

THE SECOND WORLD WAR. THE GERMAN OCCUPATION OF NORWAY 1940-1945:

When WW2 broke out in 1939, Norway wanted to stay neutral like in WW1. But for strategic reasons (coastline to Atlantic, harbours etc.) and for industrial reasons (the iron-ore fields in North Scandinavia) Norway became an object of interest. There were German plans, " operation Weserübung " and allied plans for Norway. By coincidence, the Allied mined the Leads the same date, April 8, as German warships approached Norway.

APRIL 9: Norway was occupied by Germany.

Blucher incident + Quislings role paved way for Norwegian resistance. But the country was military weak and South- Norway was easily conquered.

North-Norway resisted for 2 months. Terboven and Quisling rivalled for power.

Norwegian government and King left Norway. Decided to carry on resistance from abroad.

Military resistance ended June 10.

Germany wanted to establish a chamber of corporations built on the fascist concept and accepted only one political party: The National Unit.

Quisling was this party's leader, but organisations protested: sports clubs, teachers, trade unions and the church joined forces in a resistance movement, called the Home Front from 1942 on.

The Home Front cooperated with London and the military part of it, Mil.org. (1941) carried through sabotage against the Nazis and prepared its members for the final liberation. Groups in England, Scotland, Sweden and Canada were equipped and trained.

1943: Military sabotage of heavy water which ruined German ambitions of making an atom bomb.

Illegal resistance: illegal newspapers, listening to BBC, sabotage, underground.

Norwegians showed their resistance to the Nazis by: Wearing red stocking caps (red.opp), paper clips (symbol), having flowers in button hole (King's birthday), keeping radio (death penalty), refusing to sit down beside a German or Nazi on train, etc, etc. Informers traitors, Norwegians sent to concentration camps, the treatment of Jews, executions.

May 8, 1945: GER (350000 soldiers in Norway). A trial for traitors. 25 sentenced to death penalty.

NORWAY IN BIG-POWER POLITICS.

NATO MEMBERSHIP IN 1949:

After 1945 Norway wanted to stay out of alliances. The country wanted to be neutral, to work within UN as a " bridge-builder " between the great powers.

When a Norwegian, Trygve Lie, was elected Secretary of UN, this was in 1946, it was taken as a proof that our " mission " was appreciated.

But the years 1945-1948 saw an ever growing conflict between East and West.

Here is to be mentioned words like: " iron curtain ", the Truman doctrine, the Marshall plan, the Berlin blockade, Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe, the Soviet- Finnish pact in 1948, and then in February 1948, the communist coup in Czechoslovakia, all being elements in the Cold War. And the Czech- coup finally " convincing " Europe and Norway of communist fear.

The question here in Norway was: Might Norway be exposed to similar treatment as Czechs and Finns?

The Cold War thus led to a change in Norwegian neutral bridge-building policy. In 1948 it was clear that our country would have to seek some kind of military alliance and there were 2 alternatives:

1) A Scandinavian defence union of Sweden, Denmark and Norway. The solution was favoured by the Norwegian Government from the start. Sweden wanted this organisation \ union to be neutral. Norway depended on equipment and weapon from the USA, but the latter refused to give weapons to countries that did not side with the USA.

2) Therefore, entrance into NATO was chosen April 4, 1949.

12 countries joined from the start. Norway in order not to provoke neighbouring countries (Soviet), placed this ban: " No foreign bases or troops in Norway in peace time and no nuclear weapons ".

THE EEC REFERENDUM IN 1972:

Norway in 1962 followed the example of Britain in applying for full membership of E.E.C (common market), but negotiations were suspended indefinitely after Charles de Gaulle had caused the British application to fail. Norway followed Britain when a second application was made in 1967, and again in 1970.

But groups in Norway strongly opposed the prospect of EEC- membership.

Who were these groups:

- 1) The farmers: feared competition from products abroad.
- 2) The fishermen: feared foreign fishermen in Norwegian waters.
- 3) The radicals: feared " monopoly capitalism ".
- 4) The " independent national group ": feared loss of sovereignty.

Who supported EEC- membership:

- 1) The Labour Party elite and 2/3 of its politicians. They believed in the international idea.
- 2) All the Conservative Party. Industry and trade important.
- 3) A strong minority in the Christian People's Party and the Left.
- 4) The powerful organisations, unions, the greater part of the press.

The Opponents, headed by the farmer's organisations established the " People's Movement against EEC "; powerful propaganda organisation supported by farmers, fishermen, radical groups, the Center Party, the Socialist People's Party and some Labour politicians. " Norway is not for sale " was the national slogan.

A fight between the urban and rural area, the " little man " against the Government, Storting, powerful organisations and the press that all supported the European Movement.

REFERENDUM SEPTEMBER 23-24, 1972:

The poll gave this result: 53,5% voted against entering EEC. And 46,5% voted for. Astonishing result: But 1814, 1905, 1940-45 left its traces in Norwegian minds.

1994: The story repeated itself when the Norwegian people again turned down an invitation to join the European Union. The arguments were about the same and the vote almost the same as in 1972.