DEFENCE AND SECURITY STUDIES 2 | 2009

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The rise and decline of the Operational Level of War in Norway

Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies

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ISSN: 1504-6532
ISBN: 978-82-91571-11-9

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Contents

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Abbreviations

CAOC	Combined Air Operations Center
HQ	Headquarter
JHQ NORTH	Joint Headquarter North (Jåttå)
KFOR	Kosovo Force

abstract

Between 1970 and 2000, new institutions were established at the Norwegian operational level of war. However, in the beginning of the 21st century the Norwegian government started slimming down the Armed Forces and the operational level declined. The main question of the book is how this development can be explained. Using theory drawn from the social sciences, the author explores the power of five structural explanatory factors: the strategic importance of the northern flank; Norway's position and role in NATO; the changing character of war; financial resources; and changes in technology. All factors have had an impact on this development, but changes in the civil-military relations have also affected the significance of the operational level in contemporary war planning.

Keywords: Norwegian Armed Forces, operational level, war planning, NATO, civil-military relations, institutions

ISSN 1504-6532 • ISBN 978-82-91571-11-9
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Following the end of the Cold War, NATO itself and several important NATO members set about streamlining their command structures. By then, work had been ongoing in Norway to build institutional capacity since the early 1970s – long before the concept of operational warfare was adopted by NATO. This work continued well into the beginning of the 21st century apparently unaffected by radically changed strategic environment, external conditions and threats from the early 1990s. Momentum has subsided in the past nine years or so, as Norwegian headquarters suffered setbacks such as institutional marginalisation and the fragmentation of expertise in the management of joint military operations. The historical trajectory of Norway's operational level of warfare has been unusual, and the 1990s are rightly characterised as the "lost decade".[1]

How can this rise and decline be explained? Did institutional or conceptual requirements create a basis for the establishment of the operational level of war in Norway? And why did more than a decade elapse after the end of the Cold War before the institutions were cut back? This study describes and explains the development of the institutions at the operational level of war in Norway from 1970 to today.

The development of these institutions is a complex process, and it is necessary to investigate several possible explanatory factors. Based on an analysis of the empirical material, this study will explain

1 Kjell Inge Bjerga and Knut A. Surlien, *Forsvarets øverste ledelse i et internasjonalt perspektiv* [The central command of the Norwegian Defence from an international perspective], p. 11. (Oslo, Institutt for forsvarsstudier, 2002). Svein Ivar Hansen, Lieutenant-General, interview by author, 18 April 2007.

the development on the basis of five structural explanatory factors:[2] the strategic importance of the northern flank; Norway in NATO; the changing character of war; financial resources; and new technology. However, before turning to the explanations, we must chart the historical developments. Thus, chronological developments *before the turn of the century* will be described first, followed by an explanation of developments based on structural factors. Secondly, events *after the turn of the century* will be described and explained. Additionally, I will view developments both before and after 2000 in the light of some theoretical perspectives on military professionalism and civil-military relations. The purpose of this is to place these developments within a wider social, political and economic context, something that has not been done in Norway. This study will argue that the institutions at the operational level of war have evolved in the often tense field between what is functionally useful and what is socially acceptable – or between the functional and social imperatives described by Samuel P. Huntington in his classic study *The Soldier and the State*, published in 1956.[3]

A key feature of this study is to consider the relationship between the explanatory factors. What were the most important driving forces behind the development of these joint operations institutions? Is it the case that they evolved primarily as a result of conceptual or other professional considerations, in other words as a consequence of "the changing character of war"? Or were external conditions such as the strategic importance of the northern flank, alliance politics, and economic and technological factors more important? I wish to state at the outset that the evidence strongly suggests that the external conditions have been far more influential than conceptual or professional considerations.

Another important question is the function of the operational level. What is its position in the command structure and should this structure be simplified by eliminating superfluous levels? The operational level has traditionally been regarded as being of critical importance to the employment of military force. Many military professionals

2 My assessments are based on a study of downgraded and declassified literature and documents and on interviews with flag officers who have been commanders-in-chief of Defence Commands South Norway, Joint HQ North and Joint operational headquarters in the period 1996–2005. In addition I have interviewed the Chief of Defence in the period 1999–2005 and the Chief of the Defence Staff, later the Chief of Staff of the armed forces, in the period 2002–2005.

3 Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State. The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Harvard: The Belknapp Press of Harvard University Press, 1956).

consider this level as the very hub of the military command structure. The Norwegian joint operations doctrine describes this level of command as the link between strategic and tactical levels, a level which adapts political and strategic ends to feasible plans and operations.[4] The military commanders and the institutions at this level are supposed to convert tactical achievements into strategic results. Many would argue that the operational level has become less important than before in the light of today's complex conflicts, often characterised by new technology and rapidly evolving, politically sensitive situations, and that the levels of war should be conflated into a new and simpler structure for the conduct of operations.[5] On the other hand, the operational level still possesses the competence and capability to implement complicated and complex joint military operations, both at national and NATO level. Even though NATO is currently reorganising its military command structure and downsizing the organisation, the operational level will continue to exist, at least for the foreseeable future. It is, however, beyond the scope of this study to question the role of the operational level today or to consider whether different levels of war should be conflated or not. The objective of this study is to analyse the driving forces behind the development of this level of war, and why it in particular came under pressure after the turn of the century. In the conclusion, I will outline some thoughts on the way forward for the operational level.

A review of the literature on the subject – the lack of a study for Norway

Although much has been written about security and defence since 1970, there is limited literature on the subject of this study. In addition, Cold War studies of the military adopted a technological or political science approach. When studied from those angles, the use and development of the military was to some extent predictable. Since the end of the Cold War, however, concepts such as war and military force have become less predictable, making it necessary to analyse the phenomena from new angles and place them within a wider context. Therefore it seems essential to discuss developments in the light of theories drawn from the social sciences and the humanities.

4 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine* [Norwegian Armed Forces Joint Operational Doctrine] (Oslo: Norwegian Defence and Command and Staff College, 2007), pp. 32 and 57.

5 Ibid.; D. A. Macgregor, "Future battle: The Merging Levels of War", *Parameters,* vol. 22, no. 4 (1992): 33–47.

My objective is to explore a development closely linked to strategy and security policy and to identify the factors influencing it. Such theoretical perspectives may provide additional insights, although it is not my intention to verify or falsify the theories as such. For obvious reasons I have chosen to use the international literature on *civil-military relations* and I have made a selection of theoretical perspectives to place the Norwegian development in a wider context.

Two works deal with the development of the operational level in Norway: Kjell Inge Bjerga's *Enhet som våpen – Øverstkommanderende i Nord-Norge 1948–2002,*[6] and *Norsk forsvarshistorie 1970–2000*, *volume 5*, *Allianseforsvar i endring*,[7] written by Jacob Børresen, Gullow Gjeseth and Rolf Tamnes. They are based on studies of the archives, official documents, literature and interviews with central participants. Both works deal with the development of doctrine and its influence at the operational level. They do not, however, contain any of the theoretical perspectives mentioned above and do not place the development of the operational level within a broader social context.

As already mentioned, there is no tradition in Norway for military studies within a broad economic, political and social context.[8] Although the social implications inherent in this problem have been difficult to explain empirically from a Norwegian perspective, three works should be mentioned. *Mot et avnasjonalisert forsvar?*,[9] edited by Janne Haaland Matlary and Øyvind Østerud, highlights national and international trends and their influence on the changes in Norwegian defence. Secondly, *Norske makteliter* and *Den fragmenterte staten* offer valuable information on the role of defence and its position in Norwegian society.[10] Arne Røksund's article in the latter book, "Forsvaret mellom politisk styring og fagmilitær uavhengighet" also treats the historical

6 Kjell I. Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen. Øverstkommanderende i Nord-Norge 1948–2002* [Unity as a Weapon – Commander in Chief of North Norway 1948–2002] (Bergen: Eide forlag, 2002).

7 Jacob Børresen, Gullow Gjeseth and Rolf Tamnes, *Allianseforsvar i endring. Norsk forsvarshistorie,* vol. 5, *1970–2000* [The changing joint defence. Norwegian Defence History 1970–2000] (Bergen: Eide forlag, 2004).

8 Rolf Hobson and Tom Kristiansen, *Militærmakt, krig og historie. En innføring i forskningen fra Clausewitz til våre dager* [Military power, war and history. An introduction, from Clausewitz to the present], IFS Info, no. 6 (Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, 1995), p. 6

9 Janne H. Matlary and Øyvind Østerud, eds, *Mot et avnasjonalisert forsvar?* [Toward a denationalised defence?] (Oslo: Abstrakt forlag, 2005).

10 Trygve Gulbrandsen, et al., *Norske makteliter* [Norwegian power élites] (Oslo: Gyldendal akademisk, 2002); Bent S. Tranøy and Øyvind Østerud, eds, *Den fragmenterte staten* [The fragmented state] (Oslo: Gyldendal norsk forlag, 2001).

relationship between politics and the military in Norway up to 2001.[11] None of these works present a theoretical perspective or focuses on the operational level in particular.

As for international literature, two classic works stand out with regard to the development of military power in society. Samuel P. Huntington's *The Soldier and The State – Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* and *The Professional Soldier – a social and political portrait* written by Morris Janowitz. Both studies provide thorough theoretical perspectives on the development of military institutions at the outset of the Cold War, with links to strategy, security policy and social development. The classical perspectives of Samuel P. Huntington's views on the *military profession* and *civilian-military relations* seem relevant. His approach belongs to the social sciences, though in some respects also touches on the humanities. His perspectives are closely linked to strategy and security policy, and identify the driving forces of institutional development. Placing the military profession within his concept of conservative realism, puts the Norwegian case in a very conventional and Western tradition that may have some explanatory power. It goes straight to the heart of the balance between political control and military autonomy; a source of friction which is of concern in most Western democracies. On the other hand, one might well ask whether Huntington's perspectives are relevant today, especially to analyses of Norway. Huntington wrote his study five decades ago influenced by the Cold War, and there has been much research in this area since. Moreover, Huntington was concerned with the United States as a superpower with a professionalised officer corps, and showed little interest in small states with a officer corps based on conscription. Despite this, his perspectives may go some way to explaining the early establishment and growth of the operational level of war in Norway. The establishment in Norway of such autonomous and purely military institutions, based on officers' wish for professional independence, flexibility and freedom of action, largely conforms to his interpretation of objective civilian control of the military and of officers as conservative realists. According to his theory, the military should maximise its own organisation and build institutions to be as well prepared and suited to its tasks as possible. The establishment of an autonomous operational level should also serve to protect their activities from political

11 Arne Røksund, "Forsvaret mellom politisk styring og fagmilitær uavhengighet" [The Defence between political control and independent professionalism], in *Den fragmenterte staten*, eds. Tranøy and Østerud.

micro-management and to maintain professional independence, flexibility and freedom of action. It could be argued that Huntington's "strong objective civilian control" contributed to the growth and expansion of the operational level of war in Norway. It may also explain in part why Norway was slow to cut back its command structure after the Cold War. During the 1990s governments sought to save money and strengthen civilian control of the military. However, the hesitant cuts indicate that civilian control was insufficient and weak.

I have also considered Morris Janowitz's military sociology, as presented in his book *The Professional Soldier*. His perspectives could be relevant with regard to long-term social trends and their effects on the evolution of the military as a group. However, they seem less relevant to this study since he does not discuss thoroughly the everyday political management and control of the military. They are, moreover, not closely linked to strategy, security policy and the driving forces of institutional development.

I also wish to mention *The Postmodern Military* by Charles Moskos et al., *Humane Warfare* by Christopher Coker and *Armed Servants, Agency oversight, and civil-military relations* by Peter D. Feaver.[12] They provide important and relevant information on the development of military power in post-modern societies and civil-military relations in Western democratic states. The two latter authors also treat highly relevant theoretical issues, but do not focus on the development of the operational level in particular.

None of the literature mentioned so far, however, discusses the most recent developments. Research covering the operational level since the turn of the century, the period during which the most significant changes have taken place, hardly exists in Norway. I will return to this in chapter 4. Let us first go back and consider the development of Norwegian institutions at the operational level from the very beginning.

A brief outline of the chapters

The following chapters describe and explain the institutional development of the operational level. In chapter 2 I treat the period 1970–2000, and chapter 3 deals with the subsequent period. The chapters

12 Christopher Coker, *Humane Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2001); Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants, Agency, oversight, and civil-military relations* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003); Charles C. Moskos, David R. Segal and John A. Williams eds., *The Postmodern Military* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

begin with a chronological description. I then attempt to answer and explain the questions raised. My explanation is structured in accordance with the following factors (1) the strategic importance of the northern flank (2) Norway in NATO (3) the changing character of war (4) financial resources and (5) new technology. In chapter 4, I present Huntington's theory and the theoretical perspectives which contribute towards explaining developments, and conclude by discussing the development of these perspectives. In chapter 5 I sum up and conclude my study, and I have taken the liberty of presenting my thoughts and ideas on the future shape of the operational level in Norway.

Chapter 2

The operational level 1970–2000

The military system has one mission and one organisation. Integrated planning and unified leadership will be required for all operations.

Hauge II Committee in 1969

The building of institutions

This was the period of the Cold War between the Western Powers and the Warsaw pact. Both sides considered NATO's northern flank, which basically consisted of Norway and its adjacent oceans, as strategically highly important. In this context, Norway, perceiving itself to be threatened, had to seek protection under NATO's umbrella to strengthen its defences against a possible invasion from the Soviet Union. As Norway itself possessed limited resources, allied reinforcements and infrastructure constituted the main pillars of its defence. The relationship with the Alliance became vital. During the 1990s, however, Norway saw its strategic importance lessen. Western military strategic interest in the northern flank declined. To some extent, Russia maintained its strategic interests in the northern regions, not only militarily but also economically, keeping Norway in uncertainty with regards to defence and security policy.

In 1967 a committee was established to examine and report on the regional management of the armed forces, the Hauge II Committee, chaired by Jens Christian Hauge, erstwhile chief of the Norwegian resistance movement during the Second World War, minister of defence after the war and later Supreme Court advocate. The Committee's remit, as laid down by Royal Decree of 13 October 1967, was to recommend an institutional solution for the operational level correspond-

ing to the strategic level solution adopted for Headquarters Defence Command, which at that time was being unrolled in Oslo. [13]

Based on the recommendations of this committee, two joint defence commands at the operational level were established in 1971–72, placed directly under the Chief of Defence and his strategic Headquarters Defence Command, one in northern Norway and one in southern Norway.[14] A more symbolic position as Commander-in-Chief had been established in northern Norway as early as 1949, with a view to coordinating the defence of the region and the contributions of the various services. Experience drawn from this work served as a source of inspiration, but it was not until the establishment of Defence Command North Norway and Defence Command South Norway that Norway had an operational level with its own, designated headquarters.[15] Until then the forces in the north and south were under the leadership of each service and controlled from different geographical areas.

With the new joint defence commands in place, two powerful operational leaders were supported by the commanders from each service, and with a far closer integration between the services than earlier. The defence commands were to be led by a Commander-in-Chief, a lieutenant-general or a vice-admiral. To conduct direct leadership of ground, sea and air operations respectively, commanders from each service with their own operational centre were put in place. The commanders, for the most part major generals or rear admirals, were advisers to the Commander-in-Chief and responsible for translating operational decisions into the proper language of each service and maintaining the highest possible standard. They thus exercised operational control of all units in their own services on behalf of the Commander-in-Chief. The commanders were given an influential position, which served to maintain professional standards, a reliable leadership of operational activities; "the highest possible competence and authority" were expected of them.[16]

At the same time a joint operational centre, superior to the service-based operational centre, was established to facilitate leadership of the

13 *Oppnevning av utvalget for Forsvarets regionale ledelse* [The appointment of a Board of Inquiry into the Regional Command of the Norwegian Armed Forces], Order in Council, 13 October 1967; Stortinget, *Forsvarets regionale ledelse* [The Norwegian Defence' regional command], Recommendation to the Storting, no. 55 (1969), p. 3.

14 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, pp. 47, 50, 116–118, 129, 143.

15 Stortinget, *Forsvarets regionale ledelse*, p. 6; Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, pp. 12, 30–35, 102.

16 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, pp. 7–8.

joint operations.[17] A joint staff with its own proper functions was also established, complete with functional sections for personnel, intelligence and security, operations, logistics and signals. The headquarters also had a quarters command of their own.

Thus the operational headquarters were given two different criteria for separation at the same level in the organisation. One was the functional separation of the joint staff, which came to be called the G or J structure. The other was the separation of the services represented by the commanders and their staff. Immediately under the Commander-in-Chief a chief of staff was in charge of the staff coordination at headquarters and across services and functions.[18]

Defence Command North Norway was declared operational in Reitan in Bodø on 1 September 1971.[19] Its mission was primarily to plan and coordinate the tasks of all three services in the region in peacetime, crisis and wartime, to prepare the reception of allied forces and maintain civilian–military cooperation within the scope of total defence. Its geographical area of responsibility comprised Norway's territory and air space north of the 65th parallel north, including the territorial waters of Norway and the archipelagos of Svalbard, Bjørnøya and Jan Mayen.

Defence Command South Norway was established in Oslo in January 1972 on the same model as that of North Norway. The commander-in-chief of South Norway was given more or less the same responsibilities as his counterpart in Northern Norway, but south of the 65th parallel. The headquarters, however, were structured slightly differently. At the outset the maritime operational centre was placed in Jåttå in Stavanger while the rest of the headquarters, including the ground and air operational centres, was located in Oslo.

Both commanders-in-chief were under national command in peacetime, and also under NATO command with a view to allied planning, exercises and war.[20] However, the joint defence commands were still manned by national personnel only and answered in peacetime to the Norwegian Chief of Defence. The commanders-in-chief consequently had two roles, a NATO role reporting to Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces Northern Europe and Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic in the USA, and a national role, reporting to the national

17 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 296, Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 110.
18 See appendix A – Command Structures and Command Relationships.
19 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 115.
20 See appendix A.

Chief of Defence. In crisis and wartime the staff would be reinforced by both national and allied personnel.

