conference January 1984, or asking President Reagan to bring the issue to the summit meeting in Geneva in December 1985.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall and dissolution of Soviet communism the conditions for pushing the case altered completely. The change was twofold. First, there was no longer a Cold War to underpin the assumption that he might be alive and the Soviets thus lied. The media lost interest in the case and questions were no longer posed in parliament. Secondly, time had come to realise the idea of a joint history commission and Arbetsgruppen was established in 1991. The commission found no decisive proofs of Wallenberg’s fate but found it overwhelmingly probable that he was killed by the KGB in 1947, followed by a series of disturbing disinformation from Moscow to cover the matter.

On 17th of January 1995, on the day 50 years since he disappeared, the suggestion to honour him by some artistic venture came to a happy conclusion, and “The Raoul Wallenberg Plaza” was planned and built in the centre of Stockholm. A visible sign of honour, certainly, but also a proof that he was dead and perhaps had been so during most of the time that the question of his fate had been a painful reminder of the Cold War relationship between a great power and its much smaller neighbour.

A Name from the Cold War

Today, more than 100 years after his birth, one may ask what is left of legacy from those years when Wallenberg figured so prominently of media and in politics. The main answer is that he is remembered above all for his heroism during those fateful times of Jewish history. He truly stands out as a voice of conscience and is rightly honoured internationally for his efforts in this respect.

But his is also a name and a person from the Cold War era, roughly from 1947 to 1991. In this history as well his international stature was clearly on the move upwards. Just as he became more and more well known for his heroism, his role in the Cold War escalated as his position in international diplomacy intensified, from the typical Swedish do-gooder causing anxiety and some embarrassment in this country's neutral course in security and foreign policy, to a top priority case in foreign relations and international politics. This of course is a theme in the development of the Second World War, a lead through the complicated history of the way from war to peace and to a new (cold) war and finally to agreement and mutual understanding – and the grand history of 20th century Europe. In dealing with the young architect *cum* diplomat in the maelstrom of international superpowers we are focussing a Swede just like Folke Bernadotte or Dag Hammarsköld, who explored the possibilities coming from a neutral country and tested its limits as to the possibility of moral achievement in a dangerous word. The reasons why their missions failed – or rather, were interrupted by their sudden deaths – may be quite different. The effects on international relations however may be of some general interest.

Altogether three explications – three theories, that is – of why and how he ended up, have been forwarded. They are quite different, although the conclusion – that he was murdered – has been obvious in all of them.

Originally, in the years after the Second World War, the Swedish authorities inclined to think that he was taken in custody to act as a hostage to some demand or other, and that his value for the Soviets laid in him being alive and possibly be staged as a pawn at any time when one of the intricate questions of post-war exchange came up. This understanding seemed reasonable enough as long as Soviet-Swedish relations were clad with exchange issues, first and foremost the question of the numerous Baltic citizens who had fled to Sweden during the war. Soviet Russia demanded the Baltic citizens handed back, for years a most sensitive issue in the relationship between the neighbours. Other issues of the same direction stood out, in which cases the exchange of a diplomat would strike a sensible deal. Cynic of course, but perfect rational as seen by Soviet eyes.

That the Swedes really thought so, is obvious from the behaviour of Foreign Secretary Östen Undén. In all his sayings and action he stuck to the principle of the less said, the better for the case. The Wallenberg case should be lowered

as much as possible so as to keep down the exchange value of Mr Wallenberg. The more the case was exposed in the media, the higher the value and the less chance for a reasonable exchange. Consequently, both the foreign office and Mr. Unden plaid down the matter as much as possible, thus rising a wall vis-à-vis the media, which demanded full attention and as much noise as possible.

If they held him in custody to be used in a possible exchange bargain, it was also perfectly rational of the Soviets to state he was “unknown”, as they did in 1947. In case they had admitted he was their prisoner, the exchange value had sunk compared to the situation when he suddenly and remarkably could be exposed in a bargaining situation. This was made all the more possible when the Swedish ambassador himself had so to say offered the argument for them. In short, when Moscow stated officially that he was unknown to them, this could most probably mean that he was alive. Public opinion had to be let down however; if the media or the Wallenberg committee made too much of a noise of his return to Sweden, the Soviets could quietly and on their own make the words come true by simply killing him.

Then ten years later, in 1957, the message came that he was dead all the same. All through the efforts both officially and privately to show that he was alive had been in vain, the Soviets now said: he had been dead all the time. Why hadn't they told? Or how should this message of 1957 be interpreted?

One possibility was that Mr. Unden had been right after all. *Because* of the untameable surge in public opinion and media alike, the case was locked down by the Soviets by executing him, as he had lost so greatly in bargaining value. This fitted well with the chronology of events. In July 1947 the public address arranged by the Swedish women's organizations and demanding the return of Mr Wallenberg (worded as support of his mother, in fact) was delivered to the Soviet ambassador to Sweden. In August came the first answer; he was not in the Soviet Union and thus “unknown to us”. The first proposition in that answer was right, the second wrong. He was liquidated and thus “not known by us”; his fate however known at least to the KGB. In infamous ways the message contained some truth. As long as Stalin lived, this was the explanation. With his death in 1953 and the revelations of the XX party congress, the whole truth could be revealed, as was then admitted in 1957. The 1957 version in fact was the one and only given, and ever since to the valid explanation. He was murdered in 1947 so as to make the main content of that statement true.

The second theory is that Soviet leadership misunderstood the situation and believed – falsely – that Mr. Wallenberg had some role in the conclusion of the Second World War, and that they handed him accordingly. The expert historian of a TV series – one of the four produced in Sweden over the years – ass.prof. Bernt Schiller, advocated this theory in 1974 to explain what happened. The Russians, he stated, might have believed Mr. Wallenberg's role in Budapest was to negotiate with the Germans about the ending of the war and even perhaps

about a German-Allied separate peace treaty, contrary to the interests of the Soviet Union. Hence they arrested him and kept him in the utmost secrecy: they simply regarded him as very dangerous, an agent well worth detaining and eventually destroying by liquidation. In the media this caused a certain bewilderment, in as much as Mr Wallenberg up to now was regarded as a totally innocent and even heroic figure, and the Soviets as particularly cynical. The view that he might be suspected, rightly or wrongly, for having a role in the war, disturbed in a way the reasons for indignation toward the Soviets. The expert historian simply complicated the issue instead of clarifying it. On the other hand he was welcomed when criticising the Foreign Office for not paying sufficient attention to what the Soviets might think; "one should from the beginning have realized that the Russians regarded Wallenberg as a pawn in the great power strategy of the war". Criticism of the government in this matter was always popular with the media.³

By the middle 1990s however another theory, the third so far, emerged as an explanation of the Russian handling of the case. This theory was launched in the memoirs of general Pavel Sudoplatov, leader of the Special Forces of the State Security Ministry KGB, that appeared in 1994. General Sudoplatov had been the protégé of Lavrenti Beria and went down with him in 1953; till then he had been instrumental in Soviet espionage and security operations e.g. the liquidation of Trotsky and the extensive atomic espionage against US, and in other rather spectacular operations. His book caused a sensation when it was published and the chapter on the Wallenberg case is highly interesting although not based on personal experiences, but rather on general insight in the modus operandi of the MVD/KGB. His version seems all the more reliable as no sinister motive of its explanations can be traced.⁴ His explanation of Russian behaviour goes thus:

Soviet security forces had no interest in Raoul Wallenberg neither as saviour of Jews nor as possible agent for the Germans or even as a potential exchange person after 1945; they took him in custody for one reason only – he was a member of the Wallenberg family. As the nephew of Jacob Wallenberg he was in fact directly related to the most powerful financier in Europe who had been decisive in securing the Soviet Union valuable credits and who undoubtedly would play a decisive role in the post-war world and in Soviet finances at that. Having taken him as prisoner, the KGB initially tried at utmost to recruit him as their agent; in this way to have a member of the family as inside agent and co-player would be of utmost importance, just as Sudoplatov and his department had managed to persuade people like Robert Oppenheimer, Enrico Fermi and Klaus Fuchs to supply atomic secrets to the Soviet Union. Wallenberg however refused to cooperate. Neither promises nor threats, money nor torture helped turning him round and becoming an agent. He denied to assist MGB. Only one thing could be the outcome of this painful process, which he must have

understood – to be liquidated, as the option of freedom to tell what he then knew was impossible. Sudoplatov provides astonishing details of how and when this must have happened, ending in a lethal injection in the upper store of the Ljubljana K-bloc, where upon all traces would be destroyed.

The Swedish-Russian historic commission, the *Arbetsgruppen*, could not verify the details of the explanation given by Sudoplatov, even if he must be regarded as a most well-informed person. His is a most trustworthy version, after all, and one which explains nearly everything that happened: The secret killing and then the message of 1947 that he was (no longer) in the Soviet Union and unknown to us; the message of 1957 attested by a false doctor's letter of death by heart attack ten years before; the stubborn explanation ever since, that this was all that was known but which was delivered with an implicit regret ...

The Witnesses

But what about all the witnesses? People that had seen him in prisons and camps all around in the Soviet Union, years in and years out? Right up to 1957, even as long as 1975? Roughly one hundred persons, most of them with names and IDs, some even high-ranking officials with quite trustworthy credentials?

Quite a few were fortune hunters, as Mr Wiesenthal said, reaching out for the family's money. Some were serious, and investigated thoroughly by Swedish officials sent out to collect evidence. All cases were scrutinised, and quite a number presented to the Soviets as reliable evidence worth further investigations.

This is perhaps the most bizarre side of this case: Quite a few of the witnesses were planted by the KGB (or the follower KGB) as disinformers instructed to spread confusing evidences of Mr. Wallenberg and his circulation in the camp system. In this way Soviet security authorities themselves upheld the myth of him being alive. The rational reason was apparently to disseminate confusing evidence as to his whereabouts so as to avoid one version, one single explanation fastening its grip on people's imagination and furnishing the hungry Swedes and their insatiable media with constantly new hopes, new news. In this way the Soviets made the fog thicker and the case more impenetrable

Here the Swedish media functioned quite different from Foreign Office authorities. To the press most witnesses provided a sensation well worth covering, allowing the title "Wallenberg is alive!" a new meaning each time. To the Foreign Office any new witness meant a novel, thorough and critical examination ending in most cases with a quiet rejection if not by silence all through. Hostility was the outcome from this difference, a steady flow of criticism against the slow-working bureaucracy of the Foreign Office and above all a demand of full openness in the Wallenberg files, "the colossal secret archives" (as was said) which the Foreign Office for some reason was slow to open. "You easily

get the impression that the foreign authorities have a hidden agenda”, one of Raoul’s relatives said. The press demanded full openness into all aspects of the matter, including the treatment of witnesses, a line of argument that also penetrated parliamentary questions.

The Wallenberg case, then, may be said to reveal a number of issues relevant to the study of the media and the Cold War. The overall frame of the case is that of the smaller, neutral country opposing a dominant superpower, with all contradictions implied, not least those related to the need for information. Then there is the tensions between the media and the responsible authorities of the smaller country, and then the relationship between the media and the public, in a sensitive question which rises questions of national priorities and self-esteem. Sweden and the Soviet Union were almost neighbours. Still one single, missing diplomat could rise a delicate relationship which lasted for years.

Notes

1. All data and quotations not otherwise referred to are taken from the official Swedish commissions in which the author participated, SOU 2003:18 *Ett diplomatisk misslyckande. Fallet Raoul Wallenberg och den svenska utrikesledningen* (A Diplomatic Failure: The Wallenberg Case and the Swedish Foreign Policy), Stockholm 2003.
2. *Riksdagen*, The official record of the proceedings in the Swedish parliament. RD 1983/84 Nr. 149 s. 115
3. Schiller continued his investigations and later on published his findings in *Varför ryssarna tog Raoul Wallenberg* (Why the Russians took Wallenberg), Stockholm 1991.
4. Sudoplatov and Anatoli Sudoplatov with Jerold L. and Leonora P. Schecter 1994.

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Chapter 6

East-West Conflict, West-West Divide?

Western Self-Awareness in a Cold War Dissenter Newspaper

Birgitte Kjos Fonn

Abstract

The oppositional media should not be neglected in studies of the relationship between the media and the Cold War. In Norway, opposition forces that can be associated with what later became known as the New Left found expression in a newspaper, *Orientering*, already in the early 1950s. The existence of such newspapers makes it possible to trace the origins of the later popular rebellions back to the first years after the Second World War. Post-war neutralism, a ‘third position’, and the belief in ‘real’ democracy, individual freedom and faith in a better world, fused with a rebellion against authority and the Establishment that created both an East-West and a North-South divide. By the 1960s this had become a widespread, albeit diverse, international movement. Sources like *Orientering* indicate that already at an early stage of the Cold War, New Left dissent could be seen far more as an expression of dissatisfaction with the West’s own elites, than as an expression of pro-communist attitudes.

Keywords: Cold War, the East-West conflict, the New Left, mass media in the Cold War, Norwegian media history, the third position in the Cold War

It is essential to study the relationship between the media and the Cold War (Bastiansen 2014) and the oppositional media should not be neglected. In Norway, opposition forces that can be associated with the New Left found expression in one, fairly influential newspaper at an early stage. This makes it possible both to trace Norwegian New Left origins back to the early years after WWII and to study the significance of the fact that the opposition took the form of a newspaper.

Studies of the British and Danish New Left identify 1956, with Khrushchev’s “Secret Speech”, the Suez Crisis and the quelling of the Hungarian uprising, as the starting-point for the New Left (Nehring 2011; Ekman Jørgensen 2011, 2008), but the seeds had been sown long before. That said, the New Left is a political field which has excelled in shifting alliances, with *samizdat*-style publications and short-lived parties, often difficult to pin down. In Norway,

however, a newspaper that sought to encompass all “New Left” forces long before the concept was launched was established in the early 1950s.

The existence of an influential and rather unifying newspaper at such an early stage makes it easier to trace the origins of the popular rebellions of the 1960s back to the early phase of the Cold War. Already then, New Left dissent could be seen far more as an expression of dissatisfaction with the West’s own elites, than as an expression of pro-communist attitudes. The fact that this early expression found its voice in a newspaper also had implications for how the East-West conflict was interpreted.

A Turn to the West

Several countries emerged from the war with a plethora of political initiatives in the form of groups, associations and publications, often variously connected to the neutralist or peace movement. In both Norway and Denmark, the New Left was translated into new political parties around 1960; in Sweden, this came later. In Norway, attempts to gather these oppositional voices had been underway ever since 1948 (Fonn 2011).

With the Cold War, almost all mainstream and pro-government media in Norway took a clear stance in the struggle between the two superpowers and their corresponding ideologies. After NATO was launched, most major newspapers, regardless of political colour, became pro-Atlantic – some even overnight. Editorials, news reports and commentaries, and letters to the editor that expressed alternative views were regularly rejected (Eriksen 1972; Skre 2010; Fonn 2011). In the course of a few years, it seemed that McCarthyism – albeit in a modern form – had reached Norway, with repression of dissent in political life and in the press. With this general media “turn to the West”¹ came a feeling that the 1950s were set to become an “ice age” for public debate (Dahl and Bastiansen 2000).

This turn to the West in the Norwegian media was the result of a foreign policy choice, but also of cultural influence and practical choices in the press. The pre-war tendency to rely on Western sources (US and British ones in particular) accelerated after the war. Western press agencies like Associated Press, United Press or Reuters consolidated their positions as suppliers of news, and Norway’s major national and regional newspapers based themselves primarily on Western sources (Skre 2010). When Norwegian media slowly began to build up a correspondent network in the post-war years, the major newspapers, the national news agency NTB and the national broadcasting corporation NRK all concentrated on the Western capitals. Not until 1961 was there a (post-war) Moscow correspondent from the Norwegian press (*Aftenposten*) (Werenskjold 2011:242). Werenskjold also mentions the British-Dutch *Keesing’s* weekly diaries

of contemporary archives as important sources of information for Norway's major press institutions (ibid:50).

When the newspaper *Orientering* was established in 1952, this was a direct response to the East-West divide in the media. It was a reaction both to the fact that alternative opinions were more rarely printed, and to the constant publication of what *Orientering*'s editor later dismissed as the "subjective truths from the Associated and United Press, from L'Agence France, Reuters etc." (Fonn 2011:63). The founding fathers of this oppositional newspaper felt that the turn to the West, politically and in the media, would destroy Norwegian public debate – and that it contributed to creating dangerous enemy-images in a world on the brink of a new and even "total" war.

A Third Position

After the war, a "third position" emerged in several Western countries. Many of the post-WWII groups, organisations and publications had a strong focus on peace issues and non-alignment, and on seeking to bridge the East-West conflict. Opposition to the establishment of the Cold War power blocs was an important unifying issue (Rasmussen 1997; Fonn 2011).

This was a key point for the new Norwegian newspaper as well. The founding fathers of *Orientering* rejected the claim that Norway was forced to join the Western defence bloc, an argument frequently put forward by Norwegian Atlanticists of all political hues.

But the third position was more than that. It was also part of an emerging international effort to find a political space between communism and Western capitalism which was still based on democracy and human rights. Social democracy had originally been an attempt to find such a balance, but several social democratic states, like Norway, had become increasingly dependent on the post-war Western hegemon, the USA. Oppositionals saw this as highly problematic. US foreign policy was becoming very controversial, with the Truman Doctrine and the Korean involvement. With the emergence of McCarthyism from 1950, also domestic US politics became exceedingly controversial – even the principle of free speech was threatened.

As for the Soviet Union, it had emerged from a devastating war as an ally to the Western powers against fascism. However, relations between the West and Moscow proved increasingly difficult, and with the Korean War the antagonism between the two superpowers went global.

In Norway, this was also reflected on the domestic level. The Communist Party found itself politically isolated after the Soviet-Finnish deal and the coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948, and the Norwegian Prime Minister Einar Gerhardsen gave a famous speech ("Kråkerøytalen") where he warned against domestic

communist influence.² Many political leftists felt the need to stress that their socialism was based on democratic ideals, not coercion of any kind. This can also be seen as the litmus test of the New Left – these democratic but still distinctly socialist ideals were what distinguished the New Left from the Old Left.

Loyalty to Democracy

Orientering was established three years after Norway had joined the NATO. Unlike many other publications on the Left, *Orientering* aimed to be a “proper” newspaper with high journalistic ambitions. This was, of course, long before the two parallel development features known as the professionalisation of the press and the dissolution of the Norwegian party press had emerged. *Orientering* was an early attempt to challenge the established party press, but it was still a very political publication, for many years with opinion journalism presented against the backdrop of news about current affairs.

The bloc formation and the fears triggered by the Korean War brought the third position directly into the prevailing Cold War context. But basically the third position was also about much more than international politics. It was also about what kind of society one wanted, nationally and locally, and in peacetime. The newly established Institute of Social Research (ISF) became an important actor in formulating the third position in Norway. This is shown clearly in the contribution from a young law scholar at ISF, Christian Bay, to the ISF debate book *Think again* (Aubert (ed.) 1952). Bay’s text is particularly important because it was to serve as the basis for the guidelines for *Orientering* (Fonn 2011; Arnesen 1968).³ Both Bay and his ISF colleague and book editor, Vilhelm Aubert, later became editors of the newspaper.

Bay’s text was titled “Loyalty to democracy’s ideas”.⁴ He began by describing how the two superpowers were about to gain a dominant position in what he called “our anguished world” (Bay 1952:142). But, he continued, closer scrutiny of how power was distributed between the two revealed that it was necessary to distinguish between different forms of power.

According to Bay, the relative strength in the economic and military sphere lay in the favour of the non-communist world. He nevertheless noted that the communist world was on the offensive in several countries, particularly in Asia. The reason for this could not be found without closer examination at the clout of these different ideas and ideologies, he wrote.

Bay made an interesting point: The communists themselves had a straightforward explanation of why they had the upper hand ideologically in several countries: they had discovered the *Truth*, with a capital T. Communist leaders regarded their own ideology with a “fanatical religious certainty” and defended it with what Bay described as a “solidarity of affection” (1952:144). A further

advantage for the communists was that they promised a revolution, a social revolution, a better life for ordinary people – not just more of the *status quo*. It was hardly surprising, Bay said, that this appealed to many colonial peoples, at a time when much of the world population was poor or suppressed. That could make a good case for preferring Soviet-oriented communism to capitalism, he wrote.

However, Bay did *not* regard this as a good choice, and he saw it as a tragedy that the underdeveloped countries (as they were then called) made this choice. This was also the crux of the matter: In Bay's opinion, the Western world was in reality the best system – but it simply had not enough to offer. Few politicians or state leaders in the West had an equally fervent faith in democracy as the faith the communists had in *their* ideology. Quite the contrary: advocates of Western values had been doing their best to compromise democracy, ignoring the rules of the democratic game, making alliances with dictators – persistently behaved in a way set to destroy any confidence in Western democracies. As a result, communism was carried forward on a wave of stupidity from the West – in colonial countries as well as within Eastern Europe, Bay concluded.

Christian Bay himself had such a deep faith in democracy, provided it was used to serve the people. His text was even more a tribute to the free society than it was a criticism of the parties in the Cold War. "Everywhere in the 'free world', I think [...] we could trust democratic ideas to oust communism, if only the leaders of the democracies were in the habit of practising the democracy they preached," he wrote – if only the West's superior material resources were used to increase people's standards of living instead of financing armies all over the world (1952:155).

There were two aspects of democracy that Bay regarded as worthy of defending. One was democracy as it existed already: free elections, a real right to vote, legal security and the right to speak freely and listen freely. Of all the freedoms in a democracy, free speech was the most important: without free speech, there could be no free elections (ibid:153). This point included a strong criticism of the current situation in the USA, and probably also in Norway: "[O]ne cannot create affection for this system by restricting freedom of speech and other political freedoms in the hope of securing obedience to government policy", he wrote (ibid:155).

The second aspect was democracy as an ideal future form of society. In this future democracy, the prevailing competition and consumer society would be replaced by a community of peers, with peace, solidarity and human and cultural growth. Here we should note that the intellectual environment within which Bay was working and writing was inspired by recent (US) social psychological thought, with its emphasis on the interaction between the individual and society – including a strong sense of the importance of political and cultural freedom (Thue 2005). This inspiration can probably be heard in

phrases like this: “[d]emocratic society as an ideal form is a society that to the greatest extent possible will realise all individuals’ autonomy in the widest sense” (Bay 1952:147). Bay envisioned a society that “completely” consisted of people who were “old enough, intelligent enough, considerate enough of others, that everyone could live according to his own mind” (ibid:147-148). In other words – a society based on individual freedom.

This ideal was, perhaps, both utopian and unattainable – and it was controversial. Bay realised that his ideal society bore similarities to communist society after the phase of proletarian dictatorship, but he was uncompromising with regard to how to get there – the road to such a society should not include any kind of coercion. Bay expressed an unswerving belief that supporters of democracy had “something to fight for, a society that [would be] significantly better than the one we have today [...]. That is why loyalty to the ideals of democracy is so important – also, in the long run, for the resistance against communism,” he concluded (Bay 1952:159).

Guidelines for the Third Position

With a few months, this chapter had been transformed into guidelines for *Orientering*, and thus the first set of Norwegian guidelines for the third position.

The tension between the power blocs, the threat of war, dictatorship in the East and political uniformity in the West were dominant topics in the guidelines of the new newspaper. Its approach to interpreting the third position was to promise to criticise negative trends in both the East and West, and highlight positive developments in both blocs.

In the guidelines the notion of an ideal society was toned down, but the responsibility to work for a better society with improved living conditions for the whole population was an important theme. Freedom of speech was the overarching topic (see Fonn 2011). So strong was the non-communist commitment of *Orientering* that the editor of a first trial issue lost the job for being to “soft” on Moscow (Arnesen 1968).

In its first and formative years *Orientering* focused almost exclusively on foreign news. Later the paper increased its reporting on domestic affairs and the North-South divide, but East-West issues were naturally dominant during the first phase of the Cold War. The international relations component of the third position was further reinforced when the position was translated into an attempt to do journalism.

As the Cold War unfolded, however, it became apparent that there was both an opportunity and a danger in defining the third position so strongly as a foreign policy project, and so heavily based on foreign news. The opportunity lay in an entirely new way of mobilising public opinion, nationally and even

abroad, against militarisation, power abuse and oppression, and for the cause of peace and humanity. The danger lay in a potential bias, as the third position demanded a careful balance between the antagonists of the Cold War.

This balance proved difficult to achieve in practice. *Orientering* was soon seen as a Communist-leaning organ by opponents on both sides of the political demarcation lines, including powerful figures in the ruling Labour Party. In the age of McCarthyism, Communist accusations were easy to attract and hard to get rid of – also in a small state on the fringes of Europe like Norway. On the other hand, later studies have confirmed that there was actually a relatively strong bias in *Orientering* in the first phase of the Cold War in the 1950s and into the early 1960s. For instance, violations of human rights in the Soviet Union were treated far more leniently than violations of human rights in the USA (Fonn 2011; Knarlag 1999).

At the time there was an important difference in threat perceptions among the main groups in Norwegian political life. While NATO supporters tended to perceive the Soviet Union as the aggressive part, NATO opponents generally claimed that the Soviet Union was only trying to defend itself (Meyer 1989). Given that difference, defending the Soviet Union's foreign policy definitely makes more sense. But *Orientering* not only defended Soviet foreign policy, it also seemed to play down violations of human rights within the USSR and elsewhere in the Eastern Bloc. Violations of human rights in the USA and Western Europe were seized on with much more interest and eagerness, sometimes with bizarre results – as on one occasion in 1953 when the newspaper downplayed the importance of the lack of freedom of expression in the Soviet Union, and simultaneously ridiculed the fact that an American cartoon had been censored – on one and the same page. The headline of the cartoon story implied that the people of the USA were about to “lose the freedom of laughing at each other”, and the reporter stated that once this freedom was gone, then the other freedoms would lose their worth (Fonn 2011:62).

How could a democratic, humane socialism like the one that Bay had described translate into a newspaper that seemed to be apologetic toward the Soviet Union in the coldest phase of the Cold War? One reason was, of course, that the precursor of the New Left attracted people with very differing political views. In Norway, most of the *Orientering* inner circle belonged to the left wing of the Labour Party and were staunch democrats – like the first editor-in-chief after the paper began regular publication, Sigurd Evensmo (see also Evensmo 1978). Some even had a social liberal inclination, like Bay. But the *Orientering* circle also attracted people who had returned to the Labour Party after having been members of the breakaway Norwegian Communist Party (NKP) in the 1920s and '30s, and who had never given up their more or less secret love affair with Moscow. Others had become politically homeless after having been expelled from the NKP during a major conflict in the

late 1940s. Old Soviet-leaning communists, Labour Party dissenters, resistance people from WWII and social liberals tried to find common ground. But they were indeed *strange alliances*, as echoed in the title of Rasmussen's study of the same phenomenon in Denmark (Rasmussen 1997).

Secondly, the basically liberal attitude of the guidelines as such made the newspaper attractive to writers who still had a soft spot for Moscow and an unclear relationship to democratic ideals. Except for the openly Communist Party – and exceedingly marginal – newspaper *Friheten*, *Orientering* was the only paper where people with opinions that deviated from the mainstream pro-NATO camp could be certain of being published. The editors were aware that their attempt to challenge the lack of openness of the current party press also was its problem. But censoring certain opinions would be unthinkable in this new “rebel newspaper”, as editor-in-chief Evensmo expressed it (Fonn 2011:71).

Part of the Import

Another major reason for this bias must, paradoxically, have been that those in the newspaper's inner circle believed firmly in democracy. This spurred “third way” defenders to react strongly against human rights violations in both the United States and other Western democracies. When the editors from time to time were asked why they put so much emphasis on human rights violations in the West compared to the East, the answer was generally that, as Westerners, they had to pay particular attention to possible cracks in Western democracies. In fact, closer study of the perceived bias of *Orientering* revealed that the bias was not first and foremost an expression of pro-Soviet attitudes. What really characterised its formative years was both a specific focus *and* a critical focus on the USA (Fonn 2011). *Orientering* had been an attempt to create an alternative to the enemy imagery of the East that characterised the mainstream Cold War media, but very soon risked becoming a hotbed for similar enemy images of the West. Given its bridge-building ambitions, this was a paradox.

Even before World War II, generalised anti-Americanism could be found among intellectuals on *both* the Left and the Right in Norway as well as Denmark (Bromark and Herbjørnsrud 2005; Sørensen and Petersen 2006). After the war, however, rightist criticism of the USA seems to have fallen silent – hardly surprising, in a political climate where loyalty to the “free” world had become necessary on the political Right. As divisions between the superpowers deepened, so did the divisions between the domestic camps. How one regarded the USA became an important marker of political affiliation.

But post-war anti-Americanism also had other roots than the international deadlock. In the years after the war American products flowed into the two Scandinavian Marshall Help recipient countries. Consumer goods like vacuum

cleaners and refrigerators, but also culture and life-style products like movies, novels, popular music and slang crossed the Atlantic in an increasing pace. Sørensen and Petersen 2006 give a broad account of this influx into Denmark, an account that is also recognisable in Norway. In both countries historians have also documented that the USA regarded its “public diplomacy” as quite successful. In Norway, the media seem to have been grateful recipients of American information activities – also in the form of background articles and news stories (Skre 2010). Thue (2005) provides a broad documentation of the Americanisation of the Norwegian social sciences after the war. All in all, important sectors of society in Norway and Denmark became “Americanised” during the post-war years.

However, we should bear in mind that the influx of American culture did not consist solely of things that helped build a favourable image of the USA among the Scandinavian public. The music, movies and household appliances were accompanied by another kind of import – radical American self-criticism (Sørensen and Petersen 2006).

Some of the strongest Danish criticism of US culture and politics was rooted in American culture (Sørensen and Petersen 2006). In Norway, for instance, Jens Bjørneboe’s widely read critical essay, *Vi som elsket Amerika* (*We who loved America*), was based on the writings of the US oppositional figure David Horowitz (Bromark and Herbjørnsrud 2006). And in *Orientering*, much of the criticism of the USA seems to have originated not in Norway, but on the other side of the Atlantic.

In examining the Cold War from a press history angle, we must recall that a newspaper cannot be edited without sources. As lucidly explained by Werenkskjold (2011), by the late 1960s, the organisation of a correspondent network in the Norwegian media had come to play a major role – for instance, media accounts of the protests of 1968 generally came from where Norwegian journalists were posted. By contrast, an oppositional newspaper a decade or two earlier had no such means as correspondents, let alone access to a well-established foreign news system. *Orientering* was a small, low-budget paper, run by a handful of idealists with almost no travel budget and only a few and sporadic travelling or foreign-based contributors – among them Norway’s first female war correspondent, Lise Lindbæk.

For the most part, the paper had to depend on input from international newspapers at a time when distribution channels were fewer and less easily accessible. Erik Nord, originally a diplomat, later secretary of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Norwegian Parliament, contributed to *Orientering* under a pseudonym: he has been called the paper’s most valuable foreign affairs commentator through many years (Evensmo 1978). One reason was quite simply that Nord had unique access to international newspapers and journals at his various workplaces.

Where sources have been possible to detect, most of the accounts published in *Orientering* were second-hand or based on second-hand sources. In addition to this, Erik Nord later gave an overview of which these sources were: the sources of information were primarily Western *and* at the same time often critical to the West. For instance, the paper typically quoted American sources like *New Republic*, *New Yorker*, *Nation*, *Daily Compass*, *New York Star*,⁵ *New York Post*, *U.S. and World Report*, *I.F. Stone's Weekly*, *New York Times*, *International Herald Tribune* and *Reynolds News*,⁶ or European English-language newspapers like *New Statesman and Nation*, *Political Quarterly*, *Manchester Guardian and Tribune*. French newspapers like *L'Observateur*, *Le Monde* and *Mondes d'Orient* were also used, as was the German *Der Spiegel*. There was an overweight of Western European sources, especially British and US ones; further, many of these were leftist-leaning and critical to their own societies. For example, *I.F. Stone's Weekly*, established the same year as *Orientering*, was frequently used. This paper specialised in American muckraking and had its absolute heyday during the Vietnam War. *The Tribune* and *L'Observateur* were the main organs of the British and French neutralists; and the former was even the mouthpiece of the leftist, NATO-critical opposition in the British Labour Party. In other words, it is quite possible that *Orientering*, the organ of Norwegian neutralists, to an extent became part of a recycling of Western self-consciousness and self-criticism – where a strong focus on the Western hegemon was an important element (Fonn 2011).

However, some of the sources were non-Western, like the East German *Neues Deutschland* – and some central contributors to *Orientering* – most notably Nord – could read Russian and make use of sources like *Pravda*, *Izvestiya* and *Kommunist*. But, as is well-known, it was hard to find a corresponding self-criticism in East Bloc papers and journals, since the communist world quite simply lacked a free press (Fonn 2011).

Many of those involved in *Orientering* were in fact not journalists by profession at all, but MPs, lawyers or civil servants. Such movement of elite figures between the press and other social institutions was a well-known feature of the party press, but the occasional resultant lack of professional familiarity with journalism did not contribute to a more nuanced view of the Cold War. When *Orientering* writers had the opportunity to visit the East Bloc in the 1950s, they apparently stuck to sources inside the “apparatus”. However, there was also Finn Gustavsen. Later both editor *and* MP for the New Left Party (SF) built on the site of *Orientering* from 1961, the young Gustavsen served as the paper's co-editor until 1959 – and he was a journalist by profession, eager to “report, not repeat”. What this difference meant became e.g. apparent when, in 1953, Gustavsen had the chance to travel to Romania to cover a political conference. He returned back with some rather revealing stories showing how “ordinary” people were repressed by the communist regime. That said, on the whole,

the major part of critical articles published in *Orientering* focused on Western issues (Fonn 2011).

We do not know much about the inner circle's contact with other Western oppositionals, but there are traces of correspondence with both Danish, British and West German newspapers and/or groups in the *Orientering* archives. Some *Orientering* contributors also spent lengthy periods in countries like USA and France, and sent reports home. As a later SF MP and member of *Orientering*'s board of directors, Theo Koritzinsky, has pointed out, with detente and the opening up of more East Bloc countries, communication with East Bloc dissidents became easier, and it was no longer necessary to rely on official reports. Back in the 1950s, however, any oppositional views from the East that reached the West were still few and far between. In the West, the situation was after all different. Despite the restrictions on free speech, counter-cultures in the form of groups, parties and publications thrived. I.F. Stone is an illustrative example: Blacklisted, he could not get another reporter job in America in the McCarthyist age – but that led to the founding of what was to become a well-recognised oppositional newspaper. In case of Norway, the *Orientering* circle certainly expressed views that were unpopular among the political establishment. But the mere fact that the paper survived throughout the hard 1950s should serve to refute any claims that free speech as such was really threatened in Norway (Fonn 2011).

The United States was not the only Western country subject to criticism. Most of the European allies of the USA had their turn, both regarding their treatment of their own citizens and various aspects of colonialism, with their choice of military alliance always lurking in the background. In many respects *Orientering* voiced opinions that were unheard of at the time, but which later became fairly common. Among other things, *Orientering* was critical to France's war in Algeria at a time when the rest of the Norwegian press still saw it as a war against terrorism. This was probably due to the better awareness and knowledge of alternative sources and views among contributors to *Orientering* (Fonn 2011).

Admittedly, it is often difficult to distinguish and separate the origins of the paper's enemy imagery of Western governments. West Germany (BRD), a close ally of the USA, was another *Prügelknabe*, and one might get the impression that *Orientering* supported the rather brutal regime in East Germany (DDR). Several "apologetic" DDR stories were printed, and many of the arguments put forward bear a striking similarity to the Soviet or DDR propaganda of the time (Holtmark 1999). It could well be that the desire to present alternative news sometimes led the paper into the Eastern propaganda trap. But in the long run, the newspaper seems to have been far more anti-BRD than pro-DDR. As with the US-Soviet question, the main interest did not seem to be the East, but the West and not least its shortcomings (Fonn 2011).

An Ambivalent Criticism

Orientering's criticism of the USA was ambivalent. Articles could also express profound regret that the Roosevelt era was over: such respect for the Roosevelt legacy in itself showed the newspaper's democratic and liberal undertones. Some accounts revealed an unhappy love affair with the United States, characterised by both nostalgia and disappointment, but occasionally also by hope for the future of America's opposition. An underlying current in the criticism of human rights violations in the USA was the awareness that there were at least "two" Americas (Fonn 2011).

Most of the central figures in the first phase of *Orientering* had some kind of relationship with the United States. Christian Bay is again important, as is his colleague in *Orientering* and at the ISF, Vilhelm Aubert – they had both spent years in the USA as visiting scholars in the late 1940s. There they became acquainted with a set of scholars from the critical sciences – most notably sociology and social psychology – who had supported Roosevelt keenly during the war, and had come to miss the progressive Roosevelt era deeply (Thue 2005). *Orientering's* most important unifying figure, Health Director Karl Evang, had even spent two years in the USA during the war (Nordby 1989). Sigurd Evensmo visited the USA on a four-month State Department scholarship in 1951, and reported back that this was above all a diverse country, where one could find politically like-minded people as well as adversaries (Evensmo 1978). In other words, there was every reason for these people to be critical of post-war developments in the USA, but they were by no means enemies of the USA per se. Drawing on political scientists Peter J. Katzenstein and Robert O. Keohane's recent typology of anti-Americanism (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007), we can see that the dominant criticism of the USA in *Orientering* focused on advocating peaceful and democratic change. Suggestions that the American form of society should be brought down by the use of force never seem to have been aired (Fonn 2011).

In their work on the post-war Americanisation of Denmark, Sørensen and Petersen (2006) quote some of the fiercest criticism of McCarthyist America found in the Danish public space. "[W]e encounter an explicit rejection of the methods of McCarthy but normally set within a strongly Anti-Communist discourse," they write. Among the Danish liberal left and in a newspaper like *Information* McCarthyism was both called "neo-fascism" and described as no better than Soviet totalitarianism (ibid:41) – but these critics were not anti-American as such. The voice behind the neo-fascism claim, literary critic Elsa Gress, even described herself as a "Pro-American anti-American". The central point is that such critics – outside the Communist camp – saw "two Americas". In politics, the "good America" was the liberal Democrats; the "bad America" the Republican right. In culture, "bad America" was the dominant middle-class con-

formism and materialism and commercialised popular culture, whereas “good America” was to be found in the authentic, anti-establishment voices (ibid:42).

In Norway, *Orientering* was established by intellectuals who felt marginalised in the political climate of the 1950s. Their form of criticism indicates that these writers felt related to dissenters in the USA (Fonn 2011). Media researcher Hillel Nosssek (2007) has pointed out how journalists and editors often wear “domestic glasses” in selecting foreign news topics. In the 1950s, the lack of reliable information sources made any critical journalism on the East Bloc difficult indeed. By contrast, critical sources on Western issues were readily available – and were received with open arms. This focus on the shortcomings of the USA and its European allies must also be seen in connection with the later rebellions against the West’s own power elites and establishments. In this perspective, the journalism in a newspaper like *Orientering* can be seen first and foremost as an early expression of a West-West divide.

Broad Populist Movements

By the mid-1960s, the rather narrow political communities that the third position environments had represented ten years earlier had become broad populist movements that encompassed new views on foreign relations and on politics in general. The sociologist C. Wright Mills made the concept of “New Left” widely known in a 1960 article.⁷ As Donald Sassoon (2014) has pointed out, none of the traditional parties of the European Left managed to understand these new impulses properly. In Norway the new party SF became a fairly influential force, in 1961 stripping the mighty Labour Party of its absolute majority. *Orientering*’s by now prominent editor, and MP, Finn Gustavsen was a charismatic figure who knew how to take advantage of the new medium, television, a fact the party benefited from for years. But first and foremost *Orientering* and SF had managed to read the upcoming political mentality at an early stage – to the extent that the paper around 1970 even introduced a kind of populist leftist “how to”-journalism that apparently played successfully on the strings of prevalent individualistic currents (Fonn 2011).

In his landmark article, Mills claimed that after WWII, power had become concentrated on fewer and fewer hands. He argued vehemently that socialism would have to emphasise the element of individual freedom and preserve faith in a better world (Mills 1960) – echoing, surely without being aware of it, parts of the argumentation presented by Bay almost ten years earlier in Norway. Actually, this is not so surprising, as Mills was one of those US intellectuals who had been so influential to ISF scholars in the late 40s (Thue 2005).

Mills also declared that the insurgency would have to come from below and from the outside, not through established political channels. Thus he

described the new political landscape that was about to emerge. At that time, campaigns against nuclear weapons were about to collect far more supporters than the original proponents of the third position had dared to dream of, and the mentality change of the 1960s was further reinforced by the onset of the Vietnam War. Where the Korean War had opened the eyes of the previous generation to the oppressiveness of superpower politics, the new generation took the Vietnam War as a sign that the world was about to go totally mad.

During this period a rebellion against authority and the “system” that had created both an East-West and a North-South divide, fused into what might be seen as a common international movement, but with differing national characteristics (Klimke et al. 2011). The protests of the “1968 generation” were concerned with far more issues than those originally associated with the New Left movement (Werenskjold 2011:484), but the heritage from the early phase of the Cold War also shines through. In both Norway and Denmark the seemingly national issue of EC membership rose to the top of the agenda – but, as Rasmussen notes, denunciations of the EC could readily be associated with NATO membership, capitalism and US imperialism (1997:71). In Norway, *Orientering* was among the keenest opponents of the EC (although the campaigns included parts of both the political centre and far left). The anti-EC campaign in Norway resulted in a remarkable popular victory and a similarly remarkable defeat for the elites in 1972, in fact also a main catalyst for the dissolution of the party press. It showed that the establishment was out of step with the “little guy” in society, and the mainstream, party-based press was out of step with its readership (Bastiansen 2009).

Admittedly, many kinds of political groupings took part in the emerging protest culture of the 1960s and 1970s. A wave of Maoism-inspired Marxist-Leninism with a positive view of violent revolutions and undemocratic regimes in the Third World swept parts of the Nordic Left at the same time. But as Werenskjold (2011:486) has noted, the “New” Left had more central contacts with international currents, and it is therefore easier to see its transnational influence. What most of the popular rebellions of this period had in common was a distinct liberty-seeking anti-authoritarianism. By 1968 the protests against the elites had even crossed the Iron Curtain, eventually contributing to the fall of the East European regimes.

Conclusion

This examination of an early expression of the New Left movement in the form of a Norwegian oppositional Cold War newspaper can contribute to our understanding of the media and the Cold War in two ways. The fact that political currents that can later be recognised as belonging to the New Left found

expression in one, fairly influential newspaper in Norway makes it possible to trace Norwegian New Left origins back to the early years after WWII. Although the East-West conflict was the dominant political issue when *Orientering* was started, the paper soon established a way of covering the Cold War that can be seen first and foremost as an expression of Western self-awareness, of the West's discontent with itself, particularly inspired by American self-criticism. This study also underlines the significance of a newspaper's sources, and may thus contribute to deeper insights into the dynamics of foreign news production.

Notes

1. The terms "Western", or the "turn to the West", are variously used in the literature, sometimes signifying the USA, sometimes the US-British alliance, and sometimes the USA and its European allies in general.
2. <http://virksommeord.uib.no/taler?id=110>
3. The guidelines were written in collaboration with the journalist Sigurd Evensmo, but it is apparent from Arnesen's account that Bay was the main author.
4. Bay's text is translated from Norwegian by author
5. *The Daily Compass* replaced the *New York Star* in 1948, and ceased publication in 1952.
6. Probably also the *National Guardian*, a US dissenter paper with interest very similar interests to those of *Orientering*; see Koda 2014.
7. Translated into Norwegian in 1966 by another former *Orientering* co-editor.

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Part Two: Space, Sports, and Spies

Chapter 7

The Space Race in the Swedish Press during the Cold War Era

A Celebration of Transparent Western Television

Patrik Åker

Abstract

This chapter analyse how thoughts about television's ability to identify and define what is important and real in society, and give access to this reality, is constructed by the way the Swedish press reported significant televised events during the space race from 1957 to 1975, and how this can be related to the geo-cultural context of the Cold War. In the Swedish press, the space race was from the beginning treated as a media and communication project as much as a science and technology project. Outer space was the perfect area to make this project global; it concerned all mankind and was not accessible without media technologies. It also fitted neatly in the Cold War context. The secrecy surrounding the Soviet Union's space program could be contrasted with the openness of American/Western media. The sharp tension between the two superpowers shaped a story of transparent Western television.

Keywords: Cold War, media events, Space race, Swedish press, television

What is about to happen now – the Moon landing – is so real that there is not much left to comment on. It comments on itself through its extreme power of reality. That people all over the world at exactly the same time are able to see the first human beings on the Moon on TV is a unique and fascinating situation (Expressen 18/7-69).

The above quote by the Swedish author of the space epos *Aniara* (1956), Harry Martinson, given in a press interview in the summer of 1969, is an attempt to provide an explanation as to why people around the world were so fascinated by the televised Moon landing. The quote highlights important aspects of the televised event such as it being pre-planned and filled with expectations, attracting large international audiences, being broadcast live and, not least, how it emphasised television's ability to provide access to reality. These are the very same aspects that constitute the most central parts of Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz's definition of media events (1992/1994). It may come as no surprise that

one of their prime examples of a media event is the Moon landing.

The Moon landing was the climax of the space race which took place in a historic moment with sharp distinctions between different political systems represented by the two main combatants – the Soviet Union and the USA – usually known as the Cold War. From one perspective, the Cold War was about security and protecting national borders, which led to the arms race and the development of atomic weapons which were to act as deterrents and prevent conflicts between the two superpowers from turning into a hot war. From another perspective, the Cold War was a symbolic struggle to gain technological and ideological superiority. The Moon landing as a huge event staged for the media, primarily aimed at an international television audience, is part of the symbolic dimension of the Cold War. The event has also been described as not only “a global triumph for American science, it was also a global triumph for American television” (Schwoch 2009:1). Interestingly enough, Dayan and Katz localise media events when media provides “direct access to the real world”, to Western democracies (Dayan and Katz 1988:162). What was at stake here is not only that the Americans were the winners in this symbolic battle of technological superiority, but equally importantly, that certain American/Western ideas about television were implemented on a global scale.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse how thoughts about television’s ability to identify and define what is important and real in society, and give access to this reality, is *constructed* (cf. Couldry 2003, 2006), by the way the Swedish press reported significant events during the space race, and how this can be related to the geo-cultural context of the Cold War. This study intends to analyse how the Swedish press reported on the Soviet Union’s and the USA’s ambitions to place themselves at the centre of humanity through televised events in space from 1957 to 1975, with particular focus on the role television was given in this effort.¹ Of importance is the relationship between the national press and international television and how the press in a, during the Cold War, officially “neutral” country like Sweden understood the role of new media technologies (television and satellite communication) for uniting people over national borders. The study answers the following overriding question: How can ideas about television be related to the East-West tension during the Cold War? In order to do that, three more empirical questions have guided the analysis: How was the openness/secretcy dichotomy (which has been a central theme in earlier studies about the Cold War) expressed? What kinds of thoughts about the role of communication technology were articulated? What role did television play in audiences’ abilities to participate in the space events?

Background

The exploration of outer space is often thought of as a counterweight to the arms race during the Cold War. Although the link between space programs and nuclear weapons such as atomic bombs defined the era (Nye 1994; Geppert 2012), one starting-point for the space race is the launching of the two Russian Sputnik's in 1957, often described as a "shock" for the Americans (Maurer et al. 2011:3). Another starting point is John F. Kennedy's speech after Yuri Gagarin's successful orbit of the earth in 1961 when the USA really took up the "space race" with the Soviet. The mission's symbolic power was central to Kennedy's statement "of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to Earth" before the end of the decade (quoted in Allen 2009:82). The aim of this symbolic act was to present America as the world leader, or in David Crowley and Jane Pavitt's words, "What was at stake in such confrontations was nothing less than the future of mankind (or so both systems proposed)" (Crowly and Pavitt 2008:12-13).

Parallel to the space race and nuclear arms race was the development of television and communication satellites (Farry and Kirby 2012). Spreading visual images of being a world leader in the media, not the least through television, became decisive. This thought is central in Marshall McLuhan's statement as to how war was conducted in this new media environment: "It is really an electric battle of information and of images that goes far deeper and is more obsessional than the old hot wars of industrial hardware" (McLuhan 1964:339). McLuhan's examples to illustrate this thought are the spectacular events in space by the Russians, and the Americans' reactions "in the press and other media" to these. American television's loyalty to 'the American way of life' during the 50s (Whitfield 1991/1996:169) continued, despite initial resistance from NASA (cf. Steven-Boniecki 2010), during the space race with close collaboration between media institutions and the public American space program (Allen 2009, Makemson 2009, Kilgore 2003, Barbree 2007). The narrative surrounding the American space program was to focus on the "manned space exploration as a frontier adventure story" (Kauffman 1994:59). According to Michael Allen (2009), this touched upon "a long-held desire of the American psyche" that frames the representation in "a longer history of the discovery and charting of the New World landscape" (Allen 2009:viii). But when the televised space endeavours reached their climax with the Moon landing, it transcended this American mythological context and became, as described by Dayan and Katz, also an ultimate international media event and has been studied as such, for instance, by Henrik G. Bastiansen (1994) in a Norwegian context.

The Soviet Union's space program is quite well researched, but not its relationship to the media. In a recent anthology by James T. Andrews and Asif A. Siddiqi, they state: "The Soviet government devoted enormous resources

not only to perform its space achievements but also to publicize them in domestic and foreign arenas” (Andrews and Siddiqi 2011:1). The Russians were also quick to take TV-cameras on-board their spacecraft (see Siddiqi 2003, Allen 2009). In that way, there are reasons to believe that the role of media was as important to the Russians as to the Americans. The late 50s was also the point in time for a “re-launch of socialism” after Stalin’s death. The Soviet space exploration became an important part of this “cultural thaw” with widespread utopian hopes of openness and improved living conditions (Maurer et al. 2011). Nevertheless, despite this new cultural climate, Andrews and Siddiqi find that secrecy versus openness is the most important difference between how the American and Russian space programs were communicated. The balancing act for those working with the Soviet space program was “To publicize the program as much as possible while keeping it secret as much as possible...” (Andrews and Siddiqi 2011:9). One reason for this secrecy was the overriding possibilities for failures and the fear that it would damage the image of the Soviet society.

From a Russian perspective, secrecy was necessary because of the military aspect of the space program. The USA divided its space endeavours into a public space program and a strictly military program. This separation was not made in Soviet which, of course, had huge implications for how the space events could be communicated to the public. According to Siddiqi, Khrushchev, the Soviet Union leader until October 1964, was not even particularly interested in the manned space program and competing with the Americans for the Moon. For him, the military aspect came first, developing missiles and not spending unnecessary money on “cosmonauts and the cosmos” (Siddiqi 2003:408). In any event, the openness of the American program provided the Russians with possibilities to adjust their efforts in order to what the Americans were planning to do. Because of that they were able to conduct a couple of “firsts” in space in the first half of the 1960s despite a lack of real development in their space program (Siddiqi 2003:447).

When it comes to secrecy versus openness, Allen points out that the Americans could do both:

America effectively presented itself as constructing a public program of space exploration – of benign Earth satellites, scientific probes to nearby planets and future manned missions – all of which was sold to the American public framed within the true spirit of exploration. Meanwhile, ‘behind the scenes’ they were running a covert military reconnaissance operation designed to keep a constant eye on the activities of their superpower enemy (Allen 2009:xii).

Space exploration as a manifestation of American superiority in science and technology was early on identified as occasions that could “convert the foreign spectator into a participant” (Protocol from the U.S. Information Agency,

quoted in Schwoch 2009:57). The openness of the public space program was also emphasised in Kennedy's speech in 1961, when he described the space race as a symbolic battle between democracy and socialism, or in other words, a cultural Cold War.

The Case Study

The empirical material for this study is taken from four Swedish dailies, two morning papers – *Dagens Nyheter* (liberal) and *Svenska Dagbladet* (conservative), and two evening papers – *Aftonbladet* (social democratic) and *Expressen* (liberal). Material has been gathered from two weeks before the event and two weeks after and includes all editorial material about the actual space flight. The newspapers represent different political standpoints, which increases the possibility for critique of the space events. However, the material has been analysed as a whole and does not try to position the newspapers in relation to each other or highlight different journalists' views. The events chosen for the study are what are known in the history of the space race as, "firsts" in relation to *manned* space flights. Two exceptions are the first Sputnik in 1957, which was the initial spark to the whole space race, and the second Sputnik a month later carrying the dog, Laika. Although no human being was on board, the dog fills a similar function of emotional closeness and the event also made a lasting cultural impact in Sweden (it is, for instance, an important context in the much feted Swedish film, *My Life as a Dog*, from 1985).²

A series of events can together be thought of as constituting different phases in the space race. The first phase is the establishment of the space race with the Russian "shocks" and the American response by President Kennedy about placing a man on the Moon before the end of the decade. This phase is characterised by several Russian "firsts" with the Americans trying to catch up by conducting similar space endeavours. The second phase is the climax of the space race era with the American televised circumnavigation of the Moon in 1968 and, finally, the live broadcast from the Moon landing in 1969. The third phase was the aftermath of the space race and the main event was the docking and handshake in space between Americans and Russians in 1975. This diachronic perspective is important for the study. The reports about different space flights have been understood as plots in an overriding story about the space race.

The press material is approached using a qualitative analysis of the texts (including pictures) based on what was reported about the role of television and satellite communication. Significant examples from the extensive empirical material are used to discuss how the Swedish press reported the space race.

Establishing Television's Role

Right from the beginning in 1957, coverage of the Russian space flights was permeated with comments about the secrecy surrounding the events. There are many headlines about “mysteries” and what the satellites were “hiding”. There is also explicit critique from scientists around the world about the secrecy surrounding the space program. Even the Russian people were said to be left in uncertainty, for instance, when Laika was sent into orbit around the Earth in 1957, “On Sunday morning people in Moscow were surprised that a dog had been sent to space and you could hear the question: ‘Why haven’t they told us about the steps they have taken to return the dog safely to earth again?’”³ The newspapers were full of speculations about what had happened to the dog and the press turned to official communiqués in the Russian media in order to, by reading between the lines, figure out more about the event.

Communication and live broadcasting were a central aspect of the reporting on these early space events. The first Sputnik became a communication satellite in itself. There were rumours that the signal from the satellite was a code that only the Russians could break. The beeps from the satellite were also recorded and broadcast by the media. American broadcasters were celebrated in the Swedish press because they were fast to do this, “The alert American radio broadcasters, National Broadcasting (NBC) and Columbia Broadcasting (CBC) [sic], took the opportunity to fill their evening news broadcasts with a ‘and now you will be able to hear it.’”⁴ This way of creating a closeness to the event is also evident when Laika was sent into orbit: “The radio signals were immediately registered by radio stations all over the world and transmitted via national broadcast radio to a suddenly very space obsessed public.”⁵

At the time of the first two Sputniks, sound was the only thing that could be transmitted to audiences, but comments in the press predicted the future, “The time is very close when we can reach the Moon and also see the first landing on television, said the Russian professor.”⁶ So, on the part of the Russians, there were clear ideas about how future space events would be communicated. American experts also believed that it was possible that Laika had a television camera as companion. And there were speculations (which would eventually become true) from Russian commentators that satellites like Sputnik could be used as TV-relay stations for transmitting programs over huge areas. So, despite the fact that sound was central to these two first space events, there was a lot of talk about television. The Swedish reader was encouraged to think of space events and television together.

Television had a more central role in relation to the next huge space event – Gagarin’s orbit in 1961. However, the lack of information prompted the press to express similar suspicions about accuracy as they did when reporting about the two Sputniks. According to voices in the press, Russian media were not

supposed to say anything before the mission was successfully accomplished. That is why the broadcast of Gagarin's voice when he was still in space was thought to be a fake. The whole event seemed too well planned and there were speculations as to whether his space flight took place a couple of days earlier. What was broadcast was believed to be a recording of an earlier flight in order to "get the most publicity out of the event."⁷ Some of the American "experts" who were interviewed went as far as to say that they thought that Gagarin's space flight never took place. At the arranged press conference, Swedish journalists also saw through Gagarin, he "responded with bland formulations... gave pathetic explanations..."⁸

In the eyes of the Swedish journalists, the absence of spontaneity and the uncertainty of the information about the event turned it into propaganda. A rare exception to this is an article by a correspondent in Moscow who wrote about a press photograph of Gagarin's wife:

It is a close, intrusive study of a woman torn between hope and despair – a wife with tears in her eyes and a naked unprotected face... A moment before the victory has been captured, a second when a human being in Soviet can still doubt their absolute ability and therefore the picture in *Kosmolskaja Pravda* makes such an indelible impression.⁹

This is a telling example of how the Swedish press distinguished between the media in the Soviet Union and the role of the media in Western democracies. The celebrated uncertainty became a sign of openness. Another aspect of the lack of openness was that journalists working in Moscow were not invited to take part in the event, they were reduced to audiences, not participants: "Throughout Monday night, foreign correspondents clung to their radio receivers trying to capture the message that didn't come..."¹⁰ However, even as part of the media audience, a correspondent in Moscow capitulated to Gagarin's remarkable endeavour, "... the voice of the female announcer vibrating with pride, pride that so often before has been hard for a Westerner to take. It's not today."¹¹

The magnitude of the event was also underlined by the fact that the celebrations of Gagarin's homecoming to Moscow marked the entrance of live international television in relation to the space race. Swedish television transmitted four hours live, a broadcast that the press labelled "historic" – in line with media event theory – because it was the first live transmission from the Soviet Union to Western Europe (cf. Lundgren 2012). However, the press focused more on the historical dimension of the actual broadcast and less on the ability to take part in the celebration of the Gagarin coronation. The only way to become a true participant was to join the celebrations in the streets of Moscow. One correspondent thereby experienced something spontaneous and real: "...it was 'praznik', a genuine Muscovite super party. Yet it wasn't

May Day. This was spontaneous and not done out of habit... Today we are celebrating one of our own..."¹²

When the same ritual was repeated a couple of months later after Titov's space flight (it was broadcast in Sweden but not live this time) both the reporters in Sweden and the Swedish reporters in Russia fell back to their former distanced position. A correspondent in Moscow reflected on the imposed celebrations broadcast on Russian radio: "It is beyond belief that there is this much space music, this many space poems and this many space songs already. Russian poets and composers must have been working at full speed these last few of months."¹³ A couple of days later in the same paper, a reporter in Sweden comments on international television's ability to bridge distances and also the implicit danger of this,

One thought that struck Swedes at home in Stockholm, Moscow will soon have moved into Western Europe, to the world. The sight of Vnukovo airport, Red Square with the Kremlin, the historical museum, the Spasskij gate, they have all become familiar to a hundred million people in the West. The propaganda effect is of course stunning..¹⁴

The geographical closeness that communication over borders can create was met here with a worry which bears no similarities with how the press wrote about the American space program. The broadcasts of the celebrations of the cosmonauts were interpreted as signs of propaganda, not as moments for an international audience to take part in the festivities.

