

The development of regular army officers – an essay

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“One must understand the mechanism and the power of the individual soldier, then that of a company, a battalion, a brigade and so on, before one can venture to group divisions and move an army. I believe I owe most of my success to the attention I always paid to the inferior part of tactics as a regimental officer. There are few men in the Army who knew these details better than I did; it is the foundation of all military knowledge.” The Duke of Wellington.

Two army models

It will often help and clarify an analysis to establish the theoretical, pure models that can be used as references. In this essay I shall use the two basic types of armies that influence the land forces of the real world: the standing force army and the training-mobilisation army.

The *standing force army* is likely to be attractive to states without any massive, direct, overland threat to their territory. In the pure version of that army, the soldiers will have long service contracts. Because of its potential high readiness, including mature unit cohesion, this army model is useful for external intervention operations and in support of the police for internal security operations. The

model is expensive in manpower cost (in a Western industrialised state), relative cheap in training cost due to the long service contracts, and relatively cheap in equipment as a result of the limited size.

The *training-mobilisation army* is relevant in continental states faced with a potential (rather than an immediate) massive scale overland threat that makes it necessary to have a large section of the state population available for direct defence. The potentially large trained manpower pool makes it possible to mobilise an army that can defend the borders and territory in depth. On the other hand the character of the force makes it unsuited for other

than the direct defence mission. It is politically risky to use it for internal security operations or for external interventions.

Few armies mirror the logic of these pure models. The example closest to the first is the present British Army. Two good examples fairly close to the pure training-mobilisation army are the Cold War period Finnish and Swedish armies.

Real states are faced with a unique combination of threats, requirements, and possibilities. They may need forces for international security operations and for countering a limited force strategic coup attack with relatively high readiness and immediate unit cohesion even if there is also a risk of a massive overland invasion. France has normally needed a combination of a standing force (for external and internal operations) and a mobilisation force to counter its continental enemies. Israel has been exposed to an immediate threat that made it necessary to maintain a standing force based on long conscription service soldiers (the unit cohesion thus created has made it possible to use

the conscripts in internal security operations). The large and dense populations and low salaries of India and Pakistan have made it possible for the two countries to maintain very large standing armies of long contract soldiers.

***Officer recruiting, education,
and use***

Both types of armies need an officer corps in the peacetime units numerically dominated by lieutenants and captains in their twenties and early thirties, with a much smaller group of majors and lieutenant colonels in their late thirties or forties, and with a very small number of senior officers.

However, the two pure types of armies can or must use very different officer recruiting, screening, formal education, and career systems.

In the *standing force army* where the officer's peacetime and wartime function is the same, there are only two ways of keeping an acceptable age-rank composition in the officer corps. Either the army must

choose an "up-or-out" (to a second career) path or employ a large number of the older officers as specialists or administrators outside units. Real standing armies are using a combination of the two paths.

In the *training-mobilisation army* this age-rank composition problem is less urgent. The wartime responsibilities of many officers are different from their peacetime jobs. The expansion of the army on mobilisation makes it necessary to use officers at least one command level higher than their peacetime posts, making the age dilemma less urgent. The mobilisation of field formation and territorial defence headquarters adds to the requirement for experienced regular officers. The reserve cadre in a training-mobilisation army will man many of the posts that must be filled by the regular cadre in a standing army with its immediate readiness requirement. Where it is necessary in a standing army to base regular officer recruiting on the premise that a high percent of those recruited will have a second career after their service in the army; the training-mobilisation army can in principle offer a one

career life. This difference can influence how the regular officers are recruited and educated.

The *standing force army* cannot count on finding a substantial number of officer-candidates in the ranks of the long service contract soldiers and NCOs. It is simply not possible to attract much leadership potential for service in the ranks. Thus the army has to find its officer candidates outside the army, in direct competition with other careers. If army officer service is well regarded in society, it is possible to recruit people with college/university backgrounds. That will save the army money and help ensure that the candidates have prepared their second career before entering. Then the army (like the British Army) can concentrate on giving a short, focused military education. The U.S. Army can get a large part of its officers from the very effective officer training programmes in the universities. If, however, the army cannot get sufficient high quality officer candidates with a background that prepares them for a second career, it has to offer that civilian ac-

ademic education. Without such an offer it may be difficult to recruit the right people in the right quantity. The education can be given during the basic officer training or linked to it. In both cases the result will be that officers recruited without a university background will have a relatively long basic education period. Another option, however, is to have an employment contract with a later study leave with full pay (to be used studying in a civilian university) as an integrated element.

The officers of the standing army normally arrive in their units with very little practical experience of soldiering or leadership. This problem is best handled by linking the young officer to a mature NCO, who will tutor the young basically drilled academic in his profession. As the up-or-out dilemma continues, the advanced education of officers is often linked to options for continued academic education.

The situation in the *training-mobilisation army* is different. The main source of officer recruiting is the annual class of con-

scripts. If there are no exemptions for the privileged, e.g. university students, all the male talent of the nation of proper physical and mental condition will have contact with the defence forces. If the training is focused and meaningful and the officers in the training units offer good role models, a significant number of qualified young men (and women, if they serve) will show interest in a career as an officer. A significant number of those with obvious leadership potential and an appropriate school background (college/gymnasium) will be selected for junior NCO or reserve officer training. During the post course period as junior leaders they will demonstrate their qualities, before they can apply and may be selected for regular officer education. Even if the cadets have full military and basic leadership training before entering training, education in the officer training academy is likely to be relatively long (2½-4 years). There are two reasons for that. *Firstly* the cadets are not only to be prepared for their first, peacetime position of platoon leader or company Second in Command,

but must also be prepared for their next command and junior staff officer levels. *Secondly*, they receive a comprehensive general education in languages, management, political science, history, etc. to prepare them well for their role as military leaders of the citizens of their state. The difference between the academic training here and that given to cadets for a standing army is that here it is normally the creation of the basis for a lifetime career, not for a second career. Thus it may be focused on what is necessary in and for the army rather than what is needed to get academic credits. Therefore the academic subjects are much easier to integrate with the military subjects. This does not necessarily detract from the academic standard of the teaching as this always depends more on the quality and ambition of the teachers and cadets than on the type of resulting diplomas.

As with “real world” armies that hardly ever look completely like the two basic models, so it is with the military education systems: they rarely match the two resulting logical recruiting and training

systems. There can be many reasons for this. *Firstly* it can be a result of the fact that the armies do not mirror the pure models. Many Cold War NATO mainly conscript armies (e.g. the Danish) were dominated by the standing, combat ready element, giving some justification for focusing the basic officer education on the immediate platoon leader requirements.

Secondly a training-mobilisation army may also experience difficulties with recruiting a sufficient number of high quality candidates for officer training, leading to the bypassing of the system for selecting from the conscript pool and to offering elements of a civilian academic education. One reason could be the relatively low prestige of the officer career. Another could be that only a small proportion of the annual conscript class is actually drafted, limiting the contact between potential candidates and the army.

Thirdly the senior officers that develop the recruiting and education system may have lost understanding of the character and requirements of their military profession and the requirements of their type

of army. They may therefore accept without argument education and career models that conflict with the real requirements or they may seek civilian academic feathers that might enhance the self respect of an officer corps unsure of its own value and profession.

The army officer profession

A significant obstacle to the development of a proper army officer education is the rather widespread lack of understanding or acceptance that we are talking about the preparation for a profession. There can be many reasons, some of which are widespread, others specific to the Baltic States.

A fair part of any democratic state’s general public, press, and politicians lack understanding of the professional requirements of a regular army officer. The effects of this natural condition will be reinforced if the army officers themselves, living in a basically civilian society, choose to seek academic degrees that may impress their families and civilian neighbours

rather than spend their time in professional improvement.

People in the three Baltic countries are not likely to have been very impressed with the “professionalism” demonstrated by the majority of Soviet army officers. Some may also mistake military professionalism with the militarist attitudes they met then and want to make sure that the officers of their country are different. Many seem to conclude that the only thing required is a good general education and a very light exposure to some rather technical teaching in how to command and train an infantry platoon.

A proper basic officer education is an interactive mix of purely military elements and elements that are fairly similar to what are given in general or specific civilian education. The military part could be compared to that given to a conductor and composer student in an Academy of Music. He has to understand the characteristics of a lot of different instruments (that develop continuously) well enough to adapt their use to any situation. Some

civilian elements are linked to gaining a combination of personal communication skills (including languages), leadership and management skills rather surpassing that of the conductor or orchestra leader. Due to the army environment unsupported by infrastructure it is more like directing a movie on location.

At the same time as the officer cadet is given this interactive mix of civilian and professional skills and knowledge, he/she must be educated and influenced into being a conscientious administrator of state resources in line with the relevant legislation and procedures.

Because any young officer, especially in a training-mobilisation army, is also given the implicit task of educating a part of the population to be better citizens, he must be given a general education (political science, history, international law) that supports that mission. Even if many of the skills are distinctly individual, the army officer education must develop his understanding and acceptance that the officer corps must have an internal solidarity and cohesion to be able to with-

stand the pressure of war. In all armies this is as much a development of character, teambuilding, and ethos as it is pure education.

If those that create and carry out the basic army officer education deeply understand this, they lay the foundation for a proper and necessary professionalism. If not, they waste taxpayer’s money in peace. In war they can only hope that the enemy is even less professional.

Comparing the army officer to a less challenged profession, the medical, can highlight other elements of the army officer profession. There are several common elements.

On the path to his profession, the career hospital doctor must receive a formal education that is a combination of theory and practice. If the balance between the two is wrong, he becomes a danger to his patients, either because too much emphasis on theory leaves him without the ability to apply his profession thoroughly, or because too little theory leaves him without a understanding of the complexity of the case.

The integration of theory and practice in university hospitals should be copied in basic army officer education, even if it is more difficult. We do not have the opportunity to fight small safe wars on the local training area. This, however, does not justify the overemphasis on theory seen in many military academies. Practising the profession can take other forms than the absolute one of leadership in war.

Few outsiders feel that it is proper or safe to interfere with the internal organisation of the education or training of doctors. It is more relevant to ensure that the actual training given is of the best possible quality than to dictate how they should get their academic credits. The medical profession is normally the only one that the doctor will have in his life. Thus the academic credits he/she receives in secondary subjects are considered a minor issue for most.

Accepting that the education and training of army officers can benefit from the approach used in medical schools could focus the minds of those guiding and approving the military education systems.

Education of army officers should have a very high academic quality level. It should, however, be judged by its own premises and standards rather than forced to copy preparation for other professions.

The parallel may be developed further: In both professions, you can unintentionally endanger the lives of your fellow citizens if you do not endeavour or succeed to improve by studying and seeking relevant experience all through your service. The doctor, as the officer, should study the latest professional findings and technical possibilities to keep updated and effective. If the doctor, or officer, gets more responsible positions, the requirement grows for management skills and understanding and knowledge of other than his own speciality. As with a doctor, it would be a clear mistake to build promotion to higher leadership positions on academic, theoretical criteria only. Proven professional skills and management ability must be an important element in selection.

However, the differences between the two professions are as important as the

similarities for understanding the requirements for army officer education and development. The doctor gets constant practice and interaction with reality in his work. The officer, on the other hand, is rarely or never to get the chance to practice his profession: managing his complicated killing machine in coercion of an opponent. His situation has been compared to that of a swimmer who practices all his life out of water, hoping that he can swim if tested, but at the same time hoping that this will never happen. The realism of the simulation and decisions that prepare him, depend on the depth of the studies and professional understanding of his fellow officers. He must be prepared to succeed in a multinational environment, in a language other than his own, adding to the friction and risks.

As officers, leading doctors must understand the political system of their country to be effective. The doctor, however, normally does not have to put his hospital on wheels to serve his country, assimilate and use a large number of amateur assistants, or go into the rough in an area

where an enemy is trying to destroy it. The army officer may have to. This adds quite a few elements to the requirement of the army officer.

The character of basic army officer education makes it very important that the key military instructors in the academy can serve as role models for the cadets so that the young men or women can learn and be inspired by observing. The character of the military profession makes it important that these instructors are young. A cadet finds it hard to identify with a middle aged major or lieutenant colonel, no matter how competent he/she may be.

The development of the senior regular army officer

There is a long way from the basic army officer education to the very high professional level required in the end products: the Chiefs of Defence, Chiefs of Central Staff, operational commanders and their chiefs of staff, leaders of doctrine development, and leaders of the key

education establishments. These persons must, to succeed, have a combination of total professional insight, moral courage, management skills, common sense, and ability to interface with political leaders both nationally and internationally. One part is an effective and objective evaluation and selection system, but how is the pool of qualified candidates developed?

The development of a good senior army officer is very much like the art of making a classical Japanese high quality sword: layers of high quality are added in a continuous hardening process. A good senior professional officer is a composite product, and the character of his basic officer education is important. The quality depends on the broad professional insight of those who created the programme he went through (and the freedom from diluting interference from outside). It should include a thorough foreign language training as it is easier to learn earlier than later, and he will have much use for foreign languages in his later professional development.

However, the initial formal education is not what makes a professional senior army officer. As already mentioned in the above comparison with the medical profession, the military profession is learning by doing.

The young officer builds his later professional development by getting personal experience at platoon and company levels in his unit. Initial service other than that in units is likely to derail his later professional development, because thereafter it will be without any real foundation of personal experience, making it superficial and theoretical only. The harder, more realistic, more intense, these early experiences, the better his professional foundation, the quicker it will build. What might be learned in a few months in war can be learned in a couple of years in units that participate in hard, sometimes lengthy, exercises during the early service period. The quality of the professional experience depends on the realism of the training in garrison and the exercises: that means on the professional level, insight, and freedom of action of the senior officers mak-

ing the exercises. If the exercises lack realism (due to lack of resources, lack of a proper training area, or superficial professionalism of the exercise designers or directors) the gained professional experience will be narrower. Without proper exercise experience, the officer's later professional development will be severely hampered. It will be like being responsible for the training of a football team without the experience of matches.

Experience from peace operations can add significantly to the basic professional development of the officer.

Service in the unit should include participating in short courses in specialist schools, not only or mainly to get the specific knowledge or skills taught, but to get the chance to interact with and learn from fellow officers of the same age group.

The development of an officer also depends on the existence of an open professional debate between a sufficiently large group of young and more senior officers in the garrison. The unit commander can give such a debate a formal form, e.g. by conducting Tactical Exercises without

Troops ("TEWT"s) or seminars. Unfortunately such interaction is being undermined in many armies by lack of professional discussion in the officer's mess or by a mid-level functionary's attitude to working hours.

After the initial on-the-job creation of the professional young officer, his further development should be accelerated by a relatively short professional course (6-11 months) where he builds on his personal experience and gains a broader base of theoretical and doctrinal understanding. It prepares him for leading combined arms teams at sub-unit/unit levels and for junior tactical (rather than policy) staff positions. The course should not be too long as it should be part of the young officer's continued experience building and professional development. Part of the course should be the encouragement of a career long informal study of modern military history. As they develop professional and human insight through service and ageing, they will understand what they read in increasing depth. This again will enhance their professional work.

From now on the further professional development of the officer depends on whether he gets the chance to practice what he has learned with a maximum of freedom of action. He should develop and participate in the actual execution of exercises and training, and be given possibilities to give input to the development of methods and procedures. He will only learn effectively by personal responsibility, and from his mistakes. This second service period after Junior Staff Course (Captain Course/Company Commander Course/Brigade Course) should be the main base for selection for further formal education and eventual senior field officer or higher rank. Those who do not perform sufficiently well should be on their path to more specialists or administrative jobs or to their second career.

In most small armies (with relatively small, one-service garrisons) this service period will involve the first rotation to another location. Some of the best officers of this age and experience group should be used as instructors in the basic officer education.

The next step in the development of the senior army officer is his preparation for policy and other higher staff and command positions with a general staff officer education. The ideal is probably a two-year course given to officers with eight-to-ten years of officer experience. A one-year course like one run by many states – followed several years later for some by a one-year war college course – is too short. It will have to focus too much on a rather superficial instruction instead of giving room for the development of the in-depth understanding necessary for a staff officer in policy and joint positions or a commander at formation or higher level.

The key mission of the general staff officer education is to offer a framework for the personal professional development of the student. It should force him to use all his experience, but at the same time broaden the scope to include all aspects of joint services operations, military-civilian, total defence, and international interaction in peacetime development of structure, doctrine, and plans; in crisis-management and during participation in

international operations; and in war. The military instructors should normally be general staff trained lieutenant colonels (or majors) with good career prospects. The course should include a large element of civilian academic subjects, e.g. political science, management theory, economy, etc. The teaching must be at a very demanding level; even if it means that only a proportion of the students get full benefit from the teaching.

The students are mature, intelligent persons at a clear post-graduate level that pick-up very quickly, so these parts of the course can be validated using academic quality criteria. However, including general academic courses or formal exams is likely to undermine the course by detracting from the focus. The purpose is not to create academics, but rather senior officers with a broad insight in their own and supporting fields.

One very important part of the course is also to gain an impression of which students who in their mid-thirties still possess a significant capacity for further personal development. During post course

service in various command, staff, and possibly teaching positions, the officer uses the insights and skills gained in all his previous service and courses or career long individual studies. The available time will normally make it very difficult to do more than just to update his knowledge in the general professional fields.

His performance in the variety of jobs that he is rotated to is likely to decide what career track he is going follow in his remaining 15-25 years in the army.

Final remarks

Being an army officer is a young man/woman's profession. In the eyes of the soldiers and young regular NCOs and officers that might have to fight, middle aged officers (above 40) in direct contact with them as trainers and potential leaders lack credibility. This is a fact that has to be taken into account when developing the officer career and employment system, even if the officers themselves or the society around them think otherwise. No army should live with a structural

credibility gap between the leaders and the led. Full colonels and generals may be somewhat older, as may be staff officers of field rank in formation headquarters. There are limits, however. Even if ignored in peacetime, the physical and mental pressures of combat will punish such structural weaknesses in war. The move to the next higher level of command in a training-mobilisation army makes the dilemma somewhat less direct here than in a standing army (it may make a five year difference), but it does not remove it.

There is a tendency in peacetime armies to ignore such facts, simply because it fits both the self-interests of the officers as well as the limitations of Ministries of Finance to use civilian norms for guiding the development of the army. This does not only apply to the age distribution and retirement ages. It also applies to how one regard ones profession. No career lawyer, manager or other employee in a big civilian firm can safely ignore that career depends on a 100% commitment to self-improvement. In some public service careers, including that of army

officers, this is unfortunately not the case. Wars are rare.

Weak military professionalism and unit quality will not be noticed by the Ministry of Finance quality control norms, because they are as unsuitable to the evaluation of military effectiveness as those used in the Soviet Union. However, they create a framework for adjusting to civilian standards in working hours and other privileges that actually undermine any chance to develop the well trained combat ready army units led by deeply professional officers that the public money used on the army could otherwise support. Where the dangers of the sea and of flying set limits as to how far naval and air force officer professionalism can rot, army officers are more/less fortunate.

And a final point: all professional development happens in a continuous “dialogue” between study, experience through practice and experiment, and the maturing as a human being. This should be the general concept for army officer education and patterns of service.

Formation of the NDA

By Ltcol. Almars Viksne, Commandant of the National Defence Academy of Latvia.

The National Defense Academy of Latvia (NDA) is a military professional and academic higher educational and scientific establishment of the Republic of Latvia. The NDA was founded on 13 February 1992 in accordance with the resolution #54 "Regarding the National Defense Academy" of the Council of Ministers. The NDA is the only government military educational and scientific establishment of the Republic of Latvia.

The academy is subject to the Ministry of Defense. In event of mobilization and fighting trim it is subject to the commander of the National Armed Forces (NAF) and it executes all the NAF tasks according to the procedures and extent established by the Minister of Defense. In exceptional case or in state of war the

NDA is under direct command of the commander of the NAF and it executes the tasks of a separate military unit. In this case the NDA would act within the Latvian Brigade.

Objectives of the National Defense Academy:

- Considering the NATO states experience, to train qualified platoon, company and battalion commanders for the National Armed Forces
- To organize constant short-term courses in required military occupations, tactics and leadership on request of the Ministry of Defense (MoD), and branches of the NAF
- Reserve officers training

- Practical research in the Military to perfect the state defense and the operation of the NDA
- To prepare and publish study materials, books and scientific projects necessary related to the state defense.

General Principles of the Officers Training

Latvia considers their strategic objective in close cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that would allow Latvia along with Estonia and Lithuania, become a full-fledged member of the alliance in the future. Nowadays the National Armed Forces have to adhere to the standards that Western countries have set for their armies. Not solv-

ing the problem of compatibility between the NAF of Latvia and NATO it is hardly possible to integrate the North Atlantic security and defense structures. The system of individual and unit training according to the NATO standards will promote to meet the compatibility. Otherwise, without the appropriately trained personnel there would be difficulty even in elementary military cooperation.

The objective to train the individuals and units to carry out certain tasks is to train the individual and team professional skills. The outcome is a well-trained, self-confident and motivated soldier and a unit that is led skillfully and effectively. The training is an ongoing and advancing process. It is the main peacetime task of the National Armed Forces. This process is organized and carried out by officers. Consequently, the fighting trim of the National Armed Forces will depend on the quality of our officers.

Military education is an integral part of the officer's career. During the entire military career, the service in units and

staffs interchanges with the training courses. Multilevel training policy considers the pyramid of the military career. It increases the competition proceeding to every level of the military education. This is to invest the monetary resources in the education of the most capable officers and separate the less prospective ones in the early stages. The succession sequence is in effect. That means an officer can run for the higher level courses only on condition that he has an appropriate preliminary education and has served in the required positions. This education system promotes the formation of a military pyramid and increases the competition in taking a higher position as well as proceeding to the next level of the military education.

The officers training is organized in four levels:

- Platoon Commanders
- Company Commanders
- Battalion Commanders
- Higher Officers

Every level is followed by at least two-year service in the National Armed Forces.

Level One deals with the training of platoon commanders and specialists related to the platoon commander's level. The training is organized at the National Defense Academy and corresponding level foreign military institutions. The program duration at the NDA is twenty-seven month plus a six-month practice in the units of the NAF. The average age of the graduates is 22 to 23 years; and they have the right to occupy 2nd Lieutenants and 1st Lieutenants positions. However, due to the small number of officer corps, lieutenants often occupy higher positions. Unfortunately we have to acknowledge that there is the drawback in acquiring the military education.

Level Two deals with the training of company commanders and specialists related to the company commander's level. The training is organized at the National Defense Academy and corresponding level foreign military institutions. This is a one-year program and the average age of graduates is 27 years. Completing the

Level Two education gives the right to occupy Captains and Majors positions.

Level Three deals with the training of battalion commanders and specialists related to the battalion commander's level. The training is considered to be partly carried out at the National Defense Academy in the four-month course with the follow-on training at the Baltic Defence College or corresponding level foreign military institutions. The study duration at the NDA is four months. The average age of graduates is 35 years and they should be posted to the positions of Lieutenant Colonels.

Level Four deals with the training of higher officers. Due to the restricted number of the Level Four positions at the National Armed Forces, the training is considered to be organized only at the foreign military institutions according to the mutual agreements of cooperation.

Officers Training at the NDA

The main objective of the NDA is to train qualified officers with an appropri-

ate military education for the National Armed Forces. Five years have passed since the time the academy began to train officers in Malpils Agriculture Technical School. Many things have changed during that period of time. The NDA, together with the Police Academy, took over former Russian military school premises. They repaired and equipped some buildings for living and studying. The most important was that Latvia at that time started continuous officers training.

The Latvian Military interoperability with NATO to the NDA means that the curriculum must be compiled so that graduates could successfully operate in the NAF units considering the principles of total defense as well as participate in NATO led international peacekeeping missions without a long-lasting pre-training. As a result the priority in the curriculum is to the subjects necessary for acquiring theoretical and practical experience in managing units in the battle. That is based on principles of territorial defense, peace-time military service, participation in

peacekeeping missions and joint exercises with the partnership countries.

The Platoon Commanders Program instructs the cadets to be able to perform tasks as infantry officers in small units. Cadets obtain the basic military knowledge, familiarize with the basic principles of military administration and leadership and acquire the foreign language. The platoon commander's qualification requirements are set by the Order of the Minister of Defense # 131 on 3 June 1998.

The platoon commander's qualification can be obtained by studying in the Full Time Program, Correspondence Course and Postgraduate Course. It is also planned to train the reserve platoon commanders at the academy.

To apply for the Platoon Commanders Course it is necessary to have a section commander's qualification. One can undergo the Section Commanders Course either in the NAF training centers or at the NDA. In the Section Commanders Course, there can be admitted citizens of the Republic of Latvia up to the age of 25. They must have a secondary educa-

tion. The admission tests are in Mathematics, Composition in Latvian, Physical Fitness and Foreign Language. The study duration is six months including a one-month practice. In admission tests the applicants have to present the knowledge of the secondary education level. Physical Fitness is tested according to the NAF standards.

After a successful completion of the program, the cadets acquire the section commander qualification. That gives the right to stand as a candidate for the Platoon Commanders Course or to proceed the service in the NAF units as section commander. It is desirable that in the future the soldiers would acquire the Section Commanders Program only at the NAF training centers.

Citizens of the Republic of Latvia up to the age of 25 can be admitted in the Platoon Commanders Course. They must have a secondary education and section commander qualification obtained at the NDA, the NAF training centers or abroad. The admission tests are in Mathematics, Composition in Latvian, Physi-

cal Fitness and Foreign Language. Candidates who have accomplished the Section Commanders Course at the NDA are not tested.

The main emphasis in the Platoon Commanders Program is on the Combat Training Block. The block includes subjects that are critical to cadets training in practical skills at the battlefield and managing subordinate soldiers. Approximately, one third of the program is allocated to the foreign language training. It is related to the necessity of knowing the language to participate in peacekeeping operations, joint exercises as well as the follow-on training in foreign military educational establishments.

***The Platoon Commanders
Course includes:***

- 14-month theoretical program (Part 1)
- 6-month practice at the NAF
- 13-month theoretical program (Part 2)

To meet the objectives of the Platoon Commanders Course, various methods of instruction are introduced: lectures, prac-

tical exercises, seminars and self-study. The main emphasis is on the practical exercises. Practical field exercises are carried out in the Adazi training area and they last for 10 to 12 hours. There are also night field exercises.

To acquire the theoretical material the instructor staff uses a group work and the interactive teaching methods that involve the trainee in discussions with the instructor. Various audio-visual aids are used in the teaching process. During the self-study, the cadets are able to use the reading-room, library and a computer laboratory.

Classes are prepared, conducted and controlled by the department instructors. During the program, cadets master their commander, leader and instructor skills. Therefore, in the practical exercises cadets are appointed commanders of subunits.

After completion of the Part 1 Platoon Commanders Course the cadets earn Sergeant's ranks and they are posted to the practice or specialized study programs at the foreign military educational establishments. The practice takes place in the NAF

units in accordance with the Practice Regulations approved by the Commander of the NAF. During the practice cadets devise a Practice Project. The themes of the project they receive before leaving for the practice. The project supervisor from the NDA instructor's staff consults the cadet. The cadet personal abilities and traits are reflected in the Practice Performance Review. Practice is an integral part of the Platoon Commanders Course to evaluate on how cadets are able to put the theoretical knowledge into practice. After a successful completion of the Part 2 Platoon Commanders Course the cadets earn the rank of a 2nd Lieutenant.

The NDA is responsible of the Reserve Officers training from the students that have successfully completed the Reserve Section Commanders Course at the Student Battalion. The study is on voluntary bases. Six students of the higher educational establishments may participate in the military training to become section commanders. The program of the training is approved by the Order of the Commander of the NAF. The program takes

place during the first two years of regular study. In the last two years on the bases of the NDA there is a Reserve Platoon Commanders training. The instruction takes place once a week. After the completion of this course the candidates qualified to serve as Reserve Platoon Commanders are enlisted in the reserve of the NAF.

The Reserve Officers who want to join the full-time service will have to undergo a 3-month service at the NAF followed by the 4-month Platoon Commanders Refresher Course at the NDA. The cadets will acquire the knowledge and receive a Diploma of the Platoon Commanders qualification and earn a rank of 2nd Lieutenant. The foreign language is not taught in that program thus, one of the prerequisites is to know the foreign language according to the Platoon Commanders professional qualification.

