

# **US/Nato's military installations in The North**

**Report from Sweden - by A. Norberg, GN Board Member**

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Thank you for giving me the opportunity to say something about the Nordic countries and US/NATO's military installations. It is my conjecture that the entire landmass of the North constitutes a platform for a US war with Russia.

Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia have, through the years, become a strategic area for US/NATO's war on Russia. I am not talking solely about the numerous wargames, which are conducted in the north and in the south of this landmass, but about the installations already in place, which are the preconditions for war by the US. All wars, since and including Iraq 2003 are made possible by satellites. These facts are not known and remain unexplored by the journalists who are "imbedded" in ground-based forces. The use of space satellites in warfare is preventing progress on PAROS - a UN declaration on the "Prevention of Arms Race in Outer Space". Each year there is vote in support of PAROs at the UN. Only US and Israel regularly abstain from voting or even vote against.

What follows is an overview of the various northern installations.

## **Greenland** (Kalaallit Nunaat to the indigenous population)

Greenland was a colony of Denmark until 2009. This huge island was extremely important for US military installations – being half way between the US and Europe) and one of the important reasons why Denmark was invited to join NATO in 1949. Today, Greenland is independent from Denmark except when it comes to issues of defence (the military). Greenland is an important platform for US radar installations for US National Missile Defence. The US still works with Denmark when it comes to military installations and war manoeuvres.

## **Iceland**

This island state was one of the founding NATO members in 1949. For many years the military airfield at Keflavik, near Reykjavik, was a US base for bombers and nuclear weapons. In Richard Fieldhouse notes in his book "Nuclear Battlefields" how one time the US deployed 48 nuclear weapons at Keflavik. The base was closed in the nineties and the nuclear devices were removed but today the US are planning to open Keflavik once more. So, there is a question: will the base house nuclear weapons again? According to Fieldhouse, Iceland was an extremely important

platform for different types of US installations and in fact one of the headquarters for the US Atlantic Military Command, and a platform for US spy planes, AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control Stations) and SOSUS (a Sound Surveillance System consisting of a chain of underwater listening posts for spying on Russian submarines and vessels) and LORAN-C (a radio navigation system before satellite navigation). These installations are most probably still there and have been or will be upgraded.

## **Norway**

Norway also became a NATO member in 1949, in a way that is sometimes described as a coup d'état. The decision was taken at the Social Democrat Party Congress of 1949 although the issue of Norway joining the Atlantic Alliance (later NATO) was not on the agenda when the delegates were invited to take part. In his 1987 book "Behind the Facade" describes the debate about this important change in Norwegian foreign policy as being conducted at a "lightning tempo" and the decision to join was made but the US was not allowed to deploy nuclear weapons on Norwegian soil. However, Norway was soon transformed to an unsinkable aircraft-carrier for the different US military installations aimed at Norway's close neighbour - The Soviet Union.

The Norwegian Sea and its coastline was of enormous strategic importance to the US Polaris and Poseidon nuclear submarines. "One single Poseidon was loaded with 224 nuclear warheads-each stronger than the Hiroshima bomb", according to Daniel Ellsberg. Today, two US Trident submarines are deployed in the North under the Arc icecap. Beside these, the US has installed COBs (Collocated Operating Bases) around the entire Norwegian landmass, containing stockpiles of spare-parts, weapons and fuel. They are situated from the north to the south of Norway at Andøya, Bodø, Sola, Evenes and Bardufoss. Additionally, the US has also deployed AWACS in the area. I once met a Major Einar Edwardsen from Norway, who left the Norwegian army, in protest against US bombers training with nuclear weapons in Bodø. He contacted the newspapers about it but in vain – it seemed to be of no interest to the Norwegian Press.

## **Vardö**

On the tip of northeast Norway, only a few miles from Russia, the US have deployed Globus II – an extremely powerful radars. This particular radar was moved from an US Air Base in California, where it had been used in US National Missile Defence exercises. It represents a gross violation of the 1972 ABM Treaty between the US and the Soviet Union, which forbade either superpower from deploying such a radar

outside their territory. The erosion of the ABM Treaty began during President Clinton's Administration and was eventually killed off by President George W. Bush in 2001. I visited Vardö in 2015, and learned that the US is building a new even stronger radar to be deployed there in 2020.

## **Svalbard**

Svalbard is a Norwegian archipelago in the Arctic Ocean north of mainland Europe between Norway and Russia. In the 1920 Svalbard Treaty, signed by 46 countries, this group of islands were declared a demilitarized zone. However, the area has undergone a change in recent years due to the work of the NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg. He is a Social Democrat and a previous Prime Minister of Norway. He has allowed Svalbard to become a platform for Svalsat, a satellite station operated by Kongsberg Satellite Services (KSAT), a joint venture between Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace and the Norwegian Space Centre (NSC).

SvalSat and KSAT's Troll Satellite Station (TrollSat) in Antarctica are the only ground stations that can see a low altitude polar orbiting satellite on every revolution as the earth rotates – an orbit often used by the military for Earth observation. Bård Wormdal, author of the 2011 book "The Satellite War", has revealed that: "the Norwegian satellite installations are violating international Treaties. The installations on Svalbard – Svalsat - were extremely important during the US war in Libya among other wars."

I have seen a photo of Svalbard in which I have been able to count up to 10 radomes. The importance of Svalbard was revealed by the fact that NATO held one of its meetings on Svalbard. In 2017, a serious provocation towards neighbouring Russia.

