

## Northern Flank by A. Borealis

### Romanov demands nuclear-free zone

*The Soviet Politburo member praised Soviet-Finnish relations as a "model for other states."*

**D**uring his visit to Helsinki, Finland on Oct. 13-15, Soviet Politburo member Grigorii Romanov demanded a nuclear-free zone in the Nordic countries, denounced Western talk of an Eastern threat to Finland, and according to press, stated "his conviction that the Soviet Union and also Finland will in the future be a *good example to other states* of how a policy based on consideration of mutual long-range national interests and objective realities in today's world is to be run [emphasis added]."

With characteristic Soviet modesty, Romanov thus informed the public of Soviet intentions to "Finlandize" all the countries on its borders and, as soon as the "objective realities of today" have matured, the world. One of the prime tools of this policy is nuclear-free zones outside the Soviet Empire.

Romanov, who is also the Central Committee Secretary responsible for defense industries, told the Finns that "the proposals put forward by your country for a Nordic nuclear-free zone are now of more immediate interest than before, in a situation where American cruise missiles are being stationed in Western Europe and NATO is significantly increasing its activity in the northern parts of Europe in order to upset peace and security in this part of the world."

The Soviet Union, Romanov added cryptically, "is ready with practical measures to promote a realization of Finland's proposal."

Speaking at the 40th anniversary of the Soviet-Finnish armistice and the

founding of the Soviet-Finnish Friendship Society, Romanov stated that the Soviet-Finnish Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Assistance "is of great importance for safeguarding security on the Soviet Union's northwestern border, as well as the security of Finland."

Attacking certain Western forces and "especially forces in the United States," Romanov charged "the enemies of détente" with "attempting to penetrate the skulls of the Finns with the idea of some sort of threat from the East." He warned any Finnish dissidents: "History proves that we are able to reject attempts to have us depart from the correct path that we together have chosen."

In referring to history, Romanov was touching a sensitive nerve. During both world wars, the Finns were forced to fight wars against numerically vastly superior Russian armies, deployed by a Kremlin intent on gobbling up Finland which, from 1809 until its declaration of independence on Dec. 6, 1917, had been an autonomous part of the Russian Empire.

Forty years ago, the Soviet-Finnish armistice, which was concluded in Moscow on Sept. 19, 1944, put an end to hostilities between the two countries. The Finns proceeded to battle the 200,000 German troops of the 20th Mountain Army, which on orders of the German High Command were retreating from southern and central Finland into the northernmost part of the country, to protect Finnish nickel mines whose output was considered vital to Hitler's war effort.

On Oct. 7, 1944, the Russian IC Assault Corps launched an offensive against the German lines, which extended from northern Finland into the northwestern Soviet Union, near the Soviet port of Murmansk in the western part of the Kola Peninsula. A week later, the Red Army swept across the tiny stretch of Finnish territory and penetrated into Norway's northernmost province, Finnmark. The port town of Kirkenes soon fell to the Russians after a battle which left the town in ruins. The Red Army continued pushing westward into Norway for another three weeks, reaching the Tana River some 65 miles beyond Kirkenes. Remaining in Norway for months, the Russians pulled out only after Hitler's capitulation in May 1945.

Discreetly reminding the world and the Norwegians of that invasion, Radio Moscow on Oct. 8—five days before Romanov's arrival in Helsinki—broadcast a report on the seizure and occupation of Kirkenes 40 years ago. Soviet control of northern Norway today would be crucial to secure entrance into the North Atlantic of the gigantic Soviet fleet now based at Murmansk.

In promoting a Nordic nuclear-free zone, the Soviets aim to neutralize all of Scandinavia. A new Soviet book entitled, "The Nuclear-Free Status of Northern Europe," although criticizing Sweden's neutrality policy, praises Swedish Premier Olof Palme for his policy in favor of nuclear-free zones. Written by a certain Lev Voronkov at the prestigious Soviet IMEMO institute, the book demands that the Scandinavian countries unilaterally declare that under no circumstances will they station nuclear weapons on their soil. The book carefully omits mentioning that the only nuclear arms deployed in northern Europe are those of the Soviet Union.