In the Company Commanders Program, besides acquiring the Battle Skills an emphasis is also put on Younger Officers Staff Work Methods and Administration Principles. The prerequisite of entering the program is foreign language

knowledge. The knowledge is extended during the course consequently enabling the graduates to proceed their studies at the foreign military educational establishments as well as to take part in partnership countries joint exercises. At the end of the course the students devise and present the Course Project.

The Battalion Commanders Course deals with teaching Strategy, Tactics and Staff Work Organization. The specific short-term course themes, contents and duration depend on a certain specialization and it is coordinated with the MoD, NAF or the Staff of a Branch of Service.

The NDA provides knowledge in the Infantry Officers Specialty. That does not eliminate the possibility to train the Navy and the Air Force officers. The training of those officers is conducted in the following way:

Representatives of the Navy and the Air Force are invited to participate in the admission board to select the best possible candidates.

Civilian graduates training at the NDA part 1 Platoon Commanders Course. Af-

ter completion of the training the graduates are promoted 2nd Lieutenants.

Navy and Air Force specialist training abroad after completion the Part 1 Platoon Commanders Course.

Up to the year of 2003, the students are admitted to the Part 1 Platoon Commanders Correspondence Course. Starting with the year of 2004, the course will be available only in the full-time study program. NCOs with secondary education and at least 12-month service experience up to the age of 35 can be admitted in the Platoon Commanders Correspondence Course.

All the academy cadets and students are primarily conscripts or full-time servicemen and they are subject to all restrictions and duties according to the military regulations.

Due to the limited resources of the MoD, the small number of students in specialist training is organized in various foreign military courses and programs. After completion of that type of training it is required to organize the equalization of the education attained to the Latvian

military education standards. Candidates can be posted to the military training abroad only on condition that they have successfully completed the Part 1 Platoon Commanders Course at the NDA or they are NCOs with at least a year service experience and their qualification is up to the required level of the training program in which they are going to participate. After completion of the military educational establishment abroad and the education equalization, the officer continues to serve at the NAF according to the attained education.

An important task is to attain the NDA accreditation in Latvia. It takes place in accordance with the Accreditation Regulations approved by the Cabinet and is organized by the Ministry of Education and Science. Curriculum is accredited at least once in six years. Accreditation is the educational establishment work organization and resource quality inspection. As a result, the institution either receives the state approved higher educational establishment status or not.

The process is rather complicated and it requires abundant time and work resources. During the process the self-assessment report is worked out as well as compiled the required documents. First, the Accreditation Board approves the Assessment Board. Then, the experts of the Assessment Board acquaint with the self-assessment report and attend the educational establishment. After the visit, it submits the Accreditation Board individual reports of all experts as well as work out a common evaluation. Lastly, the Accreditation Board basing on the submitted materials from the educational establishment, expert reports, Assessment Board evaluations and explanations from representatives of the educational establishment, ballots and draws conclusion on the accreditation.

The work on the academy curriculum accreditation documents has already begun. The academy has already set the Self-Assessment Board. Accordingly, the board has started to work on:

- NDA Study Statutes
- NDA Lecturer Load Statutes
- Academic Council Statutes

- Curriculum
- NDA Internal Inspection Statutes

The NDA plans to acquire the curriculum and academy accreditation in 2001.

It is impossible to implement the program without an appropriate funding. The NDA is fully financed from the state budget. We have to acknowledge that in the recent two years the funding has remarkably enlarged. The NDA budget was gradually increased (33% growth in 1999 in comparison with 1998) which enabled us to carry out the curriculum changes in accordance with the Western expert recommendations.

The year 2000 budget to compare with the year 1999 budget increased by Ls 445'289 (\$ 742'150) or 29.88 %. The allocated resources provide the NDA study process. An extra funding is allocated to the NDA development considering the set priorities. Since two years ago, the priority is in modernizing the study equipment and improving the cadets' living conditions. To fully complete the six-story barrack reconstruction into separate rooms for two to three people, the project

according to the year 1999 estimate, will cost Ls 789'500 (\$ 1'315'830).

Framework of the NDA

The NDA serves for two purposes simultaneously. It is a military educational institution in peacetime and a fighting unit within the Latvian Brigade in state of crisis. Therefore, the NDA staff also includes positions required only as for the military unit. The NDA is formed of departments, subunits, the Research Center and other structures. The total NDA personnel are 176 people. It holds both military and civilians including 58 instructors. The number of cadets in March 2000, in the Platoon Commanders program was as big as 192, in the Company Commanders program it was 7, in the Correspondence Course it was 36, and there were 28 conscript soldiers.

The number of trainees depends on the order of the NAF. According to the Order of the Commander of the NAF # 496 1 January 1998, it is stated that the number of graduates in the Platoon Com-

manders Program (Full-time Course, Correspondence Course and Postgraduate Course) in the following four years must be 70 to 95 men. Since the foundation of the NDA in 1992, 780 cadets have graduated the academy.

The Tactics Department is the biggest and one of the most important departments of the NDA. The department training objective is to provide the cadets with knowledge and practical skills in the training subjects according to the curriculum as well as to train the cadets to be able to serve at the NAF. The Tactics Department is responsible for the Combat Training Block. It also coordinates and manages the Tactics Center, officers and senior cadets Staff Work Methods Training and academy personnel Marksmanship Training.

After completion of the Combat Training Block, the cadets must know:

- The essence of the modern battle
- Forces organization, equipment, fighting capacity and tactics
- Platoon and company commander's work in organizing a battle, battle logistics and administration

- Platoon and company commander's duties in soldiers' individual training and their consolidation in a unit

- Company and battalion armament
- Individual and group training methodology
- Signals, tactical legends and map reading

A great deal of the training is dedicated to the practical lessons at the NDA and the Adazi training area. Field exercises are carried out regularly. An emphasis is put on the practical training so that the future officers will be able:

- Manage a platoon and company in various battle situations
- Apply the platoon and company armament
- Organize the cooperation with partner forces, supporting units and logistics
- Present the battle situation on a map or model
- Solve the tactical tasks on the map and in the field

The Technical Science Department deals with the Technical Science Block where cadets study Physics, Advanced Mathemat-

ics, Statistics and Computers according to the Baccalaureates Program. However, the main task of the department is to instruct cadets in military-technical subjects such as Armament, NBC, Signals, Artillery and Battle Engineering.

The Battle Engineering deals with the NDA and the NAF unit development and their logistics and certain types of equipment.

Within the Platoon Commanders Program cadets acquire the knowledge on how to use the infantry mobile support and how to act against the enemy mobile support to increase the survivability. There are the following topics in the program: Fortification, Explosives and Demolition, Mines and Mine Fields, Obstacles, Camouflage and Concealment, Engineer Intelligence, Battle Engineering etc.

The same topics compile the Company Commanders Program. The topics in the program are taught extendedly. The attention is focused to the organizational activities, time and resource management and documentation. The cadets are introduced to the engineering novelties and

equipment application in catastrophe liquidation.

In Signals, the cadets learn to use the field telephones and field communicators. They also acquire skills in using R-159, R-163 and Star LB C-130 radios. The company commanders study the NATO signal standards and signal procedures as well as to use the Kenwood TRC-80 radio. Last year the academy purchased four modern ultra-short wave Kenwood TRC-80 radios that guarantee good long-range communication. For the further development, the department needs modems to instruct and organize computerized information transmission.

In Artillery, the Platoon Commanders Program includes the history of artillery, artillery weapon capabilities, artillery tactics, data preparation, and fire for adjustment and observation. The Company Commanders Program covers the modern artillery weapons, their capabilities and tactical differences and cooperation between the infantry and support units. A great emphasis is put on practice. The

NATO tactics are used in the fire support application.

In Computers, the platoon commanders acquire the basic computer skills as well as Windows 98, Word 97 and Excel 97. The company commanders acquire Power Point 97 and get an insight to the computer network and learn to use the Internet and e-mail. It is planned to familiarize cadets with the database of administration system Access 97.

In Armament, the cadets get acquainted with the NAF, NATO and neighboring countries military equipment. In the Platoon Commanders Program, the cadets study the Army equipment such as armored personal carriers, armored reconnaissance vehicles, mechanized infantry combat vehicles, main battle tanks, self-propelled guns and howitzers, mortars, anti-tank weapons, multiple rocket launchers and self-propelled anti-aircraft weapons. They acquire the basics of aircraft distinguishing whereas the Company Commanders Program cadets learn the newest battle equipment models, combat helicopters, aviation armament as well as

follow the latest developments and technologies. During the course, the cadets learn to independently update their knowledge in the newest technical literature, prepare visual aids and conduct lessons.

NBC deals with the main mass destruction weapons and the ways of NBC defense. The cadets learn the methods of area inspection, ways of deactivation and the general ideas of environmental problems.

The Administration and Political Science Department concerns itself with the Administration and Political Science Study Block. In the Platoon Commanders Program the cadets study the subjects such as Administration Theory, Administration Sociology, Micro and Macro Economy, Administration Psychology, War Medicine, NAF Regulations, Logistics etc. In the Company Commanders Program those same subjects are trained extendedly. After completing the program, the cadets must present a course project.

The Foreign Language Department has three-language sections- English, German

and French. The Foreign Language Department must:

Provide foreign language training to all civilian and military personnel at the Academy in order for them to comply with the language requirements of their positions.

Develop the foreign language proficiency of the cadets enrolled in the different programs to meet the minimum graduation requirements.

The majority of cadets study the English language. The English Section of the Foreign Language Department at National Defense Academy uses primarily for its instruction the American Language Course materials that are developed by curriculum personnel at the Defense Language Institute English Language Center in San Antonio, Texas. For students requiring some knowledge of military English, materials like the Specialized English Training materials from DLIELC and the book "Command English" published by Longman Group UK Limited are used as supplemental materials. Before admission, all candidates will be administered an

American Language Course Placement Test (ALCPT) which will be used as one of the factors in the decision as to whether the candidate should be admitted to one of the National Defense Academy Programs. This ALCPT test will be given several times during the course of the year and will be part of the term and graduating grades. The entry and graduation language requirements vary according to the program that the candidate is intending to enter.

The Sports Department main objectives:

- Improve and maintain cadets' physical fitness
- Teach cadets to conduct sports classes
- Teach cadets to organize and conduct competitions

To achieve these goals the cadets actively participate not only in regular classes but they also help in conducting sports sections and competitions. The department organizes classes in track and field, wrestling, sports games and other disciplines. A great attention is paid to the hand-to-hand fight as well as Greek-Roman and women wrestling. The instruc-

tors have the cadets develop strength, speed and agility through exercising in field and track, bodybuilding and weightlifting. Besides regular classes, the instructors conduct sports sections in basketball, volleyball, weightlifting and wrestling. The academy teams successfully participate in NAF and even Latvian Championships.

The Defense Research Center (DRC) carries out practical research in the domain of state security, defense policy and military science in the interests of the NDA and NAF. It is an academy unit under the authority of the Ministry of Defense. It is subject to the Commandant of the academy.

The DRC operates according to the Statutes. The Ministry of Defense (MoD) finances the DRC within the NDA budget whereas the Ministry of Education and Science finance government institutions research projects.

The chief task of the DRC is to organize research in military education and science in order to strengthen the state defense system. The general outline of the DRC is:

- Practical research in domain of the state security, defense policy and military education and science

- Research of the NATO alliance, Northern Europe and neutral countries experience in handling total defense, crisis management and military education and training

- Promoting the information exchange in security and defense matters among the Ministries of Defense and Armed Forces research centers of the Baltic and other partner countries

- The NDA library has been operating since the spring 1993. The library stock primarily consists of donations from the Liesma Publishing House. It is also supplemented with new purchases as well as institutions and private donations. The library fond is unique. A special attention in compiling the fond is paid to the literature of military science, weapons, armament and equipment. The fond is compiled regarding the suggestions from the teaching departments and the DRC.

There is a reading room, scientific and belles-lettres sections at the library. It pri-

marily serves for the academy cadets and the personnel as well as the MoD personnel. Others may use the literature within the library premises. On 1 January 2000, the library fond consisted of 27427 printed units.

Currently, the NDA library owns the widest stock of military periodical issues in Latvia. It is planned to expand it even more in the future. The library offers copies of the most significant military literature where originals were not available. The current catalogue operates in the form of cards. Since the year of 1999 the library is connected to the integral bibliographic information system "Alice". It is planned to computerize the library service and originate the possibility to use the CD-ROM database as well as access the Internet.

International Cooperation

International cooperation is one of the NDA priorities in order to improve the program quality and take over the Western countries experience in officers train-

ing. In 1997, the academy followed Danish, British and the International Defense Advisory Board for the Baltic States recommendations to modernize the study programs. Now there is a productive cooperation between the NDA and many foreign military educational establishments. A constant cooperation has been carried out with 5 countries:

- The USA, English Language Training
- Denmark, Leadership and Pedagogy
- Sweden, Reserve Cadet Training in certain military specialties
- Great Britain, Tactics
- Germany, cadet training in military specialties required by the NAF

Every year the academy plans cooperation with the countries mentioned above. In May 2000, there were 31 NDA students studying abroad in specialties like Engineering, Communications, Artillery, Logistics and Navy Officer:

- Germany, 20 cadets
- Sweden, 7 cadets
- Denmark, 2 cadets
- The Czech Republic, 1 cadet
- The USA, 1 cadet

The academy officer and instructor staff also undergoes different types of training abroad. Currently, one officer receives training at the Bundeswehr University in Germany and one in the Baltic Defense College in Estonia. One English language instructor undergoes training in the USA. Continuously, academy instructors participate in various short-term courses.

In cooperation with the USA there was installed an English language computer laboratory in 1999. Every year the academy hosts guest English language instructors from the Defense Language Institute, Texas. Supported by the Danish government, the academy installed the Army Tactical Trainer. The Danish colleagues also organized repeated academy instructors methodology training. 20 academy instructors and officers participated in the course. This year, the academy will consult the experts of the Danish Royal Military Academy in teaching department work optimization.

There is an ongoing military cooperation with Great Britain. The main activities were the Platoon Commanders Battle

Course for the cadets in 1998 and the Platoon Commanders Methodology Course for the NDA instructors in 1999.

The further cooperation will be on the NDA instructors' work assessment in the Platoon Commanders Course and instructors training in organizing the Company and Battalion Commanders Course.

The experts from Great Britain, Denmark and Sweden are invited to give an official NDA program evaluation for the academy accreditation.

NDA Development Priorities

The main priority still remains the further curriculum improvement according to the NATO standards. That will be organized in close cooperation with partnership countries military educational establishments as well as the Baltic Defense College, whereas study program coordination among the National Academies of the Baltic States and the Baltic Defense College is the other priority.

More attention will be paid to devising and approving documentation related

to the military education. An example would be an approval of the Conception of the NAF Officers Military Education as well as the NDA curriculum accreditation in 2001.

We prefer to continue developing the NDA material resources and infrastructure. It is considered to:

- Allocate funding to improve the cadets' household by reconstructing the NDA barracks till the year of 2003.
- Repair building # 1 and gradually move the NDA departments and administration to the repaired building.
- Equip the study rooms according to the contemporary requirements
- Organize the NDA Distance Learning Center for the reserve officers and specialized programs.
- Organize the CD and video library with an access to the Internet.
- Build a NATO standard obstacle course by the end of this year.

We also have to point out that the academy has to compile the Reserve Officers training program to begin the study in 2001, whereas the Battalion Command-

ers training program must start in 2002. In cooperation with the NAF the NDA has to clarify the necessity and effectiveness of the short-term qualification courses. The NDA must be ready to organize the Staff Officers, Communication, Computers, Drivers, Field Medicine, Logistics and other courses for the NAF personnel.

Conclusion

While studying at the NDA, the future officers must be aware that in democratic countries soldiers are thought civilians in uniforms. It means that the rights and freedom of each individual are highly respected. There should not be an abundance of restrictions. Restrictions are to be as many as it concerns maintaining the fighting trim. Those two processes ought to be mutually balanced. A soldier is to be aware that he serves for his country to defend democracy.

The Officers Corps is the key factor in maintaining the fighting trim as well as good relations among the soldiers of all

ranks. Otherwise, without a well-trained Officers Corps there is no hope for appropriate Armed Forces. In a democratic society military leadership and training cardinally differs from the one experienced in the former USSR and current Russian army. Even if in some instances there are common tactical methods. The relevant differences are in the way:

- A soldier feels in performing his duties
- A person and his rights are respected
- Of motivation in service for the country
- A soldier acts under stress, threat or in warfare

Latvian NAF takes over the NATO countries experience and principles. The standardization requirements are considered in compiling the study programs. It is true that officers training require high expenditures but we are aware that good fighting trim and equalization with the NATO calls for well-trained and educated officers.

The Baltic Naval Squadron – BALTRON

By Juozas ALSAUSKAS, Commander Lithuanian Navy, Commander of BALTRON

The three Baltic States - Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania began military co-operation in the defence area shortly after regaining independence. The defence-related co-operation has resulted in four military projects such as BALBAT, BALTNET, BALTDEFCOL and BALTRON. The idea to establish a joint naval unit was brought up in 1995. The same year started the first trilateral Baltic naval exercise AMBER SEA-95. In the end of 1996 the practical preparations for the BALTRON project were launched, and Germany undertook the role as the leading nation in the international co-ordination of the project. In April 16 1998 the Ministers of Defence of the Republic of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania signed the formal agreement concerning the es-

tablishment of the BALTRON. On 28 August BALTRON was inaugurated. Baltic Naval Squadron (BALTRON) is a permanently established tri-national standing Naval Force with mine-countermeasures capabilities. The operational task of BALTRON is to counter mine threats, to reduce environmental damage in the territorial waters and economic zones of the Baltic States and to enhance the security of peacetime seagoing. It is the priority of the project to contribute to the development of the national naval forces and to raise the self-defence capabilities of the Baltic States and to develop interchangeability with NATO/PfP forces.

Another aspiration is to have a capability for participation in multinational peace support operations conducted in

accordance with the United Nations Charter.

It is noted as a precondition for planning and implementation of BALTRON activities that BALTRON will train and act in accordance with NATO/PfP naval and staff procedures, both in the fleet and in the staff. The command and communication language is English, and BALTRON activities apply relevant NATO/PfP procedures and standards.

Activities

BALTRON reached its first operational milestone in September 1998 when the squadron as a multinational naval unit participated in the international mine countermeasures exercise OPEN SPIRIT-

98. The main goals of exercise were to allow BALTRON forces to familiarise themselves with NATO procedures and to bring BALTRON communications up to NATO levels.

During exercise U.S. BALTOPS-99 (an American invitational multinational maritime exercise conducted in the Baltic region) BALTRON staff was working in multinational staff shoulder to shoulder with naval officers from Poland, Germany, UK and Norway due to improve overall co-ordination and understanding. So the issuing orders and reporting has followed NATO standards and procedures.

Mine Countermeasures (MCM) Exercise PAS SEX-99 between BALTRON and Mine Countermeasures Force North-western Europe (MCMFN) based on request from Baltic States to NATO was used to create the framework for tasking of ships in order to facilitate procedural and tactical training. Prior to sailing BALTRON staff was embarked on a NATO staff ship. Tasking authority for all participants were Commander MCMFN and Commander BALTRON. During actual exercise

BALTRON staff was involved in tasking and monitoring the situation, commander's briefings and message drafting, preparation and conducting pre-sail and post-exercise briefings. The co-operation of BALTRON and MCMFN was a very valuable experience both for the ships and for the staff as well.

1999 was first full year of operations for BALTRON. BALTRON conducted activities aimed to prepare for stated aims. Beside preparations for main tasks, very important was the presence of the Naval forces of the Baltic States in the Baltic Sea, promotion of the NATO integration process and optimised use of resources. 1999 was difficult year but at the same time it gave to all Baltic Navies first experience in operating the combined squadron during around the year.

Structure and Composition

BALTRON is comprised of a combined tri-national staff and national ships from three Baltic Navies. Each nation provides 1-2 vessels. Each ship in the force

serves for six months at a time. Currently squadron is composed of Staff and Supply ship LNS Vetra (Lithuanian Navy ship), minesweepers ENS Kalev (Estonian Navy ship) and LVNS Imanta (Latvian Navy ship). At the same time BALTRON ships also remain integral parts of national navies of the Baltic States. At the moment BALTRON units have been dismissed to national bases for the crew change, ship maintenance and crew rest. In accordance with the Annual BALTRON activities plan for year 2000 the force will be collected again in Liepaja on the 20 of March and will continue their duties.

The BALTRON staff has started work October 1997 in Tallinn. The staff is fully operational since April 1998 and consists of the following positions: Chief of staff, Operations officer, Communications Officer and Public Relation Officer. Commander BALTRON and staff officers are appointed for a period of at least 12 months. Currently the staff is organised as an operational staff without the administrative capacity and it is designed to operate on board a Staff ship. During

the winter phase BALTRON staff organised more extensive staff planning using on-shore facility located at the Estonian Naval base. Also staff can use on temporary basis other naval facilities in the Baltic States as agreed in the annual activity plan.

BALTRON Units

The force employs two basic types of ships (donation of Germany) to clear mines: minesweeper and mine hunter. The minesweeper methodically travels back and forth across an area at the sea, dragging a buoy that cuts the cord from any mines that are anchored on the sea floor. The mine floats to the surface of the sea where it can be seen and detonated. The minesweeper also deals with influence mines by simulating acoustic and magnetic fields of shipping with a towed solenoid. The minesweepers operating with BALTRON (FRAUENLOB and KONDOR class ships) are considered in-shore sweepers.

The minehunter (LINDAU class) searches ahead with the sonar with which

it can detect mine like objects. When it find a mine, a remote controlled robot is submerged in the water and places an explosive on the mine to detonate it.

Two minehunters are in service with the Baltic States (LVNS Namejs and LNS Suduvis). These vessels are equipped with a modern mine detection and classification system. Their crews have been extensively trained in Germany prior to the ships arriving in Latvia and Lithuania. During exercise MCMOPLAT-99 LVNS Namejs impressed every one by finding and disposing of the first mine in the entire operation.

Personnel

Our Navies are very young, and are working hard to establish themselves in the new environment. There are a lot of young officers coming back from different countries' naval schools and academies, who are willing to use what they have learned to help the progress. One of such officers is the Executive Officer of the Estonian Navy ship OLEV Elvira

BARANOVA. On May 1999 she graduated from the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis with degree in Marine Engineering and the rank of Sublieutenant. Since June 1999, she has been serving in BALTRON. In this period she took part in exercises OPEN SPIRIT-99, AMBER SEA -99 and MCOPLAT-99. For this last operation she worked as staff officer on the Task Group staff.

Elvira BARANOVA tells that there is a big difference between the organisation and function of the US Navy and the Estonian Navy. The differences come from the size of the state, the economic and political situation, the geographical location, and the historical background. However, the basics are the same in virtually any modern military: the military discipline, the leadership principles, task performance standards, etc. The training conducted during the four years in Annapolis instilled a good sense of all that, plus it was an outstanding stress management workshop. It also helped to attain a very broad view of the world's militaries. Knowing the differences between various

navies and having the chance to see how things are done and organised elsewhere helps to get new ideas for own young navy.

Sublieutenant BARANOVA insists that being the only female in the squadron is tough at times, but at the same time it is a good opportunity for her colleagues to get used to the thought that there will be more women actively involved in sailing and mine warfare. Having women as part of the ship's company is a common thing in the US Navy now. For the Estonian Navy, however, it is a new experience, as in fact it is in Latvian Navy and Lithuanian Navy.

Training

The training system within the BALTRON project is oriented in three directions:

- Training of the staff personnel and units assigned to BALTRON before joining BALTRON and provided by a sending nation.
- Training of the personnel assigned to BALTRON before joining BALTRON and provided through BALTRON project by supporting nations.

- Training of the personnel, units and squadron during deployment to BALTRON.

Training provided by sending nations:

Each sending nation is responsible for the preparation of its national units (personnel and ships) assigned to BALTRON. National units must be fully operational for the time of assignment. It is expected that person joining BALTRON be trained to perform assigned duties. For a ship, it is expected to be trained up to conduct all assigned tasks on unit level and be capable to work together in the squadron.

Communicators proved to be insufficient. All these had impact upon BALTRON performance during second part of the year and required to allocate time for basic exercises instead of scenario based exercises.

Training provided by supporting nations.

Supporting nations have provided training support in following areas:

- Officers MCM staff training in Belgian-Netherlands Minewarfare school;
- Communications officer training in United Kingdom;

- Communications operators, technicians and instructors training in Danish Signal School;

- Specialized Damage Control training in German Navy damage Control school. This training involves firefighting, shoring and rescue at sea.

- Divers training in Norway.

Training conducted during deployment to the squadron.

During deployment to the squadron training is executed mainly on squadron level in order to prepare the squadron to conduct MCM operations in the future.

In order to execute training on a squadron level BALTRON has conducted squadron exercises and participated in multinational exercises. These have been mainly small to medium scale scenario based MCM exercises. Beside MCM, seamanship, communications and surface gunnery have been trained during these exercises.

International support

From its beginning the BALTRON project has attracted wide international

support. The states supporting the establishment of BALTRON are Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States. The international support to BALTRON is focused on providing equipment, training and expertise advice. Supporting nations have organised and conducted:

- Full set of diving equipment for those divers (Norway);
- Setting up the communications training centre in Tallinn and installation of communication equipment by Danish Navy;
- Providing the language laboratory by United States;
- Providing of degaussing (electromagnet and acoustic management) by Sweden;
- Sending staff officers to BALTRON staff in order to supervise and support the staff personal.

During the First and Second World Wars parts of the Baltic Sea were mined. Recent mine clearance operations in the coastal waters along Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have shown that remaining mines and ordnance in the area still pose

a threat to fishery and shipping. Therefore, 1996 The Latvian Defence Minister Krastins wrote a letter to the German Defence Minister Ruhe proposing a German - Latvian exercise with the aim to sweep the mines which were found in former minefield. The result was that 16 mines, 3 torpedoes and 1 bomb were countermined. Germany and The Baltic States agreed upon an annual Exercise in the Spirit of partnership for peace. Since 1996 German Navy Minewarfare Flotilla leads an annual Exercise conducted in waters of Baltic States. The exercise is called OPEN SPIRIT. It aims to effectively foster the maritime co-operation in the Baltic Sea area in the spirit of PFP, to counter ordnance's (mines, torpedoes, bombs, shells, etc.) in the Baltic Sea, thereby contributing to the reduction of the environmental damage in the area and to provide an opportunity for all participating units to increase their individual knowledge and capability.

The overall result of ordnance found only in the Riga Gulf is as follows: 38 mines, 8 bombs, and 12 torpedoes.

After an official request the Swedish Navy carried out Route Survey in the Baltic States beginning in 1994. Follow operations were called MCOPEST, MCOPLAT and MCOPLIT. During the past five years the Swedish Navy has performed seven mine and ammunition clearance operations in the Baltic. 97 mines, 57 units of unexploded ammunition have been destroyed in a 900 km² area.

Last operation MCOPLAT-99 (Mine Counter-measure Operation in Latvia, 1999), organised by the Swedish Navy's 21st MCM Flotilla from 18 October to 2 November 1999, successfully located and destroyed 35 mines in waters of Riga Gulf. Overall, 19 ships and 530 men from 10 countries participated in operation. Continuous support by the Supporting States is important for the further development of the BALTRON project. Especially the support from states with experience in NATO mine countermeasure operations is encouraged. Future development is concentrated on improvement of sweeping capabilities and expanding minehunting capability.

BALTBAT - Lessons Learned and the Way Ahead

By Major T.D. Møller, Danish Army, Second in Command/Baltic Battalion Training Team –
01. August 1999 - 31. January 2000.

Background

The defence ministers from the Baltic States and several western countries initiated the Baltic Battalion Project (Baltbat) in the autumn 1994. The initial idea of the project was firstly to fulfil a wish from the Baltic States to create a peacekeeping unit and secondly to promote the co-operation between the three Baltic States and between the Baltic States and the western countries.

Phase 1 - the peacekeeping phase

Baltbat was initially organised and trained as a peacekeeping battalion suit-

able for United Nations Chapter VI operations. The battalion - in the peacekeeping version - was organised with a multinational staff, a multinational headquarters & logistic company and three rifle companies, one from each of the three Baltic States. The equipment was basically for peacekeeping operations and the weapons for self-defence only. The training was carried out both in western countries and in respective Baltic States.