Although the integrated solution was controversial in the services, in terms of organisation it was considered to be progressive and well-functioning.[21] In 1975 the then Minister of Defence Alv Jakob Fostervoll and the Chief of Defence Herman Fredrik Zeiner Gundersen stated that this new organisation had been a positive development for Norway and the armed forces. It had "made the joint operational coordination better than before" and "created a better understanding and solidarity in the armed forces".[22] The new operational level made coordinated planning and conduct of joint operations possible, in which elements from the different services functioned as an integrated unit. In a critical situation, minor or major, the joint defence commands could respond quickly and deploy the forces required immediately, be they individual elements from one service to demonstrate Norwegian control of territorial waters, to intercept a Soviet plane violating national air space, or to respond to a small-scale aggression on the ground in the border regions. The Commander-in-Chief of the defence command was now able to exercise unity of command and to coordinate and control the activities from minute to minute, giving unity of effort.

At the same time, military requirements within services were taken care of by the commanders under one common leader,[23] a fact which helped create a powerful community around the commanders-in-chief and growing confidence in both within the services. To give both commanders-in-chief responsibility and authority equivalent to the Chief of Defence in their respective regions was a wise solution, not least as they were also relieved from certain duties of secondary importance.[24] A committee, which at a later stage assessed the supreme leadership of the armed forces, also came to the same positive conclusion.[25] We may conclude that with this new organisational structure Norway had

21 Bjørnar Kibsgaard, "Norges nasjonale kommandostruktur og forholdet til NATO" [Norway's national command structure and the relations with NATO] in *Kommandospørsmålet på nordflanken – utviklingen i to formative perioder*, ed. Rolf Tamnes, IFS Info, no. 4 (Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, 2001), p. 28.

22 Stortinget, *Erfaringer med den nye organisasjon for Forsvarets ledelse* [Experiences with the new Defence Staff organisation], Report to the Storting, no. 63 (1974–1975).

23 Kibsgaard, "Norges nasjonale kommandostruktur", p. 28.

24 Ministry of Defence, *Hovedretningslinjer for utforming av Forsvarets regionale og lokale organisasjon* [General lines to creating the regional and local organisation of the Armed Forces], Report to the Storting, no. 54 (1969–1970), pp. 8 and 13.

25 Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Innstilling fra utvalget til vurdering av Forsvarets øverste ledelse* [Report of the Military Leadership Inquiry], Norwegian Armed Forces' archives, dated 12 April 1991.

placed itself in the forefront. The same structure later inspired the development of NATO's Combined Joint Task Force headquarters.[26]

As the Commander-in-Chief South Norway was in charge of a region considered less exposed to the Soviet Union than Northern Norway, it was given lower priority. During the Cold War, preparedness was required in the north, and the time factor was seen as more critical than in the south. The separation of headquarters in the south between Oslo and Stavanger also made it difficult to plan, direct and execute joint operations. Moreover, Defence Command Northern Norway was given responsibility for all large-scale NATO exercises and also a wider area of responsibility as a consequence of Norway's extended jurisdiction over ocean waters. In the 1970s and 1980s more duties connected to surveillance, jurisdiction and exercise of authority in the oceans were accordingly transferred.[27] Defence Command South Norway had lower priority, and it was not until 1987 that all HQ functions were gathered under the same roof in extensive, modern underground facilities in Jåttå near Stavanger.[28]

Institutions at the operational level were soon to become centres of attention, given high priority in national budgets and assigned numerous duties.[29] They were considered as pillars of the Alliance and its commitment to the defence of Norway.[30] Both headquarters were given important functions in NATO's command structure. They acted as basis for the landing of allied reinforcements and also in connection with allied joint warfare on the northern flank. Their strength was shown through increasingly frequent and successful allied joint operational exercises.[31] Early in the 1970s allied manoeuvres in Norway seldom deployed more than 4,000 men a year. Throughout the 1980s the number increased many times over.[32] The number of visitors also grew. In 1969

26 Kibsgaard, "Norges nasjonale kommandostruktur", p. 28.
27 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, pp. 112, 132, 152; Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 295.
28 Ministry of Defence, Hovedretningslinjer for Forsvarets virksomhet i tiden 1989–*1993* [General lines for the activities of the Norwegian Armed Forces 1989-1993], Report to the Storting, no. 54 (1987-1988), p. 151; Stortinget, Innstilling fra forsvarskomiteen om NATOs nye kommandostruktur og stedsvalg for NATOs nye kommando i Norge [Report of the Standing Committee on Defence on NATO's new command structure and choice of location for the new NATO Command in Norway], Recommendation to the Storting, no. 2 (1992–1993), p. 1; Børresen et al., Allianseforsvar i endring, p. 296.
29 Norwegian Defence Command, *Vurdering av Forsvarets øverste ledelse*, p. 1.
30 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 145.
31 Ibid., p. 53; Sigurd Frisvold, General and former Norwegian Chief of Defence, interview with by author, 29 March 2007; and Lieutenant-General Thorstein Skiaker 28 March 2007.
32 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 97.

Defence Command North Norway hosted up to 120 senior Norwegian visitors and allied officers. In 1976 the figure was 354, most of whom were senior allied officers or other visitors from abroad.[33]

In the 1970s and 1980s the defence commands were given responsibility for planning extensive allied joint operational manoeuvres, preparing to receive significant allied forces and to store considerable quantities of allied materiel. Large sums of money were spent on the headquarters themselves.[34] The fear of nuclear attack led to the construction of expensive plants with modern communication infrastructures in the north, east and southwest of Norway – deep underground in Reitan near Bodø, Holmenkollen in Oslo, and later Jåttå, Stavanger.

The headquarters were staffed by personnel whose duties were to concentrate on preparedness rather than peaceful activities. At Defence Command South Norway, the number of personnel was first estimated to be 120 officers and civilians, whereas at Defence Command North Norway the estimation was 200.[35] It turned out that Defence Command South Norway would need 140, and as many as 400 officers and civilians were needed at Defence Command North Norway to ensure continuous operation.[36] Full mobilisation would call for three times this number.[37]

Gradually it also became important for officers to serve at one of the operational headquarters as it offered valuable training and represented an important step up the career ladder. Norwegian officers were told to develop their competence for later service in Norway and NATO's other command structures. The Chief of Defence put it thus "when moving officers to advanced positions in the military system, emphasis will be placed on their having experience of service in the integrated staff detachments".[38] In short, the joint operational professional environment was to be found at the operational headquarters of Norway.[39]

The 1990s were marked by steady development, although the *financing*, *staffing* and *joint operational capacity* of defence commands were in a more precarious state. The south would enjoy considerable growth while the north would experience a slight weakening of its position.

33 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, pp. 92, 142–143.
34 Ibid., p. 87.
35 *Oppnevning av utvalget for Forsvarets regionale ledelse*, p. 8.
36 Norwegian Defence Command, *Vurdering av Forsvarets øverste ledelse*, p. 51.
37 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 112.
38 Stortinget, *Erfaringer med den nye organisasjon*, p. 5.
39 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 185.

In 1990 the Chief of Defence established a committee under the leadership of major general Hjalmar Inge Sunde. The task of the Sunde committee was to downscale the central military organisation and adjust it to new allied frameworks and identify ways whereby a functional and viable leadership structure could be maintained despite a reduction of 25 per cent.[40] The two joint operational defence commands were also involved. The committee recommended making the deepest cuts in the staff of Defence Command South Norway. These recommendations were unacceptable to the Chief of Defence, who instead suggested a 25 per cent cut across the board at both defence commands and the Headquarters Defence Command. In his view, there had to be two defence commands operating in peacetime.[41] Following up this decision was, however, time consuming. The cuts were considered unrealistic for the functioning of the structure, and the recommendations of the committee were rejected. Until 1997, operating expenses in Reitan were reduced by 17 per cent, whereas in Jåttå they increased by 19 per cent.[42]

The funding of Defence Command South Norway was related to the re-organisation of NATO's command structure and a general fortification of the headquarters.[43] In 1994 NATO established a joint operational allied headquarters in Jåttå, Joint Headquarters North (JHQ North), localised and closely integrated with Defence Command South Norway. It turned out to be a good solution for Defence Command South Norway. The command, considered Norway's anchorage in NATO's command structure, was given higher priority than before. Gradually, the more extensive NATO exercises were carried out in Jåttå instead of Reitan.[44] Jåtta staff grew in number, making it more attractive to serve there. In combination with the relocation of international personnel with considerable knowledge of modern joint operations, the armed forces gradually developed a high level of proficiency in commanding and controlling joint military operations at headquarters.[45] For Vice Admiral Bjørnar Kibsgaard, commander-in-chief 1993–96, it was all about "giving us headquarters for joint op-

40 Norwegian Defence Command, *Vurdering av Forsvarets øverste ledelse*, pp. 1–2.
41 Kibsgaard, "Norges nasjonale kommandostruktur", p. 31.
42 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 314.
43 Ibid.
44 Frisvold, interview; Thorstein Skiaker, Lieutenant-General, interview by author, 28 March 2007; Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 207.
45 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.

erations at [Principal Subordinate Command] level with a capacity and competence never before seen in Norway".[46]

On the other hand, staff numbers at Defence Command North Norway were somewhat reduced during the same period. Its joint operational competence began to disintegrate. As funding was cut back, the integrated command was split up; the ground forces commander and his operational centre were transferred further north, from Bodø to Harstad in 1991. A small representational section was all that remained at Defence Command North Norway.[47] Staffing was reduced, making it less attractive for officers to serve in Reitan. After the move training in ground force operations took place at District Command North Norway in Harstad, chiefly because the large-scale winter manoeuvres Black Frost and Cold Winter were carried out under the leadership of the district command.[48] Consequently, Defence Command North Norway lost some of its capacity to run ground force operations.[49] Furthermore, in 1999 the air control centre in Reitan was moved to Sørreisa. The result was once again a reduction of personnel, and loss of one of its functions and its air control expertise.[50]

However, in the course of the 1990s both defence commands were given new and important missions connected to *crisis management* at home and abroad. In line with NATO trends, based on the new strategic concept of 1991,[51] Norway was increasingly eager to take part in international operations. The Kosovo crisis in the spring of 1999 revealed weaknesses in the command system, and on 6 March 2000 responsibility for operational control and logistics related to national contribution of forces and staff in international operations was transferred from the Chief Operations in Headquarters Defence Command to the Commander-in-Chief South Norway.[52] The coordinated responsibility for international operations enabled further growth at Defence Command South Norway.[53] The Defence Command later proved its ability to handle present-day crisis management. In 2000 the

46 Kibsgaard, "Norges nasjonale kommandostruktur", p. 31.
47 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, pp. 100 and 203.
48 Frisvold, interview.
49 Ibid., Skiaker, interview.
50 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 203.
51 NATO, *The Alliance's Strategic Concept agreed by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council*, Rome, 8 November 1991 [online 2 Jul 2008].
52 Norwegian Ministry of Defence, *Kosovo-krisen: Nasjonal rapport* [The Kosovo crisis: A national report], p. 9; Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 230; Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 207; Frisvold, interview.
53 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.

Commander-in-Chief South Norway, Lieutenant General Thorstein Skiaker, was entrusted with command of the KFOR 5, NATO's operation in Kosovo. This mission was given high priority by Norwegian authorities. Afterwards it was described as "proof that the command in Stavanger was relevant in facing the challenges of today".[54] The mission was carried out in a very satisfying manner – sufficient to "attract attention and make an impression within NATO".[55]

In the same period Defence Command North Norway became no less important with its high-level presence and crisis management in the northern regions. The dialogue between Commander-in-Chief North Norway and the military leaders on the Kola Peninsula was decisive during the rescue operation following the foundering of the Kursk submarine in 2000. Vice Admiral Einar Skorgen, who was Commander-in-Chief in North Norway during the salvage operation, later stated that "the importance of the personal confidence established between the Commander-in-Chief North Norway and the commander of the Northern Fleet, was decisive for the success of the salvage operation".[56] The Kursk operation would remain an example of the importance of competent leadership in crisis management in the north.

To sum up, the period 1970–2000 was marked by the institutional establishment and growth of extensive operational responsibilities, increased manning, important joint operational competence building and strengthened ability to execute command and control of joint operations. While Defence Command North Norway was slightly weakened in the 1990s, Defence Command South Norway went in the opposite direction. At the same time both joint operational commands became increasingly important in crisis management at home as well as abroad.

54 Skiaker, interview; Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 315; Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 208.
55 Frisvold, interview.
56 Einar Skorgen, "'Kursk' sett fra Reitan" [*Kursk* seen from Reitan], *Norsk Militært Tidskrift*, vol. 169, no. 12 (2000): pp. 4–8.

Explaining expansion

The strategic importance of the northern flank

The first explanation for the institutional establishment and increase of the northern command was the growing strategic importance of the northern flank. By the end of the 1960s the Alliance and the US were showing less interest in the northern regions than in the 1950s. However, with the build-up of Russian forces on the Kola Peninsula, particularly the Northern fleet, this situation was soon to change. The fear that Russian submarines could cut supply lines across the Atlantic created a common allied interest in securing a strong allied defence of Norwegian territories.

To defend the flanks and secure allied sea supremacy in the North Sea became vital.[57] The Northern Fleet had to be stopped from operating freely in the Atlantic. The only Russian access to the Atlantic from the Kola Peninsula was via the North Sea. It was important to prevent the Russians from occupying northern Norway, which would give them a better starting point for operations in the Atlantic.[58] The Norwegian fjords and ports were ice-free and could therefore function as suitable deployment areas. Moreover, the deep fjords offered excellent hiding places. Uncertainty and nervousness about Soviet intentions must be seen in the light of its policy on Afghanistan and Poland. By increasing offensive capacity the great powers were ready to respond at "short notice in the event of an attack".[59]

As Norway's ability to fight off an invasion was limited, allied reinforcements and further expansion of the allied infrastructure became the main pillars of defence.[60] To counter a Soviet attack quickly and effectively, it was important to earmark forces and conduct exercises in the region. This factor became very important for the establishment and growth of the operational level in Norway.

Firstly, after 1970 the contingent of Norwegian and allied forces earmarked for deployment in Norway grew considerably. The force level, the combination of preparedness and force structure, increased considerably. At its height, there were plans to deploy more than 700

57 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 32.
58 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 132.
59 Kjetil Henriksen and Torgeir E. Sæveraas, *Et militært universalmiddel? Amerikansk "Maneuver Warfare" og norsk doktrineutvikling* [A military panacea? US "Maneuver Warfare" and Norwegian doctrinal development], Oslo Files on Defence and Security, no. 1 (Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, 2007), p. 85.
60 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 132.

planes in Norway, and more than 50,000 allied soldiers were earmarked for Norway. By the end of the 1980s, Norway was regarded as a prospective deployment area for as many as nine detachments at the brigade and division level.[61] In addition, Norway disposed of a potential force of almost 500,000 men.[62] It became important for Norway, therefore, to handle the increasing complexity of the operations and the extensive area of control of the substantial forces involved in the country's defence. The extensive force structure demanded an independent level of command. A condition for meeting this challenge was a well-functioning operational level of sufficient capacity.

As far as the high level of forces and the needs of warfare were concerned, the administration needed to be organised and manned in a robust manner, focusing primarily on preparedness rather than peace.[63] The operational level had to be flexible in order to provide "opportunities to concentrate the forces around ongoing primary defence activities at all times without radical changes of command relationships or structures".[64] The regional distribution of forces was not fixed and would vary in accordance with strategic requirements and preparedness. With powerful joint operational defence commands the integrity of the command system would be ensured, according to the military leadership.

Secondly, large-scale manoeuvres with a substantial contingent of allied forces were also carried out. At the most, 24,000 soldiers from different countries were involved.[65] For the defence commands the increased activity meant higher priority, which again provided training in decisive and necessary leadership and conduct of joint operations. Manoeuvres grew to such an extent that significant demands were placed on command and control. All these activities required reliable and efficient leadership. It was vital to develop capacity at the national level in campaign planning, the conduct and evaluation of the large-scale invasion defence exercises in combined joint operations involving many countries. Headquarters held responsibility. In particular, the large-scale allied manoeuvres in northern Norway, under the leadership of Defence Command North Norway, were considered valuable as they provided considerable leadership experience. Throughout the

61 Henriksen and Sæveraas, *Et militært universalmiddel?*, p. 111.
62 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, pp. 372–373.
63 *Oppnevning av utvalget for Forsvarets regionale ledelse*, p. 5.
64 Ibid.
65 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, pp. 168–169.

1970s and 1980s these exercises laid the foundation for robust joint operational competence at both headquarters.[66]

Thirdly, the concept of reinforcement and revival of conventional warfare after 1967 required more extensive preparations to enable the rapid transfer and deployment of Norwegian and allied forces.[67] A Russian attack might come quickly and unexpectedly, with the flanks were exposed to small-scale attacks.[68] Storage of foreign materiel for the large-scale earmarked forces was vital in this respect.[69] As these forces might have to be deployed very quickly, important materiel had to be stored in Norway. Preparations and plans would have to be made in peacetime for the transfer and reception of allied forces. Institutions at the operational level became key factors here.

Parallel to their growing strategic importance, the *economic* importance of the northern areas also increased. In the 1970s Norway's jurisdiction over the oceans was extended to 200 nautical miles beyond territorial waters. At the same time the demand for fish and petroleum grew around the globe and the strategic importance of maritime resources increased.[70] For the defence commands this meant new assignments as well as an influential position in the field of surveillance, the exercise of sovereignty, jurisdiction and control of fisheries, in particular in the northern regions. These new tasks contributed towards a coordinated and flexible leadership, which at all times was capable of conducting operations with the necessary special competence, also in peacetime.

At the beginning of the 1980s the relationship between the USA and the Soviet Union deteriorated and the term "second cold war" gained currency.[71] In the 1980s the northern flank again increased in strategic importance in connection with the *new maritime strategy* of the USA.[72] The USA inaugurated an advanced deployment of naval vessels above and below the sea to wear down the Soviet Union. Aircraft carrier operations in advanced positions were active within range of the Kola Peninsula. In this respect the defence commands, Defence

66 Ibid., p. 133.
67 NATO, *Overall strategic concept for the defense of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Area. MC 14/3 (Final)* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 1967), pp. 3 and 10.
68 Ibid., p. 9.
69 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 373.
70 NOU, *Forsvarskommisjonen av 1974* [The 1974 Defence Commission], no. 9 (Oslo: Norwegian Official Reports, 1978), p. 32. Submitted to the Ministry of Defence March 1978.
71 Henriksen and Sæveraas, *Et militært universalmiddel?*, p. 85.
72 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, pp. 148–151.

Command North Norway in particular, now became important to the command of sea and airborne forces in their own region, forces which needed a coordinated and unified leadership.

