

Northern Flank by Tore Fredin

Toward a new Baltic defense policy

Government posturing will do nothing to further regional security; look instead at LaRouche's new defense program.

In the context of the new NATO doctrine of extension into eastern Europe, several international interventions have been made into the Nordic/Baltic region, proposing in geopolitical terms how Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania should shape their future security policy together.

In February, the Rand Corp. issued a study which proposed a Nordic-Baltic security zone, according to which Finland and Sweden ought to take a bigger responsibility for the Baltic countries. This proposal was supported by former British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd. In a speech at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London on March 28, he suggested a Baltic pact for the region.

The purpose of both these proposals is to present an interim security alternative for the region, containing a new variation of the old neutrality policy. The proposals are aimed to calm down the Russians, who have reacted rather violently to the demand from the Baltic nations that they be allowed to join NATO. According to Swedish security expert Bo Huldt (director of the Swedish Foreign Institute), this solution for the Baltic nations is the second best alternative, since NATO membership for the time being is out of the question. That was probably what President Bill Clinton presented as the U.S. policy to the three heads of state from the Baltic countries who visited Washington in June.

This will also be on the agenda when President Clinton meets Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson at

the White House on Aug. 9. According to the Swedish media, the Clinton administration wants Sweden and Finland to play a leading role in the Baltic area. After he meets Clinton, Persson will meet with Finland's Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen.

This reflects the external pressure for a new policy, but Persson himself has introduced a new tone into Swedish foreign policy during his first four months as prime minister. Unlike previous Social Democratic administrations, he has tilted Swedish foreign policy away from a utopian globalist UN policy, to ally with Europe in general and the Baltic region in particular. He has been making militant statements such as, "The Baltics cause is ours" or that he supports Latvia's efforts to become a member of NATO. Both statements clearly go beyond the traditional Swedish utopian neutrality policy.

Persson's statements have thrown the orthodox Swedish neutralists into disarray, but up to now he has only been posturing, as part of a carefully nurtured image of himself as a man of action.

A top official in Persson's staff stated, according to the daily *Svenska Dagbladet* of July 26, that Persson impressed Clinton with how he had handled the European Baltic regional conference on May 1, for which Sweden was the host nation. It was held in the town of Bisby on the island of Gotland, in the middle of the Baltic Sea. Twelve heads of state and foreign ministers from the countries around the Baltic Sea, among them German Chancellor

Helmut Kohl, attended the meeting.

The policy of expanding NATO in Europe has not been connected to the need for economic development of Russia as well as the Baltic countries, but rather to the shock therapy policy which has led to an economic disaster for eastern and central Europe. To leave out the economic aspects and limit the extension of NATO to security and military affairs, is a message which Moscow will interpret as having NATO's arms closing in on Russia.

This basic problem was not at all addressed by participants at the May 1 conference. The Swedes themselves have played a destructive role by totally ignoring the problems of economic disintegration in Russia, only focussing on the Baltic countries. Persson's militant posturing has created a new, confused, situation in Swedish security policy. A way out has been presented for the region, in Lyndon LaRouche's new strategic security document for reforming NATO's policy based on economic development (see *EIR*, June 28, "Rid NATO of the Entente Cordiale Now!"). LaRouche's analysis was distributed in the form of a leaflet by the European Labor Party (EAP) to all Swedish parliamentarians, as well as to the relevant government officials who participated in the special session of the Swedish Parliament on July 6, which had been called to discuss the domestic unemployment situation.

A second phase of the intervention by the EAP is planned for August, with the publication of the whole LaRouche document in Swedish. Since World War II, the situation has never been so open for a new security policy, both in Sweden and Finland. The confused state of affairs in Sweden, as well as the disarray of the orthodox neutralists, shows the need for a truly alternative doctrine.