The “peacekeeping” training period was finalised in the second half of 1997 during several exercises in all three Baltic States. The aim of the exercises was to report Baltbat ready for deployments from 1998 onwards.

The battalion as a whole was never deployed to a mission. The reason for that was the lack of finances in the Baltic States, lack of logistic support and logistic concept and lack of sustainability after a possible 6-month deployment. In order to compensate for the missing, but wanted deployments, 1/3 of the battalion was from mid 1998 to the beginning of 2000 three times deployed to Bosnia as part of the Danish Battalion.

Phase 2 - the infantry battalion phase

A new dimension for Baltbat was discussed and decided during 1997 and 1998.

The new challenge for the project was to reorganise and train the battalion as a light infantry battalion capable of executing Peace Support Operations. This second phase of the project is planned to be finalised by the end of year 2000.

Lessons learned

The project has faced many problems during the last 5 - 6 years. It is important to underline that the following lessons learned and observations are my personal opinion/observations, based on my 6-month service as 2IC/Baltic Battalion Training Team in the period 1. August 1999 - 31. January 2000.

Project managing

A Steering Group at Ministry of Defence level and a Military Working Group at Army Headquarters level manage the project. Both bodies include representatives from the Baltic States, the western countries, Baltbat and Baltbat Training Team.

Baltic Battalion Training Team

Right from the beginning of the project Baltic Battalion Training Team was established in order to support, train and supervise the battalion. Focus was initially on training the battalion and running the battalion leaving only minor responsibility by the organic commanders and leaders. Later on the decision to leave more and more responsibility on the organic commanders and leaders was taken. The Baltic Battalion Training Team remained in place in an advisory role.

It is my experience that the decision to let the Baltic Battalion Training Team advice instead of training the battalion was a less sensible decision. It is obvious that the commanders and leaders still need to be trained and supported in a direct and close way. It was also obvious that the Baltic Battalion Training Team did not fully succeed due to the fact that the distance between the battalion and the training team became larger. Another problem was the quality of the personnel

in the training team. The different supporting countries are manning the posts in the training team in various ways. It has to be a must that the training team officers are educated and trained in tactics and logistics related to brigade and infantry battalion tactics. The company advisors must be experienced company commanders from units equal to Baltbat. The age of the advisors must be equal to the commanders and leaders in the battalion. If that is not the case problems in building up confidence between the battalion and the training team will occur.

Tactics and Doctrine

Another problem was the decision to use British Tactics and Doctrine. The choice of tactics and doctrine is closely related to training and training standards and Table of Organisation and Equipment. Baltbat is organised as a motorised infantry battalion with a headquarters company, a logistic company and three rifle companies. The organisation is in many ways comparable to a Nordic mo-

torised infantry battalion where the philosophy is to use the vehicles as long as possible. That is not the British philosophy. Adding to the problems of using British Tactics and Doctrine is the fact that the majority of the training team officers, dealing with the battalion staff and the company commanders, are coming from the Nordic countries and not from the United Kingdom.

A possible way forward could be to develop a common Baltic States doctrine and tactics based on realistic personnel, equipment and training standards. This is in my opinion a right and relevant task for the Baltic Defence College in close co-operation with the three Baltic States General Staffs.

Personnel matters

Officers entering Baltbat for service have an uneven and often unsatisfactory level of basic officer's education. This means that it's often necessary to train basic skills before training function related matters. Officers are often rotated

with very short notice and without any regards to the units/staff activities. Another problem is the lack of time for hand-over, which naturally leads to a drop in the training performance for the unit/staff.

The level of English language is in general satisfactory but some officers are entering the battalion with little or no English language skills.

Chain of command and command relations

The project and consequently also the battalion commander have faced many problems in connection with the chain of command and command relations. In my perspective the battalion commander is unable of commanding his battalion in terms of full command, operational command or operational control definitions. The three rifle companies are purely a national responsibility and the commanding officer of Baltbat is only requested to set the training standards to be met. Consequences are unequal priori-

ties given to the project from the three Baltic States, insufficient logistic support to the battalion in terms of ammunition and personal equipment etc. It is clearly stated that the Baltic States are responsible for providing ammunition and personal equipment for the soldiers in Baltbat. But the Baltic States have failed/ been unable to fulfil these demands leading to serious impact on the training. Another major problem is the possibilities of bringing "foreign" units to one of the other Baltic States. This is almost impossible due to lack of agreements, bureaucracy and lack of will between the Baltic States. These requirements have to be solved by the Baltic States otherwise phase 2 of the project - ending up with the planned Field Training exercise in October 2000 - will not be a success.

Logistics

In the early beginning of the project a lot of equipment was donated to the project from the supporting countries. Lessons learned are that the equipment

was donated without having a proper organisation and procedures ready in the receiving countries. The equipment was not in all cases properly handed over from the donating countries and often without manuals and spare parts. In addition detailed tables of equipment and organisation was missing.

The problems were highlighted during the process of transferring the battalion from its peacekeeping organisation into the infantry organisation.

Future donations are to be better coordinated between the donating and the receiving countries. Donations of complete units or sub units including vehicles, weapons and spare parts etc. is recommended instead of donating single spare parts or equipment.

Deployments to Bosnia

The deployment of 1/3 of the battalion three times in the period mid 1998 - early 2000 had an impact on the daily training. But on the other hand the battalion and the Baltic Countries also ben-

efited from the deployments both from a military and from a politically point of view. The overall impression is that the three contingents did a very good job together with the Danish battalion in Bosnia.

The negative side of the deployments is that the training of the two specialist companies were hampered and the possibilities of deploying the battalion headquarters in the field were impossible.

Way ahead - near future

The aim of the near future is to finalise phase 2 of the project with a successful field training exercise in October 2000. The fundament for a success is established due to the fact that:

- The deployments have ended,
- The Baltic Battalion Training Team has strengthened the training of the battalion and initiated a proper planning process for the exercise.
- The Military Working Group has put pressure on both the Baltic States and the supporting countries.

- Everybody (hopefully) has realised that this is the last chance of finalising the Baltbat project in its present configuration as a success.

Most of the involved personnel and countries are working hard on achieving the aim. But there is still a long way to go.

The Way ahead – the long perspective

A continued multinational (the Baltic States) way ahead is in my opinion only realistic if some basic requirements are fulfilled. Firstly a common Baltic Doctrine and Tactics at brigade and battalion level has to be developed. This is in my perspective a natural and good task for The Baltic Defence College supported by a few general staff trained officers from the supporting countries and some of the Baltic officers who joined the first course at the college 1999 - 2000. To carry on with British Doctrine and Tactics within Baltbat and national doctrine and tactics within the national forces will in my opin-

ion newer be beneficial for the Baltic States.

The next question is whether the Baltic States wants to rely on common doctrine and tactics and close co-operation. I think that the Baltbat project has shown that it is difficult to build up a multinational formation. It has been hard for the national armed forces to understand and accept why Baltbat needs to be prioritised when it comes to manning, finances, ammunition, etc.

One possibility is to carry on with Baltbat in its present configuration. I think that the last five to six years clearly shows that this is not a realistic and reasonable way ahead. Both the Baltic States and also some of the supporting countries have clearly shown a lack of interest and will to support the project. The other extreme is to leave any kind a co-operation between the Baltic States and rely completely on bilateral support and co-operation. I have seen a tendency to go more and more bilateral. This is from a military and economic perspective a better solution but dangerous if we forget

to set common standards and interoperability demands. The common standards and interoperability demands have to be a part of the common doctrine and tactics. To go totally bilateral without any co-operation between the Baltic States is in my opinion unacceptable and unrealistic if the Baltic States are heading for a NATO membership. A vehicle for building a bridge between the Baltic States and the supporting countries could be to establish a multinational staff either at battalion or brigade level. This multinational staff should be test bed for the common developed doctrine and tactics. The staff can also participate in exercises abroad and within the Baltic States. Either in command post exercises (staff alone) or field training exercises by taking national companies or battalions under command. A few officers from the supporting countries should support the staff.

Baltic Security Co-operation: a Way Ahead

By Eitvydas Bajarūnas, Head of Foreign Policy Planning, MFA, Lithuania¹

Introduction

Many outside observers recognize achievements of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - which celebrate 10 years of the restored independence - in implementing democracy, establishing functioning free market economy, and engaging into the wider world international co-operation. Baltic foreign and security policies contributed to making them stand for stability, openness, dynamic development and ability to cope with the many challenges of globalization. Commemoration of a decade of a successful return to the global community marks the right time

to appraise the main security challenges of the Baltic Sea region, to examine current accomplishments of the three Baltic countries in their security cooperation and, in that respect, to project major future tasks.

What is the Baltic security agenda?

Assessing the security situation of the Baltic countries U.S. Secretary of State M. Albright in her speech in Vilnius in July 1997 presented it in such way: "... perhaps no part of Europe has suffered more from the old pattern of geopolitics than the Baltic states ... and no part of Europe

will benefit more if we are successful in overcoming these old patterns and replace them with new habits of cooperation". That is a most elegant expression valid even today.

Indeed, viewed from the historical perspective, the Baltic Sea region has experienced a turbulent history where major European powers - Russia (in the last century - the Soviet Union), Germany and others - have regularly tried to exercise strategic and ideological influence. Through out history fundamental rights have been ignored. The smaller countries in the region have suffered disproportionately through repeated occupation and oppression by their larger neighbors.

For centuries they have found themselves in a gray zone of uncertainty, governed by power not by principles of law or moral.

The peace treaties of 1920 between the Baltic countries and Russia were the first signs of Russia's acceptance of their sovereignty, although it never reconciled itself with the loss of the Baltic countries. The Soviet Russia occupied the three countries in 1939, after Hitler donated them to Stalin in the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. The Yalta meeting of 1945 became a funeral for Baltic independence. During the Cold War the dividing line of Europe went across the Baltic Sea region, which became a strategic backwater that received little focus on international agendas.

However, since the end of the Cold War, the region has become an important focal point where U.S., EU's and Russia's policies are intercrossed. There is a widespread understanding that the Baltic Sea region is one of the most dynamically developing, outward-looking and promising regions in Europe. The region

offers the world-market excellent trade opportunities, a good climate of foreign investments, transit routes, and a steadily growing network of international, governmental and non-governmental arrangements.

The region has enormous potential, given the 90 millions people who live there, with rich natural and human resources and excellent transit opportunities. It has an investment conducive environment, a highly skilled labor force, and is hi-tech oriented.

The fall of the Soviet Union and other totalitarian regimes in the East, the unification of Germany, restoration of independence of the Baltic countries, Finish and Swedish membership in the EU and the Polish membership of NATO, followed by continuing European and Transatlantic integration processes all provide unique opportunities for creating stability and well-being around the Baltic Sea. The Baltic region has become a laboratory example to other parts of Europe for promoting closer regional cooperation, and as a test case for the Western

approach to an undivided Europe. A significant factor here is the present day Russia's involvement in partnership relationship with the Western institutions. The U.S. and the EU are key players in the Baltic Sea region. Other countries in the region - Nordic, Poland, and Germany - also have great interests in the stability of the area.

Indeed, the Baltic Sea region might be considered as one of the most expanding regions in Europe and after the Baltic and Polish membership in EU, the region will be able to reveal its entire potential. Four EU members - Denmark, Germany, Finland and Sweden - border the Baltic Sea, four others - Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland - are on the road to accede the Union and it is only a question of time when it happens. Finally, Russia is in a partnership and co-operation arrangement with EU (although limited because of continued Chechen war) and declares its intention to expand her relationship with the Union. For these reasons the Baltic Sea has been called a future "inner EU lake".

Today, only one decade after the end of the Cold War and the restored independence of the Baltic countries, the issues of the zones of influence, boundary disputes, ethnic hatred and other past problems have become irrelevant on the security agendas of the Baltic Region. Indeed, immediately after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, there were many warnings that the end of the old socialist system might revitalize old hatreds in Central and Eastern Europe. For 40 years communism had suppressed ethnic nationalism, frontier disputes and minority discontents. Today we can see that none of these evils has come to pass - with the exception of Caucasus, some parts in Central Asia and Western Balkans. Everywhere else minority rights have been guaranteed and existing borders were either reaffirmed or changed by consent. This extraordinary success is above all due to the enlargement processes of the EU and NATO to the East. It has promised prosperity and stability to potential new members in return for their willingness to carry through market reforms, protect mi-

nority rights and settle their disputes peacefully.

The Baltic Sea region today appears to be safe from destructive forces that could cause tension among its states and for the moment traditional military security is less relevant in this region. Problems, which dominated agendas in the first years of independence - the presence of Russian troops on the soil of the Baltic countries, a high degree of militarization in the Baltic neighborhood, tensions due to unsolved minority and human rights issues in Estonia and Latvia, unilateral dependency from the Eastern energy supply etc. - no longer dominate the security agendas. The type of tension most likely to occur in the Baltic is not a military threat, but rather the highly charged, tense political situation which could turn into violent actions, extremist group actions, drug trafficking, smuggling, illegal migration etc.

But even these threats are regarded as manageable within the existing institutions and cooperative structures. More important is to detect what elements of

challenges, ambiguity and certain instability of a wider scope that still characterize the region, to notice if distrust, which may come to us from the past, still dominates relationships, if asymmetrical balance of capability still remain a source of tensions - is it possible that a Cold war type of conflict again can become pertinent in the regional context?

These are more theoretical questions, but there are many practical issues as the economic security, enlargement of both the EU and NATO, regional cooperation and neighborhood issues, including Russia and its Kaliningrad region, the U.S. presence and the wider security context.

Finally, not all states in the region enjoy an equal sense of security status. Neighbors of the three Baltic countries - Nordic countries - are solidly integrated both internally and with the rest of Europe. Presently many outsiders still regard the case of the Baltic trio as somewhat different. Although a joined community of sovereign countries, institutionally and mentally they are still apart. This pattern of ambiguity shows that further reflec-

tion is needed on the place and functions of the Baltic security cooperation.

***Enlargement of
the European Union***

One can say that what is happening in the enlargement process of the EU is that Europe is returning to where it belongs, to its original sites, from which it had to withdraw temporarily. Membership in the EU is a precondition for modernization of the Baltic countries' economies and societies as well as for fully-fledged participation in the international community. Three small states will contribute to the economic, political and social progress in Europe, to the promotion of cultural diversity and the development of common values.

At the same time, the EU's enlargement towards the Baltics is more than just an economic factor or recognition of their European cultural heritage. The Baltic countries' membership of the EU would mean a dramatic shift in Baltic geopolitics. For several centuries being forcefully

kept under totalitarian regimes or during the short prewar period of independence fluctuating in between the East and West, the Baltic countries in case of EU membership would for the forthcoming years be earmarked as a constituent part of the democratic West.

Indeed, the Baltic's as well as other countries' membership in the EU will have a positive impact on the stability in the region and will be beneficial to its neighbors. Baltic Sea states regional cooperation, particularly among the states of the Baltic Sea, Latvia and Estonia, as well as the strategic partnership with Poland, is of special importance to Lithuania. Together with the other Member States of the EU, Lithuania would contribute to strengthening the role of the EU in Northern and Eastern Europe, particularly in its relations with Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. At the same time, Eastwards enlargement of EU would increase political stability in the Baltic Sea region, guarantee the consolidation of democracy, rule of law, and the human and minority rights protection.

That is why it is of crucial importance for the EU to continue the enlargement process. EU, unfortunately, is badly conflicted on the issue of expanding the Union-membership. Some countries, e.g. Germany, would like EU membership for some of its eastern neighbors, but is concerned about the free movement of eastern workers into Germany and illegal immigrants. EU politicians also shrink from farm-subsidy reforms regarded as necessary if the EU is to bear the cost of the entry of heavily agricultural states.

Be as it is the EU has already started its journey towards the Baltics. Estonia in 1997 became the first Baltic country to start negotiations and by that making a breakthrough in Baltic geopolitics. On December 1999 the Helsinki EU Council approved the Commission's recommendation to open accession negotiations with Latvia and Lithuania. Progress in negotiation go hand in hand with progress in incorporating the EU *acquis* into national legislation and implementing it. The Union commits itself to be ready to accept new members beginning

with the end of 2002. On its side, Lithuania stated it's readiness to finalize negotiation during the year 2002 and as from the 2004 it should be ready to implement EU's requirements. Estonia and Latvia have even more ambitious plans.

Economic cohesion and level of integration of the Baltic countries might even suggest that three of them for practical purposes alone can be admitted to the EU during the same wave of enlargement. Such proposals have already been mentioned from the Commission. That is not to say that the EU needs to have an approach of "geopolitical entity". It is a mere practical and pragmatic approach on how to avoid building temporary borders in between a single economic and social space. At the same time, case-by-case approach need to be preserved and better prepared Baltic candidates should not have to wait for their neighbors, which are lagging behind.

The EU enlargement has provided new dynamism to the Baltic Sea region. The space of co-operation between Russia and the EU is expanding; the context of rela-

tions between candidate countries and Russia is subjected to changes as well. The candidate countries face dual EU enlargement challenges – on the one hand, they have to fulfill their membership requirements and, on the other, they have to assist the neighboring regions of Russia in making use of the possibilities offered by the EU enlargement process.

The interdependence between Russia and the rest of Europe is emphasized in the Baltic Sea region. Today Russia is more dependent than ever before on income generated through exports to Europe. The EU will remain Russia's largest trading partner and the main export market for its natural resources. Forty percent of Russian foreign trade is with the Union.

The Union's enlargement to the Baltic region raises a question of security and many in Lithuania ask - does the EU provide the necessary security and stability to the region? The EU does not provide any formal security guarantees but, of course, membership in the Union will definitely strengthen Baltic security. Regular exchange of information and common

decision-making has already proved to decrease the possibility of conflict among its members. The fact of co-ordination of foreign policies among EU members also decreases the possibility of external risks. Although membership of the EU would be an important stability factor in the Baltic Sea region only NATO can provide formal security guarantees.

Of course, the strengthening of home and justice affairs of the EU is on its way and any future EU member will be capable to contest so called "new threats", i.e., smuggling, crime, etc. That, together with the increased role of EU in crisis management, would bring a stronger sense of stability and security to the region.

ESDI/ESDP

Indeed, strengthening of EU's crisis management and military and civilian capabilities is a positive development by itself. Seen from a Baltic Sea perspective, the development of the Common European Security and Defense policy/European Security and Defense Identity, firstly,

should benefit the European security environment and, at the same time, not weaken but reinforce the transatlantic link lying at the heart of European security. Putting in practice the common European policy on security and defense concerns more than only the current EU members, and is an issue for consideration among all contributors to the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area, including EU and NATO candidate countries.

The EU is not just a club of wealthy nations and well functioning economies, but also the Union of countries with the increased determination to coordinate efforts in response to external political and security challenges. The Kosovo crisis once again has revealed the fact that the European countries have to have effective European crisis management capabilities in order to cope with potential crises that might occur at the periphery of Europe in the future.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as active applicants for NATO membership, associated countries with EU, and associated

partner with the WEU attentively follows the processes on the strengthening of European crisis management, i.e., ESDP/ESDI. Lithuania together with other Associated Partners with the WEU stresses the need for the adoption of the proper decisions enabling Associated Partners; to take part in all ongoing consultations and activities related to the European security and defence policy in relevant modalities, to join future European-led exercises and operations by committing forces, having the same obligations and rights as other active participants, and to contribute to the efforts aimed at enhancing European operational capabilities. That would make EU's crisis management arrangements pertinent to the Baltic Sea region as well.

NATO's openness

NATO membership of the Baltic countries is the biggest challenges ahead of us. Neither EU membership of the Baltic countries, nor the increased defense role of the EU can act as an alternative to NATO - EU is not designed to provide

“hard” security guarantees, although a scenario where one EU member state is threaten and the other members stay away just because of the absent of formal defense guarantees is unimaginable.

After 50 years NATO continues to guarantee and safeguard freedom and acts as the prerequisite for economic and social prosperity. Lithuania's membership in NATO would make final recognition and consolidation of the chosen path of reforms.

Integration into NATO is interpreted differently east from us, namely Russia, although it is clearly not a threat to anyone. All states have the right to freely choose their security arrangements and the path to well being. By admitting Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into NATO the Alliance would consolidate the zone of stability and security in Europe. It would also in a positive way affect the traditional attitudes in the East, would help to diminish the established stereotypes and would open the way for further and closer co-operation between NATO and Russia.

Lithuania's membership in NATO would be an extension of the zone of security and stability and a reinforcement of confidence in Lithuanian-Russian relations. Indeed Baltic membership in NATO should be viewed as a positive factor, consolidating bilateral relations and ensuring their further progress. Their accession into NATO would be demonstration and proof that relations between the Alliance and Russia are reaching an entirely new level, thereby confirming that the Alliance and Russia may not only undertake joint operations but also coexist in close proximity. Our countries joining the Alliance would be an additional psychological guarantee, affirming the Baltics as full-fledged partners in their relations with Russia. The accession of new members strengthens the Alliance and increases confidence and security of neighboring countries.

There is no doubt that the security and stability of the Baltic Sea region cannot be considered separately from European security and stability. Just as the other Baltic States, Lithuania will be fully se-

cure only after being integrated into NATO. Lithuania's membership in the Alliance will be a historic act of European unification, making all chances of turning back the clock impossible. The NATO enlargement should continue to deny any attempts to draw new "red lines" in Europe. The new Euro-Atlantic security system can only be envisaged if old dividing lines are removed and the creation of new ones avoided.

Though, presently the Baltic countries do not face a direct military threat they still border regions with a high degree of uncertainty and unpredictability.

In an environment of multiple challenges and risks, the significance of the Alliance remains important for the countries of the region. New risks still exist and NATO's steady hand still saves lives and stops the spread of violence as it was shown in Bosnia and Kosovo. Various local rivals and new challenges to the common European security can be more effectively solved with deeper involvement and closer co-operation with partner countries.

The spread of weapons of mass destruction and international terrorism, internal instabilities caused by a mixture of socio-economic and political imbalances and political fundamentalism could very well lead to crisis requiring a reaction from NATO. A wide range of common risks and challenges can affect Alliance interests. This calls for a broad, comprehensive and joint strategy of the Euro-Atlantic institutions. As a democratic organization based upon the rule of law, NATO must continue to show its commitment to international peace and security, while defending the vital direct interests of the Euro-Atlantic region. If the Alliance continues to adapt rapidly to the realities of the European security, it will retain its strength and vitality.

One of the most important tasks of the new NATO is to promote security integration in Europe across former divides. There is no better way to safeguard security and to strengthen stability in Europe than by linking nations together in close and binding co-operation. The Strategic Concept approved in Washing-

ton by the NATO Heads of State and Government in April 1999 contained a new concept, which could have some relevance for the Baltic Region. It introduced a concept of "non-Article 5" crisis management. The document stated that an important aim of NATO is to keep risks at a distance by dealing with potential crisis outside current Alliance's territory at an early stage.

Integration to NATO, first of all, is based on the adherence to the common values that have characterized the Western part of the globe for many years and that have united those countries to form common institutions to preserve stability and promote prosperity. The enlargement should continue to provide a visible and well articulated individual recognition of achievements of a country that has built a viable democratic society with an expanding free market economy. We do also believe that the limited capabilities of small countries, like Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, can be most affective only when combined with the collective actions of other countries sharing the same values and interests.

The Baltic countries are not asking for a free seat at the table when they apply for membership in NATO. They have proven themselves as among those who are able and willing to make tangible contributions to secure peace and stability on the European continent. The mere prospect of future NATO membership has encouraged states to make strenuous efforts towards democratization and reform and to improve and strengthen relations with one another. Lithuania is linked to the West by the ties of culture, religion, beliefs and common values, and economy. These ties are well complimented by active co-operation in the fields of defense, foreign policy and infrastructure development.

Lithuania is ready to assume the obligations and commitments under the Washington Treaty, is fully prepared to share the roles, risks, responsibilities, benefits and burdens of common security and collective defence and to subscribe to the Strategic Concept.

The admission of new members into the Alliance is important not only to

NATO's expanded security and stability but also to the destiny of the values and principles that communism denied and in whose name communism was resisted and ultimately brought down. NATO enlargement is a natural and continuing consequence of the emergence of an undivided and increasingly democratic Europe.

At the 1997 Madrid Summit where three Baltic countries were indirectly mentioned in the "open door" part of communiqué, and two years later, at the Washington Summit, leaders of the Alliance made it clear that the Alliance is on an irreversible path of changes. The invitation of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO was the best illustration of that. In Washington last year the Alliance leaders went even further in the case of Baltic countries by naming them explicitly and recognized progress made by them and other aspiring countries and reiterated NATO's openness by setting a target date - 2002 - for the next revision of the enlargement process. They provided a solid mechanism - the Membership Ac-

tion Plan (MAP) - to assist the applicants in preparations for eventual accession. These facts are encouraging in a way to double efforts to be qualified for membership in the second round of enlargement.

Lithuania expects the MAP together with an enhanced PfP program to constitute a very practical and membership-tailored element of NATO's "open door" policy. However, even without the MAP Action Plan Lithuania is well on the way to prepare to assume membership obligations. We have worked hard to get ready for membership not for the sake of membership in itself, but in the interest of our country.

Lithuania has prepared and submitted a NATO integration programme, which details the financial and military commitments Lithuania is prepared to make to NATO. As part of these commitments Lithuania is ready to spend 2 % of its Gross Domestic Product on defence by 2002. On the practical side we are concentrated on C3, the adoption of a new force structure, systematized education

and training system, including English language training, logistics, quality of life improvement, development of infrastructure, armament and equipment procurement, and air defence. We are creating an armed forces based on Western models, which can be integrated into NATO and also if need function independently of other armed forces.

The Programme places great emphasis on the need to prepare force structures, to contribute militarily to collective defence and to the Alliance's new missions. Lithuania has adapted a firm commitment to a progressive ten-year modernization and procurement programme to improve its military capabilities. A ten-year armed forces development plan foresees an active military force of 25.000. We have already begun to reform our reserve force. After completion of the reform we will have a complementary force of over one hundred thousand highly motivated reservists who can be activated in case of a crisis situation.

Lithuania is developing the overall capabilities of its armed forces and enhanc-

ing interoperability by acquiring anti-tank and anti-air weapons. This will enable Lithuania to defend its sovereignty and protect its democratic values, while simultaneously contributing to the effectiveness of the Alliance, contribute militarily to collective defence and to the Alliance's new missions. The development of self-defence capabilities and the development of Armed Forces capabilities of operating in conjunction with NATO or as a part of the Alliance Forces are an enormous task requiring strong determination of our political and military leadership.

The successful implementation of the MAP mechanisms is essential for a credible and continuous enlargement process. We note the Alliance's readiness to provide advice, assistance and practical support to the aspirant countries and in this context expect focused and candid feedback on our preparations for NATO membership.

The enlargement should continue to demonstrate the credibility of the Alliance's "open door" policy by launching individually tailored and membership

oriented programmes of measures designed to assist aspiring members in their practical preparation for accession. Lithuania has made significant and substantive progress in meeting the criteria for NATO membership, it is a fully functioning, stable democracy where human rights, freedom of expression, the rule of law and free and fair elections are respected.

The enlargement of NATO is a factor for stability in Europe and the Alliance should not close its door to well qualified candidates. We hope that this process and timely evaluation of the progress made by individual aspirants will enable the NATO Summit, which will be held no later than 2002, to launch a subsequent round of enlargement by extending new invitations to qualified candidates, including Lithuania, to start accession negotiations.

Let us be frank - there is little evidence at the moment that NATO's leaders are considering inviting new countries to start pre-accession talks already by 2002. The expansion to include Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into NATO

has turned out to be more problematic and expensive than originally expected - a factor that has made many member states reluctant to start new accession negotiations.

First, the second round of enlargement definitely suffer from a lack of leadership in the West. In the U.S. everything is overruled by the presidential elections, which traditionally tend to be "inward looking". In Europe enthusiasm for enlargement is decreasing drastically: Germany lost its rationale and political will (with the change of political leadership) and even strategic necessity (with Polish membership of NATO). France traditionally gives the EU first priority. Three Nordic Allies - Denmark, Iceland and Norway - and three newcomers - The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland - are keeping the debate on enlargement open, but they lack essential political influence at the negotiation tables.