Norway in NATO

Another reason for the establishment and growth of the operational level was Norway's relationship with NATO. With the increasing strategic importance of the northern flank relations with the Alliance became crucial. Seen from the perspective of minor states it was important to defend national interests and influence defence planning for Norway. Again, the defence commands played a central role, not only where Norway was concerned, but within NATO as well.

From a national perspective the close integration of the headquarters and their formal standing in NATO's chain of command were important for several reasons. Firstly, participation in an allied command system, formed to lead Norwegian and allied forces in the defence of Norway, was crucial in order to secure NATO support in case of an armed attack.[73] Norway itself was not able to counter an attack by a great power. Speaking as early as the mid-1960s the Government described as "one of the primary tasks of the Commander-in-Chief North Norway is to contribute towards strengthening the interest of the USA and other NATO countries in the northern regions and thereby obliging them to defend Norway".[74] Building positive relations between Norwegian and allied commanders in peacetime was regarded as one way of achieving this. It also seemed important to strengthen the Headquarters position and role in the NATO joint command system and ensure as high a level of activity as possible. Secondly, the defence commands provided Norway with an opportunity to influence defence planning within NATO. The defence commands' contact with lateral and superior NATO commands was positive and direct.[75] The institutions acted as Norway's public face in NATO, thus connecting Norway to the more powerful supporting powers, the USA and Britain, and to the defence of Europe as well.[76] The new organisation, with its establishment of defence commands, enabled an approach which took account of Norwegian interests.

73 NOU, *Forsvarskommisjonen av 1974*, p. 44.
74 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 140.
75 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 56.
76 Ibid., p. 374.

Thirdly, being integrated with NATO's command structure made it possible to acquire key defence planning capability which could later "be redirected to our own organisation at home".[77] This was necessary in order to preserve national control of military activities in Norway. Politically, only Norwegian commanding officers in the allied chain of command could command allied forces in Norway.[78] Norway wanted a command system with the capability and reliability necessary to prevent the allies from retaining national control when they deployed their forces in Norway. Based on the new criteria of warfare and technological development, operations had gradually become more advanced and complicated. It was vital, therefore, to maintain capability in this field. Were Norway not to maintain and develop such capabilities in peacetime, it would be impossible to provide a competent and efficient system in a crisis or war. If Norway proved incompetent, allied forces themselves might establish their own command systems. This would undermine national control, which was undesirable. National control was regarded as important.[79] Moreover, Norway's screening policy implied restraint to avoid teasing the Russian bear. Manoeuvres in the eastern part of Norway were subject to certain limitations. Headquarters under Norwegian control were given an important function in controlling the activities.

Seen from the Alliance perspective, substantial joint operational headquarters in Norway were also important. Primarily, they must be able to maintain leadership of NATO's flank defence, which was based on large-scale joint combined operations after 1967. An integrated command system was viewed by the Alliance as a prerequisite for this.[80] Secondly, the command structure was also viewed as important by the Alliance in order to detect an enemy attack as early as possible.[81] Thirdly, these arrangements acted as the foundation of a leadership in peacetime which would be able to quickly transfer the operational com-

77 Ibid., pp. 55–56.

78 *Om delegering av myndighet i krig til sjefen for Nordkommandoen* [About delegating authority in war to the Commander-in-Chief Northern Norway], Order in Council, 22 July 1953; *Om overføring av myndighet til sjefen for Nordkommandoen* [About transferring authority to the Commander-in-Chief Northern Norway], Order in Council, 27 January 1967; *Om overføring av kommando over visse norske maritime styrker til Atlanterhavskommandoen* [About transferring command over certain Norwegian naval forces to the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic], Order in Council, 22 May 1970. See also Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Vurdering av Forsvarets øverste ledelse*, p. 29.

79 Rolf Tamnes, *Oljealder 1965–1995* [Oil age 1965–1995], *Norsk utenrikspolitikks historie* [Norway's foreign relations history], vol. 6 (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1995–1997), p. 23.

80 NATO, *Overall strategic concept for the defense*, pp. 3 and 10.

81 Ibid., p. 10.

mand to NATO in wartime with as few changes as possible.[82] In a war their status would be altered to allied headquarters at the operational level, responsible for allied operations and for the defence of each region. Thus, they would be responsible for conducting allied operations in Norway, which called for quick transfer of command without considerable organisational changes. Defence Command North Norway acquired influence in the 1980s as it acted as a reliable support for the USA's new maritime strategy in peacetime, crisis and wartime.

The changes in NATO's command structure in 1994 had different consequences for the North and South Defence Commands. Defence Command South Norway's area of responsibility was extended and reinforced in terms of personnel, financing and capability.[83] The new integrated solution with NATO's headquarters in Jåttå and increased activity consolidated joint operational competence at the headquarters. Defence Command North Norway was placed under Defence Command South Norway and moved one step down the ladder in the NATO command structure. These changes probably indicated that the responsibility and role of Defence Command North Norway in case of invasion and threats from the east were considered less relevant by the Alliance. Even so, these solutions still secured positive integration and close ties to Norway's allies.[84]

The changing character of war

The third explanation for the establishment and growth in these institutions was the changing character of war. In this study the phrase "the changing character of war" highlights conceptual and doctrinal changes in the conduct of warfare, and the changing interests of the military profession.

During the early stages of the Cold War, east and west alike developed concepts for war fighting in the European theatre based on the principles of attrition warfare. If deterrence failed, the material assets of the opponent were to be destroyed or worn down through the use of superior firepower and the cumulative destruction of his resources. Quantity seemed more important than quality and firepower more

82 Røksund, "Forsvaret mellom politisk styring…", p. 134; see apendix A; also see Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen,* p. 140 and Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 55.

83 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.

84 Ibid.; Ministry of Defence, *Om NATOs nye kommandostruktur og stedsvalg for NATOs nye kommando i Norge* [About NATO's new command structure and choice of location for NATO's new command in Norway], Proposition to the Storting no. 115 (1991–1992), p. 6, says also that "NATO's new command arrangement is most satisfactory to Norway, both militarily and politically".

important than mobility. Both superpowers based their preparation and planning on deterrence and the doctrine of massive retaliation. If deterrence failed, the war and the final battle would be fought in a brief, violent phase with large arsenals of nuclear weapons. In such a nuclear war scenario it became absurd to distinguish between tactical, operational and strategic levels. The war was to be fought at the central strategic level.

Towards the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s a renewed interest in conventional warfare and the enhancement of a conventional capability arose. The concept of massive retaliation lost much of its credibility as the Soviet Union became capable of retaliating by a substantial nuclear attack. Thus in NATO's new strategic concept of 1967 the nuclear dimension was de-emphasised in favour of forward defence.[85] By 1967, the defence concept of the Alliance had moved from a doctrine of *massive retaliation* to *flexible response*. The new focus was on developing a strategy and conventional force structure capable of reacting according to circumstances. According to this strategy, the lowest level would mean limited use of conventional military power along the front line, followed by a threat of escalation with full nuclear war as the ultimate issue.[86] In other words, a war which in the final event was based on the concept of attrition and in which the focus was on quantity rather than quality.[87] Even so, a debate followed as to whether such an arrangement would be the right solution for the situation in Europe. The Eastern block was overwhelmingly superior in conventional forces. Consequently, the idea of strengthening forward defence with conventional ground manoeuvre elements, supported by tactical and long-range air forces, appeared.

Conceptually, this conventional warfare was initially based to a large degree on attrition.[88] With Norway's concept of large-scale joint invasion defence operations, it was a question of holding ground and gaining time until allied forces were deployed. Even so, these large conventional forces were directly attached to the operational level due to this more complicated form of warfare. This was important for the establishment and growth of the operational level in Norway, since

85 NATO, *Overall strategic concept for the defense*.
86 Ibid., pp. 3 and 7.
87 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, pp. 27–29.
88 Nils M. Rekkedal, *Moderne krigskunst: En presentasjon av moderne militærmakt og militærteori* [Modern art of war: A presentation of modern military power and military theory] (Oslo: The Norwegian Defence Staff College, 2003), pp. 481–482. Henriksen and Sæveraas, *Et militært universalmiddel?*, p. 109.

conducting effective joint military operations now became more relevant than before. In a large-scale confrontation Norway would have to cooperate with allied member countries and be able to conduct large joint operations. The deployment of these conventional forces still required a coordinated leadership. Extensive operations called for participation of more than one service, and the integrated ground, sea and air operations also required thorough coordination across all services. One integrated command system was, as the Alliance saw it, vital.[89] From a national point of view, as the Hauge II Committee in 1969 stated, "The military system has one mission and one organisation. Integrated planning and unified leadership will be required from all operations."[90] Its report contained the following proposal:

> There is an evident need for coordination between units from several services. … When an attack is launched on a region, an efficient concentration of the military forces, including an efficient cooperation between all armaments, will be decisive. In many cases all three services will be expected to cooperate, in other cases cooperation between two services will be required.[91]

In this way, both the transition to the flexible response doctrine in 1967 and a more conventional and joint operational concept, even though it was based on attrition, paved the way for the establishment and development of the operational level in Norway. In 1968 a similar solution had been established at the strategic level with the Headquarters Defence Command. The background was that unity of command and unity of effort was judged more important than maintaining the special interest of each service. This idea was seen as decisive in an operational setting in order to further develop all military forces and their capability for joint operations.[92] Through the defence commands such arrangement could be continued on a regional basis.[93]

As it turned out, the warfare concepts were to become more manoeuvre-oriented. NATO's new strategic concept and doctrine were increasingly criticised in the 1970s. It was argued that the Alliance's military reliability was weakened. A renewed interest in *classic manoeu-*

89 Ibid., pp. 3 and 10.
90 Stortinget, *Forsvarets regionale ledelse*, p. 5.
91 Ibid., p. 12.
92 Røksund, "Forsvaret mellom politisk styring …", p. 139; Stortinget, *Forsvarets regionale ledelse*, p. 12.
93 Stortinget, *Forsvarets regionale ledelse*, p. 5.

vre theory arose, with emphasis on mobility and high speed in order to outmanoeuvre the opponent.[94] One reason was that the Soviet Union had developed a manoeuvre concept already. The Russian traditions of warfare at the operational level and *operational art* dated as far back as the 1920s.[95] Although this fact had been ignored during the initial stages of the Cold War, by the 1970s the Russians had identified an opportunity for a successful and quick penetration of NATO's defences.[96] The insufficient depth of NATO's defence made the Alliance vulnerable to such an incursion. At the same time, USA's war of attrition in Vietnam was regarded as a failure. New ideas were required. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the USA therefore developed the Air Land Battle doctrine, which expanded operational capacities and synchronised inter-service cooperation.[97]

However, NATO and Norway did *not* adopt this doctrine until the Cold War was over.[98] In his 1989 comments to a study carried out by Major Sverre Diesen, later Chief of Defence, who called for more mobility and mobile operations, the then lieutenant colonel Thorstein Skiaker, later Commander-In-Chief South Norway, wrote:

> This [more mobility and mobile operations] is neither new nor unknown in itself, but the main point is that major Diesen also demonstrates how to make more conscious use of this matter, and how this combination can be used in an operational warfare, thereby gaining more effect than the sum total of tactical contributions. This has so far hardly been discussed among us.[99]

Skiaker makes two important points. Firstly, in 1970 the institutions at the operational level were *not* conceptually based on operational warfare grounded in the manoeuvre method and operational art, a belief apparently shared by many Norwegian officers, but rather that the institutions acquired a much more influential role in the development of the modern joint operations of today *at a later stage*. The manoeuvre

94 Nils M. Rekkedal, *Moderne krigskunst,* pp. 481–482. Henriksen and Sæveraas, *Et militært universalmiddel?*, p. 109ff. Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 27–29.
95 Bruce Menning, "Operational Art's Origins", *Military Review,* no. 80, September (1997): 32–47.
96 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 28.
97 Menning, "Operational Art's Origins":41–43.
98 Ibid.: 43. Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, pp. 28–31.
99 Thorstein Skiaker, "Landforsvarets operative idé ved skilleveien?" [The operational idea of land defence at a cross roads?], *Norsk militært tidsskrift,* vol. 158, no. 1 (1989): 54–55.

method and operational art now functioned as the touchstone of planning and conduct of manoeuvre-directed joint operations.[100] Secondly, there was no clear-cut concept of warfare at the operational level at that time (1989). That did not appear until the end of the 1990s, and was confirmed by the military forces and their joint operational doctrine of 2000.[101]

In the 1990s, the character of warfare changed considerably, thanks to technological development, increasing speed, precision and the potential of firepower.[102] The depth of the battlefield and operational speed at all levels also increased, and war could be waged simultaneously in several dimensions.[103] It was gradually accepted that manoeuvre warfare possessed universal characteristics in the sense that most military challenges could be solved by such approach. Not least the Gulf War contributed to this acceptance.[104] The changes led to a strong belief in *modern manoeuvre-based warfare*, with fewer but more mobile and flexible multinational forces.[105] The same development also contributed to a gradual reduction in force structure, but the same warfare concept made greater demands on command and control. The 1991 Sunde Committee stressed that "modern warfare requirements for command and control have increased the importance of headquarters".[106]

In other words, these developments gave defence commands greater influence in the planning and conduct of joint operations – not the opposite. The need for competence and command and control grew. It was therefore considered important to establish headquarters in peacetime and to carry out exercises regularly in order to establish and maintain the necessary functional competence.[107] We may assume that this was one of the reasons why Chief of Defence Torolf Rein chose to ignore the recommendations of the Sunde Committee and instead chose to keep both defence commands in peacetime, even though the force structure in other respects was being steadily drawn down.[108] The

100 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine*, 2007, p. 34; for further explanation of the concepts *operational methodology* and *operational art*, see Rekkedal, *Moderne krigskunst*, pp. 452–471.
101 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doctrine* [Norwegian Armed Forces Joint Operational Doctrine] (Oslo, 2000), part A and B.
102 Moskos et al., eds, *Postmodern Military*, p. 5.
103 D. A. Macgregor, "Future battle": 33–47.
104 Henriksen and Sæveraas, *Et militært universalmiddel?*, p. 125.
105 Ibid., p. 131ff; Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 206.
106 Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Innstilling fra utvalget til vurdering …*, p. 28.
107 Ibid.
108 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.

Proposition to the Parliament no. 16 (1992–1993), Main Guidelines for the Activity and Development of the Military Forces in the Years 1994–1998, states, "reliable command requires the maintenance of an adequate peace organisation and war structure, sufficient exercise and training activities".[109]

Financial resources

Financial resources are the fourth explanation behind the establishment and growth of the operational level. Economic rationalisation and improved efficiency informed the establishment of the defence commands in 1970. American military assistance had stopped in the 1960s and retrenchment measures became more important.[110] Improving efficiency and downsizing an expensive and oversized defence leadership were now more critical than ever.[111] In 1969 the Hauge II Committee stated that current arrangements "do not meet the demands for unity and efficiency. Staff, communications and headquarters are too expensive".[112] The operational leadership of the three services was diluted. It was also important for headquarters to be adjusted to the force structure they were to lead in peacetime and wartime, and avoid diverting necessary resources from the combat units which would undermine the primary missions of the armed forces.[113] Substantial cuts in the number of jobs as a whole were also necessary; from 250 down to 200 in northern Norway and 140 down to 120 in southern Norway.[114] Empowering the Commander-in-Chief to instruct and direct its administration would be one means of preventing suboptimisations within the services, and their contribution to defence and budgets planning in this respect were essential to create as much defensive power as possible out of the defence budget.[115] The 1991 Sunde Committee also stressed the reason for setting up the integrated commands, to "prevent expensive competition between services and make the best possible use of resources in peacetime and war".[116]

109 Ministry of Defence, *Hovedretningslinjer for Forsvarets virksomhet og utvikling i tiden 1994–1998* [General lines for the activities and development of the Armed Forces 1994–1998], Report to the Storting, no. 16 (1992–1993), pp. 90 and 219.
110 Tamnes, *Oljealder 1965–1995*, p. 64.
111 Røksund, "Forsvaret mellom politisk styring …", p. 133.
112 Stortinget, *Forsvarets regionale ledelse*, p. 6.
113 Ibid., p. 5.
114 Ibid., pp. 8–10.
115 Ibid., p. 6; Frisvold, interview.
116 Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Vurdering av Forsvarets øverste ledelse*, p. 25.

In other words, a more coordinated and efficient leadership was necessary. The defence commands and their organisation were obviously regarded as positive factors from an economic perspective, and this again paved the way for the organisational changes which took place in the late 1960s.[117] By 1975 "staff reductions in the organisational and leadership structure were considered important".[118]

Still, the defence commands were well funded compared to other parts of the peace-time organisation. The growing strategic importance of the northern flank, relations with NATO and a stronger emphasis on the use of conventional forces were reflected in favourable economical conditions for the operational management. Until 1990, the budget surplus was very large indeed, and during the same period NATO invested considerable sums in the infrastructure of the headquarters.[119] The armed forces and their contribution to society were strongly supported by public opinion.[120] Generous financial provision made it possible for the small Norwegian state to establish an operational level similar to that of the great powers. As the Hauge II Committee said of itself "[t]he committee is no executioner", and staff levels at headquarters never sank as low as foreseen by the committee.[121] On the contrary, they grew steadily to the end of the 1980s, in parallel with the steadily increasing tasks and grants. Although resources were slightly adjusted in the course of the 1990s, it made no serious impact on the command structure. The recommendations of the Sunde Committee were not followed, as already mentioned. There were to be two defence commands in peacetime![122] Defence Command South Norway acquired more staff and funding until the turn of the century as a result of the establishment of NATO's headquarters at Jåtta in 1994.

New technology

Explanation number five is technology. The Hauge II Committee stated, "the development of modern technology and communications not only makes it possible, but also rational and efficient to let the joint operational defence commands command and control a larger

117 Røksund, "Forsvaret mellom politisk styring …", p. 152; Tamnes, *Oljealder 1965–1995*, p. 64.
118 Stortinget, *Erfaringer med den nye organisasjon*, p. 3.
119 NOU, *Et nytt forsvar. Innstilling fra Forsvarspolitisk utvalg* [A new Defence. Report of the Defence Committee], no. 20 (Oslo: Norwegian Official Reports, 2000), p. 14.
120 Matlary and Østerud, *Mot et avnasjonalisert forsvar?*, p. 12.
121 Stortinget, *Forsvarets regionale ledelse*, p. 6.
122 Kibsgaard, "Norges nasjonale kommandostruktur", p. 31.

number of units".[123] This would reduce the number of levels of war to less than those found in the command structure of the services, and provide a shorter and more secure line of command from the central leadership to the tactical forces and detachments. The former organisation had not met the required standards of "coordinated planning and leadership, short and direct lines of command or clear operational responsibilities".[124] And the Soviet's demonstration of strength at the Norwegian border in the north had revealed a need to make the command system more efficient across the services.[125]

Next, developments in military technology had increased inter-service dependence. Operations became more advanced and more complicated. The need for a coordinated leadership and integrated joint commands increased during the implementation phase of the operations.[126] Thus, technological change reinforced the need to establish defence commands.