Celebrating American Openness

Shepard's successful space flight in 1961 was immediately compared to the secrecy surrounding Gagarin's, "Now that everything has worked out well... the Russians have for once have suffered from their stubborn secrecy."¹⁵ As in this quote, the Swedish press in general applauded and emphasised the American openness. The press focused on the fact that the world media were invited to take part of the event, "More than 500 journalists from all over the world have gathered on the beach about one and a half kilometres from the launch site..."¹⁶ Among the journalists, the writer of the article even finds "Soviet newsmen."

Although the openness of the space program had an international reach, the American space flight was primarily placed in a national context at this stage. In this context, the press focused on the live-ness of the televised American space event and that the public were able to take part in the pre-planning as a pre-condition for *democratic* participation. One article about Shepard's flight in 1961 by a Swedish correspondent in the USA highlights how the live broadcast made him part of this American community, "Everybody seemed to

be emotionally exhausted by the last days of waiting – even those of us who had only been sitting in front of our TV-sets since dawn. When it was at its most thrilling, our coloured maid and I held hands, convincing ourselves that this would help Commander Alan Shepard Jr.”¹⁷ What strikes readers today is why the journalist thought it was important to write about the colour of the maid’s skin. One explanation can be found in media event theory; the reporter becomes part of a bigger community which overcomes race, class, etc. By taking this position, he also loses his distance to the event and, instead, becomes part of it. Television’s ability to unite is also prominent in the coverage of Glenn’s space flight in 1962. The headline, “Americans in breathless silence in front of their TV-sets” is accompanied by the following text:

From the president in the White House to the smallest village on the prairie, in countless millions of living rooms around this big country, in schools and hospitals, in luxury homes and pokey slum dwellings, in clubs and bars, through shop windows along the cities’ business districts, countrymen from different ages and occupations, of any colour and religion, could follow the spectacular flight via television right from Glenn’s perfect start at Cape Canaveral at 15:48 Swedish time.¹⁸

This text clearly stresses the integrating and consensual character of the event. The American audience was also constructed as a heterogeneous group in newspapers, in contrast to the frequent homogenous “Russians.” In this way, the press gave television a role of binding American society together, such a role was implicitly impossible in the Soviet Union based on how the Swedish press writes about the space events.

Openness and the possibility to participate also made it easier to identify with Glenn than with the Soviet cosmonauts:

Yuri Gagarin was unquestionably first in space, but neither he nor Herman Titov was ever real and conceivable for non-Russians. They were celebrated, admired and noted as peculiar and abstract phenomena. But John Glenn was a spaceman of flesh and blood. We had gotten to know him in advance and with him we had been in agony about the unknown – and most of all – we experienced space with him.¹⁹

This editorial ends with the words: “Now we know that even he who comes second can be a winner.” And the reason why the second man could win was the presence of electronic media which could involve and create a feeling of participation within the audience, including the Swedish correspondents. This theme is picked up in a cartoon of a theatrical stage with the accompanying text: “It was a success for Glenn and the USA now, all you see are the advantages of publicity anyway, doing the trick in the limelight is a much stronger performance than entering from behind the scenes and claiming to have done



Figure 1. A cartoon in *Aftonbladet* (February 21 1962) by George Beverloo. It celebrates American openness by showing astronaut Glenn taking his place on the stage in front of an enthusiastic audience.

it.”²⁰ The presence of the media, and especially live television, became proof that the event had occurred. In *DN*, this is made explicit: “No one can doubt that the USA has done what it claims to have done.”²¹

When radio and TV became part of the American space events, reality was no longer found outside the broadcasting: “After twelve hours of reading newspapers, you don’t know any more about John Glenn’s space flight than you already did when the red hot nose cone splashed down in the swells of the Caribbean. This is how well TV covered the whole event...”²² In this quote, American television was able to identify and define what was important about the event and, what was also thematised was a moment when old media – the newspaper – encountered new media – television – as the main channel for getting access to what was real.

These early televised events set the tone for how the press reported the continuing endeavours in space in the middle of the ‘60s. The American space flights were celebrated for their openness towards the media, which was underlined by their use of live broadcasts. When writing about Russian counterparts, the use of television is noticed and sometimes admired. For instance, when writing about Tereshkova, the first woman in space: “In addition to taking thousands of control readings, she is expected to perform as a TV actress for the whole world.”²³ This highlights the importance of television, but these performances were mostly seen in a propaganda context. One example of how this was

done was the recurrent underlining of the lack of real participation and joy in Moscow when space deeds were celebrated,

A small crowd of Muscovites have gathered on a reasonably empty Red Square to celebrate the triumph in space."²⁴ "The cheers were more obvious on radio and television than on the streets."²⁵ "And even these spontaneous cheers of joy had elements of direction..."²⁶ "On Red Square, Moscow television had managed to gather a small group of workers, students and soldiers carrying two small placards."²⁷

This was not the dominant description of the celebrations in Russia (which was often synonymous with Moscow in the press) but it was a repeated context in the articles about the Russian people's celebrations. Thus, the press was separating Russian media from reality in a way that it did not when writing about the American space flights.

When one competitor in the space race is presented in that way, true or not, the floor is open for the other to become the true champion of openness, and the press was convinced that this was done through extensive live media coverage. Nevertheless, events with rather limited features of sensation and drama can also result in a bored audience. This is thematised in a series of cartoons of a man in front of a TV-set in the newspaper, *Dagens Nyheter*, at

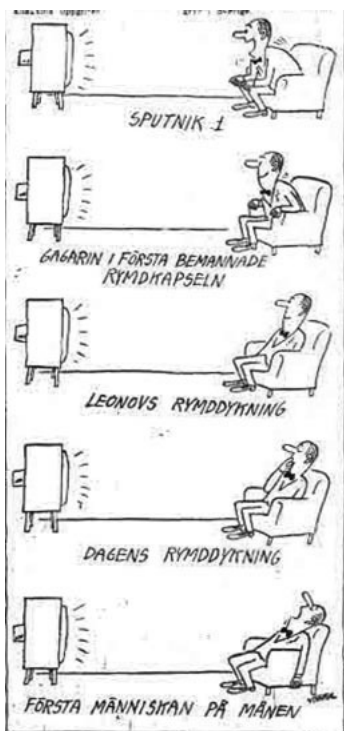


Figure 2. A cartoon by Poul Ströyer in *Dagens Nyheter* (June 4 1965). It offers an ironic comment on the centrality of television during the space race and highlights potential exhaustion.

the time of the American space walk in 1965 (4/6-65), as shown in Fig. 2. In the first picture, at the time of the first Sputnik, he is excited but becomes less and less interested with each space event, and finally falls asleep in front of his TV in the last picture when it is time for the Moon landing.

However, what is not highlighted in the drawing is the important distinction made in the Swedish press between the openness of Western television compared with the staged performances in the Russian media context. Television was understood as not only being about what is seen on the screen but, more profoundly, about the audience's ability to participate.

From National to International Participation

In the Swedish press coverage of the international live broadcast of the Moon orbit in '68, it is made explicit that *real* participation was still only possible in an American context,

It is without doubt hard for anyone outside the USA to understand how strong Americans in general experienced the triumph at Christmas... The feeling of community and the experience of collectively owning the deed has been constantly expressed these days... The background of uncertainty, fear and friction – with the war as the focal point – has probably given the space drama during Christmas a special role, a possibility to grab the chance to forget, to experience something so rare nowadays, a wave of pride and national community.²⁸

This description is very close to Dayan and Katz's definition of media events as a specific TV genre expressing reconciliation and community. The reflection the journalist made is that the event primarily touched upon American values; the ritual became a way of healing the country in a turbulent time, not the least because of the Vietnam War.

But, from another perspective, the event created a sense of globalism. In hindsight, what is remembered from the orbit of the Moon is a photograph taken by one of the astronauts, William Anders, of the earth rising behind the surface of the Moon, the so-called 'Earthrise' (cf. Makemson 2009:172). A couple of days after the orbit, *Expressen* ran the photo on their front page with the caption, "Only three others have seen this!"²⁹ The Swedish press had in the preceding days underlined that the televised mission was as much about the Earth as it was about the Moon, "The next report... will on the other hand be devoted to Mother Earth. It will be the first picture story of Earth from another celestial body."³⁰ The Moon became a platform from which to address the whole world and thereby the stage was set for the Moon landing. Although, in the actual broadcast, the attention paid to Earth was not primarily visual,



Figure 3. Front page of *Expressen* December 30 1968, with the caption “Only three others have seen this! Earth rises – over the Moon”. The Moon (its surface is in the front of the picture) became a platform from which to address the whole world.

“But the TV-cameras refused to show Earth as something other than a fuzzy, round, bright spot. We have to wait for the colour pictures the astronauts took during the TV broadcast.”³¹

This illustrates that TV is not just about vision but can instead be understood more in line with McLuhan’s idea about television as foremost tactual, involving all senses and thereby creating a feeling of taking part in something (McLuhan 1964:334). In general, covering the televised space events did not provide great moments for photographs. Instead drawings were frequently used as a way of visualising what was about to happen, as well as illustrating events as they happened. To get decent photographs, they had to wait until after the actual event. Then they became documentation of the reality of the televised events. They partly fulfilled the *visual* experience that, at the time of the broadcast, distinguished the astronaut from the participant in front of the TV. Take, for instance, astronaut Lovell’s experience in ‘68, “There are no colours up there. Where ever we looked throughout the Universe, the only sign of colour was on Earth... It was the most beautiful thing out there in space. People on Earth don’t understand how rich they are.”³² In the photograph, Earthrise, the general public was able to understand his experience – even though the low printing quality and lack of colour express the limits of using photographs in newspapers. This is also how the “Only three others have seen this!” caption can be interpreted; now the reader could see it too.

However, at the time of the Moon landing taking part in the broadcast could even supersede the experience of taking part in the actual event. One comment by Michael Collins (who orbited the Moon during his fellow astronauts' landing) picked up by the Swedish press pointed to this fundamental element in the theory of media events, "Worst of all is that I am the only human being in America who couldn't take part in the Moon landing on TV, he said."³³ Another example of the thought that reality was taking place in the broadcast was an article where the reader was encouraged to take pictures of the Moon, "Do you want to take pictures of the Moon on your TV? It is a historical moment. It can be fun to have 'your own pictures of the Moon.'"³⁴ Even if 'your own pictures' is placed in quotation marks, it signals that the audience was supposed to see themselves as taking an active part in this voyage to the Moon and that television could thereby give access to a 'transparent immediacy' (Bolter and Grusin 1999).

When Openness becomes Spectacle

The broadcast of the Moon landing was described as having a global reach, "The whole world is excited now they are on their way."³⁵ This also created the norm for watching the broadcasts. Nevertheless, this norm was constantly negotiated in the press by, for instance, interviews with persons critical of the event. Around the time of the Moon landing, the papers were full of critical comments, usually made by persons *outside* the media institution:

In addition, this well-oiled propaganda machine around the Moon stunt is effectively drawing attention away from more important social and economic problems man has to solve.³⁶ I am very upset that billions are thrown away on a technical expedition...³⁷ The Moon landing doesn't concern me at all. I am totally indifferent to whether they succeed or not. I am not going to watch the Moon landing on TV and I don't think it is a major event in world history.³⁸

These critical voices are interesting because of their emphasis on the peripheral nature of the event, that it drew attention away from more important issues. In other words, they highlighted what Couldry (2003) describes as the "mythical" aspect of media as the centre of society. It is also possible to find critical voices *inside* the press but they are quite rare. One example is an editorial which underlined the propaganda and military aspects of how the American space program was being communicated: "But this openness is of course also a gigantic PR-project, or ... a kind of 'psychological warfare'... the American space program has forcefully increased the USA's military prestige and created respect among possible opponents."³⁹ The Swedish press also articulated a potential fear that the American president, Nixon, would try to hi-jack the tel-

evised event and use it for his own propaganda purposes. Moreover, attempts to place the event in a solely American context immediately met with criticism,

Aldrin [one of the astronauts, author's comment] has a lovely garden with beautiful green trees where the radio and TV companies have hung their cables. At the back of where they have installed their microphones some idiot – who I suspect is from NASA's PR-department – has draped an American flag. It does look creepy.⁴⁰

This also underlines the global scale of the event in the eyes of the Swedish reporters. National interests were thought of as diminishing the event of its significance. Such power interests and the relationship between the symbolic and military sides of the American space program would grow into a central theme when it was time for the handshake in space between Russians and Americans in 1975. That event is regarded by the press as a PR-spectacle aimed at gaining support for the military détente in the Cold War. The press reported that it was the first time the Soviet public could see a live broadcast of the launch of a satellite and the first time the Russian audience knew about a manned space flight in advance. Still, there were limits to the Russian openness, "Not one foreign reporter of the 400 present is allowed to visit the space centre in Kazakhstan despite the ubiquitous presence of foreign journalists at Cape Canaveral, USA."⁴¹ And when there were problems with the television cameras the cosmonauts carried on-board, the Russians fell back to their old behaviour, "When Western journalists at a press conference asked questions about the cameras, they were rejected by the irritated Soviet space centre – openness is apparently greatest when everything goes according to plan."⁴²

The live broadcasts' element of uncertainty was also implicitly described as lost in this too well planned event, "To provide good TV pictures, Stafford and Leonov shook hands twice."⁴³ In addition, Russian sensitivity for television had clear limits. In the same article, the journalist commented that the Russian broadcast ended at 11 o'clock in the evening, "That is when Russian TV ends its broadcasts every day. So in the middle of [President] Ford's talk, the broadcast was shut down and the Soviet national anthem began." The Swedish journalist was implying that the Russians misunderstood the character of a media event. Moreover, recurrent writings about Russian television cameras not working threatened to spoil important parts of this televised event. Even if the press didn't explicitly write about it, the contextualisation encouraged the reader to interpret the incident as a sign of American superiority when it came to science and technology (cf. Allen 2009 p 188). The inability from the Soviet side to manage the media event became proof of this.

From a Swedish press perspective, the Moon landing stands out as the climax when it comes to participation. At the time of the joint space flight in '75, the earlier distance had returned. The dominant theme concerning participation

was how the event was received in Russia. This time Swedish journalists were not caught up, "There were probably many who cheered all over the country. Even here at the press centre in Moscow attempts were made to start applauding, but foreign journalists are hard creatures who don't let their feelings run away with them while they are working."⁴⁴ The stance the journalist took this time was radically different to the participating stance of the journalist during Shepard's space flight in 1961, or the understanding stance of the journalist writing about the orbiting of the Moon in 1968.

The Cold War as a Prerequisite for the Idea of Transparent Western Television

During the space race, the Swedish press not only celebrated the openness of the American space program when it came to access to information before and after events, it also emphasised the possibility of taking part in the journey in real time as participants via television. This latter opportunity was at first located in an American context, but by the time for the Moon landing it had become a global expectation.

Television was, according to the Swedish press, afforded its full potential in USA with their focus on 'live'. When Schwoch (2009:1) describes the Moon landing as "a global triumph for American television" it is also true for how the Swedish press treated the event. However, this triumph has a pre-history which can be described as an understanding of the space race as a prolonged media event. Early on in the 1960s, the Swedish press reported about American live broadcasts in a way that celebrated their openness. It did not matter that the Russian space program was ahead of its American counterpart when it came to achievements in space, the Americans were nonetheless considered the winners because of their open strategy towards the media. In the Swedish press, the space race was from the beginning treated as a media and communication project as much as a science and technology project. Outer space was the perfect area to make this project global; it concerned all mankind and was not accessible without media technologies. It also fitted neatly in the Cold War context. The secrecy surrounding the Soviet Union's space program could be contrasted with the openness of American/Western media. The Cold War frame (cf. Hallin 1994) also binds the secrecy surrounding the Soviet space program to a fear for the possible military implications, not least for nuclear weapons, as a reason for their silence and untruthful statements.

Consequently, when reporting about the televised American events, the Swedish press highlighted the most central aspects in Dayan and Katz's (1992/1994) definition of a media event right from the beginning of the 60s. The emphasis on the integrative and consensual character in a national context

of the early American space flights set the frame for how transnational Western broadcasts at the end of the decade were interpreted. Live broadcasting was equated with openness and the dichotomy between openness and secrecy as a recurrent theme in the space race was built around contrasting the Soviet Union and the USA as political systems. This shaped a story of transparent Western media and staged Soviet media. The Soviet Union's attempts to engage international audiences were doomed to fail in the Swedish press because of the Soviet Union's insensitivity to television's ability to provide "transparent immediacy" (Bolter and Grusin 1999).

When the Soviet Union finally capitulated to media event logic when co-operating with the Americans in '75, television was reduced to a somewhat clumsy tool in the hands of those in power. Even the press coverage of the American part of the broadcast was not given the aura of providing a social centre of humanity. One explanation is that when the sharp tension between the two superpowers temporally dissolved during détente, the Cold War frame for how to understand television in East and West disappeared.

Notes

1. Acknowledgements: the study has been supported by Ridderstads stiftelse för historisk grafisk forskning.
2. The other selected events are: Gagarin's space flight in '61, the first American (Shepard) in space '61, the Russian cosmonaut Titov's several orbits around the Earth '61, the first American (Glenn) to orbit the Earth '62, the first women (cosmonaut Tereshkova) in '63, Russian spacecraft with three passengers '64, the first spacewalk by cosmonaut Leonov '65, the first spacewalk by American (White) the same year, orbiting the Moon by the Americans in '68, first docking between manned spacecraft by the Russians in '69, the Moon landing by the Americans in '69, the first space station (Russian) '71, and finally the docking between American and Soviet spaceships in '75.
3. *Expressen*, November 3, 1957
4. *Svenska Dagbladet*, October 6, 1957
5. *Expressen*, November 3, 1957
6. *Expressen*, November 3, 1957
7. *Aftonbladet*, April 13, 1961
8. *Expressen*, April 16, 1961
9. *Svenska Dagbladet*, April 14, 1961
10. *Aftonbladet*, April 11, 1961
11. *Dagens Nyheter*, April 13, 1961
12. *Svenska Dagbladet*, April 15, 1961
13. *Dagens Nyheter*, August 8, 1961
14. *Dagens Nyheter*, August 10 1961
15. *Dagens Nyheter*, May 7, 1961
16. *Svenska Dagbladet*, May 2, 1961
17. *Aftonbladet*, May 6, 1961
18. *Dagens Nyheter*, February 21, 1962
19. *Expressen*, February 21, 1962
20. *Aftonbladet*, February 21, 1962, see Fig. 1
21. *Dagens Nyheter*, February 21, 1962

22. *Aftonbladet*, February 22, 1962
23. *Aftonbladet*, June 17, 1963
24. *Svenska Dagbladet*, June 20, 1963
25. *Expressen*, October 13, 1964
26. *Dagens Nyheter*, October 13, 1964
27. *Svenska Dagbladet*, March 19, 1965
28. *Dagens Nyheter*, December 27, 1968
29. *Expressen*, December 30, 1968, see Fig. 3
30. *Dagens Nyheter*, December 24, 1968
31. *Expressen*, December 23, 1968
32. *Dagens Nyheter*, January 15 1969
33. *Expressen*, July 16, 1969
34. *Expressen*, July 20, 1969
35. *Dagens Nyheter*, July 7, 1969
36. *Dagens Nyheter*, July 25 1969
37. *Svenska Dagbladet*, July 22, 1969
38. *Expressen*, July 17, 1969
39. *Expressen*, July 22, 1969
40. *Expressen*, July 18, 1969
41. *Svenska Dagbladet*, July 14, 1975
42. *Svenska Dagbladet*, July 19, 1975
43. *Expressen*, July 18, 1975
44. *Dagens Nyheter*, July 16, 1975

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Chapter 8

Political Resistance on Ice

The 1969 Ice Hockey World Championship in the Swedish and Norwegian Press

Peter Dahlén & Tobias Stark

Abstract

This article examines the representation of the highly politically charged matches between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union in the 1969 Ice Hockey World Championship in the two Swedish and Norwegian subscription broadsheets *Dagens Nyheter* and *Aftenposten*. The aim is to discuss the role of ice hockey and the sports media in the staging of international politics. These two matches illustrate that rather than merely seeing the Cold War as a political struggle between “the East” and “the West”, we here argue that the Cold War must be understood as a global phenomenon with a multitude of meanings and without fixed geopolitical boundaries.

Keywords: Cold War, ice hockey, world championships, Sweden, Norway, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union

“It started with an uprising, but it ended with a hockey game.” This is the introduction to Tal Pinchevsky’s (2012) book *Breakaway: From Behind the Iron Curtain to the NHL – The Untold Story of Hockey’s Great Escapes*. Pinchevsky writes about hockey players from Eastern Europe who had defected to the West in search of a better life in North America with the National Hockey League (NHL) (Pinchevsky 2012:1). The particular hockey game that Pinchevsky refers to in the quote above is the politically highly charged match between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union in the Ice Hockey World Championships on March 21, 1969 in Stockholm, Sweden. The match was “inarguably the single most important sporting event in [Czechoslovakia’s] history”, Pinchevsky claims (2012:5). Even the Director of Information of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), Szymon Szemberg, has characterised the matches as the “most emotionally charged two games in the history of hockey” (quoted in Szemberg 2007).

The purpose of this article is to analyse the portrayal of the politically highly charged matches between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union in the 1969 Ice Hockey World Championships, as reported in the largest Swedish and Nor-

wegian subscription broadsheets *DN* (Dagens Nyheter/The Daily News) and *Aftenposten* (The Evening News) respectively, both conservative newspapers. In so doing, we focus on the role of ice hockey in general and the sports media in particular in the staging of international politics in popular culture (see for instance Soares 2013; McDonald 2007; Scherer *et al* 2007; Silk *et al* 2008). Ultimately, we emphasise the importance of understanding the Cold War as a global phenomenon with a multitude of meanings and without fixed geopolitical boundaries, rather than applying a reductionist approach to the political struggle between “the East” and “the West”.

The Historical and Contextual Framing of the Two Matches

The events leading up to the extremely tense atmosphere surrounding the first match between the two teams on March 21, 1969, started the year before, in the morning of August 21, 1968, when the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia. Alexander Dubček had been elected the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia a mere six months earlier. Dubček initiated what came to be termed the Prague Spring, referring to the comprehensive changes in Czechoslovakia, including freedom of the press, the abolition of censorship, and the rehabilitation of citizens who had been unjustly persecuted during the 1950s (Pinchevsky 2012:3). This process came to a brutal halt when some 500 Soviet tanks rolled into the country: “In total, 27 divisions, including 5,000 armoured vehicles and 800 aircraft coming from the Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland, and Hungary, swept through the country in a single day. Czech military were ordered to avoid armed resistance, and all of Czechoslovakia was overtaken within 24 hours. The Prague Spring had effectively been crushed” (Pinchevsky 2012:2). The invasion left 25 people killed, 431 seriously wounded, and left countless buildings damaged by gunfire (Pinchevsky 2012:4).

Within days, the Soviets had formally established an occupational presence throughout Czechoslovakia that quashed numerous civil liberties and that would remain, undisturbed for the most part, for the next 20 years. An overwhelming display of resistance against the Soviets came seven months later, writes Pinchevsky: “The demonstrations in March 1969 remain to this day among the most revered moments in Czechoslovakian history. It was a historic moment inspired by, of all things, two hockey games” (2012:3-4).

The 1969 Ice Hockey World Championships were held in Stockholm as an unfortunate by-product of the occupation: Originally scheduled to be held in Czechoslovakia for the first time in a decade and on the occasion of the Czechoslovakian Ice Hockey Federation turning 60, the annual international tournament was forced to relocate to Stockholm in the wake of the invasion.

When Czechoslovakia was named host of the 1969 World Cup tournament at the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) Congress in Vienna, 1967, Sweden was posted as a backup in case Czechoslovakia would pull out. Sweden's interest in hosting the tournament appears to have been more of an act of impulse than a calculation of a possible Czechoslovakian withdrawal. At least this is the impression given by the then Vice Chairman of the Swedish Ice Hockey Federation, Rudolf "R: et" Eklöw, who was also a sports journalist and editor in *DN*. At the Vienna conference, Eklöw secured Sweden's election as reserve host with the aid of the President of the Swedish Ice Hockey Association, Helge Berglund (*Årets ishockey* 1969).

Although the people in Czechoslovakia could not attend the games in Sweden, they were still able to cheer for their national team in front of their television sets.¹ Pinchevsky quotes David Luksu, sports reporter on Czech television and an author of multiple books on Czechoslovakian hockey: "It was like a new chance for the whole republic. Hockey is the Czech national sport" (2012:4). Pinchevsky continues:

After Canada had dominated international hockey for three decades, the Soviet Union wrested away the championship mantle by 1969, winning the two previous Olympic gold medals, as well as four consecutive World Championships. By the time Czechoslovakia faced the mighty Soviets in Stockholm on March 21, 1969, the entire nation was riveted by a match that could hopefully salvage some sense of national pride following its squelched rebellion (2012:4-5).

Pinchevsky recounts how Dubček, who still served as First Secretary after his release from detention, commented on that game years later, recalling: "The whole country watched [on TV] as Czechoslovakia played the Soviets; it was much more than ice hockey, of course. It was a replay of a lost war" (2012:5). Czechoslovakia won the match 2-0:

Finally, after months of feeling as if the Soviet republic had been stepping on their collective neck, Czechoslovakians could enjoy a remarkable, if fleeting, victory over the Soviet Union. When the siren sounded, both teams ignored the customary handshake that traditionally followed games at the World Championships. Years later, team captain Jozef Golonka was quoted as saying, "We said to ourselves, even if we have to die on the ice, we have to beat them" (Pinchevsky 2012:6).

In the Soviet Union, the TV coverage was cut immediately after the final blow of the whistle, but the rest of the world could watch the emotional closing ceremony, with the playing of the Czechoslovakian national anthem and the hoisting of the flag.

The Czechoslovakian team repeated their victory a week later, a 4-3 win, and appeared to be heading for gold in the tournament. However, Czechoslovakia's

two losses against Sweden meant that the Soviet Union defended their world title, while the silver medal went to Sweden, and the bronze medal to Czechoslovakia. The World Championships was at this time an amateur tournament. Consequently, Canada could not make use of their professional players, and pulled out of the tournament. The irony here is that the Soviet players were real professionals, paid by the state to play full time, year round.

According to Pinchevsky, “the awesome energy” that the second victory over the Soviet Union sparked in Czechoslovakia was captured days later in a *Times Magazine* article which stated: “Overcome by a vicarious sense of triumph, a huge and excited crowd swarmed into Prague’s Wenceslas Square. One happy hockey fan carried a poster that read BREZHNEV 3, DUBČEK 4. The crowd chanted, ‘We’ve beaten you this time!’ Someone shouted, ‘The Russian coach will go to Siberia!’” (2012:7). Pinchevsky also describes how veteran television announcer Milena Vistrakova on Czechoslovakian state television was unable to contain her excitement of her country’s victory over the Soviets: “Normally, I drink herbal tea, but today I will toast our hockey players with wine. Because this is not only a victory in sports, but also a moral one”, Vistrakova said – and for these comments she was abruptly banned from television (2012:7).

There is no doubt that Vistrakova’s comments reflected the sentiment of a proud nation whose population flooded the streets in celebration. A reported half a million Czechoslovakian citizens took to the streets in a celebration that quickly transformed into something else:

Starting out as nationwide festivities, the mammoth gathering soon took a more violent turn. Within minutes of the final horn sounding on the 4-3 win, Czechoslovakian citizens stormed the streets in droves, making sure to target any and all representations of the Soviet occupation. The same *Time* article describes a brick being smashed through the plate-glass window of the office of the Soviet airline, Aeroflot [...] (Pinchevsky 2012:8).

Furthermore, in Bratislava, thousands of citizens stormed the streets with signs that read “Occupiers”, “Fascists” and “Brezhnev is a hooligan” (Pinchevsky 2012:8). Similar demonstrations took place even in other Czechoslovakian cities. The Soviet Union, the occupation power, saw the demonstrations as a counter-revolutionary threat, and wanted to curb the reformist movement once and for all. Dubček was forced to resign, and with that, the democratization movement in Czechoslovakia was over. “But the power of sport and its innate ability to unite people and perhaps plant a seed for eventual political change wasn’t lost”, argues Pinchevsky: “For the next 20 years, hockey players in Eastern Europe would look to this unique precedent in utilizing their on-ice talents to overcome the restrictions placed on them by the Communist state” (2012: 8-9). The two victories over the Soviet Union in the 1969 Ice Hockey World Championships were thus of great symbolic significance to the Czechoslovakian people.

Robert E. Rinehart (2007) has studied a similar event, more specifically how the Cold War rhetoric in sports was staged during the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, and the Melbourne Summer Olympics shortly thereafter in November – December 1956, where Hungary won over the Soviet Union in a fierce and legendary water polo match. The Olympic water polo victory served, argues Rinehart, to coalesce, if not a whole nation embroiled in life and death, then at least the Hungarian refugees and athletes:

At minimum, as a form of political resistance, the Soviet-Hungarian water polo match became a fragment for Hungarian collective memory, a tiny taste of satisfaction for Free Hungarians in Australia and for soon-to-defect athletes. The water polo victory largely became an *indirect* icon for the revolutionary movement, and a symbolic sign of resistance to ‘those butchers’, the heretofore ‘physically dominant’ Soviet Union (2007:56).

According to Rinehart, national identity may crystallize around a highly charged moment. Clearly, this match was a crystallization of national identity for Hungarians during the time of the 1956 Summer Olympics – it was a match that provided symbolic resistance to the Soviet occupation:

The Hungarian water polo team’s victory over the Soviet Union and its nearly anti-climactic garnering of the gold medal at the Melbourne Olympics demonstrated more than a simple victory of a proud and capable water polo team. It contained symbolic messages. The victory, and the context surrounding it, restated to the world that the politically significant terrain of sport still nourishes forms of resistance (Rinehart 2007:45–46, 56).

Political resistance in sport may emerge, claims Rinehart, “when a group feels that a sporting event can be used as an effective tool for political change. There may be planned or spontaneous political resistance: the key element is the attempt at effecting change” (2007:47). As the revolution had been crushed by the force of the Soviet Union, words and opinion were the last resort, and the 1956 Melbourne Olympics “created high visibility and opportunity for Hungarian athletes, which meant that their participation and subsequent victories could form oppositional signs of political resistance to the Soviet regime in Hungary” (Rinehart 2007:55). In the same way that hockey is a national sport in Czechoslovakia, Hungary has a long and successful tradition in water polo, and “much of the antecedents to the water polo match between the Soviet Union and Hungary created and intensified the symbolic nature of sports contests from [being] representative of national pride to instilling national pride” (Rinehart 2007:45). The game’s intensity was downplayed in the press and in later historical reports, however – perhaps in part because the Australian media were interested in putting on a good show at their Olympics (Rinehart 2007:54). Nonetheless, photographs of the

successful Hungarian water polo teams clearly show the players' feelings, Rinehart claims:

The Hungarian water polo gold medal teams (1932, 1936, 1952) are portrayed as bemusedly jubilant, smiling, cocky, arrogantly intense, and confident. In the photograph of the 1956 Hungarian gold medal winners, team members hold their medals unsmilingly. In fact, one player has his head bowed, while two others look extremely pensive. The mood of the team is reflective of the inner turmoil they are feeling (2007:56).

Similarly, it is possible to interpret the Czechoslovakian players' faces in the press photographs and in television broadcasts of the hockey games against the Soviet Union in the 1969 World Cup, when they, as the winning team, listen to their national anthem after the match.

How then, was the tournament depicted in the newspapers under scrutiny here?

The Tournament and the Swedish Media

It was not at all evident that Sweden could muster the required resources to take over the hosting of the Championships. A mere half a year was available for the preparations. The Swedish Ice Hockey Association first attempted to secure the financial standing of the tournament. Negotiations were initiated with the Swedish Radio/TV regarding compensation for the expected loss of audience in the stadiums due to the radio and television broadcasts. Further negotiations were opened with the City of Stockholm, rent cuts during the championships, and possible sponsors were sought through advertising agents. Here, Helge Berglund's wide network came in handy: not only was he the President of the Swedish Ice Hockey Association, he was also a leading politician in the Municipality of Stockholm and a prominent member of Sweden's largest political party, the Social Democrats, currently in government.

Furthermore, it was necessary to raise support for the event inside Sweden. Here Eklöw could take advantage of his position as a sports journalist with *DN*. He began publishing enthusiastic articles in the newspaper about the upcoming World Cup event. Slowly but surely this helped increase the enthusiasm for the tournament around the country. Eklöw's colleagues in other newspapers soon followed suit. They managed to muster considerable interest in Sweden: around 200,000 tickets for the games were sold, while several million people out of a population of approximately 8 million followed the games on TV and radio (Årets *ishockey* 1969:16).

Sweden merely had one TV channel at that time, the public service broadcaster Swedish Television (SVT).² Six matches were broadcast live, and

the colour broadcasts required rebuilding of the lighting facilities at the Ice Hockey Stadium: four new colour television cameras were purchased by the SVT, and a “slow motion” machine was hired (Reimer 2002:96). The television coverage of the games attracted a large audience. Seventy four per cent of the population watched the match between Sweden and the Soviet Union, which remains one of the highest audience figures ever recorded for a TV broadcast in Sweden.

The first match between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union on March 21, 1969, went live on Swedish television, as it did in Czechoslovakia and other countries. Viewers could hear a group of Czechoslovakians in the stands chanting, “Revenge for August ‘68!”. However, the anti-Soviet placards in the stadium were not visible in the TV images from the match, in accordance with a decision by the producer Lennart Jelbe (Reimer 2002:96). No tapes of the first match between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union were saved, however (Lind 2014). Because the videotapes were so expensive at that time, a number of tapes were re-used in order to cut costs. Due to the soaring inventory costs, many tapes were even scrapped. Despite this, some sections from the second match between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union have been saved.³

The Swedish Portrayal of the Tournament

In the spring of 2013, news broke that the Swedish newspaper *DN* was paid by the CIA to spread anti-communist propaganda during the 1950s and 1960s.⁴ With that in mind, and the knowledge of the significance of the Cold War for the development of international ice hockey in the post-war era, one might suspect that *DN*’s reporting from the 1969 World Championships was saturated with fervent anti-Soviet tirades or impassioned cries for the benefits of liberal democracy as a way of life. However, that was not the case. The great geopolitical tensions of the time were certainly a recurrent theme in the media reporting of the tournament, but the main focus of the writers seems to have been on the games *qua* sporting contests, as well as on the players and coaches as competitors, sport stars and human beings. This was primarily the case with the Swedish ones, and at least in the beginning. In fact, judging by the topics in the reporting during the first week of the tournament, the Swedish reporters were at first mostly concerned with the question of Team Sweden’s chance for a high position in the standings.⁵

At that stage, the Cold War rivalries in the reporting only surfaced in passing, when the issue was “forced upon” the writer. This can be seen when Team Czechoslovakia appeared for their first game, wearing jerseys with the old coat of arms rather than the “expected” abbreviation CSSR. *DN* explained this with reference to an anonymous Czechoslovakian source, stating that “[b]lack home

the folks nowadays read the letters as Czechoslovak Republic [...]. Hence, you can understand that we chose the coat of arms instead" (March 16, 1969).

A couple of days later, March 20, the paper acknowledged that Team USSR received their first "neutral" greetings in the tournament, when the whole youth section of the arena greeted their impressive 6-1 routing of Team Finland with incessant cheers and CCCP-banners. This in turn attracted the attention of "Russian newsreel photographers who rushed there to take pictures", *DN* reported.⁶

However, as the World Championships progressed, and the fierce matches between Team Czechoslovakia and Team USSR became the focal point of the international ice hockey fraternity, the ramifications of the Cold War came to permeate most of the news coverage in *DN*. Rather than explicitly discussing the importance of the tense political situation for the ice hockey games, the reporters tended to downplay the hostility by portraying it as little more than conventional sporting competitiveness. This can be seen in the editorial "Czech optimism: 'We must defeat the Russians'", published on March 20, the same day as the first game between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. In this editorial, the Czechoslovakian star player Josef Cerny is quoted as saying: "A victory over the Soviet Union is what we are longing for most of all! [...] Nothing is lost yet, but if we are going to stand a chance of conquering the gold medal, we must win tonight. And I believe we are in a great place to do so."

This is a noteworthy way of portraying the situation, given that it tones down the cutthroat actions on the ice, labelling them as little more than regular athletic competitiveness, as it is the quest for the gold medals that is depicted as the driving force, not the geopolitical tensions in question. Still, it could be argued that the reporters did not have to mention the events in Prague, as the readers could hardly avoid connecting the events themselves.

Besides, there are more than a few paragraphs where the reporters are addressing the significance of the tense political situation in Eastern Europe for the Czechoslovakian and Soviet players. For example, the day following Team CSSR's 2-0 victory in the first game against Team USSR, Thorwald Olsson wrote: "And what was the heroes' first comment afterwards? Well, 'finally [the first] victory since August!' They were of course referring to the Soviet invasion in August".⁷ Olsson continued the topic the following day, citing the political aspects of the massive celebrations of the Czechoslovakian players after the match. He elaborated on the festivities, before asking the President of the Czechoslovakian Ice Hockey Association, Dr. Cervenka, for his take on the connection between sport and politics. Dr. Cervenka replied: "It is a more or less natural position for us with the situation being as it is".⁸

The paper also ran stories on how first "the thriller" game between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia helped the organizers sell out all the tickets for the second game, and how this would benefit the Swedish youth ice hockey programme with hard cash.⁹ The great anticipation of the second game even

translated into a first page report the day after the matchup, with the ostentatious headline “Prague explodes in happiness over the victory”. The anonymous writer stated that the whole of Czechoslovakia

exploded in a victory-intoxicated roar when the final buzzer went off in the game between the Czechs and the Soviets [...], the Vaclav Square in Prague instantly turned into a vortex of tens of thousands of [people] celebrating the triumph: 4–3. A choir started chanting “for August, for August”. Hundreds of young people blew in hunting horns, and taxis and civilian cars drove slowly through the crowds with howling horns. A police car equipped with speakers joined in the tributes and showed no signs of wanting to intervene to restore order to the traffic.¹⁰

In the sport section the same day, the paper dissected the game, stating that the Czechoslovakian players “had played more than 100 % of their capacity” in order to beat their opponent. The paper further saluted the fact that “the little brother had pinched the big brother”.¹¹ A couple of days later, the paper lamented that “one cries with the Czechs” as their two heroic victories over Team USSR were not sufficient for them to secure the gold medals.¹²

However, arguing that this coverage meant that *DN* dwelled on the topic of the Cold War in its reporting on the 1969 World Championships would be an overstatement. Rather, it is important to note that the paper – at least the sport editor-in-chief, Rudolf Eklöw – repeatedly went out of their way to trivialize the tournaments’ implications as a Cold War battleground, stating that the most crucial thing about the games between the Czechoslovakians and the Soviets was neither the hostility on the ice, nor the massive celebrations in Czechoslovakia after Team CCSR had beaten Team USSR, but that the players actually came to face each other.¹³ A telling example of this take on the matter is Rudolf Eklöw’s résumé in *DN* of the World Championships on March 31: “As far as I’m concerned, the most crucial thing of this tournament was that the Soviet and Czech sporting-peers could actually face one another on the ice without too much hullabaloo. That the teams did not greet each other after the bout should be regarded as a mere trifle.”

All in all, however, *DN*’s way of downplaying the Cold War rivalries might not be all that surprising, given the conventional notion that sports and politics must be kept apart among fans and sports people alike. It is also possible that Eklöw’s position as the Vice President of the Swedish Ice Hockey Association contributed, as the organizers undoubtedly did everything in their power to keep the political turmoil from overshadowing the sporting contest. Moreover, this take on the matter also tied in well with the Swedish national identity and the international policy of the Swedish government at the time, with its emphasis on neutrality and striving for international reconciliation (Stark 2010: 225–228, 236, 271).

The Norwegian Portrayal of the Tournament

In 1969, *Aftenposten* was published six days a week, save for Sundays. All in all, the reporting from the tournament by Norway's largest broadsheet was fairly detailed. The first day of the tournament, March 15, *Aftenposten* had an article on the welcome reception in the City Hall the day before, and on the friendly welcome everyone received in Stockholm. The paper even highlighted that this was the first time that computer technology was used in the press section. A major article saw the tournament from a purely competitive point of view, with an assessment of the opposing teams' chances of success in the championships. In particular, it focused on the charged matches between the neighbouring countries Sweden and Finland. Political aspects of the matches between Czechoslovakia, the USSR, Canada and the United States were not mentioned. Instead, the focus was on the traditional differences in style between the elegant play of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union on the one hand, and the more physically raw Canadians. *Aftenposten* even mentioned that Czechoslovakia imitated the Soviet tactics of strengthening the team with physically strong players to be able to hold sway against Canada. Thus, *Aftenposten* did not distinguish between Czechoslovakia and USSR, but between the more fair-playing, and, when it comes to behaviour in the rink, the more civilized national teams from Eastern Europe on the one hand, and the more brutal Canadian team on the other.

Almost half way into the tournament, a big *Aftenposten* headline on 21 March claimed that "Soviet-Czechoslovakia becomes Ice Hockey World Championship's climax", and that everybody were now looking forward to that particular match. In a follow-up article further down the page, titled "Czechs have the most minutes in the penalty box of all the teams", *Aftenposten* noted that the Czechoslovakians seemed to have moved away from their role as the gentlemen of the rink. Czechoslovakia was the only team that had two men sent off the rink for unsportsmanlike conduct, Josef Golonka and Jan Suchy.

Moreover, it was not far from that Jaroslav Holik, accidentally, put a hard right fist on the American referee Trumble when he happened to run into his hockey stick. Holik was bleeding, threw off the helmet and spat towards the referee. The Czechoslovakian team claims that the judges stole the victory from them against Sweden. – We have never had such weak referees, said Holik. The weakest was that they expelled Holik for ten minutes for having spat after them [i.e. the referees], says *Dagens Nybeter*.

Here, it appears as if the Czechoslovakian team is behaving as poor sports and bad losers. *Aftenposten* made no independent assessment of the Czechoslovakian behaviour, but left it to the Swedish newspaper *DN*, in which Holik, rather than the referee, was regarded as the culprit. One may ask why *Aftenposten* did

not want to or dare perform an independent evaluation of the Czechoslovakians' behaviour. Those who read the article, however, could choose whether to interpret the Czechoslovakians' behaviour and the ensuing penalty minutes as something negative or positive: perhaps some readers saw this as evidence of how incredibly loaded the Czechoslovakians were in this tournament, how focused they were on winning – not allowing the Soviet Union to do so.

On March 29, the day after Czechoslovakia's second victory over the Soviet Union in the tournament, *Aftenposten* reported under the headline "Euphoria in Prague after 4-3" of great rejoicing in Czechoslovakia: "Delight demonstrations after hockey victory 4-3 over the Soviet Union erupted in Prague last night." The photo [by AP] was taken on Wenceslas Square, which the year before had been the centre of the many dramatic events after the Soviet invasion. The accompanying picture, at the top of the page, showed the large crowd at the Wenceslas Square. This is no insignificant place: Wenceslas Square is the centre of the business and cultural communities in the New Town of Prague. Many historical events occurred there, and it is a traditional setting for demonstrations, celebrations, and other public gatherings. The square is named after Saint Wenceslas, the patron saint of Bohemia. It is part of the historic centre of Prague, today a World Heritage Site.¹⁴ This photograph was therefore of great symbolic value for those who knew the historical significance of the Wenceslas Square. To further underscore the great political significance of the event, the article was published in the section for international news, rather than on the sports page.

On the sports page in *Aftenposten* on the same day, 29 March, however, Leif K. Nilsen comments on Czechoslovakia's 4-3 win that it was a match "with no black spots. It was fair from the first to the last minute, and although it would occasionally flash and sparkle in the eyes of both Czechs and Russians, there were never any foul play. But two Russian hockey defeats against Czechoslovakia is a tremendous loss of prestige for Russia – for several reasons." Here, Nilsen tried to downplay what he claimed many newspapers anticipated would be a "hate encounter" between the two national teams, and that the first game between the teams was not marked by hatred. There had been some rumours that there would be "policemen everywhere in the stands" throughout the match, something Nilsen considered to be "quite unnecessary after the first showdown between the Czechs and the Russians".

However, there was no guarantee of what might happen, said Nilsen, since "the Russian leadership claims that the hockey association's leader Helge Berglund and Rudolf Eklöw have not kept their promise that the Soviet team would get treatment on par with the others in this tournament". According to Nilsen, "the Russians" complained that the hosts did not halt the protests against them. The Russians were also upset that the audience in the stands were allowed to display their placards "attacking the Soviet Union". It is claimed, that it must have been an attempt to satisfy the Russians that both uniformed and plain

clothes' police remained in the stands during the match as additional safety measures, which turned out not to be necessary, Nilsen concluded.

Nilsen then continued quoting an article in the Swedish *DN*, arguing that the complex situation had prompted the Russians to state that they would "sweep the Czechs off the ice". Further, Nilsen criticised *DN* and Swedish sports journalism, arguing that "whether you can trust that it is properly quoted in the Swedish sports press, which is not always so careful about what they retell". The Russians had, on their part, received orders for fair play, not allowing themselves to be provoked, but "rather let the Czechs reveal themselves with unpleasant prank". Nilsen commented as follows: "We [i.e. *Aftenposten*] do not understand that it would have been any grounds for suggesting such a thing: although the Czechs have had too many penalties, they have, after all, never played unsympathetically."

Nilsen then continued with a detailed description of the match in question. The fact that he touched on so many aspects of the tensions surrounding the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia's national teams is an indication that the Cold War had an impact here too, that it was debated.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have shown how sports journalism can become an arena not only for sporting competition, but also for the channelling of large political tensions and conflicts. Two large broadsheet papers have been studied: The Swedish *DN* (*Dagens Nyheter/The Daily News*) and the Norwegian *Aftenposten* (*The Evening News*), both conservative newspapers. Our case study consisted of the 1969 Ice Hockey World Championship, the year after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and the so-called Prague Spring of 1968. We have shown that the Cold War was thematised and debated in the sports pages. By the same token, the World Cup tournament was even covered in the section for international news, with a focus on the conflict between the two countries, and the war-like situation that was taking place.

The two matches that occurred after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia received special attention in the media. Most people hoped, naturally, that the Czechoslovakians would win over their "occupiers", as this would have great symbolic value and in a way degrade the occupying force, the USSR. However, the sports journalists in the two newspapers studied attempted to remain neutral in their reporting of the matches between the USSR and Czechoslovakia. Furthermore, they seemed to regard the matches as pure sports competitions alongside the political conflicts unfolding outside the rink. This is in line with the sports movement's attempt to separate sport and politics, and something that is particularly noticeable in the *DN* coverage. The reason for this may be

that *DN*'s sports editor, Rudolf "R: et" Eklöw, also served on the Board of the Swedish Ice Hockey Association and was a major contributor to securing the Ice Hockey World Championships to Sweden after Czechoslovakia withdrew due to the Soviet invasion. There was a special interest from the Association's side to keep the political conflicts outside of the tournament, in order not to offend any of the participating countries. The fact that Sweden was a neutral country, and not a member of NATO, may be significant in this regard, as well as the Social Democratic government of the day.

However, it was inevitable that the Cold War and the conflict between Czechoslovakia and the USSR broke through *DN*'s reporting from the tournament. The Cold War seemed to have been even more visible in reporting of the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten*. Perhaps this was because Norway was not the host country and therefore did not have to take the same view of sensitive political issues as *DN*'s sports journalists. The fact that Norway, unlike Sweden, was a member of NATO may also have played a role here, but that was still not sufficiently visible in *Aftenposten*'s coverage from the tournament.

Both *DN* and *Aftenposten* seemed to agree, however, that for Czechoslovakia beating the Soviet Union was more than defeating another team; it was defying their occupants.

Notes

1. They could probably also follow the game by radio
2. A second SVT channel was launched in December 1969
3. See: <http://www.svtplay.se/klipp/1112870/vm-1969-sport-och-politik>
4. <http://sverigesradio.se/sida/avsnitt/171467?programid=2519>; <http://newsvoice.se/2013/03/03/cia-gav-dn-pengar-for-att-sprida-propaganda-under-kalla-kriget/>
5. See for instance Bobby Byström in *DN*, March 15, 1969; R:et Eklöw in *DN* March 16, 1969; *DN*, March 17, 1969; *DN*, March 19, 1969; Allison in *DN* March 19, 1969; Thorwald Olsson in *DN*, March 20, 1969
6. Bo Melander, *DN*
7. *DN*, February 22, 1969
8. Thorwald Olsson in *DN*, March 23, 1969
9. Bo Melander in *DN*, March 22, 1969
10. *DN*, March 29, 1969
11. Thorwald Ohlsson, *DN*, March 29, 1969; Sören Levehaft, *DN*, March 29, 1969
12. See Bobby Byström, *DN*, March 31, 1969; Sören Löfvenhaft, *DN*, March 31, 1969
13. See for instance *DN*, March 22, 1969; *DN*, March 31, 1969
14. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wenceslas_Square [© dato for nedlasting?]

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Chapter 9

Cold War Sweden and the Media

A Historiographical Overview and a Glance Ahead

Marie Cronqvist

Abstract

This article offers an overview of some main approaches in Swedish Cold War studies with a specific attention to how this field of research has dealt with the media as historical sources. The historiographical development is divided into two major research paradigms, one focusing on politics and Sweden in the postwar global environment, and the other focusing on the cultural aspects of the Cold War in Sweden. The last four decades have presented very different approaches to media as a source for historical inquiry, but also various understandings of the concept of media and theories about the interrelatedness of media forms. The broader aim of this article is not only to highlight the importance of recognizing the significance of broader media-historical perspectives to Cold War studies in general, but also to problematize Cold War historiography from the point of view of media history. Finally, some very tentative suggestions for future research into Swedish Cold War media history are presented.

Keywords: Sweden and the Cold War, Swedish media history, neutrality, Cold War historiography

In November 2014, Europe celebrated its quarter of a century since the fall of the Berlin wall. As the Cold War period gradually lingers into an even more distant past, new questions arise and new research themes need to be formulated. The purpose of this article is to approach Swedish Cold War media from a historiographical point of view with the aim of identifying some of tomorrow's most interesting research questions. I will argue that there have been two very different approaches in Swedish Cold War studies regarding the media as historical sources. As the research field has developed in Sweden, media has gradually entered into focus – and with this shift or broadening of empirical focus, new theoretical and methodological perspectives have broadened the field. Naturally, to some extent, this development mirrors international research in the field, but it also bears national trademarks. Due to the geo-strategic position of Sweden in the post war era and the centrality of the issue of neutrality, both

in matters of policy and in matters of culture and social life, Swedish Cold War researchers have chosen specific paths of historical inquiry that are interesting to compare to other countries. One aim of this article, which corresponds to the main objective of the present volume as a whole, is to contribute to such a comparative discussion.

The Swedish Press between East and West

Central to the rising field of Swedish Cold War studies in the 1970s and 1980s was the political and geostrategic position of Sweden in the East-West conflict. Up to the late 1990s, as in the other Nordic countries, research on Sweden in the Cold War was exclusively directed towards perceptions of, debates about, and implementations of national security strategies and policies. Thus, for a considerable number of years, a very strict focus on analyses of high-politics in a national context ruled out other possible approaches – comparative, social, economical or cultural (Olesen 2004:7-8).

In these early studies of Cold War high-politics, press debates stood out as essential historical sources alongside documents produced in diplomatic and/or political circles. A number of studies focused exclusively on how the Swedish press, from left to right, ideologically framed, described and debated the East-West conflict and how Swedish foreign policy was shaped in relation to specific issues. Among these we find Tomas Forser and Per Arne Tjäder's book on the debate about the so-called 'third standpoint' around 1950 (1972); Barry Holmström's work on the Swedish press and the Korean War (1972); Eva Block's analysis of the image of the US in Sweden (1976), and Eva Queckfeldt's study of the Vietnam war in the Swedish press (1981).¹ In these analyses, one cannot expect any traces of problematization of the concept of media. Emphasis was placed entirely on the newspaper press and – even more narrowly so – editorials and debates in the dailies. Yet, they are good examples of a general strand in contemporary history in which the reasons for any scholarly interest in the 20th century press was self-evident. In tune with other areas of historical research in the 1970s and 1980s, the hegemonic theories and methods were collected from the social sciences, not least the growing area of media and communication research, which at the time implied a clear emphasis on quantification of press content and media effects. Research questions evolved around media as opinion builders in foreign policy issues.

In addition, the books mentioned above are historiographically valuable not least because of their embeddedness in the Cold War experience; they bear witness to the prevalent predicaments of writing contemporary history without the benefit of hindsight. Sometimes it is but too easy to forget that in

the 1970s and 1980s, the Cold War was not a well-defined historical period, but indeed politics in the making (most often, the very term 'Cold War' was reserved for an earlier period). In this respect, Anders Berge's book *Det kalla kriget i Tidens spegel*, published in 1990, could be seen as a turning point. Berge's book is clearly marked by the end of the Cold War, and has thus a summarizing and reflective approach, but it also marks a shift – though modest – by its replacing of empirical focus from editorial content and debates in the newspapers to another press source: the magazine (in this case the Social Democratic *Tiden*) (Berge 1990).

An even firmer step towards the opening of new perspectives in the media history of Cold War Sweden came in 1995 with the publication of Alf W. Johansson's book on the famous Swedish publicist Herbert Tingsten, a political scientist and executive editor of the largest national newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* from 1946 to 1959. Paradoxically, while earlier research on Sweden and Cold War press had been almost exclusively focussed on Cold War 'great politics', Johansson efficiently introduced other relevant – but national or internal – themes such as the image of the welfare state, neutrality as a collective state of mind, and the community-building role of Social Democracy. Although not a Social Democrat but a liberal and an eager advocate for Swedish membership of NATO, Tingsten was nevertheless a 'megaphone for the *Zeitgeist*', Johansson argued (Johansson 1995). And with this book, research on Sweden and Cold War media was thus broadened in the placing of the Cold War in Sweden and not only Sweden in the Cold War.

Herbert Tingsten och det kalla kriget was published at a moment in time when Swedish 20th century neutrality was under massive public scrutiny in the wake of the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union. The heated so-called neutrality debate of the early 1990s also led to the appointment of the Commission of Neutrality Policy (Neutralitetspolitik-kommissionen), which issued its report in 1994 entitled *Had there been a war*. The report revealed the extensive Swedish preparations for reception of military assistance from the NATO powers.² Added together, the public debate and the commission report became a resolute take-off for Swedish Cold War research and in 1996, a large-scale research programme was launched, *Sverige under kalla kriget* (SUKK), in translation 'Sweden during the Cold War'. Although specific emphasis was placed on the early decades from the end of the Second World War to the beginning of the 1960s, the SUKK programme covered a range of different aspects concerning the history of neutrality in Sweden. It was primarily a co-operation between political scientists and contemporary historians in Gothenburg and Stockholm under the leadership of professors Ulf Bjereld, Karl Molin and Alf W. Johansson.

It remains beyond doubt that the impressive number of books and reports generated within the SUKK research programme over the years presented new

and important knowledge about Sweden in the Cold War.³ The programme was particularly timely and answered the loud public call for research on the paradoxes of Swedish post war neutrality. The gradual opening up of archives in the late 1990s and early 2000s also paved the way for new empirical data not least about Swedish foreign affairs, security policy and diplomacy which SUKK benefited from. However, when it came to the use of media as historical sources, the approaches in the SUKK programme followed the well-trodden path with a heavy focus on editorials and opinion material in the press while other relevant media forms such as broadcasting media, weekly press or magazines – or other media genres such as news narratives or feature journalism – were still left out.⁴ In their overview of Swedish Cold War historiography, written in 2004, Ulf Bjereld and Ann-Marie Ekengren indeed also noted the shortage of alternative theoretical approaches in Swedish Cold War historiography (Bjereld and Ekengren 2004, p. 164).

In this light, it is interesting to note that parallel to SUKK, another important and large-scale research programme on post war Swedish history was launched in the 1990s. Writing a comprehensive history of Swedish broadcast media and how it has developed as forms of public communication was the aim of the Swedish Foundation of Broadcast Media History (*Stiftelsen Etermedierna i Sverige*). Although these two research programmes most likely could have had much to gain from networking – and although there were many historians working in both research areas – there seem to have been virtually no exchange and there are no traces of cross-references. The fact that the Cold War, or any transnational or wider political or cultural context for that matter, has been largely absent in the research programme on Swedish broadcasting is apparent when reading Monika Djerf-Pierre's and Mats Ekström's introduction to *A history of Swedish broadcasting*, published in 2014, in which they summarize and reflect on the programme activities over the years (Djerf-Pierre and Ekström (eds.) 2014, p. 18).

Djerf-Pierre and Ekström rightfully stress the many merits of the project, not least the vital empirical knowledge through basic archival research that it has produced, but the questions that were never asked are of course often as interesting as the ones that were. What were the transnational contexts in which Swedish radio and television operated? What – if any – was the influence of the official neutrality policy on Swedish public service broadcasting regarding for example import and export of programmes in an age of East-West division? Such questions would have been as interesting from the point of view of SUKK as from the point of view of *Etermedierna i Sverige*. At the time they were, however, asked by none.

Cultural Narratives in Cold War Sweden

In Swedish Cold War studies, the books and reports that emerged from the successful SUKK programme opened for another strand of research in the late 1990s, one that was focusing more specifically on the cultural dimension. Inspired by theoretical approaches coined *the cultural turn* or *new cultural history* and an interest in the mediated narratives of everyday life instead of high-politics, the research project *Kalla krigets berättelser* (KKB), in translation 'Cold War narratives', resulted in a series of books in the first decade of the new millennium, some of which were doctoral dissertations.⁵ The project, considerably smaller than the large SUKK programme, was strongly inspired by what was in the 1990s a rapidly expanding and dynamic research field in the USA labelled 'Cold War Culture' or sometimes 'Cold War cultural studies.'⁶

Thus initially, the KKB project was designed by its co-ordinator, historian Kim Salomon, as a corrective to what was perceived as a hegemonic and much too narrow and elite view on Sweden in the Cold War. In order to cover the Swedish Cold War experience, the project members argued, a series of broader societal and cultural expressions and patterns also called for scholarly attention. In these studies, literature and the media took centre stage, not merely as complementary and relevant source materials for historical analysis but indeed as central arenas on which the Cold War narrative was constructed, constantly reinforced, but sometimes also challenged. The intention to analyse popular culture not as watered-down reflections of high policy but as social expressions powerful enough to influence political action, although sometimes in inverted or unexpected ways, bore witness to a wider inspiration from the cultural studies tradition in contemporary historical research of the late 1990s (Salomon 1999 (119) p. 60-69).

In several of the KKB sub-projects, including my own which analysed the spy narratives of 1950s and 1960s Swedish media, the aim was to identify and discuss the relationship between politics and everyday narratives of the Cold War, with specific attention to how the Cold War was lived on different levels of society.⁷ For such inquiries, a range of different media needed to be consulted, including news journalism, crime or science fiction, popular magazines, reportage books and feature films. In addition, the cartographies of the Cold War could be detected through analyses of political maps, text books in geography, and weather forecasts. Posters and advertising, radio and television, and material culture – from Tupperware products and Coca-Cola bottles to Hilton hotels and embassy buildings – were yet to be analysed from the perspective of how such media phenomena contribute to the construction of Cold War world views (Salomon 1999).