Second, the whole argumentation for the second round differs from that of the first round. Value-driven motives are being replaced by cool geopolitics: What are

the new countries capable of contributing to NATO, are they important in respect of NATO's new missions, are these countries defensible etc.?

Third, the enlargement issue has moved down on the NATO agendas. Operations in Bosnia and especially in Kosovo, the ongoing debate on Defence Capability Initiative, ESDI (burden sharing), and relations with Russia are presently given first priority. Indeed, ethnic tensions in Kosovo continue and there is little evidence that the World community will be able reach a political solution to the most difficult case in Balkan crisis any time soon.

Fourth, growing tensions between the U.S. and Europe (and between the U.S. and Russia) on the National Missile Defence (NMD) issue also contributes little to the enlargement process. Most likely the U.S. Administration will go along with the NMD and Europe will have to decide whether to join the project or not observing the risk of creating a double standard security - one for the U.S. and one for the European Allies. If Europe decide

to join the NMD there will be little spare money left to be spend on the European defence ambitions.

Finally, the Russian factor still dominates NATO's thoughts on openness. From one side, Russia's leadership continues a policy with strong rhetoric against any further NATO enlargement. From the other, the pragmatic and realistic approach with which Russia's President Putin has renewed the relationship with the Alliance will most likely influence the enlargement process - NATO will not be in a position to brake of cooperation with Russia by any unfriendly move (and that is how Russia continue to view the enlargement process).

Such a new context of the NATO enlargement forces the Baltic countries to choose different strategies: Instead of forcing NATO to consider their candidacies or of demonstrating their individual qualities, a strong front of all nine NATO aspirants named in Washington Summit is required.

Indeed, on 19 May 2000 in Vilnius, Lithuania, the ministers of foreign affairs

from nine aspiring NATO members came together to remind NATO leaders of their obligation to open the Alliance. The message of the meeting, which was called by Lithuania and Slovenia was simple - only when all of Europe is gathered within the borders of NATO can we say that the wounds of the Cold War have been healed. In other words, we are talking about a vision for a stable, prosperous and unified continent, allied with the United States to further the common interests and values of both. The Vilnius meeting erases the "red line" the Russians have drawn.

Too often in the past, neighbors have been jostling to position themselves for inclusion in the exclusive clubs of the West, but the Vilnius meeting showed that aspirants (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Albania and Macedonia) are willing to cooperate in order to obtain the common goal of NATO membership negotiations by the year 2002. The statement by the nine read in part: "Our goal will not be reached until each of us, as well as other European democracies sharing the values of

the Euro-Atlantic community and able to bear its common responsibilities, has been fully integrated into these institutions. We call upon the member states of NATO to fulfill this promise of the Washington Summit to build a Europe whole and free. We call upon the members states at the next NATO summit in 2002 to invite our democracies to join NATO."

The declaration signifies that eastern and central Europe has achieved an astonishing solidarity. Here are nine nations, that 10 years ago we feared would be confused by endless ethnic disputes, and which even today we might cynically predict would promote their own individual admissions into NATO at the expense of their neighbors cooperating towards the same end goal.

The three Baltic States, who enjoy strong support from their Nordic neighbors, have claimed to possess the strongest democratic credentials and will therefore be easier to digest than their southern rivals. Other NATO experts have argued that NATO's air war in Kosovo and its large peacekeeping force in the

Balkans proved the Alliance's primary threat is no longer potential aggression by Russia but instability in southeastern Europe. In the wake of the Kosovo war, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and Macedonia won lavish praise from NATO commanders for their crucial support role.

The Vilnius meeting, however, is designed to stop such antagonism and make the case that NATO needs to make. The nine countries hope that by banding together they can repeat the success of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland; whose joint efforts at lobbying for membership succeeded last year. Now, that's a challenge that can be heard and which will demand a response in Washington and the capitals of Europe.

The Vilnius Nine have achieved their end goal: They've set the terms of the debate and formed a powerful lobby group to move a distracted Europe and the next U.S. president (both U.S. presidential candidates - Texas Gov. George W. Bush and Vice President Al Gore - in their letters to the conference expressed commitment to an open-door NATO policy). There

was immediate positive response from the NATO Foreign Ministers.

The action taken by the nine nations places a huge burden of responsibility on NATO to come up with its own strategy on how to accommodate their ambitions while not paralyzing the institutions of a military alliance that operates on a basis of consensus.

Baltic defence cooperation and participation in the PfP

Currently a defence development plan in Lithuania is on the way. It is envisaged that the armed forces can function autonomously, are interoperable with and also can well be integrated into NATO structures. The development of Lithuanian defence structures envisages such priorities and directions. First, to enhance self defence capabilities through the development of infrastructure, the establishment of a new military structure, and the improvement of force readiness through training, purchases of new communications equipment, and anti-tank and anti-

aircraft weapons. Second, to achieve interoperability with NATO - through PfP, PARP mechanisms and using both bilateral and multilateral military cooperation.

Strengthening bilateral military cooperation with other nations is an indispensable part of general efforts to promote partnership and to develop ability to work together. Trilateral Baltic cooperation contributes to that.

Everyone, interested in Baltic security and defence, know the trilateral projects, which all starts with "Blat-". All these projects are embraced by the Baltic Security Assistance Group - BaltSea for short - which for the purpose of improving coordination of bilateral assistance rendered by the countries supporting Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in the field of security and defense has been established in April 1997 in Oslo. At the moment there is quite a number of supporting states which actively participate in the BaltSea framework: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands Norway, Poland, Switzer-

land, United Kingdom and United States.

Life do not permit us to sleep on the laurels, thus the "Blat" projects are undergoing rapid developments. The Baltic Peacekeeping battalion - BaltBat - is undergoing reorganisation from a peacekeeping to a full capacity infantry battalion enabling it to participate in all types of peace operations. Most importantly the unit needs to become part of the defence capabilities of the Baltic countries. The Baltic Air Surveillance Network - BaltNet - after the completion of the equipment installation, personnel training and radar connection has already started its operations in the beginning of the year 2000. Lithuania hosts the regional air surveillance center, capable of being integrated into the NATO network. Lithuanian contribution to the Baltic Squadron - BaltRon - by the end of 1999 was augmented by a mine hunter procured from Germany. All three Baltic countries send their officers to the Baltic Defense College - BaltDefCol - which is rapidly becoming the main venue for the Baltic

military elite education. Finally, BaltPers, a Swedish sponsored project, involves the creation of a modern military registration system in the form of a mobilisation database.

Indeed, the importance of the Baltic co-operation in the field of defence is not decreasing. At the moment, a practical need to organize joint procurement activities and possibilities of facilitating co-operation between national defence industries are underlined.

The equipment procurement policy is oriented toward NATO-compatible systems, which makes Lithuania turn to the Western market, as it becomes increasingly open to the Central European democracies. Lithuania has already procured weapons and other defence equipment such as tactical radios, transport vehicles, coastal surveillance equipment, anti-tank weapons from a number of Western countries. Governments of the Western countries are authorising their defence ministries to sell or donate excess equipment that is being decommissioned as they downsize their armed forces. Also, as part of the package,

these countries undertake to train Lithuanian military personnel in operating the transferred equipment. Lithuania expects this developing trend to continue in the future.

Lithuania is further preparing its armed forces for participation in peacekeeping and other operations consistent with international law. The primary emphasis is placed on participation in NATO-led PfP operations. Practical preparation is being conducted using PfP mechanisms, and Enhanced and More Operational PfP (EMOP) gains special importance. The tasks in the process of preparation vary from adequate training and interoperability to enhancing military representation in the military structure of NATO and developing appropriate national decision-making co-ordination mechanisms. Therefore, the Political-Military Framework for NATO-led PfP Operations (PMF), the Operational Capabilities Concept for NATO-led PfP Operations (OCC), Expanded and Adapted PARP, Defence-Related and Military Co-operation, PfP Training and Edu-

cation Enhancement Programme play a major role in developing Lithuania's crisis response and management capabilities.

Lithuania intends to continue to fully support and participate in the development of various activities and initiatives in the framework of EAPC (such as consultations on security issues, civil emergency planning, humanitarian de-mining, small arms control etc.); the activities of PfP (exercises, implementation of training and education programme, PfP decision-making and planning etc.). Lithuania was constantly using the EAPC to promote practical regional security cooperation: at the end of 1998 the NATO/EAPC seminar "Developments of the Baltic defense structures", which took place in Vilnius.

Especially close co-operation is in security field. The formation of common peace keeping battalion, known as a LITPOLBAT, common military training and participation in peace operations increase Lithuania's, which is aspiring for membership in Alliance and Poland's, which this year became a member of

NATO, role as stabilising powers in the region. On September 18 last year 30 Lithuanian soldiers have been sent to NATO's peacekeeping mission in Kosovo (KFOR) where they joined a polish battalion which is compound unit in the USA brigade.

Russia in the Baltic Sea region

In developing relations with Russia all three Baltic countries seek to perform bilateral relations, which would ensure equal beneficial co-operation in spirit of good neighborhood, strengthening mutual understanding and confidence and extend goodwill for our countries' integration into European and Transatlantic structures. On it side, it is in the interest of Russia that neighboring countries are stable, democratic and integrated into the European institutions.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union the Russian military doctrine and political thought developed the concept of the "near abroad" (which also covered three Baltic countries). The political aim of

Russian leadership in the 1990s has been the reunion of the areas of the former Soviet Union into a more of less cohesive unit. Russian military doctrine of that period presented repression of Russian speaking population in the "near abroad" as an acceptable reason for the use of military force - and it was left to the Russians to decide when the minorities were being repressed. In addition, Russians abandoned their "no-first-use" doctrine concerning nuclear arsenals.

At the same time, Russia made a good name for itself in 1992-1994 by withdrawing its forces from the Baltic countries (although, afterwards almost regretting this move). Although trade between the Baltics and Russia was not flourishing, Russia has shown an economic interest in elaborating its relations with the Baltics not least where the passage of goods is concerned.

In 1997 Russia shifted its Baltic policy to a more positive stance by offering security guarantees and cooperative projects to the Baltic countries. In 1997 Russian President Yeltsin made, in connection with Lithuanian President Brazauskas visit

to Moscow, an offer of security guarantees to the Baltic countries. Later followed a complementary proposal to include cross-security guarantees of the U.S., Germany and France by Russia. The three Baltic countries turned down the proposals. As a rule, guarantees are offered to states threatened by third countries, but in this case Russia proposed guarantees aimed at deterring threats which the Baltic countries perceive to emanate from Russia itself.

It seems that concern with Russia's degraded power status and wounded sense of identity has fuelled preoccupations with territorial integrity. Border agreements between Russia and Estonia and Latvia remained unsigned, although both agreements remain nearly ready for several years and despite the fact that a border agreement with Lithuania was reached. Issues related with Russian speaking minorities, residing in Estonia and Latvia are still a high priority on their bilateral agendas. Russia needs to realize that the ethnic Russian minorities in the Baltic countries will soon become citizens of the EU,

thereby creating a valuable bridge on economic and cultural levels between different peoples. Most importantly, Russians still need to assume responsibility for past misdeeds - the annexation of the Baltic countries, the deportations of thousands inhabitants, and the destruction of their property and cultural heritage.

The 1991 bilateral Treaty between Russia and Lithuania reaffirmed the right of each country to freely choose different security arrangements. Numerous interstate treaties and inter-governmental agreements, including the Treaty on the Foundations of Inter-State Relations and a Border Treaty, have been signed between Lithuania and Russia. An Intergovernmental Commission was established in 1996. The Commission consists of eleven working groups addressing the issues of trade and economy, energy, agriculture, transport, archives, social affairs, science and culture, illegal migration, regional cooperation, properties of diplomatic missions, and financial claims.

Rights of national minorities, including Russians, are fully respected in Lithua-

nia. Lithuania granted the right to obtain Lithuanian citizenship for all the inhabitants that resided in Lithuania up until the declaration of the independence. The Russian population represents approximately 8 per cent of the population of Lithuania and they enjoy full social, cultural and linguistic autonomy guaranteed by the Lithuanian laws and according to international standards.

It is too early to speculate on how new Russian President's foreign and security policy will be developed with regard to the relationship *vis-à-vis* the Baltic States. We simply hope that declared "pragmatism" and "realism" will not develop in to the policy of political and economic pressure that we are witnesses of in Latvia.

On our side, we support the development of democracy, market economy and civic society in Russia, believing that Russia will finally go away from the "territorial mentality". Admission of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to NATO and the EU will facilitate the changes in Russia's position and will help Russia to perceive

herself as a modern player in the Baltic Sea region.

Strong Russian resistance against the Baltic membership of NATO is a well-known fact. But whatever psychological barriers there may exist among Russia's decision-makers, they will be reinforced if NATO stops the enlargement process short of its stated goal of a reunited, democratic Europe. Redrawing "red lines" on the map of Europe evidences the remnants of old thinking. The NATO commitment to cross over these imaginary barriers, is the greatest assistance the West can offer Russia in helping it to find its rightful place in a democratic Trans-Atlantic community. This is why the inclusion of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and other well-qualified countries in the next round of the NATO enlargement could be one of NATO's most important tasks, demonstrating unequivocally that NATO's "open door" policy is credible and firm.

We often hear from Russia's leaders that Russia is prepared to use only political and diplomatic means in its effort to prevent the alliance's eastward expansion. But

if one accepts the Russian demand that countries wishing to join NATO should not join because of the Russian opposition, it will actually mean accepting the Russian view that these countries are in the Russian "sphere of influence". The best way to disabuse Russians of the notion of "sphere of influence" would be to acknowledge the Baltic request for NATO membership and to put it on the Alliance's agenda.

In contrast to Moscow's way of thinking, NATO expansion would bring greater stability along Russia's western frontiers. During the Cold war the border between Russia and NATO was a completely closed and chilly border, but today it is a very relaxed border of cooperation between good neighbors. NATO's enlargement has so far stabilized Russia's frontiers rather than threatened them. If Moscow opposes enlargement because it wishes to dominate its former satellites, NATO should discourage such revanchism.

Maintenance of an open and productive dialogue and engagement with Rus-

sia has been one of NATO's most important goals since the end of the Cold War. Lithuania has the same goal, and has actually been successful in maintaining friendly and co-operative relations with Russia. All political, economic and security-related questions with Russia are being solved through constructive and mutually beneficial dialogues.

Lithuania recognizes the importance of the NATO-Russia Founding Act and welcomes the Alliance's commitment to its partnership with Russia under the Founding Act. Lithuania welcomes the involvement of Russia in restoring peace in Kosovo and is encouraged by Russia's re-engagement with NATO. As NATO's Secretary General said in Vilnius "we need to get NATO-Russia relations back on track... a new European security architecture cannot be built without Russia". Russia has resumed cooperation with NATO after having frozen contacts for nearly a year in disagreement over the NATO bombing campaign in Yugoslavia. That is a positive development indeed.

***Transatlantic links and
the Baltic Sea region***

Further strengthening of relations with all European partners and with the U.S. and Canada, who support the Baltic's European and transatlantic integration, is key priority. The U.S. geopolitical position, combined with its capabilities, make a counterbalancing effect in the Baltic Sea region. It has been a backbone of politico-military support for the Baltic countries ever since the Cold war (even during, as it was seen in the non-recognition of Baltic incorporation policy), and continues to play this role. The U.S. commitment is a strong reminder that the region is an integral part of an Euro-Atlantic context.

Some say that the Baltic Sea region is the one region in Europe where an U.S.-Russian confrontation is still conceivable. Thus, the U.S. has a strong stake in defusing the potential for conflict in the region and promoting its stable economic and political development.

U.S. engagement in the region is characterized by the North European Initiative, the Barrens cooperation and the U.S.-Baltic Partnership.

The Charter of Partnership between the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania, signed in Washington D.C. on January 16, 1998, establishes the institutional framework that promotes the furtherance of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, reciprocal support to the Euro-Atlantic integration and common efforts designed for the consolidation of security, prosperity, and stability within the region and Euro-Atlantic area as a whole.

The Charter underscored a common goal of the partners to work together in enhancing the security of all states through the integration of Baltic countries into the European and transatlantic security, political, and economic institutions. The US-Baltic Partnership Charter states the United State's "real, profound and enduring" interest in the independence and security of the three countries and furthers

the US's commitment to help Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to deepen their integration and prepare for membership in the European Union and NATO. The Charter declares that the integration of the Baltic States into European and Trans-Atlantic political, economic, security and defence institutions is a common goal of all signatories.

The Partnership charter provides the framework for concrete and issue-oriented discussions on how the Lithuanian defence establishment with U.S. support moves forward in building self-defence capabilities while simultaneously preparing for Lithuania's membership of NATO.

***The Baltic security in a wider
European and global context***

The changes in the world and the ever-increasing globalization have made us all well aware not only of our own "back yard" but also of the wider regional and global issues. Having suffered through occupations and destructive policy of violence, the Baltic countries seek to contrib-

ute to the security and stability of the international community and to fight against modern challenges.

Lithuania reconfirms its commitment to the principles of settlement of international disputes by peaceful means and refrains from the use of threat or force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

If the Baltic countries want their security to be respected, they simply can not stay away from the processes outside their region. The Baltic way of dealing with the challenges as well as opportunities of the modern age is twofold - through the active participation in the UN and OSCE, and taking part in peace implementation efforts and co-operation.

First, the UN. In UN framework, especially, on security issues the Baltics are less dynamic as they concentrate primary on European issues. Lithuania seeks for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for a term of 2004-2005, which will allow using the experience of good neighborly relations in strengthening peace and stability at a regional and global level.

For several years the Baltic countries have participated vigorously in all efforts - of the UN, OSCE, NATO and WEU - to maintain security and stability in Europe. Baltics are regular participants in the international missions they contribute civil experts to OSCE missions and contribute civilian police to the UN, OSCE, and WEU mission.

Since 1994 Lithuania has been a constant and fully-fledged troop-contributing country to complex UN peacekeeping operations in Croatia (UNPROFOR), Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES and UN police support group in the Danube region), Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and Kosovo (UNMIK). Since the deployment of the first Lithuanian platoon within the Danish Peacekeeping Battalion to the UNPROFOR mission in the former Yugoslavia, some 30 civilian policemen and as many as 100 troops have served in the cause of peace within the UN missions. Moreover, Lithuanian military platoons, which hitherto total 480 troops, have served with the NATO-led missions IFOR/SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina and

lately with KFOR in the Kosovo province. At the height of tensions in the Balkans in the summer of 1999 a Lithuanian military medical team joined the Czech Military hospital fielded in Albania during the NATO Allied Harbour humanitarian operation. Lithuanian police officers have significantly contributed to the authority and expertise of the OSCE monitoring group in Croatia and the Kosovo Verification Mission. Seeking to upgrade Lithuanian peacekeeping capabilities and readiness, two major projects have been launched. Two peacekeeping battalions LITPOLBAT and BALTBAT were established with our Polish, Latvian, and Estonian neighbours. Now both battalions are fully operational and their further development is under way. Lithuania is also a member of the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

In January 1998, Lithuania joined the Standby Arrangements System for UN peacekeeping operations that was set up to accelerate the process of deployment of peacekeepers. Lithuania was one of the first countries to sign with the Memo-

randum of Understanding with the UN, according to which 24 Lithuanian civilian police officers, military observers and staff officers were put on stand-by and could be made available for deployment to a new mission within 30 days upon a request by the UN.

There are two “OSCE type” issues, which are pertinent to the Baltic Sea region. One is Confidence Building Measures and the second – the CFE Treaty.

The OSCE-wide format is best guarantee to keep Baltic security issues on a European scale and to avoid artificial notion of “regional security” to constantly reemerge. Security is indivisible and there is no doubt that the security and stability of the Baltic Sea region cannot be considered separately from European security and stability. There is no regional security. One can only speak about regional security cooperation.

At the same time, there is still room for improvement of the atmosphere of mutual confidence in the region. Already 1998 Lithuanian President Adamkus in his Statement “On the development of

relations with Russia and the confidence and security building measures” made proposals for a more effective use of the instruments of the Vienna Document of 1999. Based on the President’s Statement, Lithuania proposed to Russia in accordance with the provisions of the Vienna Document and on the basis of reciprocity to exchange a passive quota of one additional evaluation visit beyond the quota established under the relevant paragraphs of the Vienna Document and to exchange information on military forces located in the territories of Lithuania and Kaliningrad region in accordance to the formats of the CFE Treaty.

As part of our efforts to contribute to disarmament and arms control process, Lithuania already last year expressed its interest in the membership in the adopted CFE Treaty, which Lithuania regards as a cornerstone of European security. Also Estonia and Latvia are interested in the CFE.

Lithuania looked positively to the fact that the adapted CFE Treaty, after a ratification process is over, will be open to

new accessions. As it was stated by President Adamkus, at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul, Lithuania considers the possibility of accession to the Treaty, provided the accession terms are in our national interests. Accession terms should not impede the development of legitimate defensive structures of new member-states, new CFE member-states should have a right to full access to the general flexibility mechanism that will be set forth in the adapted CFE Treaty, including the right for Exceptional Temporary Deployment and an accession of the new states-parties to the Treaty as “groups of states” or “geopolitical units/regional settings” should be avoided and individual approach should prevail.

Since the adapted Treaty will no longer be based on the Group to Group structure Lithuania considers that there are no direct linkage between NATO membership and participation in the CFE Treaty. Internal preparations have already begun, such as the established interagency group, the Arms control and verification group established in the framework of National

Defense Staff, which will be a small, but competent force.

Conclusion

Continuous attention from the West is essential in the development of the Baltic Sea region still undergoing a period of transformation. This may take the form of direct investment and trade from Europe and North America and of enlarging Transatlantic institutions, thereby providing unique opportunities for stability and well-being around the Baltic Sea, and thus contributing to an integrated Europe whole and free. On the other side, continuous Baltic effort to promote trilateral cooperation is also evident.

The Western world needs to understand that the Baltic countries are tied to Europe historically and culturally. They share Western values and aspirations. Having thrown off the shackles of communism and Soviet domination, the Baltics, like their counterparts in Central Europe, want to join Europe and the Euro-Atlantic institutions. The Baltic security rests

increasingly on interdependence, cooperation, and the expansion of joint infrastructures and common values. Cooperation in the Baltic Sea region can be a significant contribution to the enhancement of European unity, of transatlantic relations, and of East-West reconciliation on a wider scale.

¹ The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the MFA. Various publications made impact on author's way of presenting the topic: U.S. Policy toward Northeastern Europe, Council on Foreign Relations, 1999; Cooperative Security in the Baltic Sea region, by O.F.Knudsen, Chaillot Paper 33, Paris, 1998; The Third Annual Stockholm Conference on Baltic Sea Security and Cooperation - Building an Inclusive System of Security, eds. J.P.Kruzich, A.Fahraeus, by U.S. Embassy in Stockholm, 1998; Baltic Sea Region. Brief. Prepared by the U.S. Information Service, Stockholm, 1998.

Russian Security Policy – In Search of a Major Power Identity

By major General Karsten Møller of the Danish Army

Introduction

“The paradox of Russian History lies in the continuing ambivalence between messianic drive and pervasive sense of insecurity. In its ultimate aberration, this ambivalence generated a fear that unless, the empire expanded, it would implode.” In this very eloquent way Henry Kissinger describes the main trend in Russian and Soviet foreign policy of at least two centuries. (Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 1994, p.143). A Russian would most certainly answer by saying: “Geography is the destiny of nations” and thereby indi-

cating, that Russia’s geographic position between Europe, Asia and the Moslem world has shaped its geopolitical evolution and foreign policy and even its domestic development. Russia has never really been an integrated part of Europe, neither politically nor economically. On the other hand Russia has never integrated politically or economically with Asia in spite of the fact, that the Russian expansion took place mostly to the East, counting more than 80% of Russian territory. In reality Russia has always been looking to and has been culturally much more integrated with the West than both Russians and Westerners normally realise.

The dissolution of the Soviet Empire and breakdown of the Soviet Union once again opened the debate in the Russian political elite on the Russian national identity, in search of a new political and economical system, geopolitical orientation political allies and economic partners abroad.

The last decade has been turbulent for Russia politically, economically and socially. Russian security policy has undergone several changes, has obtained very few successes, but several setbacks.

Especially the year 1999 was a true *annus horribilis* for Russian foreign policy, where the Russian weaknesses were dis-

tinctly exposed, culminating with the Kosovo-crisis and the Russian isolation at the summit in Istanbul in November. The initial reaction was a strong and profound anti-western sentiment of the Russian political and military elite, but not at least among the Russian population. The Russian rhetoric resembled that of the long forgotten cold war. In the wake of the Duma and presidential elections the political elite is rethinking Russian foreign and security policy. The sentiment is still anti-western and especially anti-NATO, but the recognition of the Russian interests and options seems to be far more realistic in the environment of the new President than it used to be. The Russian policy-makers will undoubtedly analyse the Russian experiences of the last decade before they formulate a new foreign policy concept. The purpose of this article is in principle the same, but instead of formulating the new Russian policy, which would be a very interesting exercise, but beyond my possibilities, it will try to identify the different options.

***The four schools of thought of
Russian foreign policy***

In the last years of the bipolar world-order Gorbachev and Shevardnadze formulated the concept of New Political Thinking, a new philosophy of foreign affairs, which recognised an interdependent and interconnected world where the importance of national interests and military threats was less dominating; instead human values played a greater role. A cautious rapprochement with the West resulted in several weapons control-agreements and in the end the acceptance of the German reunification and the independence of Eastern Europe by the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. The Soviet policy contributed considerably to the end of the bipolar world even if it can be said that the Soviet leadership had to make a virtue of necessity due to its lack of internal ability to maintain its position as superpower.

The first president of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, was a strong advo-

cate of a pro-western foreign policy and made a considerable impact on the conduct of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This policy was seen as a logical consequence of his policies on democratisation and market economy. But even at that point, the post-cold war euphoria, consensus could not be obtained in the political and military elites on the direction of the foreign policy and at least four main foreign policy schools, two idealistic and two pragmatic, could be identified, according to one of the leading Russian experts. (Aleksej Arbatov, "Russian Foreign Policy Alternatives", International Security, Fall 1993)

The first school is described as an idealistic school of liberal democrats, represented by Yegor Gaidar, Andrej Kosyrev, Anatolij Tjubais and partly Viktor Chernomyrdin. Their main concern was a rapid economically and politically integration of Russia into the West as a means of securing the implementation of market economy and democracy. The European Union, IMF and the World Bank were the main partners in the field of

economy, while co-operation with United States, e.g. the signing of Yeltsin in 1993 of the START II - Agreement, was seen as a means of establishing a new strategic partnership with the only remaining superpower. In the period 1992-93, the so-called euphoria period, they were dominating Russian foreign policy.

The leading members of this school eventually became rather unpopular in parts of the political and military elites because of some serious consequences of their policy for what was and still is perceived as basic Russian security interests. But first of all they became extremely unpopular among a vast majority of the Russian people because of their responsibility for the economic shock therapy, the privatisation (to the benefits of "the friends") and the social decline of the majority of the people.

The impact of this unpopularity also affected their foreign policy, which in the eyes of many people was totally compromised, as was the rest of their policy. This might be unjustified, but was a fact that their political opponents have used skilfully.

From an objective point of view, however, this school could be and was criticised for their obvious lack of interest in developing pragmatic relations with the emerging CIS-countries, based on the new political situation. The same can be said of their policy towards the Eastern European countries, which had just left the Warsaw Pact. Both areas are of vital importance for Russia's geopolitical situation and thereby for their relations to the West as well. They did not recognise the potential of divergences of Russia and the West on important regional and global issues, e.g. originating from diverging security interests due to Russia's status as a European as well as an Asiatic power. Their policy has been characterised by their failure to formulate the essential foreign policy objectives and security priorities of the Russian Federation. In her merciless critique of this school Dr. Nadia Arbatova concludes: "on most issues Russia just followed Western lead having produced a wide-spread impression of a never ending sequence of unilateral concessions, which discredited the

very idea of co-operation with the West and resulted in a more self-assertive course of Russia." (Russian Foreign Policy After the Dissolution of the USSR.)