## **Esrange**

In comparison with countries of a similar size, Sweden has an impressive space industry and plays a central role in the European Space Agency (ESA). The ESA headquarters is situated in Darmstadt, Germany and it works in cooperation with Esrange, the world's biggest downloading station from satellites, situated in the North of Sweden. The Swedish Space Corporation (SSC) currently controls 24 satellites from Esrange, which involves 92 satellite passes each 24-hour period. The SSC also runs a global ground station network, PioraNet, in which its US subsidiary Universal Space Network plays a big role. Esrange and ESA are presented as civil projects but in fact have a close cooperation with the Space Centre at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, USA. According to Bruce Gagnon and Loring Wirbel, both experts

in space issues, civil space projects are often a cover for global military space programmes. When Bruce Gagnon was invited to speak in Kiruna, 2007, a young woman in the audience, after listening to him, commented: "Now I understand better what all this is about. I was at Esrange as a trainee scholar last year. I questioned why most of the time they downloaded images covering Russia's landmass and sent it direct to the US. But I got no good answer to my question."

The Swedish Space Corporation co-operates with the US, South Korea, India, Taiwan and Israel.

## **Galileo**

In December 2010, a new installation for servicing "Galileo" (the European GPS satellite system) was initiated in Kiruna, in the North of Sweden. The station is equipped with a Galileo Experimental Sensor Station (GESS) receiver, which also delivers continuous data to the European Space Operations Centre in Darmstadt. The 2010 event was presented to the press and the public as: "Today, Galileo was inaugurated. It is one of the global ground-stations. Galileo, in Kiruna, will play an important role in communicating with satellites in the European global network system." Officially Galileo was presented as a purely civilian project, but it was always also to be used for military purposes. Galileo offers PRS (Public Restricted Signals) for military use for communications and to guide bombs to their target. To "sell" the project to citizens it is presented as serving civil society, but it will be a very important tool in future wars. A similar station is installed in Kourou in French Guyana, close to the Equator.

## **Cyberwarfare**

Edward Snowden became known worldwide when he defected from the US National Security Agency (NSA) and eventually ended up as a refugee in Moscow. Snowden had worked for many years for the NSA but became disillusioned with its role. He revealed to the press that his work was about mass surveillance and espionage. Two Swedish journalists made a long, detailed interview with him in Moscow which was published in Dagens Nyheter, Sweden's most prestigious daily newspaper. What was never mentioned in the interview however, was that Sweden is ranked as the third biggest country for espionage after the US and Great Britain. Sweden has electronic spy installations on the island of Lovön, close to Stockholm, and in Lerkil, not far from Gothenburg in the South. Fibre optic communications cables from Russia which pass through Sweden are the target. In 2013, a Swedish delegation, from Lovön, was invited to NSA Headquarters at Fort Meade, Maryland, USA. It was a three days secret meeting with the heads of FRA (*Försvarets radioanstalt, FRA*)

the Swedish government agency, part of the Ministry of Defence, involved in signals intelligence, or (SIGINT) and computer security. Swedish technicians are extremely well known and respected for their skills and knowledge and a culture of secrecy. Beside the installations on Lovön, the FRA used the Swedish Embassy in Helsingfors, Finland, during the Cold War to listen-in to the Soviet Union's military and diplomatic communications. The FRA had received the tools for this from the NSA. In 2008 there was a big change when the Swedish liberal right wing came to power. Everything became open and all information collected from Russian communications, political and military conversations and messages was sent to the NSA.

Edward Snowden once said in a speech at the European Parliament that: "When it comes to mass surveillance the difference between FRA and NSA is only a question of manpower and money".

In conclusion, there are two important satellite communication centres in Sweden: Lerkil and Lovön. According to British expert Duncan Campbell, Lerkil is a third party to the "Five Eyes" electronic spy network of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the US. Lerkil listens and copies private and confidential conversations and business calls without authorization. These are sent to GCHQ in Great Britain and the NSA in the US in this SIGINT Exchange Agreement.

## **STRATCOM**

In 2014, Latvia, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, and the UK signed a memorandum agreeing upon the establishment of a *StratCom Centre of Excellence* (COE) in Riga, Latvia. Its aim, according a NATO press release, is to enhance the Strategic Communication abilities within the NATO alliance. "It will operate as a centre for debate and expertise within different disciplines. The US senator, John McCain was invited to the inauguration.-Sweden signed the memorandum in 2015 and another COE for "*Cold Weather Operations*" now operates in the north of Norway.

A well-known Swedish journalist, Britta Ring, noted, on January 18th, 2017, in the weekly magazine, *Flamman* that: "the Swedish Minister of Defence, Hultquist, has connected The Authority for Defence of the Society in Sweden (MSB) to NATO's propaganda centre - the STRATCOM, in Riga. With that, all US/NATO propaganda is now officially the truth in Sweden – the Ministry of Defence even send their employed workers to Fort Bragg, the Center for Psychological Warfare in the US. Swedish radio journalists visited the installation in Riga in 2016 but made no criticism of it. Not one embarrassing question as to whether STRATCOM'S images of the

truth are real. And those who speak out against it are tools for the Russian propaganda machine."

Today we call it "Putinism". Britta Ring recalls a similar period in the fifties, which was called McCarthyism.

The conclusion is that we, normal peace people, have to go work to oppose the electronic computerised warfare as well as all other forms of warfare, and we need to recognise and understand all the connections.