As a research field matures and new perspectives arise and flourish, the insufficiencies or gaps in earlier research usually becomes visible. In retrospect,

one problem that the KKB project perhaps failed to observe and express, at least initially, was precisely its heavy dependency of and influences from American Cold War cultural studies. The radical differences between Swedish and American views, narratives and conceptions of the Cold War became only too obvious as empirical research began to develop. And although 'the Americanization of Sweden' was one highly relevant research focus, the structures, histories and not least the changing ensembles of media in the USA were simply too often at odds with Swedish Cold War culture. Instead, the project came to deal as much with narratives of Swedish modernity, the so-called 'people's home' (*folkhemmet*) and images of the welfare state as it dealt with the Cold War. Neutrality was investigated not so much as a matter of policy, but as a state of mind.⁸

Therefore, it is interesting to note that at the same time as the KKB project was attempting to challenge the political-historical Cold War research paradigm from the angle of cultural history, there were a number of books in media and communication studies which covered the postwar period. Among these were for example Jan Ekecrantz', Tom Olsson's and Kristina Widestedt's *Nittonbun-drafemtiofem. Journalistiken och folkhemmet* (1995) as well as a number of doctoral dissertations such as Patrik Åker (1998), Kari Andén-Papadopoulos (2000); Tobias Lindberg (2004), Ulrika Torell (2004) and Amanda Lagerkvist (2005).⁹ These were all studies in which conceptualizations, constructions or representations of the 'people's home' or 'Swedish modernity' took centre stage while the Cold War had none or minor explanatory value. And although Andén-Papadopoulos thesis *Kameran i krig* dealt with the photographic staging of the Vietnam War in the Swedish press, it was not Cold War periodization or context that formed the main focus of her research questions. In that case, the Cold War political framework is to a larger extent referred to in Michael Godhe's *Morgondagens experter* (2004) about images of future technology and progress in Swedish popular science magazines of the 1950s.¹⁰

Future Cold War Media Histories?

Today, Swedish research proposals with 'folkhemmet' or even 'Cold War' in the title will probably reach success not because of, but rather despite, the use of these concepts. But if one for a moment extends the vision beyond Sweden or the Nordic countries, new developments in Cold War studies could be spotted. It is my firm impression that European Cold War studies is in an exciting and dynamic phase at the moment – incorporating perspectives on transnational and crossborder social, cultural, technological and economical exchange and collaboration¹¹ – but media historical perspectives in this field are still in a very early stage and need exploration.¹² With this in mind, what could be the next step in the study of the Cold War media landscape in Sweden – indeed, what

are possible approaches or themes in a media history of Cold War Sweden? In the conclusion here, I will tentatively suggest three possible fields of study.

The first field I would suggest is concerned with the Cold War and international politics in relation to the rise of media and communication studies in 1960s and 1970s academia.¹³ Such an approach could, on a meta level, discuss the production of knowledge in scientific debates and discussions about the rapid development of media technologies, as well as hopes and fears about the significance of propaganda and mediated messages in social life. What happens when concepts such as ‘mass communication’ and theories of media effects such as ‘magic bullet’ or ‘hypodermic needle’ enters into a language? Is there a relation between the Cold War discourse and the influence of shooting analogies in mid-20th century mass communication studies? The discursive analysis could be complemented by analyses on the level of agency in a Swedish context: How were these new theories of the media used in the national so-called ‘total defence’ (*totalförsvaret*)? Who were the representatives and advocates of such theories in a military context; that is, what linkages were there between the three areas of media and communication research, the growing field of Public relations, and the national defence? Such possible future research could draw successfully upon recent international scholarship in the field, including the edited books *How reason almost lost its mind. The strange career of Cold War rationality* (2013) and *Cold War Social Science. Knowledge production, liberal democracy, and human nature* (2012), with the ambition to situate the history of Cold War knowledge in the specific Swedish and/or Nordic historical context.¹⁴

A second possible approach would be to focus on the interrelatedness of different media and how they came together to shape specific media events in the context of the Cold War. In such a pursuit of focusing the ‘in-betweens’ of media, concepts such as intermediality, convergence and remediation, all of which are now frequently employed by media historians, could be useful. In a Cold War context, this would also demand a further and deeper look at the transnational aspects of postwar national media industries, for example the central role of television and the expansion of broadcasting media in relation to everything from the moon landing to nuclear tests, but also the media infrastructure and media practices in relation to specific conflict areas and/or national or international events. For example, as I argued earlier in this chapter, I think much is left to investigate when it comes to the changing media ensembles¹⁵ and the transnational dimensions of Swedish public service broadcasting.

Along a third possible path of study, the media representations of the Cold War in our own time could be explored, including the manufacturing and commercialisation of Cold War memories in mass media, digital media, and in the field of cultural or industrial heritage. Such explorations could connect to the existing scholarship on media and memory, including for example scholar-

ship on the mediatisation and/or commodification of memory, the relationship between journalism and memory, or the relationship between war, media and memory.¹⁶ While the lion's share of this research has been made in and about the United States and/or from an Anglo-American perspective, to approach Cold War mediated memories from European or Nordic perspectives would certainly open up different paths, presumably both empirical and theoretical. How is the Cold War mediated and remembered in a country so strongly marked by the cultural construction of neutrality? How can we explain the long series of Swedish museum exhibitions and popular history television programmes with the Cold War as their main theme?¹⁷

Finally, it is of course crucial to remember and recognize the simple fact that historiographical reflections such as this one are always written from a certain perspective. The three possible future fields of study I mention are not only painted with hasty and broad strokes, but they also mirror my own current research interests and preferences. Nevertheless, I firmly believe that Swedish or Nordic Cold War studies have everything to gain from moving to incorporate more integrated perspectives, not least to sincerely problematize and review Cold War political action, global conflicts and events, technology and science, as well as ideological discourses, from a media-historical point of view. In the end, a peculiar and striking fact of the Cold War is that it remained cold. To a large extent, it was played out in the media and by the media. And when we remember it, we do this through its media representations.

Notes

1. Forser and Tjäder 1972; Holmström 1972; Block 1976; Queckfeldt 1981.
2. *Had there been a war. Preparations for the reception of military assistance 1949-1969*, SOU 1994:11E. English translation of *Om kriget kommit. Förberedelser för mottagandet av militärt bistånd 1949-1969. Betänkande av Neutralitetspolitikkommisionen*, SOU 1994:11.
3. All are listed in *Sveriges säkerhet och världens fred. Svensk utrikespolitik under kalla kriget*, 2008, written by the three main co-ordinators as a summary of the SUKK programme.
4. See for example Malm 1998, Ottosson 2000. See also Ekengren 1997.
5. Salomon, Larsson and Arvidsson, (eds.) 2004; Cronqvist 2004; Kärrholm 2005; Wiklund 2005; Salomon 2007.
6. This research field was ignited by a few influential books around 1990, not least Elaine Tyler May's *Homeward bound. American families in the Cold War era*, 1989, and Stephen J. Whitfield's *The Culture of the Cold War*, 1991.
7. See Cronqvist 2004; Salomon, Larsson and Arvidsson, eds. 2004; Kärrholm 2005; Cronqvist, Sturfelt and Wiklund, eds. 2008; Salomon 2009.
8. Inspiration came from other researchers, for example Stråth 2004.
9. Ekecrantz, Olsson and Widestedt, eds. 1995; Lagerkvist 2005; Lindberg 2004; Torell 2004; Åker 1998.
10. Andén-Papadopoulos 2000; Godhe 2004.
11. See for example Autio-Sarasma and Miklóssy, eds. 2013; Annette Vowinkel, Payk and Lindenberger, eds. 2012; Ingimundarson and Magnúsdóttir, eds. 2014.
12. Among the few exceptions is Badenoch, Fickers and Heinrich-Franke, eds. 2013.

13. Interesting perspectives are opened up by film scholar Per Vesterlund in his chapter on three Nordic conferences in mass communication in the early 1970s. Per Vesterlund, "När medier blev vetenskap. Om tre nordiska massmediekonferenser 1972-1974" in Marie Cronqvist, Patrik Lundell and Pelle Snickars, eds., *Återkopplingar*, 2014, p. 51-69.
14. Erickson et al, eds. 2013; Solovey and Hamilton Cravens, eds. 2012.
15. The concept of 'media ensemble' is here an alternative to the media system approach, which has been used by Nordic media historians, for example Henrik G. Bastiansen, 'Media history and the study of media systems', in *Media History*, vol 14, iss 1, 2008; Jonas Harvard and Patrik Lundell, eds., *1800-talets mediesystem*, 2010.
16. For the commodification of memory, see for example Landsberg 2004; for journalism and memory, see Zelizer 1992; and for war, media and memory, see Williams 2009. Good overviews are to be found in Garde-Hansen 2011; and Erll and Rigney, eds. 2009.
17. Some examples of museums with large Cold War exhibitions that has opened in the last two or three years are Flygvapenmuseum in Linköping, Marinmuseum in Karlskrona, and Stockholms Länsmuseum. Examples of television programmes in which Cold War materialities are explored are *Hemliga svenska rum* (2008), *Svenska hemligheter* (2010) and *Kalla krigets fordon* (2014).

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Chapter 10

“The Most Disgraceful of All Crimes”

Critical Journalism during the Cold War?

A Norwegian Spy Case Study¹

Paul Bjerke

Abstract

The late 1970's was a transitional period in Norwegian journalism. The Party Press was slowly replaced by the “independent”, corporate run press, and the traditional minutes were replaced by the “tabloid” storytelling. This chapter analyses how these changes in journalism ideals were reflected in the coverage of a spy story in the late Cold War. Did the new investigative and/or populist ideals of journalism influence the coverage of a female spy who was seen as a threat to the Norwegian society's security? The chapter uses mainstream media coverage of the Gunvor Galtung Haavik espionage affair as a case and concludes that a pro Government Cold War frame was dominating. The glimpses of critical and investigative reporting against the authorities reflect the still existing party press conflicts.

Keywords: espionage, journalism ideals, party press, Gunvor Haavik, newspapers, framing

64 year old Gunvor Galtung Haavik was arrested in flagrante in January 1977 while she handed over classified documents to *KGB* officers in the outskirts of Oslo. The state prosecutor later charged her for almost 30 years of espionage for the Soviet Union. The court proceeding was scheduled for November of that year, but Haavik died in prison in August, before the court was able to rule on her criminal case.

Haavik was probably the most important Norwegian female spy during the cold war. Prime Minister Odvar Nordli (Labour Party) himself made the arrest public.² It was a political shock and became a big media affair which the national newspapers have printed stories about until recent days.

12 years earlier, Ingeborg Lygren, a secretary at the secret police, had been arrested and accused of espionage, probably being confused with Haavik. Lygren was released by the authorities and given compensation from Parliament. In hindsight, one of the unresolved questions is why the police did not investigate Haavik in 1965.

This chapter analyses how three mainstream Norwegian newspapers, *Aftenposten* (conservative), *Arbeiderbladet* (Labour) and *Verdens Gang* (VG) (populist tabloid) covered and framed this sensational espionage case in the late Cold War.

The Cold War Frame

Inspired by Erving Goffman's classical book *Frame Analysis* (1974), "framing" has achieved great popularity as a useful concept in the analysis of journalistic writing and journalistic practices throughout the Western world (Entman et al 2009; Matthes 2009; Vliegenthart and van Zoonen 2011). "Framing" is about how some aspects of "reality" are selected and made salient in a media text or a series of texts. Creation of frames helps to define and refine a phenomenon or an event. The frame is not openly shared with readers or viewers. It is therefore considered to be "ontologically distinct from the topic of the news story" (Pan and Kosicky 1995).

The Cold War dominated the world from World War II until the 1990's and inflected journalism in many ways. It was a strong *frame*, partly constructed by journalism and news media and partly reproduced and transmitted by them. American research has showed that the US mainstream media generally promoted the Cold War frame in a positive manner. Robert Entman claims that the period of the Cold War was characterised by a dominant paradigm that organised "normal" elite thinking, media coverage and public response to foreign and defence policy. According to this paradigm or frame,

the problem was communist aggression and intention to conquer the world; the cause was an ideology melding atheism with ruthless totalitarian dictatorship; the remedy was constant vigilance and struggle on ideological, diplomatic, economic, and military fronts; and the evaluation tended toward moral condemnation of the communist side and idealisation of "free world" allies. Virtually any problematic situation that arose in the world could be, and was, assimilated to the Cold War paradigm (Entman 2004:95).

Daniel Hallin has argued that the Cold War frame not only dominated American society's understanding of foreign affairs, but also was part of an ideological consensus that defined journalism as such:

The other historical condition which made possible the consolidation of the "high modernist" model of journalism was the high level of ideological consensus which prevailed during this period, centred around the watered-down corporatism and welfare state which emerged from the New Deal and the "bipartisan" consensus of Cold War foreign policy (Hallin 2006).

Was this also the situation in Norway in 1977? Earlier research has found contradicting tendencies. Some studies have showed close relations between the media, the pro NATO political parties and the Government in political journalism (Bastiansen 2009, Skre 2010, Fonn 2012) and between the media, the police and the Government in clandestine matters (Heradstveit 1973; Bergfald 1975; Nilsen and Sjøe 1998). Other studies have found an evolving, more critical journalistic attitude towards authorities in the coverage of national security matters in the late 1970's (Dahl and Bastiansen 2000). These contradictions may reflect that the period was a transition time in Norwegian journalism.

Journalism's "Social Mission" – From Support to Criticism

The journalist profession and the media industry reason their activities with an obligation to carry out a *social mission* (Oltedal 2012; Roppen and Allern 2010; Kovach and Rosenstiehl 2007; Deuze 2005; Leigh 1947). Norwegian journalists' own understanding of their social mission has changed over the last 40 years from a set of *commitments* to a set of *rights* (Bjerke 2010).

Until the 1970s, the "mission" was largely understood as journalism's commitment to support the "progress", the reconstruction of the country after World War II and the NATO membership (Røssland 1999; Nilsen and Sjøe 1998; Skre 2010; Fonn 2012). During these years, Norway had a distinct *party press* and journalism was often seen as an integrated part of party politics (Høyer 1982; Bastiansen 2009). But most of the newspapers and the news media's common organisations shared these kinds of *commitments* to the main institutions of society (Røssland 1999; Nilsen and Sjøe 1998; Bjerke 2009; 2010).³

Beginning around 1970, the social mission was increasingly perceived as a *right to criticise* government and other powerful institutions and to defend individuals against abuse or negligence from authorities and other powerful agencies. The most important formalisation of this new understanding of the press' social mission was a new, initial chapter in the Code of Ethics.⁴ The paragraphs were introduced in 1975 and have later been only cosmetically changed. The press' organisations listed a variety of offensive claims of the press' *rights* within the community, for example:

It is the right of the press to carry information on what goes on in society and to uncover and disclose matters, which ought to be subjected to criticism. It cannot yield to any pressure from anybody who might want to prevent open debates, the free flow of information and free access to sources.⁵

The press ethics changed from an implicit principle of protecting important institutions in society (Røssland 1998, Omdal 2005) to a principle of unabridged freedom to criticise them. The new Code of Ethics also declared, "The individual

newspaper ... must be able to act freely and independently.” Thus, the Code formalised what is the most central ethical norm of Norwegian journalists today, they shall be “independent” of any external interest (Brurås 2001; Hovden 2008; Bjerke 2009:401). The previous ethical commitments to participate in institution building mostly disappeared.

Andreas Norland⁶ who chaired the revision committee, claimed that the new Code was a programmatic speech on behalf of the press and the journalistic profession. He said it was “*not just a collection of maxims, it is also a declaration of independence*”.⁷ The revision of 1975 was both a result and a stimulation of a professionalisation process, expressed in a stronger professional identity and stronger organisations. The Code introduced stronger boundaries against the Government in the way that “the first paragraph addresses the authorities with allegations of the press’ position in society” (Sørum 2006: 51). Media historians Dahl and Bastiansen write, “The liberal ideology of the press as an ‘independent fourth estate’ with the right to scrutinize the Government came in as a new element” (Dahl and Bastiansen 2003:317, my transl.).

The mid-seventies’ revision of the press’ self-understanding established scrutinizing of the authorities as a fundamental ethical norm. How was this new journalistic ideal implemented in journalism concerning espionage, an important defence and security matter during the Cold War?

The Haavik Case

Gunvor Galtung Haavik was the daughter of a doctor in a small industrial municipality located in the Hardanger Fjord on Norway’s West Coast (Tofte 1987:143). She moved to Oslo to study medicine. However, she had a great interest in Russian literature and art and started reading the language with help from immigrants (Tofte 1987:143). One of them, illustrator Vladimir Carrick, became a great mentor to her (Jacobsen 1992:16f).

In 1943, Haavik met Valentin Koslov, a Russian prisoner of war, while she was working as a nurse in Bodø. They became lovers for a short while until he managed to escape from the POW camp and flee to neutral Sweden. After a short stay in Sweden, Koslov returned home to the Soviet Union, but Haavik could never forget the love of her life. In 1947, she applied for a position at the Norwegian Embassy in Moscow (Tofte 1987:143ff).

From Moscow, Haavik was able to travel to Leningrad and meet Koslov, by then married with a family. However, they continued to meet and correspond with help from one of the embassy’s Russian drivers. He was a KGB agent, and the KGB organised and surveilled their relationship and meetings, and recruited Koslov as an agent (Tofte 1987:144; Jensen 1994). In April 1950, the KGB used threats against him to enlist also Gunvor Haavik as an agent (Jacobsen

1992:88ff; Tofte 1987:143). The espionage activity continued until Haavik was ordered by the Foreign office to return home to Oslo in 1956. Her contact with the KGB resumed two years later and she supplied various KGB contacts with secret Norwegian government documents until she was detained on January 27, 1977. The arrest was made public the following day.

As early as the 1950s, the Norwegian Police Surveillance Agency (POT) had been informed, by the Soviet defector Anatoly Golitsyn, about an employee at the Norwegian Embassy in Moscow who was "a KGB informant" (Jacobsen 1995:128f). In 1965, Ingeborg Lygren was arrested and accused of espionage. She had served at the Norwegian Embassy in Moscow and matched the defector's information. Lygren served as Vilhelm Evang's secretary. Evang was head of the Norwegian military intelligence (The Norwegian Defence Security Department, FSK). He had been a member of the communist affiliated student group *Mot Dag*, but like most of the group members, he later joined the ruling Labour Party (Jacobsen 1995:22).

This led Evang to be in major conflict with the head of POT, the more conservative Asbjørn Bryhn (Jacobsen 1995:117ff) and Bryhn arrested Lygren without informing Evang. However, the POT was unable to build a case against her and had to release the suspect from custody. The case was finally dismissed due to "lack of evidence" (Jacobsen 1995:132ff, Andersen 1992:292ff). After a heated political debate, Ingeborg Lygren was awarded financial compensation by Parliament, and Bryhn and the POT were criticised for their actions by a Governmental commission.⁸ However, the POT found it very difficult to admit their blunder (Andersen 1992:314).

It was twelve more years before Gunvor Galtung Haavik, likely the person Golitsyn had earlier referred to, was arrested. The arrest was *not* based on Golitsyn's information, but was rather the result of secret monitoring of a suspected Soviet official in Oslo. What was the reason behind the procrastination? Journalist Alf R. Jacobsen claims that military intelligence (FSK) had conducted preliminary investigations as early as 1966 and was confident that Haavik was the real spy.⁹ However, the FSK was not able to arrest Norwegian citizens – and Jacobsen writes:

The new Head of the Police Surveillance Agency (POT) would not challenge the compact majority, who still thought that Ingeborg Lygren was guilty. It would have broken with Angleton's¹⁰ and Bryhn's world views, and Gunnar Haarstad¹¹ did not have the power, nor the imagination to do that (Jacobsen 1995:163) (My transl.).

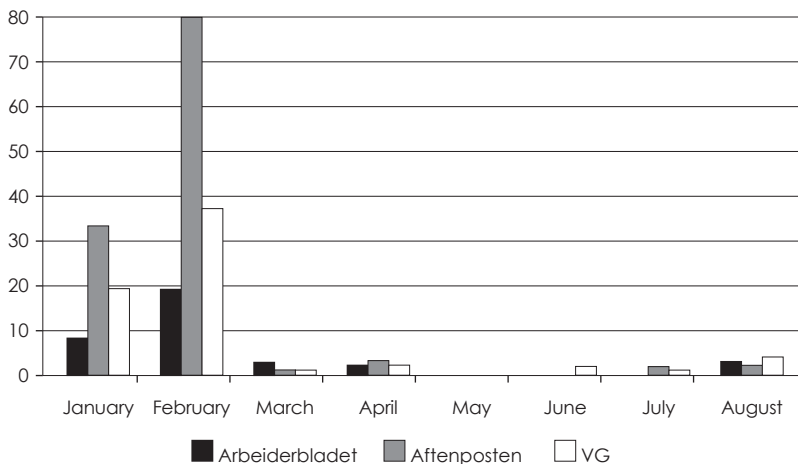
Roy Andersen concludes in a biography on Asbjørn Bryhn that Bryhn "*was still convinced of Lygren's guilt*" when he died in 1990 (Andersen 1992:314f).

Critical Scrutinizing – of Whom and What?

A study of *Aftenposten*, *Arbeiderbladet* and *Verdens Gang (VG)* gives a picture of how large, mainstream, agenda setting newspapers with different formats and political affiliations covered a central Cold War event in 1977. *Arbeiderbladet* and *Aftenposten* were the leading political newspapers in the labour and conservative press (Bastiansen 2009). *VG* was the “up and coming” boulevard paper (Eide 1998).

All the three newspapers published the arrest of Haavik as their top story on Saturday January 29th. The case was then referred to with irregular intervals in all the newspapers until her death in August, as figure 1 shows.

Figure 1. The Coverage of the Haavik Case in *Arbeiderbladet*, *Aftenposten* and *VG* from January to August 1977



Aftenposten printed a total of 105 articles in 29 different issues. The vast majority (99 articles) were ordinary news stories. In addition, *Aftenposten* published three editorials and three comments on the matter. 85 articles were printed during the first two weeks.

VG published 72 individual articles and notices about the Haavik affair. Both *Aftenposten* and *VG* “gathered” several stories and printed them together, usually with a striking front page title.

Arbeiderbladet’s coverage was by far the most modest in scope. The newspaper printed a total of 23 news articles, three editorials and five letters from readers. The Haavik affair made the front page in six editions.

It follows from the discussions above that at least five actors could have been exposed to critical media scrutiny: the defendant spy herself, the Soviet intelligence organisation KGB, the Soviet authorities, the Norwegian Police Surveillance Agency POT and the Norwegian authorities (the Government and

the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice and Defence). How did Norwegian mainstream newspapers scrutinize these actors?

Table 1. Articles Containing Critical Assessment of Different Actors in VG, *Arbeiderbladet* and *Aftenposten* (January-August 1977 by newspaper, % of all articles concerning the Haavik case)¹²

Actor/Newspaper	VG	Arbeiderbladet	Aftenposten	Total
Soviet authorities/KGB	14	11	12	13
Norwegian authorities	11	3	7	8
Haavik (the alleged spy)	10	0	5	6
Minister Evensen	8	0	10	8
POT (Norwegian intelligence service)	0	6	1	1
Media	0	17	1	3
No critical assessment	58	75	74	69
Total ¹³	101	112	110	108
N=	(72)	(36)	(105)	(213)

As Table 1 shows, the majority of the articles were free from critical assessments¹⁴ of any of the actors. The most widespread negative critical assessments were directed against Soviet authorities and the KGB. There was also some negative criticism against the Norwegian authorities, especially the lack of security procedures in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see below).

The two more conservative papers presented some critical scrutiny of Minister Evensen’s relocation of Gunvor Haavik in 1965, while the Social Democratic newspaper defended Evensen and attacked the (conservative) media for its unfair persecution of him (see below).

The Norwegian Police Surveillance Agency (POT)

It is the responsibility of the Norwegian police to expose and apprehend Norwegian citizens and foreign nationals engaged in illegal intelligence against domestic targets. In 1977, the services were organised into a special unit called the *Police Surveillance Agency* (POT).

During the first days, the media unanimously praised the POT. *Arbeiderbladet*’s editorial claimed, “The latest disclosures show that the Norwegian intelligence system is working properly. The authorities have also demonstrated a willingness to take action when necessary.”¹⁵ In addition: “A meticulous and lengthy work has led to unveiling of the espionage. When the authorities were ready to take action, they acted with determination and efficiency.”¹⁶

Aftenposten was in the same generous mood. The newspaper wrote that Haavik had been tailed for several months and the fact “that she never discov-

ered her ‘shadows’ indicates how clever the Norwegian policemen have been. The intelligence service has done an outstanding job”.¹⁷ *Aftenposten*’s editorial followed up: “the evidence of police surveillance capability and efficiency to safeguard our country’s security, (provides) an opportunity to congratulate its officials for a job well done”.¹⁸

The tributes were no less overwhelming in news reports. In the issue of February 1, the newspaper wrote, “it is at least certain that the police have made a remarkable effort, claims one source which understands the details of the case.”

In *Aftenposten*, crime editor Odd Bergfald summarised the Haavik affair under the title: “Do we fear the spies or the police?”. And the answer was undisputed at the time: The spies.¹⁹

The Lygren Blunder

The day after Haavik’s arrest NRK²⁰ reported on the possibility of a connection between the Lygren affair (see above) and the new arrest. *Arbeiderbladet* followed up on Monday, January 31: “Embarrassing for the intelligence: Arrested wrong woman”.²¹ *Verdens Gang* on the other hand immediately rejected these allegations:

It is hardly correct as NRK reported over the weekend that in 1966, the Police Surveillance Agency arrested Ingeborg Lygren instead of Gunvor Haavik.

On the other hand, it is obvious that the police action against Ingeborg Lygren – who later received NOK 30,000 in compensation from Parliament because the police had no evidence against her – forced Gunvor Haavik to become a sleeper agent.

Ms. Haavik acted as such until around 1970.²²

These short paragraphs in *VG*’s article were misleading on two significant points. It was later proved that in 1965 the Police Surveillance Agency (POT) had confused Gunvor Galtung Haavik with Ingeborg Lygren and arrested the latter.²³ Moreover, according to the ruling against Haavik’s estate in 1978,²⁴ Haavik was *not* made a sleeper agent in 1965.

VG’s erroneous information had no named sources, but probably originated from the police themselves. Knut Haavik, Rolf Eriksen, Arne Løvstrøm and Michael Grundt Spang wrote the articles about Haavik in *VG*. The first three claim in interviews²⁵ that they had “very good sources” in the police, and Grundt Spang was also generally thought to have close POT connections.²⁶ 35 years later, Knut Haavik claims:

I was the only journalist in Oslo who could walk around unrestricted at Victoria Terrace in Oslo, the criminal police and POT headquarters. I was “part of the gang” there, I had a lot of good friends at the police station.²⁷

A book published the same year (Elvik 1977) summarised it was "common knowledge" that Haavik had exceptionally good contacts at the POT. The unresolved question is whether the police misled *VG* or the relationship was not as good as the journalists claim.

Aftenposten mentioned already, on January 29, 1977 that Gunvor Galtung Haavik had been replaced by Ingeborg Lygren as secretary at the Moscow embassy in 1957. However, the newspaper did not point out the possible police confusion. Journalist Per Egil Hegge admits they failed:

We didn't realise that this was the same information that led to the Lygren arrest, that they should have singled out Haavik. We did not know that much, but I'm crushed that we did not see the link that night²⁸

Aftenposten wrote about the connection between Lygren and Haavik in the Monday paper. The headline on the front page was "*Haavik case a key to the mystery?*" and the story continued inside "*Is there a link to a former spy case?*"²⁹ However, the paper did not raise the important follow-up question: Why did it take twelve years to arrest Haavik? The interview data confirms the noncritical attitude: "We were not critical at all. In that time, there was nothing of today's critical attitude towards the police and the police work", says Per Egil Hegge.³⁰

Two weeks after the arrest, NRK put the long detection time on the agenda. In a broadcast on the morning of February 9, 1977 reporter Harald Kjølås said that "according to reliable sources Dagsnytt has been in contact with, the Police Surveillance Agency (POT) would have launched an investigation against Ms. Haavik in 1966, but they were thwarted by orders from higher officials." NRK's report freed the POT from potential accusations of incompetent investigating and put the blame on some unidentified persons in a "higher position" instead. The Attorney General, the POT's chief in 1965, Asbjørn Bryhn, and key representatives of the then nonsocialist Government rejected the assertion from NRK. Per Borten, who served as Prime Minister in 1966, mailed letters to the editors claiming that no one in his Government had heard of any suspicions of espionage directed at Haavik at that time. *Aftenposten* wrote:

Prominent members of the Borten Cabinet categorically reject any knowledge of investigation against Gunvor Haavik as early as 1966, as alluded to in the radio's news broadcast yesterday morning.³¹

VG headlined its issue the following day with "The spy rumours PLANTED in the NRK"³² and used a partisan framework: The alleged false story may be an effort from the political left to turn attention away from criticism of Labour Minister Jens Evensen (see below).³³ *Verdens Gang* and *Aftenposten* did otherwise seem to accept the disclaimer and did not publish any further follow-ups on the matter. *Arbeiderbladet*'s Bjørn Hansen, on the other hand, raised some questions:

Following the strong rejections of the allegations that Gunvor Haavik was in the spotlight, new questions emerge: Was the POT at that time only interested in *one* person? Was the spotlight never directed at the suspected spy who had been in Moscow before Lygren and who could match the description in the intelligence reports they had received ... does the public have the right to know why Lygren was arrested, while her predecessor in Moscow was never under suspicion?²³⁴

Hansen urged the Attorney General to provide answers to such questions and to provide Ingeborg Lygren “full and unreserved redress”. Except from *Arbeiderbladet*’s two articles, there are no manifest critical eyes directed at the POT. The content analysis indicates comprehensive use of police information with no named sources, and the interviews indicate a rather close relationship between the Police Surveillance Agency and the journalists, especially in *Aftenposten* and *VG*. This is no surprise. Journalist Halvor Elvik wrote in his 1977 book:

In any criminal investigation, the information presented to the public is usually dominated by police and prosecution sources... All journalists who have done crime reporting know that the police leak during an investigation. Most such leaks go rather unedited into the newspapers as proper news (Elvik 1977:21f, my transl.).

Martin Eide underscores that “active crime reporting, at times in close interaction with the police, had early become a trademark of *VG*” (Eide 1998).

Earlier investigative reporting and research have also discovered long lasting contacts between all the three newspapers and the intelligence services (Nilsen and Sjøe 1998; Calmeyer 1993; Lund Commision 1996). There is also an established international research finding that crime journalists and police often have a close working relationship (Pollack 2001).

Media’s coverage of the Haavik case reveals an important nuance: unlike *VG* and *Aftenposten*, *Arbeiderbladet* raised some rather critical questions regarding the police and the prosecution authorities, even if the questions were not followed up with investigative reporting.

The reason for these critical questions in *Arbeiderbladet* may be the increasing disagreements among *Arbeiderbladet*’s journalists about the police intelligence services. There had been a long lasting clandestine cooperation between some of *Arbeiderbladet*’s editors and journalists, among them Olav Brunvand, Rolf Gerhardsen and Arne Hjelm Nielsen, on the one hand, and the *POT* and the *FST* on the other (Nilsen and Sjøe 1998; Calmeyer 1993; Lund Commision 1996). In 1977, Olav Brunvand was still the editor-in-chief of *Arbeidernes Pressekontor* (The Worker’s Press Agency) that worked closely with *Arbeiderbladet* where his son Per was editor-in-chief. However, in the 1970s, this link was weakening. A new generation of journalists like Bjørn Hansen,

Bengt Calmeyer, Einar Førde and Arne Treholt³⁵ had more “liberal” views on security politics.

In *Aftenposten*, the crime newsroom covered the Haavik affair, rather than the political journalists.³⁶ Odd Bergfald was head of the crime department during this period. Bergfald was a lawyer by training and had worked with the *POT*’s Asbjørn Bryhn on the treason settlement after World War II. When Bryhn celebrated his 80th anniversary, Bergfald – contrary to information well known at that time³⁷ – rejected all “rumours” of the poisoned relationship between Bryhn and the FST leader Evang. In the obituary after Bryhn’s death in 1990, Bergfald praised him: “And we – the Norwegian public – have been lucky having had Asbjørn Bryhn on the police force”.³⁸

These facts may partly explain why the intelligence services were mainly framed as “our” “protection” against the “enemy” in the hunt for renegades and traitors. The police was framed as “us” and “good” and the *KGB* spies as the “other” or “bad.”

This kind of framing is not something that is specific to the police intelligence services. The Swedish criminologist Ester Pollack writes:

News about deviation, “bad” news, has entertainment value and sells well on the news market. It is also moral speech, separating the forces of “good” from the forces of “bad”, illuminating the conflict between good and evil. A variety of economic, political and social organisations have an interest in defining what is to be regarded as aberrations. Journalists have also a central position in production and distribution of the modern society’s understanding of the socially deviant and hence of normalcy (Pollack 2001:79).

In the Cold War, espionage on behalf of the “enemy” (the East) was one of the most seriously deviant forms of behaviour. *Aftenposten*’s Bergfald wrote in a book about the *KGB* in Norway: “Treason is, throughout history, seen as the most disgraceful of all crimes” (Bergfald 1975:3). In an article in *Aftenposten* some years after he retired, he wrote, “espionage is a vile and disgusting crime”.³⁹

Gunvor Galtung Haavik

How was the “deviant” herself, Gunvor Galtung Haavik, depicted? The representation was rather different in the three newspapers. *VG*’s front-page story on the first day was “THE SPY: Money motive for 64 year old MATA HARI”:

For 30 years, she has been a great admirer of the Soviet Union. She cultivated intimate USSR acquaintances – she spoke Russian fluently and was a qualified Russian translator. But the revealed spy Gunvor Galtung Haavik (64) – a pretty and modest Norwegian Mata Hari – also received money for her services to Moscow.⁴⁰

A double page story inside the newspaper stated that Gunvor Galtung Haavik was “intensely concerned about the Soviet Union, its people and culture – and presumably also secretly about the Soviet Communist system”. Further: “she also admitted to have received money for her services, but the motive of the espionage could also have been of political nature”.⁴¹ Haavik was framed as a combination of the famous female spy Mata Hari and a communist spying for ideological reasons.

These frames were constructed with the help of erroneous “facts” and an unrelated metaphor. Mata Hari has been portrayed as the femme fatale spy in several popular cultural books and films,⁴² but a somewhat less apt metaphor for Gunvor Galtung Haavik’s deeds, one can hardly imagine.⁴³ Haavik was probably forced into espionage because of her love to a Russian prisoner of war. Haavik was *not* a Communist. She was genuinely interested in *Russian* culture. Valery Carrick, the man who awakened her interest in the subject and was her mentor for ten years, had fled Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. The article shows how *VG* in 1977 adopted popular cultural stories that could be tied to the news.

Arbeiderbladet’s reports were probably closer to the truth. As early as January 29, the Labour newspaper wrote:

It was a love affair that got the now 64 year old Minister of Foreign Affairs employee Gunvor Galtung Haavik to become a spy for the Soviet Union’s secret service. Gunvor Haavik was, for ten years until 1956, stationed at the embassy in Moscow. During this period she was associated with a man whom she never had the opportunity to meet again. But during this time, she gave information that enabled the Soviet intelligence to put pressure on her – and this pressure was used for all it was worth.⁴⁴

No sources were named in the text and many of the details were erroneous. However, the text reported two main elements of the story, Haavik’s love for a Russian and the pressure from the KGB. Later, *VG* followed up this frame:

Her love for a young Russian prisoner of war was fateful for Gunvor Galtung Haavik. In her despair, she took the first steps on the way to treason in order to save the man she was in love with. Then she was stuck in the KGB’s net. She never saw her beloved again.⁴⁵

Both *Arbeiderbladet*, (from Day 1) and *VG* (From Day 2), highlighted the love relationship as the reason for her many offenses, *Aftenposten* withheld this central information. The conservative newspaper *never* mentioned Haavik’s love relationship at all. Journalist Per Egil Hegge says that *Aftenposten* in 1977 “did not write much about sex, even in such a case.”⁴⁶

In hindsight, it is easy to see the paradox: The popular cultural descriptions of Haavik in *VG* probably provided more insight into the real story than *Aftenposten*’s strictly political reporting.

Aftenposten claimed in a more general way that "Ms. Haavik appears to be an example of how an individual is cynically abused and destroyed in the service of espionage. Among the approximately 40 people who have been convicted of espionage for Eastern countries in Norway since 1945, there have been numerous similar tragedies".⁴⁷ Then the newspaper proposed some good advice for Haavik:

What Haavik should have done, before it was too late, was to go to the police, which is what anyone who is contacted by Soviet Russians is being asked to do. Several KGB victims have already contacted the police, put all cards on the table and not regretted it afterwards.⁴⁸

Aftenposten's advice on what Haavik "should have done" may be up for discussion. Haavik's main concern was probably her lover Valentin Koslov's fate. Koslov told in an interview with the documentary film maker Knut Erik Jensen:

[the night she signed the contract with the KGB] they said to her: "You know what? Your friend's life is hanging by a thread".... "You can say goodbye to him. You're never going to see him again". "After that, I had no choice", she said: "I knew that I had committed high treason, but I could not betray you".⁴⁹

Gunvor Galtung Haavik was never able to tell her own story in the media in 1977. The only exception was an interview with her attorney Meyer in *Aftenposten*, where he said, "as far as we know, Haavik has no communist sympathies."

Haavik was in jail, restricted from receiving letters and visits. She was unable to make a statement. If Meyer's low media profile was her choice or his, we do not know. The newspapers' practices and analyses are, in any case, rather far from the ideal of "protecting individuals against abuses of the authorities". The Cold War framing of spies as criminal traitors seems to be so strong that critical investigating of possible injustices against Haavik was out of question.

The Norwegian Authorities

In 1977, Norway had a Labour Government led by Prime Minister Odvar Nordli. The three newspapers did not criticise the Government's reactions on the espionage matter. Instead, the Government was praised by the media for its firm and appropriate attitude towards the Soviets, including the expulsion of a large number of diplomats. All the newspapers agreed that the Government should not take into account the ongoing difficult bilateral negotiations over the maritime delineation boundary in the Barents Sea.⁵⁰ It was taken for granted that the Norwegian authorities should take distinct action and expel Russians.⁵¹

The issue was never analysed at a system level, that intelligence and espionage (even using dubious methods) are standard parts of the business of embassies. Even Western embassies in Moscow were spy nests.⁵²

The overall framing of the espionage matter was the Cold War, in which *our* spies were heroes, while the enemy's spies were villains. The tribute to the Norwegian Social Democratic Government's firm reactions was unanimous, from both the pro Government *Arbeiderbladet* and the traditionally Government critical *VG* and *Aftenposten*. A typical example of what was taken for granted is an editorial in *Arbeiderbladet*:

The strangest comment has come from the Chairman of the Communist Party, Martin Gunnar Knudsen. He has said that "It's also conceivable that someone could find it opportune to reveal such matters in an election year". One should have a fairly well developed tactical talent to work out accusations of such election tactical manipulations.⁵³

We do not know if the Communist Party's Chairman was right or wrong. We *do* know, however, that the POT consulted the Foreign Minister about his views on the date of the arrest (Official Norwegian Report 1998). There are also a number of international examples⁵⁴ when intelligence services and/or governments have used espionage events in tactical games, especially regarding the timing of arrests and/or disclosures. *Arbeiderbladet* was hardly in line with the understanding of journalism as being an independent watchdog. The editorial was rather a mouthpiece of the Labour Government.

There were no differences in views between pro-Government and opposition newspapers concerning the authorities' attitudes towards the Soviets. The opposition papers were *not* criticising any statements made by the ruling Government (see below).

On the other hand, ten of *VG*'s articles contained critical scrutiny and/or criticism of the Norwegian authorities. Most of this criticism related to the security practices in the Norwegian Ministries or in the Moscow embassy. The newspaper interviewed a former, anonymous Ministry employee who raised sharp criticism against her former workplace's practices.⁵⁵

Arbeiderbladet never rose, nor referred to, such criticism of the authorities. These differences can be explained by the newspapers' different political party affiliations, most noticeable in the coverage of one of the Ministers, Jens Evensen. The two conservative newspapers scrutinized and raised relatively harsh criticism against Evensen. The Minister was perceived as "Soviet friendly" among conservative politicians and journalists, and he was particularly controversial among *Aftenposten*'s editorial staff (Retzer 1999:237).

There *was* a link between Gunvor Galtung Haavik and Jens Evensen, Haavik had been Evensen's secretary at the Ministry of Trade in 1962, and "friends" immediately warned Evensen after the arrest that "conservative forces" would use the affiliation to defame him (Retzer 1999:89ff). When several journalists questioned Evensen on the matter during the weekend following Haavik's arrest, he replied that he had quickly relocated Gunvor Haavik. However,

he would not confirm if he had any information that indicated that she was a security risk and – if so – how he had handled that information. Evensen’s answers raised new questions: Did he have any reason for his suspicions? Had he taken action? If not, why?

The issue has never been fully clarified, but there are indications that Evensen saw her as inept. Rumours circulated in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that Haavik had had a relationship with a Russian driver when she lived in Moscow. Evensen’s version was that he did not like Haavik and that the rumours about sex were so vague that it was inconvenient to report them. In any case, Evensen did not report them, but got his way and Gunvor Galtung Haavik was relocated to the Trade Policy Office.

In the first two weeks after Haavik’s arrest, *Aftenposten*’s morning edition had six front-page stories on Jens Evensen, several of them critical like “Evensen’s statement causes unrest in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs”⁵⁶ and “Evensen did not report his suspicions”.⁵⁷

During the first two weeks, *Arbeiderbladet* had six front-page stories on the Haavik affair, three of them about Evensen: “Relocated by order of Evensen”,⁵⁸ “Was seen as a security risk?”⁵⁹ and “Love affair caused Haavik’s relocation”.⁶⁰

From the first day, *Arbeiderbladet* framed the relocation as a strong and forthright action due to national security interests: The Minister was not sure he could trust Haavik, so he set aside protests in the organisation and relocated her immediately.

VG’s top story on February 10, 1977 was about Evensen. The title was “Espionage rumour planted in NRK?” The ingress stated:

Was the purpose of planting this rumour in NRK to redirect the uncomfortable spotlight from a member of the current Government to another Government with another political colour? ⁶¹

The tabloid newspaper interviewed Harald Kjøllås in NRK who admitted that the story of the “politicians who kept the POT from acting” was not correct. On the other hand, Kjøllås maintained that the police arrested the wrong person in 1965. Thus, the newspaper freed the Borten Cabinet from criticism, but did not ask the follow-up question: How do you explain the police’s lack of interest in Haavik?

The newspaper discussion follows the traditional party press pattern: Conservative newspapers criticise Labour politicians, defended by Labour newspapers. In his book about the Norwegian party press, Henrik G. Bastiansen concludes:

In practice, the party newspapers came to reside in the ongoing civil war with each other in their battle over public opinion... Papers in opposition were often the most on the offensive; they had the role of the Government’s relentless critics, while the pro Government press was more often rebuffed. Virtually

any political statement was strongly criticised by the opponent's papers – and defended by their own reporters (Bastiansen 2009:480f) (My transl.).

We can probably spot such mechanisms here. The party press system was under pressure, but not abolished. The Evensen affair shows how the struggle between the parties was clearly present in the newspapers, even concerning security policy issues on which the major Norwegian parties essentially agreed.

The scrutinizing of Minister Evensen was the strongest element of critical reporting in the Haavik case. This report had its basis in the partisan press struggle. *Arbeiderbladet* framed *Aftenposten's* attack on Evensen as a party issue, but this political fray took place within the Cold War framework. The criticism of Evensen was that he was not vigilant enough against possible Russian infiltration. Evensen's defenders did not claim that it was acceptable to have a Russian spy as a secretary. They supported his firm move to relocate a possible security risk.

The Evensen affair also shows how the party press functioned as a counter-weight to potential media scandals and media hunts. Today, the overall number of media outlets may well have followed *Aftenposten's* example and framed the affair as a political scandal with Evensen in the role as the scandalised politician (Thompson 2000, Allern and Pollack 2012): What did Evensen hide? Why did he not report his suspicions about Haavik in 1962? Could 15 years of espionage have been prevented?

The KGB and Soviet Authorities

The Soviet Government and its intelligence organisation the KGB were exposed to strong negative assessments in all three newspapers, which all stressed how the KGB used all kinds of techniques to engage spies. The journalists showed how Russians abused both state-run companies, wire agencies (Tass) and regular diplomatic channels as cover for KGB activities. This negative picture of KGB, the Soviets and the Russians characterised both editorials and news reports. The following – typical – example is from *Aftenposten*:

Most shocking is the scope and scale of the violation of the simplest rules of a good neighbourhood. Norwegians will be more wary of the Soviets, distrust has been given new nourishment. There is a limit to what Norway is going to put up with from the Soviet Union. It is appropriate and necessary to expel six Russians....They make appealing statements, but behind their backs, they think and act in an unfriendly way. What is the KGB doing in other countries when the organisation is placing so many spies in our small country?⁶²

Arbeiderbladet was more cautious in its language, but the message was much the same:

Revelations of Soviet espionage in Norway a short time ago, and in particular the fact that the Soviet Union had a spy in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs throughout several decades, represents a severe strain on relations between the two countries.⁶³

The Soviets were not merely portrayed as the bad guys. They were also often presented as fairly inept and ridiculous. *Aftenposten* wrote that the KGB agent Printsipalov "continued his physical resistance to the Norwegian police" even after they identified themselves, "but of course it was of no use. Several years of intense surveillance work had resulted in an arrest *in flagrante* of a person who was suspected of espionage".⁶⁴ The frame was strengthened by the fact that no Eastern European sources were quoted during the entire period in any of the newspapers.

Conclusion

We have seen that the three mainstream newspapers scrutinized the alleged spy Gunvor Haavik, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Labour Minister Jens Evensen. Haavik was scrutinized, not as a potential victim, but to reveal her offences and in *VG* and *Arbeiderbladet* to disclose the reasons for her crimes. The main source seems to have been the police. *Aftenposten* tried to reveal what exactly had happened when Labour Minister Jens Evensen relocated Gunvor Galtung Haavik in 1965. *Aftenposten* and *VG*'s critical reporting on this subject was countered by *Arbeiderbladet*.

The other actors in the affair did not fall under the same scrutiny. The Police Surveillance Agency was hailed by the newspapers for the arrest. *Arbeiderbladet* raised some critical questions concerning the POT's procrastination, *VG* and *Aftenposten* did not. The KGB and the Soviet government were criticised and/or ridiculed, not scrutinized.

The overarching frame of the news coverage and comments were the *Cold War*: We (the West) against them (the East). "Our" spies and our intelligence services were (mainly) the good guys in the struggle between good and evil in the Cold War. The Soviet Union's spies and secret police were the bad and sometimes stupid guys of the story. Or as Robert Entman concludes on the Cold War frame: "Evaluation tended toward moral condemnation of the communist side" (Entman 2004:95). Hallin's concept "bipartisan consensus of Cold War" may also be applied to the material. In 1977, the societal Cold War frame overruled journalists' new watchdog ideology in the coverage of alleged spies. This underscores that media frames must be seen as a social phenomenon, as suggested by Vliegenthart and van Zoonen:

Production and reception are not only affected by individual differences, but also by social and cultural context, structural division and power constellations (Vliegthart and van Zoonen 2011:111).

However, inside this Cold War frame there exists two sets of divergent frames. First, there was a distinct difference in the coverage of Jens Evensen between the two conservative papers and Labour affiliated *Arbeiderbladet*. In addition, *Arbeiderbladet* criticised the police to a certain degree. These diversions were probably results of the still existing party press system. Second, there are differences concerning the framing of the spy. The popular tabloid *VG* framed the Haavik case as a classical KGB honey trap. *Aftenposten* completely omitted the love affair element, probably due to the newspaper's moral code.

Overall, this study of mainstream media coverage of an alleged spy indicates that the Cold War frame was dominating. The small elements of critical and investigative reporting against the authorities mainly reflected the still existing party press conflicts.

During the same period, two other media events involved the Norwegian intelligence services. In February, former Prime Minister Per Borten (Centre Party) initiated sharp criticism of the services' surveillance practices. In addition, in August, several left wing activists in Oslo were arrested and charged with illegal monitoring of the intelligence services ("Listesaken"). Both affairs raised considerable media interest and the coverage of "Listesaken" revealed a more critical approach to the authorities in some newsrooms than during earlier events regarding national security (Dahl and Bastiansen 2000:302ff).

The differences between the findings in this study and Dahl and Bastiansen's findings may have organisational and personal explanations. In both *Aftenposten* and *VG*, the crime desk covered the Haavik affair. Senior reporters with close contacts to the POT led these desks. The political reporters covered "Listesaken". In *Arbeiderbladet*, the news reports are more scrutinizing and critical towards the POT than the lead articles. All these facts underscore that the 1970's were a *time of transition* in Norwegian journalism. The dominance of the Cold War frame was diminishing, but still strong. The critical ideal was on the rise, but still weak.

Notes

1. All the interviews, the collection of articles in the sample and parts of the content analysis were carried out by three students at Volda University College – Monica Hägg Lund Langen, Oda Kveen and Marita Skeie – under my supervision. The students used the data in their term papers in 2012 (Langen 2012, Kveen 2012, Skeie 2012). I have used their raw data material; the collected printed articles and the transcript interviews. A warm thank to them. Without their efforts, this chapter could not have been written.
2. It is not known why the Prime Minister himself held the press conference. *Aftenposten* wrote that it "shows how serious the authorities were". When Arne Treholt was arrested some years later, it was the General Attorney who informed the press.

3. Media voices opposing these commitments were weak, mostly seen in a small, weekly newspaper, *Orientering* (Fonn 2013)
4. The Code of Ethics is set up by the Association of the Norwegian Press, an umbrella organisation of publishers, editors and journalists. The Code has a strong support in the journalistic institution.
5. The 1975 version of the Ethical Code is downloaded from Sørum 2006. The translation is based on the English version of the recent Code, downloaded from NP's web page, www.presse.no.
6. Norland later became Editor-in-Chief of both *VG* and *Aftenposten*.
7. *Journalisten*, august 1974: 13-14, quoted in Sørum 2006:52.
8. Governmental Commission to scrutinize the intelligence services, report released 12.05.1967
9. Jacobsen's claims are based on documents and interviews with Trond Johansen and Lars Heyerdahl from FSK. (Jacobsen 1992) and it must be added that Johansen is seen by many as an important player in the "intelligence game" of Norway (Nilsen and Sjøe 1998:106f).
10. James Jesus Angleton, Head of the CIA's counterintelligence unit in the period 1954-1975
11. Asbjørn Bryhn's successor as Head of the Norwegian Police Intelligence Service
12. (N) is low for *Arbeiderbladet*. However, it represents *all the* articles about the affair in the paper.
13. The columns may sum up to more than 100 %, because each article may contain critical assessments of more than one actor.
14. The articles have been searched for facts, sources, analyses and formulations that bear the mark of critical assessment. In the analysis, Norman Fairclough's definition of (negative) evaluation is used. It includes "evaluative statements", statements with "deontic modalities", statements with "affective mental processes" or "assumed values" ("cases without the relatively transparent markers of evaluation... (values).. much more deeply embedded in the text", i.e., as "an assumption of shared familiarity with implicit value systems") (Fairclough 2003:173).
15. This and the following quotes from the newspapers are translated by me.
16. *Arbeiderbladet*, January 31, 1977
17. *Aftenposten*, evening edition January 29, 1977
18. *Aftenposten*, morning edition January 30, 1977
19. *Aftenposten*, morning edition February 19, 1977
20. *NRK*, The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation, was the only legal provider of radio and television signals in 1977. The broadcasting markets were liberalised from 1981.
21. *Arbeiderbladet*, October 31, 1977
22. *Verdens Gang*, January 31, 1977
23. See i.e. Berg and Eriksen 1998
24. In May 1978, Oslo City Court ruled that Haavik's estate had to pay a NOK 200.000 fine, an amount corresponding to the money she allegedly earned through the illegal espionage. The ruling in the civil case against the deceased's estate was classified, but the General Attorney published a press release after the court ruling.
25. Interviewed by Marita Skeie in november 2012.
26. However, such contacts have never been proved.
27. Knut Haavik interviewed by Marita Skeie November, 6, 2012
28. Per Egil Hegge interviewed by Monica Langen November 1, 2012.
29. *Aftenposten*, morning edition January 31, 1977
30. Per Egil Hegge interviewed by Monica Langen 01.11.2012
31. *Aftenposten*, morning edition February 9, 1977
32. *Verdens Gang*, February 10, 1977
33. Jacobsen (1995) claims that the more leftleaning military intelligence, FSK, started an informal investigation against Haavik in 1965/66. Jacobsen's version is that FSK had to drop this because contra espionage was a police (POT) matter. This *may* be the information Kjølås referred to. Kjølås' source may have been Trond Johansen or other Labour-leaning officers in the FSK.
34. *Arbeiderbladet*, February 10, 1977

35. Arne Treholt was in 1985 convicted for espionage in favour of the Soviet Union
36. Jf. Presentation of editorial employees. *Aftenposten* morning edition November 9, 1978)
37. I.e. Report from the Mellbye Commision, released May 12, 1967.
38. *Aftenposten*, morning edition January 25, 1990
39. *Aftenposten*, morning editon August 23, 1986
40. *Verdens Gang*, January 29, 1977
41. *Verdens Gang*, January 29, 1977
42. Mata Hari's real name was Margaretha Geertruida Zelle. Zelle was in World War I convicted of espionage for Germany and later executed. Her biographer Russel Howe argues that Mata Hari was not a German spy, and "in a professional sense, she was never a spy at all." (Howe 1985) However, Zelle, using the artist name Mata Hari, worked as an erotic dancer and nude model and her story has been an irresistible topic for popular cultural myth formation for nearly 100 years. Mata Hari was portrayed by Greta Garbo in a 1931 Hollywood movie, and she was the theme of the Norwegian Eurovision Song Contest entry in 1976.
43. In 2008, *Dagbladet.no* published an article where Haavik again was framed as a Mata Hari. She had allegedly an extraordinary appeal on men. According to herself she was courted by several KGB agents and U.S. diplomats. *Dagbladet* refers the 1989 autobiography of Kjell Bækkelund, a famous Norwegian pianist: "She presented herself. Gunvor Galtung Haavik, First Secretary. She turned out to be very lively, and she revealed in-depth knowledge of Russian art. In addition, she was funny and ironic. *Attraction* was the word. We both felt a very close proximity, where it was easy to talk, tell jokes, feel at ease. The last few days in Moscow we met daily".
44. *Arbeiderbladet*, January 29, 1977
45. *Verdens Gang*, January 30, 1977. No sources are revealed in the text
46. Per Egil Hegge interviewed by Monica Langen November 1, 2012
47. *Aftenposten*, morning edition February 4, 1977
48. *Aftenposten*, morning edition February 4, 1977
49. "Min kjære venn", documentary film Knut Erik Jensen., 1994, also quoted in *Dagbladet.no* <http://www.Dagbladet.no/magasinet/2008/09/07/545893.html>
50. Norway share borders with Soviet/Russia in the north. The borderline in the Barents Sea was an unresolved issue between the two countries for more than 50 years, until a final solution was reached in September 2010.
51. One of those expelled was a correspondent for the news agency *Tass*.
52. Ingeborg Lygren worked as a "postman" for the CIA; she posted letters to CIA agents inside the Soviet Union (Jacobsen 1995).
53. *Arbeiderbladet*, January 31, 1977
54. During the 1978 general election in BRD, several SPD politicians were accused of espionage (Werenskjöld 2014:3)
55. *Verdens Gang*, February 2, 1977
56. *Aftenposten*, morning edition February 3, 1977
57. *Aftenposten*, morning edition February 5, 1977
58. *Arbeiderbladet*, January 31, 1977
59. *Arbeiderbladet*, February 2, 1977
60. *Arbeiderbladet*, February 9, 1977
61. *VG*, February 10, 1977
62. *Aftenposten*, morning edition January 31, 1977
63. *Arbeiderbladet*, february 13, 1977
64. *Aftenposten*, morning edition January 31, 1977

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Part Three: Towards the End

Chapter 11

Norway's Olympic Cold War, 1980

A Neighbouring Country's Response to the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan

Oddbjørn Melle

Abstract

Six months after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Moscow was set to stage the 1980 Summer Olympics. Against the backdrop of the propaganda struggle between the superpowers at a transitional phase from *détente* to the second Cold War, the article explores how the US call for boycott of the Games stirred an intense debate in the Norwegian press, a focal arena of the public sphere. While a close ally of the US and a NATO-member, Norway bordered on the USSR. How did this context influence the discourse on boycott in response to the appeal from Norway's NATO-patron? The study demonstrates how different Cold War opinions played out rhetorically in the press and ultimately may have influenced the decision of the top NGO within sports, to boycott the Games.

Keywords: Jimmy Carter, *détente*, Olympic Games, framing theory, rhetoric, NATO-loyalty

If ever there was a conflict based more on perception than on truth, the Cold War remains that conflict (Kampmark 2002:40).

The evidence is steadily accumulating that framing is a powerful concept for explicating the activities of journalists and news organizations (Nelson et. al. 1997:577).

On December 26, 1979 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. The invasion increased tension between the superpowers and in Western Cold War historiography it is regarded the final nail in the coffin of United States-Soviet Union co-operation (Hanhimäki and Westad 2003:517f.): "With SALT II in trouble and *détente* in the ropes, the Soviet Union in one swoop inadvertently killed both of them" (Kort 1998:75). President Jimmy Carter branded the invasion as "the greatest threat to peace since the Second World War" and Afghanistan became a vital asset in the US war of rhetoric, mobilizing world opinion against the Soviets (Urban 1988:56). As a countermove Carter called for a worldwide

boycott of the Olympic Games to be held in Moscow July 19-August 3, 1980. This article analyses the reaction to that appeal in a particular segment of the public sphere in Norway – a selection of newspapers.

The Cold War was also a war of rhetoric and propaganda, both superpowers eager to influence perceptions and the cognitive domain. Image building was central, trying to discredit *the other* while constructing a positive picture of oneself in world opinion – a concept of the modern media age. Half a year after the invasion, the USSR was to organize the Olympic Games in Moscow, regarded by its leadership as a great opportunity to present its socialist capital in a positive light to a worldwide audience in the age of television: “[P]ost-war Olympiads were always part of the Cold War’s cultural competition” (Cary 2011, 293).

One of the countries that had to react to the call from the American President was Norway. An ally to the US, sharing an almost 200 km long land border with the Soviet Union, it was in a delicate geostrategic and political position between East and West. Before exploring the Norwegian discourse on the matter, some contextual parameters should be outlined (Bevir 2013).