The second "idealistic" school was "the internationalists", as its supporters preferred to characterise themselves. They were in favour if the of the restoration of the former Soviet empire and are often also called "Derzhavniks" after the old Russian word *derzhava*, which literally means state, but has a clear implication of empire in contradiction to the modern Russian word for state, *gosudarstvo*. The leading members of this school were communist like the chairman of KPR, Gennadij Zyuganov, the chairman of the Duma, Genneadij Zeleshnov and neo-imperialists like e.g. Aleksandr Lebed. They are people who cannot reconcile themselves with the dissolution of the Soviet Empire and they believe that the peoples of the former empire genuinely want its reestablishment. It is only the political elites of these countries who have interests in their continuation as independent states. They do not, however, favour a

reunification by military force but recommend instead the exertion of political and economical pressure on these countries. They have a clear understanding of the many serious weaknesses of Russia in the international system. Nevertheless they have been demanding that the West recognise the "special Russian rights and responsibilities in the so-called "near abroad".

Concerning the "far abroad" they are very suspicious of the West and tend to be isolationists. They are advocating establishing a politically and economically co-operation with alternative partners, first of all China and India, but also Iran. They are in favour of the expansion of Russian arms trade and even exports of nuclear technology and materiel as a means to enhance the prosperity of Russia.

The third school of thought was characterised the "democratic-pragmatic" or the liberal, democratic gosudarstvenniki. They believe that a strong democratic state is a necessity for Russia, if the severe economic and political problems of the Fed-

eration are going to be solved. This school comprised people like Grigorij Yavlinsky, Aleksij Arbatov, Sergei Karaganov and Vladimir Lukin. They were pointing out the necessity of defining Russia's security and foreign policy priorities based on the realities of its geopolitical situation and domestic political and economical problems. They were strongly in favour of close co-operation with the West, but were stressing that Russian interests should be pursued, not abandoned for the sake of co-operation and economic aid. They were sceptical about the reliance on Western economic aid and in the words of Nadia Arbatova: "... considered a sound national security policy as a value of its own rights, regardless the amount of foreign credits this policy might earn. They were operating on the principle that rejection of utopian expectations and naïve illusions would help to avoid disappointments and mutual recrimination later."

This school had two different views on the Russian relations with the "near abroad countries". One group wanted to overcome these countries fear of Russia's pos-

sible intentions by giving extended concessions and exercising the outmost flexibility in their mutual relationship. Another group wanted a much harder policy, especially vis-à-vis Ukraine. It is important to note that this problem is one of the most controversial in Russian foreign policy, involving a lot of emotions concerning the lost empire.

The fourth school is often characterised the "reactionary-pragmatic, and consisted of radical nationalists like Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and General Colonel Albert Makashov. They want to restore Russia as a superpower and the Russian empire, if necessary by force, and have been strongly in favour of economic blockade and military intervention on the side of the separatists in the Baltic republics, Crimea, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, Their ideological point of departure is Great Russian nationalism, orthodox Christianity and anti-Semitism; they are strongly anti-Western and have been advocating alliances with Iraq, Libya, North Korea and Cuba. They are in favour of the dissolution of UN; instead they want the

world divided into spheres of influence of the great powers.

This school as well as the first have been marginalised since the middle of the nineties, while the second and the third have merged in the process in the period 1994-96 in which a new broad foreign policy consensus was created.

The new pragmatism

The basis for this consensus was the recognition that the great expectations of the first two years of the Russian Federation had not been met. Russia had failed to become an equal partner of the West

And it was realised among the decision-makers, that Russia had to take into considerations its status as a nuclear power with extended regional responsibilities, what Leon Aron has called postimperial pragmatism. (Leon Aron, *The Foreign Policy Doctrine of Postcommunist Russia and Its Domestic Context*).

This new pragmatism was clearly expressed in the paper made during 1992 by the National Security Council: The

Main Tenets of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, signed by President Yeltsin in April 1993. This document is important, because for the first time in centuries a Russian foreign policy without a special spiritual mission, e.g. Moscow as the Third Rome or the extension of the communist idea to the rest of the world, was formulated.

The document emphasises the relations with the "near abroad" and the Russian interest in strengthening its ties with the former Soviet republics and protecting the Russian minorities left in these countries. The most important foreign and security priorities of Russia were the strengthening of the integration in CIS on the political and economical level, but also on the political-military level.

Creating an efficient system of collective security was given top priority.

The document also stressed the need for resuming intensive co-operation with the Eastern European countries and that European integration without Russia would severely damage vital Russian national interests. Russian-American rela-

tions should be developed on the basis of mutual interests. In the Asian-Pacific ocean region a stable and balanced relationship should be developed with all countries, first of all China, India and Japan.

The active Russian policy vis-à-vis CIS raised doubts in the West of the Russian intentions, especially when foreign minister Kozyrev defined the near abroad as a "unique, sui generis geopolitical space, to which nobody but Russia could bring peace" (*Nezavizimaya Gazeta*, 22 Sept. 1993). Russia worked hard for the recognition of CIS as an international regional organisation with observer status at the UN General Assembly. CIS-peacekeeping in the states of the former Soviet Union was a top priority for Russia but eventually showed to be one of the most controversial issues as well in relationship to the other CIS-countries as to the West. Russia had legitimate security interest, e.g. in Tadjikistan, and felt obliged to intervene, which was disapproved by the West, which on the other hand did not have any intentions of involving themselves in any of these troublespots.

The above mentioned consensus which developed in the period 1994-96, took its point of departure in an emerging recognition that the strategic situation was changing to the disadvantage of Russia

The West was planning the extension of NATO with at least three former members of the Warsaw Pact and was obviously not inclined to take into consideration the Russian objections. The West had apparently lost its interest in Russia disappointed as it was with the domestic development. The development of CIS appeared to be a failure with sharply conflicting interests between Russia and a number of the other CIS-countries. Only Belarus and Armenia could be regarded as loyal Russian allies; and both of them were weak and poor.

In addition, the first Chechnian war 1994-96 demonstrated the weakness of Moscow in maintaining the cohesion of the Federation, which added to the perception of a Russia in a highly vulnerable position. In the political elite the suspicion was raised if the West preferred a Russian disintegration. At least this was

the interpretation of the article of Zbigniew Brzezinski in Foreign Affairs Sept/Oct 1997: "A geo-strategy for Eurasia."

The assessment was that all important political and economical and strategic factors were developing in a direction that was highly unfavourable for Russia. The strategic thinking of Russian political and military elites tend to be dominated by geopolitics and geo-strategy even in the post-cold war period. It is difficult to accept the concept of co-operative security if you tend to consider international politics as a zero sum game.

The arguments of the more traditional political and military strategist got renewed impact. They pointed out the obvious military weakness of the Russian Federation. The armed forces had been hid by a series of "disasters" leading to the biggest of them all, the war in Chechnya by the end of 1994. The many cuts in the armed forces, resulting from the different weapons control agreements which were concluded during the period of Gorbachev and Shevardnadze, were

difficult to absorb for the military system, a system, which only reluctantly considered the structural changes, which were the logical consistency of these agreements. The dissolution of the Soviet Empire resulted in considerable changes and cuts, as did the withdrawal of forces from Eastern Europe, especially from the German Democratic Republic. The officer corps of the armed forces used to be a privileged elite, but now it experienced a social disaster, by the way like most of the civil society. Lack of reform and profound structural changes increased the problems, especially the apparent lack of morale in the armed forces, which was proved during the first war in Chechnya.

The political-military situation had profoundly changed. First of all the military balance had changed dramatically to the disadvantage of Russia. Until the end of the eighties the Soviet superiority had been 3:1 of the five main weapons system categories of the CFE-treaty. The imminent expansion of NATO would increase this ratio to 4:1. From a geo-strategic point of view Russia had withdrawn about 1500

km from Schwerin, Magdeburg and Prag to Kursk and Smolensk as it is pointed out by the Russians. For more than 300 years Moscow Military District had been rear area, now it had suddenly become a "frontline" district. The operational depth of NATO has been enlarged with almost 20%.

The argument of NATO, that the Alliance does not constitute a threat to Russia, has not been accepted by most of the elite. The Russian counter-argument is exactly the same as the Western during the cold war when discussing the overwhelming military might of the peace-loving Soviet Union: It is not only a question of declared intentions, but also of capability, which is a rather important factor in assessing the intentions.

All these military-strategic deliberations led to the conclusion that Russia in this new situation had become far more dependent of nuclear weapons. It became apparent in the National Security Concept of 1997. The purpose of the Russian nuclear weapons was not only the deterrence of nuclear aggression but also if

necessary aggression with conventional weapons, if such an aggression cannot be stopped by other means. Unfortunately the development of the Russian nuclear deterrent was not promising, to put it mildly. Technical obsolescence and lack of funding will force the Strategic Rocket Forces to cut the number of strategic warheads to 1000 by the end of year 2001.

The Russian perception of the international situation in traditional geopolitical and geo-strategic terms contrasted to the Western priorities of arms control, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the much broadened security concept of co-operative security. This new concept was in many ways reflected in the work of the many different institutions in Europe dealing with security issues, e.g. OSCE, NATO, EU and WEU. Russia realised that the Western countries would never allow a new security system in Europe to be based on OSCE, which was the Russian preference. Instead an emerging NATO-centred security system could be observed, a system

from which Russia obviously would be excluded. It contributed to the outspoken bitterness of the Russian political elite and nourished the growing anti-Western sentiment. It was never understood why Germany was treated so generously after the Second World War, while Russia after the end of the Cold War was deliberately excluded from the only decisive security organisation in this humiliating way.

The Primakov legacy

The reassessment of Russian foreign policy was distinctly expressed in what has been called the Primakov-doctrine, named after the in 1996 appointed foreign minister Jevgenij Primakov. It can be described as generally anti-Western and pragmatic, but with some elements of anti-Western idealism and was included in President Yeltsin's Message to the Russian Parliament in 1997. The essence of the doctrine can be expressed in four points:

(1) Russia will carefully develop a long-term foreign and security policy, based on political consensus.

(2) Russia will actively defend her interests, but should avoid direct confrontation in her course of action.

(3) Russia will strive for an international system based on the principles of multipolarity and will oppose all tendencies towards unipolarity.

(4) Russia will develop relations to the most important states in the world in accordance with the potential of Russia and her status as a nuclear power – relations, which are to be built on the principles of equality.

Quietly a shift of paradigm had taken place in Russian foreign policy, a fact that would become very clear during Primakov's period as minister of foreign affairs and since September 1998 as Prime Minister. In a foreseeable future this primarily pragmatic, but basically anti-Western policy will be dominating Russian foreign policy thinking, while the Primakov perception of a Russia who is still maintaining status as great power and therefore has global interests and obligations – the idealistic part of his foreign policy concept – might be fading.

Primakov was striving for establishing partnership and strategic alliances with China and India, but only with limited success. Especially China is reluctant to become a close ally with a weak Russia.

The efforts to enhance the integration in CIS were revived, but apart from Belarus and to a certain extent Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, the efforts must be characterised as a failure.

The decisive relationship, however, was Russia and the West or more specifically Russia - NATO.

NATO's decision at the Madrid-summit in September 1997 to expand the Alliance with Poland, The Czech Republic and Hungary influenced the political and military elites negatively and permanently. The motivation of the Alliance's decision was simply not understood or as the military elite would say: It was all too clearly understood. If Russia did not constitute a threat to the new members, why then did they need this membership? And if it was the intention to create a new and more political security organisation – as it was stated, why then should Russia be kept out?

Russia realised that she could do nothing to prevent the expansion, but she also noted that legitimate and essential Russian interests were not taken in consideration in the end.

Russia chose to consider the NATO – Russia Founding Act, signed at a NATO–Russia summit in Paris in May 1997, as a kind of compensation for the NATO-expansion. Russia had become a strategic partner of the Alliance and it was the Russian perception, that the work in the Permanent Joint Council, PJC, was intended to give Russia at least an indirect access to participate and influence the decision-making process in the Alliance in all essential decisions concerning international security and off course in questions where vital Russian interests were influenced. The final goal would evidently be joint decision-making.

But the desire for and early expectations of a privileged strategic Partnership have been profoundly disappointed. Facts have shown that this was never the intention of the alliance, Russia could not accept participation in Pfp, EAPC, IFOR/

SFOR and PJC as the proof of the good will of NATO.

In these organisations Russia would be reduced to one (big) country among others. Russia wanted at least a relationship between one big alliance and one big country, a privileged partnership.

And if Pfp and EAPC are not enough for the Poles, the Czechs and the Hungarians why then should it be enough for Russia?

The military elite claimed that the Alliance's assurances that NATO's nuclear weapons and conventional forces would not be stationed in the three new member-countries were - to put it mildly - vague. The establishment of the Headquarters of the Danish-German-Polish Corps in Szczecin in Poland justified in their eyes the Russian suspicions. From the very beginning the military establishment seriously doubted that NATO was changing from a primarily military organisation to a merely political one. It also suspected that the concept of strategic partnership between the Alliance and Russia was hollow and its suspicions were con-

firmed when in December 1997 United States and United Kingdom launched airstrikes against Iraq without consulting Russia at all. This event sent shock waves through the political elite. The weakness of Russia had been exposed and the country had been humiliated.

But was this event a shock, the next to come, the launching of NATO air campaign against Serbia on March 24th 1999, has to be compared to an earthquake. In this case what was perceived vital Russian interests were totally neglected and the Russian position as great power had been undermined by the fact that the decisions had been taken in the NATO-council and not in United Nations Security Council, where Russia would have been able to exercise its veto-right. Once again the Russian weakness had been mercilessly exposed and the feeling of deep humiliation, shame and anger was broadly shared, not only in the political and military elites but also not least among common people. This experience will undoubtedly have a long lasting impact on the Russian perception of the West. The new president

might be very pragmatic, but he will be limited in his freedom of action vis-à-vis NATO due to the public opinion, which is distinctly reflected in the Duma.

Shortly afterwards the worst of the Russian expectations were fulfilled when NATO at its summit in Washington in April 1999 adopted the new Strategic Concept, in which NATO, according to the Russian interpretation, stated its intentions to initiate military operations of different kind outside the area of the NATO Treaty and if necessary do it without the consent of the UN Security Council.

In the prevailing Russian perception the air campaign against Serbia had absolutely nothing to do with humanitarian intervention. It was a "demonstrative action" intended to give the Alliance a new and badly needed *raison d'être* at the eve of the organisation's fifty years anniversary.

The Russians are claiming that they have learned an extremely important lesson: Nobody will take Russian interests into account, unless the country possesses

considerable military strength. And if you possess this strength you will be able to neglect international law.

The Russian reaction to the air campaign demonstrated the weakness of the former superpower. The rhetoric was strong and called upon the memories of the worst days of the cold war. But there was very little to support the words. Relations to NATO were suspended, except from the co-operation in SFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as bilateral military co-operation between Russia and the NATO-countries, and two middle-level NATO-officials in Moscow were expelled. Active and substantial support for Serbia was limited. Eventually Russia realised that she had been isolated, except from China and India. The bluff had been called; in the long run you cannot play the role as a great power with an economy of a size of the Netherlands and a (official) defence-budget almost three times that of Denmark. But it can be a very troublesome and painful process to realise this fact. After a while Russia assessed that she had to maintain her influence by participat-

ing in the settlement of the crisis. At that stage former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin was launched as mediator. His role in the negotiations is difficult to assess, but most importantly his appointment sent an important signal to Milosevic and to NATO. Russia wanted a solution with or without the acceptance of Serbia and Russia wanted to be part of that solution.

The Russian intervention was actually very helpful for NATO, which had serious internal problems with the maintenance of the political unity of the Alliance. Apparently she did not get much credit for her efforts. During the negotiations Russian interest were more or less neglected, which became obvious in the final stage dealing with the military arrangement, when the Russian frustration led to the famous "march to Pristina" on July 12th 1999, an event which contributed to the restoration of the Russian self-confidence, but was without any military significance. On the contrary the events demonstrated the Russian isolation. The Russian airforce was denied flight permis-

sion over the countries of their former allies and it was therefore impossible to sustain the battalion at Pristina airport. In the end it had to be supported by NATO.

The impact of the Kosovo crisis

The Kosovo-crisis caused deep concern in the Russian political and military elites. The National Security Council met on the 29th of April. The meeting was presided by president Yeltsin and the consequences of the crisis for Russian security and defence policy was discussed. One of the conclusions was that the nuclear forces should be given priority and that the programmes for nuclear research and development should be enhanced and the ministry of finance was told to provide the necessary funding. Immediately after the meeting defence minister, Marshall Sergeyev, announced that Russia was going to change her military doctrine.

In June the armed forces demonstrated during exercise "Zapad 99" the new Russian threat perception. The scenario was a

local conflict like the one in the Balkans, which is developing into a major regional conflict, where Russia is attacked from the West. A build-up of hostile forces is taking place in the Baltic Republics and in the end Russia is compelled to stop the aggression by using tactical nuclear weapons.

The exercise was analysed in a meeting 2nd of July in which President Yeltsin, all the ministers from the "power ministries" and the ministers responsible for finance and economy participated. At the end of the meeting Yeltsin promised additional funding for the defence and the minister of finance was ordered to provide the necessary means, which must be characterised as a mission impossible.

In the beginning of October a draft of the new military doctrine was published. It confirmed the changes in Russian perception of the international situation. The threats against Russia would possibly derive from local conflicts developing into major regional conflicts. The main threat was once again identified as the Western strategic direction even if the Southern direction (from the Muslim

countries) should be taken into consideration. If an aggression could not be stopped by other means Russia would resort to the use of nuclear weapons. The same basic principles were observed in the new draft of the National Security Concept, which was published shortly afterwards. Minor differences between the two documents could be noted; the National Security Concept emphasised the Russian internal problems, which are seen as the major threat to Russian security. In comparison with the national security concept of 1997 the external threats are accentuated without being dramatised and the nuclear policy is identical with that of the military doctrine. It is important to note that the two documents are representing the Russian view of the world and her place in the international system. In the National Security Concept the illusion of Russia as a great power with global interests and obligations seems to be abandoned. The weaknesses of Russia are clearly analysed and recognised and it seems as if the logical conclusions for Russian security policy have been drawn.

Russia is an important regional power with an enormous potential if it is used properly. Russia is still a nuclear power, which gives her a special status in the international system. It is obvious that the West is not recognised as a strategic partner. It might be a useful partner from time to time but conflicts of interests will continue.

***The impact of the crisis in
Northern Caucasus***

The crisis in Northern Caucasus and the outbreak of the second Chechnian war in the autumn of 1999 have no doubt contributed to this more realistic appreciation of the Russian position. The main security problems of Russia are the cohesion of the federation and the internal weaknesses of the political and economical systems, the social and moral crisis and demographic development. It should be evident from the events in Northern Caucasus in the autumn and winter that the Southern strategic direction is the main external threat to the country. The mili-

tary means necessary for this type of local and even regional conflicts are not nuclear weapons but a wide range of conventional weapons systems, including precision guided munitions. In comparison with the conclusions of the meeting in the National Security Counsel late April last year the new situation requires new priorities for the defence and the military-industrial complex.

Putin's vision

The election of Vladimir Putin as new president seems to conclude the process of analysing Russia's role and possibilities in the international system. It is not yet clear what will be the final result of the process, but there can be identified different options and certain indications of which policy the new president will pursue.

As mentioned in the beginning of this article 1999 exposed the weaknesses of the Russian foreign and security policy. The strong anti-Western rhetoric was clearly leading to a growing isolation and rein-

forced tendencies of self-isolation and what Sergei Karaganov has called a controlled level of tension with the outside world, could be observed. (Moscow News no. 9 March 8-14. 2000). But by the end of the year the prime minister and from the same day the acting president, Vladimir Putin, wrote a long article in *Rossijskaya Gazeta* where Russia's situation was analysed in depth. As also stated in the National Security Concept, which the acting president adopted in the beginning of the New Year the main threats to Russian security are internal and not external. First of all he wants to strengthen patriotism, restore the central power of the state (*gosudarstvo*) which is the prerequisite for modernising the country by establishing economic growth and social justice. It is also the prerequisite for the restoration of Russia's position in the international system (*derzhava*). What kind of role Russia is going to play is not defined in any detail. The president is well aware of the Russian economic weakness. The country is dependent of export of raw materials and crude oil. Russia's lim-

ited economic upturn is based upon the devaluation in the wake of the crisis in August 1998 and the rising oil-prices on the world-market. But this can turn out to be of limited duration. The Russian share in the world economy is shrinking and Russia is almost left out of the information technology revolution if not to speak of the post-industrial development as such.

For the next 15 to 20 years to come Russia will continue to lag behind the leading group of industrial countries even if she succeeds in implementing a successful economic policy.

This situation leaves the president with limited options regarding foreign and security policy.

The different schools described earlier each have their solution.

The first school, the liberal democrats or the Westernizers, is almost non-existing but would suggest that Russia adapt its foreign policy to the Western world and take up a position as a junior partner and this option is totally unrealistic for domestic political reasons.

The fourth school, the reactionary-pragmatic or the ultra-nationalist, is still and - after the NATO enlargement and the bombing of Yugoslavia - even more in favour of a comprehensive military build-up, mobilisation economy, self-sufficiency and extended co-operation with anti-Western states, e.g. Iran Iraq, Libya and North Korea, and an alliance with China. It favours strong pressure on the CIS-countries in order to force them into a closer co-operation with Russia and eventually reunification. This option is just as unrealistic as was the first mentioned, but primarily for economic reasons. Ten years after the breakdown of the Soviet Union there are no way of return to a militarised economical and political system.

The third school is the merged schools of internationalists and democratic pragmatists. They have been supporting the basic concept of Jevgenij Primakov, the concept of a multipolar world, which requires a very pro-active foreign policy in all spheres in order to counter the tendencies to a uni-polar world and to re-establish the geo-strategic balance. Ex-

tended political, economical and political co-operation with the CIS-countries and the establishment of an alliance with China are important pillars in this policy. The purpose is to regain superpower status for Russia.

A new Russian foreign policy?

Sergej Karaganov has in the article, which was referred to earlier, argued convincingly against this concept. First of all it reflects a geo-strategic thinking of the 19th-20th centuries and even though the geo-strategic dimension has not completely disappeared, the globalisation of the world and the geo-economy of the 21st century are not properly taken into consideration. Secondly, it requires Russia to pursue a global power policy, which is beyond the country's economic resources. Thirdly, eventually it might in all probability lead to a confrontation with the United States and the West, which would be totally counter-productive. The fourth argument of Mr. Karaganov points to the fact that Russia is a weakening pole and there is

no need to legitimise this fact even conceptually. The fifth argument concerns the relationship with China. A Russian-Chinese alliance and mutual understanding of a multipolar world is anti-Western and pro-Chinese. It is not Russian interest to be involved in a worsening American-Chinese relationship.

As a new alternative he proposes a concept of selective engagement or a concept of concentration.

It will require a substantial revision of the country's strategic priorities. First priority should be given to the achievement of economic growth and the prerequisite for this will be integration into the world economy. A reliable protection of Russian vital interests is needed. Mr. Karaganov claims that the list should be very short and he mentions one: The maintenance of an effective nuclear capability as the most cost-effective instrument of ensuring security and a wide range of other interests. Russia should abandon its aspirations of being a great power. It is pure illusion as the country's positions in all important fields are de-

clining. The foreign policy should avoid confrontations, especially with the countries, which are important for Russia's economic development. One of the main objects of the new foreign policy will be to attract foreign investments to Russia, which in addition will require comprehensive internal reforms. At last he suggests that Russia drops its tough rhetoric "Our threats are no longer feared, but they irk and discourage those who would like to promote partnership relations with Russia." The proposals put forward of Mr. Karaganov are interesting because they are reflecting a new and much more realistic view on Russia's place and possibilities in the international system, a view which is likely to be very close to the ideas of the new president and might be the basic element in the new foreign policy concept of Russia. This concept is expected to be adopted by the National Security Council in the near future and then signed by the president.

It must, however, be stressed that there are many participants in the decision-making process and it is likely that the

president has only limited freedom of action. The ministry of foreign affairs, the ministry of defence and the general staff, members of the DUMA and Federation Council have still an important say in this process and the Primakov-doctrine was broadly accepted. It will therefore require great efforts to convince them of the necessity of a radical change. No doubt, president Putin is a very pragmatic person and it seems as if he is preparing a major conceptual change step by step.

By stressing the internal problems as the origins of the Russian weakness and not putting the blame on the West but on Russia herself he has contributed to a better understanding of Russia as a major regional power, but has abandoned the concept of Russia as a great power pursuing global interests. He has realised that it will take decades to modernise Russia and that it cannot be done without co-operation with the West. Russia will pursue her own national interests by co-operation in and with major international organisations, e.g. OSCE, EU and the Council of Europe and NATO. As an

equal partner Russia will have the possibility to exert a maximum of influence on the decision of these organisation, and problems concerning foreign trade will have priority. For that reason Russia will probably try to intensify the political and economical co-operation with Europe, especially the European Union.

The president has re-opened the co-operation with NATO. It might develop slowly step by step, but this is probably one of the areas where the new president has the relatively little freedom of action. The sentiments against NATO are still very strong, both in the political and military elites, but not the least in the population. The 24th of March 1999 has not been forgotten and will probably be remembered for years to come. Concerning the special relationship between Russia and the United States in the field of nuclear weapons and arms control there are still many dangerous potential conflicts over the horizon: START II, START III; the ABM-treaty and not at least NMD, which might have serious consequences for the future

Russian co-operation with United States and NATO.

As mentioned earlier one of the most controversial questions in Russian politics is the Russian relation to the CIS-countries. Having recognised its position as a major regional power the relationship with these countries will be of growing importance. The relationship to Ukraine has been improved recently but is still very complicated. The union with Belarus cannot conceal that there are major divergences of interests between the two countries, which are setting narrow limits for further integration. The relations to the Transcaucasian countries are very active but also extremely complicated. The threat from fundamentalist Muslims have contributed to the intensification of the relations to the Centralasian countries and Russia is enhancing its role as the bulwark against this threat.

In the Far East Russia is working to improve the economical co-operation with Japan. The relationship with Japan can, however, only be improved if the conflict over the Kurile Islands can be

solved, which can be very difficult because of the strong nationalistic feelings it will raise in Russia, if concessions are made to Japan.

The relationship with China is friendly if not cordial, but apparently on a much more realistic level than in the times of Yeltsin and Primakov. The talk about a strategic alliance between the two countries has silenced for the time being.

A picture is emerging of a much more realistic and pragmatic Russian foreign policy even if the basic anti-Western tendency will still remain. In recognising the weaknesses of the Russian Federation, it seems to have been accepted that for years to come Russia can only play a role as a major regional power. The world will from time to time be reminded of Russia special status as a nuclear power. Russia will probably not be an easy player in the international system. She will pursue her strategic priorities with all means and the co-operation might be difficult. The Russian strategy might be the same, but the tactics have evidently been changed by the new president.

The predictability of Russia might be enhanced, although this would be a new and an untypical trend for Russia. You always have to bear in mind the words of Grigorij Yavlinsky: "In Russia everything can happen,"

Territorial Defence in Baltic Defence College

By Michael H. Clemmesen, Brigadier General

- 1. Start defensive operations with the territorial forces at the place of attack and continue resistance against the enemy across the length and breadth of the territory causing delay and attrition.*
- 2. Conduct the main defence with manoeuvre forces, closely integrated with and supported by territorial forces.*
- 3. Conduct the deep battle with forces left behind enemy lines with forces infiltrated for the purpose and any available long-range artillery unit, priority against enemy command capability and logistic assets.*
- 4. Protect friendly command elements and logistic assets with territorial forces in rear areas.*

*(From Chapter 1: The Foundation for Operations.
The Baltic Defence College Operations Manual. Revised Edition May 2000)*

When the basis for the creation of the Baltic Defence College was worked out in the summer of 1997, it was agreed that the teaching should reflect the territorial defence idea. Even if the developing operational concepts of the three states were

different in many details, they could be grouped together under that heading.

Territorial defence is never the preferred option. All nations want to meet, contain, and defeat any attack or invasion as far forward as possible, the best

option being to stop it before it reaches the state territory and causes death and destruction.

However, for the relatively weak and poor state, the best is rarely an option. Use of the depth of the territory and the potential power of resistance of the nation to deter – and if necessary counter – attack and invasion becomes the only option. The more significant the relative weakness, the more the defence will depend on full use of the territory and well-prepared mobilisation of the national resources.