Technological development also contributed towards increasing capabilities at the defence commands throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Maintaining capabilities in specialist areas was a crucial contribution towards providing a competent and efficient system in crisis and in warfare and thus preserving national and allied interests.[127] Technological change also contributed to the previously mentioned emphasis on the changing character of warfare and the move towards more modern manoeuvre-based warfare.[128]

On the other hand, information technology introduced in the 1990s made information and communications much more efficient, and it appeared feasible to reduce the signal support organisation of the headquarters. It was not until after the turn of the century, however, that the real impact of technological developments on the size of the headquarters staff came to be felt.

123 Stortinget, *Forsvarets regionale ledelse*, p. 5.
124 Ministry of Defence, *Forsvarets regionale og lokale organisasjon,* p. 2.
125 Ibid., p. 3; Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, pp. 109 and 167.
126 Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Vurdering av Forsvarets øverste ledelse*, p. 25.
127 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 118; Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 54.
128 Moskos et al., *Postmodern Military*, p. 5.

Chapter 3

The operational level 2000–2008

"We had a sneaking feeling of being left alone up in the north".

General Sigurd Frisvold

Downsizing and marginalisation

The year 2000 marked a turning point. After the turn of the century, the institutions at the operational level suffered five reversals initiating a process of disintegration.

The first setback came in March 2000. In 1997 NATO had established a new command structure which was to be fully operational by the spring of 2003. The new structure was up and running as early as 3 March 2000. The headquarters of the allied forces in Brunssum, Netherlands, became the new regional Joint Force Command Northern Europe. The allied joint operational command in Jåttå was placed under Brunssum. Jåttå was still supposed to be in command of several services in crises and wartime, but from now on it was to operate at the third and lowest NATO level, with no clearly defined area of responsibility. The NATO command was no longer to be an integrated part of Defence Command South Norway, only located together. The defence commands no longer served as formal NATO headquarters. And for the time being, it was decided that the Commander-in-Chief South Norway would "wear two hats" as the commander of the two headquarters in Jåttå.

In the same period two functional headquarters were established under Brunssum. One, in the London suburb of Northwood, would command maritime operations (Maritime Component Commander), and one, in Ramstein, Germany, air operations (Air Component Commander). Under Air Component Commander, five allied air

operations centres for tactical control of air operations (Combined Air Operations Centre, CAOC) were also established. One of them, CAOC 3, was located with Defence Command North Norway in Reitan, under the leadership of the Norwegian air commander.

The marginalisation of NATO's command structure impacted Norway and its institutions at the operational level. Firstly, as a result of the new organisation, both defence commands lost influence over, and responsibility for the planning and management of operations in Norway.[129] From now on these activities would mainly be conducted from Britain and the Continent. Responsibility for planning and managing NATO's air operations was moved to Ramstein, except for one extended arm reaching out to Reitan, though under allied command. Responsibility for sea operations was moved to Northwood. As JHQ North had no clearly defined geographical area of responsibility, this was a serious setback compared to the former arrangement. Earlier, the defence commands were responsible for all types of operations and coordinated allied activities at one designated point in international waters.[130]

Secondly, with NATO's new and smaller command structure multi-functionality was assigned to the strategic and regional levels while the development at the tactical level was characterised by the individual services, expressed through their single service component commands. This was undesirable seen from the Norwegian perspective because the Norwegians experience of multi-functional organisation at tactical level had been excellent up to 2000.[131] To Norwegian eyes, a multi-functional organisation at NATO's tactical level made it easier to coordinate services and equipment deployment. Without a multi-functional tactical level organisation, commanding joint operations in a coordinated and general manner would be a challenge. Moreover, expenses could be cut with such an approach.[132]

Thirdly, it was negative because marginalisation led to the fragmentation of the expertise developed at headquarters, especially in the north.[133] Acquiring and maintaining joint operational capabilities were clearly going to be much more difficult.

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129 FFI, *En analyse av NATOs nye militære kommandostruktur* [An analysis of NATO's new military command structure], report no. 1998/04676 (Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 1998), pp. 19–20; Kibsgaard, "Norges nasjonale kommandostruktur", p. 33.

130 FFI, *En analyse av NATOs nye militære kommandostruktur*, p. 20.

131 Ibid., p. 51.

132 Ibid., p. 20.

133 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.

The second setback was connected to the reform that started in 2002. An extensive downsizing began at headquarters, as a direct consequence of the general reorganisation of the armed forces. One of the main difficulties with the reorganisation of the 1990s had been that minor changes in leadership and command were not proportionate to the considerable reductions in the structure of forces.[134] At the turn of the century, the command structure was oversized relative to current and future structures. New technology had made command and control easier than before.[135]

The Norwegian Special Committee on Defence Policy of 2000 and the Defence Study by the Chief of Defence of 2000 both discussed these problems in their recommendations. Both recommended *a single* joint operational headquarters. It was obvious that manning *two* large headquarters was difficult in conjunction with the other broad challenges which faced the armed forces in this new age. For the Special Committee on Defence Policy of 2000 "the new headquarters would create a powerful national joint operational environment"[136]. This argument emphasised the challenges of maintaining joint operational competence at two different places in Norway throughout the 1990s at a time of rapidly declining funding. While waiting for another report the special committee did not however recommend a new site for the joint operational headquarters. Thus Jåttå swept forward as a rival to Reitan, which had so far been seen as the best option in regard to professional military competence. Later, in the autumn of 2000, Chief of Defence Sigurd Frisvold recommended siting the joint operational headquarters in Jåttå.[137] In their long-term proposition on defence in 2001 the Government also settled on Jåttå.[138] Parliament concurred. Defence Command North Norway closed down in December 2002, and joint operational headquarters were established in Jåttå under the command of Lieutenant General Thorstein Skiaker, placed directly under the Chief of Defence.[139]

134 NOU, *Et nytt forsvar*, p. 15.
135 Stortinget: *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005* [Transformation of the Armed Forces in the period 2002–2005], Proposition to the Storting, no. 45 (2000–2001); Stortinget: *Innstilling fra forsvarskomiteen om omleggingen av Forsvaret*, p. 16.
136 NOU, *Et nytt forsvar*, p. 60.
137 NTB,"Ett nasjonalt hovedkvarter" [A national headquarters], press release, 31 October 2000; Frisvold, interview.
138 Ministry of Defence, *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005* [Restructuring the Armed Forces 2002–2005], Ministry of Defence, *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005*, p. 74.
139 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 314.

Many saw this as a negative trend because the capabilities developed at Defence Command North Norway would be dispersed even more. The headquarters were widely regarded as the best equipped and staffed and to have the most extensive expertise on joint operations acquired during activities and upgrades during the Cold War. Their joint operations skills had increased considerably over the years. It had become "the centre of excellence in joint operational operations".[140]

Two minor *regional* commands were established at the same time under Joint Operational Headquarters.[141] The regional commands were regarded as part of the operational level, assigned to assist Joint Operational Headquarters avoid an unpractical and oversized area of control.[142] Regional Command South Norway was established in Trondheim and given operational control of territorial defence in the region. Regional Command North Norway was established in Reitan and given operational control of territorial defence in the three northern counties. In addition, Svalbard, Bjørnøya and Jan Mayen with their adjacent oceans were included in its area of responsibility. The command focused on joint operations "in line with the long-standing joint operational tradition in Reitan".[143]

One result of the reorganisation was a cutback of almost 40 per cent in the operational level staff.[144] Parallel to the considerable reduction in allied exercises, the last NATO manoeuvre was in 1999, much of the joint operational capability the headquarters had built up, in particular in the north, now disintegrated.

Neither did it become *the one and only* joint operational headquarters, with a powerful national joint operational environment, as foreseen by the Defence Study of 2000 and the Special Committee on Defence Policy of 2000.[145] Instead, *three* more or less joint operational headquarters emerged. The situation was unclear, with capabilities and staff spread all over the country. In addition, new missions

140 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen,* p. 205.

141 Stortinget, *Innstilling fra forsvarskomiteen om omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005* [Recommendation of the Standing Committee on Defence on the transformation of the Armed Forces in the period of 2002–2005], Recommendation to the Storting, no. 342 (2000–2001); Ministry of Defence, *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005*, pp. 16 and 57.

142 Ibid., p. 47.

143 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 315.

144 Ministry of Defence, *Den videre moderniseringen av Forsvaret i perioden 2005–2008* [The continued modernisation of the Armed Forces in the period 2005–2008], Proposition to the Storting, no. 42 (2003–2004), pp. 54–55 and pp. 93–94.

145 Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Forsvarssjefens Forsvarsstudie 2000 – sluttrapport* [The Defence Study by the Norwegian Chief of Defence 2000 – final report], Archives of the Armed Forces, dated 22 June 2000, p. 14; NOU, *Et nytt forsvar*, p. 60.

connected to international operations and more administrative tasks gradually came to dominate at the Joint Operational Headquarters. One of the latter was the administration of the allied manoeuvre centres – which could equally well be attended to by the armed forces logistics section.[146]

In short, *the full consequence* of the reorganisation was that the capability to command joint operations in Norway disintegrated. Norway's national capability in this field was increasingly questioned.[147] Flag commander Håkon Tronstad, who had more than five years in operational service in the US Commander Striking Fleet Atlantic and US Commander Second Fleet, put it like this:

> I will not draw too harsh a conclusion after the exercise Cold Response in 2006. However, as commander of Norwegian task group I often felt the lack of an HQ with stronger capabilities presenting quick and constructive guidelines. We all know that the Joint Operational Headquarters is facing setbacks and reductions. Transformation of military forces in Norway has generally meant fewer man-labour years. … Still, I doubt whether we will be able to command and support complicated operations without a staff similar to those of our partners. To make a small joint operational headquarters carry out efficient command and control will depend on us adopting technology and routines which have so far not been introduced by others. I cannot foresee this situation.[148]

The third setback came in June 2003 when NATO introduced new and extensive changes in the command structure. In October 2003, JHQ North was replaced by the Joint Warfare Center, under Allied Command Transformation, Norfolk, Virginia, USA. The allied headquarters in Jåttå went from being an operational headquarters to an exercise centre for training allied staffs. Formally, Norway disappeared from NATO's command structure where defence planning and operational leadership were concerned.

This meant that the planning and conduct of NATO operations in Norway were further removed from Norway. Jåttå was even more

146 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.
147 Ibid.
148 Håkon Tronstad, *Bør det norske forsvaret lære av US Navy?* [Should the Norwegian defence learn from US Navy?], talk at the Oslo Militære Samfunn, 26 March 2006.

reduced as a joint operational institution.[149] The Joint Warfare Center has no influence over defence planning nor does it have any operational function in the NATO command structure. Coordination between Joint Warfare Center and Joint operational headquarters might prove valuable where the transformation of military forces is concerned. This responsibility is assigned to Joint Operational Headquarters in Norway. However, its position is insignificant when account is taken of the tasks and missions of Joint Operational Headquarters in operational leadership and international operations. These are now separate institutions, consequently with less significance.[150] A scientist at the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment put it somewhat ironically after spending a year seconded to the Joint Operational Headquarters: "Co-localisation certainly makes one want headquarters to cooperate and assist each other, although this has not led to much disturbance in our daily staff routines."[151] While Norway's political influence from having allied headquarters on Norwegian soil should not be underestimated, Jåttå as a joint operational institution was considerably weakened when the position of the allied headquarters was changed. From then on it also became more difficult to acquire joint operational capability.

The fourth setback came in 2005. Contrary to the Chief of Defence's recommendation the Government decided to close down Regional Command South Norway in connection with the long-term plan for the armed forces.[152] It closed on 1 August 2005 and its tasks were transferred to Joint Operational Headquarters, but without a ceiling on the number of staff. The result was a further reduction of 50 man-labour years at the operational level.[153] The operational level consequently also lost its grip on territorial forces. Since then these forces have experienced a kind of operational leadership void, especially in the south.[154] Tasks linked to international operations are given higher

149 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.
150 Ibid.; Hansen, interview.
151 FFI, *Analysestøtte for Forsvarets operasjoner – ett år ved Fellesoperativt hovedkvarter* [Analysis support for Defence operations – one year at the Joint operational headquarters], report no. 00012 (Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2005), p. 9.
152 Defence Staff Norway, *Forsvarssjefens militærfaglige utredning 2003* [Chief of Defence Norway's Defence Study 2003 (MFU)], Archives of the Armed Forces, dated 8 December 2003, p. 10; Ministry of Defence, *Den videre moderniseringen av Forsvaret i perioden 2005–2008*, p. 55.
153 Ibid., p. 94.
154 Frisvold, interview; and Knut Vold, Lieutenant-General and Commander of the Norwegian Home Guard's District no. 5, conversation with author, 18. May 2007.

priority and Joint Operational Headquarters lack the skills to follow up the home guard districts adequately.

The fifth and last setback so far happened on 1 August 2006. Joint Operational Headquarters now abandoned the well-known organisational structure with the commanders from each service. The new organisation was rebuilt as a joint structure with one chief of staff, one operational detachment and one operational support detachment. The functional J-structure works as the basis of each detachment, in which functions J-2/3/5/7 belong to the operational detachment.[155] Other J functions, J-1/4/6/8/9, are assigned to the operational support detachment. The positions of commander were discontinued and the skills relating to each service and operational room were organised under the joint operational detachment. The chief of staff and the chief of the joint operational detachment remained on two-star level, the commanders of the support detachment and the air operational room were both placed at a one-star level. The commanders of the operational rooms of sea, ground and special operations forces were placed at the level of colonel/commander.[156]

One could say that the new system offers a more coordinated and efficient leadership of joint operations and headquarter activities. Still, removing the commander has undoubtedly undermined headquarters' authority.[157] No general will be "checking the services", and making demands, authoritatively and competently – certainly not during operations. One might well ask whether today's arrangement of Joint Operational Headquarters could provide a reliable leadership for contributing countries if they have to make do with subordinate allied forces.[158]

To sum up, the years 2000–08 were marked by institutional downsizing, cutbacks and the disintegration of joint operational capabilities, all of which weakened the armed forces' ability to conduct large-scale joint operations. Institutions were marginalised within NATO, losing, in theory at least, operational responsibility and authority.

155 The functional designations are as follows: J-1 personnel, J-2 intelligence and security, J-3 operations, J-4 logistics, J-5 plans, J-6 communication, J-7 exercises, J-8 budget and J-9 CIMIC. See appendix A.

156 Ministry of Defence, *Den videre moderniseringen av Forsvaret i perioden 2005–2008*, p. 56; appendix A.

157 Skiaker, interview.

158 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.

Explaining the decline

The strategic importance of the northern flank

Explanation number one is the reduced strategic-political importance of the northern flank. After the Cold War the new framework led to several changes in European defence and security policy, also known as *The Revolution in Strategic Affairs*. The Iron Curtain of the Cold War had contained a number of internal and ethnic conflicts. The end of the Cold War was followed by several limited wars on the European continent in the 1990s. The threat of full-scale nuclear war feared by so many was now replaced by real, if limited wars in restricted areas. Although the relative importance of the Northern fleet grew and the Russians maintained their interests in the northern regions, Russian forces on the Kola Peninsula were reduced in size and power. Crisis management and peace-support operations moved to the fore, as reflected in NATO's updated strategic concept, which was adopted in 1999.[159] This concept was based on the regulations and main principles that had been drawn up in 1991. Further emphasis was now placed on the Alliance and its ability to contribute to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic region. Other threats were given more priority. The Alliance was authorised to act "out of area", if required. This undoubtedly hastened the decline of Western military strategic interest in the northern flank, and in the Norwegian institutions at the operational level in consequence.

Firstly, the force structure was considerably reduced. The changed security environment led to a reduction in structure of 30 and 40 per cent in NATO and Norway respectively through the 1990s.[160] The command structure which in 2000 appeared oversized relative to the operational force structure, is now considerably reduced.[161] A smaller force structure requires a more modest leadership apparatus. The recommendation to set up one joint operational headquarters in 2000 is explained by an understanding that the force structure had become significantly reduced, and that the headquarters might now

159 NATO, *The Alliance's Strategic Concept Approved by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council,* Washington, 23–24 April 1999 [online 7 May 2007].

160 Øystein Singsaas, "Utviklingen av NATOs kommandostruktur i dagens sikkerhetspolitiske situasjon og betydningen for Norge" [The development of NATO's command structure in today's security political situation and its impact on Norway] in *Kommandospørsmålet på nordflanken – utviklingen i to formative perioder,* ed. Rolf Tamnes, IFS Info, no. 4 (Oslo: Institutt for forsvarsstudier, 2001), p. 25

161 Ministry of Defence, *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005*, pp. 10–16.

command and control most units on their own.[162] This paved the way for large-scale cutbacks. The reasoning behind the closing of Regional Command South Norway was also in part a consequence of the smaller force structure.[163]

Secondly, the reinforcement concept of the northern flank of allied forces was considered less relevant and the earmarked forces were discontinued. The joint operational institutions thus lost many of their tasks and missions related to the preparation and reception of these forces, making it easier to reduce priority and downsize the headquarters.[164]

Thirdly, allied exercises in Norway and the activities linked to the institutions were considerably reduced after 2000. Deterrence seemed less important after the Cold War, and the reductions also led to small-scale manoeuvres. Allied exercises are still carried out in Norway, and quite frequently, but concentrate more on crisis management, civil security and missions likely to occur in international peace-support operations. Consequently, they are no longer linked to operational plans and the conduct of large-scale allied joint operations. Thus, capacity to plan and conduct such operations was also adversely affected.

The Chief of Defence, General Sigurd Frisvold, recognised in the light of the new strategic framework, that traditional invasion defence with large-scale international operations could no longer determine the development and dimension of the operational level.[165] He stated clearly on 31 October 2000, when he presented his final recommendation on the future command structure and concluded by calling for the establishment of *one* joint operational headquarters in Jåttå:

> A changed focus from invasion defence to reaction and quality in order to handle the most obvious challenges, i.e. limited attack and crisis management, is a crucial factor in determining the dimensions and organisation of the command structure in the future.[166]

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162 Headquarters Defence Command Norway*, Forsvarssjefens Forsvarsstudie 2000*, p. 14; NOU, *Et nytt forsvar*, p. 60

163 Ministry of Defence, *Den videre moderniseringen av Forsvaret i perioden 2005–2008,* pp. 54–55, 93.

164 Frisvold, interview.

165 Ibid.

166 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen,* p. 201. Quoted from the assessments and recommendations of the Norwegian Chief of Defence on a new command structure.