Sports and Politics

The American boycott initiative hurt a sore spot in the Kremlin, Soviet prestige, and was so intended (Corthorn 2013, 47, 49). Why was this global sporting arrangement so important for the Soviets? The USSR had not from its foundation been a member of the Olympic movement. For years, the Bolshevik state was treated as a pariah in international politics by most capitalist powers. Although President Franklin D. Roosevelt recognized the Soviet Union diplomatically in 1933 – the year Hitler ascended to power – it was not invited to the Olympic Games before World War II. This was part of the Western *sanitary cordon* policy, a political and economic blockade of the USSR and its sporting contacts (Mertin 2007:236). Sports and politics fused and excluded the first communist state from the international Olympic movement.

World War II was a historic watershed. The decisive Soviet contribution to the victory over Hitler’s Germany changed the IOC members’ attitude and, simultaneously, the USSR developed a positive attitude to the Olympic movement, adjusting its foreign policy to a global situation as a superpower. With this reorientation came its successful entry into the Olympic arena at the Helsinki Games in 1952 at the height of the Cold War. Over the next decades, the Soviet Union proved itself a triumphant power in the realm of summer and winter sports as well as chess. Commenting on the Soviet Union’s lack of *soft power* resources in international relations, political scientist Joseph S. Nye Jr. makes an exception for the field of sports: “The Soviets also invested heavily in sports,

and over the decades Soviet Olympic teams won more gold medals than the U.S. in Winter Games, and were second in the Summer Games” (Nye 2004:74). According to historian Evelyn Mertin, sport “opened up a completely new field of action for socialist propaganda” (Mertin 2007:236). The next inclusive step in world sports came in 1974 – in the period of *détente* – when Moscow was chosen to organize the Summer Games in 1980. It had taken time to achieve this recognition, and the Soviet interpretation was not apolitical: “By awarding the organization of the Games to Moscow the world sports leaders basically approved the peace loving foreign political course of the Soviet government” (Mertin 2007:238 n19).

Having achieved this acknowledgement, however, the USSR was met by a call to boycott the Games and the superpowers confronted each other on a new arena of propaganda, the realm of sports. The U.S. initiative stands as an example of *linkage-policy*. It was a continuation of the Nixon-Kissinger strategy of connecting political and military issues, using a unique capability to obtain its will by ‘the carrot or the stick’ (Kort 1998:63). Imbued with a strong moralistic stroke of exceptionalism the US could resort to this multidimensional weapon against the USSR, while seldom *vice versa* due to an asymmetry of superpower capability.

The US call for boycott was part of a linkage package of sanctions in the global struggle against the Soviet Union with national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski as main proponent. Beginning early in the year of 1980, Carter announced a series of measures to punish the Soviets. For one thing, he withdrew the SALT II treaty from consideration by the Senate. For another, he restricted American grain sales to the Soviets. Third, he cut off high-technology sales. Furthermore, the president charged the Soviets with expansionism, posing a threat to the Persian Gulf, a particularly sensitive geopolitical region, and he announced the Carter Doctrine: The US would use force to protect its access to the oil resources in that region (Kort 1998:76). On top of these measures came what is the focus of this article: Carter withdrew the US from the Olympics and called on other countries to do the same.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan – as represented in the Norwegian media, marketed as the ultimate proof of aggressive intent – had a momentous shock effect on public opinion (Melle 2007:218-222). We now know that the intervention reflected defensive rather than offensive objectives (Westad 2005:322; Gibbs 2006:239. See postscript and the last endnote). A rare exception in the West in seeing the Soviet invasion as defensive already when it took place, was the main architect of the US containment strategy, George F. Kennan, who regarded Afghanistan as “a natural security concern for the Soviets” (Gibbs 2006:241).

Decision-Making in some NATO Countries

Already on December 31, 1979, the NATO council discussed some kind of retaliation to the Soviet invasion. The US initiative to boycott the Olympics was intended to hurt its antagonist in the Cold War by getting support from as many countries as possible.

According to the *New York Times* “Margaret Thatcher’s Britain was truly an island of loyalty to Mr. Carter”, but in fact both Parliament and government were seriously divided on how far to follow the US sanctions. On a rhetorical level Thatcher lived up to the Anglo-American special relationship – condemning Russian aggression, but in line with London’s traditional aversion to the use of economic sanctions, the prime minister opted to provide only half-hearted backing for Carter’s package of sanctions. Politely, she rejected Carter’s request for expanding the scope of COCOM (Lahey 2013:29, 33). Instead, to strike a blow at Soviet prestige, Thatcher wrote an open letter to the chairman of the British Olympic Association (BOA) in an attempt to persuade the IOC to relocate the Games outside of the Soviet Union, to no avail. BOA decided to participate despite strong pressure from political authorities and damning voices as from the Archbishop of Canterbury: By invading Afghanistan, “the hordes of atheist Communism have enlarged their territory.” A despairing Foreign Secretary Carington lamented that the BOA-chairman was “made of cement from the tip of his toes to the top of his head” (Corthorn 2013:50, 51). In a NGO-perspective, BOA demonstrated autonomy and proved exceptionally resistant to government pressure (Lahey 2013:21, 34, 37-42). The French government, on the other hand, saw no reason to boycott (Franck 1983:83).

In West Germany, the government simply commanded the sports organizations to stay at home in solidarity with the US (Franck 1983:84, 117). Soon after the call for boycott, in February of 1980, the West German government announced that it would not let the US stand alone, but the coalition government in Bonn wanted a boycott framed as a NATO-initiative. Foreign Minister Genscher (FDP) fronted the issue with Chancellor Schmidt (SPD) more in the background, somewhat hesitating. Two months later, on April 15, came the *Boykott-Empfehlung*: “Der politische Druck war immens. Durch diese Empfehlung war die Entscheidung des NOK wesentlich bestimmt.” The government (SPD/FDP) prioritized loyalty towards its most important NATO ally (Frank 1983:113-119, citation:118). In contrast to many other countries where governments lacked any sway with their sporting associations (Corthorn 2013:50), there was no autonomy for the West-German NGO in this case. The decision ran counter to Willy Brandt’s *Ostpolitik* – a repeated source of irritation to American administrations (Kalberg 1991:31) and unpopular among Christian Democrats and supporters of the Hallstein Doctrine. One of the architects of *Ostpolitik*, Egon Bahr, an associate of former chancellor Brandt, doubted the effect of a boycott.¹

In Norway, the decision-making process seems to have been more complicated and drawn out over a longer period than in other countries. Three sports institutions were involved in the process, and the final say did not rest with the National Olympic Committee (NOC), but with a board above it – the *Idrettstinget*. NOC was the first national committee in Europe to vote for boycott, though a preliminary vote, a recommendation (Bangstad 1980:40). After the British vote the Norwegians reversed themselves. Then, after the West German vote, the committee changed its position once again. The final decision was to boycott (Sarantakes 2011:203). The Norwegian committee members, obviously, waited for a coordinated NATO stand. However, the split between Bonn and London, in the course of this debate, gave no clear signal to follow.

Framing Theory

An important aspect of a policy is how it will play out in the media and the images that accompany it (Malek 2003:23, 26). The premise for analysing newspaper editorials as a source of *meaning* rests on the assumption that editorials are one of the major discourse genres in the media, carrying much ideological weight in expressing opinions and attitudes. The main interpretive tool in the present *content analysis* of editorials, by means of soft hermeneutics, is Goffman-inspired *framing theory* (1974): “A frame is a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context of understanding and that suggests what the issue is by means of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration” (Johnson-Cartee 2005:24).

A key to influencing an audience is the linking of frames to assumed frames on the side of the receiver, thus achieving a cumulative effect of persuasive power by invoking common codes, triggering certain underlying interpretive schemas in the process of convincing. (Cf. *rhetoric*, in Aristotle's words, the art of persuasion, based on three key words: *Ethos*, *Pathos*, *Logos*.) Thus, framing is part of the inevitable process of selective influence over the individual's perception (Van Gorp 2007:61; Entman 1993; Benveniste 1971: 208-9). It is of vital importance that a message (as well as its interpretation) is based on an understanding of the addressed audience, the temporal situation and the total structure of the discursive interaction. Invoking a common *framing repertoire* makes consensus easier to obtain, which entails the *functionality* of frames, an aspect of communication that may lead others to accept one *meaning* over another: “[T]o explain political life and action, context is everything. [...] Context frames meaning. Meaning creates context. Change the one and you change the other” (Apter 2011, p.780). Frames, then, are “conceptual tools which media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret, and evaluate information” (Neumann et al. 1992:60). In sum: To frame is to select context (Polletta and Ho 2011:188, 203).

As applied here, this means to uncover the ideological context within which the text is embedded, the extent, type and depth of Cold War reasoning on a scale ranging from tough confrontational-thinking to conciliary *détente* thinking towards the Soviet Union (Van Gorp 2007:60; Tewksbury and Scheufele 2009:18f). To bear in mind: A discourse is historical, relates to the past (Fairclough and Wodak 1997:276).

To what extent the decision-makers (sports leaders) were, in fact, influenced by the opinion-makers (editors) is hard to measure. What *is* available for analysis is the *meaning* expressed in the editorials, not the exact *effect* of this one-way communication. Editorials are for everybody to read, but they belong to the elite stuff in newspapers. This elite assumption is strengthened by the discrepancy between the vote of the sports leaders in favour of boycott and an opinion poll among the population with a result against boycott, to which I will return. Accordingly, the analysis boils down to a focus on editorials trying to influence another elite category, the sports leaders. Ideally, knowledge on the social recruitment of top sports leaders should have been available, but none such exist. Anticipating that neither group was homogeneous, the aim is to expose and explain some kind of ideological hegemony in Norwegian Cold War rhetoric as emanating from the editorials. So, how was the framing in mediating the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent call for boycott from the American President – and what consequences were derived thereof? How did the editors select, present and arrange their arguments in order to convince the decision makers in the sports associations?

Newspaper Review

The boycott initiative lends itself to a manageable case study, narrowing the temporalization to the half-year period from the invasion to the opening of the Games. The eleven newspapers selected for a survey were all published in the Norwegian capital Oslo.² On an ideological spectrum they can roughly be divided into two categories based on *general* political-ideological affiliations. If this also applies to this case, remains to be seen. On the one hand, the centre-left group: *Dagbladet*, *Arbeiderbladet*, *Ny Tid*, *Friheten* and *Klassekampen*. On the other, the centre-right group: *Aftenposten*, *Verdens Gang*, *Nationen*, *Vårt Land*, *Morgenbladet* and *Norges Handels- og Sjøfartstidende (N.H.andS.T.)*. In 1980, some of these newspapers were still mouthpieces of political parties, as the party press system had just begun to erode. In the six-month period under scrutiny, the number of relevant editorials in each paper varied, commonly three or four.

Centre-left Papers

Already at the end of January, liberal *Dagbladet*, saw two fronts fighting to get the upper hand in the discourse on boycott. What had started as a unanimous anger over the Soviet invasion began to split as to arguments and crisscrossing motives *pro* and *con* participation. Taking a spectator-role, the paper witnessed “bewildered” sports leaders, “hesitating” politicians and a “flood” of letters to editors. *Dagbladet* distanced itself from what it referred to as a front supported by most mainstream newspapers, representing a permanent Cold War frenzy against the Soviet Union – a stand unleashed automatically whenever there was a given chance for criticism. Within this phalanx were those “cold warriors who had never wanted any contact, and that had rendered suspect any eastward contact, be it political, cultural, economic or in sports” (January 31). *Dagbladet* accused them of using any opportunity to break off relations with the Soviet Union, with damaging consequences for the *détente* policy. It should be inserted here that according to Carter-adviser, Brzezinski, “the European stake in *détente* is very large and they will want to protect it” (Lahey 2013:24).

At the end of March *Dagbladet* detected a change in public opinion. Participation was gaining ground, probably because the athletes had engaged themselves more actively in the debate. By the end of May, the paper concluded that Carter’s initiative had not been successful, a new political defeat for the American President. Among the countries more involved in athletics, only Canada and West Germany had followed suit. That some Latin American, Arabic and African countries – “besides Norway” – followed the USA was of little importance, it added sarcastically. By the end of May *Dagbladet* focused on temporality – the result would not have been the same if voting had been postponed until then. The paper regretted the decision to boycott. A strange game had evolved between the government on the one side and the sports associations on the other, none of them wanting to take an initiative to change the decision (March 26, May 21 and 30).

The governing Labour Party-organ, *Arbeiderbladet*, was from the beginning against boycott, though admitting that this stance had not become easier after the arrest of dissident Andrei Sakharov, prominent member of the Helsinki Watch Committee and Nobel Peace Prize taker in 1975. There was a tendency in many papers (also in opinion polls and in the Norwegian Parliament) to lump the Sakharov case on top of the invasion of Afghanistan as ammunition for boycott. Still, the paper held that common opinion in Norway did not support the U.S. appeal. Whereas the main opposition organ, *Aftenposten*, argued for solidarity within NATO, *Arbeiderbladet* referred to neighbouring countries Sweden and Finland, both in favour of attending the Games. The paper wanted a similar stand – a clear “yes” – from Norway (January 24, March 21 and 23, May 31.1980).

The small socialist weekly *Ny Tid*, mouthpiece of The Socialist Left Party, opined that politics and sport could not be separated and supported participation – a manifestation of the wish for *détente* and cultural exchange across the Iron Curtain, “not least important on the international agenda at a time when the Cold War was about to restart.” The paper was in line with the so-called German *Ostpolitik*, a strategy based on a *counterframe* of contactshaping instead of the confrontational strength-and-punishment strategy prevalent in the reasoning of the right. *Ny Tid* was satisfied that the Labour Party government had announced skepticism towards boycott but wanted a clearer voice, not a mere postponement of its say.³ The paper favoured a united Nordic stand, pointing to the fact that the other Nordic countries would participate: “No one would interpret that as support for the brutal assault on Afghanistan.” This *de-linking* of the matter illustrates the different lenses through which the Cold War was framed. Diverging perspectives rested on different ontologies – systems of beliefs, values and categories – to comprehend the world. The article ended by proclaiming the pursuit of *détente* as more important than considerations for President Carter’s voters in that year’s U.S. Presidential election (January 23, 1980).

The two newspapers on the far left, *Friheten* and *Klassekampen*, both Communist papers with a small circulation, reflected the Sino-Soviet split in their affiliation to the USSR and China, respectively. With this ideological context in mind, their framing and stand could be predicted. The first reaction in *Friheten* was that President Carter would not get much support even though he put pressure on his NATO allies (January 21). This was against the Olympic ideals and would mean a relapse to the worst days of the Cold War. After the final decision by *Idrettstinget* in April, to boycott the Games, *Friheten* – enraged and speaking on behalf of the Norwegian Communist Party – declared it nationally debasing to trot in Carter’s boycott steps in such a pitiable manner. Criticizing Prime Minister Nordli of passivity, the paper appealed to the government to take actions, making the sports leaders come to their senses, annulling the boycott decision, bringing them in line with public opinion. According to *Friheten*, the decision to boycott would never have been made if Norwegian sports associations had not been led by “the reactionary leaders” of NOC, Arne B. Mollén, and the leader of *Idrettsforbundet*, “the NATO-general O. J. Bangstad.” (April 22, May 20, 1980).

The contrast to the other communist paper, *Klassekampen*, could hardly have been sharper: After the “Soviet aggression towards Afghanistan [...] invading and occupying a poor, neighbouring country”, it found every reason to boycott the Moscow Olympics. The occupation was no isolated incident, but part of the Soviet Union’s “worldwide aggressive plans.” The Games would be used by the Kremlin as a “gigantic propaganda show” about “peace and friendship between peoples.” Although the paper found the US attitude hypocritical, it supported the

boycott (January 22, 1980). Two months later, *Klassekampen* admitted that the public opinion had become less intransigent towards the aggressor, but found it preposterous that the USSR was to host the Olympics whilst responsible for “bloody repression taking place in a neighbouring country” (March 21, 1980).

Centre-right Papers

Aftenposten (liberal-conservative), with the biggest circulation, is regarded the authoritative opinion-making organ of the establishment. Around 1980 its circulation was challenged by the tabloid *Verdens Gang*, both papers owned by Schibsted, the dominant media house in Norway. The first reaction in *Aftenposten* to the call for boycott was moderate and hesitant, a wait-and-see attitude. Its advice was that no solo action should be taken. It was important to stand together in a coordinated front against the USSR (January 1 and 14, 1980). Three months later *Aftenposten* came out much clearer in support of boycott. If West-Germany, France and Great Britain supported the USA and Norway did otherwise, it would put Norway in a hopeless position. This was followed by a standard formula in the Norwegian security discourse ever since becoming a NATO member in 1949, that it had been Norway's rule of thumb to show solidarity with “the Western democracies.” (A paper further to the right, *N.H.&S.T.* had accused *Aftenposten* of being «lukewarm» to a boycott (April 4, 1980)). Not siding with the US would be a fatal breach of faith, discarding a foreign policy continuity that had brought safety to Norway in the Cold War (*Aftenposten*, April 18, 1980).

By June, more was known about decisions in allied countries. Carter had gained little support even among NATO countries, and voices were raised to annul the boycott, among them, *Arbeiderbladet*, mouthpiece of the Labour government. *Aftenposten* admitted disappointment but saw no reason to change opinion, linking its stand to what it held to be the general opinion in Norway about the Soviet invasion – and not, primarily, to the call from the American President: “In this country we were all indignant and shocked by this grave example of the USSR's cynical power politics. Therefore, it was decided to stay away from the Moscow Games” (June 2, 1980).

Nationen (Centre Party) wanted to hear the government's opinion, though recognizing the right of the sports associations to decide. Already at the end of January, the paper remarked that the question of boycott, obviously a hot political potato, had been discussed at two government sessions, with the only known outcome that the government “awaited the course of events.” By the end of March, the paper felt that the pendulum of opinion was moving away from boycott towards participation, a signal coming from both the government and the sports camp. *Nationen* saw no reason for this “softer stance towards

the USSR”, neither on Afghanistan nor in the case of Sakharov or in the general situation for human rights. In March, when another preliminary vote in NOC pointed towards participation – adding to the confusion – the editor was disappointed, yet, very satisfied a month later when *Idrettstinget*, finally, voted for boycott. That decision would certainly stand “the judge of history,” though not in line with a public opinion poll taken since the paper had asked for it three months earlier. The paper regretted that so few West European countries supported the boycott (January 26, March 22, April 21, May 22, 1980).

Verdens Gang, focused on the function of sports in totalitarian regimes. Participating in Moscow would add to “the prestige of Soviet military and civilian leaders.” This framing, seeing the Olympics in Moscow as a means to accumulate goodwill – *political capital* – in a rivalry for global hegemony with the US, was common among those defending boycott, so also in West Germany where one could find expressions like the “red Olympics” (cf. Franck 1983: 95, 105). *Verdens Gang* reminded its readers about President Carters appeal to the 104 countries that had condemned the intervention in the UN General Assembly, to stay away from the Olympics (January 17 and 22, 1980). The ‘Uniting for Peace’ procedure was used to circumvent a Soviet veto in the UNSC. Leading up to this procedure, British diplomats used the Norwegian representative to present that agenda (Lahey 2013:35f). After two months of public debate, *Verdens Gang* reported that a majority of athletes wanted to participate. The paper disliked this “at a time when Soviet forces were bombing villages and killing those fighting for freedom in Afghanistan.” Keeping politics and sports apart was “meaningless nonsense.” *Verdens Gang* repulsed the accusation that Washington was exerting pressure upon allies. At the end of May the paper voiced its disappointment that support for boycott was so limited worldwide (February 28, May 20 and 29, 1980).

Vårt Land is a newspaper close to the Christian People’s Party. From January to May 1980, it had six editorials on the topic with a hardening line, from ambivalence asking for time to reflect on the consequences, to strong appeals for boycott. Separating politics and sport was an illusion. It also linked the invasion of Afghanistan to the arrest and internal exile of human rights activist Andrei Sakharov. If the athletes and their leaders wanted to go to Moscow despite this, it would be an insult to everything the dissident Sakharov stood for and a propaganda victory for the Kremlin. Two days before the decisive vote at *Idrettstinget* the paper’s appeal was framed in accordance with the global ideological battle between East and West: “To boycott the Olympics is a reaction that will hurt the Kremlin. We have a clear choice. We can become a pawn in the Soviet play of propaganda, or we can stand shoulder to shoulder with the USA. There is no intermediate position. The choice should be easy.” When it turned out that the great majority of sport nations viewed otherwise, the paper warned against setting aside the decision to boycott. That would be

a treacherous act against “the downtrodden people of Afghanistan” (January 22 and 24, April 17, May 30, 1980).

The two newspapers on the right wing, *Morgenbladet* and *N.H.&S.T.*, were even more typical examples of framing the topic in a dichotomous Cold War setting and using strong words. According to *Morgenbladet*, hosting the Olympic Games had a special potentiality for “legitimizing” Soviet politics. This was how the communist “party cadres” saw it, and to thwart this outcome the boycott should be supported (February 6, 1980). When, by the end of March, it turned out that few countries would follow the US appeal, the paper was disappointed to miss the opportunity of sending a message “to ordinary people in the USSR about how the world reacted to bestial encroachments.” This would help the power holders in the Kremlin to fulfil their “gigantic propaganda show” towards their home market (March 25, 1980). The wording was identical with that used by the China-loyal *Klassekampen*, on the far left, already on January 22. The two ideological extremes coalesced in condemning the Soviet Union.

Nearing the date for the final decision, *Morgenbladet*, escalated its rhetoric and its display of loyalty to the US: “The Moscow Olympics was a battle between East and West” – a Cold War in miniature. The paper rejected outright that politics and sports could be separated. It was already a matter of great power politics, with a war in the background and the paper sent a warning: “If our leaders of the sports associations break with American policy, a torpedo is placed beneath Western unity and solidarity” (April 4, 1980). Likewise, the keyword in the rhetoric of *N.H.&S.T.* was “solidarity with our NATO-allies.” This paper saw West Germany as an example and pointed to Bonn’s “loyalty towards NATO’s most important member, the USA.” However, the paper proved wrong in anticipating that Great Britain would stand behind the same “line of loyalty” as had West Germany. It asked rhetorically: “What could be expected from Norway as a NATO-partner if solidarity fails even before it is put to any grave test” (April 17 and 23, 1980). As seen by *Morgenbladet*, the West had shown weakness by not acting united. With this split, the Olympic Committees in Italy and Great Britain had engaged in politics across their governments, procuring an important victory for the USSR in its “psychological warfare” (May 22, 1980).

In the few days before the highest organ in Norwegian sport, *Idrettstinget*, voted on the boycott issue on April 19, 1980, four of the newspapers in my sample had editorials trying to influence the outcome, all of them belonging to the centre-right group. They supported a boycott and argued unanimously on a mix of morality, Western solidarity and Norway’s obligations as a member of NATO and with strong ties to the USA. One might wonder if this was a coordinated mobilization, and certainly, it was a show of passion on the issue. Seen as a competition in subservience to the US, *Morgenbladet* was the winner.

The papers favouring participating in Moscow, on the other hand, seemed more relaxed, not overly eager to affect the outcome. The exception was *Friheten*,

as loyal a mouthpiece to Moscow as most bourgeois papers to Washington. *Arbeiderbladet* held that in the colder climate between East and West it was more important than ever to keep open channels and contacts on as broad a front as possible, including sports. This was also the opinion of *Ny Tid*, with links to the Socialist Left Party. The sole paper not fitting my initial ideological classification, the pro-Chinese *Klassekampen*, positioned itself close the most conservative papers with a scathing condemnation of Moscow and supporting boycott.

A Last Dose of Rhetoric – From an Academic Heavyweight

Adding to the editorials published just before the meeting of *Idrettstinget* – all supporting boycott – an article appeared that warrants special attention due to its timing, choice of newspaper, argumentation, focus of address and the authority of its author. In the transparent Norwegian public sphere and in a situation of flux, it may well have been a decisive factor of influence on hesitant delegates of sport leaders. In optimum timing and spacing the article appeared four days before the vote in *Idrettstinget*. With a photo of its author, the renowned professor of law at the University of Oslo, Johs. Andenæs, the article appeared strategically beneath the editorial in *Aftenposten*, probably the most influential print media space in this nation. How did he argue against participation in Moscow, what frames and perspectives did he bring into the discourse, on what ontology did his intervention rest?

Entitled «*The Responsibility of Sports*», Andenæs appealed to the «spokesmen of sports» to show «responsibility» in leadership: In the current situation this meant *not* to close ones eyes to aggression and *not* to participate in a great show as if nothing had happened in Afghanistan. Whether Norway participated or not, the decision would be a «political decision». Andenæs framed his argument in a context of Western solidarity, stressing Norway's solidarity obligation towards the US. Participation in Moscow would mean a breach with Western unity «after the final decision about boycott was taken by the USA.» There was no questioning US authority to decide on behalf of its allies. National sovereignty seemed to depend on – in fact, be inherent in – subordination to a strong patron, the axiomatic, supreme dogma in official security discourse: «We should not forget that this solidarity, after all, is the decisive protection also for *our* freedom and independence» (*Aftenposten*, April 15, 1980). The implicit reminder was the German occupation in World War II, a consequence of failed neutrality in a world threatened by totalitarianism, an experiment never to be repeated.⁴

In his rhetoric of persuasion by means of historical analogy, Andenæs recalled the Nazi occupation when the Norwegian resistance movement passed the watchword to boycott all official sports events. By this link of memory, using history deliberately, Andenæs, hinted to the use of sports for propaganda

purposes by the German occupants and their Norwegian henchmen, the Quislings. This parallel, pointing to Norway's darkest historical moment under the Nazi regime, played on the *totalitarian paradigm* of understanding, common in the West during the Cold War: The label "totalitarian" was used as a generic ideological concept to bracket fascist and communist regimes (Thompson 1984:28; Benn 2006:189), contrasting Western democracies. Andenæs did not directly liken the Moscow Olympics with Hitler's Berlin Olympics in 1936, as some did in West Germany (Franck 1983:105). He invoked the totalitarian parallel via a *frame package*, generating certain associations, linking the textual level and the cognitive level. He reminded readers that during World War II the sports front in Norway had stood firm, boycotting all official sports meetings in a collective demonstration against Hitler's occupation. This accorded with a point in framing theory, the careful selection of aspects of perceived reality, making them more salient (*priming*) in the communicating text, inducing audiences to make associative connections (Entman 1993:52).

Time had come to see if that act, four decades ago, had stood the test of time and could be repeated, implying similar circumstances as *strategic framing* and using certain *semiotic resources*: To refuse going to Moscow would correspond to the choice of value of the past, representing honourable continuity: "A yes, I believe, would be difficult to defend, confronted with the judgement of the future" (*pathos*). Framing by analogy, Andenæs' narrative linked two boycott initiatives 40 years apart. By connecting to a memory of the most traumatic experience in Norwegian history, linking latent structures of meaning, he appealed to a collective conscience (*ethos*) in an effort to persuade sports leaders to repeat (*logos*) the glorious example of the past. However, Andenæs explicitly addressed the sports leaders *as leaders*, assigning them a special responsibility. Certainly, it added *authority* to the message that this passionate request came from a person jailed by the Germans in World War II, subsequently acting as a legal prosecutor in the case of treason against the quislings. By this analogy, playing on a shared collective *memory* (Assmann 2011), Andenæs could hope for his wanted outcome.

It was a master frame, involving a *frame extension* backwards to Norway's fight with another totalitarianism, enhancing its authority by a postulated similarity between past and present. (On framing *as border and stretcher*, Marin 2001:352, 425). Frames' resonance with their audiences and their belief systems is crucial to their success (Polletta and Ho 2011:190-3). One cannot know for sure the effect of Andenæs' narrative, its penetration into the deciding echelons of sports. ('Who say what to whom with what effect?'). However, the potency of the strategic frames he invoked, his overall *emplotment*, should not be underestimated, linking his arguments to a chronology of totalitarianism, capitalizing on the values of that perspective – confirming that *discourse is historical* (Fairclough and Wodak 1997:276).

The finishing touch of the debate came three days after Andenæs' article, when the essence of his narrative was repeated in the same paper, the very day before the conclusive meeting of *Idrettstinget*, April 19, echoing Andenæs' request to make a decision that would stand the judgment of history. What appeared a coordinated effort with other bourgeois newspapers may have been decisive in producing a majority for boycott, by a vote of 73 versus 57. These two articles in tandem could well have been decisive in swaying the majority of the delegates towards boycott. Yet, there may have been even more to this well-calibrated input into the discourse: Johs. Andenæs' son, Ulf Andenæs, a journalist at *Aftenposten*, was sent to Afghanistan immediately after the invasion. His reports made a deep impression on readers as well as on his father. Johs. Andenæs himself had been an athlete (decathlon) in his younger days and with leader duties within sports.⁵ He specifically addressed the current sport leaders, the decision-makers on boycott.

An opinion poll published March 29 showed another mode among the population at large: 47 % were in favour of participation whereas 34 % were against and 19 % had no opinion (Struksnes 1980:459f). The dividing line correlated with my newspaper analysis. A majority of those voting for the Labour Party and the Socialist Left Party supported participation, whereas in the Conservative Party, the Christian People's Party and the Centre Party a majority advocated boycott, indicating that in 1980 the party press era was not yet history.

Conclusion: A Study in Loyalty

Surveying the newspaper editorials, one must conclude it to have been a study in degrees of loyalty. While there was a consensus on condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, a split emerged as to the rejoinder. The cleavage surfaced as to the principle of linkage and how far to extend loyalty to the US. Two groups of newspapers were exposed, for and against participating in the Moscow Olympics. The position of the first group – smallest in numbers as well as print copies – papers on the centre-left side of the ideological scale, did not imply an inference from condemning the invasion to responding with a boycott. These papers might be placed within the Cold War-paradigm of *Ostpolitik* with a preference for continuing *détente*, keeping channels of contact open, to – hopefully – perforate the Iron Curtain. A common trait was their putting much less ardour into their rhetoric on the issue. The exception in this group was the China-friendly *Klassekampen*, very critical towards the US on a general basis, nonetheless strongly in favour of boycott.

All papers on the centre-right-side argued for boycott, some with a very strong rhetorical fervour. To them participating in Moscow was equal to supporting the invasion, or they purported so as a leverage on the sports lead-

ers. For a majority of editors, and probably sports leaders as well, it was near political blasphemy to disobey an American President. The prime mover for this stand seemed to be a reflexive loyalty towards Norway's main ally and ultimate guarantor of military security. Conforming to this Cold War *doxa* – accumulated since 1949 – loyalty towards the patron came out as the insurance payment for that security. Combined with a strong moral revulsion over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan this may have been decisive for the outcome of the boycott issue.⁶

The question never arose whether this automatic loyalty was compatible with national sovereignty. Rather, sovereignty was thought of as depending on that relationship. This correlated with an instinctive negative perception of the USSR, the constitutive ideological Cold War divide. Shortly after World War II (1946) 36 % of the Norwegians had credited the USSR for the biggest contribution in defeating Hitler-Germany, whereas 29 % credited the US (Balstad 1969:87). After all, a part of Northern Norway had been liberated by the Red Army, which withdrew thereafter. (Norway, unlike Sweden, has never been at war with Russia). However, this symbolic capital of goodwill eroded for many reasons, replaced by a perception of the USSR as the big, threatening *other*. This image of an aggressive USSR, crystallizing as the Cold War unfolded, erupted once again in 1979, constituting the backdrop of the discourse on boycott.

Viewing the editorials as *speech acts*, the first group of papers could be labeled *doves*, whilst the second group acted as *hawks* in the Cold War constellation. Most papers in the second category, the victorious side of the discourse, disliked the possibility that hosting the Olympics might improve the international image of a Communist state. The invasion of Afghanistan presented an opportunity to prevent this by heralding a boycott. The loyalty aspect towards the US came out particularly strong in *Morgenbladet* and *NH&ST*, while the other papers supported their rhetoric as much by moral arguments – that participation meant approval of the invasion and betrayal of the Afghan people.

At a critical moment of the discourse, *Aftenposten* – supplementing its editorials – opened its most attractive column to a leading academic, Johs. Andenæs, who in a rhetorical masterpiece, appealed for boycott. His rhetorical emplotment-strategy is deconstructed into *remembrance*, *linking* and *repeating*, connecting the actual issue to a well-known heroic World War II memory in a binary *longue durée*-narrative: democracy versus totalitarianism. Norwegian sports leaders, then, followed the only two other NATO countries, Canada and West Germany, in support for the US request, a choice in line with leading newspapers, though not with most Norwegians, despite heavy socializing resources and domination of major media outlets.

The decisive factor in the newspaper campaign for boycott, obviously, was that the appeal emanated from an American president, activating bonds of loyalty in a patron-client relationship. That bond was more important in fram-

ing the discourse than whatever happened in distant Afghanistan. The editors harboured a genuine concern that the Soviet Union might get the upper hand in the war of propaganda and image building between East and West. Anything reducing that menace deserved support. Subservience to the U.S. was a necessary contribution to a united front against a feared enemy. This client role was calculated to be rewarding, functioning as an insurance payment for protection by the patron in the overall Cold War context. The implication was to delegate national sovereignty to a protector. Fundamentally, this loyalty rested on an ideological identification with the US. Digging somewhat deeper in the archeology of Norwegian history, however, another related factor of explanation can be excavated: The widespread existential Cold War insecurity may be interpreted as a result of the most traumatic date in Norwegian history, April 9, 1940, when Hitler Germany occupied Norway – a parallel to Pearl Harbor and 11.9.2001 for the US – never to be experienced again.

In hindsight, accessing information unavailable at the time, it can be argued that the widespread contemporary opinion of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, was based on misperception or deliberate misrepresentation. Whereas documents available later show that the Soviet action was mainly intended to shore up the flagging Communist regime in Kabul, Carter presented it as another step in a global Communist Third World challenge (Hanhimäki and Westad 2003:518). Strong impressions implanted in the first constitutive days evoked latent Cold War images and generated a will to retaliate in some way against the invader.

As demonstrated in this case study, the immediate representation of current affairs is somewhat a privilege for the mass media. However, interpreting contemporary history is a risky business with ample potential for manipulation, engraving almost ineradicable false opinions. In fact, the very first interpretation of current affairs, diffused by media, may stick in public memory, generating a stronger *Wirkungsgeschichte* than what is revealed later, when historians access archives.

Postscript

Finally, there is a temptation to ponder the irony of history. In the 1980s Afghanistan was the battlefield for a contest between Soviet-style communism and fundamentalist Islam, sponsored by the US. As of writing, Norway has been a loyal partner in its NATO patron's military crusade in that same country, Afghanistan, since 9.11.2001 against fundamentalist Islam – with overwhelming support in Norwegian mass media and few questions about the legitimacy (concerning international law) of this intervention. Norwegian soldiers, stationed in faraway Afghanistan under NATO-article 5, was rewarded medals of honour by

former Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg, now NATO's General Secretary. While there was a heated media debate on the privilege of awarding medals to our war heroes – the Prime Minister or the King – there was almost no questioning Norway's participation in that distant war, epitomizing a foreign policy by autopilot – to a large extent handled by our assumed protector.⁷

It is a paradox that NATO's present ideological enemy in Afghanistan is much the same as that financed by the US to topple the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul three decades ago, precipitating the Soviet invasion. We now know that the year 1979 heralded the *Islamic turn* in international politics: Very few observers saw “the danger of ‘militant Islam’ against which the Soviet Union was reacting in Afghanistan” (Corthorn 2013:51). Moreover, the Kremlin feared that Islamist fundamentalism, having just overthrown the Shah in Iran, would spread from Afghanistan and Iran to millions of Muslims in southern Soviet Union, the soft belly of that superpower.⁸ Even fewer knew that it was US clandestine policy to stir up Islamist insurgents in Afghanistan against the Soviet-friendly regime there.⁹

Yet, it would be anachronistic to point a finger to the newspaper editors for a lack of perception. This information was not readily available to those involved in the discourse on boycott of the Moscow Olympics. However, would it have mattered – at a stage in the Cold War when our chief ally was engaged in a strategic partnership with Islamic fundamentalism against our common adversary, the Soviet Union, in Afghanistan? Loyalty towards the US has been the overriding consideration – *Leitmotif* – of Norway's orientation in the post-war world. The 1980-discourse on punishing the Soviet Union may be a minor case in point, though illustrative of a widespread elite consensus on Norway's subservience to its patron in international politics. As uncovered in my analysis, a majority of newspaper editorials reflected the power of that dogma of loyalty.

Notes

1. Already in the polarized atmosphere of the Cold War in 1963, as Mayor of West Berlin, Brandt had supported the West German Olympic leadership in proposing an all-Berlin Olympics in 1968, an act of cooperation to make the Wall more permeable. On Brandt's use of NGO's to seek East German contacts, Cary 2011:292, 311.
2. The analysis is based on the editorials as printed in Struksnes 1980:474-85, translated into English by the author.
3. Did the Norwegian government put pressure on the National Olympic Committee? For conflicting answers, Sarantakes 2011:203, 211; Kothe-Næss 1986:42.

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4. Interestingly, and demonstrating continuity, the loyalty formula used by Andenæs in a 1980 context was a replica of an editorial in the same paper 16 years earlier, defending the US intervention in Vietnam and attacking those who demonstrated against our patron (*Aftenposten*, April 19, 1966).
5. Personal information from Ulf Andenæs, February 25, 2014.
6. Selective morality may not be a Norwegian speciality, but a counterfactual question emerges: Would the same standard of morality have been met by NATO-members if the US were to host the Olympics during its war in Vietnam (cf. Franck 1983:150, 269)? What is known is that the Norwegian newspapers supporting the US boycott in 1980 also defended the US war in Vietnam 15 years earlier, marking a continuity of loyalty (Melle 1973) (Exception: *Klassekampen*, founded in 1969.)
7. The *sovereignty aspect* was hinted at by the leading conservative MP, C. J. Hambro, in 1950, the year after Norway entered NATO: Norway had got “a leadership of our foreign policy that lies outside our country and its borders” (Eriksen and Pharo 1997:37).
8. On the Muslim faith as the Soviet Empire’s “Achilles heel”, “weak flank” or “weak spot”, Motadel 2013, pp. 792, 820.
9. In 1998 Carter-adviser, Brzezinski, boasted that the American aid program to the mujahedeen was intended to undermine the pro-Soviet regime and lure the USSR “into the Afghan trap” (Gibbs 2006:255). *Operations Cyclone*, to fund and arm Afghan Islamic fundamentalists, was secretly authorized by President Carter on July 3, 1979, six months *before* the Soviet invasion. This covert operation to destabilize a USSR-friendly regime (and possibly the USSR itself) was planned and executed by the CIA, funding rising to \$630 million in 1987. If this was a trap, the call for boycott stands as punishing the Soviets for falling into a trap laid by the US. In the war of propaganda from the West the mujahedeen confronting the USSR were labeled ‘Islamic resistance’ fighters (Corthorn 2013, 47) or ‘freedom fighters’, as by President Reagan.

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Chapter 12

Media Securitization and Public Opinion

Denmark and the Euro-Missile Issue 1979-1983

Palle Roslyng-Jensen

Abstract

From 1979 to 1983 the most divisive issue on Danish security policy was the deployment of new Euro-missiles in Western Europe. The main Danish media discourses on the missile issue are followed by analysis of the securitization in the coverage of a number of main broadsheet Danish newspapers and it is established that there is some concordance between the media discourses and the public discourses on the Euro-missiles and the NATO dual-track decision. During the period there was both public mobilization and activation on security issues and the “peace commitment” received strong public support. The opinion surveys establish evidence that the growth in public support was connected to a securitization stressing disarmament, nuclear arms and missiles in a humanistic context. The moderate left newspaper *Politiken* can be assigned some responsibility for the discursive change in Danish public opinion on the investigated issues.

Keywords: missiles, dual-track decision, NATO, nuclear arms, opinion, securitization

The comprehensive political and public mobilization and media attention on the Euro-missile issue in 1979 took place both in Denmark and in other Western European countries, but according to the report on “Denmark during the Cold War” by the Danish Committee on International Affairs (DIIS) public mobilization was higher in Denmark than in most other NATO countries – although there were no plans for a deployment of the Euro-missiles in Denmark (Danmark under den kolde krig 2005c:203-232). Literature on security during this period has in several cases analyzed the influence of the organized “peace movements” or other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) on Danish security politics and the political process connected to the development of the Cold War on a national and international level. How the media covered the Euro-missile issue has only been raised as part of research on the political process (Rasmussen 1997:167-246; Krasner 1986:427-433; Nehring and Zieman 2012:1-24;

Cooper 2002:37-80). This article aims to substantiate the idea that the media had a role in the development of public opinion on the Euro-missiles and the NATO dual-track decision and that media securitization on nuclear arms and armament/disarmament had a particular effect on the development of public positions on the Euro missiles.

The concept of media framing is based here on the definition by Robert M. Entman: "selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation or evaluation" (Entman 2009:5). It is closely related to the concept of securitization in that security problems are raised and created through discursive politics and discussions in the political sphere, in media and in the public. According to Ole Wæver "security is a practice, a specific way to frame an issue. Security discourse is characterized by dramatizing an issue as having absolute priority." Securitization can thus be connected to political actors, media and the public, when they regard or mediatize a subject in a way which makes it a problem of security (Wæver 1997:5).

The study is based on existing literature on Danish media and security, the main newspapers during the examined period and public opinion polls. Media coverage and framing of the Euro-missile issue is analyzed by examining the securitization of newspapers. The analysis includes the Copenhagen-based broadsheet newspapers *Berlingske Tidende* and *Politiken* and the smaller and new left-oriented newspaper *Information* from September 1979 to January 1980. Also included are the responses and contexts of the Social Democratic newspaper *Aktuelt*, the Communist Party newspaper *Land og Folk* and the broader right-wing newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*. The security framings of the investigated newspapers are compared with simultaneous opinion polls on Danish security policy.

Copenhagen's main right-wing newspaper, *Berlingske Tidende*, was oriented towards middle-class sensibilities and had informal links to the Conservative Party. In security politics it supported a Cold War discourse with support for the NATO-alliance and to US policies and frequently renounced the Soviet Union and its Danish supporters. Until 1979 *Politiken* was officially connected to the Social Liberal Party, and its discourse was generally military-critical. After *Politiken* formally broke away from the Social Liberal Party it continued a military-critical framing in its reportage and supported bridge-building of relations between East and West. *Politiken* generally supported the frequent government coalitions between Social Liberals and Social Democrats. *Information* was, on the other hand, not connected to any political party and during the 1950s and the early 1960s *Information* supported NATO and a Danish military defense. During the late 1960s it shifted to a clear new left frame and aimed itself at a readership of intellectuals, students and left-wing youth in general (Thomsen and Søllinge 1991:130-141; 165-177; 235-241).

The Cold War framings have comprised securitization according to principle positions on the East-West divisions and threats and support emanating from the superpowers as included in the DIIS Commission Report “Denmark during the Cold War”; Nikolaj Petersen on Danish Foreign Policy 1973-2006 and earlier security studies (Danmark under den kolde krig 2005; Rasmussen 1997). During the 1970s and most of the 1980s the framings were comprised namely of:

- Traditional Cold War discourse, which unilaterally supported the NATO-alliance and US policies. This view was generally embraced by the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and by broadsheet newspapers *Berlingske Tidende* and *Jyllands-Posten*.
- The accommodating and bridge-building discourse on relations between East and West included NATO-alliance acceptance and global orientation and to some degree superpower skepticism, and was generally utilized by the Social Democratic Party and the Social Liberal Party and by broadsheet newspapers *Politiken* and *Aktuelt*.
- The new left discourse based on anti-imperialism, anti-capitalism and superpower skepticism and with a strong global orientation. It was utilized by the new left political parties Socialist People’s Party (SF) and the left-wing Socialist Party (VS), and by the broadsheet newspaper *Information*.
- Traditional left-wing discourse included support for the Soviet system and Soviet policies and anti-capitalist framing and was utilized by the Danish Communist Party (DKP) and its newspaper *Land og Folk* (Danmark under den kolde krig 2005a:117-229).

From Détente to the Late Aggravation of the Cold War

During the early and mid-1970s the majority of the Danish population saw the Cold War as a phenomenon of the past. The end of the war in Vietnam and the Détente between East and West on the European scene as established in the Helsinki accord and the West German BRD accords with the Soviet Union and Poland on the frontiers of Germany 1971-72, as well as the Basic Treaty between East and West Germany 1972, dominated the relationship between the superpowers. A distinct third-world orientation was predominant in the political center and left; in the younger generation issues such as decolonization and anti-apartheid fuelled the urge for democratization, global governance and economic and social progress. In contrast the parties of the left and their supporters connected the United States and its policies with imperialism and power politics. For the majority of supporters of left-wing parties this did not signify support for the Soviet Union or the Soviet system, but the Soviet

Union was generally less in focus in discussions around prospects for global development. Left-wing supporters also tended to defend the Soviet Union and its policies as they were opposed to American influence. Beginning in 1949, Danish security policy and support for Danish membership in NATO was endorsed by the Social Democratic Party, the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party irrespective of the composition of governments. During the whole period from 1949 to the end of the 1970s the Danish NATO membership had been combined with an accommodating policy towards the East Bloc and a lower level of military expenditure than most other NATO members. New tensions between the USA and the Soviet Union during the last phase of the Cold War from 1977-79 developed in parallel with domestic political disagreement and growing politicization on Danish security policy between the parties of the right and the Social Democrats. The media certainly had a role in the public mobilization against the missile issues (Olesen and Villaume 2005; Petersen 2006).

Resurrection of Sharper East-West Divisions on Nuclear Issues: The Neutron Bomb 1977-78

In June 1977 the New York Times published information stating that the USA planned to develop, produce and deploy a new nuclear weapon: the neutron bomb. It was to be stationed in Western Europe. The response in the Federal Republic of Germany and in the Netherlands was sharp – both politically and in the media (Rasmussen 1997:173-174; Petersen 2006:196-198). In Denmark protests were raised although it was obvious that the neutron bomb would not be deployed in Denmark. The protests were based both on a general fear of nuclear arms and on the consequences of the neutron bomb for the balance of terror¹, and the protests represented a securitization based on a fear of nuclear war. The objections and protests had an inherent strength by stressing the nature of the new weapon: killing people without destroying property. This message was easy to transmit to a wider part of the population while being difficult to dispute in terms that were agreeable to many people. Prime Minister Anker Jørgensen (Social Democrat) publicly described the neutron bomb and nuclear arms in general as “the devil’s work.” The neutron bomb question opened a more widespread NGO opposition towards nuclear armament, and the protests were especially initiated by “The Cooperation Committee for Peace and Security” (SAFK), and received support from left-wing political parties, and some support from trade unions. SAFK was established in 1974 primarily by the Danish Communist Party (DKP) on Soviet initiative and had a breakthrough during 1978 in collecting 120 000 signatures of protest against the neutron bomb (Nielsen and Dybbro 2012; PET-kommissionens beretning

2009:290-301; Rasmussen 1997:175-245). In early 1978 President Carter stated that the United States would not continue production, but the Danish debate was revived in October 1978 on the question of whether the United States should produce components for the bomb. The question disappeared from Danish media and the public scene later in the year and was replaced by the Euro-missile issue (Danmark under den kolde krig 2005b:120-125). The combination of the development of new nuclear warheads to be placed in Europe and a US initiative on nuclear strategy had a forceful effect on the public a few years after the end of the Vietnam War. The development and stockpiling of nuclear arms was already in this case securitized on moral and humanitarian values and comprehensible to a large portion of the population (Rasmussen 1997:177). In 1978 production of the neutron bomb was cancelled; this could well have been due to the success of public protests, fuelled by the media's framing of the issue in 1978 and was at least interpreted by the participants that public protests had an effect on major security issues.

The Euro-missiles and the 1979 NATO Dual-track Decision

In the US and NATO decision-making process the modernization of INF-tactical nuclear arms in Western Europe was raised in late 1978 and early 1979 as a response to Soviet modernization of INF-missiles (SS-20). The debate began in Denmark in April and May 1979 and was predominantly raised by Jørgen Dragsdahl, a correspondent for *Information* in Washington. His articles were based on former American disarmament experts, frustrated by the stop to American disarmament negotiations with the Soviet Union and the nuclear rearmament taking place at the end of the 1970s. Dragsdahl concluded that the USA initiated rearmament and that a nuclear war was not inconceivable. Dragsdahl's articles were connected to an elite strategic discussion and were left-wing oriented² (Danmark under den kolde krig 2005c:77-79).³

The Euro-missile issue was raised politically during early and mid-1979 by Gert Petersen (SF) while the Social Democratic minister of defense claimed that a need for a modernization and upgrading of the NATO nuclear arms in Western Europe did exist (Rasmussen 1997:179; Danmark under den kolde krig 2005c:77-83). Media coverage of the Euro-missile issue was at this stage not an immediate threat to the security policy of the current government coalition of Social Democrats and the Liberal Party (Venstre), although *Berlingske Tidende* stressed the need for a stronger Danish defense and modernization of the NATO defense, while *Politiken* wrote that the USA and NATO exerted pressure on Denmark to accept missile modernization.⁴ The respective stance of the two main Copenhagen newspapers was not surprising and close to their traditional positions on security and defense politics.

In October 1979, the coalition government of the Social Democratic Party and the Liberal Party was dissolved and election took place. Security politics did not play an important role in the campaign, but on 15 October Prime Minister Anker Jørgensen (Social Democrat) received a diplomatic letter from Brezhnev with a request to support a Soviet disarmament proposal. Anker Jørgensen answered that discussion could not take place right before the election and he was supported by *Aktuelt*, which also stated that the disarmament proposal was rigged and was alluded to the Soviet SS-20 missiles. The parliamentary majority supporting NATO was upheld, but several Social Democratic backbenchers and candidates appealed for a Danish disarmament initiative. Their proposals received only modest publicity in the media except in *Information* and *Land og Folk*, although reportage in *Land og Folk* was seldom covered in the mainstream media (Danmark under den kolde krig 2005c:83-88). During the campaign period, media discussion on missiles in Europe was kept alive by *Information* and Jørgen Dragsdahl. After the election a Social Democratic minority government was formed, Anker Jørgensen continued as Prime Minister and Kjeld Olesen (Social Democrat) became Foreign Minister. A few weeks later the missile question became public again in Parliament and in the media as it became clear that a decision had to be taken at the NATO council meeting 12 December. Debate in the Social Democratic Party was vehement and was headed by newly elected parliament members. The result was the decision that Kjeld Olesen should seek a postponement of the dual-track decision in the forthcoming NATO meeting.

Left-wing Mobilization against the Euro-missiles

After the election a broader and initially mostly left-wing mobilization against the decision was established. At the beginning of November 1979, the Cooperation Committee for Peace and Security (SAFK) initiated a collection of signatures once again and attained 63 280 signatures in a couple of weeks, less than half the number of signatures on the protest against the neutron bomb. This was possibly because the armament-framing was less clear than the neutron bomb issue. The dual-track decision included a chance for a NATO and a Soviet disarmament initiative. After the signature campaign followed letters to the editor and especially *Politiken* and *Information* printed several of them, and *Aktuelt* a few (Petersen 2006:206; Rasmussen 1997:181-182). The mobilization gradually received support from not only the new and traditional left but also from center and moderate left; the Social Democratic youth organization and trade unions paid for advertisements in the mainstream press (Rasmussen 1997:201-203). The campaign had a left-wing framing, but the engagement of several large trade unions made it a delicate question for the Social Democratic leadership. Usually a campaign started by a DKP-connected organization would not have scared the

Social Democrats, but this time the campaign for nuclear disarmament reached a broader audience. It could not be rejected by referring to the traditional Danish nuclear policy on no placement during peace time and to the general rule that Danish NATO-membership aimed at prioritizing both security and *Détente*.⁵

The first major public demonstration against the dual-track decision took place 25 November in front of the Danish parliament, the day before the Government announced that it would try to postpone the NATO decision. Appeals by SAFK and several other NGO organizations were raised in the following two weeks before the NATO meeting and the appeals had clear backing from *Information* and *Politiken*. The yellow press newspaper *Ekstra Bladet* – part of the *Politiken* publishing house and traditionally connected to the military critical Social Liberal Party – organized a signature campaign against the dual-track decision, attaining a modest 20 000 signatures. *Aktuelt* of course supported the postponement of the dual-track decision but it was obvious that the Social Democrats were divided on the case (Rasmussen 1997:181). Several leading Social Democrats stressed a clear *Détente* policy with articles or interviews in *Aktuelt*, and they implied consideration for a Nordic security balance, the terms for an unchanged nuclear policy and a willingness to participate in disarmament initiatives as long as this policy did not threaten Danish NATO membership. These were meant as a clear message to the left-wing voices, who wanted to extend Social Democratic support for a critical line on the NATO missile policy to a more extensive change in Danish security policy. *Aktuelt* was in close alignment with government policy on this question and not ahead of government policies. An editorial in *Aktuelt* had a warning to one of the Social Democratic ministers not to depart from the position that the Minister for Foreign Affairs had taken.⁶

Discussions on the NATO dual-track decision started slowly during spring, summer and early fall of 1979, but reached a climax in November and December of that year. Teach-in-arrangements and other public meetings with media coverage became frequent during these months and a demonstration in Copenhagen on 9 December attracted 40 000 participants. A clear mobilization had taken place within a few weeks. On 12-13 December 1979, the NATO council resolved the so-called dual-track decision, seeking negotiations with the Soviet Union and at the same time preparing a deployment of the new NATO INF-missiles after three years – if an agreement was not obtained.⁷

Securitization of the Media Debate September 1979 - January 1980

In editorials April 25 and September 9 1979, *Berlingske Tidende* concluded that Euro missiles should be deployed in Western Europe as the Soviet SS-20 missiles were already in place in Eastern Europe. Denmark had to support

the deployment although a placement in Denmark was not relevant.⁸ There was no change in this position during the complete course of events on the Euro-missile question.⁹ The issue on Danish support for the Euro missiles was raised even more forcefully by *Berlingske Tidende* after the Danish election 23 October 1979 and the formation of a new Social Democratic government, and the Euro-missile question was now mainly framed as a parliamentary problem for the new government. The terror-balance discourse which *Information* took up in early 1979 was not raised in *Berlingske Tidende* before December 1979 in connection with the position of the Social Democratic government that NATO should seek to postpone a decision regarding the Euro-missiles.¹⁰ The Social Democratic reservations on the dual-track decisions were regarded in *Berlingske Tidende* as a dangerous concession to Soviet propaganda and a threat against Atlantic unity, and debate within the Social Democratic Party was now a dangerous national security issue.¹¹ *Berlingske Tidende* often used Niels Jørgen Haagerup as an expert on security and NATO-affairs, and on 18 January he wrote a feature article called "Debate on Danish security" concluding that Danish positions and debate threatened the Danish reputation in NATO. *Berlingske Tidende* printed an answer by Lasse Budtz, the Social Democratic spokesman on foreign affairs, who sought a balance between skepticism of the deployment of Euro-missiles and continued support for NATO-membership.¹² No other Social Democratic or left-wing voices had comprehensive articles printed in *Berlingske Tidende*.

Politiken adopted a NATO-skeptical position when the Euro missile issue was first raised in Danish media in May 1979.¹³ Several articles during September and October stressed that at present there was military equilibrium between East and West, and consequently there was no need for new Euro-missiles.¹⁴ The opposite stance that the Soviet SS-20 missiles were actually threatening equilibrium between East and West was presented by Erling Bjøl, professor in international politics, who had for many years covered security politics in *Politiken*.¹⁵ Jan Øberg, peace researcher and frequent debater in the coming years presented a critical view in *Politiken* on NATO armament and Western views on the terror balance.¹⁶ Editorials and letters to the editors on security were frequent with the clear majority being skeptical of the Euro-missiles.

Information: From late 1978 and early 1979 nuclear and missile issues were covered by *Information* with critical framing on first the neutron bomb and later the Euro missiles as a threat against nuclear equilibrium. In October and early November 1979 when the issue was raised in all the main newspapers, *Information* was still covering it more comprehensively than all other newspapers. The majority of articles and editorials on the missile issue in *Information* were written by Jørgen Dragsdahl. On several occasions Dragsdahl argued that the Soviet SS-20-missiles were not a threat against Western Europe and that by deploying new missiles NATO would strengthen the Soviet leaders, who were

seeking confrontation with the West. In nearly all cases Dragsdahl argued from a securitization level based on strategic and political arguments. His arguments were followed by articles by Richard J. Barnet and other Americans, who had served as his sources.¹⁷ Another early voice against the Euro-missiles was Erik Knudsen, author and NGO organizer, who included in his articles both arguments that the western missiles were a threat against the equilibrium and more emotional appeals for public engagement to create hope for a peaceful world.¹⁸ In October 1979 *Information* asked all Danish political parties to publish their arguments to Richard J. Barnet's article on the possibility of the Danish Parliament stopping nuclear armament in Europe; however, only the left-wing parties accepted the invitation. Letters to the editor in *Information* were in nearly all cases critical towards the Euro-missiles or generally took a more emotional stance towards the threat of a future nuclear war.¹⁹ Likewise the majority of news agency telegrams printed in *Information* supported a NATO critical attitude.²⁰

Security framings in the three Danish newspapers are categorized according to the following frames on the Euro-missiles and the dual-track decision. The categorization is carried out via a qualitative assessment of all newspaper articles on the issues in the three newspapers in the time period encompassing October 1979 to January 1980.

1. The main strategic security level. Decisions regarding the Euro-missiles were seen as a threat against an existing nuclear equilibrium – or as safeguarding the nuclear equilibrium. Examples included:
 - Opinion-related articles (views), *Politiken* October 1979: "To the demand for stronger nuclear arms in Western Europe our answer must be no. Those who demand them have not been able to show, that the Soviet armament has changed the military balance in Europe."
 - Journalistic articles (news): these were often news agency telegrams: e.g. from Moscow Soviet statements against the Western missiles: *Politiken* October 23, 1979; "Soviet proposal creates unrest in the NATO camp" – and from Washington or Western European capitals statements supporting Western INF-missiles or mentioning Soviet nuclear armament.
2. The general security-political level: Danish (and European) security through NATO-membership and alliance with the US – or through support for Détente and an accommodating policy towards the Soviet Union. Examples included:
 - Opinion-related articles (views). *Berlingske Tidende*: November 25, 1979: "NATO is shocked over the Danish decision... From the American side the view is that real negotiations are not possible until NATO has proved its unity through an expected common decision in December."
 - Journalistic articles (news): Often news agency telegrams on support for or opposition against the dual-track decision and the consequences for the NATO alliance.

