

## Northern Flank by Göran Haglund

### The Soviets rearm on Norway's border

*While the INF treaty cuts ground-based missiles, new Soviet sea-launched missiles are based in northern Europe.*

Well-timed with Soviet Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov's Jan. 11-15 visit to Sweden and Norway, untiringly sermonizing about peace and cooperation in Northern Europe, Norwegian Military Intelligence issued new information concerning the Soviet buildup of sea-launched nuclear missiles in the region adjacent to northern Norway.

The added Soviet missile capabilities now unveiled fly in the face of the INF treaty signed by President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachov during the infamous Pearl Harbor Day summit last December. While Moscow is accusing the West of darkly plotting to circumvent the spirit of the INF treaty, the Soviets themselves have already deployed new weapon systems which expose the treaty as a sham.

According to the new revelations, a Norwegian P-3B Orion reconnaissance plane recently returned from the Barents Sea with some very interesting pictures taken of a Soviet Yankee Class submarine.

The pictures, according to the Norwegian daily *Aftenposten* of Jan. 12, "are concrete proof that the Soviet leadership a long time ago decided to rebuild this kind of submarine to be a platform for completely new kinds of weapons. A costly and extensive reconstruction had been done, the hull had been made 10 meters longer and the tower 3 meters longer. The ship probably is now able to carry both torpedoes and long-range cruise missiles, and has received new fire-control and sonar systems. It appears to be a ship meant to be used as an attack

submarine, and ought probably to be regarded as a new kind of submarine."

Since 1978, at least 15 Yankee Class ballistic missile submarines were removed from duty in compliance with the 1972 SALT I treaty. The new observations confirm that the Yankee Class submarines removed under the SALT treaty, are converted and re-launched as attack and cruise missile submarines. According to *Aftenposten*, "the pictures show a Soviet escalation on an important maritime sector, and indicate how doubtful the INF treaty can turn out to be, as seen from a northern European point of view."

According to the Norwegian daily, "the Yankee Class submarines are likely to be able to carry the long-range missile SS-NX-24, which is nuclear-tipped. A smaller cruise missile with the code SS-NX-21 has also been developed. It is designed to fit the standard torpedo tubes used by Soviet ships and is probably deployed on the submarines of Yankee, Victor, Akula, and Sierra Classes. The consequence of this is that both the Norwegian Sea and Norwegian territory will come more into focus and be of more strategic importance than the INF treaty."

Polemizing against Gorbachov's October 1987 Murmansk speech, in which he claimed to have limited military activity in areas bordering on Scandinavia, *Aftenposten* wrote:

"It's hard to see that Gorbachov's description coheres with reality; the contrary seems to be the case. According to Norwegian Military Intelligence, during 1987 there were large-scale modernizing efforts and an ex-

tension of the military forces on the Kola Peninsula. The advanced fighter-interceptor Su-27 Flanker for the first time was stationed in the north. An aircraft matching any of the American fighters on the scene, the Su-27, with its 1,000-kilometer range, gives important support to long-range operations aimed at Soviet control over the Norwegian Sea or parts of Norway itself. Also the early-warning and command plane Mainstay appeared last year at the Kola."

A new feature of the two large Soviet Navy exercises in 1987, was the participation of bigger air forces, *Aftenposten* noted. In one period of the exercises, they ran 50-60 air formations a day, with up to 20 jet fighters involved in each.

No sooner had Ryzhkov left than the chief of Norwegian Military Intelligence, Rear Adm. Egil J. Eikanger, in a Jan. 18 address to the Oslo Military Society, revealed that the world's largest submarine, the Soviet Typhoon Class strategic missile sub, has been stationed at a newly expanded submarine base less than 50 kilometers away from Norway's border.

A Norwegian P-3B Orion reconnaissance plane has also taken pictures of the new Soviet supply ship for strategic missile submarines, *Aleksandr Brykin*, the construction of which was completed in Leningrad last year. The *Aleksandr Brykin* is the first unit of a new class of submarine tenders, designed to resupply the most modern Soviet strategic missile submarines, such as those of the Typhoon Class, with up to 16 new missiles, after the submarine has fired some of its own missiles. The Typhoon Class submarines carry 20 SS-N-20 missiles, each with six to nine nuclear warheads that can strike targets anywhere in the U.S. from their home waters in the Barents Sea, or from positions below the North Pole's icecap.