

The US-Nato War Games in Finland

by Kerstin Tuomala for Stockholm conference, Feb. 4, 2017

This year we have many anniversaries, besides in Sweden also in Finland.

In december it will be 100 years since Finland declared independence from Russia and Lenin signed the recognition of it. A little more than 100 years earlier Russia had given Finland autonomy, which made it possible to develop as a nation. This happened in connection with that Sweden lost Finland to Russia in the war 1808-1809.

The first 30 years of independency Finland went through four wars. 1918 there was the civil war; 1939-1940 the Winter War and the Following War 1941 – 1944 against Russia; and the War in Lapland 1944 – 1945 against the former ally, Hitler's army, which refused to deliberately leave after the cease-fire with Russia in september 1944. The Germans destroyed Lapland in that war, the inhabitants had to flee with families and cattles to Sweden, houses were burned and the ground was mined.

But we have also another anniversary – the 10th of this month it is 70 years since the Peace was signed in Paris and we have lived in peace since. This peace included restrictions in our defense and armament.

Finland has a 1300 km frontier with Russia. Our postwar president Paasikivi realized this as a fact and together with the restrictions of the peace treaty it led to a treaty of friendship, cooperation and aid with the Soviet Union. Among others we agreed not to attac or threat nor to let third part through our territory attac or threat the Soviet Union. Due to these treaties and to the wisdom of our presidents Paasikivi and Kekkonen we developed cooperation with Soviet Union which benefitted both countries until the frontiers were opened. That period lasted more than forty years with increacing well being and also enriching cultural interaction. We learned to trust cooperation and diplomacy rather than military force.

”In qustions concerning peace and war we always are in favour for peace. In international conflicts we strive to take the role of a physician rather than of a judge.”, president Kekkonen announced.

After the collaps of the Soviet Union, the peace movement turned weaker. Our politicians deviated by small steps from the former peaceful policy. Our UN-delegates accepted Georg Bush senior's war against Irak 1991. In connection with the purchase of Hornet-fighters 1992 Finland started military cooperation with USA. By and by the law for UN-soldiers was change so that they could participate in peace-forcing operations, which means using violence in other purpose than extreme self defence. Finland also has joined Partnership for peace and by and by participated in strict NATO war exercises as well as in NATOoperations in other countries, for example in Afganistan. Finland participated in surveillance of the air space of Iceland in Februar 2014.

In September 2014 the commander of the Finnish army signed a hostlandtreaty between the Finnish government and NATO. It has not been discussed nor voted about in the parliament. After that US marin soldiers have exercised winter war in Lapland each Januar. The Arctic Challenge Exercise which was the biggest NATO fighter exercise in 2015 flew also over Finland and NATO fighters used finnish airfields.

2016 USA invited itself to exercise war on ground near Tampere - and in the air starting from a field near Kuopio and flying over the whole of Finland. On our south coast the NATO Baltops exercise trained landing.

2016 our government signed bilateral defence treaties with Great Britain and USA .

This year Finland will be host for the Artic Challenge Eercise. Our army will attend 84 international educational programs and war exercises both abroad and at home. Last years it was about the same.

2015 the government started to support StratCom which claim it stands for true information in contrast to desinformation. The risk is the development of "voluntary" totalitarianism accompanied by censorship, already noticeable in the medias.

Finland has agreed to construct a Center for rejecting hybrid threats. As host Finland will contribute to the main costs.

I am worried about that Finland's politicians have resigned our independency and permit foreign powers threat Russia through our territory. As motive is claimed that Russia is aggressive and cannot be estimated - with reference to Krim, Ukraina and now Aleppo. The more our politicians rely in force, the less they use diplomacy and peaceful cooperation for our security. Finland has never gained anything in fights, everything is won at the negotiating tables.

If the peacemovement doesn't come together to stand up against the military threat, we maybe are lost. But let us not forget that even though more than 50% of the Finns believe that there will be war with Russia, more than 60% say NO to NATO.

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