3. The armament/disarmament level: a broad popular discourse on moral or humanitarian consequences of military weakness, armament and nuclear arms. Security (or war) promoted by armament (military strength) – or the chance of war is reduced through disarmament (reciprocal or singlehanded as a trigger to reciprocal disarmament). This discourse was often connected to the notion that arms and in particular nuclear arms and means of arms delivery promoted tension and possibilities for war as an independent factor while disarmament promoted Détente and cooperation (or peace as it was predominantly named) as an independent factor. Examples included:
 - Opinion-related articles (views). *Information* editorial “Nuclear arms” August 24, 1979: “Ask yourself the question are you more afraid of a Soviet attack, which gives reason for the competition of armament ... than of the nuclear technocrats, who develop and sophisticate nuclear arms ... For most sensible people the answer is clear ...”
 - Journalistic articles (news). News Agency or correspondent telegrams with voices against armament or fear of military weakness. *Berlingske Tidende* November 25, 1979: “The Alliance (NATO) has by intensive debates developed a program to meet the commitments of the Alliance to obtain a fair decision on the placement of tactical nuclear arms in Europe”.

Table Newspaper Articles on the Euro-missiles: September 1979 to January 1980²¹

Journalistic articles: news (news agencies & correspondents)			
	Politiken	Berlingske	Information
A. Strategic security level			
1. Threat against nuclear equilibrium	57	4	73
2. Safeguarding nuclear equilibrium	20	70	13
3. Categorization not possible	22	26	15
Sum per cent	100	100	100
Number of articles	54	27	34
B. Political security level			
1. Security through NATO	19	41	9
2. Security through accommodation: USSR	41	11	17
3. Categorization not possible	41	48	74
Sum per cent	100	100	100
Number of articles	54	27	34
C. Armament / disarmament level			
1. Security by military strength	19	48	18
2. Security by disarmament	63	7	35
3. Categorization not possible	18	45	47
Sum per cent	100	100	100
Number of articles	54	27	34

Newspaper articles: Views (editorials, features, discussions, letters to the editor)

	Politiken	Berlingske	Information
A. Strategic security level			
1. Threat against nuclear equilibrium	53	6	85
2. Safeguarding nuclear equilibrium	28	75	8
3. Categorization not possible	19	19	6
Sum per cent	100	100	100
Number of articles	32	16	48
B. Political security level			
1. Security through NATO	25	88	8
2. Security through accommodation: USSR	69	6	81
3. Categorization not possible	6	6	10
Sum per cent	100	100	100
Number of articles	32	16	48
C. Armament / disarmament level			
1. Security by military strength	28	69	8
2. Security by disarmament	62	12	85
3. Categorization not possible	9	19	6
Sum per cent	100	100	100
Number of articles	32	16	48

The three newspapers clearly differed in their notion of news and views connected to the Euro-missiles and the NATO dual-track decision. *Berlingske Tidende* supported the new Euro-missiles as they would strengthen the strategic balance and NATO and argued strongly against the Social Democratic attempt to postpone NATO decisions. *Berlingske Tidende* supported the notion that security is obtained by military strength. *Politiken* and *Information* held the opposite view. *Information's* coverage was almost exclusively against the Euro-missiles and the dual-track decision. In existing literature, *Information* has been allocated a specific importance as NGOs, left-wing political parties and to some degree, Social Democrats and Social Liberals could fetch arguments taken from *Information* to diagnose, evaluate and prescribe action on the missile question during the last months of 1979, especially since this period involved important political changes. The circulation of *Information* was modest, approximately 25 000. However, *Politiken's* much broader coverage and a majority of their feature articles were also against the new Euro-missiles (Danmark under den kolde krig 2005b:92-93; Jensen 2014:595-598).²²

Securitization and Public Opinion

Surveys of public opinions on security issues during the period give no accurate indication on the background for a change in public attitudes but one may draw a connection between securitization and public opinion. The general attitudes to

Danish membership of NATO did not change. In early 1979 before the missile discussion started, 57% of the questioned Danes supported Danish membership in NATO and in the following years, 55% to 63% supported the membership while the number of opponents varied from 17% to 23%. The majority of Danes saw NATO membership as an instrument of security and 72% wanted the same level or even stronger Danish defense (Danmark under den kolde krig 2005b; Observa December 24, 1979:102; Observa December 6, 1982:422).²³

Acceptance or opposition to the NATO missile decision was more flexible. According to Gallup (24 December 1979) 43% of the population questioned or opposed the dual-track decision and 31% supported it. An Observa survey dated 6 December 1982 reflected strong support for the “modernization of the defense of Western Europe” and the words missile or nuclear arms were not used in the questions asked. Of the respondents 51% supported “the modernization”, 29% opposed it and 20% were in doubt. An Observa survey from July 4 1983 worded its question: “Irrespective of the relative strength between East and West do you think that the upgraded nuclear missiles should be deployed or not?” Fifty-eight percent answered that they should not be deployed, 24% that they should be deployed and 18% were in doubt. A very different distribution of answers was produced just seven months later with the wording “nuclear missiles” used instead of “defense”. (Udenrigspolitisk Årbog 1982 (1983):423; Udenrigspolitisk Årbog 1983 (1984):429-430). The last public opinion survey was undertaken shortly before the actual deployment of the Euro-missiles. It is obvious that the wording of the survey influenced the answers given. Any mention of “nuclear” or “missile” created a larger opposition to NATO decisions and Social Democrats especially gave different answers to the survey questions while left-wing and right-wing parties had more steadfast opinions. Generally a significant part of the public had changed their opinions and opposition against the missiles was no longer exclusively connected to left-wing political adherents (Petersen 2006:286). A fairly large group endorsed criticism of nuclear arms and modernization of the European missiles; they supported the Détente policy but were not ready to renounce the security of the NATO-alliance and the cooperation with the United States. Coverage in both *Information* and *Politiken* supported disarmament and opposed the Euro-missiles. For *Information* it was not surprising considering that it was a left-wing newspaper, while *Politiken* had a larger readership and many Social Democrats among their subscribers. A significant representation of the moral-oriented armament/disarmament frame – especially if nuclear arms and missiles are included in the assessed articles on security – would indicate that *Politiken* was able to engage a fairly large part of their readership against the Euro-missiles and the double-track decision. The readership of *Berlingske Tidende* would not have been tempted to accept these arguments or this framing in articles.

The comprehensive results of international tension, campaigns and discussions on nuclear arms were without doubt describing a stronger public fear of war including nuclear war. An international survey in 1982 on the fear of war among the population showed that 36.8% of the Danes expected a world war (and obviously an East-West war) within the next 10 years compared with 41% of West Germans and 32% of Swedes (Gallup, Sifo:November 1982).

From Dual-track Decision to Deployment of the INF-missiles

The Danish proposal for postponement of the dual-track decision was rejected in the NATO council and Danish activities on the issue diminished in the following months. An obvious explanation is the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on 25 December 1979. The most active Danish NGO on security, SAFK would not voice their disapproval of the Soviet invasion and consequently important members from the moderate left opted out. Despite this development several decentralized peace movements were established from 1980 to 1982 and most of them were close to the new left wing or traditional left-wing organizations and political values, and they constantly sought to attract followers and mobilize broader parts of the population. In 1981 the traditional Easter march (named from the anti-nuclear marches in the early 1960s) attracted between 35 000 and 40 000 followers. A wide array of local left-wing organizations was active and SAFK was no longer essential. The right-wing parties vehemently opposed the campaigns against the western missile policy but they were not able to create the public mobilization that the left wing achieved. With the gradual broader "peace movement" it became more difficult for the right-wing to establish opposition to the "peace movement" by arguing that it consisted primarily of communists and supporters of the extreme left wing and that they supported Soviet policies (Rasmussen 1997:202-203).

In September 1982 the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and two smaller right-wing parties replaced the Social Democratic government with a minority government led by the Conservatives and for the next four years the government was in constant minority on security politics. The prospects for establishing a Danish rejection of the NATO missile policy and other aspects of NATO policy to some degree became easier as a parliamentary majority supported many aspects of a more NATO-critical policy. However, the government was not ready to resign and the existence of a border between the NATO-critical policy of the Social Democrats and the government was undeclared and under pressure (Petersen 2006:317-323; Nielsen 2008:125-129). This was a sign of the duplicity of the development of Danish security politics and the duplicity of the security opinions of the population. A majority of the population supported "peace

politics” but was not ready at elections to vote for parties who would support a new government supporting a unilateral NATO-critical stand. In a Gallup poll from 1983 45% of respondents agreed that communists and the extreme left were behind the “peace movements”, but 50% opposed the claim that their activities and positions were unilaterally in favor of the Soviet Union. At the same time the newspapers were divided on much the same lines as observed on the Euro-missiles and the dual-track decision (*Dansk Udenrigspolitisk Årbog* 2004:429-432).

Besides the different opinion surveys on simple issues and questions only one more extensive survey exists on the attitudes of the Danish population to war, peace and armament in the 1980s. It was arranged and financed by the “Center for Peace and Conflict Research”, University of Copenhagen and the survey was carried out by the opinion survey institute AIM. The survey was psychological in its approach and decidedly framed by “politics of peace” (Jacobsen 1988).²⁴ A clear majority of the 600 persons asked indicated that they believed they had a personal responsibility and some influence on international relations and on the possibility for Détente. A majority disagreed with the present Danish policy based on the terror balance (nuclear based) and they saw the threats of nuclear war as a classic choice between Soviet occupation and destruction. Questioned on the choice between only these two possibilities the majority chose a Soviet occupation (52%). On the question of choice among six kinds of fear (including personal or family related sickness or death) 73% feared nuclear war most. According to the survey a majority supported global solidarity without connection to the East-West division and they were neutral in their attitudes to the relationship between East and West. The responses on global solidarity and the East-West division were based not on the AIM survey but on in-depth interviews with a considerable effort made by interviewers for pollster effects.

“Peace commitment” had considerable backing and acceptance in the Danish population, which is not inconsistent with opinion surveys on security questions during the investigated years. But the “peace commitment” was not extended to cover a change on Danish NATO-membership and disarmament on Danish military forces. This is in accordance with media securitization from 1979-1980 on the Euro-missiles and the NATO dual-track decisions. Danish newspapers were divided between a traditional Cold War discourse which included a belief in supporting NATO missile modernization and a bridge-building discourse towards the Soviet Union which included opposition to new NATO missiles and general disarmament. *Berlingske Tidende* and *Information* were positioned on either side of this division, while *Politiken* took a stance that opposed the new Western INF missiles and nuclear strategy and supported a “peace strategy”, while not opposing a NATO membership or some level of Danish military preparedness.

Conclusion

Almost irrespective of the development in Danish or international security politics during the end of 1970s and the early 1980s a small majority (or in some cases a large minority) of the public saw international security in frames dominated by missiles and nuclear arms. For many Danes their views were based on humanitarian values and a general fear of war. According to surveys on public opinions, the “peace commitment” was supported by 40-60% of the adult population. The percentage of supporters, opponents and undecided on the “peace commitment” differed substantially depending on the wording of the questions asked.

“The peace commitment” had been established among a significant part of the population by several years of campaigns, activities, political debates and media securitization. According to Nikolaj Petersen attitudes in this period towards peace movements and protests against nuclear arms were widespread but not deep (Petersen 2006:286-287; Danmark under den kolde krig 2005b:128-130). The Danish view was nuanced. Many Danes wanted security through both NATO membership and anti-nuclear initiatives; they listened to the messages of NATO-critical NGOs even though those same NGOs held political views different from their usual voting patterns. They continued to subscribe to their newspapers of habit, which preserved their traditional stance on security. There were some differences between media and public securitization on the Euro-missile issue. The securitization of the newspaper coverage of the missile issue was established on both the political level and the strategic level and on positions connected to armament (military strength) /disarmament. The disarmament discourse was more complex as it encompassed moral and humanitarian notions.

The investigated newspapers presented clear differences in their coverage and attitudes to the Euro-missile issue and the NATO dual-track decision. Coverage in *Information* was dominated by resistance to the NATO-decisions, the deployment of the Euro-missiles and to some degree Danish government decisions on security policy and by discourses dominated by political and strategic frames. The comparatively small circulation and clearly left-wing distinction of *Information* indicate that the effect was especially effective among elite left-wing groups.

Berlingske Tidende's coverage almost unilaterally supported the NATO decisions on the Euro-missiles and the dual-track decision and opposing voices were given a modest coverage. During the investigated period *Berlingske Tidende* held a weak position on the Euro-missile issue, but in light of the clear public support for Danish membership of NATO the paper's framing was not completely antagonistic to a significant part of the public, who in surveys expressed opposition to the NATO decisions on missiles but supported Danish NATO-membership.

The coverage and the securitization of *Politiken* may be characterized as situated between *Information* and *Berlingske Tidende*. Its role may also be described as significant vis-à-vis its readership. *Politiken* had a large circulation and a considerable number of subscribers who voted Social Democratic or liberal left and they supported the “peace commitment” to a fairly high degree. *Politiken* supported the Social Democratic standpoint on postponing a decision on the Euro-missiles and *Politiken* generally saw the Euro-missiles as a threat against Danish (and Western) Détente towards the Soviet Union. The security coverage of *Politiken* from October 1979 to January 1980 had a surplus of articles with disarmament-framing compared with those from *Information* and *Berlingske Tidende* and the general securitization of *Politiken* during this period was closer to the public NATO-critical discourses on the missiles (according to the investigated surveys) than the other two newspapers. It is difficult to ascertain with certainty how deep the “peace commitment” was in the longer run in the public and in the disarmament-oriented media as the development coincided with the international changing arc away from the Cold War and nuclear threats. While it is not possible to conclude that *Politiken* had a clear responsibility for the change in public opinion on NATO-policies and nuclear strategy, some importance must nonetheless be assigned to *Politiken* for the discursive changes on public securitization during this period.

Notes

- 1 The concept is often called “mutual assured destruction”. Key concept in the neorealist system theory on balance of power or security stability in the nuclear based international system during the cold war, Kenneth Waltz (1979):204.
2. After the cold war, Jørgen Dragsdahl was the subject of an investigation by the Commission to Investigate the Danish Police Intelligence Unit (PET) and public attacks by historian Bent Jensen. Jensen claimed that Dragsdahl was an “influence agent” for the KGB. The attacks were followed by lawsuits of defamation by Dragsdahl against Bent Jensen. The judgments on the defamation case have been contradictory and are at present awaiting High Court treatment. (PET-kommissionens beretning (2009j):137-178; Bent Jensen (2014b):574-594.
3. Jørgen Dragsdahl in *Information*, April 14 & 20, 1979
4. *Berlingske Tidende*, April 25, 1979; Niels Jørgen Haagerup in *Berlingske Tidende*, September 5, 1979; *Politiken*, May 31, 1979
5. *Aktuelt*, November 25, 1979
6. Lasse Budtz in *Aktuelt*, October 16, 1979; *Aktuelt*, November 9 & 14 & 21, 1979; Anker Jørgensen in *Aktuelt*, November 24, 1979
7. Erik Knudsen in *Information*, August 23, 1970; Jørgen Dragsdahl in *Information*, August 31, 1979; Jørgen Dragsdahl in *Information*, September 22 & 23, 1979 & November 16, 1979; Lasse Budtz in *Information*, November 13 & 14, 1979
8. *Berlingske Tidende*, April 25, 1979 & September 9, 1979
9. *Berlingske Tidende*, October 5 & 23, 1979 & December 13, 1979
10. *Berlingske Tidende*, December 13 & 14, 1979
11. *Berlingske Tidende*, November 26, 27 & 29, 1979 & December 14, 1979
12. Lasse Budtz in *Berlingske Tidende*, January 20, 1980
13. *Politiken*, May 31, 1979

14. *Politiken*, September 5, 1979; Erik Knudsen in *Politiken*, October 23, 1979
15. *Politiken*, October 27, 1979 & November 8, 1979
16. *Politiken*, November 26 & 27, 1979
17. *Barnet in Information*, September 29-30, 1979; *Cox in Information*, October 6-7, 1979
18. Erik Knudsen in *Politiken*, August 23, 1979
19. *Information*, October 30, 1979 & November 14 & 15 & 20, 1979
20. Reuter & RB, Moscow in *Information*, November 7, 1979; AP, Reuter & RB, *Washington in Information*, November 13, 1979; RB in *Information*, November 15 & 17, 1979
21. "numbers" refer in the tables to the number of articles for each newspaper, which are assessed to belong to the indicated level and category. Note that the number of articles are few. They are given in percentage to be comparable.
22. O.R.H. Jensen in *Politiken*, November 11, 1979; Erik Beukel in *Politiken*, November 17, 1979; Øberg in *Politiken*, November 26 & 27, 1979; Øberg in *Politiken*, December 23, 1979
23. *Politiken*, May 18, 1980: Kasper Vilstrup survey.
24. The survey was conducted in 1986.

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Chapter 13

Politics, Press and the Euro-missiles

The Take-off of the Euro-missile Conflict in Norway

Terje Rasmussen

Abstract

On December 12, 1979, NATO's Council of ministers met in Brussels to decide on the deployment of intermediate-range missiles in European countries. Negotiations with the Soviet Union on the SS 20 missiles were to continue alongside the preparation of the deployment. The planning of the NATO dual-track decision in the autumn of 1979 triggered heavy opposition in a number of European countries, including Norway. The chapter reports on the coverage of the Norwegian party-affiliated press, not least on the dilemmas of the main social-democratic newspaper. Based on quantitative and qualitative content analysis the rhetorical strategies of the reporting in leading newspapers is addressed and their roles as arenas in the public sphere discussed.

Keywords: Euro-missiles, dual-track decision, party press, press strategies

On December 12, 1979, NATO's Council of ministers finally made the decision to produce and deploy over 500 new intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe. This involved land-based Cruise and Pershing II rockets, which exceeded NATO's current supply as far as striking capability and accuracy were concerned. In order to forestall opposition in many western European countries, this decision was accompanied by a second decision, which offered negotiations with the Soviet Union on such weapons. If these negotiations were successful, and the Soviet Union was pushed to cancel the deployment of its SS-20 missiles, then the second decision would cancel the first. The dual-track decision was an artifice to manage public opinion and partisanship, including that in Norway.

In this chapter, I examine how the Norwegian press, strongly affiliated with the political parties, handled the sides of the dispute and their arguments, how they constructed public meaning during the conflict. I address the events and turmoil that lead up to the dual-track decision in Brussels, focusing on the tension in the governing social-democratic Labour party (Arbeiderpartiet), and

two nation-wide major broad-sheet news-papers, belonging to different political parties and movements: the Government's leading outlet *Arbeiderbladet*, and the conservative *Aftenposten* the then mostly read newspaper in Norway. In the debate, they played a key strategic role in selecting arguments and sources. What is of particular interest in the few weeks of heated debate leading up to the decision is how *Arbeiderbladet* handled the dilemma of being the public voice of a split Labour party, and how the rhetoric of the conservative *Aftenposten*, the leading opposition paper, could defend a united conservative party, but nevertheless was a prime source of information for the opposition on the left. The topic here is the relationship between the press and an internal political division, and how the opposition gradually gained momentum under the condition of a party-press system. I will address the following sub-themes in the debate: How did the two newspapers select their respective positions in the debate? How did the debate handle the conflict over the status of the missiles (tactic or strategic)? And how did the debate handle the conflict over modernisation vs. deployment of a new generation of missiles? Towards the end I comment on some of the main events in the years following the decision that made the Social democrats to reconsider, and eventually go against the dual-track decision in favour of a freeze position. The analysis is based on content analysis of the missile-related news stories, editorials and debate in the two newspapers in the most heated period of the case, from September 24. to December 22. 1979. A simple quantitative overview demonstrated that the public debate peaked in this period: *Aftenposten* brought 129 news-stories and 27 op-ed entries, and *Arbeiderbladet* brought 87 stories and 45 op. ed. entries in the period. In this intense period, the conflict found its main news frames and conflict lines; a broad opposition movement emerged and the press found, or attempted to find, its place. In short, as in many other countries in West-Europe, the missile conflict established its initial constellations politically and publically.

The missile debate played out with unusual intensity in the Norwegian press over a short period prior to the dual track decision, with over 5000 newspaper articles in the Norwegian press from the end of September through the middle of December 1979 (Grepstad 1981). In the course of one week in December, there were 27 articles, 7 debate entries, and 3 editorials only in *Aftenposten* on the issue of the deployment plan alone, and almost as much in *Arbeiderbladet*. By contrast, the case had been virtually non-existent in the press until October.¹ The debate and press coverage did not really take off until November, 6 or 7 weeks before the NATO meeting for the dual-track decision. A torchlight parade against the plans was arranged December 5th, with 4-5 thousand participants, and 70 thousand signatures were collected (Sevje 2010, 97). The activist Eva Nordland writes that two events gave support to the debate in Norway: the Norwegian visit of arms control advocates Arthur Cox and Herbert Scoville,

who were both critical of deployment; and the creation of No New Nuclear Weapons (Nei til Atomvåpen) approximately October 20th, following an initiative from central profiles on the moderate left (Nordland 1980, 28). The well-known political researchers Arne Olav Brundtland and Sverre Lodgaard took up the thread with very different conclusions on the problem of deployment. A petition from the new anti nuclear campaign signed by 100 persons of various political leanings was delivered to Prime Minister Odvar Nordli October 25th. A short time afterwards the number of signatures had risen to 40 thousand and December 11th the number was 60 thousand. No New Nuclear Weapons also arranged trips to Brussels to facilitate participation in demonstrations during the ministerial council meeting. More than 50 thousand people walked through the streets of Brussels. The No New Nuclear Weapons (NNA) campaign had emerged as a broad, centre-left NGO and became part of a rapidly growing European peace movement.

A Heated Debate

One reason for the heated debate in the autumn of 1979 was that the decision became public knowledge at a rather late stage. In February 1979 a NATO High-Level group (HLG), including Norwegian Deputy Minister of Defense, Johan Jørgen Holst, as an active and knowledgeable participant, completed their proposal for modernisation.² The plans were not published until after NATO's Nuclear Planning Group's (NPG) meeting in Miami at the end of April. There were scattered newspaper articles in the Norwegian press that later developed into "the missile case." *Aftenposten's* and *Arbeiderbladet's* coverage of both the Planning group's meeting in April and the defence ministers' meeting in Brussels May 16th was short. The Norwegian government felt bound by the confidentiality of the negotiations of the HLG, and deputy minister Holst did not perceive it to be his role to share information on the group's work: "We have agreed that until we come to a clarification of the assessment work that has taken place, we should not be public about what is happening in the internal assessments".³ There are indications that the Norwegian government took a position on deployment early on and had a clear goal of avoiding public debate (and internal conflict) until the dual-track decision had been taken. The government emphasized externally that they wanted to maintain an open mind until the NATO meeting.⁴ However, Head of defence, General Sverre Hamre, stated to *Dagbladet* that "in the actual case with NATO's nuclear weapons, the government's position was clear before Stoltenberg was appointed. And he was responsible for continuing government policy".⁵

The first news about the plans appeared in the Norwegian press in April 1979, but on the whole, the NATO plans were absent from the Norwegian

press until October. The press had neither the tradition nor the practice to see, let alone exploit, the potential for conflict in events. This was a time in which the Norwegian press was generally uncritical in its coverage of security policy. The press was not yet prepared to be in a tense relationship with the authorities (Helset 1981:146). News journalism in Norway was furthermore directed primarily towards Parliament and less so towards the government. Political journalist Arne Finborud argued that "If the Norwegian Parliament is remarkable for its openness toward the press, we find the government on the opposite side. The Norwegian government – regardless of which party affiliation it may have, is one of the most closed political institutions in the Nordic area. Both the Prime Minister and the individual cabinet members work primarily behind closed doors. Very little information comes from government offices concerning daily work. There is no journalist in the whole of the Norwegian press who exclusively follows government business, there is no continuous and systematic press oversight of the government and the central administration" (Finborud 1981). Additionally, international security policy was considered a complicated journalistic subject with limited interest among the readers. In the case of the missiles, military strategy and political considerations were intertwined, and much revolved around advanced technique and conflicting methods of reporting and counting. Of course, this made public coverage difficult: Former chief editor with *Aftenposten* Trygve Ramberg admitted that "a requirement of active foreign affairs journalism: to cut through the political positions and into the real intentions, documents and consequences behind the various plans, is acute and intrusive, but extremely difficult to fulfil" (Ramberg 1981).

Because of the silence from the Foreign Ministry, a *debate about the debate* generated: A series of statements in the press commented on the lack of openness on the missile question. The chairman of the Young Liberal Association argued that "the politicians are afraid to enter a debate about defence policy. There is no tradition for such a debate in Norway" (*Aftenposten* 27. Nov. 1979). Another uneasy feeling was that the Government had made its statement long before the debate on the question. An editorial in *Aftenposten* stated that "Instead of informing public opinion, many in Labour Party's leadership preferred to hide the problems under a semi-transparent veil...the Prime Minister for example contributed total silence."⁶ A liberal MoP strongly regretted that "the Parliament, merely one month before the issue would be considered at NATO's council meeting, was invited to discuss this question. The deadline that was given to Parliament had no relationship to the major importance of the issue" (Rossbach, UD-informasjon, no. 29, 2. November 1979. A leading political scientist close to the Governing party, (Martin Sæter) in *Aftenposten* 25. October 1979) commented that "... I have the impression that we here in Norway have attempted to avoid a discussion of this problem, and I think that is highly questionable." And finally, the Prime Minister could himself acknowledge *after* the dual-track

decision was a reality, that: “We have a very poor ongoing debate regarding security and defence questions in this country. There has also been insufficient information service in such matters.”⁷

The protests were due not least to the anti-government sentiment that surrounded the planning while Johan Jørgen Holst was active. When the plans were made known through the media, they triggered a new anti-nuclear protest, also within the Labour party. The leadership in the party was unprepared. The otherwise jovial defence minister Thorvald Stoltenberg handled the missile decision brusquely: “Jahn Otto Johansen, [leading political reporter and editor in *Dagbladet*] almost believed I was delusional and that’s approximately what he wrote in the *Dagbladet*’s comments” (Stoltenberg 2001:194-95). But Stoltenberg didn’t see that he should have done things differently. He puts forth an interesting logic: “I was convinced that the decision was correct. That I suddenly appeared to be a type of missile enthusiast is connected to the internal division of tasks in the government cabinet. The defence minister must be the one who concentrates on the hard, military facts and makes certain that all sides of the issue are on the table – how else can one create space for reconciliation?” (Stoltenberg 2001:195).

The biggest problem was the Labour party itself. A large minority in the International committee and in the Parliament group was critical. By far most of the regional organizations were against the dual-track decision, and defence minister Thorvald Stoltenberg believed that the government’s proposal would also be defeated in the National Executive Committee meeting at the end of November, if it were to come to a vote: “The truth is; only four people spoke for the proposal: Prime Minister Odvar Nordli, Foreign Minister Knut Frydenlund, party leader Reiulf Steen and myself. The rest opposed the government’s line, or were at least critical.” How could the government still have their way? One of the reasons was that the leader of the Labour Party’s youth organization Thorbjørn Jagland used his skill to find a solution for the party. Stoltenberg comments that “Jagland did his utmost to avoid having the issue come to a head through a vote. Together with Reiulf Steen and Knut Frydenlund he managed it” (Stoltenberg 2001:194).

Two Press Strategies

Aftenposten and *Arbeiderbladet* set their strategies according to their respective party’s positions. This was, after all in the years of the party press system in Norway. Additionally, *Aftenposten* ended up being the main national reporting body, while *Arbeiderbladet* was the main arena for debate. When it became clear that this case would develop into a conflict, *Aftenposten* went on with comprehensive coverage of meetings and statements in connection with the

case. Both *Aftenposten* and the Conservative party had taken a clear and undisputed stance in favour of NATO's dual-track decision, and both claimed that deficient information was the cause of the rising opposition. *Aftenposten* had committed itself to correct this. Furthermore, the missile case was an occasion to demonstrate that only the Conservatives could be trusted regarding consistent support for NATO, in order to delegitimize the Government in security matters. Relatively speaking, *Arbeiderbladet* gave little coverage to the case and maintained the Government's silence. The many debates which eventually found their way to *Arbeiderbladet* helped offset the clearly experienced lack of information from the newspaper's editors. One can assume that the debate in *Arbeiderbladet* relied on the substantial reporting from *Aftenposten* as a major source.

Arbeiderbladet was strategically important because the stance regarding the missile case was unclear in the ruling party, and the debate might influence the party's and the government's position. If the aim of the opposition was generally to make dissent visible, the main goal was to influence the Government in particular. Therefore the clear majority of articles in *Arbeiderbladet* were against a deployment decision. *Arbeiderbladet* became the arena where the Government's silence was met with a strongly growing opposition both within and outside the Labour party. The debate raged also in *Aftenposten*, but since the opposition did not prioritize *Aftenposten*, it never reached *Arbeiderbladet*'s level.

Early in the "missile autumn" of 1979, the missile proposal was presented as a military-technical question, without particular political newsworthiness: "Norway will support NATO's efforts to restore the military balance in Europe. According to what *Aftenposten* has learned, both the government and Parliament's bodies were prepared to accept this. In NATO one is clear that the Soviet Union at the moment has a weapons and technical lead which means that military strength is in their favour in Europe".⁸

Aftenposten was both earlier with information on NATO's plans, and dedicated more space to the issue. Under the headline, "Puzzlement in the Labour Party after uncontrolled nuclear weapon debate", *Aftenposten* wrote: "We have already received negative messages from the Netherlands and from Denmark, and we ask ourselves if the fourth surprise will come from the West German Social Democrat's convention in Berlin in the coming week... Should the West German Social Democrats also come to a diluted position, the result will be a completely new situation".⁹

Initiatives from the Soviets in reportage and articles were occasionally given a sceptical, distrustful frame: "It was expected that the Soviet Union would make a propaganda initiative in conjunction with the fact that NATO lands are now discussing a necessary renovation of tactical nuclear weapons. Such a renovation will be a response to the Soviet Union's increasing nuclear impact...".¹⁰ The Soviet proposal was in this manner treated as less than serious,

but without being explicitly obvious. It was readily apparent that there is only talk of a Western renovation of the nuclear arsenal – but not real armament. Further, this renewal is necessary – this is a fact, not a judgment. The plans (as presented) were a response, not an escalation in the arms race, as the opposition claimed. This was a general feature of the missile headlines in *Aftenposten*, and to a degree also in *Arbeiderbladet*. This statement was in the same article concerning Brezhnev's proposal to withdraw SS-4 and SS-5 missiles: "Such a numerical decrease can look good on paper, and can possibly cause problems in some of the NATO countries where modern tactical nuclear weapons are expected to be deployed." The propaganda aspect is confirmed while at the same time the opposition in Western Europe to the dual-track decision is characterised as the problem. The peace movement naively took the bait, i.e. the Soviet initiatives and split NATO. A common argument on the supporters' side was to characterise the opposition in NATO countries as involuntarily serving as an extended arm of Soviet PR in the West. This was followed up by *Aftenposten*'s editorials.

One of the recurrent themes in *Aftenposten*'s editorials concerned the one-sidedness of the opponents to the missile plans: "We are nevertheless witnessing an odd campaign...but there is a large and considerable difference between the two camps: The No voices are unilaterally concerned about the new nuclear weapons that may possibly be deployed in Western Europe. The Yes voices feel threatened by the Soviet Union's weapons of mass destruction that are already ready for use".¹¹ And: "But we do not, and should not, want to be in the situation where the Soviet Union increases its superiority from day to day during the negotiations, because the NATO countries – as the peoples' movement and others require – fail to act... Perhaps some of the people's movements should concern themselves with this side of the case. But they don't".¹²

Tactical or Strategic?

Tactical nuclear weapons are weapons which can be used on the battlefield, and which can lead to a decisive outcome in an ongoing war. Strategic nuclear weapons are intercontinental ballistic missiles that the superpowers could use against each other. In line with this distinction, the Cruise and Pershing II missiles were presented as tactical intermediate-range missiles (INF). The opposition claimed early in the debate that it was important to examine how the Soviets would interpret the new NATO missiles. Given the prevailing distrust between the superpowers, it was likely that the Soviets would consider the missiles as strategic because they would be able to hit targets well inside the Soviet Union. In addition, the missiles would be perceived as part of a new first-strike strategy, because they were fast, with great accuracy and the ability

to hit political and economic centres in enemy territory. The opposition called the missiles “Euro-strategic” in order to highlight the possibility that a deployment would have serious strategic consequences for the relationship between the superpowers. Two competing definitions of the significance of the missiles sought to gain ground in the public eye.

In Norway, the political circles that were in favour of the decision strongly highlighted the negotiation aspect of the dual-track decision. By emphasizing the negotiations, the Soviet intermediate-range SS-20 missiles appeared to be the primary reason for the necessity of the deployment decision. The NATO plans were explained as a reaction to Soviet nuclear escalation at the tactical level, as a necessary response to achieve balance. Editorials in both *Aftenposten* and *Arbeiderbladet* emphasized the Soviet rearmament at the same level. Both papers pointed to the many SS-20s that were aimed toward Norway and Western Europe, and declared that Western weakness at the tactical level in Europe was unacceptable. It was therefore likely that the Soviets would understand the seriousness and agree to mutual reductions of nuclear weapons in Europe.

The opposition generally claimed that the likely outcome of such a NATO decision would be more nuclear weapons pointed toward Western Europe. There would be a strategic imbalance between the superpowers if the USA could directly strike targets inside the Soviet Union with intermediate-range missiles from Western Europe, while the Soviet Union would be unable to make an equivalent strike on targets in the USA, without adopting intercontinental strategic weapons that represent mutual annihilation. The opposition’s stance that it faced “Euro strategic” missiles never won out in the editorial language. But in the course of the debate one could sense a trend towards less use of the term “tactical.” Nuclear “intermediate-range missiles” was by far the most common term.

The opposition claimed that the negotiation components of the dual-track decision served nothing else than to positively influence western politicians toward the American plans. In the first place, the Americans acted from a little known doctrine that it is possible to keep a nuclear war at a (tactical) level, without resorting to intercontinental missiles. Did the Americans think a nuclear war could be limited to Europe? The doctrine assumed that the parties relied on weapons with first strike capabilities, which can eliminate enemy nuclear weapons before they are put to use. The Pershing II and Cruise missiles were such weapons. The claim therefore was that NATO was about to become an alliance armed with offensive nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the 572 new missiles deployed in Western Europe would increase the risk that this area would be a Russian target in a war situation.

The signals that eventually filled the media regarding international protests against nuclear missiles resulted in more space being devoted to the case on the news pages. After it became clear that there was great opposition within

the Labour party all the way to the top level, the case got high priority. Of the two papers, more reporting was in *Aftenposten*, and more debate was published in *Arbeiderbladet*, the government organ. *Aftenposten*'s readers were more likely to agree with the question, and the opposition did not prioritise debate there, such that debate in *Aftenposten* was less than in *Arbeiderbladet* (but certainly not modest). Security policy is traditionally a topic that has great coverage in *Aftenposten*, and more than usual in this case due to the split in the Labour party.

Analysis of the content of reporting clearly confirms that both papers treated the NATO dual-track decision more as a domestic-political question, than as an international security question. This does not mean that the newspapers excluded events in other countries regarding the case, but that the papers emphasized the problems that arose in the domestic political environment and in the Labour party in different ways. This however occurred in two very different manners. *Arbeiderbladet* presented the case as a mild difference of opinion between two groups in the Labour party. The conflict was harmonized by giving little weight to others with strong opinions in the case, such as the NNA-movement and the Conservatives. The problematic differences of opinion within the Labour party thus became the focus of attention for *Arbeiderbladet*'s coverage, yet it was done as plausibly as possible.

In *Aftenposten*, the case received a serious and thorough coverage, and international coverage was more comprehensive than in *Arbeiderbladet*. In *Aftenposten* the spotlight also focused on the split in the Labour party, and dramatized it as a confrontation that put Norway's international reputation in danger. The Labour party was presented as a party with an unsteady and less than confidence-inspiring foreign policy. The coverage was thus very different in the two newspapers, in spite of the fact that editorially, both papers had chosen the same position on the dual-track decision.

In the debate *Aftenposten* took the hard line that criticised the government for being lighthearted in the face of Soviet rearmament. *Aftenposten* (Nov. 21. 1979) associated the opposition in the Labour party to the traditional opposition to NATO in the party. The conservative tabloid VG was also clear that the Soviets had modernized and altered the equilibrium of nuclear forces in Europe, which NATO must address.¹³ The liberal tabloid *Dagbladet* came out against the plans and pointed to the large and growing opposition in Norway and in Europe. *Arbeiderbladet* had a difficult period, as in all cases when the Labour party was split. The obvious strategy was the opposite of what would have been journalistically opportune. The newspaper supported the government, minimised controversy and emphasised agreements. The newspaper created plenty of space for debate postings from each side.

Modernisation?

The NATO planning emphasised that Pershing II and Cruise missiles involved a modernisation of NATO's nuclear forces in Europe. This term was used more than "deployment" and far more frequently than stationing. The term "modernisation" was used as a consequence of NATO's argumentation, namely that nuclear missiles did not herald a new strategy and were not qualitatively new weapons. The deployment plans were seen as a necessary upward adjustment of NATO's intermediate-range weapons, due to the Soviet Union's deployment of SS-20 missiles. The government and the Conservatives also used the term "modernisation" from this understanding of the decision.

The No New Nuclear Weapons movement (NNA/NTA) and the opposition in general claimed from the beginning of the debate and through the entire period that this was a misunderstanding: the Soviets would see the new missiles as a new generation of highly accurate long-range nuclear weapons. They would be able to reach targets in the Soviet Union in short time and would be considered as offensive weapons, and lead to new armament. A prominent figure at the Social-democratic left, Helge Sivertsen, stated that "The new plans mean a new escalation of nuclear armament in Western Europe that can be fatal. To call this a modernisation of forces is misleading".¹⁴ No New Nuclear Weapons also emphasised this: "[The activist Jon Grepstad] claims that it is misleading when the Foreign Minister in his report for Parliament uses the term 'Modernisation.' – This is a question of nuclear armament, he says".¹⁵ The columnist Arne Skouen wrote ironically about "modernisation" in the radical-liberal tabloid *Dagbladet*: "Fashion is changing in nuclear weapons also. They're telling us in the current sales promotion from the USA that the Pershing II missile has a new model, just as with cars and clothes, and that Europe must have 572 of this model as a response to the Russian SS-20. Otherwise we might risk being killed by old-fashioned nuclear weapons".¹⁶ Skouen hit the nail on the head: the NATO leadership and the USA fought that entire autumn to convince Western European national assemblies and governments of the necessity of the missile decision. In many ways this took the form of a campaign where terminology played an important role. "Modernisation" became for NATO and the Yes-side the primary concept and characteristic of what the decision meant. This was above all the concept that the peace movement had to combat, and disclose. Thus the degree to which the press presented the plans as "modernisation" or as truly "rearmament" became important.

Irrespective of the conceptual critique from the unified opposition against missile deployment, was the term "Modernisation" the most commonly used term both in *Aftenposten* and *Arbeiderbladet* in articles and reportage on the missile case. This was true from the beginning to the end of the investigation period. The same was the case for the editorials. Both newspapers chose to

use NATO terminology, even after it was clear that the term was no longer neutral. The papers also to a certain degree used the terms “renewal” and “replacement” that in a similar way indicated that there was no question of qualitative changes. The more neutral term “deployment” was used less than modernisation.

Consequently, *Aftenposten* and *Arbeiderbladet* played an active role on the proponents’ side in this rhetorical war. The papers used ‘modernisation’ in presentations of opponents’ criticism of the same term. The press forced the opponents’ argumentation into the proponents’ interpretative framework. But they couldn’t avoid at the same time being politicised themselves. For *Arbeiderbladet* it was rather obvious that the opinion was divided as to whether modernisation was an adequate expression. Some journalists chose to put the term in quotation marks to highlight the expression’s unreasonably positive or harmonising value: “The Government is prepared to say yes to a ‘modernisation’ of NATO’s nuclear weapons in Central Europe. Parliament accepts the Government’s program, but there is still some strong scepticism among the Labour party.” In other places there is reference to the “so-called modernisation plans” and “so-called modernisation of NATO’s nuclear weapons”.¹⁷ Generally, the talk of “modernisation” connoted a pro NATO position. Minister of defence, Thorvald Stoltenberg, admitted later about the talk about *modernisation*: “Many reacted strongly to this wording, which was perceived as an attempt to deceive the public. We explained by referring to the new technology in these weapons, but failed to convert anyone. Modernisation was an unwise choice of words” (Stoltenberg 2001:193).

Throughout the 1980s the term modernisation disappeared from the newspaper columns. “Dual-track decision” became the common designation for the NATO countries’ decision in Brussels, but no parties used this formulation in the fall of 1979. A primary reason for this change was that the Government had a greater need to emphasise the negotiation aspect of the decision, because of the extensive resistance. Thus “dual-track decision” was more adequate than “modernisation.” In spite of the fact that the transition was essentially the work of the proponents, the peace movement also benefitted from it in its campaign.

December 5th the government attempted to take the initiative in the case to prevent division. A delegation led by Prime Minister Odvar Nordli would go to Washington to discuss the case with the American leaders, while party chairman Reiulf Steen would travel with companions to Moscow to emphasise the seriousness of the situation with leaders in the Soviet Union. The purpose externally was to show that Norway put great weight on negotiations, and internally to make it more difficult for the opposition to openly resist the plans. The opposition interpreted the trip as empty symbolic actions intended to placate the resistance and bring peace to the party. Former deputy party leader Thorbjørn Berntsen viewed this as “a purely diversionary tactic to take

the sting out of the resistance to deployment which was present" (Berntsen 1988:248). The journeys appeared to be odd given that they apparently had not been prepared and coordinated with other countries. It was obvious to many at the oppositional side that the trips were for so-called internal 'medical use'.

Then the Real Struggle Began

To summarise my findings concerning the opening of the missile-crisis: After a brief initial period where the decision was presented as close to a mere technical adjustment, the issue was soon transformed into a controversial political question that emerged as the prime dividing line in the political domain that autumn. A broad political opposition did not accept that this was a question of modernisation, and their intention was to act in the public opinion to draw on the deep, internal conflict of the governing party. The two newspapers manoeuvred in the waters of their parties and presented the coming dual decision on deployment and disarmament talks. The negotiations-part of the decision was highlighted, and the missiles were presented as tactical rather than euro-strategic. *Aftenposten* dramatized the conflict and Soviet military power, whereas *Arbeiderbladet* trivialised the conflict in the party and in Europe. The rhetoric of the conservative paper was conflict-oriented, whereas the Social-democratic paper emphasized consensus. In spite of its editorial support to the Government, *Arbeiderbladet* was a leading arena for debate for the opposition. Generally, the struggle was not so much about influencing the public opinion, but about empowering one or the other of the conflicting positions in the governing party.

Following the dual-track decision in December 1979, nuclear weapons were high on the public agenda. Resistance to the missiles continued to unfold up to the first deployment in 1984. A half million signatures against deployment were collected. 20,000 people marched in torchlight parades in 1983 and 1984 in the centre of Oslo against the missiles, the largest post-war demonstrations in Norway. Just before the protests in October 1984, the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) broadcast numerous programs on nuclear weapons. Also at this time the Japanese film "Judgment Day" was broadcast, and the film "The Day After" opened in Norwegian cinemas. Generally, the movement No New Nuclear Weapons was taken more seriously as a source.

Members of government Thorvald Stoltenberg and Knut Frydenlund struggled hard, as they saw it themselves, to find a balance between nuclear disarmament and the fact of Soviet armament. Two wings were formed, right at the top of the party. The dual-track also divided the Parliament more or less on the middle on several occasions in the period 1981-1985 that created the foundation for a broader security policy debate with many bitter and personal

confrontations. Former president of the parliament, Guttorm Hansen (Labour party), writes that “in reality this debate involved essential clarifications of Norwegian foreign and security policy across party lines. The schism that many experienced as troubling for the country was well on its way behind us at the conclusion of the turbulent years of the early 80s” (Hansen 1986:244). Nothing remained the same, writes Guttorm Hansen, with lament. A political process was underway in the Labour party and the moderate parties. Public opinion pushed for a change in the stance toward the east-west conflict. As one of the most loyal Labour party member in the 70s, Hansen was strongly in favour of the NATO plan. Only in the mid eighties did he reconsider: “More and more it is clear to me that concepts like NATO solidarity and loyalty to the alliance could not or should not mean that Norway cannot let its voice be heard when we have differing opinions” (Hansen 1986:222).

Paradoxically, it helped the readjustment of the Norwegian Labour party, along with other West-European Social-Democratic parties, that Ronald Reagan was elected US president in the fall of 1980, and soon after initiated a sharper rhetoric against the East. This forced a clearer European perspective regarding security policy. But negotiations stopped and the time for deployment moved ever closer. More importantly, the party lost power to the Conservatives (Høyre) in 1981 and could reorient itself in opposition. The controversy surrounding the dual-track decision continued, and the Labour party experienced a serious latent internal schism. Stoltenberg writes: “The opposition in the Labour party was so great that at one point the party creaked in the joints. In many ways, the controversy was more serious than during the European Community fight in 1972. At that time there were also strong feelings on both sides, but deep inside I believe that the sides understood each other and that all had idealistic motives for their positions. It was not the same with the controversy over the dual-track decision, and therefore it had such an explosive force” (Stoltenberg 2001:196).

When the Labour party went into the opposition in 1981 with a new and more pragmatic leadership (Gro Harlem Brundtland), the opposition in the party went on the offensive. The conflict between the conservative Kåre Willoch government and the opposition was stronger in Parliament, where Labour party leadership had weakened authority on the question, thus was all the closer to the public debate. The government chose to take an open policy on the question of Norway’s portion of the financing of the new missile systems in the spring of 1982, which created problems for the Labour Party leadership (Sejersted 2003:323). With openness as a strategy, the government drove a wedge into the Labour party.

The opinions within the Labour party’s internal “Missile committee” in 1982, were divided but managed to come to a unified formulation of the question on negotiations with the Soviet Union based on an American (Democratic) freeze proposal. Between fall 1982 and spring 1983 parts of the party turned

the ship around: Deployment would have to wait as long as negotiations were underway. The Labour party was definitely in political opposition.

In October and November 1982 and before its national convention the following year, the missile case led to an aftermath in the Labour party when former party leader Reiulf Steen announced in *Dagbladet* that the party probably would go against the dual-track decision.¹⁸ The press immediately sensed the value of such an unexpected 'surprise' to the rest of the party leadership, an initiative that "struck like a rocket", according to *Dagbladet's* editorial October 29th. This caused considerably stir in the party. Before the Labour party's national congress April 23rd and 24th, 1983, Reiulf Steen continued his "protest" against the established circle of party leadership, above all Guttorm Hansen and Knut Frydenlund. According to Olav Maaland in *Bergens Tidende*, it also irritated the grass roots of the party that Steen expressed himself to a non party paper.¹⁹ The compromise at the national party congress calmed tempers and the press lost interest. It was too late anyway to change the decision. There were extra rounds in Parliament about the financing of deployment in the spring of 1983, but Prime minister Kåre Willoch got what he wanted with the help from the liberal-conservative majority in the Parliament, despite the fact that dissidents from the Christian Democratic party and the Center party voted with the Labour party.

Finally, after turmoil and controversy from the autumn of 1979 to 1983 the conclusion was: "Freeze": Despite objections from the former party elite a stop/freeze was unanimously adopted in 1983 by the central and national board and the party congress. This followed similar reconsiderations in the West-German SPD and other West-European Social-Democratic parties. The new position put the debate on quieter footing for the party. The opponents to the dual-track decision won. But beginning in 1983 the first missiles were deployed. The one who changed the situation was Mikhail Gorbachev, the new general secretary of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. In 1987, the INF Treaty on removal of all land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles was signed.

After 35 years of cold shoulders towards the security policy resistance/opponents, security policy gradually became more open to the public. Participants in the debate were profiled more clearly, and various points of view were more visible. The Labour party had to increasingly give in to pressure on security policy. In the so-called prepositioning issue (prepositioning of American military materiel in Norway) in 1980, the national board decided that the case should be discussed in the various party organs. This was new for the Labour party, and it forced its way forward as a result of experiences in the missile case. The party's "turnaround" in the missile question in 1983 further confirmed this. At the same time, the *Arbeiderbladet* changed its editorial stance towards this case. These developments in the Labour party and the *Arbeiderbladet*, sharpened the tone of *Aftenposten's* editorial: "Until now responsible Norwegian

politicians have had a much too defensive stance towards this movement, and many have virtually played along with the many remarkable initiatives from their leadership. Now No New Nuclear Weapons' long-range goal is so clear that one must actively take account of this movement... Far too long have far too many accepted NNA's assurances that we do not want Norwegian NATO membership for life... The non-historic pacifism and neutrality has shifted attention from land to sea, and in the future restraint and "demilitarisation" will occur on the western side..."²⁰ But ultimately, the stance towards the deployment of the 'pacifists' and 'neutralists' reached the editorials of *Aftenposten* as well.

Notes

1. Where other references are not given in the following, facts and analysis are based on Rasmussen 1986.
2. Several observers have noted Holst's central role, see Spor Readman 2011, 42.
3. *Arbeiderbladet* 21. November 1979
4. *Arbeiderbladet*, 29. Nov. 1979
5. *Dagbladet* 8. December 1979
6. *Aftenposten* 21. November 1979
7. *Dagbladet*, 21. December 1979
8. *Aftenposten* 4. October 1979
9. *Aftenposten* 1. December 1979
10. *Aftenposten* 8. December 1979
11. *Aftenposten* 21. November 1979
12. *Aftenposten* 4. December 1979
13. See VG's editorial Oct. 26. 1979
14. In *Dagbladet* 26. October 1979
15. *Aftenposten* 27. October 1979
16. *Dagbladet* 11. November 1979
17. *Arbeiderbladet* 2. and 3. November 1979
18. *Dagbladet* 28. October 1979
19. *Bergens Tidende* 20. April 1979
20. *Aftenposten* 25. August 1984

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Chapter 14

Soviet and American Leaders in Ice-Cold Lines

The Political Cartoons in the Norwegian Newspaper Aftenposten 1980-1984

Rolf Werenskjold & Erling Sivertsen

Abstract

This chapter conducts a systematic investigation of how the conservative Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* used political cartoons to depict the Soviet and American leaders during the period 1980 through 1984. Newspaper cartoons have always played an important role, but even so their use has not been the subject of much serious research. Political cartoons have been used when concepts of the enemy have been created, reproduced and changed; this was also the case during the Cold War. Framing theory has been used as a theoretical framework for both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of the political cartoons in Norway's largest newspaper during a critical period of the Cold War. In this chapter, cartoons are defined as an independent visual form of communication. The chapter provides a survey of how the cartoons were used, which cartoonists were employed, and how the cartoons entered into the editorial processes. The chapter pays particular attention to how *Aftenposten* by means of these cartoons presented the super-power leaders by means of different frame categories.

Keywords: frames, political cartoons, visual communication, foreign news

Cartoon drawings have been an important feature of the press and of comic magazines for several hundred years. Gradually they developed a close connection to the political commentaries in leading newspapers. The cartoons have sometimes been assessed as simply funny and humorous, but on other occasions they have come across as malicious, and conveying a clear political purpose. Historically, cartoons have always had an ambiguous nature. They have played an important role as campaign weapons for political reforms, but they have also contributed to the creation and perpetuation of enemy images, both in the context of domestic and foreign policy (Bouvier 1999). This was also the case during the Cold War between East and West (Hunt 2009:121), but this phenomenon has only rarely been the subject of scholarly investigation.

This chapter will analyze how the conservative Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* used political cartoons to comment on international political

events during the five-year period from 1980 through 1984. This period was characterised by strong tensions and confrontations between the superpowers, and the foreign policy cartoons were a feature of the journalism of the time. The chapter will therefore discuss the cartoons' independent status as visual communication and their relation to the paper's editorial processes. A central question will be what kinds of interpretations of the Cold War did *Aftenposten* express through its use of cartoons? What was the distribution between Cold War categories and other topics? Where did the leading cartoonists come from? The analysis will especially focus on how Soviet and American leaders were portrayed visually in these cartoons, by themselves and together. What kinds of framings were used? To what extent did the *Aftenposten* cartoons represent a particularly Norwegian explanation of the world, or did they simply reflect common imported Western interpretations?

Framing Theory

Framing theory may shed light on *how Aftenposten* used cartoons to depict the Cold War during this five-year period. Framing theory has in recent years been defined as more relevant for a number of problem areas connected to studies of social movements, politics, journalism and opinion creation, than agenda- and cultivation theory (Werenskjold 2011). It has blazed the trail for interdisciplinary approaches to our understanding of the processes involved in the media's influence. Framing theory have become one of the most significant areas of modern communications research. Frames and framing does not just include how the media present their cases, but also involves both the internal editorial processes and the societal relations of which the media are a part. In these processes, the media are both arenas and actors.

An early version of framing theory is related to Walter Lippmann, who in the 1920s observed that journalists through "*the pictures in their heads*" had a tendency to generalise certain ideas (Lippmann 1922). The American sociologist Todd Gitlin was an early user of the framing perspective on the relationship between the protest movements and the media in the United States in the 1960s. Gitlin gave this definition of the concept of framing:

Frames make the world beyond direct experience look natural. ... Frames bring order to events by making them something that can be told about; they have power because they make the world make sense (Gitlin 1980:6).

In later framing theory, Stephen D. Reese (Reese, Gandy et al. 2001; Reese 2007) and Robert Entman have been at the centre of explaining how social phenomena are constructed by the media and will then, in the next round, influence the public's perceptions (Entman 2003; Entman 2007; Ensink and

Sauer 2003; Shah, McLeod et al. 2009:83-98). Entman has summed up many of the earlier definitions of the concept of framing:

Selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution (Entman 2003:5).

The establishment and use of frames in the media is a dynamic process that includes both inner and outer factors in the work of the news desks, as well as the interplay between the media's framing and the public's predispositions. Such inner and outer factors are instrumental in deciding how the media will position their cases inside a framing. These social conceptions appear to be long-lasting (Reese, Gandy et al. 2001:11). The process of frame construction is going on continuously through the interaction between journalists and an external elite of individuals or groups that have a vested interest in influencing how certain cases and events are presented by the media (Tankard 2003:24, 43). In the context of the Cold War, these external factors included the current government at any time, the specialist environment of military and security policy experts, the milieu of party politicians, as well as the social protest movements that opposed the arms race in the 1980s. The various participants had very different strengths and resources to promote their particular points of view in the media, as Gamson and Stuart have shown in the United States (Gamson and Stuart, 1992). Even if there exists an interplay between the media and external factors that are displayed in the media strategies of the various actors here, the relationship is not symmetrical (Rucht 2014).

Internal factors such as journalistic news criteria, political party preferences, market conditions and the economy may restrict external influences. Furthermore, the organisation of the editorial staff, including such factors as the age of the journalists, their social background, education and professional status (Hovden 2008), will influence the cooperation or competition when it comes to the choice of *frames*. This is connected to the media's gatekeeper functions (Shoemaker, Vos et al. 2009:73-83). The results of such a *process of frame construction* are the frames that can be found in the actual text that appears in the media (de Vreese 2005:52).

The framings in the actual media text can be divided roughly into two main categories: *generic* (episodic) and *thematic*. While generic frames emphasise the reporting of episodes that highlight the unique aspects of certain events, thematic frames provide broader perspectives that anchor the events in more comprehensive contexts. These call attention to general tendencies or to a general phenomenon manifested in a particular case (Entman, Mathes et al. 2009:176). Robert Entman has maintained that such a framing should: 1) define and delimit the problem; 2) identify the problem's cause; 3) provide a basis for moral reflections; and 4) suggest solutions and initiatives (Entman 1993:52).

What is framed and highlighted may, in interaction with the predispositions of the public, contribute to the strengthening or changing of how events or cases presented by the media are evaluated. In this context, culture functions as a storehouse of applied frames and schemes or patterns. That storehouse becomes the foundation for the reactions to the communication process that new frames become a part of, both for the elites and for the general public (Entman, Mathes et al. 2009:176; Shah, McLeod et al. 2009:86; Van Gorp 2014). *The Cold War framing* or *the War on Terror framing* are examples of this kind of overarching scheme. Studies have shown that frames may influence attitudes both on the individual and social level, and provide a stimulus for political socialisation, political decisions or collective actions (de Vreese 2005:52).

Tankard and Reese have summarised the many attempts to spot where in the media texts the use of frames may be identified; they can be found in headlines, introductions, photos, photo captions, editorials, choice of sources, choice of quotations, italicised quotations, logos, statistics, figures and illustrations, plus concluding statements and paragraphs (Reese, Gandy et al. 2001:101).

While the agenda setting theory dominated communications research until the 1990s, research projects based on framing theory have been dominant since the mid-nineties (Entman, Mathes et al. 2009; Van Gorp 2007). The differences between agenda theory and framing theory can be summed up as follows:

Agenda setting looks on story selection as a determinant of public perceptions of issue importance and, indirectly through priming, evaluations of political leaders. Framing focuses not on which topics or issues are selected for coverage by the news media, but instead on the particular ways those issues are presented (Price and Tewksbury 1997:184; Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007:15).

The interest in framing theory in Norwegian media research has developed in waves (Werenskjold 2011:43–44). Among more recent Norwegian media studies utilising a framing perspective can be mentioned articles by Sigurd Allern and Øyvind Ihlen, along with the doctoral dissertations of Audun Beyer and Rolf Werenskjold (Allern and Ihlen 2008; Werenskjold 2011; Beyer 2012; Allern 2014). Werenskjold and Sivertsen have used the framing perspective on the visual communication that press photos constituted in the leading Norwegian newspapers in connection with the global wave of protest in 1968 (Werenskjold and Sivertsen 2014).

Caricatures as Visual Framing

A majority of the studies with an agenda setting- or framing perspective on the media's ability to influence a mass audience, have been concerned with analyses of texts and verbal messages (Coleman, McCombs et al. 2009:153).

Andrew W. Barret and Lowell Barrington have documented that visual messages can also have a strong influential force, whether alone or as a reinforcement or highlighting of the editorial line on issues expressed in the text (Barret and Barrington 2005). Paul Messaris and Linus Abraham represent a more general approach to the role that visual communication may play in the framing process. They emphasise that visual communication is different from both oral and written communication, in that it is easier to take it for granted. The visual medium may contain opinions that would have created more opposition if the same message had been expressed in words (Messaris and Abraham 2001:215-226). Paul Fox and Gil Pasternak have also stressed the fact that visual representation of conflict contributes to the formation of our collective memory (Fox and Pasternak 2011:1-15). This study is also related to analyses of selected individual photos. A number of both earlier and more recent studies of politics, election campaigns and voter opinions have documented the strong influence that visual frames can have on attitudes to individuals, events or issues. These studies have shown that voters often tend to make up their minds about political candidates based on impressions gathered from press or television images of the candidates (Barret and Barrington 2005:609; Coleman and Banning 2006). Other studies have revealed that the size of press photos are significant when it comes to attracting the attention of the public (Wanta 1988). Many years before this turn towards visual communication in the milieu of English-speaking research, Sivertsen employed framing theory in order to understand and explain how Norwegian political leaders were represented by the press (Sivertsen 1987). Peter Ludes, Winfried Nöth and Kathrin Fahlenbrach have emphasised the importance of the extensive use of visual communication in the media across national boundaries, and the growing significance this has had for the production of meaning and established patterns of power (Ludes, Nöth et al. 2014).