At the same time, the northern regions, with their vast oceans, undefined borders and large strategic resources, are still important in terms of Norwegian defence and security policy. Norway's relations with Russia are increasingly close and cooperative, although the situation in Russia is still unstable and unpredictable.[167] It is regarded as necessary, therefore, to maintain an operational leadership element in the north to control the "back door" and secure Norwegian rights. For this reason Regional Command North Norway was established.[168] Still, as we have seen, this led to a military weakening of institutions at the operational level *in general* in consequence of the dilution of trained personnel.[169]

Norway in NATO

Another explanation for the institutional cutback concerns developments in and Norway's relations with NATO. The strategic changes of the 1990s, together with the implementation of a mobile and deployable Combined Joint Task Force concept, led to an extensive reorganisation and reduction in NATO's command structure.[170] To the Alliance it was important to transform the command structure in order to handle new assignments and duties more flexibly and efficiently elsewhere in the world, in parallel with a steadily decreasing force structure.[171] NATO "eased the pressure" on the northern flank. Marginalisation in security policy made it again essential for Norway to concentrate on maintaining its influence and a closer relationship to NATO.[172] To Norway these have always been as important as maintaining an allied headquarters in the country.[173] Nor was Norway included in the defence and security policy constellation in the European Union. We had "a sneaking feeling of being left alone up in the north".[174]

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167 Torgeir Hagen, *E-tjenesten i en omskiftelig verden* [The intelligence service in a shifting world], lecture delivered at Oslo Militære Samfunn, 20 November 2006; Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, p. 194.

168 Ministry of Defence, *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005*, p. 47; Jørgen Berggrav, "Landsdelskommando Nord-Norge – operativ blindtarm eller indrefilet?" [Regional Command North Norway – operational cul-de-sac or entrecote?], *Norsk Militært tidsskrift*, vol. 172, no. 11 (2003).

169 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.

170 NATO, *NATO Handbook* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001).

171 Singsaas, "Utviklingen av NATOs kommandostruktur", pp. 24–25.

172 Janne H. Matlary, "Internasjonaliseringen av militærmakten – makt eller avmakt?" [Internationalisation of the military power – power or powerlessness] in *Mot et avnasjonalisert forsvar?* eds. Øyvind Østerud and Janne H. Matlary, pp. 185–242.

173 Ministry of Defence, "NATOs nye kommandostruktur – fra 65 til 20 hovedkvarter" [NATO's new command structure – from 65 to 20 headquarters], *FD Aktuelt,* no. 4 (1999), p. 4.

174 Frisvold, interview.

Undoubtedly, this hastened the reduction and marginalisation of the operational level in Norway.

The new command arrangements in 2000 primarily resulted in a secondary and more marginal position in the NATO command structure, as mentioned above. Norway had less influence in the Alliance regarding defence planning in Norway, less operational responsibility, unpractical solutions for the operational leadership seen from the Norwegian perspective, and fewer opportunities to develop joint operational leadership and competence.

The marginalisation of NATO's command structure strengthened the focus on a coordinated and efficient national operational leadership of the military forces. A chief argument in favour of *a single* joint operational headquarters in Norway was that changes in NATO's command structure in 2000 had made "an adapted, but *powerful and integrated* national operational leadership of our forces" essential.[175] As a result of the Alliance's weakened concentration on the northern areas, Norway was now expected to take responsibility for military operations in a lower conflict spectrum.[176] One joint operational headquarters would have more freedom of action and flexibility, and utilise resources better, regardless of threats that might arise.

Further, Norway's *invitations and adaptations to the allied command structure*, under the reform of 2002, weakened the competence and leadership of the operational level. Defence Command South Norway was preferred as the one joint operational headquarters in the country, instead of the headquarters in the north. Defence Command North Norway had so far been regarded as the most competent of the two headquarters.[177] The reason not to choose North Norway was to be found in the Alliance.[178] Chief of Defence sought with his recommendation to secure close relations with allied and Norwegian authorities and keep allied staff activities in the country. It was feared that NATO would close JHQ North if Norway terminated activity in Jåttå, particularly as NATO was being pressed to reduce its own command structure.[179] The Norwegian military leadership entered into a positive dialogue with the NATO leadership, and was given to understand that Norway's command structure dispositions could affect NATO's

175 NTB, "Ett nasjonalt hovedkvarter".
176 Frisvold, interview.
177 Tore Idsøe, "Ny kommandostruktur "[New command structure], *Nordlys*, 14 November 2000.
178 Frisvold, interview.
179 Bjerga, *Enhet som våpen*, pp. 200–201.

subsequent activities.[180] The growing emphasis on international operations, based on Norway's interest in keeping the Alliance relevant, also pointed in the direction of Jåttå.[181] The responsibilities, role and functions of the one joint operational headquarters for international operations could be simplified provided close contact with NATO's command structure in Jåttå was maintained.[182] Thus, much of the joint operational expertise built up in Reitan was lost.

This adaptation to NATO's command structure also helped disperse activities to *three* locations, making Joint Operational Headquarters less powerful than originally intended. Once again the reason was to be found with the Alliance. According to the Government, Norway's command structure dispositions would help CAOC 3 in Reitan maintain standards and "remain on Norwegian soil with a Norwegian commander". Regional Command South Norway was also established in Trondheim with a view to planning and receiving allied reinforcements and to enabling advance storage in Trøndelag. [183] The coordinated, efficient and competent operational leadership which had been foreseen never materialised.[184] The chief military argument in favour of a joint operational headquarters had been, paradoxically, that "challenges in NATO's command structure have made an adapted, strong and coordinated national operational leadership of our forces essential".[185] It was also claimed that Regional Command North Norway had exploited its position to expand organisationally more than originally intended and at the expense of Joint Operational Headquarters.[186]

Thirdly, the organisational setup contributed a kind of additional command level in the national chain of command. The Regional Command was organisationally part of Joint Operational Headquarters. It was to function as advanced headquarters from the Joint Operational Headquarters, with staff seconded from the rest of the command structure, but it was defined as an independent command level. This organisational structure required high standards of cooperation, coordination and information flow between the headquarters and put the command structure under strain. Given today's com-

180 Frisvold, interview.
181 Matlary, "Internasjonaliseringen av militærmakten", p. 230
182 Ministry of Defence, *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005*, pp. 74–75; Frisvold, interview.
183 Ministry of Defence, *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005*, pp. 74–75.
184 Frisvold, interview.
185 NTB, "Ett nasjonalt hovedkvarter".
186 Frisvold, interview; and Tomas Colin Archer, Lieutenant-General, interview by author, 17 April 2007.

plicated conflict pattern and operational concept the distance from the central leadership to tactical units must be as short as possible. This is in particular the case in sensitive crisis management where information flow is critical, as Norway was to experience with the Elektron affair in 2005, when two Norwegian fisheries inspectors were abducted by a Russian fishing vessel. In this case Joint Operational Headquarters were gradually sidelined.[187] These procedures, and having to ask for staff reinforcements, breach well-known and important principles of equality and responsibility in crisis management. The principles indicate the same organisation, routines and procedures in peacetime, crisis and wartime, and with clear-cut interface and regulations. One command level and two (later one) headquarters less would make the operational leadership less fragmented and its challenges less onerous.

Finally, *the altered status of allied headquarters in Jåttå* in 2003, i.e. from an operational headquarters to an exercise centre, undoubtedly reduced Jåttå as an joint operational institution.[188] Firstly, Joint Warfare Center had no responsibility for defence planning, making it more complicated for Norway to influence the planning process in NATO. Secondly, the headquarters have no operational function in NATO's command structure. Joint Warfare Center will not exercise command in peacetime, crisis and wartime. NATO now operates mobile headquarters placed immediately under the regional commands in Brunssum and Naples in Italy for the operational planning and command of Alliance operations. To Lieutenant General Thorstein Skiaker, the then Commander HQ North and Chief Joint Operational Headquarters, these changes showed that Norway's intentions to lead allied operations on Norwegian soil were being abandoned.[189] The operational level of war in Norway remained for national purposes only. Thirdly, the changes put an end to the close-knit integration between the services, which had been valuable to the development of joint operational competence. Norwegian Joint Operational Headquarters found that it was no longer easy to enjoy the benefit of competent allied personnel.

187 Ministry of Defence, *Oppsummering av ordrer fra forsvarssjef til Landsdelskommando Nord-Norge på VTC 170100B Oktober 2005* [Summary of orders from the Chief of Defence to the Defence Command North Norway at VTC 170100B October 2005], classified operational memo issued by FD III, SITSEN.

188 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.

189 Skiaker, interview.

The changing character of war

The third explanation for the disintegration was the changing character of war, and transition to modern manoeuvre-based warfare. The extensive political restructuring in the 1990s, the *Revolution in Strategic Affairs*, the decreasing Russian threat and the appearance of new threats, made it easier for NATO to make use of new conventional capabilities based on new technology. During the Cold War the focus had been on quantity rather than quality.[190] Warfare was changed by the *Revolution in Military Affairs*. Moreover, war could now be waged in new dimensions, among them psychological warfare, information operations and high-tech network operations. New and cognitive domains were considered essential to succeed in a steadily advancing conflict pattern, which required an overall and integrated approach.

These changes made the concept of large-scale joint invasion defence operations seem less relevant. Confidence in modern manoeuvre-based warfare grew. It was now considered possible to make manoeuvre-based warfare more effective. The concept moved towards a more indirect and manoeuvre-oriented operational pattern; this was confirmed in the new Norwegian joint operational doctrine of the armed forces published in 2000. Here the command of joint operations was at the centre of attention.[191] The doctrine was derived from manoeuvre theory, and the method was operational. This concept became the foundation of the new Norwegian defence concept. At the same time the idea of network-based defence appeared, based on technological developments and inspired by the American concept of *Network Centric Warfare*. This idea later found expression in the *Introduksjon til Nettverkbasert Forsvar* [Introduction to network-based defence] published by the Command and Staff College in Oslo.[192]

This development strengthened the need for competence, command and control, which in turn increased the importance of headquarters at the operational level.[193] On the other hand, the same process brought about the institutional reduction and marginalisation of the operational level after 2000. *Firstly,* the reforms downsized the force structure. Emphasis was on forms of warfare in which the enemy was out-manoeuvred instead of wearing down his material resources

190 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring,* p. 29.
191 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine,* 2000, A and B.
192 Inge Tjøstheim, *Introduksjon til nettverkbasert forsvar* [Introduction to a network-based defence], Militærteoretisk skriftserie, no. 1 (Oslo: The Command and Staff College, 2001).
193 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine,* 2000, part B.

and manpower. The new approach was regarded as "the poor man's concept", and seemed a reasonable solution in reduced circumstances. A subordinate military force, at least in the beginning, was expected to defeat a superior force by "out-manoeuvring" the enemy in a "indirect approach". The concept was regarded as risky as the individual soldier was of greater worth now than during the Cold War.[194] The aim was to make the adversary abandon his military objectives, not necessarily to defeat him physically.[195] The military forces were slimmer, but more mobile and flexible and had little need for a weighty command structure.[196] As mentioned already, this was an important factor in the down-scaling of headquarters in 2002.[197]

Secondly, manoeuvre doctrine and network-based defence tend to blur the lines between levels and to level out the command structure.[198] It is essential that the situation is perceived consistently across the entire organisation in order to speed up the planning and conduct of the operations. Information flow is therefore of vital importance between the levels.[199] Flexibility is emphasised, independence and initiative as well, based on the philosophy of mission command.[200] "Subordinate commander must be able to decide *on their own,* based on their interpretation of the commander's intention, rather than pass information through the chain of command and wait for a decision to be made."[201] For this reason decisions are decentralised, power is moved throughout the system, and there is less need for large headquarters. One moves *Power to the Edge* – to subordinates commanders – in accordance with NATO's new conceptualised approach to command and control.[202]

We may assume that all this has made reductions at the operational level less complicated. Minister of Defence Kristin Krohn Devold, in her outline for the Chief of Defence's military statement 2003, presented regulations regarding further downsizing and flattening of the

194 Henriksen and Sæveraas, *Et militært universalmiddel?,* p. 86.
195 Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Forsvarssjefens grunnsyn for utvikling og bruk av norske styrker i fred, krise og krig* [The Norwegian Chief of Defence's approach to the development and use of Norwegian forces in peace, crisis and war] (HQ DEFCOM-NOR, 1995).
196 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 29.
197 Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Forsvarssjefens Forsvarsstudie 2000,* p. 14; 2000:20; NOU, *Et nytt forsvar*, p. 60.
198 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine,* 2000, part A, pp. 97–98 and part B, pp. 40–41; Command and Staff College, Tjøstheim, *Introduksjon til nettverkbasert forsvar*, pp. 46–48.
199 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine,* 2000, part B, p. 155.
200 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine*, 2000, part A, p. 53.
201 Ibid.; also see Tjøstheim, *Introduksjon til nettverkbasert forsvar,* pp. 46–48.
202 David S. Alberts and Richard E. Hayes, *Understanding Command and Control,* CCRP Publications (Washington DC: Department of Defence, 2006), p. 49 ff.

command structure, based on a network-based defence concept and new and harsher demands for rapid information exchange between the levels.[203] The Government explained its decision to out-phase Regional Command South Norway from 2005 by pointing to the fact that a network-based defence concept would allow the armed forces to command joint operations at high speed, with great flexibility and face many different situations. "Therefore the shortest possible distance between strategic, joint operational and tactical command levels and the operational units is vital."[204] It is nevertheless doubtful whether this fully explains why Regional Command South Norway was phased out. Financial resources were probably more important, although expectations generated by the transition to new operational concepts had obviously contributed to the downsizing.

Thirdly, the new concept reinforced the need for an integrated and efficient leadership. Today's operations require even stronger integration between the services than before. A network-based defence puts an end to the traditional division of sea, air and ground defence. The concept calls for the ability to connect intelligence, decision-making, sensors and platforms from the services more effectively than before.[205] Improving the capability to coordinate efficient command and control of joint operations in accordance with new concepts was, according to former commander of Joint Operational Headquarters, Lieutenant General Tomas Colin Archer, the chief argument behind the reorganisation of 2006, during which the commanders from the services were discontinued.[206] They had been placed on a higher level than the chief of staff, who had the main responsibility; the services were therefore too dominant at the headquarters. The organisation was seen as a hindrance to efficient planning and leadership of joint operations as well as to the daily routines. Colin Archer's recommendations were as follows:

> Most operations today, incident and crisis management included, require a joint contribution from several services. This in turn calls for the capability to establish a mutual understanding and to coordinate and synchronise contributions across services. This is vital to make efficient use of resources and realise

203 Ministry of Defence, *Rammer for forsvarssjefens militærfaglige utredning* [The scope for Norway's Defence Study], 30 October 2002 (Odinarkiv [23 Jan 2007]).
204 Ministry of Defence, *Den videre moderniseringen av Forsvaret i perioden 2005–2008*, p. 54.
205 Norwegian Ministry of Defence, *Rammer for forsvarssjefens …*
206 Archer, interview.

> desirable outcomes during incidents or crisis. To achieve this, image building, planning and command of operations will be the best method. This again means that the operational structure is the highest and most important organisational level in the Joint Operational Headquarters, as well as a shifting of focus from services to mutual focus in the day-to-day management. By localising the service functions in one joint operation room through daily activities the operational understanding and competence in the headquarters will also increase.[207]

Because there had been too much focus on the services Colin Archer terminated the commanders to counter the tendency to exaggerate the service focus. Putting special operations force structures at the same level as the services was also meant to level out functions in one integrated direction.[208] Time will tell whether a more integrated, efficient and competent joint operational leadership has been obtained. However, headquarters have been weakened as an operational authority for the services.[209] One may also ask whether the new arrangement will inspire sufficient confidence among contributing countries if allied forces are placed under the command structure.[210] The command structure is still expected to lead allied joint operations, and the annual winter exercises will be important touchstones in this respect.[211]

Financial resources

The fourth explanation for the institutional cutbacks was straitened financial circumstances. The new picture after the Cold War and a shifting of focus from invasion defence to expedition defence required Norway, like all other NATO countries, to respond to with various restructuring requirements.[212] New and more complicated security challenges demanded new responses from the armed forces. During the 1990s, military instruments proved inadequate to the new challenges. In consequence NATO countries, Norway included, had to reform their military forces and focus more on quality, mobility and reaction in order to deploy quickly in a regional effort.

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207 Defence Staff Norway, *Anbefalinger om videre utvikling av Forsvarets operative kommandostruktur* (Oslo: Defence Staff Norway, 2005), p. 1–2.
208 Archer, interview.
209 Skiaker, interview.
210 Frisvold, interview; and Skiaker, interview.
211 Norwegian Ministry of Defence, *Rammer for forsvarssjefens …*
212 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, p. 125.

At the same time spending on the armed forces in Norway sank by NOK 3.3 billion in 2002 money during the decade from 1990 to 2000, (or 8 per cent of the defence budget, or from 3.1 to 2.1 per cent of gross domestic product).[213] The need to reduce the structure and organisation came quickly and powerfully. Although the Sunde Committee had concluded as far back as 1991 that "Reductions in spending and in the organisation as a whole will result in a scaling back at the command level of the armed forces", the Government did not adopt this particular recommendation.[214] By 2001 "it [was] obvious that the armed forces [were] in a deep and permanent structural crisis".[215] Straitened economic circumstances would finally persuade the Government to change the operational leadership structure. Resources had to be used in a more integrated and efficient manner.