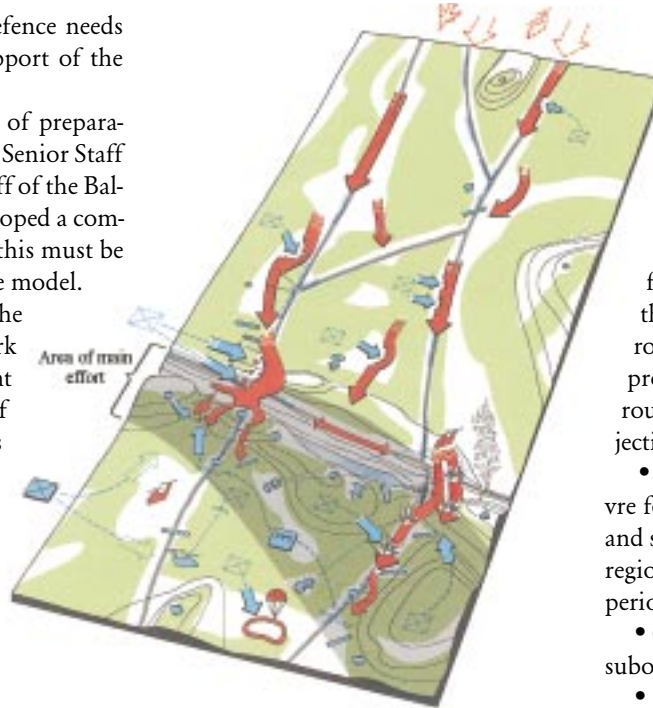
It was also agreed in 1997-98 that the teaching should be inspired by the Total Defence models for the mobilisation of national resources developed by the Nor-

dic States: a balancing of defence needs with the protection and support of the civilian population.

During the last 1½ years of preparation and teaching of the first Senior Staff Course, the international staff of the Baltic Defence College has developed a common understanding of how this must be done. We had to develop one model.

It was not possible within the available course time to work with several, radically different ones. The revised edition of the College Operations Manual and the tactical exercises are the results of that common brainstorming and represents the de facto line of discussion and teaching of mobilisation and Total Defence issues at the Baltic Defence College.

The teaching in the Baltic Defence College operates with Military Regions (sub-divided into Military Districts for local defence and total defence) and manoeuvre forces (brigades and independ-



ent units). The teaching strongly underlines the principle that there must always be a clear responsibility, *unity of command*, for all armed forces (no matter if volunteer force, close air defence, border guard,

coastal defence) in a geographical area. Any responsibility for control of/co-ordination with naval or air force units will be decided by the mission and task organisation given by higher authorities.

The *Military Region* Areas of Responsibility (AOR) have boundaries following the civilian subdivision of the national territory. They also mirror one clearly defined operational level problem or task (e.g. one major likely route of invasion or possible enemy objective: e.g. the state capital). The region:

- Give orders to any assigned manoeuvre forces and any coastal defence forces and subordinated air defence units in the region, according to directives from superior headquarters.
- Give orders to Military Districts not subordinated to the manoeuvre forces.
- Provides Combat Service Support to both manoeuvre forces and Military Districts, as well as host nation support to any international reinforcements.
- Co-ordinates land, naval, and air operations in defence of the region.

The *Manoeuvre Forces*:

- Conduct the main defensive operations.
- Are assigned missions and AOR (normally following Military District boundaries) in the main threat areas.

Forces of the Military Districts in the manoeuvre force AOR are under operational command of the manoeuvre force commander. However, the manoeuvre formation uses its own units against the likely (or actual) enemy main effort. The Military District forces are used outside the expected or actual enemy main effort and in the rear part of the manoeuvre force AOR. Enemy actions in these areas are delayed and reduced in strength, thereby giving the manoeuvre force time to react/move its forces to counter the enemy.

The *Military Districts* are created with an area covering one or more civilian administrative units (counties). Thus they cover the entire area of the state and they ensure that any invasion of the land territory is met at the point of entry with Economy of Force defence means (with

all armed forces, e.g. Border Guard elements, under command) in a way that creates the best possible conditions for the employment of the manoeuvre forces.

***The Military District
Main Defence Mission***

When directly subordinated to the Military Region, they

- Meet and defeat minor violations of the state territory wherever they occur.
- Meet, delay, and wear down major invading forces and gather detailed intelligence concerning the enemy forces in the district, thereby creating the time and conditions necessary for the successful employment of manoeuvre force formations and units.
- Continue the same mission with forces operating behind the forward elements of the invading forces.

When subordinated to a manoeuvre force formation, they

- Conduct forward, flank, and rear security operation with district units or

with elements subordinated to manoeuvre force sub-units.

- Prepare counter-mobility engineer works to the rear of the manoeuvre force formation.
- Guard key military objects (e.g. HQs, prepared obstacles).

***The Military District
Total Defence Mission***

Total Defence co-operation is active in peacetime, partly in that the Military District co-ordinates military assistance to other state and local authorities in the district (in case of natural or other catastrophes, major crime, etc.), and partly in the planning and exercising of the wartime role.

From mobilisation onwards this mission is continued regardless of the tactical or command situation in the district. However, the conditions are drastically different in the three different situations: in our own rear area; when the district is a combat zone; and when behind the lines of the invading forces.

In our own rear area during and after the mobilisation the district:

- Participates in and assists in the implementation of the planned mobilisation and distribution of the total defence structures and resources in the district (e.g. personnel, transport, medical supplies and facilities, other supplies, other facilities) for police, civil defence/rescue service, civilian emergency authorities, and other proper organisations.

- Protects the mobilisation, training, and deployment of the manoeuvre forces and other central defence force and civil defence/rescue units.

- Starts the planned guarding of earmarked key civilian and military objects and institutions.

- Prepares and guards demolitions and other obstacles.

- Counters – in co-operation with other total defence authorities (civil defence, police) – enemy operations in the district (special operations units, and the effect of air and other long-range weapons).

In the combat zone the district:

- Tries as much as possible to continue to support the population and the other total defence authorities.

- Facilitates liaison between manoeuvre force units (or any international reinforcements) and the civilian authorities in the district in relation to evacuation, local logistic support, etc.

Behind the lines of the invader the district:

- Helps to organise and lead resistance against the invader.

- Tries as much as possible to continue to support the population and screen it from pressure.

The Baltic Defence College

Thus the Baltic Defence College has created a common understanding of the concept of territorial defence, which is actively being developed within the framework of teaching of the senior staff course at the college. As the development of this concept is of crucial importance to development of the overall structure and concept of the defence forces of all three states,

it is only natural that the Baltic Defence College is a focal point of developing such doctrine. This development depends, however, on inputs and contributions from all three Baltic states. In the following two articles Major General Ants Laaneots provides a valuable contribution and I welcome further contributions.

The Defence Region and its tasks

By Ants Laaneots, Major General of the Estonian Defence Forces

According to the “Main directions of Estonian defence policy” ratified by the Parliament on May 7, 1996, the defence conception of the country is based on the principle of territorial defence. In Chapter III of that document the following is stated: “To organise national defence the territory of the country is divided into defence regions. /.../ Every defence region is divided into defence districts” (RT I 1996, 33, pg. 890).

The purpose of Estonian territorial defence is to wear down the intruding enemy in every way, to slow down enemy advance by every kind of combat activity, to fiercely protect strategically important objects to keep them under own control until other states in the international security system could react with political, economical and military help. And after that to free the territory of the country either independently or with the help of others.

The distinctiveness of **territorial defence** is:

- **decentralisation of the defence forces by establishing districts.** Forming and preparing wartime units, mobilisation and implementing in wartime are done in specific areas of responsibility. Such military-territorial units are independent in their preparation and conduct of combat activities. They are based on the availability of local reserves and supplies and can operate also when central-

ised command is lost or if the enemy breaks through in the deep of the territory.

- **division of wartime units into two parts** – general-purpose forces and territorial (national defence) units.

- **wide use of dispersed combat tactics and guerrilla activities.** By establishing locations for combat activities instead of fronts and by guerrilla activities in the rear area of the aggressor the latter is given no opportunity to benefit from his advantage in firepower. The enemy is tied in constant combat that has no fixed front line or rear.

The territorial defence system consists of defence regions, defence districts, navy and air force units and units and establishments under central command.

In its order no 198-k "Creating defence regions and forming their staffs" dated March 13, 1998, the Government of the Republic of Estonia tasked the Defence Forces to establish defence regions. The Defence Minister attempted in his order from July 22, 1998 "Forming the staffs of defence regions" to implement the order. However, this implementation has been delayed for several reasons.

The defence region (DR) is a military-territorial operative body of troops capable of independent operations. It consists of different defence districts (DD) and units from different arms.

Tasks of a defence region

The tasks, structure and composition of a defence region are usually determined in accordance with the operative tasks given to it and with its location. In its area of responsibility a DR may have the following tasks:

In peacetime:

- to observe the situation on land, sea and in air space;
- to maintain constant readiness to com-

mand subordinate units and raise a degree of combat readiness;

- to plan and prepare to raise combat readiness and carry out mobilisation;
- to plan and prepare for defensive military activities through specific action plans and through checking their feasibility by conducting training and exercises;
- to plan, prepare and constantly control the availability in quantity and quality of the necessary reserves (reservists, vehicles) and supplies for carrying out defence tasks;
- to organise peacetime training and activities of general-purpose forces' units as well as territorial defence units and to provide regular supplies according to the orders of the Chief of Defence;
- to organise the guarding and protection of objects at the defence forces' disposal;
- to ensure that border guards units and rescue board units in the area of responsibility of the defence region are prepared and ready;
- to prepare the area of responsibility for defence activities;
- to establish the necessary co-operation with civilian authorities, helping

them with preparation for and conduct of civil defence and rescue activities;

In time of crisis:

- planned and orderly to raise defence readiness of the defence region and to form and prepare wartime units for defence activities;
- in co-operation with border guards to counter border violations;
- to wear down the invading enemy and slow down the enemy advance starting from the borders of own area of responsibility with combat activities of border guards and general-purpose as well as territorial defence units that can be formed immediately; to block enemy assaults and tie him up in combat operations thus creating the conditions for forming main defence forces and for using them in an organised way;
- to hold strategically important areas objects;
- to tie enemy forces with active defence, gaining time and creating conditions for outside forces to arrive and take the initiative;
- to destroy the enemy by constant attacks with own forces and together with

helping forces eventually to free all Estonian territory;

- to organise guerrilla war and counter activities in the areas conquered by the enemy;

- to assist civilian authorities in their conduct of rescue and civil defence activities.

A wartime defence region consists of:

- a) units of general-purpose forces;
- b) territorial units, incl. defence districts, rescue units and border guard districts.

The units with the best weapons and the best training status are **designated to the general-purpose forces**. These include mechanised, infantry, coastguard, artillery, air defence and engineer units. General-purpose forces are formed on the basis of defence forces' peacetime units or by defence districts. They are not associated with any specific area of responsibility and they are used, under command of the Chief (supreme Commander) of Defence, to complete the most important combat tasks in any area of the country. In order to form general-purpose forces, those reservists are used, who are between the age of 19-35, who are healthy and have

received complete military training and who will have the best weapons, equipment and vehicles of the defence forces. The battalion or a unit equal to it (artillery battalion, air defence division etc.) is the base unit for the general-purpose forces. In wartime it is practical to form brigades that operate according to the principles of Task Forces, i.e. brigades without a permanent structure. Their composition is determined by the commander of a DR according to the tasks given to them.

Defence districts (DD) are formed on the basis of units from the Estonian Defence League as tactical units designed to complete territorial defence tasks within a certain area of responsibility. In order to form defence districts it is practical to use reservists between the age of 20-55 who have completed conscript service or have received the necessary military training in some other way. They will be given weapons, equipment and vehicles of the Defence Forces and the Defence League not designated for Defence Force wartime units. Also older female and male volunteers may be included in the DD to carry out lighter duties.

To guarantee effectiveness the DD headquarters must be formed already in peacetime integrated with the headquarters of Defence League units.

It is recommendable to form **rescue units** as specialised units within the defence regions based on rescue board peacetime companies. Being in the special purpose reserve of the commander of the defence region these units carry out the most important tasks of rescue and civil defence, and if needed also engineer tasks in wartime.

In wartime **border guard districts** continue observation, guarding and protecting the border in their area of responsibility operating under the command of the commander of the defence region. In sectors attacked by the enemy they organise fierce resistance on the border with the purpose of gaining time necessary for the mobilising the defence region. When the aggressors forces break through the sub-units of the border guard district remain in the enemy rear and begin guerrilla activities in designated areas. When the territory of the country is freed they assume the border guarding duties without waiting for special orders.

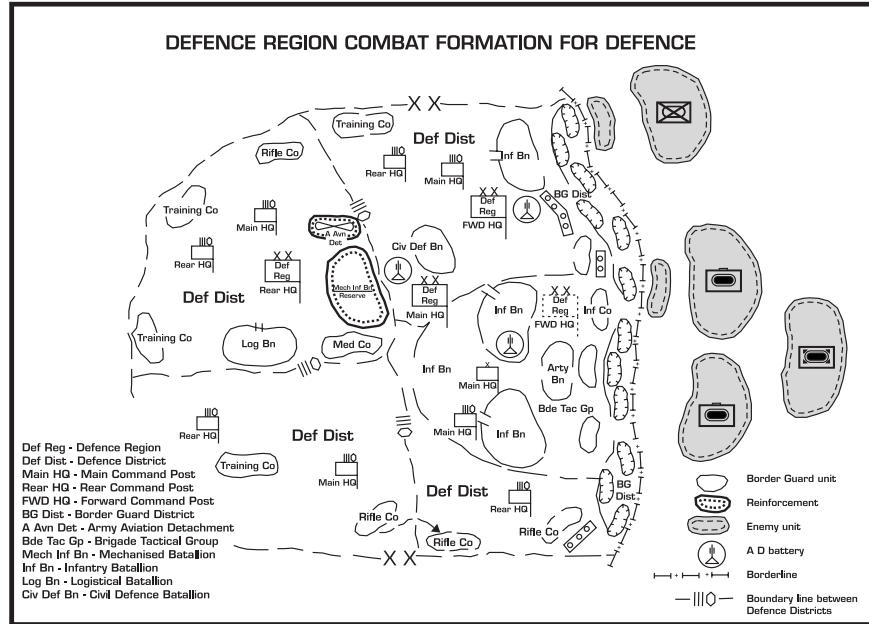
To guarantee the success of the combat activities the Chief (Supreme Commander) of the Defence Forces may reinforce a defence region with additional land-, air- and/or navy units.

Principles of territorial defence activities

Taking into account that combat will often take place against an enemy superior in size and firepower as well as mobile and fire power, the following recommendations may be given for conducting combat activities:

- since we are not able to considerably improve our firepower, we must prevent the enemy from using his fire in a concentrated way. Defensive battles must be conducted not in the pre-planned defence sectors or positions but in deep areas, creating combat sectors and using so called "dispersed combat tactics";

- the technical weakness of own weaponry and inferior mobility must be compensated by a multitude of forces and practical arrangement of territorial defence;



- mines and other obstacles must be widely used. Since we are not able to remarkably improve our units' mobility in the near future, we must try to slow the enemy mobility down to our level;

- to gain local superiority the enemy forces must be tied in combat in a dis-

persed manner and thus avoiding his using his forces in a concentrated way;

- it is important to protect large inhabited locations because combat in built-up areas allows tying and defeating numerous enemy forces with small forces (as the Chechnya war example proves);

- in the areas conquered by the enemy guerrilla war must begin immediately.

Logistic service of a defence region

The rear of the defence forces operates on three levels. First, the rear of the General Staff of the Defence Forces; second, the rear of a defence region and third, the rear of a battalion or a unit that is its equal.

In a small and relatively poor country it is impossible to gather and keep all materials necessary to wage war in the defence forces. That is why the supplies for the units in wartime come from two sources. Military materials that cannot be obtained from civilian society (weapons, ammunition, mines, explosives, helmets, combat order) are obtained and distributed to the units by the logistical system of the defence forces. All the materials necessary for military activities that are available in civilian society (food, fuel, vehicles, spare parts, certain clothing items etc.) are purchased or obtained by implementing the obligatory duty law of the national defence.

Supplementing the units of a defence region with materials necessary for everyday and combat activities takes place on the account of both the resources of the defence forces and local resources following the principle of "from up downwards" as follows. The defence region provides supplies for all its units, in wartime also border guard and rescue board units, guaranteeing material transportation to units based on the units' commanders' requests either with rear area vehicles or with vehicles of the designated defence districts. If the transportation means are inadequate and if the situation demands it, also the units' vehicles are used to transport materials.

Principles of mobilisation

Mobilisation of a defence region is its organised and planned transition from peacetime staff into wartime staff within the set timeframe.

DR mobilisation may be total or partial. It is prepared as territorial and dispersed. It must be possible to conduct

mobilisation in a secret manner, regulated with orders, thus guaranteeing a flexible increase of forces corresponding to the greatness of the danger.

The speed of conducting it is vitally important for the national defence.

To conduct mobilisation **formation centres** are established in the garrisons and the defence districts, one for each battalion or a unit equal to its size. Formation centres form sub-units in the **formation points** that are established, one for each company or a unit equal to it. The personnel of formation points and centres are designated from the Defence League and from the personnel of the defence forces not used in wartime forces and from conscripts. It is practical to have a defence region 2IC to run mobilisation in the defence region, his work organ being a regional national defence department.

Commanding a defence region

The commander of a defence region is under the direct command of the Chief (Supreme Commander) of Defence and

is fully responsible for completing the peacetime and wartime tasks given to his defence region as well as for co-operation with the representatives of different services and civilian authorities.

The commander of a defence region leads subordinated units, organisations and establishments either directly or through his headquarters of the defence region. The headquarters of the defence region is commanded by the chief of staff, who carries out his duties being the acting 2IC of the commander of the defence region. It is practical to appoint another 2IC of the commander of the defence region in addition to the chief of staff.

All the defence forces' land-, navy- and air force units are placed under the command of the defence region commander by the Chief (Supreme Commander) of Defence. Establishments and organisations that are situated within the area of responsibility of the defence region are totally subordinate to the commander of the defence regions. In peacetime operational issues, i.e. combat readiness, raising defence readiness and mobilisation,

preparing the area of responsibility for combat activities, are the region commander's direct responsibility. In addition Defence League, border guard and rescue board armed units and national defence departments are directly subordinated to the regional commander in case a crisis endangering the national safety of the country breaks out.

To command the defence region in wartime at least three command posts are established: **main command post (MCP)**, **alternative command post (ACP)** and **rear command post (RCP)**. Commanding of all activities of the defence region takes place from the main command post where the commander and main personnel of the headquarters of the defence region are situated. The alternative command post with the necessary operational personnel, commanded by the 2IC of the commander of DR, is situated in a hidden and protected terrain. It monitors combat activities and the orders of the commander of DR, being ready to take over commanding the forces of the defence region. During the course of com-

bat activities the ACP may be used when necessary to command the tactical group operating in the main direction of the activities. Depending on the operational situation the command posts change their locations on the average 1-3 times in 24 hours. It will be disallowed to relocate the main command post and alternative command post at the same time.

During the time prior to combat activities and also in a war situation where there is no direct danger, the peacetime DR headquarter building and its communication systems may be used as a permanent command post of the defence region.

"A general conscription duty, a dispersed command system that is always ready to operate, a territorial system of mobilisation and people's great desire to defend the country are the preconditions for the success of the territorial system of national defence." (*Lieutenant General Ermei Kanninen "About our system of territorial defence", report in the Finnish Military Science Society, March 1, 1971*).

The Defence League and Defence Districts

By Ants Laaneots, Major General of the Estonian Defence Forces

The experience of the defense wars in the last century has shown that the success of military activities does not depend only on the fighting ability and bravery of the units waging war on the front but more and more on what is done to ward off the enemy on the whole territory of the country. Next to the units with the main intensity of the regular combat activities, the numerous complex of military units and establishments carry out all kinds of tasks in forming war time units, providing all the necessary supplies for the fighting units, securing and supporting the fighting units and protecting citizens from the dangers and hardships of war all over the country.

Nowadays an aggressor will use numerous special forces in an attack: land- and marine assault, air- and rocket impacts in order to neutralize power- and command structures, destroy or seize important objects and economy, and to quickly suppress resistance and the defense ability of the population of the victim country. It

is very difficult to predict in which part of the country the enemy may suddenly appear therefore the means and readiness to face him must be evenly distributed all over the country. To preserve the defensive will of the fighting units and of the whole population warding off the aggression it is particularly important to have a

stable force in every place of the country securing the rear area. It is important to know that organized resistance will be put up everywhere the enemy has appeared including the territory seized by the enemy. The system of territorial defense is the instrument used to solve these problems.

In a majority of the European countries, particularly in those that do not belong to any military alliances, the armed forces are divided into; general-purpose forces and territorial units. Such classification is used in the armies in Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania etc.

As a rule, general-purpose forces compose a more battle efficient and mobile

part of the armed forces. They are designated to solve the major combat tasks of the national defense in the core of aggression in any part of the country. They are not permanently assigned to any area of responsibility.

Territorial units are located all over the country and they have certain areas of responsibility. In a way they form a nationwide "security cover" and fill various tasks both in own rear and in the territory occupied by the enemy.

Territorial defense in Estonia

The conception of Estonian national defense has gone through a development of eight years. The purpose was to establish a system of defense forces that is as easy, practical and effective as possible, that would guarantee completing the mobilization task and resistance in every case no matter what the situation. The national defense models of the Nordic countries served as a good example.

The basic principles of our national defense are of a total nature and based on

territorialism. Total defense embraces the idea that military defense of a small country is able to achieve its goals only when the entire population participates in it with all available means. The territorial structure serves this purpose and allows achieving it.

Today Estonia has achieved the correct solution of the national defense that needs only further detailing and consistent implementing. Both the Scandinavian experts and the experts from NATO have declared our general defense conception fitted for the purpose. It provides decentralizing the national defense in time of war and creating **regional military-territorial body of troops – defense regions** with vast authority and responsibility. The defense region consists of general-purpose military- and territorial defense units. It has a fixed area of responsibility where it is fully responsible for preparing and successfully conducting defensive activities also in the situation where the central command of the national defense in no longer operational.

In one or the other way we have both of the mentioned components.

Peacetime units of the armed forces prepare and form general-purpose forces necessary for the wartime.

Territorial defense is based on the Defense League

Also we do not have to start creating territorial units from the scrap. When our neighbors in Finland form their territorial units only while declaring mobilization, we have already in peacetime a nationwide territorial defense structure in the form of the units of the Defense League that are well suited for the establishment of wartime territorial defense. Additionally the areas of responsibility of the Defense League units coincide with the country's administrative divisional units – counties, which makes it considerably easier to connect the military side of the national defense with civilian society and to establish and implement the total defense system as a whole.

However the Defense League law does not determine wartime tasks for the organization, but regulates the activities of the Defense League. These are established in the mobilization plan, in the overall plan of national defense and in other legal documents concerning national defense that are ratified by the Commander of the Defense Forces (in wartime supreme commander). However, in peacetime the Defense League is not capable of carrying out all tasks of wartime territorial defense. The calculations show that the minimum staff necessary to carry out the tasks of territorial defense is 30 000 people. The voluntary national defense organization Defense League incorporates a relatively small amount (8 200 people) of members of different background and age which is simply not enough. Defense League units must become the framework that is going to be the basis of forming wartime territorial units – defense districts. The missing personnel will be formed out of the reserves by mobilization. Thus the Defense League changes its nature in wartime, as it cannot be based only on the

principle of its members being volunteers and it **becomes a specific part of the defense forces – territorial force**, its units become defense districts.

Tasks of the defense districts

The tasks, structure and order of formation are determined by the order of the Commander of Defense Forces from December 1998.

Being three to four times larger than the peacetime unit the defense district (DD) is a tactical unit of territorial defense with a structure and set area of responsibility adjusted for it.

The tasks that a defense district must complete in their area of responsibility are wide and various. More important of these tasks are:

- Carrying out tasks of raising the defense readiness and in case of mobilization forming the units that are both permanent staff and the units appointed for the task;
- Helping the National Defense Departments and units conduct mobilization;

- Preparing the defense district's area of responsibility for defense activities;
- Securing and reinforcing the border guards (in frontier defense districts);
- Helping local municipal governments, government establishments and the police in guaranteeing the public order according to legislation;
- Organizing guarding and protection of important national and military objects, material supplies;
- Manning observation posts and command points that belong to the close-air surveillance system (CASS) of air defense and making sure the observation tasks are completed constantly;
- Organizing the take-over of military quarters and other objects on the departure of the units and their purposeful use and care;
- Combat with the enemy reconnaissance-diversion groups and the air- and marine assaults;
- Protecting the area of responsibility either independently or together with other military units in case the enemy attempt to conquer it;

- Calculating and preparing military reserves according to the tasks set by the commander of the defense district;
- Providing supplies to the military, evacuation of the injured and the sick from the battle area and securing the rear according to the tasks set by the commander of the defense district;
- Organizing and commanding guerilla activities resistance movement in case the enemy has seized the area of responsibility
- Helping the local authorities implement civil defense.

The structure and composition of every defense department depends on its location and wartime tasks. For example, one of the tasks of a DD that is situated on the coast or on islands may be protecting the coast. It means that coastal defense units must be a part of that DD. A DD with an open area that has a danger of enemy attacks by tanks may need anti-tank sub-units etc.

The typical structure of a defense district has:

- **Internal defense sub-units** - to guard and protect important objects and material supplies, to man the close-air sur-

veillance system (CASS) of air defense, to complete tasks of internal security and guerilla activities in own area of responsibility;

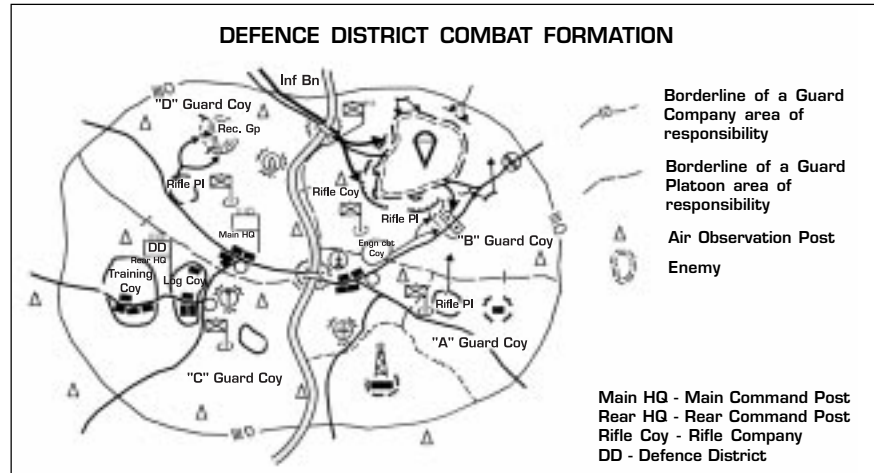
- **Combat sub-units** - to complete unexpected general military, guerilla and other combat tasks in own DD and in areas of responsibility of other defense districts within the defense region;

- **Anti-tank, air defense and artillery sub-units** - are formed according to the

need to complete tasks characteristic to these arms;

- **Engineer sub-units** - to obstruct the enemy movement, to destroy objects and demination, to do ground work, to repair bridges and roads, to guarantee crossing over bodies of water. It is practical to make use of peacetime road- and bridge construction organizations in forming engineer sub-units;

- **Training sub-units** - to form new units



and to quickly prepare necessary reserves to supplement the combating units;

- **Logistics sub-units** – determined by own defense district sub-units and the headquarters of the defense region to provide supplies and services for the military units.

Defense districts are established step by step

At the beginning of establishing and developing the defense districts it is practical at first to form one battle company in every defense district (Tallinn Special Defense District organization will need special consideration) and the amount of internal defense companies that corresponds to the amount of tasks given to them (in Tallinn the internal defense companies may be joined into internal defense battalions if necessary), also one engineer company, logistics company, heavy arms sub-units according to the weapons at use and tactical need. In order to gain experience also the number of battle platoons in the internal defense companies should at

first be limited to one in each company. Various tasks of a defense district also allows maximum use of female volunteers and the members of the Women Home Guard who are sure to manage with some tasks better than men, at the same time allowing to use the latter in combat units.