However, there exist few scholarly studies of cartoons and caricature as a form of visual political communication. Political cartoons differ, from journalism or documentary photographs in one crucial respect. The drawings are not obliged to represent reality. Drawing is interpretative to a much greater extent than the photograph. There exist a number of doctoral dissertations that concentrate on studying political cartoons in relation to different themes, but very few that focus on how these cartoons have been used by the press. Most of these studies are based on image analysis in the humanist tradition, where the source material also includes a broader range of cartoon literature (Moyle 2004). This type of research, however, does not provide a basis for comparative studies of how cartoons have been used in the Norwegian and Nordic press. Political cartoons in a Cold War context have only rarely been investigated. An exception is the article on the media and the framing fight by William A. Gamson and David Stuart about the symbols used in the depiction of nuclear

weapons in American cartoons. That study is based on a social sciences framing perspective (Gamson and Stuart 1992), but does not cover the same themes and period as this analysis takes up. The Canadian John Greenberg has also studied how cartoons have been used to promote certain points of view in the immigration debate in Canada (Greenberg 2002).

The framing perspective that has been explained here, provides a starting point for the mapping out and analysis the cartoons *Aftenposten* used to comment on international and security-related political issues during this five-year period. This study aims to analyse how Norway's largest newspaper visually framed the conflicts between East and West after the period of *détente* was followed by a new Ice Age in superpower relations.

Because *Aftenposten* was considered to be a liberal-conservative newspaper, which at that time was fighting for the consolidation of the parties on the right and championed the Conservative Party's views on foreign policy, this is not a study of the competition for framings in a wider sense. In that case the material would have to be extended to include more newspapers. *Aftenposten* thus only represents one voice in a larger choir. Even so, the paper was, as the country's biggest subscription newspaper, an important mouthpiece for the foreign policy establishment in Norway. Here we will develop a framing-theoretical approach to cartoons that comment on the Cold War conflicts and the political leaders, in order to be able to investigate, at a later date, the competition between several newspapers.

Materials and Method

This study uses a quantitative content analysis (Østbye, Helland et al. 2013:207-229; Krippendorff and Bock 2009) of all the political cartoons about security- and foreign policy topics from *Aftenposten* during the five-year period from the 1st January, 1980 to the 31st December, 1984. The study goes systematically through all the morning and evening editions of the paper, based on *Aftenposten*'s digital archives. The registration and categorisation of the political cartoons have developed through several phases. To begin with, all the pages containing political cartoons with a security- and foreign policy content were downloaded, and then the discursive unit, the cartoon, was coded in keeping with the survey of variables in Table 1. From 1980 through 1984, *Aftenposten* published a total of 1541 foreign policy-related cartoons.

In the second phase, a systematic, inductive and manual numbers-based coding of the foreign- and security policy cartoons was carried out. In this phase, the cartoons with Cold War themes were identified. Cold War cartoons are here understood to mean the types of drawings that emphasise and comment on the conflicts between East and West, be it within the ideological, political,

Table 1. Code Scheme for Political Cartoons

Variables	Content
Medium	Name of newspaper – also registers morning or evening edition
Date	Publication date
Page placing	Page placing of each individual cartoon
Title	Title of the text that the cartoon illustrates
Text	Text in the cartoon
Tema	Theme/subject of the cartoon
Cold War/Not Cold War	Whether the cartoon is related to the relation between East and West or not
Framing Category	Frames used in the individual cartoon
Geography	What country does the cartoon illustrate?
Cartoonist	Name and nationality of cartoonist
Agency	Syndicated agencies
Source	Specific source for cartoon outside of syndicated agencies, plus references to external newspapers

economic or military area. These are cartoons that focus on who is believed to be responsible for the conflicts, the nature of the conflicts and place one or the other of the actors in a negative or positive light (Entman 1993). During this phase, the cartoons containing American or Soviet leaders were identified. None of the framing categories were defined in advance. The framings that the state leaders were presented with, were defined and thematised on the basis of inductive discoveries in the material and with focus on clusters of media messages (Van Gorp 2014). The method of analysis is mainly case specific.

The cartoons depicting the state leaders were printed out from the database and sorted into different categories based on the actual case content and the concomitant text. The cartoons included the superpower leaders, either on their own or together. The printouts were made to ensure that the cartoons that ended up in the same category, actually were of a similar nature. To achieve intercode reliability, the evaluation of the content of the cartoons was carried out by both authors, independently of each other. These evaluations have been concurrent, and so it has not been necessary to keep a separate scheme to measure evaluation divergence. The thematic categories were only defined when the rough sorting out of frames in the cartoons had been completed. Based on the issue contents, the cartoons of the Soviet and American state leaders were divided among five main categories: economy, political system, international politics, disarmament and the relation to Eastern or Western Europe. While the major thematic categories for the two superpower leaders were relatively similar, the frame categories were quite different, both in character and in number. The different frame categories in the analysis will be identified in the ensuing text.

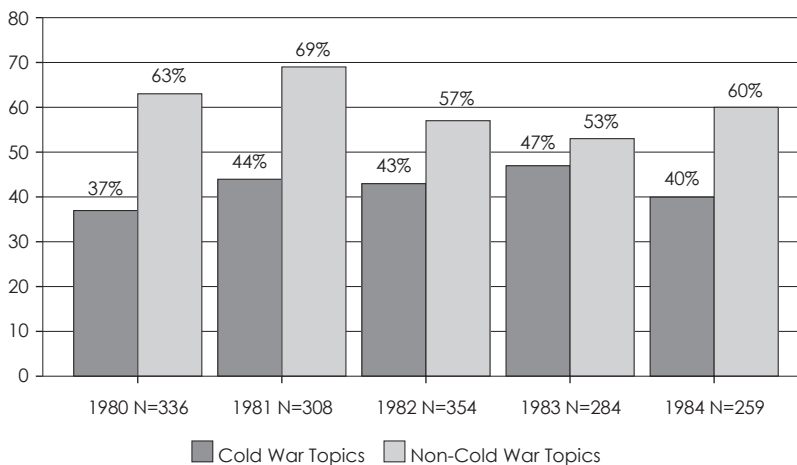
Cartoons Dealing with Foreign- and Security Policy

Throughout this period, *Aftenposten* had a comprehensive coverage of cases dealing with foreign- and security policy. Most of the cartoons in the selection were directly connected to the paper's foreign policy commentaries, but a large number of them were also published on the discussion pages. A majority of the cartoons were linked to the editorial foreign news commentary. These were written either by the correspondents or by the editorial management in the foreign newsroom at home.

Sometimes the commentaries were written by journalists in the foreign newsroom who had specialist knowledge of the relevant area. Some of them were former correspondents in the specific region. Unlike the editorials, all the editorial commentaries were attributed. In the course of this five-year period, *Aftenposten* published a total of 1541 political cartoons. Figure 1 shows how the cartoons were distributed during certain years in this period. The figure also reveals that even if the percentage of cartoons with Cold War themes remained relatively stable, the total number of cartoons declined after 1982. This development may be explained by the fact that international tensions were somewhat reduced during the period after the death of Brezhnev in 1982.

The great majority of the cartoons in *Aftenposten* were connected to commentaries related to the news situation in many countries, especially connected to political or economic crises, elections and political leaders. A great many cases were treated, and the number of cartoons with Cold War themes remained high throughout the period. All in all, some 647 cartoons focused on Cold War themes, comprising 42 % of the total.

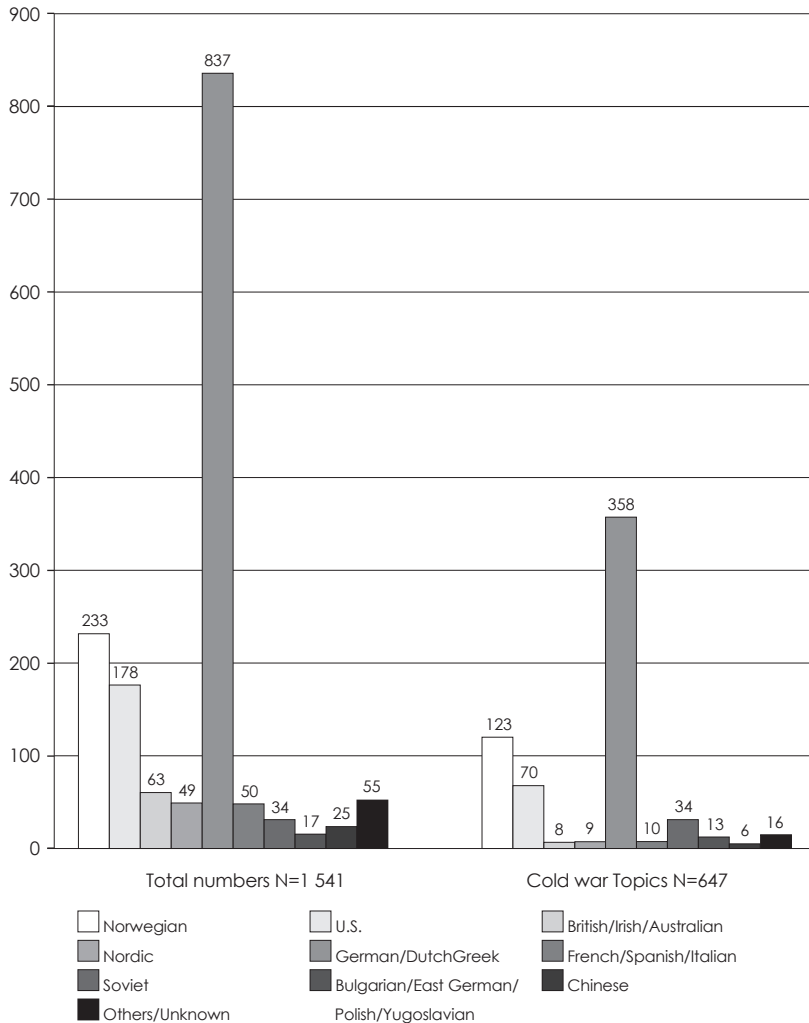
Figure 1. A Complete Survey of the Percentage Distribution of Cartoons with and without Cold War Themes during the Period 1980-1984



The Cartoonists

Who were the cartoonists that *Aftenposten* employed to illustrate their editorial commentaries? How specifically Norwegian were the attitudes that were conveyed to the paper's readers through these drawings? *Aftenposten* published political cartoons made by altogether 125 identifiable cartoonists during this period. Among these only 17 were Norwegians. 18 drawings were made by unidentifiable cartoonists or publications.

Figure 2. National Origin of Cartoonists and Total Numbers of Cartoons Published by *Aftenposten* 1980-1984



As shown by Figure 2, *Aftenposten* published a majority of cartoons by German/Dutch and Greek cartoonists, in total 837 drawings (52 %). Then followed Norwegian cartoonists, with 233 drawings (15 %). American cartoonists were the third most important group of contributors to the paper with 178 (12 %). The large number of cartoonists from different countries document a diffusion of ideas from a large part of the Western world during the last phase of the Cold War. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that the picture of the world presented by *Aftenposten*'s cartoonists was widely shared. However, we have only scant knowledge of the selection and published framings in other Norwegian newspapers or abroad. One might perhaps have expected that cartoons of American origin would have had a dominant place in *Aftenposten*, but this was not the case. The great majority of foreign cartoons actually originated in continental Europe.

The Most Frequently Used Cartoonists

It is somewhat surprising that *Aftenposten* used relatively few Norwegian cartoons to illustrate events related to security- and foreign policy during the period under discussion. Norwegian cartoons comprised 123 (15 %) of the total of number of drawings dealing with Cold War topics, but a good deal more than half (69 %) of all the Norwegian cartoons focused on Cold War issues. Most of the Norwegian drawings were produced by the in-house cartoonists on the editorial staff, Ulf Aas and Kåre Bondesen. Between them, they produced a total of 151 (10 %) of the cartoons dealing with foreign policy topics. In addition to these, *Aftenposten* also reproduced a number of cartoons made by other Norwegian cartoonists on their debate pages.

Table 2. The Most Published Cartoonists in *Aftenposten* 1980-1984 in Percent of the Total

Topics	1980		1981		1982		1983		1984		Total	
	Num- bers	Cold War Topics	Num- bers	Cold War Topics	Num- bers	Cold War Topics	Num- bers	Cold War Topics	Num- bers	Cold War Topics	Num- bers	Cold War Topics
BAS	31	30	38	43	45	44	55	56	59	49	45	44
Cartoonist												
Kåre Bondesen	22	22	9	15	2	4	1	2	3	5	8	9
F. Behrendt	7	8	6	8	5	8	7	6	3	4	6	7
Bill Mauldin: Chicago Sunday Times/ Europa-Press												
A. B.	4	4	4	4	2	1	2	3	1	1	3	3
Ulf Aas	2	2	3	4	3	3	>1	-	2	1	2	2
Other	34	34	40	26	43	40	34	33	32	40	36	35
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N=	336	125	308	134	354	152	284	133	259	103	1541	647

As Table 2 shows, *Aftenposten* published, during the five-year period, a total of 691 cartoons with the signature BAS (Basilis Mitropoulos). 287 of these dealt with Cold War topics. The Greek cartoonist supplied cartoons for a large number of European and American newspapers. *Aftenposten* made extensive use of his drawings from 1978 onwards (*Aftenposten*, morning edition, November 27th, 1982: 25). The paper had exclusive rights to the use of his cartoons in Norway. BAS used a few simple, but expressive lines. His drawings were usually without text, a fact that contributed to the clarification of his message for an international audience. A textual element in the cartoons would have reduced their communication potential.

The second most utilised cartoonist was one of the in-house members of the *Aftenposten* staff, Kåre Bondesen. All told, the paper printed 120 of his drawings, half of them dealing with Cold War topics. As a cartoonist, his specialty was social commentary. His drawings were often small, placed in one column, and they were often used to illustrate letters to the editor (Graff et al. 1984:116). Like BAS, Bondesen was also intent on letting the drawings speak for themselves, and the cartoons, therefore, seldom contained any text.

The third most used cartoonist was the German-Dutch Fritz Behrendt. The paper published 89 of his cartoons during this period, 45 of them focusing on Cold War topics. Behrendt's drawings were published in a number of European and American newspapers. Even *Pravda* printed his cartoons. In Norway, Behrendt was first used by *Arbeiderbladet* from 1959, before *Aftenposten* secured exclusive Norwegian rights to his work from early in the 1960s.

The Cartoons in the Editorial Process

There were great differences between newspapers in their use of political cartoons. Some papers had their own resident cartoonist on the editorial staff, while others used syndicated cartoons delivered from different agencies. The organisation of the cartoonists' work may give some indication of the relationship between cartoon drawing and text.

An in-house cartoonist was originally a member of the editorial staff. His task was to express and enhance visually the editors' political agenda, because the cartoons underlined the political commentary. The drawings were often conceived as a cooperative project between the writer and the cartoonist. Unlike the photograph, the cartoons were not limited by reality. During the period after World War II, most of the leading newspapers in the Norwegian party press system employed their cartoonists on a permanent basis. Ulf Aas, Kåre Bondesen, Jan O. Henriksen and Inge Grødum left their stamp on *Aftenposten*'s political cartoons in the 1980s. There is evidence to suggest that the relationship between the newspapers' editorial writers and the cartoonists

changed when the party-based newspaper system disintegrated in the 1980s. This development gave the cartoonists a freer position than earlier, making the connection between the editorials' production of ideas and opinions and the cartoons less obvious. This was particularly noticeable within the Labour press after 1985, where the cartoons had been included in the work to construct a number of joint editorial solutions for the many Labour newspapers that by now began gradually to break away from the Labour Party (Backe, Herb et al. 2001:95-100). Developments in *Aftenposten* seem to have followed a different route. When Jan O. Henriksen became in-house cartoonist in 1985, the connection between editorials and cartoons became more evident.

The publication of a cartoon in *Aftenposten* might come about in several ways. One way was for the writer-journalist to compose his text first. Then this text was passed on to the cartoonist, and through discussions between him and the writer, the cartoon was produced in the course of 2-3 hours. On other occasions the cartoonist had more time. The political cartoons were selected by the editorial management, and it sometimes happened that the editors of *Aftenposten* would stop cartoons that they did not like.¹

As we have seen, the in-house cartoonists' share of the drawings published in *Aftenposten* was fairly small. The bulk of cartoons came in from abroad. Some of these came from syndicated cartoonists, who sold their drawings through agencies. Europe Press A.B. was such an agency that *Aftenposten* made use of. We have insufficient knowledge of the terms of the contracts between the paper and the agency, but *Aftenposten* paid for exclusive Norwegian rights to particular cartoonists. One such cartoonist was Paul Mauldin. *Aftenposten* also printed cartoons taken from other newspapers. Other cartoonists were tied more directly to the paper through personal contracts. While most foreign cartoonists were represented by single drawings, both Behrendt and BAS are examples of cartoonists who appeared in the same papers through several decades. Both of these cartoonists submitted a collection of topical drawings to the foreign newsroom every week. The editors then selected which of the drawings they wanted to use for which topics. The editorial control of the framing in the cartoons was reinforced even further by the fact that the same cartoons might be used several times, with shorter or longer intervals between the repetitions.

Political Leaders in the Cartoons

How, then, were political leaders in general and the Soviet and American leaders in particular framed in *Aftenposten*? During the five-year period, the total number of cartoons depicting all the state leaders comprised as much as 44 % of all the cartoons published by the paper. In certain years, the use of state

leaders as a *leitmotif* in the cartoons made up an even larger percentage, as shown by Table 3.

Table 3. Leaders of the Great Powers and Nordic Politicians in the Political Cartoons Published by *Aftenposten* 1980-1984 in percent

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Political leaders total	51	51	41	40	37
Brezhnev	7	10	5	-	> 1
Andropov	-	-	-	4	1
Chernenko	-	-	-	-	>1
Carter	7	1	-	-	-
Reagan	3	6	9	7	4
Thatcher	3	3	1	2	2
Schmidt	3	4	3	-	-
Kohl	-	-	1	2	1
Giscard	1	1	-	-	-
Mitterand	>1	2	1	2	2
Chinese Politicians	4	2	2	1	1
Norwegian Politicians	2	1	2	1	3
Danish Politicians	>1	1	1	1	>1
Swedish Politicians	2	2	2	2	1
Finnish Politicians	>1	1	1	>1	>1
Other Political leaders	16	19	12	22	19
Total %	100	100	100	100	100
N=	336	308	281	284	259

It was the leaders of the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, that dominated *Aftenposten's* cartoons during this period, as shown in Table 3. The paper also paid a lot of attention to French, British and West German leaders in the cartoons, but largely overlooked Norwegian and Nordic politicians. In the U.S. the situation was different. There the national politicians dominated the cartoons related to nuclear war, as Gamson and Stuart have pointed out (Gamson and Stuart 1992:68-69). The superpower dominance in the cartoons is easy to explain. It was the superpowers that dominated international politics. In the following, we want to map out the main categories of the framings used by *Aftenposten* in its presentation of the Soviet and American leaders (Table 4 and 5). We will also give a more detailed description of the framings we have identified and discuss what we may conclude from these.

The Soviet Leaders

Aftenposten published a great many cartoons featuring Leonid Brezhnev, but still significantly fewer than of the American presidents. The 75 Brezhnev cartoons, published from 1980 to 1982, were a part of very different thematic areas of

foreign policy. What many of them had in common, was that they depicted Brezhnev as an old man. The cartoons also presented the president with other dominant framings, as a representative of an expansionist Soviet state and a state that suppressed the human rights of citizens in his own country. Those last two elements were important thematic areas for *Aftenposten's* coverage of the Soviet Union during the entire period.

Table 4. Framing Categories of the Soviet Leaders in *Aftenposten* 1980-1984

Frames	False peace doves	Soviet expansionism	Master and slave	Human Rights	Evil Empire	Arthrosis	Economic disaster	Total
1980 Economy								
Political system				4		1		5
International politics	1	5						6
Disarmament	5							5
Relations to Eastern Europe			2					2
1981 Economy								
Political system				1		4		5
International politics		4						4
Disarmament	4							4
Relations to Eastern Europe			6					6
1982 Economy							1	1
Political system				1				1
International politics		5						5
Disarmament	1							1
Relations to Eastern Europe			4					4
1983 Economy								
Political system					1	2		3
International politics								
Disarmament	5							5
Relations to Eastern Europe			2					2
1984 Economy								
Political system						3		3
International politics								
Disarmament	1							1
Relations to Eastern Europe			1					1
Total	17	14	15	6	1	10	1	

After the death of Brezhnev (November 10th, 1982), *Aftenposten* published significantly fewer cartoons of the leaders who succeeded him, Yuri Andropov (died February 9th, 1984) and Konstantin Chernenko (died March 10th, 1985). This can partly be explained by the fact that the total number of cartoons featuring state leaders was reduced, but it was also due to the fact that the paper needed time to map out the new leaders' politics with regard to the West. *Aftenposten*

printed 13 cartoons featuring Andropov in the course of 1983 and 1984. Both Andropov and Chernenko were old men and were regarded as transitional figures in Soviet politics. Andropov was depicted as a seriously health-impaired Soviet president. *Aftenposten* displayed a fundamental skepticism to Andropov's disarmament initiatives, which they perceived as an encouragement to the peace movement in the West, with the ultimate aim of preventing a Western deployment of new nuclear missiles. In this context, Andropov was presented both with the halo of an angel and the bottom of a devil.

Every one of *Aftenposten's* cartoons featuring the Soviet leaders had a framing that could be linked to the Cold War. They were described with 7 main framings, which all underlined different problematic aspects of the Soviet state, seen with Western eyes.

False Peace Dove

The false peace dove frame was used by *Aftenposten* to characterise the different Soviet initiatives during the disarmament negotiations. *Aftenposten* believed the initiatives to be part of the Soviet attempts to divide the Western governments by suggesting solutions that were similar to the demands made by the peace movement in the Western countries. This framing was used about all the Soviet leaders, especially Brezhnev and Andropov. The message was that they were not to be trusted.

Cartoon 1. The False Peace Dove Frame²



Master and Slave

Aftenposten used the *Master and Slave* frame to characterise the relationship between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. All the cartoons of this category showed that Brezhnev and the Soviet Union were pulling the strings and constituted the real suppressive power in Eastern Europe. This type of drawing was used during the crisis in Poland in 1981-1982, but was also used to frame the events in the region throughout the entire five-year period.

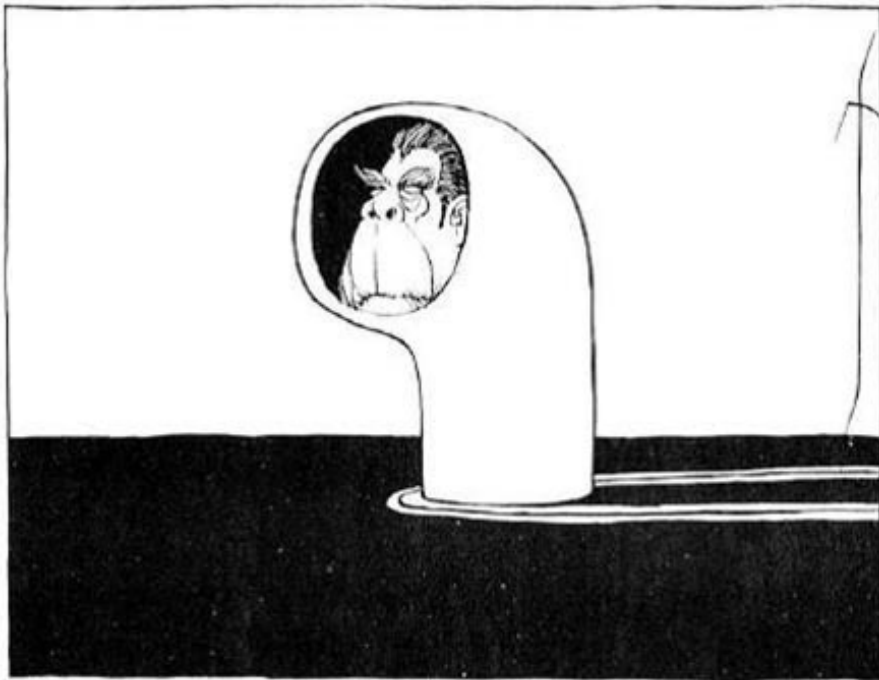
Cartoon 2. The Master and Slave Frame during the Polish Crisis³



Soviet Expansionism

The frame *Soviet Expansionism* was used to depict the Soviet Union as a threat to world peace. This was used in particular in connection with the invasion of Afghanistan, but also in relation to Norway, Sweden and the southern parts of Africa. Framings like these reached a peak during the submarine incidents in Sweden in 1981 and 1982. The foregrounding of the expansionist element was used in connection with events outside of the traditional sphere of Soviet power. This framing disappeared from *Aftenposten* after Brezhnev's death in 1982, when international tensions abated somewhat.

Cartoon 3. The Soviet Expansionism Frame during One of the Submarine Incidents in Swedish Waters⁴



Arthrosis

The *arthrosis* frame was used to describe both the Soviet social system and its leaders as an old, stagnant social order based on a defunct Communist ideology and an idolisation of a leadership that was physically barely able to walk unassisted.

Cartoon 4. The Arthrosis Frame⁵



Human Rights

Aftenposten put a great deal of emphasis on the violations of human rights in the Soviet Union and their treatment of dissidents. *The Human Rights* frame stressed how the Soviet regime tried to prevent public debate and how they abused psychiatry in trying to silence oppositional writers and other intellectuals. The framing created a basis for moral judgments of the oppressive Communist state.

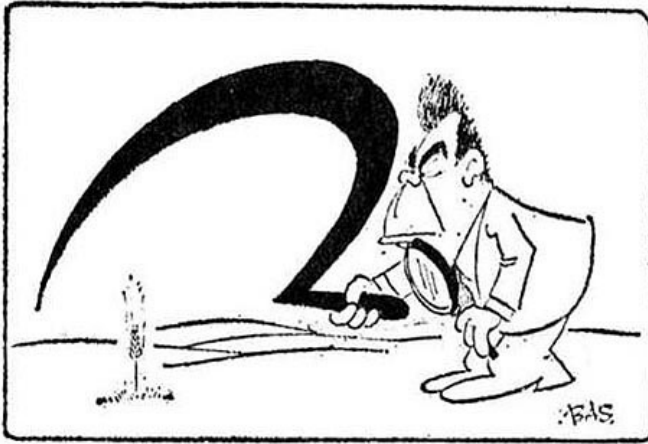
Cartoon 5. The Human Rights Frame⁶



Economic Disaster

Aftenposten described the economic crisis in the Soviet Union by means of *the Economic Disaster* frame. This category was used most often to comment on the problems in the agricultural sector experienced by the Soviet Union in the early 1980s. It highlighted the connection between the Communist system and economic problems.

Cartoon 6. Economic Disaster Frame⁷



The Evil Empire

The Evil Empire frame depicted the Soviet leader Andropov as a part of the evil that Communism represented, but *Aftenposten* used this very rarely.

Cartoon 7. The Evil Empire Frame⁸



The American Leaders

Aftenposten published many more cartoons of the American presidents than of the Soviet leaders, but they were much more differentiated in the framings and covered many more topics, both in terms of domestic and foreign policies.

There were relatively few (26) cartoons featuring Jimmy Carter, something that can be explained by his loss in the presidential election in 1980, and by the fact that the greater part of his presidency falls outside of the period of cartoon selection for this study. *Aftenposten*'s cartoons depicting President Carter in 1980 were influenced by the election campaign, the crisis in Iran, the boycott of the Moscow Olympics and the relations with Europe. Only 4 of the Carter cartoons were connected to Cold War topics.

Aftenposten gave a more mixed picture of Ronald Reagan, both in terms of domestic and international politics. During the period, the paper published 100 cartoons about him. Reagan was presented in various ways: as a cowboy, as an actor, as a strong and energetic president and as an old and confused man. Thematically, the cartoons of Reagan covered all of the political topic areas that the U.S., as a superpower, was involved in: the American and international economy, disarmament talks with the Soviet Union, the relations to the peace movement, political trade issues with regard to Europe and developments in South America. Variants of the different framings of Reagan were also recurrent in the Norwegian and international press, depending on which political positions were propagated. Table 5 shows that the political cartoons that *Aftenposten* used during this period, comprised as many as 17 different framing categories. Here only the categories that placed the American presidents in a Cold War perspective are accounted for more closely.

The Cowboy

As Table 5 shows, *the cowboy frame* was the most frequently used depiction of the American presidents. It was used a total of 18 times in the course of this period. *Aftenposten* used the cowboy framing to describe both Carter and Reagan, and it may thus be perceived as generic. The cowboy framing may be interpreted both positively and negatively, as Johan Hammarlund and Kristina Riegert have also shown, based on the textual coverage of the United States in the Swedish press (Hammarlund and Riegert 2011:16). The frame took its symbolism from American Western movies, which were popular in Europe in the 1960s and 1970s. The cowboy hat, the riding boots and revolvers were fundamental elements in these cartoons. In the Swedish study, this framing was used to describe a lonely, masculine and action-oriented hero, but also to describe lawlessness and irresponsible leaders who ignored the rules of international relations. *Aftenposten* also used some of the same elements, but

Table 5. The Framing Categories of the U.S. Presidents in Aftenposten 1980-1984

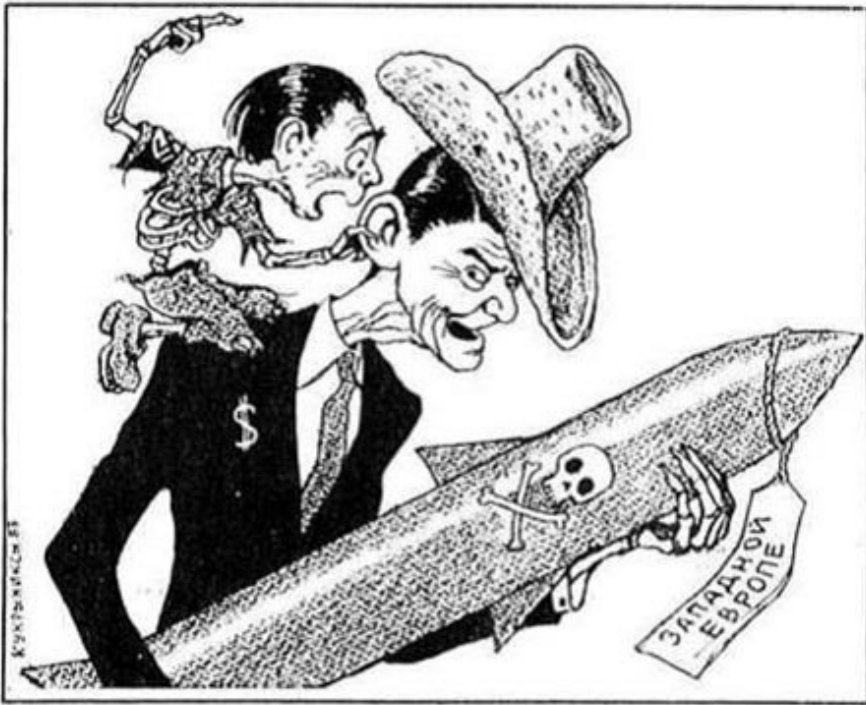
Frames	1980				1981				1982				1983				1984				Total			
	Economy	Political system	International politics	Disarmament	Relation to Western Europe	Economy	Political system	International politics	Disarmament	Relation to Western Europe	Economy	Political system	International politics	Disarmament	Relation to Western Europe	Economy	Political system	International politics	Disarmament	Relation to Western Europe				
The Cowboy	5				1				4				2						1	3	2	18		
The actor on stage	4					2					1		1	1		1						11		
The Peace and liberty through strength								1	1				1	1				2			1	7		
The Strong and weak presidency									2			1		1			1	1		2		9		
The wizard						2										5						7		
The Impending disaster (Latin America)								1					3				1					5		
The Not in my Back Yard (Latin America)												1					3			1		5		
The Economy crisis						1					4											5		
The Impotent Super Power												1					2			1		4		
The Political fight/struggle	2					1													1			4		
The Euro Headache														3								3		
The Bad and the Good Guy	1																1					2		
Incompetence	1						1															2		
The Political system crisis	1															1						2		
The Allied in conflict																				1		1		
The Pinocchio																	1					1		
The Paint them red													1									1		
Total	- 14	-	-	-	4	4	2	7	-	4	2	6	6	4	5	3	7	4	1	-	7	3	3	-

basically employed this framing in order to describe the genuine American culture; in addition, it suggested an oversimplification of political conflicts and showdowns between different actors. The cowboy frame was also used to describe European leaders like Gro Harlem Brundtland and François Mitterand.

Cartoon 8. The Cowboy Frame⁹

The cowboy frame did not just dominate in the Western press. *Aftenposten* published a number of cowboy frames taken from the Soviet press that reveal that this framing contained significant ideological differences, as Pamela E. Oliver has also shown was the case in the use of frames and ideologies in social movements in the U.S. (Oliver and Johnston 2000). The Soviet cowboy frame had an unambiguously negative meaning and thus differed markedly from the American and European variants. *Aftenposten* wanted to show how the picture of Reagan as enemy was presented in Soviet newspapers and magazines.

Cartoon 9. The Soviet Cowboy Frame¹⁰



The Actor on Stage

Ronald Reagan was often portrayed as the actor who was capable of capturing his audience with well-directed speeches and other appearances. *The Actor on Stage* frame depicted Reagan as an invulnerable Teflon president. The implicit message is also about a president who is in the hands of his advisers as scriptwriters and directors of his public performances. As shown in Table 5, this frame was the second most frequently used description of Reagan in *Aftenposten* during the five-year period.

Cartoon 10. The Actor on Stage Frame¹¹



Peace and Liberty through strength

The Peace and Liberty through strength frame was tied to relations with the Soviet Union, nuclear weapons and the disarmament talks, plus American foreign policy in general. The problem that the framing expresses in the texts was connected with the Soviet Union's expansionist foreign policy, a threat that could only be met with American and allied military strength, for instance in the form of a "modernisation" of NATO's arsenal of nuclear weapons.

Cartoon 11. The Peace and Liberty through Strength Frame¹²



The Weak Presidency

The framing of President Carter in the cartoons depicted a weak and clueless president facing big problems both at home and abroad. On the home front, Carter was challenged by Senator Edward Kennedy, and the Democrats were deeply divided about his presidential candidacy. The Iran crisis weighed heavily on him, and he came across as an irresolute leader of a superpower in decline. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan reinforced this impression. In spite of this, Carter became the driving power behind the boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games in 1980. Norway and West Germany were among the relatively few who supported this initiative. *Aftenposten* supported Carter's boycott project, but the paper registered in the summer of 1980 that France, Great Britain, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and other European countries had chosen to participate.

Cartoon 12. The Weak Presidency Frame¹³



The Strong Presidency

The Strong Presidency frame was presented as a contrast to the weak presidency frame. This way *Aftenposten* depicted an American president who was characterised by strength and action. This frame was only used about Reagan. Carter was generally portrayed as a weak and indecisive president.

Cartoon13. The Strong Presidency Frame¹⁴



The Impending Disaster

The *Impending Disaster* frame was connected to the American political engagement in El Salvador, which *Aftenposten* was fundamentally critical of. The implicit message expressed fear that Reagan's policies in Central America would lead to a catastrophe like Vietnam. The same cartoon was used five times in the course of the period 1981-1983, with 1982 as the peak year.

Cartoon 14. The Impending Disaster Frame¹⁵



Not in My Backyard

The *Not in My Backyard* frame also focused on the American political involvement in Central- and South America. These drawings gave expression to the traditional American view of Latin America as both a problem area and an area upon which they needed to keep a watchful eye. This American attitude, traceable to the early 19th century, was formalized in the Monroe Doctrine of 1823. Through this doctrine, the United States made clear that it would not tolerate that European or other powers gained a foothold in the Western Hemisphere. The framing in the 1980s emphasized the American attempts to prevent that regimes based on a Communist ideology would seize power in the Central- and South American countries.

Cartoon 15. The Not in My Backyard Frame¹⁶



Impotent Superpower

This frame underlined the fact that in spite of the U.S. being defined as a superpower, its margin of action and power on the international stage were limited. The United States emerged again after the Beirut catastrophe as a strong military power after Reagan's invasion of the island of Grenada.

Cartoon 16. The Impotent Superpower Frame¹⁷



The Bad and the Good Guy

In *the Bad and the Good Guy* frame, the leaders are presented as expressing an antagonistic relationship, either within themselves or between two leaders where one is presented as bad, while the other one is good. For instance, Reagan may be presented as a devil and an angel in the same cartoon. Such ambiguous drawings were used to register the growing European distrust of American foreign policy.

Cartoon 17. The Bad and the Good Guy Frame¹⁸



Pinocchio

Aftenposten also showed how the Soviet press portrayed Reagan the Liar, someone who talked about peace, but who promoted rearmament and American capitalism. *The Pinocchio* frame underlined the fact that lies made the nose grow.

Cartoon 18. The Pinocchio Frame¹⁹



Paint Them Red

The Paint Them Red frame depicted President Reagan's attempt to brand the peace movement in the U.S. as Communists and Soviet collaborators. This frame was only used once.

Cartoon 19. The Paint Them Red Frame²⁰



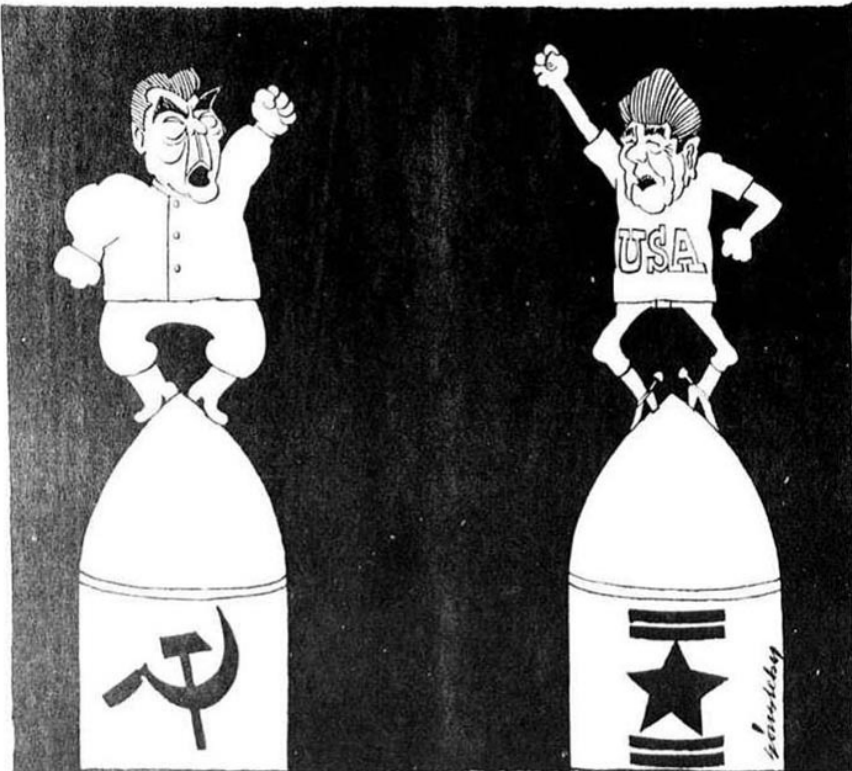
The Soviet and American Leaders Together

Aftenposten published several cartoons that depicted the Soviet and American leaders together or in the company of other leaders.

My Father Is Stronger Than Yours

The *My Father Is Stronger Than Yours* frame describes the conflicts between the superpowers concerning the question of nuclear disarmament. *Aftenposten*'s cartoons portrayed the negotiations as a kind of game. What all these drawings had in common was the fact that they only included the superpower leaders. None of the cartoons emphasized the global consequences of the nuclear arsenals, as did comparable cartoons in the American press (Gamson and Stuart 1992).

Cartoon 20. The My Father Is Stronger Than Yours Frame²¹



Don't Feed the Bear

This frame depicts the Soviet leader as a dangerous Russian bear that one needs to keep one's distance from, and on no account provide resources in the form of oil, know-how or other means that could weaken the American hegemony. At the same time, it criticises the U.S. for exporting grain to the Soviet Union, while at the same time demanding that other Western countries should refrain from exporting technology that could be used for the construction of the Soviet gas pipeline to Europe.

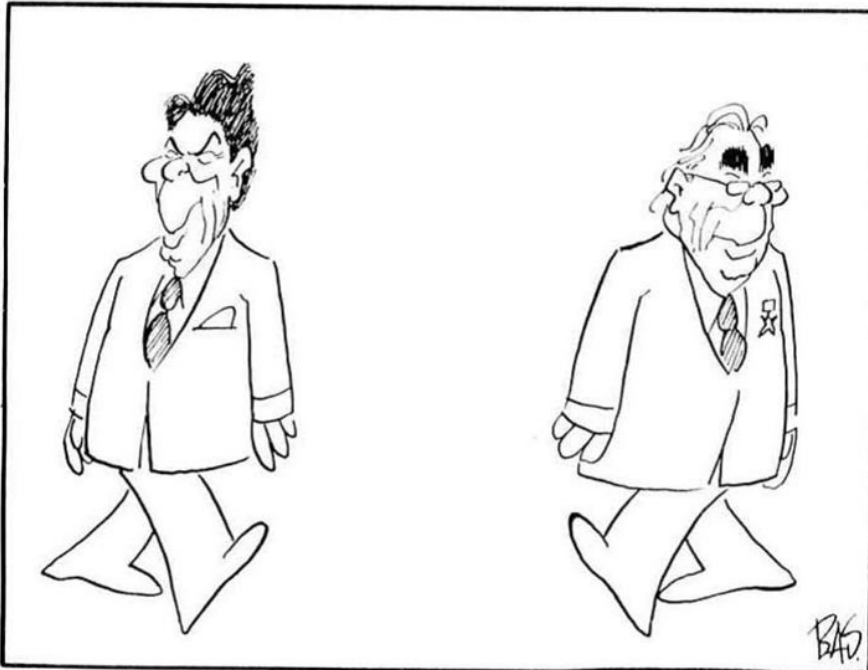
Cartoon 21. The Don't Feed the Bear Frame²²



Should I Stay or Should I Go

Aftenposten used the *Should I Stay or Should I Go* frame to characterize the speculations about possible summit meetings between Reagan and the Soviet leadership. The lack of summit meetings between the United States and the Soviet Union was a characteristic element in Reagan's first period as president, up to the point when Gorbachev took over as Soviet leader in 1985.

Cartoon 22. The Should I Stay or Should I Go frame²³



Watch the Dragon

Aftenposten did not publish many cartoons portraying the superpower leaders and their Chinese counterparts. Those that were used depicted the complicated relationship between the U.S. and China, which was made particularly difficult because of the Taiwan question.

Cartoon 23. The Watch the Dragon Frame²⁴



Conclusion

In this chapter, we have analyzed how *Aftenposten* used cartoons to frame events and questions relating to foreign- and security politics during the period 1980-84. This analysis has shown that the cartoons did not only constitute a humorous and ironic view of the world seen from the outside. They can also be considered to be an integrated part of the paper's production of opinions. The cartoons were a visual guide to how the illustrated text should be interpreted. In this way, they limited the interpretive alternatives for the reader. The cartoons went hand in glove with the party press. In the course of the five-year period, *Aftenposten* printed 1541 cartoons, and almost half of that number (614) were related to Cold War topics. Our analysis has established certain fundamental features. The cartoons that focused on the political leaders dominated. There are few cartoons showing ordinary people or women in our selection. We have also found that the cartoons that featured Cold War topics, had their focus on the superpowers. This chapter has therefore emphasised on how *Aftenposten* framed the Soviet and American leaders in the period. The framing in these cartoons was chiefly concentrated on the leaders in the two superpowers as representatives of two different and antagonistic systems. The analysis has identified a whole cluster of different, but related variants of the Cold War framings. We have made three principal discoveries. Firstly, it was a common feature of the political cartoons that they defined and delimited problems, they defined causes and they constituted a basis for moral judgments. This way the antagonists and the corresponding concepts of the enemy were clearly defined within a journalistic frame of reference.

The drawings did not always provide suggestions for solutions or other measures. An important exception involved the disarmament question, where the cartoons conveyed the message that the Soviet threat could only be met by means of strength.

Secondly, the framing of the American leaders was much more differentiated than what was the case with their Soviet counterparts. Almost all the cartoons featuring the Soviet leaders expressed a Cold War perspective, while the American presidents were presented through a much wider range of themes and perspectives. Thirdly, we have also found that *Aftenposten* used cartoonists from outside of their own ranks much more often than their own in-house cartoonists. Norwegian cartoonists were only responsible for relatively few of the published cartoons. This reveals an extensive diffusion of framings from the rest of the Western world. A surprising finding was that American cartoonists did not dominate in *Aftenposten*, but their European colleagues did. The framing in the political cartoons in *Aftenposten* during the period 1980-84 was dominated by European rather than American ideas.

The many additional Cold War cartoons that put their stamp on this period have been left out of this analysis, even if such cartoons tended to cover both events and themes that could have given a wider and deeper understanding of the Cold War framings. Future research must address the question of how the Cold War was presented in the cartoons of other Norwegian newspapers, and how these drawings were similar to or different from the cartoons printed by *Aftenposten*. The same need for additional research applies to how the cartoons were used in other Nordic newspapers. And it is only possible to say how special the cartoons from the period 1980-1984 were when one is able to compare them to the cartoons from both the previous and the succeeding period. This is an investigation that still remains to be made.

Notes

1. Telephone interview with house cartoonist in *Aftenposten*, Kåre Bondesen, June 15, 2013.
2. BAS – *Aftenposten*'s morning edition, January 25, 1984:6
3. Jan O. Henriksen – *Aftenposten*, March 28, 1981:1
4. Fritz Müller, *NCR Handelsblad – Aftenposten*, October 12, 1982:8
5. Fritz Behrendt – *Aftenposten*, evening edition, August 31, 1984:6
6. Kåre Bondesen—*Aftenposten*, December 11, 1981:8
7. BAS – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, May 29, 1982:4
8. Steve Mendelson, *The Washington Post – Aftenposten*, morning edition, June 11, 1983:4
9. BAS – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, October 21, 1981:8
10. *Aftenposten*, morning edition, November 21, 1983:8
11. Fritz Behrendt—*Aftenposten*, morning edition, August 8, 1981:4
12. BAS – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, November 22, 1984:1
13. BAS – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, March 28, 1980:8
14. BAS – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, May 25, 1982:8
15. BAS – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, February 6, 1982:4
16. Inge Grødum, *Nationen – Aftenposten*, evening edition, October 27, 1983:4
17. Fritz Behrendt – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, December 31, 1983:26
18. BAS – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, August 9, 1983:7
19. *Aftenposten*, morning edition, December 31, 1983:4
20. Auth – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, October 25, 1982:8
21. Sven Sønsteby – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, August 8, 1981:18
22. Oliphant – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, October 11, 1982:6
23. BAS – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, February 28, 1981:4
24. Mauldin – *Aftenposten*, morning edition, February 2, 1981:8

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Chapter 15

Towards Glasnost?

A Case Study of the Norwegian News Coverage of Mikhail Gorbachev as Soviet Leader in 1985

Henrik G. Bastiansen

Abstract

The appointment of Mikhail Gorbachev as Soviet leader in March 1985 is often seen as the beginning of the end of the Cold War. Later his policy became known in the West as “glasnost” (openness), evaluated in a very positive way in the West. Therefore, it is interesting to study how western observers evaluated Gorbachev during his first year as leader of the Kremlin. How did they interpret his politics – before all the changes of the late 1980s? How did they evaluate his personal position of power, his interior policy and his foreign policy during his first year in office? This is a case study of the news coverage in the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten*, the leading daily on foreign news journalism and for many decades also the biggest newspaper in Norway – with a lot of educated Soviet experts producing daily news and comments about the events in the USSR.

Keywords: Cold War, Mikhail Gorbachev, glasnost, Soviet Union, foreign news

The year 1985 was an important year in the history of the Cold War. The first half of the 1980s had been dramatic, with the Soviet SS-20 missiles and the invasion of Afghanistan in December of 1979, NATO’s dual-track decision and the West’s boycott of the Moscow Olympics in 1980. This was followed in 1983 by the Soviet downing of a South Korean passenger plane. President Ronald Reagan referred to the Soviet Union as “the Evil Empire”, and more years of confrontation between the two superpowers followed. The death of Leonid Brezhnev in 1982 did not lead to any significant changes in this situation. His successors as Soviet leaders, Yuri Andropov (1982-84) and Konstantin Chernenko (1984-85), also failed to instigate any important changes in the tense relationship between East and West (Gaddis 2005).

Many things began to change, however, when Mikhail Gorbachev took over in 1985. The Soviet Union had a tradition with strictly control of the mass media by the communist party and the state, all the years since the Russian Revolution in 1917 (see McNair 1991; Part One, page 9ff and Roth Ey 2011, Service 2010).

But now, the nature of the signals emanating from the Kremlin appeared to change, and this gradually acquired great significance (see McNair 1991). Jeremy Smith tersely sums up the situation this way: “A man called Mikhail Gorbachev became leader of the Soviet Union and made some changes, things got out of hand, and the whole thing collapsed” (Smith 2004: 1). From the vantage point of today, one may easily believe that the relationship between East and West entered a new phase as soon as Mikhail Gorbachev took over as Soviet leader in 1985. But was this really what happened? What essentially characterised the news coverage in the Western press at the beginning of his tenure as Kremlin leader? How was he perceived *before* his slogans of “glasnost” and “perestroika” became household words in the West? Has posterity, especially since the fall of Communism in 1989, and the very familiarity of the concept of glasnost overshadowed the reality of how he was actually depicted in the Western press in the beginning? In the following we intend to carry out a case study of this question, using material from the Norwegian press of the period. The focus of our inquiry, then, will be on how the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* perceived Mikhail Gorbachev as the new leader of the Soviet Union in 1985.

The answers that will be forthcoming in the following are based on an exhaustive examination of *Aftenposten* for the entire year of 1985, both the morning and the afternoon editions – approximately 600 newspapers in all. All the articles written about the Soviet Union in the course of this year have been collected and examined. This amounts to more than 1000 newspaper pages of articles, which have been downloaded, printed out and filed chronologically. What is treated here are only the articles about Mikhail Gorbachev where he figures as the main character and actor or as the object of commentaries. Even with these limitations, this constitutes an extensive press material that is here analysed for the first time, in an attempt to study the foreign affairs journalism of *Aftenposten* as it is played out in the context of a concrete theme from the late part of the Cold War.¹ What follows is a detailed qualitative study organized both chronologically and thematic, based on the historical method as it can be used on the newspaper press (see Start and Sloan 1989, Dahl 2004: chapter 4, Langholm 1967, Dahl 1973, Kjeldstadlie 1992, Tosh 2000).

The choice of *Aftenposten* is self-evident: this newspaper had large resources and was the leading Norwegian paper when it came to producing its own in-house coverage of international events. The paper's slogan was quite self-confident: “If you've read *Aftenposten*, then you know what's going on.” For many decades, *Aftenposten* had been Norway's largest-circulation newspaper and was by many people accorded a particular prominence. At the paper's 125th anniversary in May 1985, the Norwegian prime minister, Kåre Willoch, observed that with its large circulation and its “comprehensive coverage, *Aftenposten* contributes importantly to the formation of contemporary Norwegian reali-

ties.”² If this was a correct assessment, we should also be able to ask how this newspaper contributed to the formation of people’s impressions of important world events, such as Mikhail Gorbachev’s accession to the leadership of the Soviet Union in 1985. This theme is also interesting because there is a close (but complicated) connection between Gorbachev’s policies and the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe in 1989, the re-unification of Germany in 1990 and the Soviet Union’s own disintegration in 1991 (see Gorbachev 2013, Smith 2005, Sakwa 2010). These events came to mark the end of the Cold War. In 1985, however, nobody knew what the coming years might bring. That is one more reason why it is interesting to study how a newspaper like *Aftenposten* regarded Gorbachev during this particular year.

The Foreign Affairs Journalism of *Aftenposten* in 1985

In order to understand *Aftenposten*’s coverage here, we first need to know something about the paper’s coverage of foreign affairs generally. No other Norwegian newspaper contained so much foreign material, written by its own correspondents, as *Aftenposten*. The paper had a network of correspondents at eleven different offices around the world. In addition, the paper received material from local associates in Moscow, Beijing and Tokyo, three offices that it operated together with the Swedish newspaper, *Svenska Dagbladet*. In addition to these, one must mention the paper’s own Oslo editorial staff assigned to international subjects: in 1985 they numbered 16 members, 14 of which were editorial contributors. This meant that the paper’s foreign affairs section was so large that it equalled the entire editorial staff of a medium-sized Norwegian district paper. The in-house editors coordinated the coverage and adapted the material that poured in from correspondents and news agencies. At this time, *Aftenposten* received foreign news coverage from NTB, AP, UPI, Reuters and *The New York Times*, while press photos came in from AP and Reuters. A certain piece of news might appear in up to six different versions: one from the paper’s correspondent and the rest from the different agencies. *Aftenposten* had a much more comprehensive access to international news than all other Norwegian newspapers. The paper also had exclusive rights in Norway to all material from *The New York Times* and was able to print this at the same time as it was published in the United States. Thus the paper’s coverage of foreign affairs demonstrated daily its formidable resources – a point also made at the paper’s 125th anniversary in 1985.³

More recent research has strengthened this impression. Rolf Werenskjold has established that Norwegian foreign affairs journalism, measured in terms of the number of correspondent positions, reached a peak in the period 1975-1994. In *Aftenposten* the number of correspondents was equal to the number

employed by the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK): both of them had thirteen positions in this area during the period as a whole (Werenskjold 2012:247). No other Norwegian mass media prioritised foreign affairs journalism as much as the NRK and *Aftenposten*.

The Journalistic Coverage of the Soviet Union

Norwegian newspapers have, since the early 19th century written about Russia and Russians – understood as the “other” compared to Europe – often with fear for the “Russian threat” to Scandinavia and Norway. A historical study shows that such tendencies goes back far beyond the October revolution in Russia in 1917 and also before the Russian-Japanese war of 1904-5. Russia was a mighty neighbour and a big autocratic power state under the czar, feared by the 19th century editors in the Norwegian press (see Berghei 2010).

The October revolution in Russia in 1917 didn’t reduce this fear; in fact the liberal press became scared by the Labour movement and its socialism and communism – and gradually took positions on the bourgeois side of the political specter, together with the Conservative party and its press. The long and brutal Stalin regime increased the fear, especially after the communist takeover in Czechoslovakia in 1948 – and Norway thus became one of the founding countries of the NATO alliance in 1949, in an age fearing nuclear war (Røed-Fauske 2014, Dahl and Bastiansen 2000: Chapter 7). The membership intended to solve the question of national security against Stalins Soviet – and it was supported both by the Labour press and the bourgeois press in Norway – with *Aftenposten* as the countrys dominating conservative newspaper.

Thus, in the Cold War period, *Aftenposten* printed a lot of material about the Soviet Union. It was articles supporting the Norwegian military defence of national security, the situation in the Northern part of the country, the threat from Soviets military power, Soviet politics etc. In fact, running news coverage of the Communist part of the world, especially the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, was an important part of *Aftenposten*’s foreign affairs journalism.⁴ News from the East was a significant part of the paper’s total coverage of foreign affairs, and *that* was not a given for a newspaper that for generations had been known for its basic liberal-conservative stance and actually functioned as the leading newspaper of that part of the press that was associated with the Conservative Party. Since 1984 the paper had even had Egil Sundar as editor-in-chief, widely known as a prominent conservative member of the Norwegian press corps. In spite of this, *Aftenposten* had a surprisingly strong competence as far as the Soviet Union and Communism were concerned: on its staff could be found foreign affairs journalists, correspondents and commentators with relevant studies of the Soviet society, who were fluent in the

Russian language, read *Pravda* regularly and thus were able to analyse on a daily basis the latest news from the Soviet empire in the East. Such knowledge was exactly what was asked for – wrote *Aftenposten* a lot of times – in 1985.⁵ In *Aftenposten*'s own coverage of Gorbachev in 1985 there were especially four important journalists writing.

The first one was Per Egil Hegge (b. 1940). He is undoubtedly *Aftenposten*'s best-known Soviet expert. Hegge had a bachelor's degree that included subjects like Political Science and Advanced Russian. He started his professional career in the local press in Trøndelag, then moved on to NTB and was hired by *Aftenposten* in 1962. In 1963-64 he was a correspondent in London. In 1968 he reported on the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, and was awarded the Narvesen Prize for his achievement. Between 1969 and 1971 he was the paper's correspondent in Moscow. In the wake of this assignment, he published two books, *Moscow Intermediary* (1971) and *News from Moscow* (1972). Later on he worked as the paper's Washington correspondent during two separate periods, 1977-81 and 1988-92.⁶ In 1985 he wrote only sporadically about Gorbachev.

The second was Kjell Dragnes (b. 1946). He studied advanced Russian as part of his bachelor's program at the University of Oslo. He got a job as journalist with NTB in 1973 and worked on the staff of the main radio news program in the NRK ("Dagsnytt") during the years 1975-77. He began working at *Aftenposten* in 1977. That year he translated Hedrick Smith's book *The Russians* into Norwegian, together with Tor Strand and Egil Johan Ree – both with experience as Moscow correspondents for the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) (Smith 1977). In the period 1978-82, Dragnes himself became Moscow correspondent for *Aftenposten*. He then worked as assistant editor in the foreign affairs section from 1985 to 1989. Later on he was employed as correspondent in London and then in Moscow for a second time.⁷ In 1985 he wrote most of the articles about Mikhail Gorbachev.

The third important journalist was Bobo Scheutz, Moscow correspondent for *Aftenposten* in 1985. He was a Swede, writing both for *Aftenposten* and his own newspaper, *Svenska Dagbladet*. Scheutz was a very productive correspondent and wrote many articles from the Soviet capital. He gave a lot of evaluations of Gorbachev, but in 1986 *Aftenposten* ended the deal with him as Soviet correspondent.

The fourth important journalist was Aasmund Willersrud (b. 1951), who took his place as Moscow correspondent for the next four years. Willersrud was educated Cand. Mag. with Russian studies. He started in *Aftenposten* in 1980, with journalistic experience from VG and the NRK. In 1990 he became *Aftenposten*'s correspondent in Eastern Europe.⁸ In 1985, he wrote sporadically on the Soviet Union, but not so often as Kjell Dragnes.

Some of these Soviet correspondents – like Per Egil Hegge and Kjell Dragnes – had taken the Russian language course arranged by the Norwegian military

defence. There, a former Soviet refugee, Aleksej Perminow (b.1922), taught them Russian in a very effective way.⁹

In addition to these reporters, articles were also written by other foreign correspondents, such as Stein Savik (Eastern Europe), Elisabeth Holte (Paris), Per Nordrum and John Crowe (USA).