After 2000, cuts across the board and calls for greater efficiency fuelled the downsizing of the operational level. The Defence Study by the Chief of Defence of 2000 and the Special Committee on Defence Policy of 2000 addressed this problem. The Committee shared the view of the Chief of Defence on the desirability of *a single* joint operational headquarters and also emphasised the economic considerations. The staff and leadership structures would have to meet cost-efficient requirements.[216] Parliament took note of the recommendations and cut spending on operational levels for the budget period 2002–05 by about 40 per cent.[217]

Economy was probably also the main reason why Regional Command South Norway was phased out in 2005. The Minister of Defence advocated in his terms of inquiry for the Chief of Defence's 2003 military study more cuts and levelling out of the command structure, based on cost-efficiency requirements.[218] However, the Chief of Defence saw the situation differently:

> It is considered necessary to give the armed forces time to implement and gain experience with the present command structure, which should be maintained unchanged for a two-year

213 Ibid., p. 309.
214 Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Vurdering av Forsvarets øverste ledelse*, pp. 1 and 29.
215 Ministry of Defence, *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005.*
216 NOU, *Et nytt forsvar,* p. 60.
217 Ministry of Defence, *Den videre moderniseringen av Forsvaret i perioden 2005–2008,* p. 55.
218 Norwegian Ministry of Defence, *Rammer for forsvarssjefens …*

> period. Afterwards a thorough evaluation should be made at the end of 2004 to consider further efficiency and rationalisation of national strategic leadership, command structure and foreign positions.[219]

In spite of these objections the Government still chose to phase Regional Command South Norway out in 2005. It was "necessary to reduce the command structure further in order to transfer resources and responsibilities to operational units", and address recent demands for higher cost-efficiency.[220]

Phasing out Regional Command South Norway came as a surprise to the military leadership. The commander of Regional Command South Norway, Major General Kjell Narve Ludvigsen, resigned saying that the Ministry of Defence's recommendation, seen in the light of the recommendation of the Chief of Defence "came as a surprise. The reasons given in the proposition seemed strange and out of kilter with realities".[221] In other words, the argument was neither operational, nor military; financial constraints seemed to carry the day. According to Chief of Defence Sigurd Frisvold and Chief of Defence Staff Svein Ivar Hansen, the cause was disagreement within the Government coalition over armed forces policy in the spring of 2004.[222] The Government had to solve their economic worries "overnight".[223]

The financial situation was also a factor in the reorganisation of the Joint Operational Headquarters in 2006. In the Proposition to the Storting no 1 (2006–2007), Budget term 2007, the Government told Parliament,

> Reorganisation has been carried out by FOL [The operational leadership of the armed forces] as part of a total downsizing of the leadership apparatus in the armed forces. This is an important part in the downsizing of leadership and staff functions and the orientation of the FOL organisation towards operational activity. It will also contribute to cutting the resources spent on leader-

219 Defence Staff Norway, *Forsvarssjefens militærfaglige utredning 2003,* p. 10.
220 Ministry of Defence, *Den videre moderniseringen av Forsvaret i perioden 2005–2008,* pp. 55–55 and 93.
221 Regional Command South Norway, "Berømmet sine medarbeidere", *Forsvarsnett*, 10 May 2005 [online 26 Feb 2007].
222 Frisvold, interview; and Hansen, interview.
223 Frisvold, interview.

> ship functions down to the figures presented in Proposition to the Parliament no. 42 (2003–2004).[224]

Spending considerations were thus behind the extensive post–2000 reorganisation and institutional downsizing of the operational level.

New Technology

The fifth explanation for the institutional cutbacks is technological progress. *Firstly*, it changed the character of warfare and lay behind the adoption of modern manoeuvre and network-based operational concepts. As we saw, there was an urgent need to integrate and streamline leadership at the operational level. This also contributed to the slimming down of command structure after 2000.

Secondly, the expense of mounting a high-tech defence capability made considerable reductions in force and command structure necessary.[225] The price of new, sophisticated weapons systems delivering greater power, range, precision and flexibility, guided by new command, control and communication systems, rose faster than the general price index. Technological progress put more pressure on finances after the turn of the century.

Thirdly, because new information and communications technology enables leaders to control a wider area staff cuts could be made at the operational level. Network-based defence increases the areas of control under each headquarters.[226] As the joint operational doctrine from 2000 pointed out "the combination of high competence and adapted communication and information technology will downsize staff and also increase staying power".[227] The recommendations to reduce joint operational headquarters to one assumed that headquarters would be able to command most tactical units in all services directly, without intervening levels because a smaller force structure and "future leadership and decision systems will make possible larger areas of control than today". [228] Minister of Defence Kristin Krohn Devold also presented regulations in her outline of the Chief of Defence's military

224 Ministry of Defence, *Budsjetterminen 2007* [Budgetary period 2007] Proposition to the Storting no. 1 (2006–2007), pp. 83–84.
225 Matlary and Østerud, *Mot et avnasjonalisert forsvar?*, p. 18.
226 Tjøstheim, *Introduksjon til Nettverkbasert Forsvar,* pp. 46–48.
227 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine*, 2000, part B, p. 40.
228 NOU, *Et nytt forsvar*, p. 60; Ministry of Defence, *Gjennomføringsproposisjonen – utfyllende rammer for omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005* [Proposition of implementation – supplementing the scope for transformation of the Armed Forces in the period 2002–2005], Proposition to the Storting no. 55 (2001–2002), pp. 14–15; Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Forsvarssjefens Forsvarsstudie 2000*, p. 14.

statement in 2003 regarding further downsizing and levelling out of the command structure, based on new technology.[229] This political argument was used to justify the discontinuation of Regional Command South Norway in 2005.[230] New information and communications technologies thus inspired and made it possible to rationalise and streamline the command structure

The economic gains may not be as much as anticipated. A network-based defence concept has only partly been operationalised. The armed forces have so far only discussed and studied network-based defence conceptually, and made only part of the leap from a platform-based defence.[231] The concept should therefore be seen more as a future vision than a reality, despite providing the architecture for a new command structure. A report from the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI) in 2004, *Forventninger til et nettverkbasert forsvar* [Network-centric defence model stokes expectations] said that "a general impression is that expectations are too high as to how information and communications technology (ICT) can generate a common understanding and decisions in the organisation".[232] The military recommendations of the Chief of Defence in 2003 and Major General Kjell Narve Ludvigsen's opinion of the discontinuation of Regional Command South Norway in 2003 underline this statement.[233] Therefore, new information and communication technology can have inspired a rather *premature* downsizing of the operational level.

229 Norwegian Ministry of Defence, *Rammer for forsvarssjefens …*

230 Ministry of Defence, *Den videre moderniseringen av Forsvaret i perioden 2005–2008,* pp. 54–55, 93.

231 Sverre Diesen, "Mot et allianseintegrert forsvar" [Towards an alliance-integrated defence], in *Mot et avnasjonalisert forsvar,* eds Janne H. Matlary and Øyvind Østerud (Oslo: Abstrakt, 2005), pp. 171–172.

232 FFI, *Forventningene til nettverksbasert Forsvar* [Network-centric defence model stokes expectations], report no. 04004 (Kjeller: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, 2004).

233 Defence Staff Norway, *Anbefalinger om videre utvikling …,* p. 10, Regional Command South Norway, "Berømmet sine medarbeidere".

Chapter 4

Perspectives on professionalism

Far from advocating war, the military leaders generally viewed it as the last resort of policy and looked forward to it with gloomy forebodings and feverish preparations.

Samuel P. Huntingto

The Soldier and the State

Huntington laid out his classical theories on the military profession and civilian-military relations in his book *The Soldier and the State*. Here he explains how the military profession and relations between the military and political authorities contribute towards forming a country's defence policy and military institutions.

To understand Huntington's model one should be familiar with his understanding of the military profession. He depicts officers as *conservative realists* trying to maximise their own organisation while being fully prepared for all potential threats.[234] Maximising means the *quantitative* dimension of the military forces in relation to grants through the defence budget, the *qualitative* dimension of organisation and leadership, the composition of forces and alliances with other countries. Added to this are the *dynamic* conditions related to the use of military force: when and how to use force. He sees officers as conservative realists, meaning that they feel a moral duty to defend society in their role as obedient servants to the state. Thus, officers will argue for the need to strengthen the military system and in favour of generous budgets. By nature they are concerned with power, pessimists, collectivists,

234 Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, pp. 59–79.

nationalists and have a military and instrumental view of their own profession. Politically they should be neutral, and military institutions should be independent.

According to Huntington the development of military institutions rests on two imperatives, one *functional* and one *social*. The *functional imperative* is connected to an external perception of society's security and the extent to which this calls for a powerful military defence. The *social imperative* is related to motivating forces, ideologies and dominant institutions in society. In order to obtain national security it is important to weigh military demands based on external threat perceptions against other demands. Nations which fail here will, he claims, ruin their own resources and expose themselves to internal as well as external risks. Huntington's point of departure is that civil-military relations are at the heart of the conflict between imperatives. A well-balanced relationship is decisive to obtain a "successful" security and defence policy. By civil-military relations is meant the balance between political control on one hand and military professional independence, autonomy and flexibility on the other hand. The objective is to develop civil-military relations which maximise military security with the lowest possible costs to society in general. One essential point, Huntington says, is the military officers' need to maximise their own organisation as much as possible, regardless of threat levels.

Civilian-military relations are best maintained through *objective civilian control*, according to Huntington. It may express itself through indirect political control of military affairs and maximise military force. Such control encourages the military profession to adopt a neutral political stance and a voluntary subordination in order to ensure civilian control of military force. At the same time it allows officers to maximise military effectiveness and ensure national security. In this way, they will maintain their professionalism and military independence. The political level defines the political objectives and the frameworks through which political power is transferred to the military, together with the decision as to which operations should be implemented, and how. The stricter the lines between the military and political spheres are drawn, the more objective its control will be. The stronger the external threats, the more important is objective civilian control. Officers' expertise, legitimacy and jurisdiction over the application of military force on behalf of society should not be influenced by politicians and other civilians. This also applies to the officers' desire

for professional freedom and autonomy.[235] However, there should be no doubt that military force is subjected to political authorities and civilian control.

Huntington's antithesis to objective civilian control is *subjective civilian control*, as a result of which military force is minimised.[236] Subjective civilian control means that specific interests from one or several groups in civilian society, including political institutions, strive for power and influence. It may express itself through direct political control of what should be a military affair. According to Huntington, it will undermine the military profession and constrain attempts to maximise the military organisation and thereby national security. The relation between objective and subjective civilian control, however, should be seen as a continuum where the point is not a question of either/or, but rather more or less of one or the other.

Norway through the prism of Huntington's theory

Huntington's perspectives seem relevant to the establishment and development of institutions at the operational level in Norway in the period 1970–2000. Both functional and social forces seem to have influenced this development.

In terms of the *functional imperative* containment of the threat from the East was central to defence planning during the Cold War. Threats to Norwegian territories were taken extremely seriously. The demonstration of forces in 1968 caused doubt and uncertainty as to the Soviet intentions, and the strategic importance of the northern flank grew, also where security policy was concerned.[237] A robust and powerful military force was therefore of the utmost importance in this situation.

In terms of the *social imperative* there was considerable interest support for a robust and powerful military force. With the Second World War still a recent memory, the need to protect the state and national territories against the threat from the East was broadly accepted. The prevailing ideology was to accept that Norwegian men with barely one year of national service training should be sent to wage a total war to defend the nation state. A powerful national invasion defence, based on military service and reinforcements from the Alliance was important both to society and in political circles. The armed forces enjoyed stable public support as a national institution with "broad

235 Ibid., pp. 15–16.
236 Ibid., pp. 59–97.
237 Henriksen and Sæveraas, *Et militært universalmiddel?*, p. 91.

participation and a high degree of legitimacy in the population".[238] We should remember that political circles in Norway in this period were subject to growing Soviet pressure, which partly took the form of a well-organised, continuous press campaign over many years and partly of threats against Norwegian decision-makers in closed circles.[239] This obvious and permanent threat from the East also led to an acceptance in society that the costs related to the armed forces had to be borne, and defence budgets increased.[240] In other words, the opportunities to maximise military power were good.

A maximised and very strong military force does, however, call for political control. It was considered easier to control a military power with an integrated and unified leadership; under this system the Chief of Defence was an independent professional military leader.[241] But the ministerial level lacked the capacity for extensive oversight, management and control of the armed forces. American military aid had ended in the 1960s and the economic situation made it impossible to establish a comprehensive leadership apparatus. This explains why the development of new joint commands in the command structure led to more *objective civilian control*. Politicians were also grateful for the distance to events provided by the additional command level. A clear-cut distinction was drawn between war and peace in terms of the threat perception, and between political and military areas of responsibility. More objective civilian control should make it harder to blame political levels should operations fail, which might very well happen, considering the threat from the East. With regard to such operations, the politicians could use the armed forces as a "doormat", denying all responsibility "and lean back".[242]

This train of events fits Huntington's perspective on officers' desire for professional independence, freedom of action and flexibility. New, clearly defined command levels gave them vertical professional autonomy. In combination with gradually improved finances, the military leadership was now able to *maximise* its own organisation, in reference to the potential threat from the east, as well as meet its tasks and commitments in the Alliance. In a *quantitative* perspective, willingness to maximise was apparent in the organisational growth at the new

238 Matlary and Østerud, *Mot et avnasjonalisert forsvar?*, p. 12.
239 Olav T Storvik, "Tønne Huitfeldt", *Aftenposten*, 27 March 2007.
240 Erling Bø, "Debatten er forutsigbar" [The debate is predictable], interview by Nina Græger, *Forsvarets Forum,* no. 6 (2007): 26–27.
241 Røksund, "Forsvaret mellom politisk styring …", pp. 137–140 and 152.
242 Hansen, interview.

command level and headquarters' budgets. In a *qualitative* perspective it found expression in an integrated and efficient leadership and development of capabilities at headquarters. With regard to the time and place for deploying military force, aspirations to maximise the organisation were expressed in the desire of the chief commanders to handle problems independently, quickly and efficiently. The chief commanders were given extensive authority and independence.

So, what was to be done when the threat dissipated at the end of the Cold War and spending sank dramatically? From point of view of the *functional imperative*, the threat from the East disappeared, making threat assessment more complicated. The need for a quantitative, large and powerful defence declined. From the point of view of the *social imperative*, there was no desire to finance a large force structure, and between 1990 and 2000 defence expenditure in Norway sank by NOK 3.3 billion in 2002 money – 8 per cent of the defence budget, or from 3.1 per cent to 2.1 per cent of the gross domestic product. [243]

However, there was no realignment of the balance between political control and professional independence, despite the altered strategic situation, new approaches to crisis management on the international stage and lower spending. The decade was marked by weak political guidance and control for several reasons. Until 1987, the Ministry of Defence and Headquarters Defence Command were located in the same place. They were now located in separate places. The size and capacity of Headquarters Defence Command and the now greater physical distance from their political masters allowed Defence Command to fight off or retard policy decisions. The organisation plans contained in the Government's proposition were never put into effect, and few if any cuts were made in the command structure. The maintenance of military professionalism and emphasis on conventional warfare in doctrines and training weakened political control during the war in the Balkans in the 1990s.[244] Moreover, the upper political echelons in Norway were fragmented in the 1990s, with little unity and consistency, as a consequence of tensions between the military and political leadership. Cooperation was at an ebb, there was physical distance between the Ministry of Defence and Headquarters Defence Command, each cultivating their own particular mentality. During the 1999

243 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring,* p. 390.
244 Henning A. Frantzen, *"Proper War" and "War in Reality": The Changing Concept of War,* IFS Info, no. 6 (Oslo: Institute for Defence Studies, 2002), pp. 6–10.

Kosovo crisis, political control seemed almost invisible.[245] Personal conflicts in the upper reaches of government led to weak political control.[246] There was no debate on defence issues in this decade, leaving the armed forces to run their own show within certain limits.[247] There was probably not much political mileage in defence or security policy in this period either.[248] Interest in scrutinising and controlling the military forces seemed weak. It was long since the role of the military had been at the centre of controversy, and the possibility of a military coup was regarded as non-existent in Norway.[249]

So the military could benefit from much *objective civilian control* and vertical professional autonomy. Given their need to maximise their own organisation, the leadership structure was not subjected to reorganisation.[250] Lieutenant General Svein Ivar Hansen describes the 1990s as "the lost decade". In line with Huntington's view of officers as conservative realists, the armed forces still maximised the threat from the East, tried to "keep the light shining" and called for higher expenditure.[251] It may also be argued that the officers were disloyal to political guidelines. However, such criticism seems irrelevant in the sense that they always will, in Huntington's view, call for high expenditure based on their conservative realism. Moreover, the threat from the East was familiar and therefore easy to keep warm. The fact that international military service in peace support operations was not regarded as an opportunity to acquire valuable know-how, unlike exercises and peacetime operations at home, also reveals a strong inclination towards conventional warfare among officers, who preferred strictly distinct, well-defined and separate military levels of war.[252]

The interest in maximising the armed forces was expressed at the operational level by Chief of Defence Torolf Rein's rejection of the recommendations of the Sunde Committee and by the maintenance of two defence commands. It found further expression in the strengthening of Jåttå in the 1990s and the strengthening of capabilities at the headquarters after the integration with NATO headquarters in

245 Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring*, pp. 221, 291–292 and 382.
246 Hansen, interview.
247 Bø, "Debatten er forutsigbar":26.
248 Feaver, *Armed Servants, Agency* …, p. 180 ff.
249 Torunn L. Haaland, book review: *Armed Servants, Agency, oversight, and civil-military relations, Norsk Militært Tidsskrift*, vol. 173, no. 3 (2004): 28–29.
250 Hansen, interview.
251 Ibid.
252 Frantzen, *"Proper War",* pp. 5–11; Børresen et al., *Allianseforsvar i endring,* p. 229.

1994.[253] The unification of international activities in Jåttå in 2000 was also instrumental in this respect, further strengthening the headquarters' position.[254] In Reitan things were more complicated in light of new challenges, resulting in higher activity levels in South Norway at the cost of Defence Command North Norway in the 1990s.

Disintegration – Huntington revised

Let us start with Huntington's *functional imperative*. The external threat to Norway diminished after the Cold War. It was no longer one-dimensional, but more complicated and less distinct than before. Security was to be built more on participation abroad to counter threats wherever they appeared. The role of military force changed along with the conception of the Norwegian armed forces from an anti-invasion force to an expeditionary-oriented force capable of countering such threats. Expeditionary defence lays more emphasis on small, standing forces with high-tech equipment adapted to local conditions, including conditions in places not covered by the Alliance.[255] In Norway, the power to mobilise is subordinate to high-quality forces, the general defence concept has changed and international operations have come into focus. In other words, the imperative calls for a modest and better qualified defence.