In course of military activities also the border guard sub-units are given under the command of the commander of the defense district in case the former have withdrawn from the border sectors under attack into the defense district.

In planning mobilization of defense forces practical distribution and designation of reserves between general-purpose units and the defense district is important. Of course the units of general-purpose forces are a priority here. Reservists of age 20 to 45 who have completed technical or military service or received corresponding military training, and are not figured into defense forces wartime general-purpose units, are appointed to form defense districts.

In peacetime some of the people who participate in the activities of the Defense

League, will be mobilized other military units. Therefore the commanders of units and defense districts should, already in peacetime take into account this fact. Separate sub-units should be formed for the activities of the Defense League that are not going to be included in the DD and does not influence its readiness and combat ability. In case a crisis breaks out, forming and implementing the defense districts is conducted according to the corresponding orders of the general staff of the defense forces that are passed on to the units and establishments via operational communication network of the defense forces. In case of a direct assault on a defense region or a defense district, also in case the centralized command is lost, defense districts are formed independently according to the orders of the commanders of defense regions or defense districts corresponding to the regulations of the commander of defense forces that has been established already in peacetime.

A commander of a defense district is fully subordinate to a commander of his

defense region. Depending on the combat situation and needs, the commander of a defense region may make a defense district temporarily subordinate to a commander of a general force brigade or tactical group fighting in the area or vice versa – in the best interest of successfully solving a task some general force unit may be made subordinate to the commander of the defense district.

***Responsibilities of the
Defense League increase***

In our present situation where qualified officers are in permanent need it is most practical to appoint the chiefs of the Defense league units to be the commanders of the corresponding defense districts. Receiving two tasks of very big responsibility and work- load the commanders must be highly professional. They must possess the qualities of a good leader and the ability to carry out one's peacetime tasks as a chief of the unit, and at the same time prepare wartime activities of the defense district. Unfortunately

several of the present chiefs of units have paid little attention to personal professional development and for a long time have been distant from any kind of learning processes. Today's units and wartime defense district need energetic, experienced leaders. It is the task of the General Staff of the Defense Forces to conduct the necessary rotation of officers in the Defense League and appointing such people who manage their tasks well.

It is easier and more practical to form the headquarters of defense districts based on the unit headquarters including additional reserve officers chosen and appointed for it. Local bureaus of regional national defense departments may be included in the headquarters of DDs as a part of the headquarters personnel department.

In order to command the defense district in wartime a DD main command point and rear command point are established on its basis. The Main command point should be where the commander of the defense district and headquarters main operation personnel are situated and lead the whole activity of the DD.

The rear command point that is commanded by the Chief of Logistics of DD has two important tasks: logistical servicing of own units and providing necessary material supplies that are available in civilian society for the fighting general-purpose units according to the orders of the defense region headquarters.

At the beginning of military activities the command points of the defense districts are situated in hidden and if possible - protected - locations. Locations are changed according to need. Prior to combat activities and sometimes also in war situations if there is no direct danger, the peacetime headquarters building and communication systems of the Defense League may be used as a stationary command point (SCP).

To protect one's own shed

A somewhat funny problem has appeared in the exercises of the first defense districts. Some headquarters have included all objects in their area of responsibility in the lists of objects that need guarding

and protection, oftentimes including small shops, storehouses and other minor objects that belong to the planners themselves or to their relatives. Here a pragmatic approach is needed, important objects and places of storing supplies are placed under guard and protection, and there are simply not enough soldiers to guard everything. The following should be under the protection of internal defense companies of defense districts:

- State, county and commune (municipal) government establishments;
- Radio, television, communication and information communication centers;
- Water supply systems;
- Airports and marine ports;
- More important bridges, embankments and hydro-technical establishments;
- Storehouses and terminals of food, fuel and other materials important in completing national defense tasks;
- Power stations and other important objects of power system;
- Industrial establishments important from the point of view of the state and national defense;

- Hospitals for the personnel of the defense forces;

- Road junctions, railway stations.

This list is by far complete.

To make establishing procedures faster and easier, the commanders of the Defense League should, based on the initial information, already in the first half of 1999-2000 conduct necessary organizational and territorial changes to join units' peacetime and defense districts' wartime internal defense structures, divide defense districts' areas of responsibility into areas of responsibility of internal defense companies and those again into areas of responsibility of internal defense platoons. It will be the concern of the units' headquarters to determine wartime structure of defense districts as exactly and practically as possible and in cooperation with the general staff of the defense forces to compose and ratify initial personnel tables, and that could be the beginning of real cooperation in mobilization with national defense departments.

Good work of the General Staff and the units of the Defense League, and the

fact that we have almost all the necessary weapons and partially also the equipment, create real preconditions to the situation, where a large and important part of the national defense – the system of territorial defense – may get on its feet fairly soon. Also our present government's firm budget policy that is directed towards developing national defense and understanding of the extraordinary importance of fast completion of mobilization infrastructure gives reason for optimism.

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The debate on the Latvian SS Volunteer Legion

By Bjarke W. Botcher, post graduate student of East European Studies at the University of Copenhagen.

In March 1998, Latvia was on the front page of a number of international newspapers. The headlines said that fascism was developing in Latvia. The reason was that a group of veterans from the Latvian Legion held a march in central Riga to commemorate their fallen comrades. The march had taken place on the 16th of March every year since Latvia's independence, but especially this year the foreign, and not least Russian, reactions were harsh.

The veterans of the Latvian SS Volunteer Legion claim they fought in German ranks to hold back a greater evil, the Soviet Union. They consider themselves as freedom fighters. Russia, Jewish organisations and even some Latvians believe that the veteran link with the Nazi SS-organisation is a national disgrace. They consider the veterans as Nazi sympathizers. Other Latvians claims that the veterans are to be considered as victims, who were hoodwinked or forced to spill their blood for the third Reich.

This article will examine the fundamental features of the debate on the Latvian Legion, as it turned out in the spring of 1998 and, partly, the following two years. The examination is not thorough, but include a selected number of the most characteristic Russian, Latvian, Israeli/Jewish and Danish newspaper articles and official statements. First, a brief introduction is necessary.

The debate before 1998

Since the end of the World War II (WWII) it has been a topic of much discussion, whether the Latvian SS Voluntary Legion in fact consisted of Latvian volunteers fighting for Hitler, and whether the Legion was an integrated part of the German SS-formation. These questions are important to determine, whether the legionaries were Nazis sympathizing with the ideas of Hitler, national heroes fighting for an independent Latvia or simply victims forced to fight for the occupational power.

The two questions were obviously relevant to the Latvian Legionaries with the status of Prisoners of War (POW) in the allied camps in Germany after the war. A "denazification" would allow them to get out of the POW-camps to the more comfortable Displaced Persons-camps (DP) and give them the right to emigrate to the Allied countries.

The American-Latvian historian Andrew Ezergailis has in a selected collection of documents proved, that "in the campaign to clear the Latvian soldiers of the Nazi tag the refugee spokesmen, under the leadership of the Latvian Red Cross prevailed: at all critical junctures they were able to disassociate the Latvian Legion from the labels of SS and «voluntary»"¹.

The Latvian side in particular had to argue for the fact, that the major killings of Jews in Latvia had already taken place at the time of the formation of the Legion in the winter of 1943 and that the soldiers of the Legion in reality mainly was draftees, not volunteers, who in some cases had to choose between forced labour in the German camps or to "volunteer" for service in the Legion.

The last major killing of Jews in Latvia was carried out in March 1942, almost a year prior to the founding of the Legion². Thus, the Legion as such could not have taken part in the killings. The Latvian argumentation was complicated by the transfer of a number of the Latvian Sonder Dienst (SD) forces, who were war criminals for their contribution to the killings of Jews, in late 1944 to the Legion. For the vast majority of drafted soldiers of the Legion this transfer was a disaster, as it smeared their involuntary participation in the activities of the Legion.

After some disputes, the former legionaries received refugee status and in September 1950, they were – according to a common Latvian point of view - finally denazified by the US Displaced Persons Commissioner Harry N. Rosenfield, who stated that

“..the Baltic Waffen SS. Units (Baltic Legions) are to be considered as separate and distinct in purpose, ideology, activities and qualifications for membership from the German SS, and therefore the Commission holds them not to be a movement hostile to the Government of the United States...”³”

This Latvian victory did however, as we will see, not mean that the debate on the claimed association of the Latvian Legionaries with the SS ceased.

A major problem for the former legionaries has been that as well the Germans as the Soviets could benefit from tying the Latvians to the war crimes that in fact took place in Latvia during the German occupation. Whereas the Germans could minimize their own role in the atrocities, the Soviets could claim that they liberated Latvia for fascist criminals, as they introduced a pro-soviet government and at the same time smear Latvian émigrés living abroad, who were critical towards the Soviet regime in Latvia.

Since then, there has been an ongoing debate between the Soviets and veterans from the Legion, residing outside Latvia.

The Soviets from time to time published materials like the pamphlets “Daugavas Vanagi – Who are they?” which accused the Latvian people in general and Latvian émigrés in particular for war crimes. Sometimes Western Nazi hunters used these materials in their search for war criminals. Today we know that the KGB was behind these materials, and that only some 10% of the contents can be considered correct⁴.

The veterans, on the other hand, refused all the Soviet accusations – even the true part of them, and denied or simply did not mention the Latvian participation in the holocaust.

In this way the debate continued, in some periods on the quiet and in other periods more actively, until it bloomed again in 1998.

What happened in Riga on March 16th 1998?

Estimations from a number of sources concur, that approximately 500 demonstrators, of this the majority war veterans dressed in uniforms from the Latvian Legion, participated in a commemoration in the Cathedral of Riga and afterwards marched to the Monument of Freedom, where flowers were laid. The ceremony went off in an orderly manner, and a large force of police controlled it. A handful of Russian speaking counter demonstrators shouted at the gathering, calling them murderers and Nazis. A large number of local and foreign medias covered the incident, including two Russian TV-stations.

So far goes the concurrence. On the other hand, there is no agreement about, whether the Latvian Government sanctioned the incident, if it only was a symbol of commemoration of the fallen soldiers or rather an insult to those, who fought fascism.

Russian criticism

The by far harshest criticism came from the Russian side. On the day of the event, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement, that “reports that on the 15 and 16 March veterans of the Lettish Voluntary Legion celebrated in Riga – with approval of the official authorities – the 55th anniversary of the establishment of this formation, whose history had been marked by blood and sufferings of thousands of people, have provoked indignation in Moscow”. The statements continues, that “the Lettish divisions, which had sworn an oath to Hitler, had participated in punitive actions, and in 1944 the Lettish police battalions, the notorious “Arājs-team” and other units were incorporated in it and murdered tens of thousands of Jews, Russians and Belorussians.” Further, the statement accuses the Latvian authorities of granting the “fascists” a number of benefits, not given to those who fought fascism, and that it is hypocritically to excuse the conduct by stating, that Latvia did not participate in the war as a state. Finally, the statement criticizes that the Commander of the Armed Forces participated in the march, and that this proves “that despite official statements the Latvian ruling circles actually play into the hands of, and join the forces that whip up nationalism and russophobia in the society”⁵.

In a letter to the OSCE memberstates of March 20 1998 the Russian Duma writes, that “it is indicative that the march of members of the Lettish SS legion took place on the background of continuing violations of the rights of the Russian-speaking population of Latvia...” Finally, the OSCE member states are urged to condemn the policy of the Latvian authorities⁶.

In the Russian press, the tone is further sharpened. In connection with a demonstration in front of the Latvian embassy in Moscow, Moscow-mayor Lushkov said, that “I do not know of any other countries where human rights are breached so openly” whereupon he compared Latvia to the Pol Pot-regime in Cambodia and demanded sanctions against Latvia⁷.

In an article in St. Petersburg Gazette on march 18th 1998 1st deputy chairman of the Duma Vladimir Ryshkov states, that “Latvia has once more demonstrated, that for its government and pro-government circles former SS-members are far more important than the human rights⁸”, after which he demanded sanctions against Latvia.

That the Russian side was aware, that the critics was not without consequences for Latvia, shows the following article from Voice of Russia’s internet site: “the march had its consequences: Latvia failed to be included in the first group of countries wishing to join the European Union, which could be considered as reflecting its unsatisfactory human rights record”⁹.

Generally, the same topics are criticised as well by the official Russia as the Russian press. The criminal character of the Latvian Legion, that Latvia affirms it never took part in the war as a state; that the legionaries get social benefits, while those, who fought fascism cannot get a decent pension; that there is a tendency toward connecting the march with the status of the Russian speaking minority in Latvia, and finally, that Russia is aware, that the criticism has its consequences for Latvia. The Russian newspapers and individual politicians go further, accuse Latvia of being fascistic and demand political and economical sanctions.

Danish reactions

The Danish newspapers were quite more referring, than the Russian, although they also to a certain degree came to a decision as to the moral and political aspects of the case.

The newspaper Information wrote in a leading article, that the marking of the “55-anniversary of the foundation of the Legion...by itself is a provocation in a country, where 65.000 Jews were killed during the three years under Nazi-German occupation. Although a provocation, that could be accepted in the name of freedom of expression and assembly, if the march had not got the half official approval of the Latvian authorities. It is true, that...Latvian men were forced to join the Legion by the Nazi-German occupying power...But it is also true, that...Latvian members of the SS-unit actively and enthusiastically took part in the extermination of Jews. After this, the writer tells about the international responses to the march that made the Latvian President dismiss the Commander of the Armed Forces, and continues linking the march of the veterans to the Russian speaking minority in Russia¹⁰.

The newspaper Jyllandsposten did not only carry foreign criticism of Latvia, but gave an impression of the Latvian reaction too. “The Latvians once again feel let down by the West after the Russian cannonade of accusations of human rights violations... What happened to the moral support from EU and USA after the cannonade of more or less strange allegations and threats from Moscow? Should we once again be the victims of a great political game? It looks suspiciously like a new Molotov-Ribbentrop-pact”, says Atis Lejins, director of the Latvian Institute of International Affairs. He continues that “nobody protests, when Russia threatens to introduce economical sanctions¹¹”.

As regards accounts of events and statements in the Danish press, there seems to be a tendency that Russian statements take precedence over Latvian statements. Despite the article in Jyllandsposten about the Latvian reaction, official Russian statements and reactions are referred much more often than Latvian is. This could be explained – although not justified – by the fact, that most Danish newspapers have a correspondent based in Russia, while Latvia in the best case is covered from Russia or Sweden. In addition, the international news agencies cover Russia more diligent than Latvia. Besides, as a regional great power, Russia has possibilities for distribution of information, which Latvia cannot match.

However, as regards the attitude of the Danish press towards the march on March 16th, a pro-Russian attitude cannot be found.

The newspaper Information compares the Russian and the Latvian sides, and thinks, that the march should have been tolerated for the sake of the freedom of expression, but deviate from this perception as the newspaper fasten on the “semi official approval of the Latvian authorities”. Finally, one can see a tendency toward connecting the acceptability of the march of the legionaries with the Latvian political debate on the status of the Russian speaking minority.

The article in the newspaper Jyllandsposten set out the Latvian astonishment that the Western countries does not support Latvia against the Russian criticism, and thereby hits the very important point: that in the Western world it is politically totally unacceptable to defend anything, that anyhow can be linked to the third Reich and the Holocaust.

Israeli/Jewish reactions

The Jewish debate about the march on March 16th 1998 started already in connection with a visit by the then Latvian president Guntis Ulmanis to Israel in February the same year. During the visit Ulmanis recognised, that Latvia is aware that some of its citizens persecuted Latvian Jews during World War II¹²

The Israeli newspaper Ha aretz welcomed the statements of the president, but foresaw that they could be tested already at the yearly march in March¹³.

On the 20th of March the Latvian daily Diena writes, that the embassy of Israel to Latvia condemns the arrangement of the legionaries, but consider Latvian Government's desist from participation in the march as a positive reaction.

According to Diena, the criticism from the Jewish Simon Wiesenthal Centre's Riga-department became so intense just in 1998, because Latvia was then trying to enter Western organisations as EU and NATO, and that for an applicant country nazi manifestations were incompatible with membership aspirations. The article also establishes, that the Jewish criticism of the march was not linked to the alleged human rights violations, claimed by Russia. Furthermore, it made no difference whether high ranking Latvian officials participates in the march while on duty or as private citizens. Thus, the Governments refrain from participation can only be considered as a gesture for the international community, but not as a real condemnation of the bloom of fascism in Latvia¹⁴.

The Simon Wiesenthal centre in Jerusalem condemned in a press release the march of the legionaries in 1999 with the words: "although these units were not involved in crimes against humanity, many of their soldiers had previously served in the Latvian security police and had actively participated in the mass murder of civilians, primarily Jews...The stubborn insistence of Latvia's SS Legion veterans to conduct a public march to glorify their role as combatants on behalf of the third Reich is a clear indication that many Latvians have still not internalised the lessons of WWII". Thereupon is mentioned, that the situation would be different, if the Latvian Government had charged war-criminals residing in Latvia, but in a country, in which "not one of the numerous Latvian killers who collaborated with the Nazis has been brought to justice since Latvia obtained its independence, far too many Latvians feel free to identify with those who fought alongside the perpetrators of the Holocaust rather than with its victims"¹⁵.

The Israeli/Jewish criticism is generally not as harsh as the Russian, and is issued differently. The Israeli/Jewish criticism distinguishes between the Latvian Legion and units, which are convicted for crimes against humanity, by not mentioning the Legion as a criminal organisation. Although the legionaries are not considered criminals, the Jewish side does not think, there is any need to commemorate the Legion that was forced to fight for the Nazis, as anything positive. They also attach importance to the fact, that members of the special force (SD), who had previously committed crimes, were transferred to the Legion in the last years of the war. Another subject touched by especially the Wiesenthal Centre is the will of the Latvian Government to institute legal proceedings against war criminals in Latvia.

The Latvian debate: a response to the criticism

The debate in Latvia started – like the Jewish debate – before the march itself on March 16th. The approaching march of the legionaries was thus the subject of a letter to the Latvian newspaper

Diena, written by Uldis Neiburgs, the leader of the department for WWII in the Latvian Museum of War. In the letter it is established, that it is not correct to connect the march with the anniversary for the founding of the Legion. On the 16th of March 1944, the two divisions that constituted the Legion for the first and only time during the war fought together in a four-day battle near the river Velikaya. In the letter it is also stated, that the Nuremberg judgement in its final phase distinguished between soldiers, who voluntarily joined the ranks of the SS organisation, and soldiers, who were forced in service. The letter emphasises that the Republic of Latvia never supported or sanctioned the founding of the Legion, and that Latvia in every possible way lost the war, in which it did not participate. It is also mentioned, that Latvia as the only country in Europe had nearly 50% of its population replaced during the war. Sympathy is expressed for the Israeli wish that war criminals should be held responsible for their crimes. Finally, the letter states that the official opinion of the Latvian Government is, that as well the German as the Soviet mobilization of Latvian forces was unlawful according to the Hague Convention and, that the US Government in 1950 recognised, that the Legion is to be considered as separate and distinct from the German SS¹⁶.

Also well before the planned march, the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on March 12th puts out a statement, in which Latvia unambiguously condemns the Nazi ideology and crimes against humanity during WWII executed by totalitarian regimes. About the planned march in Riga the statement says that “the Government of Latvia will not participate in the commemoration activities¹⁷”. The day after Diena publishes a part of the statement¹⁸.

The Latvian reactions to the Russian criticism came already on March 17th in an official protest issued by the foreign ministry. Herein Latvia expresses indignation concerning the inactivity of the Russian authorities in connection with threats and demonstrations directed against the diplomatic representations of Latvia in Russia – not least the burning of the Latvian flag at the building of the Latvian Consulate in Pskov and acts of hooliganism at the building of the Latvian Embassy in Moscow on March 17th¹⁹.

On April 1st, the spokesman of the Latvian foreign ministry declares with an ill-concealed reference to the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, that certain organisations have “politicized, distorted and inadequately interpreted the official statement of the Latvian Government of March 13th”²⁰.

On May 27th, a majority in the Latvian parliament votes for a dismissal of National Armed Forces Commander Juris Dalbins, for participation in the march, dressed in uniform, in defiance of a governmental instruction not to participate formally in uniform, and preferably not participate at all.

In the Latvian press appeared furthermore a number of articles like the one, already given an example of, from the Danish newspaper Jyllandsposten.

The debate in Latvia has to a high degree taken on a character of defence against foreign, primarily Russian, accusations. The differences, despite of everything that can be heard in the academic debate in Latvia, has not found expression. But, in return the general public in Latvia for the first time became acquainted with a disputed period of the history of their country.

Whereas foreign observers and journalists has stated, that March 16th is the day of the founding of the Legion or the day, Hitler ordered it established, all Latvian writers agree that the day marks the only time, the two Divisions of the Legion were fighting together. The Latvian side in the debate also agrees that the Latvian Legion as such was not convicted at the Nuremberg-tribunal, but that it

was the acts and crimes of the SS organisation, including the founding of the Latvian Legion, that was sentenced. It is often emphasized, that Latvia never has supported any fascist regimes, and that Latvia did not take part in the war as an independent state. The Israeli calls for proceedings against war criminals are supported, but the majority of observers seem to believe, that there is a bigger need for proceedings against criminal from the period of communist occupation.

Importance is attached to the fact, that the Legionaries – according to a common Latvian point of view – was finally denazified already in 1950 by a decision taken by the US Government, but also that the Latvian Government already before the march banned official participation. It is considered unjust, that certain organisations seem to be able to change those two important facts in the eyes of the public. Further, the harsh Russian criticism is protested against.

Analysis of the debate

While the debate, as mentioned above, started already before the march in both the Latvian and the Jewish press, it is beyond any doubt, that it was the harsh Russian criticism that caused the subject to become a popular subject for the international press in the spring of 1998.

As we have seen, there are a number of questions that differentiates the parties. Among the most important questions are:

- Whether the Latvian Legion should be considered a criminal organisation, and its position at the Nuremberg tribunal?
- Whether or not the Latvian Government sanctioned the march?
- What the date of the march marks?
- Why the reactions on the march became so extensive especially in 1998?
- Granting of pensions to respectively legionaries, veterans from the Red Army and victims of the Holocaust.

Besides, it is relevant to raise a number of additional questions, like why Russia wants to link the march to the status of the Russian speaking minority in Latvia, and the question of possible sanctions against Latvia.

Several Russian statements and articles mention, that the Latvian Legion was criminal and at the Nuremberg tribunal was branded as a felonious organisation. It is remarkable, that not even one of the Russian contributions mentions that the main part of the Legion soldiers were draftees, who were forced to serve. This missing acknowledgement of the use of forced labour reminds of the traditional Soviet perception of the Legion. A Danish newspaper is at first close to the Russian perception, by writing that Latvian SS-members took active part in the killing of Jews, but admits then, that joining the Legion was not always voluntarily. The Jewish perception is differently detailed, as it states that the Legion did not commit crimes, but that there among its soldiers were people, who under other units committed crimes against Jews and others. From that one could deduce, that the Jewish perception distinguishes between criminal and political guilt: whereas the Legion is cleaned for the first, it does not mean that it is politically legitimate to mark it in public. The Latvian side argues, that so far it has not been proved, that the Legion as such committed crimes. The relatively few soldiers with crimes on their conscience should not be allowed to smear the memory of the majority of the drafted legionaries.

Several of the Russian statements criticises the Latvian Government for having sanctioned the march and for the fact that some high ranking officials and members of the Parliament participated. A Danish newspaper thinks that the march was semiofficially approved by the Latvian authorities. The Jewish criticism is more diverse, as the Israeli Government praises the Latvian Government's refrain from participation, whereas the Riga-department of the Wiesenthal Centre believes, that the government's decision not to participate only is a blind for not condemning fascism. The Latvians answers the criticism by stating, that the government already before the march informed the public, that it refrained from participation, and continues, that in a democracy peaceful demonstrations hardly can be forbidden. Concerning the uniformed participation of the Commander of the National Armed Forces, the government admits that it was incorrect, and therefore he was subsequently dismissed.

It is characteristic for especially Russian and Western contributions that they at first thought, that the date of the march marked either the anniversary of the founding of the legion or even the day, when Hitler ordered it established. The Latvian reaction was that the day marks the first and only time the Legion fought united against the approaching Soviet Army. By choosing this day as the legionaries' commemorative day, they most probably tried to draw attention to the fact, that the Legion according to the veterans fought against the Soviets for Latvian independence. That the purpose of the date could be doubted, could tell us either about a Russian attempt to politicise the incident or about the short historical memory of the media.

It is interesting, why the reactions on the march were so harsh and persistent especially in 1998. What separates this year from the former, where similar marches took place? It is worth a note, that the subject is not touched from the Russian side. The Wiesenthal Centre in Riga offers however a suggestion: The Latvian aspirations for membership of Western security organisations had become important in 1998. There is, however, a number of factors, that could have played a role: a) in 1997 Latvia almost succeeded in being member of the group of countries, that could start membership negotiations with the EU. b) the Latvian president visited Israel a few weeks before the march. c) on March 3rd the Latvian police broke up an unannounced and therefore illegal demonstration of mainly, but not exclusively, Russian speaking pensioners, who demanded pensions raised. The TV-pictures of the Russian speaking pensioners shouting at the Latvian policemen caused loudly Russian protests. Thus, already before the march, a conflict was approaching. Once again, it is necessary to notice, that the Russian criticism often concerns other subjects than the march itself, whereas the Jewish criticism primarily concerns subjects connected with the case.

From official Russian side it is questioned, whether it is fair, that veterans from the Legion receive a special pension, which veterans who fought fascism are not entitled to. The Simon Wiesenthal Centre raises the same question, although not in favour of Red Army veterans, but Latvian surviving victims of the Holocaust and their next of kin. It is worth stating, that this question does not concern Latvian pensions, but German pensions, which, according to German law, is payable to veterans and widows of those who were in German service. This possibility could only after Latvia regained its independence be used by such persons living in Latvia, and today a number of Latvian veterans and their widows receive pensions from Germany. From Latvian side it has been stated, that Latvia as a free country hardly can influence, which pensions its citizens, receive from abroad. Jewish organisations have tried to stop this arrangement or at least enlarge it to include the victims of Holocaust.

Only the Russian side has demanded the introduction of sanctions against Latvia. The Jewish side does not mention the subject, whereas several Western sources refer to the Russian demands. It is worth a note, that Western observers do not encourage Russia to react in a more adequate manner, whereas the Latvian side is calling for moral support from the West.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the harshest criticism of Latvia in connection with the march came from Russia. A certain part of the criticism was however, as explained above, unjust. It especially concerns the Russian claims that the Latvian Government had sanctioned the march, but also the statements, that the Legion was a felonious organisation. The examination of the debate has shown that as well Russian as Western contributions has made very basic errors by e.g. not being acquainted with, what the day of the march marks.

The examination of the Russian contributions to the debate has shown, that there unfortunately is every reason to believe, that the old Soviet perception of history still has not been changed in favour of a new and more modern perception.

Most fair and competent seems the Jewish/Israeli reactions to be, as it is evident, that this side has a detailed knowledge of the case, and does not mix it up with subjects not related to it.

Despite relatively many repeats of the Russian argumentation, the Western criticism has not been useless. Although much seems to show that the Legion did not commit crimes, exemption from criminal guilt is not synonymous with exemption from political guilt.

The newest research points in the direction that the Legion did not commit crimes, and that it thus is not correct to mention the Legion, without explaining that it neither was voluntary nor an ordinary part of the German SS.

Important subjects like reconciliation and forgiveness lie in wait under the surface of the debate, although it is not expressed explicitly. The Latvian president made an attempt to start a process of reconciliation by his statements. There are no indications of anything similar with Russia. To that is the Russian outrages committed both before and after the German occupation of Latvia still remembered too well. The question of guilt is, however, not the subject of this article.

The criticism after the march on March 16th made the Latvian authorities realize the difference between criminal guilt and political- or moral guilt, and that it is limited, what an government can afford not to dissociate itself from – even in the name of the newly regained freedom of expression. The question of political or moral guilt is important, not least because it opens for a discussion of reconciliation and forgiveness.