The reports from abroad were supplemented with analyses made by their colleagues from the Oslo editorial staff. The result was a steady stream of news articles and commentaries whereby *Aftenposten* almost daily was able to cast light on the situation in the Soviet Union.

Chernenko: "The End of an Era"

The news that a leader in the Kremlin was dead, was immediately an international news item. "Konstantin Chernenko Dead" was *Aftenposten*'s announcement across the entire front page of the afternoon edition on Monday the 11th of March 1985. The large letters were in boldface type, and below the reader could see a large picture of the former Soviet leader. The news of his death had been confirmed by an announcement from the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party the same morning. "Only one year with Chernenko", noted Kjell Dragnes in his summary of the previous year in Soviet politics. He wrote that Chernenko "represented the end of an era in Soviet politics, an era that he had neither the ability, determination nor time to put his personal stamp on." With the death of Chernenko, "the last man from the old Brezhnev guard has left the Kremlin leadership, and with him one may say that the Brezhnev era is irrevocably over," was his verdict. For Dragnes Chernenko pointed towards the past: "It felt like a backward turning of the wheel of time on the 13th of February 1984, when he was elected Secretary-General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" after Yuri Andropov.¹⁰

The news of Chernenko's death did not come as a surprise, as *Aftenposten* for a long time had printed reports of the Soviet leader's poor health. On the following days, the paper printed extensive articles about the funeral in the Kremlin.¹¹ In one of these articles, it was observed that "the new leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, turned his memorial speech about Chernenko into a personal political manifesto."¹² From that point on, much of *Aftenposten*'s Soviet-oriented journalism began to focus on Mikhail Gorbachev.

Gorbachev: "Finally, the Time Has Come"

Aftenposten presented Mikhail Gorbachev as the new leader of the Soviet Union concurrently with the news of Chernenko's death on the 11th of March.

The successor was not wholly unknown: He had been noticed already in December 1984, when he was on a state visit to the United Kingdom and visited the British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher. And while Konstantin Chernenko still ruled his country officially, Kjell Dragnes, on the 4th of February, 1985 – almost five weeks before the change of leadership – dared to proclaim that “the next secretary-general of the Soviet Union’s Communist Party will be called Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev.” He had arrived at this conclusion after a detailed study of the official party organ, *Pravda*, from the 20th of December, 1984 to the 19th of January, 1985. Dragnes had counted the number of nominations in the elections to the supreme soviets in all of the Soviet Union’s 15 republics. From this survey emerged “a picture that shows some of the internal hierarchy in the Kremlin”: Mikhail Gorbachev had been nominated as many times as the prime minister and more frequently than the other members of the Politburo.¹³

This way of reasoning represented classic Kremlology and is a good example of the method that Western observers used to interpret external signs as symptoms of the actual conditions behind the façade of the Soviet state. Kjell Dragnes gave a detailed description of his method. This was probably the first time that *Aftenposten* printed speculations, complete with name and documentation, about who might be next in line to become the new secretary-general of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union.

Kjell Dragnes’ prophesy was borne out by later events, as the news of Chernenko’s successor became known as early as the 11th of March. The next day *Aftenposten* featured Mikhail Gorbachev on the front page with name and picture for the first time that year. And the news was presented in proactive terms, as the new Soviet leader made an appeal to the United States to join the USSR in order to “stop the global arms race.” This was a statement that he had already made in a speech to the Central Committee in Moscow, right after his election as new secretary-general. The same day *Aftenposten* printed a news telegram from Associated Press commenting that Gorbachev had become increasingly visible and gradually had emerged as “the Number Two” in the Kremlin. And it was his trip to the United Kingdom in December 1984 that brought him into the international spotlight: “Gorbachev gave the West a new impression – a younger and more polished Soviet leader.”¹⁴

“A New Deal in the Kremlin?” was *Aftenposten*’s question in its editorial. The paper expressed the opinion that it was “encouraging” that the ruling elite in the Soviet Union had appointed a person who did not have “his roots in the Stalin era, as their leader. This might mean that the time has finally come for more pragmatic party officials to give their compatriots the stimulus and optimism for the future that they have for so long been waiting for.” The paper criticised the unwarranted secrecy that surrounded the Soviet hierarchy, but thought that the election of Gorbachev might indicate that the system “perhaps,

in spite of everything”, had an ability to “renew itself and supply itself with new strength.”¹⁵

Aftenposten now printed a lot of evaluations of the new Soviet leader. Kjell Dragnes wrote that “the much-discussed generational change in the Kremlin has now occurred. The old men’s time is over.” Moscow had for a long time been known to elect “older people in poor health to the country’s most prominent positions as Secretary-General of the Communist Party and as President” and thereby shown “beyond any shadow of a doubt how petrified the Soviet political system and society have become.” Dragnes went on to point out how Gorbachev belonged to a new generation, who had grown up “in a post-Stalin period” in a strong Soviet Union that had “acquired parity in status with the United States in terms of military strength.” This generation’s experiences were different from those of predecessors like Brezhnev and Chernenko, who had both experienced the collectivisation of the 1930s, Stalin’s terror regime and the battle with Hitler. Dragnes suggested that under Gorbachev one might perhaps see “extensive experiments” in fields such as agriculture and industry, but he also wrote that a full-scale U-turn in ideology, or in the economic and security policies of the Soviet Union, was “unthinkable.” He still expressed hope that Gorbachev would look at the problems with somewhat “less ideologically coloured glasses”, so that he might be able to “bring his country out of the stagnation and close to apathy that have characterised it in recent years.”¹⁶

At this point *Aftenposten* printed a full page about Gorbachev, illustrated with a press photograph of a leader with an authoritative expression. On this page, Aasmund Willersrud wrote a commentary that suggested that Gorbachev might wield a long-term influence on the development in the Soviet Union:

In 54-year-old Mikhail Gorbachev the Soviet Union will get, for the first time in a generation, a party leader who is young, energetic and dynamic. He has what it takes to become a new, strong leader figure, who is described as reform-oriented, but not especially liberal. The choice of Gorbachev is particularly important, since he has the potential for remaining in his leadership position for at least 20 years. He will thus have a decisive influence on the future not just of his own country, but also on the relationship between East and West far into the next century.¹⁷

Willersrud pointed out that the Soviet Union now for the first time had chosen leaders who had been born after the Russian Revolution of 1917. What that implied he suggested by referring to Gorbachev’s statement that “everything that is new and progressive will be strengthened and given priority.”¹⁸

From the very beginning, there was an evident contrast in *Aftenposten*’s evaluation of the Kremlin leaders: Chernenko was old, backward-looking and belonged to the past, while Gorbachev was young and vital and belonged

to the future. Thus, the paper described them in totally different terms. The international reactions that the paper printed were cautiously expectant with regard to Gorbachev.¹⁹

However, no one yet knew what political course Gorbachev intended to pursue. The answer to this question seemed quite open and uncertain. In its editorial entitled "Gorbachev in Old Tracks?" *Aftenposten* declared that it was "too early" to draw any conclusions about the way that the change of Kremlin leadership had been carried out, and therefore promised its readers to be on the look-out for "words and actions" from the new leadership in Moscow. The paper noted that Gorbachev's speech the day before had not contained "anything that suggests that he intends to take the foreign policy of the Soviet Union in a new direction." The paper still expressed hope that Gorbachev might become "the man who will start the process of *détente* that we are all wishing for," but reminded its readers that "our expectations of him are in reality built on a rather shaky foundation. Before he took over the reins in the Soviet Union, he has not said anything that gives us grounds for optimism."²⁰

All in all, *Aftenposten* gave an extensive presentation of the change of leadership in Moscow. The news coverage reveals that the paper did more than simply print material from news agencies like NTB, AP, Reuters and UPI. It was characteristic that so much was locally produced, by the Soviet experts in *Aftenposten*'s own foreign affairs section. The most central contributors here were Kjell Dragnes and Bobo Scheutz. Thus, *Aftenposten* was clearly more than a simple relay-station for the dissemination of international news, since their own journalists put their personal stamp on the news through articles and commentaries. The question of how *Aftenposten* covered such a news item thus becomes almost identical with how the paper's area experts evaluated the events. This was a field where *Aftenposten*'s coverage deviated from that of other Norwegian newspapers: most of them had to use the general news agency bulletins that came in from abroad and had few opportunities for producing their own material. In *Aftenposten*, however, we find that a high percentage of self-produced international news commentary was a permanent feature. In the following we are going to take a closer look at three particular themes in *Aftenposten*'s depiction of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985, namely how the paper perceived his personal position of power, his domestic policies and finally his foreign policy.

Theme No. 1: *Aftenposten* and Gorbachev's Personal Position of Power

After the leadership change, the Soviet experts on *Aftenposten*'s staff were particularly concerned about Gorbachev's position of power inside the Soviet

government, since that was the basis for what he would be able to accomplish in his new position as secretary-general. The immediate impression was that Gorbachev had a very different personal style than his predecessors: "Soviet TV last night showed pictures of a smiling Mikhail Gorbachev in conversation with ordinary people. It is the first time that pictures have been shown of Gorbachev in such grassroots situations since he took over as party leader in March," said a news telegram from NTB-Reuters. The heading was also quite suggestive: "Gorbachev's Charm Offensive."²¹ At the same time, the Soviet experts in *Aftenposten* also began to study the changes of personnel that now started to come in the Soviet state, as a symptom of their underlying significance.

"Gorbachev Strengthens His Position: Romanov Removed from the Politburo," wrote Per Egil Hegge in July, in one of the first articles of this kind to appear. The news item was that the 62-year-old Grigory Romanov had been removed from the Politburo, while the party leader in Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze, had come in. Hegge observed that with this move, Gorbachev "had clearly consolidated his position of power." He saw the appointment of Shevardnadze as voting member of the Politburo as "a powerful demonstration" of Gorbachev's fight against corruption in the Soviet Union. Shevardnadze had taken on this fight in Georgia when he was leader of the KGB there. He had exposed the corruption of the local party boss, who had therefore been forced to resign. Now Gorbachev had given Shevardnadze a promotion. Per Egil Hegge pointed out that Gorbachev, in his fight against corruption, "has also displayed a strong disapproval of Leonid Brezhnev's style of leadership." The signals he had sent out in this connection were, according to Hegge, "as clear as they are indirect."²² His source was *Pravda*.

"A Surprising Choice in the Kremlin," wrote Per Egil Hegge in *Aftenposten*'s evening edition the same day. The news was that the long-serving Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrej Gromyko, had been chosen as the new President of the Soviet Union, while Eduard Shevardnadze had succeeded him as Foreign Minister. An article without byline presented a portrait of Gromyko entitled "The Persevering Russian."²³ In the morning edition the next day, the news was repeated in news telegrams – with the additional comment that the West was surprised. "Gorbachev Strengthens His Grip on Power," was the title of the editorial. It observed that Gorbachev now had "strengthened his position further... Systematically Gorbachev is putting his pawns in place... This is a game that is becoming more and more exciting to follow," wrote the paper.²⁴

Later on *Aftenposten* printed several articles about Shevardnadze. Under the heading "Outspoken Man in the Kremlin", he was quoted as saying that he considered the arms race "meaningless." He was "not afraid of making very candid and courageous statements", it was said.²⁵ *Aftenposten* saw him as an "unusual Soviet leader" – he actually asks for criticism, of himself included. This was "a rare occurrence on the top level in the Soviet Union", the paper

remarked.²⁶ Per Egil Hegge wrote an article entitled “Changes in the Kremlin Also Below the Party Leader: All Gorbachev’s Men.”²⁷

As 1985 wore on, *Aftenposten* printed a number of similar articles; the personnel changes in the Soviet Union came quite frequently and now involved many powerful older men that Gorbachev wanted to exchange for younger blood. Through its own commentaries the paper linked these personnel changes to the change in Soviet leadership that had taken place in March, and this way they became a manifestation of Gorbachev’s personal position of power and his influence on the Soviet hierarchy.²⁸ The change from Gromyko to Shevardnadze represented the greatest transition: the perennial “Mister Njet” was followed by a Foreign Minister who shocked the world with his openness. By October the retirement of ministers and local party bosses had become so usual that they “no longer command a lot of attention”, as Kjell Dragnes noted. He stated that Gorbachev “keeps renewing and rejuvenating”, while he at the same time made demands of the same bureaucracy.²⁹

Theme No. 2: *Aftenposten* and Gorbachev’s Domestic Policies

Aftenposten’s impression of Gorbachev’s domestic policies was closely connected to the above-mentioned personnel changes. How did the paper assess his domestic agenda? Actually, whether Gorbachev should be seen as a reformist or as a traditionalist came to be a recurring question in the paper’s many articles about him throughout the remainder of 1985.

“Gorbachev No Obvious Reform Politician”, wrote *Aftenposten*’s correspondent Bobo Scheutz from Moscow as early as two days after the change of power. In his opinion, the most important ingredients in Gorbachev’s “success with the public... was that he managed to stand and walk and talk and laugh like an ordinary human being, which is clearly a talent that few of his colleagues in the Politburo are able to show.” But this did not necessarily mean that he in other respects possessed “markedly deviant points of view on how the Soviet Union’s interests in the world might best be maintained”, he added. Bobo Scheutz regarded Gorbachev as more of a conservative and traditional type of Soviet leader than as a reformist:

What Gorbachev has said and written in recent years does not give an impression of his being anything but a conservative leader. His ideal is, as far as we can judge, social reform – not reform of the system – in keeping with the pattern introduced by former party leader Yuri Andropov... It looks very likely that Gorbachev will continue Andropov’s policies during his early days in power...³⁰

“Will he be able to change course?” asked Scheutz a few days later. He believed that Gorbachev’s forthcoming speech would be “in the spirit of Andropov”, with a strong emphasis on stimulating the economy and with “warnings to slackers and idlers that the party and the state would no longer tolerate their lack of ideological commitment.” Scheutz pointed out that the state- and party machinery at Gorbachev’s disposal on the whole was the same as in the time of Brezhnev, and there he would find a lot of opposition to change. Scheutz therefore concluded that Gorbachev’s potential for success depended on how many and who among his followers he would be able to appoint to various positions.³¹

Towards the end of March, Bobo Scheutz elaborated on his opinion that Gorbachev did not represent any fundamental change of direction in comparison to his predecessors. Here he referred to the Soviet magazine *New Times*. It stated that “all Western speculations about how the new party leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, is going to implement parts of Western-style market economy and democracy, can be categorically dismissed as wishful thinking among politicians and ideologues who are eager to see Socialism removed from the face of the earth. Such changes will never come to pass...”.³² If this was a realistic assessment, the world could not expect any significant liberalisation of Soviet society in the future.

But this perception of Gorbachev as a traditional Soviet leader was challenged by other articles in *Aftenposten*. In mid-April, Per Egil Hegge wrote about Gorbachev’s domestic policies under this heading: “The Soviet Union’s New Leader Hits Hard: Sharp Criticism of Economic Failures.” Hegge concluded that “after only one month as party leader, Mikhail Gorbachev has challenged the mighty Soviet planning agency Gosplan,” since he had, in a number of “high-profile domestic initiatives” the previous week, advocated the delegation of economic power to individual companies and local organisations. Hegge observed that Gorbachev’s proposals went much further than the reform plans of Prime Minister Aleksei Kosygin in the 1960s – they had come to nothing because of strong opposition in the party machinery. Hegge also noted that “Gorbachev’s new style of leadership is clearly evident; almost all the boasting about the great things that have been done, has now been removed from the pages of *Pravda*, and he treats the problems with a directness that can partly remind one of Nikita Khrushchev. Instead he talks openly about the problems.”³³

By his comparison to Kosygin and Khrushchev, Per Egil Hegge showed that he could put current Soviet news into a larger historical perspective. Not surprisingly, since he had followed Soviet politics for several decades. He wrote this article after a close reading of *Pravda*’s summary of Gorbachev’s speech. Hegge thought that the Soviet leader’s speech was “particularly noteworthy” because it represented an attack on the powerful leader of Gosplan, Nikolai Baibakov. His position was so strong that in 1983 he had spoken out against

the secretary-general, Yuri Andropov, when he had advocated decentralisation. Hegge had also noticed that *Pravda* had referred to Gorbachev without using the title "Secretary-General", a practice that had not been in use since the time of Khrushchev. He regarded this as *Pravda*'s attempt to bolster the position of the new Soviet leader.

At the same time, Bobo Scheutz continued his description of Gorbachev from his observer's position in Moscow. "Soviet Politics Unchanged" was the title of his article about Gorbachev's first major speech as party leader. Scheutz found "no new signals" about decisive changes in Soviet politics in what Gorbachev said in his speech to the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. Scheutz had closely studied the report that the news agency TASS had sent out.³⁴ On its editorial page, under the heading "Gorbachev's Profile", *Aftenposten* reflected on the impression that the paper was beginning to form of the new Soviet leader:

A few months after the change in leadership, we are gradually beginning to see the outline of a profile that is Gorbachev's own... Usually a new Soviet leader needs a lot of time in the beginning to ensure that he is firmly in the saddle. However, Gorbachev has already shown an unambiguous willingness to shake up the Russian economy, among other things by challenging the central planning bureaucracy. He has created quite a stir by talking plainly about economic and administrative mistakes, something that is extremely unusual in the Soviet Union. He has started numerous fights in order to remove incompetent officials, strengthen discipline in the workplace and to lead the Soviet Union into the information age. It is well known that he wants more openness in the public debate and a degree of decentralisation in the decision-making process.³⁵

This editorial, then, focused on what was new about Gorbachev: he appeared to stand for something quite different from predecessors like Brezhnev, Andropov and Chernenko. This was in keeping with what Per Egil Hegge had written when he compared Gorbachev with the thaw under Nikita Khrushchev in the fifties and sixties.

It is interesting to note that this impression contrasted to a certain extent with what Bobo Scheutz had reported from Moscow. A front-page spread that referred to one of his articles, pointed out that if Gorbachev was going to succeed with his economic reforms, he would have to "overcome strong forces that are sceptical of all change. If he succeeds, it will be because of personal qualities like toughness and efficiency. It will be a mistake to believe that a 'liberal' has taken over in the Kremlin. Gorbachev is the system's man." These comments on the front page of *Aftenposten* referred to an entire page that was dedicated to Gorbachev, illustrated with a photo that showed a smiling party leader. Here Bobo Scheutz started off in the following way:

Almost every day for close to two months, one has been able to read long and interesting articles in the Soviet newspapers about how bad everything has been and how good it must now become. Regret and penitential exercises on the level of the state are a strange process that ought to lead to surprising results. Or maybe not?

It may take a long time before we can surmise the answer. In reality, what has happened up to this point is only that the latest change of power in the Kremlin has unleashed a wave of more or less well-founded hopes – both in the East and in the West – that the mighty Soviet Union is facing a radical change of course...³⁶

Scheutz wrote that “a swarm of words, admonitions and warnings” have “swirled around us in recent weeks” and reminded his readers that Gorbachev had to enlist the support of his 270 million inhabitants if he was going to be successful in the implementation of his reforms. He observed that Gorbachev “had broken with Brezhnev’s and Chernenko’s self-glorification”, but also cautioned that “Gorbachev believes in the old ideals: a more open style does not mean liberalism.” He found it necessary to register a protest against Western reports that had early on described Gorbachev as “liberal.” Scheutz was convinced that one could with certainty say that this was not true – and reminded people that Gorbachev had been politically active already under Stalin, and that he for more than 30 years had been formed by a Communist Party that “stands for all that goes against liberalism. He, who has been lifted up to his positions of power by tough veterans like Mikhail Suslov and Yuri Andropov, is not a liberal.” People who in the competitive environment of Soviet politics have managed to fight their way to “the top of the Politburo, cannot afford to indulge this kind of weakness,” wrote Bobo Scheutz. He even went so far as to express his opinion that Mikhail Gorbachev “is unlikely to become an ideological innovator.” On the contrary, he had a “strong belief in the system’s admirable qualities” and had not up to this point expressed any misgivings about participating in the ceremonies of the Soviet system.³⁷

At the same time, *Aftenposten* continued its evaluation of Gorbachev in its editorials. In June 1985 one passed the 100-day-mark for his regime. The paper now believed that the many hopes and expectations that he had inspired were unrealistic:

The idea that there was a greater possibility for the world to develop in the direction of *détente* with Gorbachev at the helm in Moscow, has turned out to be purely wishful thinking. On several occasions during this period, it has rather been a question of whether Gorbachev instead is aiming for a more confrontational stance with regard to the United States. Gorbachev’s own compatriots have also had to give up most of their hopes.³⁸

It must have been a disappointed editorial writer who wrote these lines. *Aftenposten* now viewed Gorbachev as the Soviet system's man and considered him to be a continuation of Yuri Andropov's political direction. Shortly after this, Bobo Scheutz elaborated on his impressions in an article entitled "Does Gorbachev Herald a New Soviet Society?" There he began by correcting Western mass media:

Mikhail Gorbachev has during his three months as party leader of the Soviet Union come across as a new type of Soviet leader: efficient, modern and with visions of how the broken Soviet society might develop a more satisfactory reality orientation. However, this picture has largely been created by the mass media in the West, and is far too much based on more or less realistic expectations that the mighty Soviet Union is going to enter a stage in its development that involves a closer approximation to a Western model of society. There is still nothing that can substantiate such a belief.³⁹

Seen from Moscow, then, there was no basis for the impression of Gorbachev that the West had developed, even if he admitted that the Soviet leader's speeches were characterised by a "candour" that deviated markedly from what people had been used to "during the geriatric rule of the last 10-15 years."⁴⁰ Even so, he wrote several times about Gorbachev's new initiatives, for instance the high-profile campaign against alcohol abuse that he instigated.⁴¹ But when Scheutz in December presented a retrospective view of the year that was coming to an end, it received a telling headline: "The Soviet Union with Gorbachev at the Helm: Stable and Traditional Course." Once more he pointed to the continuity that characterised Mikhail Gorbachev:

This process has nurtured the optimistic belief that there is a change of power going on in the machinery of power in Moscow. Unfortunately, this is not true...

The people who are now taking over the chairs vacated by the old Brezhnev guard, have all been formed by the old Soviet system. Many of them joined the party during Stalin's reign, and all of them had relatively important positions under Brezhnev without expressing any misgivings about the way the country was being ruled. That these people should suddenly begin to represent something radically new, is wishful thinking that has originated in the West.⁴²

He expressed his opinion that in spite of the "relatively dynamic early days of the Gorbachev era", there was "nothing to indicate that the new party leader did not aim for stability. He has no desire to change the system, he wants to improve it." Again and again Scheutz stated that Gorbachev was not a liberal, but a loyal servant of the system. Western mass media had got him all wrong.

Still, the material on the Soviet Union in *Aftenposten* was not unambiguous. The day before the paper had printed a sensational telegram from NTB/Reuters:

The Soviet party organ *Pravda* – the mouthpiece for the Central Committee of the Communist Party – expressed the opinion that the Soviet press was too boring! It was dominated by “a tedious pattern of repeated proclamations.” *Pravda* stated that the Soviet press should begin to point out the mistakes that the authorities had made.⁴³ *Something* had at least changed during Gorbachev’s first months as Soviet leader.

Theme No. 3: Aftenposten and Gorbachev’s Foreign Policy

As soon as Gorbachev had taken over as leader of the Soviet Union, *Aftenposten* was preoccupied with his foreign policy. As early as on the 12th of March, the day after the change in leadership, the paper placed Gorbachev’s appeal to the United States for arms reductions on the front page. Right next to it, the paper placed the news that Reagan invited Gorbachev to a summit meeting. The fact that the Geneva negotiations were set to resume the day after Chernenko’s death, put East-West relations on top of the news agenda already on Day One of Gorbachev’s tenure.⁴⁴ Throughout the rest of the year, there followed a steady stream of news about the Geneva negotiations, but it is beyond the scope of this article to examine this coverage.

For the Soviet-watchers in *Aftenposten* it was interesting to discuss whether or not the new Soviet leader was going to change the country’s foreign policy: the paper took up this subject in an editorial only three days after the change of power.⁴⁵ In a new editorial a little more than two weeks later, *Aftenposten* assessed Gorbachev and his arsenal of weapons in the following way:

No one likes nuclear weapons, regardless of whether they are American or Soviet. But why does so much of public opinion in the West get the impression that nuclear weapons are much more dangerous in the hands of Reagan than in the hands of Secretary-General Gorbachev? It is a paradox that an important aspect of this lopsidedness is due to our rights as citizens of open and democratic societies... The free exchange of opinions that we enjoy as a matter of course, does not exist in the Soviet superpower... The party-controlled mass media in the Soviet Union focus exclusively on the threat they see in American nuclear weapons.⁴⁶

The way *Aftenposten* saw it, the nuclear debate in the East and the West tended to be so unbalanced because of the openness of the Western countries and the closed nature of the Soviet system. On the 7th of April – during Easter Week – Mikhail Gorbachev proclaimed in *Pravda* a unilateral stop in the deployment of Soviet intermediate-range missiles in Europe until November, and he challenged the United States to do the same. After reporting that

Reagan had rejected this initiative,⁴⁷ *Aftenposten* commented on Gorbachev's proposal in an editorial:

For NATO it is out of the question to follow up on Gorbachev's proposal. The deployment of American intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe is an attempt to compensate for the deployment of SS-20 missiles that the Soviet Union has already largely carried out. If NATO were to take Gorbachev at his word, it would lead to a freeze in the Soviet advantage... Thus a count of nuclear warheads will reveal that the Soviet Union today is ahead by a factor of eight to one.⁴⁸

The paper characterised the initiative as "smart", because Gorbachev had chosen to publish it during Easter. He knew very well, according to the paper, that this was high season for demonstrations against nuclear weapons in a number of Western countries. And the moratorium was set to expire in November, at which time people in the Netherlands were scheduled to decide on potential deployment on their own territory. The editorial pointed out that after this initiative, Gorbachev might "depict himself as a man of peace" who had "made a move" towards disarmament in Europe, "without in any way weakening the ambitious rearmament that the Soviet Union itself had already completed." The editorial characterised Gorbachev as "outgoing" and "eloquent" and observed that he possessed "a highly developed sense of political effect."⁴⁹

From Moscow Bobo Scheutz reported that Gorbachev's first important speech did not contain any big news, not even about the country's foreign policy.⁵⁰ In yet another editorial, *Aftenposten* concluded that there was "no sign of a more conciliatory course in the field of foreign policy – that is no doubt still well preserved in Gromyko's experienced hands." The paper expressed doubt of whether the new Soviet leader would be "willing to turn upside down a system that he is himself a product of."⁵¹ From Warsaw Stein Savik reported that Gorbachev had extended the Warsaw Pact for another 20 years – and even longer if necessary. That news item was illustrated with a press photo where Gorbachev was in the process of signing the document.⁵² A telegram from NTB-AP announced that the Soviet Union was planning a new, major offensive in Afghanistan.⁵³ Bobo Scheutz reported five days later that Gorbachev considered the first round of negotiations in Geneva to be "futile."⁵⁴

In the news that *Aftenposten* printed in the spring of 1985, there was very little that indicated that Mikhail Gorbachev was going to transform Soviets foreign policy. To the contrary, in the editorial that marked Gorbachev's first 100 days in office, the paper expressed the belief that one must expect "a deterioration" in relations with the United States. The Soviet Union had also "toughened its stance" in Afghanistan, the paper wrote.⁵⁵ In an editorial entitled "The Soviet Union's Dangerous War" shortly thereafter, the paper wrote that the campaign in Afghanistan might lead to "the whole region turning into a

witches'cauldron."⁵⁶ The paper also reported on Gorbachev's "harshest attack yet on the United States" towards the end of June.⁵⁷

In the summer of 1985, the previously announced November summit meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev started to draw near. The countdown now started to dominate the international news of the East-West relationship. This was especially true of the disarmament talks in Geneva. The tensions in these news items grew considerably. At the end of July the paper quoted The White House saying that the Soviet Union's announcement of a five-months moratorium on nuclear testing, with an invitation to the United States to follow suit, represented "the beginning of a new Soviet propaganda offensive" before the summit meeting in November. The United States rejected the proposal. The officials also commented that the Soviet test ban was to take effect on the 6th of August, which was the 40th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima in 1945 – and to further illustrate the Soviet timing, the announcement of the proposal came on the day of the 10th anniversary of the Helsinki Declaration of 1975.⁵⁸ In August *Aftenposten* printed a UPI telegram that quoted Gorbachev as saying that the American bombing of Hiroshima was "barbaric", and that the West had not learned anything from it. TASS also reported that he had written a letter to the Japanese victims of the Hiroshima bombing.⁵⁹ The next day *Aftenposten* printed a bulletin from NTB-Reuters where the Soviet Union claimed that the U.S. had developed plans in the 1940s for using nuclear weapons against 70 cities, a claim immediately denied by the Americans.⁶⁰ The fact that the Hiroshima bombing was drawn into the disarmament debate between the Soviet Union and the United States, reveals clearly the growing tensions between the two superpowers: both parties were trying to get an upper hand in the fight for public opinion throughout the world in advance of the November summit. A few days after the 40th anniversary commemoration, *Aftenposten* used a full page to print an article by Henry Kissinger entitled "The Atom Bomb Has Secured the Peace."⁶¹

Early in September, *Aftenposten* reported that Gorbachev had allowed an interview with the American news magazine *TIME*. There he stated that relations between the United States and the Soviet Union were "very tense" at the moment. He characterised the situation as "explosive." He also said that the American SDI plans for an anti-missile defence system in space would make it impossible to reach agreement on arms control. *Aftenposten*, which commented on the interview in an editorial, observed that "Moscow has already managed to get a head start in the race for the international opinion in advance of this summit, partly because of Gorbachev's well-planned initiatives, and partly because the West was caught unprepared for them..." The paper referred to the fact that Gorbachev in the *TIME* interview had claimed that "the United States is trying to push the Soviet Union into a corner before the summit, and that the U.S. immediately rejects all Soviet proposals as mere propaganda." On

its own behalf, *Aftenposten* added that neither American nor Soviet politicians were “novices in the fight for international public opinion,” and then added: “But when Gorbachev says what he says, he knows that what he ascribes to the United States, is also part of Soviet tactics.” The same day Bobo Scheutz reported from Moscow that Gorbachev had said that if the U.S. abandoned the SDI programme, the Soviet Union would immediately begin to significantly reduce the number of its own offensive weapons.⁶²

In this way *Aftenposten* kept printing both initiatives and reactions from both parties through the autumn of 1985. The paper’s foreign affairs correspondents did not just get a lot of mileage out of the Soviet-American missile struggle, but also from the PR-war between them. “The Kremlin’s PR Offensive Troubles Reagan’s Staff”, reported correspondent John Crowe from Washington. The White House was worried that Mikhail Gorbachev, “with his latest media offensive directed against the United States”, would “be able to steal the spotlight and thus pick points from President Reagan” in the period prior to the summit meeting. Washington was now analysing Gorbachev’s moves thoroughly, he wrote, including the *TIME* interview. Reagan’s Press Secretary, Larry Speaks, claimed that after the Soviet leader’s interview with *TIME*, President Reagan ought to be given air time on Soviet television in order to present American views on disarmament and space weapons. Crowe produced a telling comment when he remarked that “President Reagan, who has always been famous for his unique command of mass communication, may in Gorbachev have met his equal.”⁶³ *Aftenposten* observed that Moscow was “on the offensive in the tug-of-war for public opinion around the world.”⁶⁴

Concurrently with all this, *Aftenposten* did not forget that Gorbachev was continuing the Soviet campaign in Afghanistan. The paper commented on this in an editorial entitled “Teeth of Steel”, illustrated by a press photo of Gorbachev. According to the paper, Andrej Gromyko had said about Gorbachev that “this man has a charming smile, but teeth of steel.” The paper adopted Gromyko’s words, and then added on its own behalf that “what the West has been allowed to see, is Gorbachev’s winning smile, which has convinced many people that the Soviet Union has only good intentions in advance of the summit meeting in Geneva in November. His teeth of steel are on display in Afghanistan” – with the new major offensive that the Soviet Union had just started.⁶⁵

Thus *Aftenposten* was trying to penetrate behind Gorbachev’s winning smile and beyond his immediate charm. “Gorbachev’s Charm Offensive in the West at Risk”, reported Bobo Scheutz from Moscow. At that point KGB’s spies in Great Britain had just been exposed.⁶⁶ Soon after, Britain had expelled 31 Russians, while the Soviet Union retaliated by sending as many as 37 British diplomats packing.⁶⁷ About the last of these expulsions, Bobo Scheutz wrote that “Gorbachev Shows a New Face”, referring to the power politician behind the smile.⁶⁸

As the autumn of 1985 wore on, one can clearly identify a tendency in *Aftenposten*'s reporting on Gorbachev: his name was repeatedly seen in connection with the acronym PR. More and more *Aftenposten* tended to view Gorbachev as a skillful Public Relations agent—an actor who understood the needs of the media of mass communications and who was capable of creating initiatives about disarmament and arms control that placed the Soviet Union ahead of the United States in the struggle to win the war of public opinion around the world. It was quite unusual that the Kremlin leader seemed to master this game better than “the Great Communicator”, Ronald Reagan, in the White House. When the third round of the Geneva talks started up again, *Aftenposten* wrote in an editorial that “Moscow has appeared frequently in PR contexts in the interval between the second and third round...”⁶⁹

“The Kremlin on the Offensive”, was the paper's reaction, on the front page, when Gorbachev suggested a 50 per cent reduction in the Soviet and American arsenals of nuclear weapons. And with regard to the coming summit between Gorbachev and Mitterand in Paris, the paper declared that the Soviet leader “would need all his PR talents during the visit that he starts today.”⁷⁰ The paper's Paris correspondent, Elisabeth Holte, reported that Mikhail Gorbachev had announced the Soviet Union's newest missile initiative during a speech in the French national assembly. She quoted NATO officials in Brussels who were “disappointed” that he had presented his new proposal “in this way” – with a proposition that first “ought to have been discussed confidentially at the Geneva disarmament talks. By presenting his initiative in public first, Gorbachev risks being branded as a propaganda maker,” they concluded.⁷¹

In an editorial, *Aftenposten* found it “deplorable” that Gorbachev “introduced to the public problems that really belong in the Geneva meeting rooms.” The paper thought that Gorbachev “was trying to play to the gallery. He is primarily directing his proposals to the European public, in the hope of swaying their opinion in his favour.”⁷² “Are the Soviets Sincere?” asked Elisabeth Holte in an article that discussed the new Soviet disarmament proposal.⁷³ In the United States, President Reagan answered with a speech at the United Nations. According to *Aftenposten*, this was his “reaction to Gorbachev's attempt to conquer public opinion in Western Europe and the U.S.. Reagan is no longer on the defensive,” wrote the paper. From Moscow Bobo Sheutz reported that the reactions from the Kremlin to Reagan's speech were “extremely negative.”⁷⁴

In October the Washington correspondent John Crowo reported that Gorbachev's interview with the news magazine *TIME* now had consequences: Ronald Reagan was now slated to be interviewed by the Soviet press: both by *Pravda*, *Izvestija* and the news agencies TASS and Novosti. It was the first time in 24 years that an American president would give a comprehensive interview to the Soviet press. The last time had been John F. Kennedy in 1961. After that Nixon had spoken twice on Soviet television. The Soviet interview with

Reagan had been arranged as an answer to Gorbachev's having been given space by *TIME*. This was one more link in the escalation going on before the Soviet-American summit in November, *Aftenposten* wrote.⁷⁵ Later on the Kremlin rejected Reagan's initiative, Bobo Scheutz reported from Moscow.⁷⁶

Through articles and commentaries such as these, *Aftenposten* showed aspects of the tug-of-war between the superpowers, where both nations tried to position themselves in the best possible way before the Geneva summit meeting. The paper called the proposals and the reactions to them, from both parties, PR and propaganda, and its foreign affairs correspondents felt able to evaluate them. "War of Nerves Down to the Wire", wrote *Aftenposten* immediately before the summit was scheduled to begin.⁷⁷

Then came the summit meeting. Gorbachev and Reagan met in Geneva. *Aftenposten* treated the meetings as front-page news every day, but the breakthrough did not come until the 21st of November. On that day, the front page proclaimed: "The Ice Broken in Geneva."⁷⁸ The front page the next day followed suit: "Finally on the Right Track." And the editorial concluded that "The Summit Gives Hope."⁷⁹ Kjell Dragnes, who followed the meeting in Geneva, reported that Gorbachev and Reagan parted in an optimistic spirit when the meeting was over. From Moscow Bobo Scheutz reported that Soviet television had deviated from its usual practice and transmitted directly from the final press conference in Geneva. That way Reagan "for the first time had an opportunity to appear before the eyes of the Soviet TV audience" – without prior editing.⁸⁰

At the turn of the year 1985-86, something quite unusual happened again: Reagan and Gorbachev spoke at the same time on American and Soviet television. Both speeches lasted about five minutes and had been taped in advance. It was the first time ever that such an exchange had taken place. "New-born Year with Hope for Peace", wrote *Aftenposten* all over the front page the same day.⁸¹

Conclusion

In this article we have asked the question of how *Aftenposten* regarded Mikhail Gorbachev as the new leader of the Soviet Union in 1985. Based on an exhaustive analysis of all the relevant articles published in *Aftenposten* during this year, we are now able to draw at least three conclusions:

First of all: After a detailed report on Chernenko's death and funeral in the Kremlin, *Aftenposten* immediately started to consider his successor's personal position of power in the Soviet hierarchy. The paper printed a number of analyses of Gorbachev's personnel changes, with the transition from Gromyko to Shevardnadze in July as the greatest and most surprising. *Aftenposten* looked at these changes as a symptom of the underlying situation: that Gorbachev

was strengthening his position in the system – and that he was recruiting people who shared his views. Here the journalists were using “the Kremlological method” for their analyses. Much of this was not general information from the news agencies, but was written by *Aftenposten*’s own Soviet experts.

Secondly: Articles produced by its own staff were equally important in *Aftenposten*’s follow-up of Gorbachev’s domestic policies in 1985. Here it becomes quite clear that the paper printed different opinions. Was Gorbachev a reformist or a traditionalist? Did he represent a new political direction or was he just a continuation of all that had been? The new style of leadership that Gorbachev displayed from the very beginning tempted many to believe that he was a liberal – a view that Bobo Scheutz in Moscow repeatedly warned against. He saw Gorbachev as the system’s man and believed that he was first and foremost engaged in continuing Andropov’s policies. This opinion sometimes collided with what the paper’s other Soviet experts wrote. There is ample evidence in the material from 1985 that both Per Egil Hegge and Kjell Dragnes seemed to be more concerned with *the new direction* that Gorbachev represented than seeing him as a traditionalist.

Thirdly: Material written by *Aftenposten*’s own journalists and correspondents also dominated the paper’s coverage of Gorbachev’s foreign policy. Analyses from the Oslo staff were combined with the correspondents’ reports – and agency bulletins – into a very extensive news presentation. From Day One of his tenure as the new leader of the Kremlin, Gorbachev’s foreign policy was at the top of *Aftenposten*’s news agenda: the Geneva negotiations. Mikhail Gorbachev launched so many proposals and introduced so many initiatives in 1985 that *Aftenposten*, as the autumn wore on, more and more tended to characterise him as a Public Relations man. Gradually the Kremlin leader began to be seen as a more effective marketer of his own views on disarmament and arms control than Ronald Reagan in the White House. *Aftenposten* was keen to analyse the strategy that it believed was hiding behind all his different initiatives, as an attempt to expose the top leader in the East. This gave the articles on Gorbachev a critical quality, even if the paper gradually started to be more favourably disposed towards the disarmament proposals.

A total evaluation of the Gorbachev material published in *Aftenposten* in 1985, reveals a high degree of tension in East-West relations, deadlocked negotiations, mutual distrust and the superpowers’ continuous fight for public opinion around the world. Sure enough, Gorbachev might smile charmingly, and his new style of leadership was attractive to many, but even so there was little evidence of the “glasnost” to come. The Russian-American news in *Aftenposten* was in 1985 still dominated by the fundamental antagonisms of the Cold War: the superpower rivalry, nuclear weapons, disarmament negotiations, Reagan’s SDI programme, etc. This was the situation, even if *Pravda*’s criticism of the Soviet press, Gorbachev’s interview with *TIME*, Reagan’s interview with

the Soviet press and the two state leaders' simultaneously broadcast television speeches at New Year's seemed to indicate that changes in the direction of greater openness might also be coming. But *how* this increasing "thaw" in the East-West relationship after 1985 was covered in newspapers such as *Aftenposten*, remains a topic for future research.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this article was presented as paper on the international research conference "Media and the Cold War 1975-1991", November 20.-21 2014, at Volda University College, Norway
2. *Aftenposten*, May 14 1985
3. Per Kristian Haugen: "*Aftenposten* Prioritises Its Foreign Affairs News", in *Aftenposten*, May 14, 1985
4. There is nearly no research done of the coverage of Russia or the Soviet Union in the Norwegian press. One exception is Berghei 2010, but he is covering the period 1880-1905. A newer example is Røed-Fauske 2014, covering fear for nuclear war in the Norwegian press 1948-62.
5. See *Aftenposten* April 17, April 25, April 26, and especially April 30, 1985, but also May 10, May 20, June 6, June 11 and June 18, 1985. These articles pointed on the international importance of the Soviet Union and thus the need for more exact Soviet knowledge and research, also in Norway. Aasmund Willersrud wrote for instance on "A Strategy of Knowledge against Soviet" in his article April 30, 1985.
6. *Pressefolk* 1997
7. *Pressefolk* 1997
8. *Pressefolk* 1997
9. Interview with Kjell Dragnes November 28, 2014
10. *Aftenposten*, March 11, 1985
11. *Aftenposten*, March 12-14, 1985
12. *Aftenposten*, March 14, 1985
13. *Aftenposten*, February 4, 1985
14. *Aftenposten*, March 12, 1985
15. *Aftenposten*, March 12, 1985
16. *Aftenposten*, March 12, 1985
17. *Aftenposten*, March 12, 1985
18. *Aftenposten*, March 12, 1985
19. *Aftenposten*, March 12 and 15, 1985
20. *Aftenposten*, March 14, 1985
21. *Aftenposten*, April 18, 1985
22. *Aftenposten*, July 2, 1985
23. *Aftenposten*'s evening edition, July 2, 1985
24. *Aftenposten*, July 3, 1985
25. *Aftenposten*, July 5, 1985
26. The paper quoted Shevardnadze in the following words: "Let me be perfectly honest: During all those years I have, to a certain extent, been patiently waiting for the arrival of a time when a constructive, direct and principled criticism of the mistakes made by the Central Committee will become the norm in our society, an everyday occurrence at our meetings. Unfortunately, we have still not come this far... Like every other person, I also have my defects and shortcomings, and I would wish that you, members of the Central Committee, would point them out to me. If you stress, for the public, that it is possible to criticise the Central Committee, you should start at the top." *Aftenposten*, July 27, 1985
27. *Aftenposten*, July 6, 1985

28. On the following dates *Aftenposten* printed news of important changes in the Soviet leadership: July 6, July 13, July 18, September 28, October 16, November 18, December 12 and December 27, 1985.
29. *Aftenposten*, October 26, 1985
30. *Aftenposten*, March 13, 1985
31. *Aftenposten*, March 16, 1985
32. *Aftenposten*, March 25, 1985
33. *Aftenposten*, April 15, 1985
34. *Aftenposten*, April 24, 1985
35. *Aftenposten*, April 25, 1985
36. *Aftenposten*, May 4, 1985
37. *Aftenposten*, May 4, 1985
38. *Aftenposten*, June 7, 1985
39. *Aftenposten*, June 22, 1985
40. *Aftenposten*, June 22, 1985
41. *Aftenposten*, August 28 and October 11, 1985. He also wrote about Gorbachev's trip to Siberia (September 5), his demands of the agricultural sector (September 12) and the new Five-Year-Plan (November 14).
42. *Aftenposten*, December 14, 1985
43. *Aftenposten*, December 13, 1985
44. *Aftenposten*, March 12, 1985
45. *Aftenposten*, March 14, 1985
46. *Aftenposten*, March 28, 1985
47. *Aftenposten*, April 9 and 10, 1985
48. *Aftenposten*, April 10, 1985
49. *Aftenposten*, April 10, 1985
50. *Aftenposten*, April 24, 1985
51. *Aftenposten*, April 25, 1985
52. *Aftenposten*, April 27, 1985
53. *Aftenposten*, May 23, 1985
54. *Aftenposten*, May 28, 1985
55. *Aftenposten*, June 7, 1985
56. *Aftenposten*, June 12, 1985
57. *Aftenposten*, June 27, 1985
58. *Aftenposten*, July 30 and 31, 1985
59. *Aftenposten*, August 6, 1985
60. *Aftenposten*, August 7, 1985
61. *Aftenposten*, August 13, 1985
62. *Aftenposten*, September 4, 1985
63. *Aftenposten*, September 5, 1985
64. *Aftenposten*, September 6, 1985
65. *Aftenposten*, September 10, 1985
66. *Aftenposten*, September 14, 1985
67. *Aftenposten*, September 19, 1985
68. *Aftenposten*, September 16, 1985
69. *Aftenposten*, September 19, 1985
70. *Aftenposten*, October 2, 1985
71. *Aftenposten*, October 4, 1985
72. *Aftenposten*, October 5, 1985
73. *Aftenposten*, October 10, 1985
74. *Aftenposten*, October 26, 1985
75. *Aftenposten*, October 31, 1985
76. *Aftenposten*, November 5, 1985
77. *Aftenposten*, November 18, 1985

78. *Aftenposten*, November 21, 1985
79. *Aftenposten*, November 22, 1985
80. *Aftenposten*, November 22, 1985
81. *Aftenposten*, January 2, 1986

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Chapter 16

Frozen Kisses

Cinematographical Reflections on Norway's Role in the Cold War

Bjørn Sørenssen

Abstract

The Cold War inevitably left its mark on the fledgling Norwegian film industry. This article draws special attention to renowned documentary film maker Knut Erik Jensen's two fiction films *Brent av frost* (1997) and *Iskyss* (2008), both based on actual stories and dealing with Norwegians who became directly involved in the Cold War as servants to the Soviet intelligence service. These films are put into perspective by placing them in context with Jensen's documentary work on life in and history of Northern Norway during and following World War II. The films are also discussed on the background of the contemporary critical reception, with a reference to the modernist aesthetics employed by Jensen, that left Norwegian critics ambivalent about the films.

Keywords: Norwegian film history, film production, film aesthetics, cold war culture, documentary

The main purpose of this article is to show how two of the fiction feature films of Norwegian film director Knut Erik Jensen reflect various phases and stages in the relationship between Norway and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The movies in question are *Brent av frost* (Burnt by Frost, 1997) and *Iskyss* (Ice Kiss, 2008), both are based on actual stories and dealing with Norwegians who became directly involved in the Cold War as servants to the Soviet intelligence service.

In 2000 Norwegian director Knut Erik Jensen had a huge success, both with the critics and at the box office, as his documentary *Heftig og begeistret* (English distribution title *Cool and Crazy*), about a male choir in the extreme north of Norway became the greatest audience attraction for a documentary at Norwegian movie theatres ever as well as an unexpected international success.

The narrative climax of *Cool and Crazy* is built around a tour the choir undertakes to Murmansk in Russia. At this point several personalities have been carefully constructed through individual presentations and Jensen then lets the

drama of postwar Finnmark play out with the choir's communist as a kind of protagonist, confronting his choir brothers about his political beliefs, weeping at the monument to the Red Army soldiers, liberators of Finnmark, enduring the shame of the ecological disaster left by his ideological heroes, but finally reconciled with his choir mates in a Russian folk song, being enthusiastically received by the Russian audience. This scene points to the importance that the war and postwar experiences in Finnmark, Norway's northernmost county, has in the output of this prolific film maker, and, in the present context, the way the Cold War was a central backdrop to life in Northern Norway during these years.¹

Knut Erik Jensen, and the Finnmark Region

Knut Erik Jensen was born in Honningsvåg in the extreme north of Norway. During childhood, he experienced the trauma of the evacuation of Finnmark. Finnmark is the largest (approximately the size of Denmark) and most sparsely populated county of Norway, sharing a border with arctic Russia in the northeast. During the later stage of World War II, in 1944, the occupying German army, fearing a Russian invasion, decided on using the tactics of the "scorched earth." All inhabitants of Finnmark were ordered to be evacuated and the county put to the torch. Apart from the town of Kirkenes near the Russian border, every house, private, business or official, in the county was set fire to, villages and townships were razed. The larger part of the population were evacuated, under appalling conditions, to southern Norway, while a considerable number hid from the Germans in makeshift camps and in abandoned mines enduring considerable hardship during the winter of 1944/45. During these winter months Finnmark became the first part of Norway to be liberated from the Germans, by the rapidly advancing Soviet Red Army soldiers, who naturally were greeted as saviours by the remaining population. The Norwegian resistance in the area during the war, was, unlike the resistance movement in southern and central Norway, closely aligned with the Soviet Union. This was emphasized by the fact that the Norwegian resistance here was referred to as "partisans", echoing the name for Soviet resistance groups under the German occupation. The events in Finnmark during and immediately after World War II form the backdrop for Jensen's four fiction films, as well as many of his documentaries.

After finishing his elementary education in Finnmark, Jensen went on to study languages at the University of Oslo, spending a year in the Soviet Union, studying Russian, before deciding on attending the London International Film School in 1973. Back in Norway Jensen became involved in local film making, setting a pattern he has followed ever since. He also became involved in the establishing of the Film Centre of Northern Norway, inspired by the post-68 film centre movement in Sweden.²

Since the late 70s he has worked as a cinematographer, editor and director for the regional branch of the Norwegian public service company, NRK, leaving a prolific oeuvre over three decades. This includes documentaries, a documentary series for TV and four fiction films. His most important work as a television director and producer is undoubtedly the documentary series *Finnmark mellom øst og vest* (*Finnmark Between East and West*, 1985-86), consisting of six installments varying in length from 55 minutes to 1 hour 33 minutes. In this series he attempted to present an audiovisual history of Finnmark, based on archival material and interviews with a polemical undertone: the people of Finnmark had to rely on their own strength and their loyalty to their land, often in the face of adverse intervention from the “southerners” of the Norwegian administration, in the task of rebuilding their wasted Finnmark.

Gunnar Iversen (Brinch and Iversen 2001) points out Jensen’s documentary series as an eminent example of “writing history from below”:

The many small participants in history, each with a story to tell, are documented by Jensen’s camera and saved for posterity. These stories are simultaneously a corrective from below and a complement to other sources and historical discourses. The experience of the people is placed in the center (Brinch and Iversen 2001:217, my translation).

Knut Erik Jensen’s feature length fiction films are *Stella Polaris* (1993), *Brent av frost* (*Burnt by Frost*, 1997), *Når mørket er forbi* (*Passing Darkness*, 2000) and *Iskyss* (*Ice Kiss*, 2008). All films show affinities to Jensen’s documentary work in several ways, the most immediate trait is, however, that they share a specific historical and geographical background. In *Stella Polaris* the central conflict develops from events connected to the wartime evacuation and burning of Finnmark as experienced by a child. Formally it is characterized by an impressionistic style of filmic modernism, relying totally on the images to relate a story, without the use of dialogue. At times this technique of Jensen’s is reminiscent of French modernist film makers of the 1960s like Resnais, leaving the viewer to sift through visually coded memories, without being too generous in terms of assisting the viewer.

The faint echo of the problematic relationship with the Soviet Union present in *Stella Polaris* is enhanced to the central theme in *Brent av frost*. Employing much of the same fragmented narrative as in its predecessor, *Brent av frost* recounts the story of the Norwegian partisans from Finnmark working with and from the Soviet Union and their problematic divided loyalties after the outbreak of the Cold War. The central narrative has as its background several cases where former partisans in the 1950s were tried and convicted as Soviet spies.

Where *Brent av frost* dealt with idealist youths who had fought as partisans against the German occupants and were pressed into service by the KGB following the war, *Iskyss* is based on the story of Gunvor Galtung Haavik, a sec-

retary at the Norwegian embassy in Moscow and later a central person in the Norwegian Foreign Office, who fell in love with a Russian she was nursing in Norway during the war and later was used as an agent by the KGB. Jensen's take on these two stories differs significantly from the standard formula spy movie, providing background that transgresses the simple black-and-white rhetoric of the Cold War.

The Cold War Movie Genre and Norwegian Fiction Film: Ola Solum's *Orions belte*

The Cold War movie genre was initiated almost immediately after the end of World War II, when the rivalry between the Soviet Union and the communist bloc quickly escalated. It is debatable whether it may be said to constitute a proper genre at all, since it comprises a great number of sub-genres, such as action film (e.g. *From Russia with Love*, Young 1963), thriller (e.g. *Torn Curtain*, Hitchcock 1966), comedy (e.g. *One, Two, Three*, Wilder 1961), social problem film, (e.g. *On the Beach*, Kramer 1959) or a combination of the two latter subgenres in Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* (1964). However, the spy movie may be said to be the most enduring form of the genre, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, ranging from the action format of the early popular James Bond movies to the more complicated spy dramas represented by a film like *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (Ritt 1965), based on John le Carré's novel and directed by Martin Ritt in 1965.³

In Norwegian fiction film the Cold War theme is largely absent from the fiction films produced after 1945. The great exception is *Orions belte* (*Orion's Belt*), directed by Ola Solum in 1985, a film that, according to Gunnar Iversen, marks a watershed in Norwegian film history (Iversen 2011:253-261). According to Iversen the movie made an impact, both as an example of new financing methods for Norwegian fiction film, but also because of its economic success while emulating the Hollywood action movie in a convincing way, thus serving as a model for other film makers.

Produced during the late part of the Cold War, the film is also remarkably explicit in its description of the political situation in the Svalbard Archipelago during the Cold War era. The film is based on Jon Michelet's novel by the same name from 1977. Michelet, a sometimes controversial author in Norwegian public life, was engaged as a journalist in the Maoist newspaper *Klassekampen* (Class Struggle), when he in 1976 went to Svalbard and, based on his investigations there, wrote an article on how the Soviet Union was circumventing an agreement with Norway on keeping the islands de-militarized by stationing war helicopters in the Soviet mining town of Barentsburg. The novel follows three Norwegian sailors who accidentally discover that the Russians are installing an

electronic early-warning system on the islands, and when this is discovered have to escape from units of the Red Army. The theme of the novel was in line with what Michelet, *Klassekampen* and the Maoist party AKP were claiming at the time: that the superpowers USSR and USA were heading for a new war, and that Norway might become a battleground.

By the time the movie was made in 1985, these questions were no longer politically debated and the producers of the movie concentrated on the action sequences. However, the contemporary political climate was reflected in the adoption of Michelet's claim that Soviet military forces were trespassing on the supposedly de-militarized Svalbard area, a fact that made one of the reviewers of the film take notice. In an otherwise positive review in *Dagbladet*, Thor Ellingsen, remarked on this:

...Some will find it frivolous and irresponsible to make an entertainment movie in the style of Maclean and Bagley about a... politically extremely sensitive area, by portraying Norwegians and Russians shooting at each other.⁴

Ellingsen needn't have worried. The political aspects were drowned out by the, for Norwegian film, spectacular action events involving helicopters and fantastic scenery from Svalbard. The film won the Norwegian equivalent of Oscar, the Amanda, both as best film and for best male actor.

Brent av Frost (1997)

Having treated the question of Norwegian-Russian relations during the Cold War in his documentary television series *Finnmark mellom øst og vest* (Finnmark – between East and West), it seems only natural that Knut Erik Jensen would turn to this subject in his fiction films. In the case of *Stella Polaris*, which might be described as an audiovisual poem on loss and remembrance, the Russian connection is visible, but enigmatic. *Stella Polaris* opens with the nameless heroine of the story wandering aimlessly around in a large and desolate city that obviously is Russian (the scenes were shot in St. Petersburg) – we are given to understand that these images constitute a dream, but we are not given any clue to how to relate this to the rest of the film, which deals with images and fragmented story lines about life in Finnmark through five decades, from the 1930s through the 1980s.

For *Brent av frost* and *Iskyss*, however, the Russian connection serves as the basis for the story. His screenwriter and collaborator for both films was the journalist Alf R. Jacobsen, a prolific writer and journalist, who had also been producing the current affairs program *Brennpunkt* at the Norwegian public broadcaster NRK, having written extensively on the subject of Northern Norway and the Russian connection.

The subject matter for *Brent av frost* is the history of the Norwegian partisans fighting alongside Russian agents during the German occupation of Finnmark.

The war and resistance in Finnmark was more brutal than anywhere else in Norway and the civilian population had to pay a terrible price. Immediately after the German occupation was a fact, several Norwegians left for nearby Russian settlements. Soviet authorities, aware of the fact that the non-aggression pact signed by Hitler and Stalin was temporary, enlisted many of these Norwegians in the service of the intelligence agencies GRU and NKVD, and after having given them basic training, re-infiltrated them on Norwegian territory (Huitfeldt 1997:5). The agents were also required to swear a loyalty oath to the Soviet Union, promising never to reveal anything about their activities. When Germany attacked Soviet Russia in the summer of 1941, these partisans became crucial for the fight to keep the Germans from conquering Murmansk, the ice-free harbour so important for Soviet supply lines. More Norwegians from Finnmark were recruited for partisan activities and worked together with regular Red Army agents providing information about German troop movements and supply ships by radio. The German Abwehr soon became aware of this, and several operations were initiated against these activities, leading to harsh reprisals against the partisans and the civilian population suspected of aiding them. The price paid by the partisans themselves was very high: out of more than a hundred persons who were registered in the service, 52 were arrested. Of these, 23 were executed, 10 were killed in action, 2 lost their lives and 11 escaped, the remaining 6 surviving German imprisonment (Huitfeldt 1997:24).

With the onset of the Cold War the surviving partisans soon came under suspicion for continuing their activities as Soviet spies, but now against Norwegian and NATO forces. This led to whole communities being singled out as “communist covens”, as was the case with the fishing village of Kiberg, home to half the number of Norwegians who had undergone partisan training in the USSR. In spite of being under special surveillance from Norwegian intelligence units and the subject of several police raids, the suspicions of spy activities in the Kiberg region were never proved, but the community was stigmatized. In 1992, when H.M. King Harald V of Norway visited Finnmark for the unveiling of a monument in honor of the partisans, he also stated that “I am afraid that we may have unjustly inflicted great personal strains on some in the shadow of the Cold War” (Huitfeldt 1997:27).

Nevertheless, there were some cases during the Cold War, where former partisans and/or family members were convicted of spying for the Soviet Union. According to testimonies given at the closed court cases, the Soviet secret services had been using the loyalty oaths given during the war as a means to pressure the ex-partisans into service for the USSR. In one case, that of Selmer Nilsen, who in 1967 was convicted to 8 years in jail for his activities, his family was coerced by KGB agents to send the 17 year old boy to the USSR to be trained as an intelligence agent (Fjørtoft 1986).