In terms of the *social imperative,* developments after the Cold War made defence policy more controversial. According to a report compiled in connection with the Government Inquiry into the Structure of Power in Norway, which was published in 2002, 40 per cent of chief executive leaders in society and 15 per cent of senior officers believe that Norwegian forces should not take part in NATO operations outside the geographical areas of the Alliance. In a nationwide survey in the spring of 2002, 56 per cent were found to share the same opinion, while a good third agreed that Norwegian forces could be deployed outside the primary areas of the Alliance.[256] During the Cold War, levels of support for the armed forces had been considerably higher.[257] There were indications that the nation-state and its protection now meant less to people in light of increasing internationalism. To the man in the street military force is today a rather vague tool whose

253 Frisvold, interview.
254 Skiaker, interview.
255 Matlary and Østerud, *Mot et avnasjonalisert forsvar?*, p. 11; Moskos et al., eds, *Postmodern Military,* pp. 14–17.
256 Gulbrandsen, et al., *Norske makteliter.*
257 Matlary and Østerud, *Mot et avnasjonalisert forsvar?*, p. 23.

function is to benefit the state, and not used by the state.[258] After 2000 perceptions of the military and its role in the Western world have grown more ambivalent.[259] As a consequence budgets have been more limited and expenditure declined. The financial situation has been tighter and the general failure of the armed forces to reorganise themselves in the 1990s did not help.

Alliances and coalition operations have internationalised warfare, where the use of power is legitimated by bodies at a supra-governmental level.[260] The nation-state has been brought into alliances and accepted duties far beyond national borders. Supra-governmental bodies, such as NATO, the EU and UN have become more powerful and more important, also where military force is concerned.[261]

The role of the media has also changed. Once controlled partly by the state, the media in today's post-modern society are influenced by non-governmental, often international organisations motivated by ideals and economy.[262] The media exert more influence and thus contribute to making the military sphere more political and civilian.[263] Thanks to advances in media technology the days are long gone since war was seen as an isolated event between military forces on the battlefield and its inevitable consequences on civilian society were accepted.[264] Events on the battlefield must bear the light of day.

As a consequence of the changes in security policy and financial constraints, a new balance was struck between political control and military professional independence. When Norwegian forces became involved in controversial incidents during the Kosovo crisis in 1999, politicians felt unable to control events.[265] Modern crisis management required integrated civil-military leadership and power to exercise political-strategic control of the military force. Continuous political-military contact became more important. Vague distinctions between war and peace and fewer possibilities to separate politicians and professionals were other challenges. A joint report prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and Headquarters Defence Command after the Kosovo crisis concluded that the challenge now

258 Ibid.; Diesen, "Mot et allianseintegrert forsvar", pp. 167–169.
259 Moskos et al., eds, *Postmodern Military*, p. 20.
260 Ibid., p. 4; Matlary and Østerud, *Mot et avnasjonalisert forsvar?*, p. 18.
261 Matlary, "Internasjonaliseringen av militærmakten", pp. 219–236.
262 Moskos et al., *Postmodern Military*, pp. 20–21.
263 Coker, *Humane Warfare,* p. 102.
264 Frantzen, *"Proper War"*, p. 19.
265 Hansen, interview.

lay in securing political control at every step of the operation. At the same time, efficient military leadership should neither be prevented nor hampered. Internal consultation and decision-making procedures came up against considerable challenges.[266] The move from clear context to complicated everyday life called for new arrangements.

The Defence Study by the Chief of Defence of 2000 and the Special Committee on Defence Policy of 2000 recommended restructuring the entire command organisation, with a view to reducing and integrating management at the strategic level, and establishing a single joint operational headquarters at the operational level.[267] Apart from financial considerations, the Integrated Strategic Leadership was set up in 2003 to widen political-strategic control of the armed forces and enhance capacity to handle crisis management at all levels.[268] The Alliance called for more integrated and unified action from Norway.[269] As part of the 2002/03 reorganisation effort, a combined quantitative study was made of human resources at the strategic and operational levels. Under the new leadership structure, the Ministry of Defence was strengthened by 100 officers, though the bureaucracy as a whole remained unchanged. Other military leadership levels were radically downsized by the politicians. A small Defence Staff replaced the large Headquarters Defence Command, and the operational level was reduced considerably. All this undoubtedly made it difficult for the officers to *maximise* their own organisation. As they saw it, a high ceiling is to no avail if you have to bend your knees to get in.[270] Instead one can say that civilian power was maximised and moved towards *subjective civilian control.*[271]

At the same time, there are traces of a maximising process. The changes in NATO's command structure in 2000 had made it vital

266 Ministry of Defence, *Kosovo-krisen: Nasjonal rapport* [The Kosovo crisis: domestic report] (Oslo: MoD, 2000), p. 2; also see Røksund, "Forsvaret mellom politisk styring …", p. 143.

267 Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Forsvarssjefens Forsvarsstudie 2000*, p. 14; NOU, *Et nytt forsvar*, p. 60; Ministry of Defence, *Gjennomføringsproposisjonen – utfyllende rammer for omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005* [Proposition of implementation – supplementing the scope for transformation of the Defence in the period 2002–2005], Proposition to the Storting no. 55 (2001–2002), pp. 14–15.

268 Ibid., p. 23; Stortinget, *Gjennomføringsproposisjonen – utfyllende rammer for omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005* [Proposition of implementation – supplementing the scope for transformation of the Defence in the period 2002–2005], Recommendation to the Storting, no. 232 (2001–2002); Ministry of Defence, *Gjennomføringsproposisjonen*, p. 13; Ministry of Defence: *Bruk av klasebomber i Hjerkinn skytefelt* [The use of cluster munitions at Hjerkinn weapon range], press release no. 53, 30 October 2002 (Odinarkiv [22 Jan 2007]).

269 Ministry of Defence, *Omleggingen av Forsvaret i perioden 2002–2005*, pp. 45–47.

270 Hansen, interview.

271 Frisvold, interview; and Hansen, interview.

"to have an adapted, but *strong* and *integrated* national operational leadership of our forces".[272] One appropriately large joint operational headquarters would allow significant freedom of action, flexibility and utilisation of resources for countering potential threats.[273] Creating a single Joint Operational Headquarters would, within strict financial limits, be seen as an attempt to maximise a unified, joint military ability to command operations and carry out everyday activities at the headquarters. By removing the commanders balancing the composition of the staff structure, it would be possible to oppose maximising attempts by each individual service and get a unified and efficient leadership of the military force.[274]

The military continues its attempts at self-maximising and retains a desire for professional freedom and independence. This serves to underline the continuing tensions inherent in balancing political control and military professional freedom. However, the opportunities for the military to maximise its own organisation in the light of current financial and political guidelines have declined steadily since the end of the Cold War, particularly after 2000. It no longer benefits from the vertical autonomy of the Cold War era.

Is Huntington still relevant? The various attempts to oppose maximising tendencies on the part of the military, strategically and operationally, attest to the relevance of parts of his theory. But others must be questioned since the Armed Forces today operate under very different conditions than those of the 1950s, when Huntington carried out his study. It is harder, for instance, to separate the military and the civilian spheres than during the Cold War. The Armed Forces work more closely with the political leadership, and have little choice, in today's political, financial and social climate, but to accept a significant degree of subjective civilian control, even if this is undesirable from Huntington's perspective. The growing political dominance over the military we have seen in most Western countries in recent years, reflects a renewed acknowledgement of the fact that the use of military power is politics, and military operations and campaigns will always be of political concern.[275] Clausewitz' words that "war is nothing but a continuation of political intercourse with an admixture of other

272 NTB, "Ett nasjonalt hovedkvarter" [One national headquarters], press release, 31 October 2000.
273 Frisvold, interview.
274 Frisvold, interview; and Archer, interview.
275 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine* 2007, p. 30.

means", seem to have acquired new meaning after the end of the Cold War.[276] A robust, autonomous military professional operational level of war may today represent a threat to political leadership and control as it, instead of linking the strategic and the tactical levels, can filter out politics and separate the levels instead of knitting them together. Especially in situations with a high political profile, such as peace support operations, this might be a challenge. The operational level of war might be a precondition for success in a major high-intensity war, but as Hew Strachan argues, one should be careful about thinking of this level of war as providing a universally applicable approach. In Strachan's opinion, using the war in Iraq 2003 as an example, the consequence might be a disjunction between the kind of war the military is prepared for and the war its government actually asks it to engage in.[277] The result is a generally purposeless use of force unable to fulfil its political objectives.

Further, new security challenges – counter-terrorism, counter-insurgency and nation-building being three examples – presumably place higher demands on civilian involvement, in which the armed forces play a more subordinated role.[278] Contemporary operations in complex conflicts often call for broader solutions and inter-agency operations down to the lowest tactical level.[279] There seem to be general agreement that we need more civil-military integration and coordination – not less.[280] In this respect, a dominant, autonomous, national military command level as prescribed by Huntington might be too compartmentalised and separate from the planning and conduct of operations.

Huntington's faith in the professional ethos of officers willing to act as obedient servants to the state as long as they stay away from politics and civic issues also requires reflection. Peter D. Feaver discussed this very question in his 2003 *Armed Servants, Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations*, in which he claims that Huntington's ideal obedience has not really existed after the Cold War in the United

276 Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, p. 57, quoted from Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*.
277 Hew Strachan, "The lost meaning of strategy" in *Strategic Studies – A Reader*, eds. Mahnken, T. G. and J. A. Maiolo. (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 431.
278 A. J. Echevarria, *21st Century War: Strategic Premises and Operational Consequences*, lecture in utility of military power at Norwegian Defence Command and Staff College, Oslo, 6 November 2006.
279 Norwegian Armed Forces, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine* 2007, pp. 29–30.
280 Niels Nagelhus Schia and Ståle UIriksen, *The UN, EU and NATO: Common Challenges in Multidimensional Peace Operations,* Working Paper, no. 728 (Oslo: NUPI, 2007) [online 28 Aug 2008], p. 6.

States. Instead he points to considerable challenges in relation to the political leadership of military power. However, Feaver's view is hard to transfer to the small state of Norway. Huntington's ideal of officers as obedient servants to the state is also a subject of discussion. Loyalty and obedience among officers have seldom been discussed in Norway and call for further investigation. What I can confirm here and now is that military power in Norway must relate to a society, conditions and expectations that are very different from 50 years ago.

Conclusion – rise and decline

The institutional history of the operational level between 1970 and 2000 was marked by the establishment and growth of two powerful joint operational defence commands. Throughout the period the defence commands enjoyed high priority, which resulted in increased operational responsibility, increased manning, the accumulation of much joint operational competence and an increased ability to command and control national and allied joint operations. They were considered among the most important pillars in the allied defence of Norway, including deployment of allied reinforcements and conduct of war on the northern flank. The institutions had an important role in the command of large-scale and allied joint operations in a unified, efficient and competent manner, and in maintaining necessary levels of surveillance and preparedness. Their capabilities were demonstrated through steadily increasing and successful allied joint operational manoeuvres. While Defence Command North Norway came through the 1990s slightly weakened, it was no less important in surveillance, crisis management and maintenance of Norwegian interests in the northern regions. Defence Command South Norway went from strength to strength, culminating in the command of NATO's Kosovo operation at the end of the 1990s.

In the second period, 2000–08, the operational level faced institutional disintegration and marginalisation. Increasing institutional pressures of recent years on the institutions have led to lower priority and reductions in staff. Joint operational competence has disintegrated and declined since the turn of the century, and the ability to command and control large-scale national and allied joint operations now seems somewhat weakened. The operational institutions no longer play a part in NATO's command structure and lack operational responsibilities and authority. The operational level in Norway is once again exclusively geared to national objectives, providing an organisational solution

which offers leadership challenges in relation to military operations and crisis management. From a national point of view, marginalisation has reduced one's ability to influence defence planning in the Alliance, resulted in problematic solutions for operational leadership and fewer opportunities to build joint operational competence. Although the 2006 reorganisation, when the commanders were discontinued, may improve joint operations command over time, the authority of the level was undoubtedly weakened. In other words, the powerful and unified operational leadership foreseen in 2000 has not materialised.

The rise and decline of Norway's operational force proceeded alongside a complicated pattern of strategic, technological, economic and social factors. During both periods the same conditions influenced developments.

The strategic importance of the northern flank: In the beginning of the first period the northern flank gained increasing strategic importance within NATO, and flank defence was strengthened. Force and exercise activity levels increased as a result of the adoption of the invasion defence concept. To meet these contemporary challenges, a powerful joint headquarters at the operational level was a prerequisite. The strategic importance of the northern flank grew in the 1970s and 1980s when Norway expanded its territorial waters and USA's new maritime strategy was implemented. New duties and assignments followed, underlining the need for an integrated and efficient command system. The operational activity in general and extensive exercise-related activity in particular led to the accumulation of considerable operational expertise during this period.

In the 1990s, however, Norway saw its strategic importance weaken. There was a tailing off of Western military strategic interest in the northern flank. The concepts of invasion and reinforcement in Norway became irrelevant. Combined with new operational concepts the force levels were considerably reduced. The need for a relatively large leadership apparatus had diminished, and the institutions lost many of their duties under the former defence concept. These premises were essential for the downsizing which took place after the turn of the century when it became politically possible and even desirable to scale down headquarters. Moreover, diminishing allied exercise activity after 2000, with less focus on large-scale joint operations, led to the disintegration of the joint operational capability at headquarters, particularly in the north.

Norway in NATO: With the growing strategic importance of the northern flank, relations with the Alliance became vital. The interests of Norway and NATO to establish an efficient and competent leadership in Norway, closely integrated with NATO's command structure, coincided. Allied assistance in case of crisis and war, influence on defence planning in NATO, the acquisition of valuable competence and securing national control of allied forces in Norway all seemed probable. An integrated command system became a prerequisite for undertaking leadership of the flank defence, detecting any hostile attacks as soon as possible and serving as a basis for the leadership structure in peacetime, which could rapidly transfer the operational command to NATO in wartime. The centrality of the institutions in the command system assured them high priority and formed the basis of rapid growth in the size and capabilities of the headquarters.

However, in the course of the 1990s the interests of Norway and NATO in an operational leadership in Norway closely integrated in the command structure of the Alliance began to diverge. NATO "eased the pressure" on the northern flank. During the two latest reorganisations of NATO's command structure, the Norwegian institutions were cut back and marginalised, losing their central position in the Allied command system. They found it harder to attend to national interests. Marginalisation made it more difficult for the armed forces to deploy military resources in an integrated and effective manner. Combined with a greater emphasis on international operations, these factors informed the decision taken in 2001 to establish a single joint operational headquarters in the south at the expense of a concentration of joint operational know-how in the north. Consideration for the Alliance, combined with national strategic interests in the northern regions, made Norway's dispositions with regard to its own command structure even more complicated. The tensions between national and allied considerations have weakened the operational level with personnel and know-how dispersed among several locations. The current leadership structure also involves challenges connected to the management of operations and crises.

The changing character of war: NATO's transition from a doctrine of massive retaliation to a doctrine of flexible response in 1967 resulted in a new defence concept linking conventional military forces to the operational level. It became important to have an independent joint operational command system in each part of the country in order

to meet Soviet aggression quickly and effectively. Should a full-scale confrontation occur, Norway would have to work with allied forces and command extensive combined joint operations. As such operations would require highly sophisticated cross-service coordination, one would clearly need a powerful and credible invasion defence system with an integrated command system at the operational level.

Towards the turn of the century warfare gradually became more manoeuvre-oriented. A new manoeuvre-based operational concept and network-based defence undermined the concept of large-scale invasion operations. It was no longer as necessary to sustain extensive operational leadership capacities for the remaining forces. The concepts have brought levels closer together, increased the necessity to flatten the command structure and made it even more imperative to ensure integrated, efficient and competent leadership at the operational level. These features contributed to a robust cutback of the headquarters after 2000.

Financial resources: Economy was an important argument when the defence commands were established in 1970. Rationalisation and efficiency were required, and a unified leadership was seen as important in order to prevent inflationary competition between the services. Still, a gradual improvement in finances during the 1970s and 1980s made it possible for the armed forces to maximise their own organisation and establish an operational level comparable to that of the major powers.

After the Cold War expenditure on the armed forces diminished and a more comprehensive reform had become necessary by the turn of the century. The operational leadership structure was affected, making it necessary to use resources in a more integrated and efficient manner. After 2000 rationalisation and calls for efficiency gains were influential in decisions downsize the operational level. Tight budgetary constraints made it impossible to maintain powerful and influential institutions.

New Technology: Technological progress facilitated a more centralised, rational and effective leadership and contributed therefore to the 1970 establishment of an operational level. It also increased inter-service dependence, which made joint operations more complicated. This, in turn, made it important to establish and develop competence throughout the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in order to conduct allied joint operations in a trustworthy manner and ensure national control of the forces.

However, technological developments after 2000 have prompted command structure rationalisation and made it technically possible for a commander to exercise far-reaching control without a large staff. Technology was an underlying force in the development of new operational concepts but increased the cost of high-tech military forces, indirectly reinforcing institutional developments after the turn of the century. At the same time there is evidence that expectations of the new technology's ability to support command and control were too high. In response, the armed forces have tended to realise the dividends of technology and downsize staffs in advance.

What about the social, civil-military relations? During the Cold War the armed forces enjoyed strong public support. A powerful invasion defence, built on conscription and reinforcements from the Alliance, was regarded as important also by civilians. The armed forces were a national institution and the public were willing to accept substantial spending on defence. Maintaining political control over a powerful military force required an integrated leadership and a new balance to be struck between political intervention and professional soldiers' desire for independence. The new leadership apparatus added another degree of *objective civilian control*. In a favourable financial climate the chances for the military to establish and maximise a new operational level seemed good.

After 2000 civil-military relations are increasingly characterised by *subjective civilian control*. Security policy, financing and social considerations have altered. The political level and civilian society have intruded more into the armed forces, but with less willingness to spend money on them. The military have less room for maximising their own organisation and services. They can no longer benefit from the Cold War era's vertical autonomy. Institutions at the operational level find themselves in straitened circumstances. The military's interest in self-maximisation and desires for professional freedom and independence remain as witnessed by the ongoing tension between political control and professional military independence.

Main reasons and mutual relations: Although growth and disintegration have been affected by security policy, technology, funding and social issues, *security and funding policies* seem to have played the most important part. It is within these variables we have seen changes which are clearly linked to the establishment, growth and disintegration of the organisations under discussion. The increasing strategic

importance of the northern flank, relations with the Alliance and the financial environment have been the most important driving forces behind their establishment and development, towards the turn of the century. Likewise, as the strategic importance of the northern flank declined, NATO lost interest in a tightly integrated command structure in Norway. A difficult economic situation resulted in cutbacks and marginalisation after the turn of the century. It seems clear that a critical security and financial environment was *the main reason* why decisions were made in the late 1960s and 1990s to reorganise the armed forces. There is also an obvious linkage between the evolution of security policy and military spending. A clearly perceived threat leads to increased expenditure on a more powerful military force – as well as the other way round.