The debate on the Latvian Legion has been cyclic. In 1950, the Latvian Red Cross succeeded in convincing the US Government, that the Latvian Legion essentially must be considered as separate and distinct in purpose, ideology and activities from the German SS. In 1998, it once again became necessary for Latvia to inform a sceptical world about these differences.

The debate on the Legion has not just repeated it self, it has also been unequal. It was the Russian point of view that went around the world the first time. Russia has, only by virtue of its size, better possibilities than Latvia for influencing the world opinion. To attack is easier than to defend. Not

least when the case concerns a subject as touchy as collaboration with the third Reich, and when the explanations on this necessarily are complicated.

A fundamental feature of the debate is that the Latvians have had to carry a reversed onus of proof. After WWII as well as in 1998 exterior circumstances meant, that it was the small Latvian people, which had to convince its innocence to a mistrustful world. After the WWII Latvia had lost its statehood and was charged for war crimes by the Allies and the Soviet Union. In 1998, Latvia had regained its independence, but was still weak and vulnerable to harsh, primarily Russian attacks.

Since the end of WWII, it has been a topic of much discussion, whether the soldiers of the Latvian Legion in fact were heroes, Nazis or victims. To date, there is still no general agreement about the question.

Notes

¹ Ezergailis, Andrew: The Latvian Legion. Heroes, Nazis or Victims? A collection of documents from OSS War-Crimes investigation files, 1945-1950. The Historical Institute of Latvia, Riga 1997.

² Ezergailis, A.: The Holocaust of Latvia 1941-1944. The Missing Centre. The Historical Institute of Latvia, Riga, published in association with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington DC, 1996. pp. 222-225, 239-270.

³ US Displaced Persons Commissioner Harry N. Rosenfield's letter of September 12th 1950 to Chargé d' Affaires of Latvia in Washington, J. Feldmanis. Reprinted in Ezergailis, A.: The Latvian Legion.

⁴ Ezergailis, A.: The Holocaust of Latvia. P. 324f, p. 15, p. 5f.

⁵ О реакции России на события в связи с 55-ой годовщиной создания Латышского добровольческого легиона СС. Заявление МИД России от 16.03.98. (And: Statement of the MFA of Russia, 19. March 1998).

⁶ Appeal by the State Duma to the heads of State or Government and the Parliaments of the Member States of the OSCE in connection with a march organized by SS veterans in Riga, 20.03.1998.

⁷ Lushkov attacks Latvia (By Jansson, Eric), The Baltic Times 2-8.04.1998

⁸ Бывшие члены СС для Латвии важнее, чем права человека? Санкт-Петербургские Ведомости но. 50, 18. марта 1998.

⁹ It's high time to use authority, Voice of Russia 1999: www.space.ru/english/voice/Exclusive/excl_next148_eng.html

¹⁰ Nyeng, Ole: "Lettisk strækmarch", dagbladet Information, April 7th, 1998, p. 12.

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¹⁴ Lase, Inta: "Ulmanis aicinās politiski izvērtēt leģiona atceri. Diena 01.04.1998.

¹⁵ Newsbreak – Press information, Simon Wiesenthal Centre (Israel Office), 16.03.1999.

¹⁶ Neiburgs, Uldis: SS, Waffen SS, Latviešu Leģions un Latvijas valsts politika. Diena 06.03.1998

¹⁷ Official notice by the Minister of Foreign of the Republic of Latvia, Dr. V. Birkavs, March 12th, 1998.

¹⁸ Tihonovs, Juris: Valdība nepiedalīsies leģionāru pasākumā, Diena 13.03.1998

¹⁹ Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, 17.03.1998

²⁰ Lase, Inta: Ulmanis aicinās politiski izvērtēt leģiona atceri. Diena 01.04.1998.

Lithuania's Struggle against Soviet Occupation 1944-1953

By Major Arūnas Stašaitis, Lithuanian Army

"I still believe that the struggle I led for nine years would bring its results"

Final words by Lithuanian General Jonas Demaitis in the KGB Court, Moscow 1954.

The repression of the population in Lithuania started on the first day of the Soviet occupation on 15th June 1940 and continued until the 31st of August 1993 when the Soviet-Russian Army finally returned home. The Soviet authorities carried out deportations, mass killings, imprisonment, and sovietification of the Lithuanian people and Soviet colonists were settled in Lithuania.

Soviet-oriented historians have tried to "justify" the mass deportations by referring to Lithuanian partisan activity, but in fact the deportations were largely

directed against the so-called "enemies of the people" of which a majority had never been partisans¹. The Soviets deported whole families; infants, children, women and elderly to Siberia. Altogether the Soviets deported 12 percent of the population². A rough estimate is that during the period 1940-1990 Lithuania lost one third of its population due to war, destruction and repression, as well as to emigration and deportations - a total equal to about one million citizens.

Following the secret 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between the Soviet Un-

ion and Germany the Soviet Union occupied Lithuania on 15 June 1940 and formally annexed it on the 3 August 1940. The Lithuanian nation never agreed to occupation or subjugation. The people of Lithuania resisted in all possible ways, and struggled to win back their freedom and independence. Despite the repression, underground resistance organizations formed, and a mass revolt took place on 23-27 June 1941 following the German attack on the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941. The revolt briefly liberated the largest part of the territory of Lithuania that was occupied by the Soviets, and re-established the independent Republic of Lithuania that formed a Provisional Government. Molotov, then Soviet Minister of Foreign

Affairs, condemned Lithuania and Lithuanians in Radio Moscow for the revolt.

German occupation of Lithuania followed from 1941 to 1944. The occupational regime of Germany was also based on extreme violence and repression, and mass exterminations of the population were carried out. The new occupation of the Lithuania as well as repression and terror stimulated a natural necessity to resist the occupant and violator. The defense was primarily aimed at the re-establishment of the independent Lithuanian State. The Lithuanian Freedom Army (LFA) was founded in December 1941, and its first headquarters were established in Vilnius on the initiative of Lieutenant Kazys Veverskis. It must be pointed out that LFA was first of all a military organization that preferred to restore Lithuanian independence by the use of armed force against the Germans, and it was not a political organisation.

As the war progressed the German retreat began. When the front was still rather far away, Lithuanians hoped that Western countries would stop the Soviet

army at the Lithuanian border, and few realized that incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union was to come. Hopes for renewed freedom were raised by the Atlantic Charter, which was proclaimed on 8 August 1941 by Churchill and Roosevelt. This agreement laid out the general principles for the basis of peace after Germany's defeat. It underlined the right of every nation to restore independence, which had been taken away by aggressors during the war. Thus Lithuanians fought against the Germans and then the Soviets, and waited for a war between the West and the Soviet Union. At the end of World War II in the West, Lithuania was the first Baltic State to start fighting trying to defend the free world from communism.

Lithuania met the second Soviet occupation unprepared and disorganized. Because of the experience from the first Soviet occupation, there was much determination to fight, but there were no battle plans or outlines and, most importantly, there was no political or military leadership³. Some leaders of the anti-Soviet and anti-Nazi resistance had been put

in German camps and prisons, and many higher rank officers and patriotic officers had been sent to Siberia or were executed during the first Soviet occupation. Other officers, fearful of the Red terror, had escaped to the West. The Lithuanian anti-Soviet partisan movement began in earnest the summer of 1944 and reached its peak in the spring of 1945, but at the same time Soviet repression grew stronger. Lithuanians were terrorized, raped, shot, imprisoned and deported to Siberia. Almost all of the Lithuanian army's high-ranking officers, who might have been expected to organize resistance, had fled into exile. Besides, before the Second World War there was no teaching of non-conventional war fighting in the Lithuanian Army Military Academy and NCO school, and especially the older officers, trained in conventional warfare, found it difficult to adapt. The Lithuanian writer Algirdas Julius Greimas gave a sarcastic but accurate description of the psychological drama, which he himself experienced - "*I saw that those officers of ours who pretended to be members of the resistance were*

*shit. It's possible to trust lieutenants and captains, but not colonels"*⁴.

The entire resistance struggle can be conditionally divided into three periods:

***First period:
Summer 1944 to spring 1946***

During this time, the resistance groups were established spontaneously. Officers and NCOs of the former Lithuanian army mostly led these groups, but only few officers and NCOs had survived two occupations. The resistance fighters acted in battalion or company level units, mostly during daytime, and used regular Army tactics. More than half of the estimated 30 thousand partisans who fell in battle, died during the first fighting period. The struggle in this period was very bloody. Partisans had units from battalion to company size, but they did not have higher-ranking officers to co-ordinate the effort, and many had little experience in warfare. There is no statistic of casualties on either side and they will probably never be known, but an informed guess on the

total number of losses of Lithuanians partisans could be about than 30 thousand. As the partisans could chose time and place for the engagements the Soviet side suffered perhaps more than 80 thousand casualties⁵.

The Soviet government brought two NKVD (later MGB and KGB) divisions, four Border regiments, and recruited about seven thousand local army helpers, so-called "stribai", for use against the partisans. When needed other regular army units including air force and artillery were brought in to Lithuania. M.A. Suslov, the main ideologist of communism at this time and a member of the Soviet Politburo, came to Lithuania assigned with the special task of putting down the Lithuanian resistance-movement. It is an indication of the seriousness of the problem he faced, that he said - "*There will be a Lithuania, but without Lithuanians*"⁶.

The Soviets employed up to about 100.000 soldiers against the Lithuanian partisans.

The frontline units used against the partisans were the 2nd and 4th NKVD divisions. The 4th "General Vetrov" divi-

sion was transferred to Lithuania after fighting in the Northern Caucasus and Crimea, and was especially cruel. It eradicated some villages and their inhabitants in the Dzukija region of Lithuania during Christmas of 1944. The NKVD soldiers lived almost as prisoners, and were often short of food and clothes. Frequently, they fought without officers, but even together with officers the NKVD soldiers were allowed to rape, rob and kill non-combatant Lithuanians. During the whole resistance period NKVD workers handled captured resistance fighters and civilian people in a very brutal way. Trying to intimidate others, the fighters and often also innocent civilian people were brutally tortured. Killed Lithuanians were disgraced, clothes were removed from corpses, ears and noses were cut, and five-cornered stars were carved on their breasts.

***Second period:
Spring 1946 to the end of 1949***

As the Soviets expanded their control, the partisans split into much smaller

groups of approximately from 5 to 15 partisans, and fundamentally changed their tactics. They spent the daylight hours in well-camouflaged bunkers and mostly carried out combat operations at night, fighting in often very well planned ambushes. The independent groups were gradually subordinated to a district, and began to concern themselves with the eventual consolidation of all partisan forces and support the creation of a united leadership. But only in February 1949 was this process completed. The widespread armed resistance partially became an organized military structure. Most partisan units based their activity on military regulations, "statutes", drafted by themselves, wore military uniforms or at least distinctive signs, carried arms in public, and issued decrees for the fighters as well as for the civilian population. The partisans' military action and propaganda hindered the establishment of administrative institutions of occupation authorities in rural districts, and disturbed the organization of the formal Soviet elections to the bodies of the occupational authorities. The partisans also assisted in the efforts to

boycott mobilization to the occupational army, fought collaborators, impeded the collectivization, and resisted the colonization of the country and the nationalization of private property, and thus deferred the general demoralization of the population. The partisans published more than 70 periodicals and non-periodical newspapers. Many of the published pamphlets tried to inform the population of the international situation and to maintain the national Lithuanian identity. During this period partisans many times succeeded in breaking the Soviet "Iron Curtain" and send representatives to the West to ask for help against the Soviet occupation. One example of a Partisans' plea to supporters in the free world, which clearly illustrates the despair and hopelessness of the situation, read:

"Lithuanian partisans have understood very well that alone they could not resist bolshevism. But not all of us agreed that we could go like animals to the slaughterhouse. We believed without a doubt in the victory of truth and in the conscience of the Western world. Courageously we stood in an uneven fight, having no doubt that the Free World, which shows off its ideals

of freedom, will not let bolshevism - the shame of civilization - spread out and dominate the Baltic States and even Eastern Europe... We believed in promises, but we were deceived... We believed that by fighting we would be able to exist for a few years with our armed forces and the iron will of the Lithuanian nation... But it went the other way. Nations who fought for their freedom were left hopelessly alone... Thanks gentlemen! Through your indecision and delay bolshevism has made terrible wounds to the Lithuanian nation. Communism destroyed part of the nation by deportations to Siberia and another part was put into jails for a slow death. Against the partisans the Soviet NKVD used means of torture never before known in the world: the soles of feet were burnt, the flesh underneath the fingernails was pricked, fingernails were pulled off, arms and legs were broken, sex organs were damaged, the skin peeled off the body..."

Partisans' message to Western politicians⁷.

A consolidation of all partisan forces was achieved only in February 1949 when all the leaders of Freedom Fighters throughout Lithuania had a secret meeting. The Freedom Fighters created a unified council by uniting into the LLKS (Lithuanian Freedom Fighting Move-

ment), which would coordinate the political and military activities of the underground movement. The leaders of the Freedom Fighters formulated and approved the rules and regulations, some partisan field manuals, and a criminal code to the fighters and populations. They accepted an advanced doctrine for tactics of resistance and worked to improve ties with supporters in the West. The Freedom Fighters meeting approved a Supreme Council, and selected General Jonas Pėmaitis as chairman. All members of this Council died in battle or were shot in jails.

Third period: 1950 to 1953

The resistance movement gradually declined during this period. The activity of the KGB agents and KGB shock groups was increasing, and the incidents of treason were growing in number⁸. KGB shock troops disguised as partisans killed many civilian people in an attempt to discredit the Freedom Fighters. The Soviet authorities refused to recognize the partisans as freedom fighters and declared that they were simply bandits who robbed and

killed peace-loving citizens. Soviet propaganda varied this concept of banditry, capitalists, landowners and high-ranking officials of the Smetona (last Lithuanian President) regime⁹. However, such assertions were refuted simply by the fact that hardly a tenth of the freedom fighters could be called representatives of the “exploiting classes”. The partisan movement was most widespread in Dzukija, one of the poorest regions of Lithuania¹⁰.

Individual partisan groups and sole partisans continued the struggle for a few more years. The last active partisan Antanas Kraujelis perished in the struggle on 17 March 1965. The partisan struggle went on record in Lithuanian history as a war for the right of national independence. It is uncertain whether this struggle was responsible for the fact that fewer Soviet citizens came to settle down in Lithuania than in Latvia and Estonia, where the partisan movement was much weaker¹¹.

Although the armed struggle was suppressed, the resistance of the Lithuanian population against the occupants continued. It simply took other forms: underground organizations were founded con-

stantly, prohibited literature was disseminated, cultural resistance took place, and dissident movement for human and civil rights grew until the Lithuanian people finally succeeded in regaining their independence as a free democratic nation in 1991.

¹ J.P. Kedys, 1994. Terorizuo jama ir naikinama Lietuva 1938-1991. [*Lithuania under destruction and terrorisation 1938-1991*]. “Ryto” spaustu vė, Klaipėda. p. 409.

² See annex A and B. Arvydas Anučas k as, 1996. Lietuvių tautos sovietinis naikinimas 1940-1958 metais. [*Soviets destruction of the Lithuanian Nation 1940-1958*]. “Mintis”. Vilnius. pp.446-447. (Original in Russian).

³ Editor Saulius Pukas, 1999. “Lithuania. Past, Culture, Present”. Baltos Lankos, Lithuania. p.202.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ J.P. Kedys, 1994. p. 408.

⁶ Arvydas Anučas k as, 1996. p. 408.

⁷ J.P. Kedys, 1994. p. 202.

⁸ See annex B. “MVD works results from 15 July 1944 to 25 October 1953 and Partisan war in the Lithuania in Numbers July 1944-October 1953.” Quoted from Arvydas Anučas k as, 1996. pp.446-447.

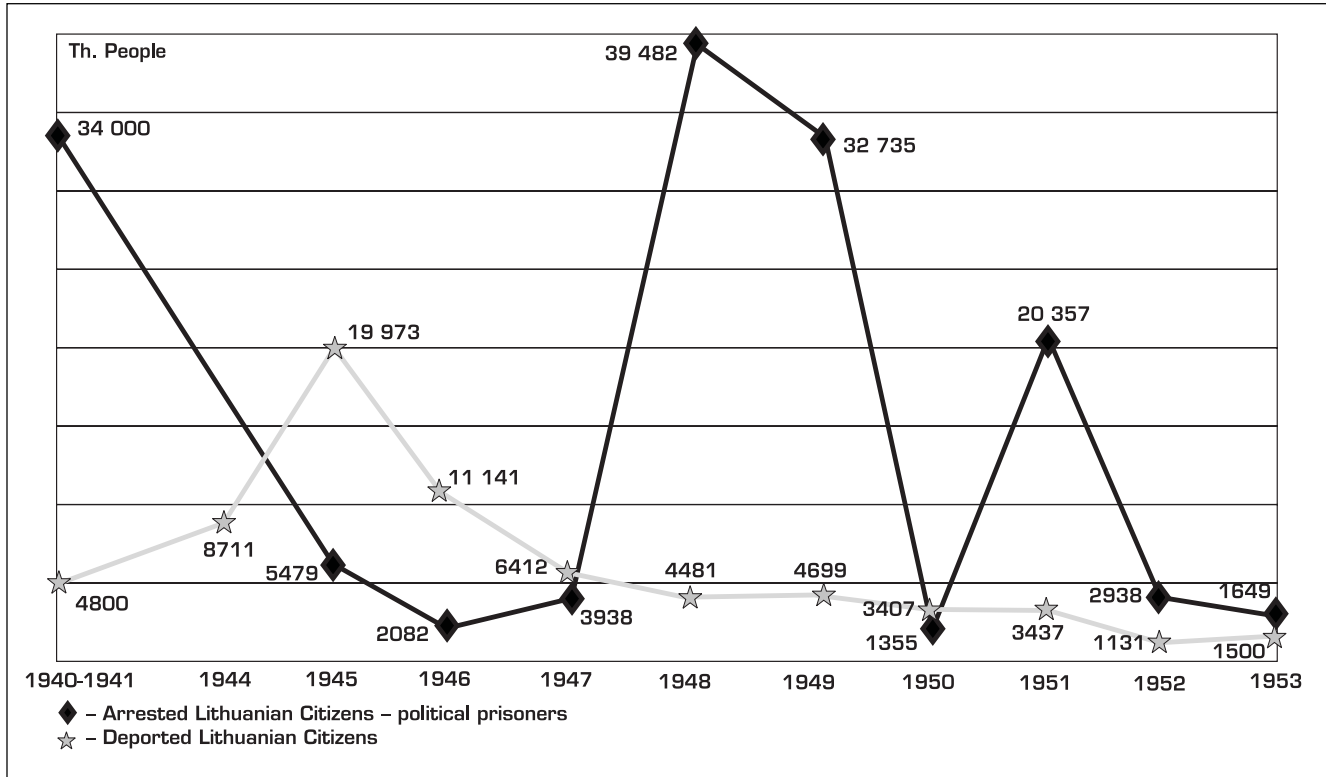
⁹ *Ibid.*, p.203.

¹⁰ J.P.Kedys, 1994. p.408.

¹¹ J.P.Kedys, 1994. p. 203.

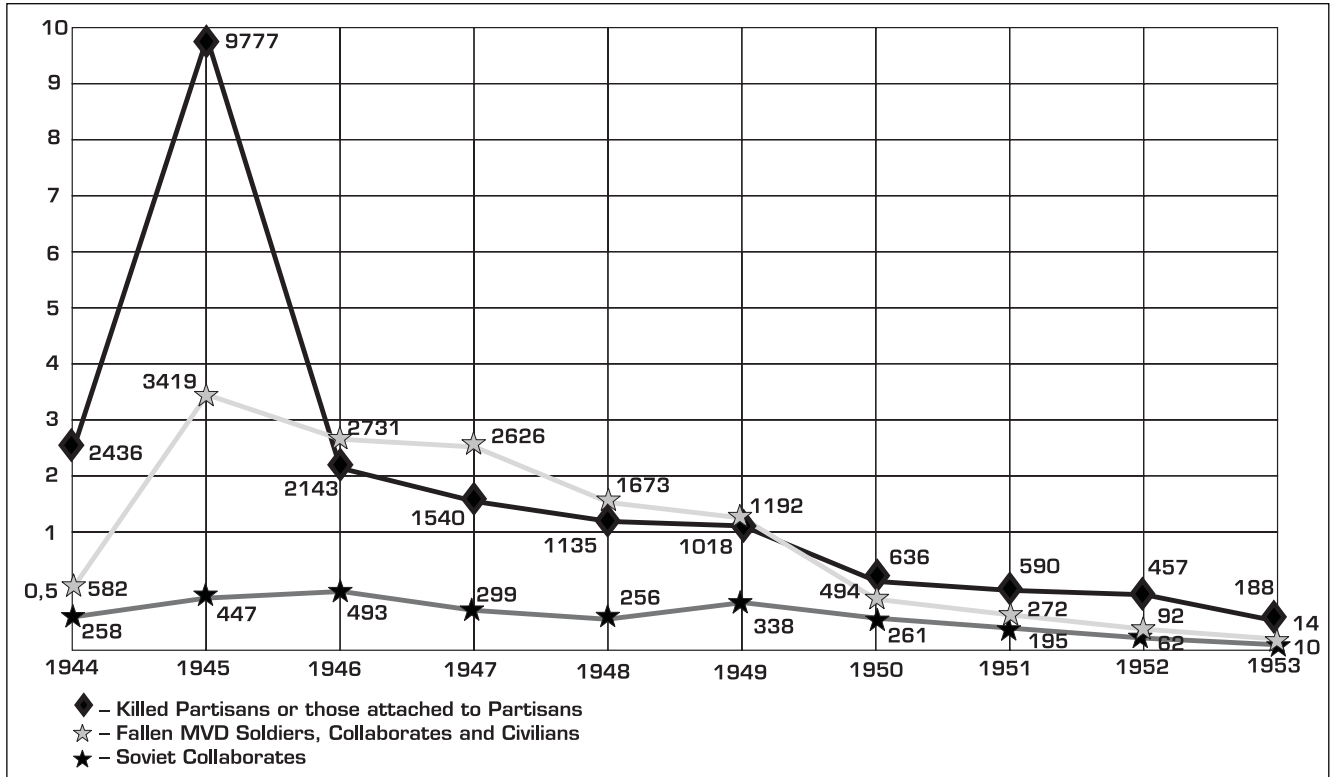
Annex A

THE LITHUANIAN NATION IN 1940-1941 AND 1944-1953 MGB (KGB) STATISTICAL INFORMATION



Annex B

PARTISAN WAR IN LITHUANIA IN FIGURES JULY 1944–1953 MGB (KGB) STATISTICAL INFORMATION



Annex C

MVD (NKGB) work results from 15 July 1944 to 25 October 1953 (Translated from Russian)

| Eliminated | 1944 | 1945 | 1946 | 1947 | 1948 | 1949 | 1950 | 1951 | 1952 | 1953 | Total |
|---|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|---------|
| Underground Command Centers | — | 7 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | 17 |
| Regional and District Staffs | 5 | 31 | 15 | 5 | 12 | 16 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 103 |
| Total number of Armed Nationalists (Guerrilla) | 4515 | 17524 | 5199 | 3041 | 2473 | 2186 | 1044 | 1138 | 632 | 354 | 38106 |
| From this: | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Killed | 2436 | 9777 | 2143 | 1540 | 1135 | 1192 | 635 | 590 | 457 | 188 | 20093 |
| Arrested | 2079 | 7747 | 3056 | 1501 | 1338 | 994 | 409 | 548 | 175 | 116 | 17963 |
| Legalized Armed Nationalists | 285 | 36272 | 1055 | 708 | 176 | 51 | 18 | 17 | 16 | 6 | 38604 |
| Nationalist Organizations and Groups | 166 | 819 | 500 | 363 | 339 | 440 | 262 | 224 | 89 | 53 | 3255 |
| Total number of arrested | 4162 | 19973 | 10760 | 6416 | 4481 | 4699 | 3407 | 3396 | 1131 | 951 | 59376 |
| From this: Members of Nationalist Organizations and underground signalers | 316 | 4382 | 3676 | 1610 | 1086 | 1218 | 1077 | 943 | 337 | 205 | 14850 |
| Armed Nationalist supporters | 329 | 3083 | 1986 | 2145 | 1112 | 1274 | 821 | 791 | 354 | 364 | 12259 |
| Total number of Deported : People | — | 4479 | 2082 | 3938 | 39482 | 32735 | 761 | 20357 | 2203 | — | 106037 |
| ffffddddd Families | — | 1204 | 501 | 1022 | 11233 | 9633 | 189 | 5136 | 312 | — | 29230 |
| From this: Kulak Families | — | 437 | — | 602 | 8228 | 7886 | 173 | 4188 | 217 | — | 21731 |
| Nationalist Families (answer from terror acts) | — | 767 | 501 | 420 | 3005 | 1747 | 16 | 948 | 95 | — | 7499 |
| Number of Armed Nationalists terror acts | 854 | 3324 | 2354 | 1572 | 823 | 560 | 285 | 187 | 93 | 63 | 10115 |
| Killed in these acts | 582 | 3419 | 2731 | 2626 | 1673 | 1018 | 494 | 272 | 92 | 14 | 12922 |
| From this: Soviet Collaborates | 253 | 447 | 493 | 299 | 256 | 122 | 83 | 52 | 17 | — | 2022 |
| Fallen MVD soldiers | 93 | 725 | 273 | 155 | 118 | 98 | 50 | 44 | 35 | 5 | 1596 |
| Confiscated: Cannons | 4 | 4 | 1 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 9 |
| Anti-tank Guns | 10 | 10 | 9 | — | 1 | — | — | — | — | 1 | 31 |
| Mortars | — | 15 | 15 | — | — | — | 1 | — | — | 1 | 32 |
| Grenade launchers (Panzerfaust) | — | 4 | 4 | — | — | 1 | — | — | — | 1 | 10 |
| Machine guns | 395 | 1225 | 501 | 312 | 208 | 176 | 61 | 76 | 48 | 12 | 3014 |
| Automatic rifles | 606 | 2245 | 1166 | 794 | 523 | 522 | 291 | 273 | 190 | 77 | 6687 * |
| Rifles | 4884 | 9596 | 3959 | 1695 | 1090 | 984 | 498 | 487 | 316 | 108 | 23617 * |
| Pistols | 516 | 1832 | 1678 | 1275 | 1001 | 1069 | 480 | 587 | 437 | 170 | 9045 * |
| Mines | 459 | 1403 | 1592 | 66 | 8 | 63 | 2 | 12 | 14 | 3 | 3622 * |
| Hand grenades | 3196 | 5845 | 2743 | 1509 | 862 | 716 | 314 | 207 | 192 | 47 | 15631 * |
| Various ammunitions | 620618 | 1427565 | 716180 | 405396 | 186166 | 213545 | 173169 | 118025 | 49367 | 13118 | 3943063 |
| Explosives (kg) | — | 504,3 | 337,5 | 75,4 | 74 | 147,2 | — | — | 8,4 | 3 | 1149,8 |
| Typewriters and copymachines | 2 | 132 | 78 | 92 | 54 | 97 | 37 | 27 | 40 | 18 | 577 |

Head of the Lithuanian SSR MVD 4-th Department Maj. P. Raslan, 25 October 1953. *Arithmetical mistake in the original.

Editor's notes

In the Second issue of Baltic Defence Review 1999 I published the article “UPRISING OF DECEMBER 1, 1924” by Dr. Hannes Walter. Unfortunately a translation error occurred on page 131. The text published reads:

“The share of Estonians in the grouping of the Red Army by the end of the War of Independence had grown to 160.000 men in the Estonian front line”.

The correct text should have read:

“The grouping of the Red Army had grown in number to 160.000 and the share of Estonians was only marginal.”

With this correction I hope that both the author and the readers will accept my sincerest apologies for the misleading mistake.

**Ole Kværnø,
Editor**

Section VI

Graduation of the first staff course at the Baltic Defence College 22 June 2000



Mr. Juri Luik, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Estonia graduates Captain Meelis Kiili of the Estonian Army



H.E. Lennart Meri, President of the Republic of Estonia and Brigadier General Michael H. Clemmesen, Commandant of the Baltic Defence College.

The graduating Estonian students.





The graduating Lithuanian officers

The graduating Latvian students





Students of the first staff course together with national representatives