Simon, the protagonist of *Brent av frost*, is a composite figure, obviously based on Selmer Nilsen, but given a background that also connects with the background of some of the other spy convicts with partisan background. Kjell Fjørtoft's book *Spionfamilien* (The spy family) on the Nilsen family during and after the war (Fjørtoft 1986) has obviously been a major source for the screenwriters, while Fjørtoft's book *Lille-Moskva – Den glemte krigen* (Little Moscow – The forgotten war) from 1983 has been additional source. Selmer Nilsen's activities were connected to the U2 affair, where American pilot Francis Gary Powers in 1960 was shot down over the USSR in his spy plane, en route to Bodø, where Selmer Nilsen had gathered intelligence about a mystical black airplane – "The Black Lady." Knut Erik Jensen has used this factual information in his film to place Simon with a pair of binoculars close to the Bodø air base.

Brent av frost is on the narrative level a film about a young man, somewhat of an outsider, who experiences the brutality of German occupation and flees to Soviet Russia after having been accused of harboring partisans. Here he is recruited by the KGB, receives fundamental instruction in spycraft and is returned to Norway, where he reports on Norwegian and NATO activities from hidden radio transmitters. At some point – it is unclear if this is before or after the war – he falls in love with a girl from a higher stratum of society and they marry. His activities are discovered, he is convicted, serves his jail sentence and returns to a hostile local environment, still supported by the love of his wife.

The narrative as represented above, is the result of a re-ordering of the narrative fragments Jensen scatters during the 97 minutes of *Brent av frost*. True to the standard he set in *Stella Polaris*, he has foregone chronological narrative representation and presents a kaleidoscope of events, images, scraps of conversation, off-screen recitation and newsreel clips for the audience to make sense of. The only constants are Simon (acted by Stig Henrik Hoff), his wife Lillian (Gørild Mauseth) and the KGB Major Lasov (Jevgenij Sidikhin) and the way they interconnect over the years. Visually, *Brent av frost* is a prolongation of the aesthetics presented in *Stella Polaris*, where Jensen uses his eye for the expected and unexpected visual wonders of Northern Norwegian nature through the seasons, eminently caught by cinematographer Svein Krøvel's camera.

At no time during the film is there made any attempt to explain the motives of Simon in entering the secret service of another country in order to spy on his homeland. This is consistent with what former supreme commander of the Norwegian military forces in Northern Norway and military historian General Lieutenant Tønne Huitfeldt writes in an article in 1997 (Huitfeldt 1997:20), where he comments on the fact that Norwegian military intelligence were unable to get the partisans of Finnmark to talk about their experiences during the war and that the silence about this was never broken. Whereas Huitfeldt points to the loyalty oath given to the partisans, combined with pressure from KGB in the years following the war to keep the partisans quiet about their connections

with the USSR, Knut Erik Jensen makes the silence into a personal trait of Simon. He shares his intelligence with the Russians, his love with Lillian, but keeps his thoughts to himself. The only direct comment on his own situation is in a line spoken upon his release from jail in Southern Norway: "I'm leaving here and entering the Cold War, and the further north you go, the colder it gets."

The film shows Simon torn between his love of his home place and Lillian and his complicated relationship to his adopted homeland, represented by charismatic Lasov, a veteran fighting with the Norwegian partisans in Finnmark during the war. Lasov is obviously modelled on Nikolaj Sisov, the agent who persuaded the Nilsen family to send the 17-year-old Selmer to Moscow and who turns up at irregular intervals in Fjørtoft's story of the partisans from Bakfjord, the last time after Selmer Nilsen has been arrested in 1967. In *Brent av frost* Jensen extends the story line on Lasov until after the fall of the Soviet Union, to show him, now as a representative from the post-communist Russian government presenting parts of Francis Gary Powers' U2 plane as a gift to the Norwegian Aviation Museum in Bodø. In the scenes from the Soviet Union, Lasov is portrayed as a father figure to Simon, confronting him when Simon seems to waver in his loyalty, rewarding him when he has fulfilled his obligations. The last time he appears in the movie, Simon is no longer there, he has, apparently found refuge in the love of Lillian and has no more need for confrontations or rewards.

Brent av frost was generally well received in the Norwegian press. Many critics saw the film more or less as a continuation of *Stella Polaris*, accepting the modernist film language. Per Haddal in *Aftenposten* pointed to similarities with the great Russian film maker Andrej Tarkovsky and wrote that "[The Movie's] expeditions in the borderland of aesthetics are most convincing in this year's most ambitious Norwegian film, the lyricism, rather than the historical narrative."⁵ Others were plainly bothered by the modernist narrative fragmentation. Liv Jørgensen in *Dagbladet* wrote: "The movie is, however, too confusingly told [...] I find it excessive. Too much of Svein Krøvel's exquisite photography, too many narrative jumps, too great ambitions to tell us all at once, too easy to lose track."⁶

Iskyss (2008)

While the background for the story line in *Brent av frost* is the whole complicated story about the fate of the Norwegian partisans in Finnmark, *Iskyss* is based on the history of a single person, Gunvor Galtung Haavik, a secretary in the Norwegian Foreign Ministry who was arrested while passing secret documents to a Russian in Oslo in January 1977.⁷ During the first interrogations she admitted that she had been a spy for the Soviet Union for almost 28 years, after having been recruited by the KGB as a secretary to the Norwegian ambassador in the Soviet Union in 1950.

She died of a heart attack in jail half a year later, before her case could come up for court and, apart from a court verdict in 1978 ordering the confiscation of NOK 200,000 from her estate, information about this most serious espionage case in Norway has been withheld from the public.

When Alf. R. Jacobsen started to work on a book about the Haavik case, the public premises stated in this conviction were the only facts available about her. It stated that, while working as a nurse in Northern Norway during the war, she had befriended and entered into a relationship with a Russian prisoner of war, Vladimir Kozlov, while he was a patient in the hospital. In 1944 Kozlov managed to escape and successfully made his way to neutral Sweden, from where he was repatriated after the war. Because of her excellent knowledge of Russian, Haavik was used as an interpreter in connection with the repatriation of Russian prisoners of war in Northern Norway. She was later offered permanent employment by the Norwegian Foreign Ministry and used as an interpreter in connection with the establishment of the Norwegian/USSR border in Finnmark. In 1947 she was attached to the Norwegian embassy in Moscow as a secretary. She found out that Kozlov was alive and living in Leningrad and sought him there, only to find out that he was now married. Nevertheless, they rekindled their romance and she managed to keep this connection hidden from her Norwegian colleagues. In order to maintain secrecy, she used the Russian chauffeur at the Norwegian embassy as a go-between. It turned out that he was a KGB employee (as was Kozlov's wife) and in 1950, during a dinner arranged for the two of them, Haavik was pressured into the services of the KGB. Haavik was highly trusted by the embassy and was used as a courier, carrying diplomatic mailbags between Moscow and Oslo, and would now make sure that the KGB got access to these sensitive documents for the rest of her stay in the Soviet Union until 1956. Back in Norway, where she was employed at various departments in the Foreign Office, she was approached again by the KGB in 1958 and, according to the verdict, she had no less than 271 "conspirative meetings" with representatives for the Soviet Union, where she shared classified documents of various importance. Her relationship with Kozlov had ended, but they still kept in contact by letter (Jacobsen 1991:239-244).

In 1993, Jacobsen and Knut Erik Jensen planned a documentary based on Jacobsen's book *Iskjys* and went to Russia, where they found Vladimir Kozlov, who was more than willing to talk about his relationship with Gunvor Galtung Haavik. And what was more: he had taken care of all Haavik's letters to him – these letters became the main source material, translated from Russian into Norwegian by Knut Erik Jensen in Jensen's documentary, *Min kjære venn* in 1994. During their visit Jensen had asked Kozlov to write an account of their relationship and when Jensen 10 years later again met Kozlov and reminded him of this, whereupon Kozlov produced an 800 page handwritten document (Wikander 2008). The letters and Kozlov's reminiscences was the background

material for Jacobsen's and Jensen's screenplay for *Iskyss*, where Gunvor Galtung Haaviks's passionate letters to her lover, as an off-screen comment, constitute the backbone of the film.

In terms of story line and visual appearance Jensen continues the modernist aesthetics of his previous films, with sudden jumps in chronology and perspective, albeit less conspicuous than in *Stella Polaris* and *Brent av frost*. By renouncing traditional dialogue construction and a clear causal chronology in favour of beautifully photographed episodes (again thanks to Svein Krøvel's exquisite cinematography) with off-screen monologues, Jensen's focus remains on the passionate love story between "Gunvorskaja" and Vladimir.

In the title sequence introducing the film, Alf R. Jacobsen and Knut Erik Jensen are credited for the screenplay, with the addition: "Freely based on Alf R. Jacobsen's book "Iskyss" about the KGB spy Gunvor Galtung Haavik." This marked distance from the source material is emphasized by the fact that the main protagonist has been renamed – now it is the story about Vera Våge, although the screenplay writers leave no doubt about who "Vera Våge" is. True to his disdain for traditional film dramaturgy, Jensen opens the film with a metaphor – images of an ice-covered river, a man with a compass looking at it, a cut to another ice-covered river, this time apparently the Moscow River with Vera, in a Norwegian sweater recognisable from one of the few photos that exist of the young Gunvor Haavik, while Vera's voice sounds off-screen: "Voldoshik... Do you remember my joy – simply because you existed in this world." These words are from one of Gunvor Galtung Haavik's letter to Kolzov. The film then jumps to the reunion between Vera and Vladimir (while Haavik has received another name, Vladimir Kozlov is still Kozlov) and proceeds by flashbacks and flashforwards through their affair and the way that the outside world, in the spectre of the KGB, intrudes on this.

If film critics of the Norwegian newspapers had been fairly tolerant of Jensen's aesthetical approach in *Stella Polaris* and *Brent av frost*, they took exception to *Iskyss*. Here, they clearly expected, given Jacobsen's book and his cooperation with the screenplay, a straightforward story of doomed love and its consequences and they did not hide their disappointment. Typical is the review in *Dagbladet*, one of the most influential newspapers in Norway, traditionally seen as an organ for Norway's intellectual elite. With the title "Pre-tentious poetry told in tableaux. *Iskyss* aims for High Art. But fails miserably", the critic, Vegard Larsen yearns for a good old-fashioned spy drama:

With ingredients such as treason, blackmail, cold war and uncritical and extremely passionate love, the story about the Norwegian spy Gunvor Galtung Haavik has everything needed in order to create *The Great Norwegian Epic Drama*, told with the help of classical dramaturgy. There wouldn't have been a dry eye. No film theatre would have stood empty. That was not

to be. Instead, one of the most exciting and interesting stories in post-war Norway is pushed out on the sideline, literally left out in the cold. We are here talking action that bounces back and forth, tableaux being overlapped by new tableaux, close-ups of mysterious smiles supplemented by a voice reading old love letters.... The historical aspect is almost totally removed to the background of the film. Maybe that is why Jensen has chosen to call Galtung [Haavik] Vera Våge, in order to give himself more artistic leeway? If one does not already know about the story of Galtung [Haavik] beforehand, the story, as it is acted out on the screen very difficult to follow. And even more difficult to be attracted to and moved by.⁸

Vegard Larsen ends his review by rewarding *Iskyss* by rolling a 2 (out of 6) on the review dice. Larsen's negative view on what was perceived as an unnecessary "art film" version of what should have been an exciting and entertaining spy drama was echoed by most critics. The most notable exception was veteran film critic in *Aftenposten*, Per Haddal, who found Jensen's experimental treatment of his subject material positive:

Iskyss is a meditative expedition in an aesthetical and cooled-down borderland. In a unique world of vision ...Here is a beautiful and daring attempt, with multiple echoes, to make film art from different world of expression than the usual ice-less and friction-less one.⁹

Film and history in "The Aura of Art"

The consternation Knut Erik Jensen's film caused among Norwegian film critics in 2008 has to do with the choice of his format. In his history on the Norwegian feature film, Gunnar Iversen points out that following the success of *Orions belte* in 1985, few film directors would dare to challenge the domination of mainstream action-oriented movies (handlingsfilm) with experimental and/or modernist expressions (Iversen 2011:273). He points to Knut Erik Jensen as one of the few willing to risk this, and he also gives Jensen's choice of expression as one of the reasons for the extremely long and painful production process for *Iskyss* – 8 years.

There are two main factors that may contribute to explain the negative reception in Norway for *Iskyss* and both reasons have to do with expectations. The first is the distrust of the concept of "art cinema", that in the years following 1985 had the critics shunning the implicit elitism of non-commercial cinema and looking for vindication of the amount of money spent on film production from domestic box office receipts and foreign export. While there was a movement among Norwegian film critics in mid-20th century to seek acceptance for film as an art form, mainly in order to secure larger economic support from the

Norwegian state, critics at the turn of the century were much more insistent on making the fledgling Norwegian film industry conform to the ideals of an international commercial film industry, one that could emulate the productions of the Hollywood entertainment industry. On this background, film makers insisting on modernist and experimental forms, like Knut Erik Jensen and Unni Straume, tended to become marginalised.

In his 1984 book *Film in the Aura of Art*, Dudley Andrew describes the kind of films

... that insist on being different. Purportedly outside the system, they must teach us how to deal with them. This they do in the midst of our reviewing them, or, more often, as we feel called to re-view them. The effort they demand of spectators to learn a new system, one suitable for a single film, places the film outside standard cinema where it may be either ignored or given special, even lasting, attention (Andrew 1984:6).

This points to the kind of effort, patience and involvement demanded of the spectator that is strongly at odds with the consumer-oriented entertainment expected from the film experience in the multiplexes of the early 21st Century.

In the case of *Iskyss* this traditional distrust of the “difficult” modernist filmic expression was exacerbated by another unfulfilled expectation – that of the historical fiction film. The historical-biographical movie, the *biopic* – is one of the oldest film genres existing. It is accepted as a partly fictional retelling of historic persons and events, with allowance for a certain degree of poetic licence. Most of the films in this genre are covered by what historian Robert Rosenstone terms the “mainstream historical film.” At the heart of this concept lies a claim of veracity – this is how it was – and as, Rosenstone points out, inherent in this claim lies the danger of

... “false historicity”, or the myth of facticity, a mode on which Hollywood has long depended. This is the mistaken notion that mimesis is all, that history is in fact no more than a “period look”, that things themselves are history, rather than become history because of what they mean to people of a particular time and place (Rosenstone 1995:60).

This allows the movie industry to disguise a historically anchored discourse as “historical fact” and by doing so de-ideologize it. To counter this tendency, Rosenstone advocates experimental encounters in cinematographic history, citing films like *Walker* (Alex Cox 1987), *The Battleship Potemkin* and *October* (Sergei Eisenstein 1925 and 1928) and *Antonio das Mortes* (Glauber Rocha 1969).

Knut Erik Jensen’s three fiction feature films *Stella Polaris*, *Brent av frost* and *Iskyss* may safely be added to the film titles above as the kind of experimental encounters in cinematographic history preferred by Rosenstone. They make no attempt at presenting “History as it was”, opting instead for a subjective

insight in complicated personal and historical situation, demanding an effort of the audience to interpret and re-interpret the images, words and sounds presented by the director.

Knut Erik Jensen's films dealing with Cold War themes were all produced during the first two decades following the end of the Cold War in 1989. As such, they stand out both as important reflections on how this period affected Norwegian society in history and the arts and how this was mediated in the following years. The apparent taboo on the treatment of the Cold War in Norwegian film history, finally broken by the action-thriller *Orion's Belt* in 1985, was, to the consternation of some of the critics, treated within the artistic paradigm of "art cinema" in Jensen's films. This article has sought to emphasise the need to view Knut Erik Jensen's groundbreaking cinematographical treatment of the period in context, both in relation to the perceived truths about this period and seen in the light of Jensen's unique position in Norwegian cinema, with his consistent juxtaposition of the individual and the collective in Norwegian post-war history.

On this background *Brent av frost* and *Iskyss* stand out as enigmatic footprints of the enigmatic era of the Cold War in Norway.

Notes

1. For a discussion of *Heftig og begeistret* in English see Sørenssen 2005.
2. The Swedish radical film movement of the 1960s, led by directors like Stefan Jarl, Jan Lindqvist, Lars Westman and Lena Ewert, among others, had a profound impact on a new generation of Norwegian documentary film makers in the years between 1970-1980. The Swedish distribution and production center FilmCentrum served as a model for a Norwegian Film Centre, established in Honningsvåg, Northern Norway (Svenstedt 1970), (Sørenssen 2001)
3. For an assesment of the James Bond films in this context, see Hochscherf (2003) and Dodds, K. (2005).
4. *Dagbladet* February 9 1985
5. *Aftenposten* August 30 1997
6. *Dagbladet* August 30 1997
7. See Paul Bjerke's article in this volume.
8. *Dagbladet* October 4 2008, my translation
9. *Aftenposten* October 4 2008

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- Cox, Alex (1987), *Walker*, USA
 Eisenstein, Sergei (1925) *Bronenosets Potemkin (Battleship Potemkin)*, Soviet Union
 Eisenstein, Sergei (1928) *Oktjabr (October)*, Soviet Union
 Hitchcock, Alfred (1966) *Torn Curtain*, USA
 Jensen, Knut Erik (1998) *Brent av frost (Burnt by Frost)*, Norway
 Jensen, Knut Erik (2000) *Heftig og begeistret (Cool and Crazy)*, Norway
 Jensen, Knut Erik (2008) *Iskyss (Ice Kiss)*, Norway
 Jensen, Knut Erik (1993) *Stella Polaris*, Norway

Kramer, Stanley (1959) *On the Beach*, USA
 Kubrick, Stanley (1964) *Dr. Strangelove*, USA
 Ritt, Martin (1965) *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*
 Rocha, Glauber (1969) *Antonio das Mortes*, Brazil
 Solum, Ola (1985) *Orions belte (Orion's Belt)*, Norway
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Chapter 17

The End of the World Revisited

Nuclear War Films and their Reception in Norwegian Media

Jon Raundalen

Abstract

Three feature films from the 1980s are analyzed in this article: *The Day After* (US 1983), *Threads* (UK 1984) and *Letters from a Dead Man* (USSR 1987). These three films were the most widely distributed and discussed representations of nuclear Armageddon in the US, Western Europe and the Soviet Bloc respectively. Comparisons are made between the iconographies, genres and narratives that the films employ, in order to illuminate the sort of stories which were told about the threat of global nuclear war at the time, and how the films were influenced by the different stakes and positions in the cold war standoff of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD). Although the films originated from both sides of the cold war conflict, they were all screened in NATO-allied Norway. The article concludes with an analysis of the reception of the three films as it can be traced in the reviews and debates that they sparked in Norwegian newspapers.

Keywords: The Day After, Threads, Letters from a Dead Man, nuclear fear, cold war film, genre film

*Russia is the only country in the world realistically capable of turning the United States into radioactive ash.*¹

This statement could have been a quote from a Soviet television broadcast in the 1980s, when the threat of nuclear war was an everyday concern for people in both Eastern and Western Europe. The above quote, however, came as an uncomfortable reminder of what that uncertainty used to feel like. The words were uttered in March 2014 by the leading TV personality and close ally of Vladimir Putin, Dmitry Kiselyov, on the state-controlled Rossiya 1 television channel. On the night of the referendum in which Crimea voted 'yes' to joining the Russian Federation, Kiselyov made this statement standing in front of a large screen depicting a mushroom cloud produced by a nuclear explosion.

In a time where states again use the media to fling nuclear threats at each other, and politicians and commentators are talking of the dawn of a new

Cold War, it makes sense to revisit the later stages of the previous Cold War to remind ourselves of the imagery and discourse which used to surround the nuclear threat.

According to Shapiro (Shapiro 2002: 371-375) as many as 250 films featuring the atomic bomb as a central theme were screened in the US throughout the 1980s, including foreign films. This clearly attests to the centrality of the atomic bomb in western popular culture at the time. Still, only a handful of the world's films on nuclear war stand out as landmarks three decades later. I intend to make reasonably close analyses of nuclear war films for this article, and therefore searched for one film that defined the apocalypse for the US, Western Europe and Eastern Europe respectively.

The obvious choice representing the American view was the ABC television film *The Day After* (Nicholas Meyer 1983). The film was already much debated before its spectacular television premiere to over 100 million American television viewers on the night of the 20 November 1983.² It soon became an international phenomenon through television screenings and a wide theatrical release across Western Europe and parts of Eastern Europe.

It seems that the preferred medium for films about nuclear war has been television. This might be because the subject matter was more closely linked to typical televised current affairs programs such as news, information, politics and education, rather than theatrical film and cinema which to a larger extent has been associated with entertainment. The most well-known and discussed UK film about nuclear Armageddon from the mid-1980s, *Threads* (Mick Jackson 1984), was a co-production between the BBC, Nine Network Australia and Western-World Television Inc. The film was commissioned by the BBC as an updated version of Peter Watkins harrowing *The War Game* (1965), which was never broadcast because of the fear that it could spark mass suicides.³ Similar to *The War Game*, *Threads* relies on a realistic documentary style to illustrate the severity and reality of the atomic threat to the audience. It is a film which is difficult to watch, and has been described as a film which one will literally never be able to forget.⁴

What then about Eastern Europe? Did they have a landmark apocalyptic film in the 1980s? Although the public spheres in the Warsaw Pact countries were limited, due to censorship of the media, the people could not possibly escape an awareness of nuclear weapons and their threat to humanity. My research into selected Eastern European newspapers revealed that there was, in fact, a significant nuclear holocaust film in the Eastern Bloc. The Soviet film *Letters from a Dead Man*, directed by Konstantin Lopushanskiy, was produced by the state controlled company Lenfilm in 1986. It was awarded the Grand Prix at the West German Mannheim Film Festival in 1986 and was one of the most discussed films at Cannes the following year. It is difficult to reconstruct exactly when and where in Eastern Europe the film premiered, but the fact that it was

screened over a long period of time in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and was reviewed and debated in the republic's party controlled newspapers, is a strong indication that it was shown all over Eastern Europe.⁵ We can safely assume this because the GDR consistently had a stricter cultural policy than their neighbors such as Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, and if it was granted release in the GDR it is unlikely that it would be banned in any other Eastern European country, with the possible exception of Albania. After the film's initial theatrical release in East Berlin it continued to be screened in second-run theaters there for two whole years.⁶

Having established that *The Day After*, *Threads* and *Letters from a Dead Man* are the three most significant nuclear holocaust films of the 1980s, my main aim in this article is a comparative analysis of the three films. I investigate similarities and differences between them as one of many possible paths to better understand the experience of the Cold War. I strongly believe that among the products of popular culture, and in particular within popular film, we find historical artifacts with great potential to tell us about the past.⁷ If a single potsherd from the Roman Empire can tell volumes about the life of the Romans, the blockbuster films of our recent past should not be brushed under the carpet and be forgotten, but be treated as important reservoirs of collective memory.

In the following comparative analyses of the three films I begin by focusing on the style and genre of the films, before I discuss narrative and content. As I cannot possibly cover every aspect of the films, I have chosen to structure the analysis according to the following questions: How is the eruption of World War III envisioned and who is blamed for the catastrophe? In what way is the nuclear blast represented? How do the three films differ in imagining human community and the future, if any, in the aftermath of the blast?

Based on the analysis of the differing versions of a future nuclear disaster from across the systemic divide, I make a case study of the reception of these three films in Norwegian newspapers. Although the films were produced by both "friends" and "enemies" of Norway in the cold war discourse, they were all screened in Norway, either in cinemas or on television.

Genre and Aesthetics

Unsurprisingly *The Day After* and *Letters to a Dead Man*, which were released little more than two years apart at the two extreme flanks of the systemic divide, differ strongly in the aesthetic means chosen to tell the story. One could say that they were produced within two different aesthetic paradigms.

The Day After is a classic Hollywood genre film, a lushly colored melodrama veering on the brink of sentimentality, combined with high octane spectacle. *Letters from a Dead Man*, on the other hand, is just as "classic" in its faithful-

ness to European art cinema tradition, with somber tableaux which are almost monochrome in their heavy amber and sepia tones. The UK film *Threads* is also highly representative of a national filmmaking style. *Threads* starts out as a textbook example of British “kitchen sink realism” with its grainy grayish scenarios, lit in a starkly realistic, almost documentary style.

The Day After

The first images we see in the film, before the credit sequence, are of the morning drill and preparations for take-off by a US Air Force plane from SAC Airborne Command Post in Omaha, Nebraska. This briefly introduces the theme of war before the military plane takes off and aerial shots show romantic images of Americana, from amber waves of grain and cattle grazing, to farm rooftops via idyllic suburbs to the skyscrapers of the big city. The montage goes on to present several scenes of the city coming to life in the early hours of the morning and children learning and playing in church, schools and parks. The whole montage sequence is shrouded in emotionally charged music, which complements the representations of patriotism already present in the images. With closed eyes one could easily mistake the film for a western. The sweeping orchestral parts alternate with sequences in which a lone bugle plays a tune which alternates between joyful and sorrowful, leading our connotations at first to a “cavalry to the rescue” situation in a western, but soon changing into something more reminiscent of “Taps”, the bugle call played at the end of military funerals in the US.

This three minute montage sets the stage for how the prospect of nuclear war will be presented in *The Day After*: as classic Hollywood melodrama. That is not to say, however, that this narrative form cannot convey the seriousness or gravity of the matter. The film proved to be, as I have indicated above, an important catalyst for the global discussion about nuclear disarmament in the 1980s.

Considering genre, the film is not a traditional combat film, even though the central theme is war. To the extent that this film belongs to a genre it would be fair to say that it relies on the genre conventions of the Hollywood disaster movie. The film could also be said to belong to what Douglas Gomery calls the “social problem telefilm” (Waller 1987:4-9), as many of the different characters’ storylines are concerned with domestic issues such as parenting, teenage pregnancy, marriage, family, and so on. Although hailed in retrospect as a major media event of the 1980s, the film received mixed reviews in many European countries. Several critics complained – as they had about the American TV series *Holocaust* (Marvin J. Chomsky 1978) a few years earlier – that such serious matters should not be dealt with lightly, dependent on the narrative conventions of Hollywood. In a comprehensive article in “Screen”, Susan Boyd-Bowman (1984) meticulously reviews the critical reception that *The Day After* received

in the UK, where the film was scorned by many leading critics as sentimental, melodramatic and reminiscent of television soap operas such as *Dallas* and *Coronation Street*. The caustic reception by the leading UK critics was rather surprising, because Britain had a strong anti-nuclear movement which could benefit greatly from a popular Hollywood film with the potential to push the threat of nuclear war upwards on the political agenda. The audience, however, turned to the film in large numbers regardless of the underwhelmed critics. According to Boyd-Bowman (1984:72) as many as 17 million tuned in to the film on its first broadcast in the UK, although not all were still watching at the end of the film. Another important legacy of the film is the claim that it directly influenced nuclear policy at the highest political level. In his 1990 autobiography "An American Life", Ronald Reagan who was president of the United States when *The Day After* premiered, shared a quote from his own diary on the day that he first saw the film: "It's very effective and left me greatly depressed /.../ My own reaction: we have to do all we can to have a deterrent and to see there is never a nuclear war" (Reagan 1990:585). Significantly, his prescription for avoiding nuclear war is still deterrence and not disarmament, which makes it clear that he does not stray from his established policies although he admits to being emotionally gripped by the content of the film.⁸

Threads

The Day After was followed in 1984 by a BBC TV film called *Threads* (Mick Jackson 1984). The film places the idea of community as integral from the very first minute of the film, explaining with an allegory to a spider's web how human society is held together by an infrastructure of important, but fragile threads. As in *The Day After* the British film has sub plots centering on the domestic sphere. An obvious difference from the start, however, is the color palette. Immediately after the introduction of the spider's web, we are introduced to the teenage couple Ruth and Jimmy sitting in a car on a hilltop overlooking the industrial town of Sheffield. It is early spring with a cold light shining through the smog produced by the industry below. The grass and shrubs are brown and gray, and the car and the surroundings are photographed in sober and subdued colors. The music at the start of *Threads* is consistently diegetic, emanating from radios or televisions within the environment where the action takes place, far removed from the turgid orchestral score and sentimental bugle horn in *The Day After*. This narrative style from the start of *Threads* has much more of a documentary-like effect, which makes the credit sequence from *The Day After* seem like a Coca Cola advertisement by comparison. The cold lighting and stark realism is heightened by the insertion of many inter-titles and facts and statistics written across the screen accompanied by the sound of a telex machine, as if it were a documentary.

The film was regarded by many as a remake of and a vindication of sorts for Peter Watkins' 1965 film *The War Game*, which was banned for being "too horrifying for the medium of television" (Boyd-Bowman 1984:76).⁹ Thus, the filmmakers behind *Threads* went to great lengths to create scenes which would affect and stick in the viewers' minds. What makes *Threads* much harder to watch than *The Day After* is the documentary style and the fact that we are consistently brought much closer to the graphic and distressing consequences of the explosions and radiation. In both films we see that the main characters lose some of their hair and have dust and soot all over, but whereas in *The Day After* they still look relatively composed, in *Threads* we are fully exposed to their deterioration with relentless realism. They vomit and urinate themselves, and scream out in excruciating pain when their skin starts peeling. When the pregnant girl from the beginning of the film is having her baby, the "threads" of society are already severed and left to her own devices, she has to gnaw off the umbilical cord with her bare teeth. Towards the end of *The Day After* two of the principal characters, a young couple both affected badly by radiation sickness, meet in an improvised hospital. Although they know they are fatally wounded, they make an effort to be cheerful and pretend that everything will be fine. In *Threads* no one has the energy to pretend. The world they knew is gone and Darwinian laws have taken over, as I will return to in the section on how the community and aftermath is described in the three different films.

Letters from a Dead Man

The Soviet film *Letters from a Dead Man* opens with a solitary light bulb hanging by a cable from the ceiling. The camera slowly pans down to a woman on her deathbed with her husband watching over her. The room is in half darkness and the characters are lit in chiaroscuro style, in long takes and somber tableaux. The colors range from sickly yellow to brown and black and symbolize isolation and despair, however, the tableaux are strangely beautiful compositions reminiscent of Rembrandt's paintings. The characters are sculpted in high contrast between light and darkness, placed in an elaborate and highly symbolic *mise-en-scène*. The husband, a professor of physics, slowly rises from his chair and walks over to a desk overflowing with papers. He sits down and continues writing a seemingly endless letter to his son Eric. As the title of the film indicates, the father does not expect to live very long. In an effort to keep his sanity he writes down his existential and philosophical meditations about the nuclear holocaust, while he waits for radiation sickness and hunger to take his and his wife's lives. We understand that nuclear disaster struck a while ago, and we are introduced to a small group of people who are trapped in the cellar of what used to be a museum of art, somewhere in the Soviet Union. They have carved out a minimal existence in a few cellar

rooms, between artifacts such as statues, paintings and historic books – the legacy of humanity, now in ruins.

With its almost monochrome, sepia-colored tableaux and heavy philosophical monologues, the film echoes famous works from contemporary European art cinema such as Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker* (1979) and Lars von Trier's *The Element of Crime* (1984). In stark contrast to *The Day After* and *Threads* the Soviet film treats the nuclear disaster almost solely on an existential and philosophical level. The elaboration of everyday life and normality, which takes up half of the running-time in both *The Day After* and *Threads* in order to create maximum contrast to the nuclear blast, is nowhere to be seen in *Letters from a Dead Man*.

To the extent that the film belongs to any genre, it might be labeled as a post-apocalyptic science fiction film, with deep roots in European art cinema in general and Eastern European film in particular. The setting is dark, claustrophobic and Kafkaesque, and the time and setting of the story is never made clear. From the look of the remains of a hospital and the occasional mention of computers, we can deduce that it is somewhere close to the present time. The world outside the museum cellar – into which the professor has to venture for black market food and painkillers for his wife – is a noisy and chaotic place. Fog, dust and darkness creates a very confusing geography, where masked troops violently enforce the curfew, adding an interesting Orwellian aspect which I discuss later in the section dealing with the different representations of the aftermath and senses of community in the three films.

The Blame

In most war and combat films the action takes place in the context of an historical conflict, where it is given who started the war and who were the victors. However, when filmmakers from across the systemic divide made films about WWII in the 1980s, they had to explain the outbreak of the nuclear holocaust and place the blame for putting an end to humanity.

In *The Day After* the conflict that leads to the nuclear exchange starts with a Soviet attempt to take control of West Berlin, prompting NATO to invade East Germany in an attempt to free Berlin. The question of who struck first is avoided in a clever way in the film's narrative by a newscast stating that "unconfirmed reports" say nuclear weapons were used by the Soviets in West Germany, thus when NATO "retaliates" with nuclear weapons, it seems justifiable although the audience cannot know for sure if the Soviets struck first. The filmmakers seem to have consciously avoided the controversial distribution of guilt, probably because it would hamper worldwide distribution of the film if it intimidated a large part of its potential audience with too much American flag waving and finger pointing. In January 1984 *The Day*

After was broadcast in communist Poland and was reportedly seen by two thirds of the population (Boyd-Bowman 1984:84), and in 1987 during the era of Mikhail Gorbachev's "glasnost" and "perestroika" reforms, the film was shown on Soviet television.¹⁰

The prelude to war in the film *Threads* is an American incursion in Iran which the Soviets try to stop. Similar to the story in *The Day After*, the conflict is heightened by a blockade of West Berlin and rioting in East Germany. The fighting between the superpowers spreads to the Persian Gulf and escalates in Iran. There is a gradual build up to the main nuclear blast of the film, destroying the city of Sheffield. NATO deploys a tactical nuclear weapon to wipe out a Soviet base in Iran, and two days later the Soviets detonate a strategic nuclear bomb over the North Sea and minutes later strike several NATO targets, including an air base near Sheffield.

In *Threads* there is no prevarication around the blame. This frankness probably has to do with the fact that from the perspective of the filmmakers, if not the Thatcher government, the UK was being used by the Americans and NATO as an important launch base for nuclear weapons and therefor became a prime target for Soviet bombs in a war game over which they themselves had no control. Therefore pointing out which nuclear superpower struck first was secondary to driving home the point that "everybody loses in a nuclear war", and to eradicate the belief that a nuclear war was "winnable".¹¹

What then of *Letters from a Dead Man* which was produced under Soviet censorship, where does it place the blame? The easy censor-pleasing solution for a Soviet filmmaker would be to place the blame squarely on war-mongering America. However, the director Konstantin Lopushanskiy did not choose this easy route. Lopuschanskiy had worked with the great Soviet art film director Andrei Tarkovsky's on his masterpiece *Stalker*, and the inspiration from his school of filmmaking clearly shows in *Letters from a Dead Man*. In Tarkovsky's style of filmmaking – as was a trademark for Eastern European art film in general – social and political commentary was often shrouded in metaphor and symbolism in order to outwit and bypass the censors. Thus, where Lopuschanskiy could easily have pointed the finger at reckless Americans, he chose to neutralize the question of blame by attributing the missile launch to a computer error. This is not to evade the controversial subject however, because by choosing this explanation for the blast Lopuschanskiy creates an opportunity to criticize the madness of nuclear weapons and the arms race in general, and thus also managing to indirectly criticize his own government. Significantly, the story about the computer error is not revealed until halfway through the film, at a point where the audience has had plenty of time to reflect critically upon the madness of the arms race, most likely assuming that the film's narrative is taking place in the aftermath of nuclear war between the superpowers.

The Blast

The representation of the blast in the three films is quite similar, relying on iconic images of mushroom clouds and a shockwave of monumental proportions. The now familiar images of apartment buildings torn apart like cardboard boxes and scorching firestorms incinerating everything in their path are present in all three films. *The Day After* refrains compared to the other two films which are more graphic in their depiction of the victims' burning skin and so on. In *The Day After* the moment of impact is represented by something which resembles x-ray images, where the light of the atomic blast is so strong that we momentarily can see the victims' skeletons through their flesh. Hence we understand that they are instantly incinerated, but at the same time the filmmakers avoid the most graphic detail of burning skin and gushing blood, which would probably have made the film impossible to transmit on US prime-time television.

No Future? Representation of Aftermath and Community in the three Films

Before I deal with the Norwegian reception of the three films, I consider the question of what kind of post-apocalyptic future the three different films envision. The nature of the conclusions of the films is crucial for the ultimate message that they convey about the nuclear threat and which policies they can be said to subscribe to.

The image of the aftermath of nuclear war in *The Day After* is represented with much of the color palette of classical Hollywood filmmaking intact, giving the film what *Threads* director Mick Jackson caustically referred to as a "Dallas-like" gloss" (Boyd-Bowman 1984:77). The urban scenery is dominated by the expected images of dust and rubble, but the sun is still shining from a blue sky. Around the rural farms that play a central role in the film, we see some dead animals and radioactive dust, but there are also patches of green grass and the lighting is consistently bright and sunny. There are, of course, many scenes depicting looting, illness and death after the blast, but in most of these scenes the underlying message is one of community and hope. Farmers from the area around the blast site meet to discuss how to grow crops now that the top soil has been damaged by radiation, and a priest gathers residents for a sermon in the remnants of a ruined church. The image of the church plays effectively on the well-known convention in western movies, where the laborious transition from wilderness to civilization at the western frontier is symbolized by the image of half-finished church buildings.

It would be an overstatement to say that *The Day After* has an entirely happy ending. There is, however, a strong belief in humanity and the perseverance of

man and the “threads” of society, as it were, underpinning the film’s depiction of the aftermath of nuclear war. Towards the end of the film we hear the US president addressing the nation on radio. We learn that a cease-fire has been negotiated with the Russians and that the nation will rise like a phoenix from the ashes:

I wish to assure you that America has survived this terrible tribulation. There has been no surrender, no retreat from the principles of liberty and democracy for which the free world looks to us for leadership. /.../ the government functioning under certain extraordinary emergency options, we are prepared to make every effort to coordinate relief and recovery programs at state and local levels.

This optimistic consolation and belief in the future, the bright and sunny *mise-en-scène* and numerous references to the national myth of the western frontier, together amount to a relatively happy ending. When the magazine “Newsweek” reported that *The Day After* had “the unhappiest ending in the annals of broadcasting history” (Waller 1987:8) it is obvious that this was written before *Threads* was broadcast. Although *The Day After* can make for serious thought and be a depressing experience to watch, its style and message is far removed from the endless nuclear winter at the end of *Threads* and the dark suicidal mood in the dungeon-like museum cellar in *Letters from a Dead Man*.

As the title of *Threads* indicates the main theme of the film is that war, and in particular nuclear war, will tear away the fragile “threads” which hold together the fabric of human civilization. The depiction of the aftermath of the blast is a horrifying dark age, where Darwinian survival rapidly replaces human civilization. The film shows predictions of what the human condition will be like after society’s threads have been severed, at first scenarios of weeks and months after the blast, and then 3, 8 and 13 years into the future. Ruth, the pregnant girl from the frame story, gives birth to a daughter in an abandoned barn. By the time Ruth’s daughter is thirteen she is on her own. The parental generation is, to a large extent, dead and the hardened youngsters fight each other for food. They speak in a broken language which signifies the complete deterioration of civilization and the regression of man to a former stage of human evolution. Ruth’s daughter is robbed of a rabbit that she has managed to catch, and is raped by the pack of boys who stole her food. In the very last scene of the film, Ruth’s daughter appears at a facility which looks like it used to be a hospital. She is about to give birth. A woman at the facility gives a hand in the delivery of the baby, wraps it in a bloody blanket and hands the bundle back to the mother. The mother looks down into the blanket and her face is transformed into a horrified scream at the sight of the monstrosity that she has given birth to. The frame freezes before we hear the scream. We are left with the image of horror and despair on the mother’s face. The screen goes black

and credits roll in silence. The filmmakers could not have made it any clearer that there is no future for the human race after a nuclear war.

Through the whole film *Threads* is shot in gray tones, and the descent of mankind into darkness is effectively represented by low-key lighting that often renders the characters as mere shadows and silhouettes against the background. There is absolutely nothing in *Threads* which reminds us of the soap opera gloss that Mick Jackson saw in *The Day After*. There are no signs of hope anywhere in the narrative about the aftermath of the blast. The future is drawn as bleak as possible, with no compromise. If a television film should deserve the label “the unhappiest ending in the annals of broadcasting history” (as the aforementioned Newsweek critic wrote about *The Day After*) *Threads* would be a well suited candidate.

The narrative in *Letters from a Dead Man* is almost entirely devoted to the aftermath of the nuclear blast. It is more similar to *Threads* in that it is very dark and bleak in color and theme, still it is not as distressing in its realism. Lopuschanskiy chose a more stylized approach. The yellow-brownish images are almost monochrome and the main source of light is a single light bulb, which constantly pulsates because it is powered by a pedal generator that the characters have to tread on to keep the light going.

The theme of nuclear disaster and the post-apocalyptic condition is dealt with in a deeply serious way, but differently from both the slightly sentimental Hollywood spectacular of *The Day After* and the hard hitting realism of *Threads*. In *Letters from a Dead Man* the nuclear apocalypse is consistently approached on a philosophical level. There are some scenes of people dying of radiation sickness and a short montage of harrowing images from the blast, but dominating the narrative in *Letters from a Dead Man* is the existential question of how mankind – with all its intelligence, science, art, history and philosophy – could end up destroying itself. The film’s many dialogues and monologues revolve around this issue. The theme is clarified in a speech held by the former director of the wrecked museum which provides shelter for the small group of people who make up the cast of the film:

All evidence suggests that the history of mankind has ended. It’s time to sum up the outcome. And I think it should be done calmly, without vulgar affectation. Today I want to talk to you like a dead man to other dead men. /.../

In this room, a lot of hateful words have been said about mankind, contemptuous and scornful, but I won’t throw a stone at it today. This is what I say: I loved mankind. I love it even more now that it no longer exists.

He leaves the room, lies down in a shallow grave that he has dug out, and shoots himself.

The film paints a bleak picture of the post-apocalyptic, and the short scenes from the blast are very disturbing, but still the film is more comfortable to watch

than *Threads*. The lament for all that is lost brings about discussions about the countless good things about the world and humanity which used to be, and thus lets the audience contemplate the values that we have to take care of and not risk wasting it in a nuclear Armageddon.

The world outside the museum is a Kafkaesque and Orwellian labyrinth with orders being relayed over loudspeakers, commanding people to obey the curfew. Those who do not are beaten or shot at by faceless troops, who disappear as quickly as they appeared. This is a portrayal of an authoritarian regime, which at any other point in Soviet cinema history would have been halted by the censors. The fact that these scenes were kept in the film is clear testament to the effects of Gorbachev's "glasnost" and "perestroika" reforms, which made it possible for filmmakers and other artists to express themselves more freely.

In *Letters from a Dead Man* it is stated that the surface of the Earth is so uninhabitable that they have to prepare themselves to live underground for 30 to 50 years, and the museum director begins his speech with the statement that "the history of mankind has ended". Still, there is some glimmer of hope in the film's narrative. Towards the end of the film the main character, the professor writing the letters referred to in the title, adopts a band of eight orphaned children. He acts lovingly and fatherly towards them and on Christmas Eve he involves them in making a makeshift Christmas tree from old twigs and wire. Candles are lit and he tells them a story. He pulls out an old clock which has a small rotating globe on top of it. They huddle together and watch in silence as the clock strikes twelve and the globe turns around and around. Shortly after this touching and heavily symbolic scene the professor dies. A voice-over of a child's voice starts telling the story of the professor and the children in the third person, in a language which resembles that of the New Testament. The tale cites the professor as saying "go while you have the strength, for while a man is on his way there is still hope for him". We get the impression that this is a future gospel for the post-nuclear world, recited from some time in the future, with the blast as year zero, the professor as its prophet, and the eight children his disciples who will go out into the world and be the light and hope for a new beginning. In the film's final image, the children have started their trek into the unknown world outside the museum. The color palette has shifted from sickly yellow to bright white and bluish gray, but the horizon is still foggy and opaque. They all cling onto a single rope – the "thread" of humanity – as they climb a hill into the unknown. This religious metaphor is also testament to the new policies of the Gorbachev era. In earlier times filmmakers would never have gotten away with such obvious and positive references to the bible and religion.

Epilogues

Both *The Day After* and *Letters from a Dead Man* have epilogues expressing the hope that we will never experience a nuclear war. *The Day After* ends with the following statement between the last shot and the end credits: "It is hoped that the images of this film will inspire the nations of this earth, their people and leaders, to find the means to avert the fateful day". In *Letters from a Dead Man*, also between the last shot and the end credits, there is a quote from the Russell-Einstein Manifesto: "There lies before us, if we choose, continual progress in happiness, knowledge, and wisdom. Shall we, instead, choose death, because we cannot forget our quarrels? We appeal as human beings to human beings: Remember your humanity, and forget the rest!" In *The Day After*, the western style music, a sweeping orchestral score, plays over the end credits in traditional Hollywood fashion. *Letters from a Dead Man* also uses music at the end to signal hope for the future, but in a more subtle manner, with a music score which is melancholy and sad. It nevertheless works as somewhat uplifting, as it is the first music we hear in the film, whose soundtrack has previously been dominated by booming noises of indeterminable origin from outside and a depressed silence and muted voices inside. *Threads*, however, is also in this capacity by far the most uncompromising nuclear war film of the three. It ends with the birth of a deformed child and the credits roll by in silence. There is no comfort and no compromise.

Reception in Norway

At the end of Susan Boyd-Bowman's 1984 article "'The Day After': Representations of the Nuclear Holocaust" – where she analyses the film and its UK reception – she calls for further reception studies from the many countries around the world where *The Day After* was distributed (Boyd-Bowman 1984:97). For the final section of this article I attempt to supply a partial answer to her call, by analyzing the reception in three Norwegian newspapers of the nuclear war films discussed above.

Susan Boyd-Bowman's study of the UK reception of *The Day After* paints a picture of unimpressed critics across the board, attacking the film for being too much of a soap opera and for negating the effects of nuclear war to make the film passable for commercial television. Boyd-Bowman expresses some surprise at the almost consistent rejection of the film, as the UK had a very strong anti-nuclear movement and that the film dealt with pressing global concerns.

All the largest national newspapers in Norway covered the American television premiere of *The Day After* on 20 November 1983, and on 14 December

of the same year Norway's leading tabloid *Verdens Gang* (VG) ran a follow-up article on its surprisingly lukewarm reception in the UK.¹²

I have focused on the reception in Norway's three largest national newspapers – VG, *Dagbladet* and *Aftenposten* – and their reviews are quite similar, though not entirely alike. The reviewer in VG, Sølvi Wærhaug, is the most positive. She gives the film a maximum rating, praising the film for its matter-of-factly rendition of the ultimate of horrors and for not becoming a “sentimental or soppy film”.¹³

The reviewers in both *Aftenposten* and *Dagbladet* were more critical to the format of the film, leaning toward the UK reception of it as being too dependent on genre conventions and hampered by the demands of prime time commercial television. Interestingly however, they both conclude that the relevance and importance of the subject far outweighed any artistic shortcomings. *Dagbladet*'s Thor Ellingsen writes that “the only sensible way of measuring the value of a film like *The Day After* is by its potential opinion-forming ability”, and by its possible merits in “really contributing to raising our consciousness”.¹⁴

The tone in other reports and articles about the film are also focused on how serious and highly relevant the topic is, rather than the fact that it is a Hollywood production. Reading the newspapers of late 1983 and early 1984 one is immediately struck by how the threat of nuclear war was perceived as very real and impending. During these months the papers were brimming with news and feature articles, opinion pieces and interviews, all about the nuclear threat. The interest in the subject was enhanced by the breakdown in the Geneva negotiations on nuclear disarmament, which coincided almost to the day with the television premiere of *The Day After* in the US. Also, the publication of the shocking report by scientist Carl Sagan and colleagues, maintaining for the first time that a nuclear war would be followed by a global “nuclear winter”, coincided with the theatrical release of the film in Norway. Norway also received a visit from US Secretary of State, George P. Schultz, holding a press conference in Oslo on security questions only two days before the Norwegian premiere. All these events underlined the relevance of the film's subject.

Aftenposten ran a series of articles on the film's impact on the debate on nuclear weapons in the US, on how the film was received in the UK and an article on the film's premiere on Polish television, which happened just two days before the general release of the film in Norway.

As it turned out, however, another Cold War story would break in the newspapers and eclipsed the initial shock of *The Day After*. On the day before the first preview screening of the film in Oslo, the high ranking Labor Party politician and diplomat Arne Treholt was arrested and charged with espionage for the Soviet Union and Iraq, in what was to become the most spectacular espionage case in Norwegian history.

Threads and *Letters from a Dead Man* understandably did not attract quite as much attention as *The Day After*. Norwegian state broadcaster, NRK, was

offered *Threads* by the BBC to show on television in 1984, but it was declined because of the very strong images. In 1985 however, for the 40th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, NRK decided that the time was right. Again, VG used the title “matter-of-factly horror”, as they had in the case of *The Day After*.¹⁵ The reviewer writes: “We can draw two conclusions from the British doomsday vision which was broadcast last night. One is that this could happen. The other is that this must never happen.”¹⁶ The reviewer goes on to praise *Threads* for its sobriety and lack of sentimentality although it narrates the ultimate of horrors, but argues that the filmmakers may have overdone the horror by leaving out every trace of humanity, empathy and compassion in the depiction of the aftermath.¹⁷ The other newspaper reviews follow the same pattern, comparing it to *The Day After* but concluding that this was even more shocking, appalling and relentless in its realism than its American predecessor. When the film was broadcast it was introduced before and reviewed immediately after the screening, by a discussion with a Norwegian professor of medicine specializing in the medical effects of nuclear war.

Letters from a Dead Man only got limited art-house release in Norway, distributed by the Norwegian Association of Film Societies. Still, several articles were written about the film, especially in Aftenposten. The paper’s long standing chief film critic, Per Haddal, was a strong advocate for the Norwegian release of this film. Since none of the commercial distribution companies wanted to import the film, it took quite a while before it reached Norwegian theaters. In the meantime Haddal wrote several articles about the film as well as an interview with the film’s director. Frode Holst in VG also wrote an article about the film when it was screened for 2300 delegates at a peace conference in Copenhagen in October 1986. Holst praised the film, for its “appalling and convincing” message that peace is the only solution if humanity is going to survive.¹⁸

Per Haddal in Aftenposten praised the film for finally breaking a pattern where, in his opinion, films about nuclear war had become “bombardments of banalities”. The film nakedly exposes the point zero of human existence, Haddal writes, where we witness both inner and outer decay taking its shadowy toll on the characters, but still “the director refuses to be a fatalist”.¹⁹ Haddal indirectly links this to the film being a transitional work of art, being the first critical post-“glasnost” film. Not a film which was previously banned and now released, like so many Soviet films released around that time, but a true product and proof of the reality in the “glasnost” reforms.

Conclusion

In the process of researching this article, three different positions on nuclear disarmament have emerged as dominant in the newspaper discourse around

the films on nuclear war. The first approach, which all the films seem to challenge in differing ways, was the official policy of President Reagan and his administration. Namely that nuclear war is a necessary illusion. It will never happen again, because we can safely avoid it through deterrence between the superpowers. This position was called Mutually Assured Destruction and had the unfortunate, or maybe very fitting, acronym MAD. The second position is the belief that nuclear war only causes limited or partial destruction, in other words that a nuclear war can be survivable and at best a winnable situation. The third position is that nuclear war equals total destruction and the end of humanity. A nuclear war will probably not end before it is too late to leave an inhabitable planet for humanity.

How do the three films fit in with these differing positions? *The Day After* appeared to some of the Norwegian and most of the British critics as a soap-opera and evading the real horrors of a nuclear holocaust. In the context of US politics, however, it illustrated what was actually a highly controversial view. The film's narrative clearly implied that a nuclear war could happen, which was diametrically opposed to the view of the Reagan administration. Nevertheless, the film prevaricate the issues compared to the relentless, unforgiving realism of *Threads*, since several of the main characters survive and the government is ready to rebuild and regenerate the nation. Thus, *The Day After* belongs in the middle position where a nuclear war is seen as survivable and winnable, and therefore not as frightening that we have to call for all nuclear arms to be abolished.

Threads, on the other hand, was expressly made to communicate the view that a nuclear war could not be won. According to an interview with its director Mick Jackson, he and the scriptwriter were united in their determination to produce a film "so frightening and so completely bereft of hope, that no-one watching would ever again contemplate the notion of a winnable nuclear war."²⁰ Thus, it is infinitely clear that *Threads* stands as a proponent of the third view; that nuclear weapons should never have been invented and must be completely abolished.

Letters from a Dead Man leans mostly toward the third position, since its premise is that humanity has come to an end as a consequence of nuclear war. Although we can sympathize with the museum director's speech and suicide, by the end of the film it is clearly the professor's humanity and inspirational speech to the children, about action before apathy, which comes out as the final and dominant message of the film. This message points to some sort of future, even though it seems unlikely that there could ever be one.

I conclude by returning, once again, to the seminal article by Susan Boyd-Bowman about nuclear war in film. In the article she makes an argument for a value of *The Day After* which is greater than the conclusions of the British critics. The film managed to push a very depressing subject further up the

political agenda and it reached out to an impressive amount of people around the world with a very important message – whether its images and narrative resembled “Dallas” or not. If we are to believe Ronald Reagan’s autobiography it influenced his stance on nuclear disarmament, and thus made the world a somewhat safer place in which to live, which no one would attribute to “Dallas”. However, Boyd-Bowman agrees with the critics that once the initial reaction was over, the film left too little “to chew on” (Boyd-Bowman 1984:83). I understand this “chewing” to mean the film’s ability to leave any lasting reflections in the viewer; reflections which go beyond the initial shock. If we use this proverbial “chewing” as the standard with which to measure the three nuclear war films discussed here, it is undoubtedly *Letters from a Dead Man* which leaves both the heaviest, most lasting and rewarding philosophical fiber “to chew on” after the viewing. On the other hand, the most harrowing images from *Threads* are, as I mentioned earlier, images that will probably never be forgotten once you have been exposed to them. We often say that “I’ll never forget that movie”, but after having seen *Threads* that phrase takes on a new and more concrete meaning, which may in turn also be a sort of “chewing” – or maybe rather churning – that keeps us from forgetting that the nuclear threat is still evident and needs to be addressed in the foreseeable future. If we extend the chewing metaphor to the merits of *The Day After* it might not have given us more than the fast fading taste of a chewing gum, but there is no doubt that it had the advantage over the other two films in that it made millions of people stop to think, even if it was for a short while.

Perhaps we should follow the conclusion of the Norwegian critics. They agreed on one point, which was that in this special instance – on the question of annihilation of humankind – the theme of nuclear war was ultimately more important than the aesthetic quality of the film. Still, it is my hope that when crucial films start to be made about our present global crisis of climate change and global warming, they will be able to combine the impact in audience numbers of *The Day After*, with the blunt force of *Threads* and the lasting philosophical legacy of *Letters from a Dead Man*.

Notes

1. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/state-television-presenter-warns-russia-could-turn-the-us-into-radioactive-dust-9197433.html> (Accessed 26 June 2014).
2. “Re-Placing The Day After” (1987) Waller, Gregory A. in *Cinema Journal* 26, No. 3, Spring 1987, p. 3-20; and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Day_After (Accessed 26 June 2014).
3. Cf. interview with director Mick Jackson *The Scotsman* <http://www.scotsman.com/news/end-of-the-world-revisited-bbc-s-threads-is-25-years-old-1-773083> and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Threads> (Accessed 26 June 2014).
4. See, for example, film blogger Phil Gee: “Threads’ (1984) vs ‘The Day After’ (1983) – an in-depth analysis” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFwbDd4IEa8>.

5. Cf. "Vision eines Infernos", Neue Zeit 22 October 1987, "Warnung vor einem nuklearen Inferno", Neues Deutschland 30 October 1987, "Das Menetekel", Berliner Zeitung, 4 November 1987. <http://zefys.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/ddr-presse/> (Accessed 26 June 2014).
6. According to cinema programs in Berlin newspapers the film ran until 2 November 1989. Cf. "Neues auf der Leinwand Vom 27. bis 2. November 1989", Neue Zeit 27 October 1987. <http://zefys.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/ddr-presse/> (Accessed 26 June 2014).
7. See for example Raundalen, Jon (2005) 'A Communist Takeover in the Dream Factory – Appropriation of Popular Genres by the East German Film Industry', *Slavonica*, Vol. 11, No. 1, April 2005.
8. Much could, of course, be said about the unreliability of autobiographies in general, and Reagan's motives for "sharing" this quote from his personal diary in particular. The Reagan administration had been nervous for a long time about this film and had even tried to get Reagan to appear on television immediately before the film in an effort to reduce its impact (Boyd-Bowman 1984:82). In other words, the "quote" about his gut reaction against nuclear war when seeing the film might be just spin or it might be homage to the power of Hollywood movies, of which he as a former actor was keenly aware.
9. Later investigations have shown, however, that the British government's fear that the message of *The War Game* would strengthen the nuclear disarmament movement was the actual cause for the ban, rather than their concern for sensitive viewers (Boyd-Bowman 1984:76).
10. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Day_After (Accessed 26 June 2014).
11. Cf. Interview with *Threads* director Mick Jackson in 'End of the world revisited: BBC's Threads is 25 years old', The Scotsman 5 September 2009. Available at <http://www.scotsman.com/news/end-of-the-world-revisited-bbc-s-threads-is-25-years-old-1-773083> (Accessed 20 June 2014).
12. Knut Åge Hansen, "Ikke sterk nok", VG, 14 December 1983.
13. Sølvi Wærhaug, "Nøkternt uhyggelig", VG, 28 Januar 1984.
14. Thor Ellingsen, "Dagen etter", *Dagbladet*, January 1984 (exact date unreadable on copy); Per Haddal, "Dagen efter Bomben", *Aftenposten*, 28 January 1984.
15. Liv Herstad Røed, "Nøktern uhygge", VG, 7 August 1985.
16. Liv Herstad Røed, "Nøktern uhygge", VG, 7 August 1985. All quotes translated by the author.
17. Ibid.
18. Frode Holst, "Russisk Ddommedag", VG, 16 October 1986.
19. Per Haddal, "Illevarslende brev fra en død mann", *Aftenposten*, 8 May 1987.
20. Cf. Interview with *Threads* director Mick Jackson <http://www.scotsman.com/news/end-of-the-world-revisited-bbc-s-threads-is-25-years-old-1-773083> (Accessed 20 June 2014).

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THE NORDIC MEDIA AND THE COLD WAR

The Cold War between the East and West during the period 1945-1991 was a rivalry where the world's doom constantly emerged as a possible result. It was global and included northern European countries like Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway in different ways. Historians are still discussing how Cold War history should be understood in these countries, but they have rarely been concerned about mass media and communications. Meanwhile, many media scholars have neglected the theme entirely. In this book, these two areas of knowledge are combined in new research on the Nordic mass media, and their significance during the Cold War.

A number of controversial topics are covered. Nineteen Nordic scholars sheds new light on Nordic print media in all four countries, but also write about radio and the television broadcasting. Extending the traditional Cold War research on media and communication to include sport, magazines for men, political cartoons, and films, the book lays the foundation for Cold War studies to become an integrated interdisciplinary field of knowledge, and a more central part of the Nordic media research than before – with countless opportunities for exciting new research, with high relevance to world conflicts in our own time.

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