It is evident that institutional requirements created the basis for the establishment and growth of the operational level of war in Norway. Compared to conceptual factors and professional relations, primarily connected to the changing character of war, they have clearly been the most important driving forces behind the development of these joint operational institutions. In 1970 there was no clear-cut concept of warfare at the operational level and even though the institutions were given a much more influential role in the development of modern joint military operations, their conceptual needs have played a less significant role. External conditions have been far more important.

Nevertheless, the *changing character of war* and *technological progress* during both periods reinforced and simplified the need for a unified and competent leadership at the operational level. In contrast to the security and financial environment, however, both fields evolved in one direction, one accentuated after the Cold War. The command structure came under pressure from a new defence concept after the turn of the century, improving opportunities for broader control at headquarters. So, these factors also contributed to the cutbacks of the institutions. There is an obvious connection here, in which technological development engendered new and more manoeuvre-based operational concepts. Expensive technology also contributed to budgetary constraints.

Finally*, social change and alterations in civil-military relations* paved the way for maximising measures and a new, powerful command level towards the turn of the century, although they later made it harder to maintain and maximise the organisation. The general societal factors are not, however, as directly implicated in the growth and

disintegration of the operational level as the previously mentioned factors. They seem more like peripheral preconditions than direct causes. As we have seen, balanced civil-military relations also depend on the changing security and financial environment.

The need for an integrated leadership: Our five central structural factors have tended to accentuate the need for *integrated* leadership at the operational level in Norway. This need was spurred on the establishment of the operational level in the 1960s, and has remained a developmental leitmotif for almost 40 years. It was also the reason behind the last reorganisation of Joint Operational Headquarters in 2006; this need still seems strong.

So, will the decline continue in the years ahead? Will the operational level be relevant in the future? It seems probable that the underlying forces that I have discussed will continue to operate in the future and guide the development of institutions at the operational level.[281] Budgets will in the near future remain tight,[282] and reorganisation will therefore probably continue in the same direction.

On the other hand, the nation state may become even more central than it is today. Some strong trends point in that direction, including growing competition over resources, increasing conflict and great power rivalry at the global level, continuous challenges facing the UN and NATO, and for Norway challenges in the High North.[283] Threats against Norway and Norwegian interests at home and abroad may increase, generating a need for a mightier military force than we find comfortable today. If so, it will inevitably lead to a larger and more robust command apparatus. If the importance of the nation-state does increase, ensuring full national control over military activity may also be deemed increasingly important, also from the small state perspective. Such control requires a solid and competent operational level.

Irrespective of broader developments, the need for a joint operational headquarters will obviously remain. If national or limited allied joint operations are to be carried out, there will be a need for a joint operational level in Norway. The question is, will there be a further reduction of the operational level or not? On the one hand, given Oslo's recent decision to site the entire operational level in the High

281 NATO, "NATO Comprehensive Political Guidance. Endorsed by NATO Heads of State and Government. 29 November 2006", 29 November 2006 [online 19 Jan 2007].

282 Ministry of Defence, *Budsjetterminen 2007*, p. 39.

283 NOU, *Et styrket forsvar* [A Strengthened Defence], report from the Defence Special Committee to the Ministry of Defence (Norwegian Official Reports, 2007), p. 7.

North, it is obviously intended as a consolidating move, as in 2000.[284] Unsurprisingly, the chief arguments in favour of concentrating resources and competence in the North are that it will strengthen the capability to command larger national joint operations and allied joint exercises and provide a solution to today's dysfunctional organisation of crisis management .[285] In combination with the increased strategic importance of the High North and a Government that emphasises national interests and national control,[286] one may yet see a stronger operational level and more robust organisation which is prepared to safeguard Norway's interests both at home and abroad. Furthermore, from the geopolitical perspective, Norway will have the only joint operational headquarters in NATO north of the Polar Circle – in a region whose strategic importance is likely to grow. Given the anticipated downsizing NATO's command structure, this new national headquarters might be of interest for old reasons. Distance and presence still matter.

Of course, there could be further reductions. Firstly, the reorganisation may be seen as an opportunity to cut back on staff and costs. As mentioned, future budgets look set to stay tight. Secondly, concentration at one location in the north will undoubtedly be at the expense of the remaining national joint operations capabilities in Jåttå – the headquarters that for *the present* possesses the most competence in joint operations.

The new operational leadership will be found in Reitan for a short period. Over the longer term, however, it is not unlikely that the headquarters will be moved closer to the strategic leadership in Oslo. A possible emphasis on physical proximity between the integrated strategic level and the operational level will reflect the evolution of civil-military relations we have seen recently, with less emphasis on objective civilian control of the military forces and more on subjective control.

Other fundamental questions could be asked of the organisational level: Will Norway cling to the old institutional solutions and the

284 Ministry of Defence, *Iverksettingsbrev for forsvarssektoren 2009–2012* [Letter of implementation for the Defence Sector 2009–2012] (Oslo: Ministry of Defence, 2008), p. 37.

285 Headquarters Defence Command Norway, *Forsvarssjefens forsvarsstudie 2007* [The Defence Study by the Norwegian Chief of Defence] (Oslo: The Armed Forces, 2007), p. 17; NOU, *Et styrket forsvar*, p. 57 and Ministry of Defence, *Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier* [Defending Norwegian security, interests and values], Proposition to the Storting no. 48 (2007–2008), pp. 73–74.

286 Ibid., p. 23.

separation of the different levels of war, or will the Government create a completely new and effective solution for integrated operational leadership? If the latter is deemed necessary, a thorough examination of the whole command structure, including strategic and tactical levels and their functions would be required. As in the late 1960s, it could be accomplished by a credible civil-military committee enjoying the necessary authority at both the political and military levels. Only then will we again see a new structure that can meet the challenges facing a small state like Norway. A solution that could serve at the cutting edge in NATO and for some time to come. We would still need operational art, concepts and methods, but that does not mean that we need the operational level of war.

Terms and expressions

The terms and expressions below are taken from the Norwegian Chief of Defence's Strategic Directive for Operations, appendix A, and the new Norwegian Armed Forces Joint Operational Doctrine, appendix A.

Command and control: Command and control is one of the basic functions and is fundamental to the planning and execution of operations. It consists of the organisation, the processes, the procedures and the systems that ensure that military commanders are in a position to command and control their forces.

Commanding authority: The right and duty to command as required and in the right and proper manner.

Directive: Military message which determines regulations or orders one particular mission to be executed. A plan meant to be implemented on order or when circumstances which have been indicated occur. In general terms, any message starting or regulating an action, manner or procedure.

Full Command: Full command is the military authority and responsibility of a commander to issue orders to subordinates. It covers every aspect of military operations and administration and exists only within national services. When members of the Alliance assign forces to NATO, nations will delegate only operational command or operational control. As a consequence of this, no NATO commander will exercise full command over assigned forces.

National use of full command entails authority for a commander to direct military activities within that commander's area of authority, including administration and logistics, unless otherwise stated. The concept is used in connection with command of an organisational unit, for example a brigade, an air squadron or a group of warships. Every commander in principle exercises full

command over subordinate commanders in the same unit/formation, including their subordinate personnel, provided that operational command has not been excepted or delegated.

Joint operations: Operations in which contributions from several service branches are integrated and coordinated in order to realise the benefits of synergy at strategic, operational or tactical level, often within a multinational framework and usually in close co-operation with civil resources and agencies.

Manoeuvre method: One of three methods in *The operational basis of the armed forces* (manoeuvre, attrition and stabilisation). The manoeuvre method describes a set of techniques which affect the opponent's willingness to continue combat: *surprise, initiative, indirect method, speed, mission-based leadership* and *analysis of the force and weaknesses of the opponent.* The ultimate purpose is to cause a physical and psychological breakdown with the opponent.

Manoeuvre philosophy: One of three approaches which together form the basic operational philosophy of the armed forces (*effect, network, manoeuvre*). Manoeuvre philosophy is to understand the psychological aspect of combat and to view combat as a battle between wills marked by uncertainty and chaos. By striving to command these factors through training and exercise and master them better than the opponent, challenges may be turned to one's own benefit. Manoeuvre philosophy is to take initiative and analyse where to implement these measures in order to obtain the best possible effect on the opponent –while using a minimum of one's own forces. Manoeuvre philosophy can be applied on all levels and is the belief that the right effort, at the right time, with repeated initiative and continuous pressure on the opponent will give a small force the opportunity to affect a large force.

Operation: A military operation is a series of combat activities, movements and other actions which are intended to achieve an overall aim. An operation can be carried out both with and without armed action. An operation can be carried out to achieve a strategic objective or it can form part of a series of operations. Such a series is called a campaign.

Operational concept: Clear and brief statement of how a commander has planned his mission.

Operational art: Operational art is a military commander's use of the means at his disposal to achieve the desired effects and achieve the overall objectives. The operational art is referred to as an "art" because it entails linking together and realising, often abstract, strategic aims, by means of physical activities. The term "art" is used because it is about managing combat in a range of different temporal and spatial dimensions in the physical, social, information and cognitive domains where there are few quantifiable values or set answers. Operational art is also the art of the possible, that is to say making use of the resources that one actually has in order to achieve the best possible result.

Operational command: Operational command is the authority transferred to a commander to assign missions or duties to subordinates, to deploy detachments, to reorganise detachments and to keep or delegate operational control, tactical command and/or tactical control to the extent necessary. Operational command does not in itself mean administrative or logistic authority. The concept can also be used to indicate the forces which are at the disposal of a commander. Operational control means that a commander who has been assigned the force, can use the entire force or parts of it to solve assigned missions. The concept describes the highest authority a NATO commander exerts over forces detached from member countries. It is used on military strategic level. As the authority does not include responsibility for administration or logistics, such authority rests with the Chief of Defence or the person appointed by him. In a national connection the Chief Joint Operational Headquarters exerts operational command over national forces assigned him until command is transferred to NATO. As for national forces not transferred to NATO operational command is exerted. The Chief of Defence can delegate operational command, operational control, tactical command and tactical control down the organisation. Operational command normally does not include command of operations on a day-to-day basis, but leadership through directives, frameworks and guidelines. National crisis management can be an exception here.

Operational control: Operational control is the authority transferred to a commander to conduct assigned forces to implement duties or missions indicated which are normally restricted in action,

time or room. This means authority to group assigned detachments and to keep or delegate tactical command and/or tactical control of these detachments. Operational control does not in itself mean authority to use components of the assigned forces for missions outside the duties assigned to the operational commander. Operational control does not mean logistic or administrative control. Operational control is the highest level exerting direct leadership of operations. Operational control includes a restricted permission to use assigned forces. Every transfer of command shall specify which restrictions apply to each assigned force. This authority is applied in NATO on operational level, i.e. regional command, and nationally by the defence command. Operational control can be delegated between commands on operational level. A commander who has operational control can delegate tactical control and detach tactical command on permission. The restrictions issued in delegating operational control to the operational level shall follow the force if this level chooses to delegate authority.

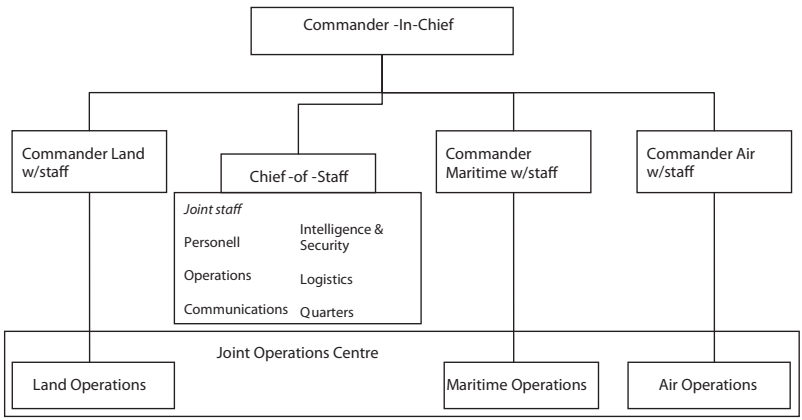
Operational lines of command: General line of command decided by the operational organisation and established for one particular operation or a series of continuous operations. The degree of authority is further specified and graded as *operational command, operational control, tactical command* or *tactical control*. The operational command concepts do not in themselves mean responsibility for administrative conditions and logistics.

Operational demands: Demands made by the operational commander to the producer of forces as to the detachments which are planned under his command. Among them are personnel, training and logistics support.

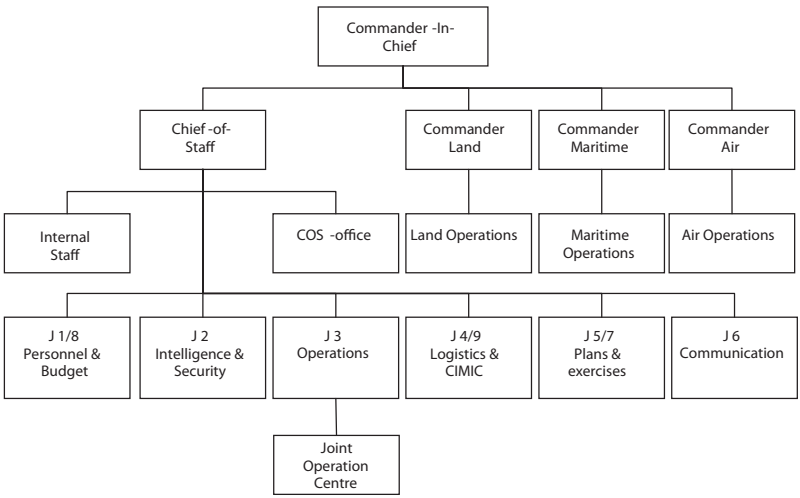
Transfer of authority (transfer of command): A measure by which a nation transfers operational command or operational control to a NATO Command, or the corresponding transfer from one NATO Command to another. Such a process is also employed when Norway assigns forces to coalition operations or to the UN. Nationally, the concept of Transfer of Command is used. This includes the transfer of both command and control.

Command Structures and Command Relationships

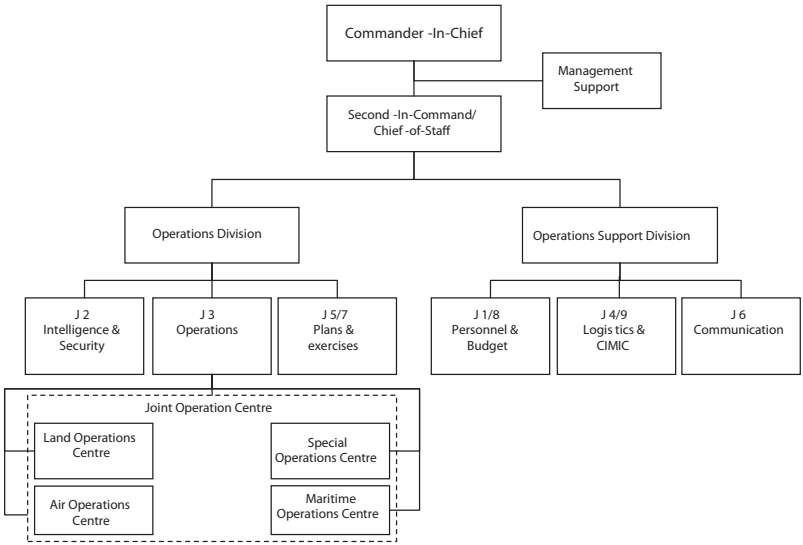
Joint Defence Commands 1970 – 2003



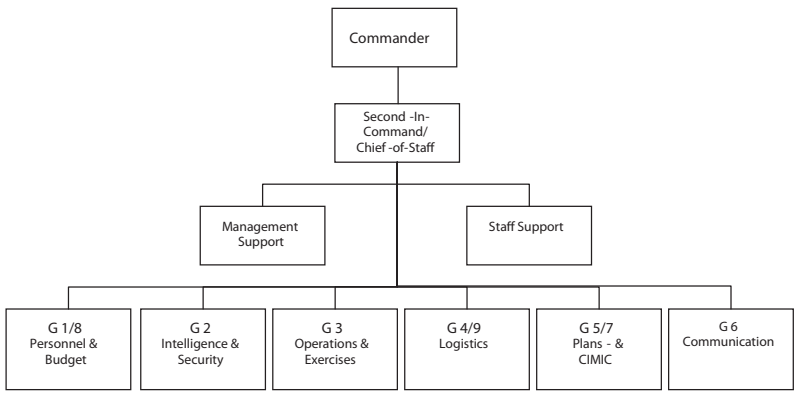
National Joint Headquarters 2003 –2006



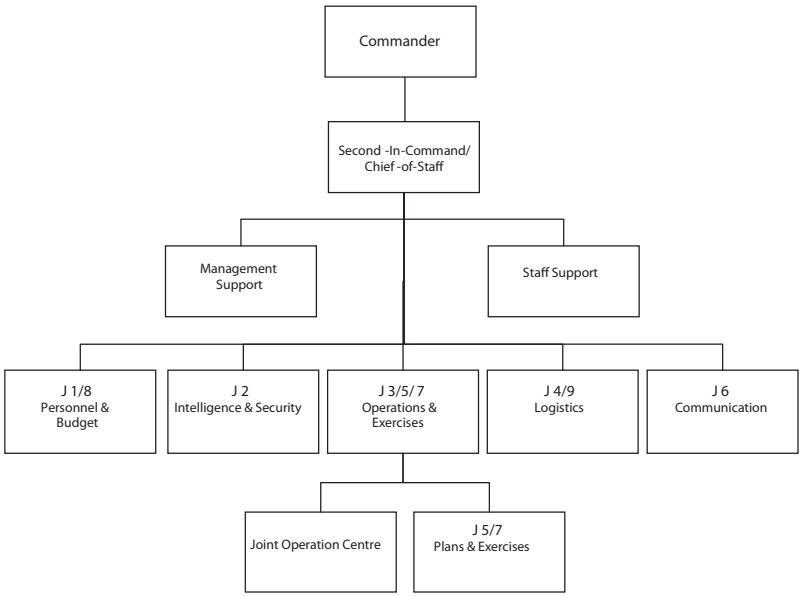
National Joint Headquarters 2006 –



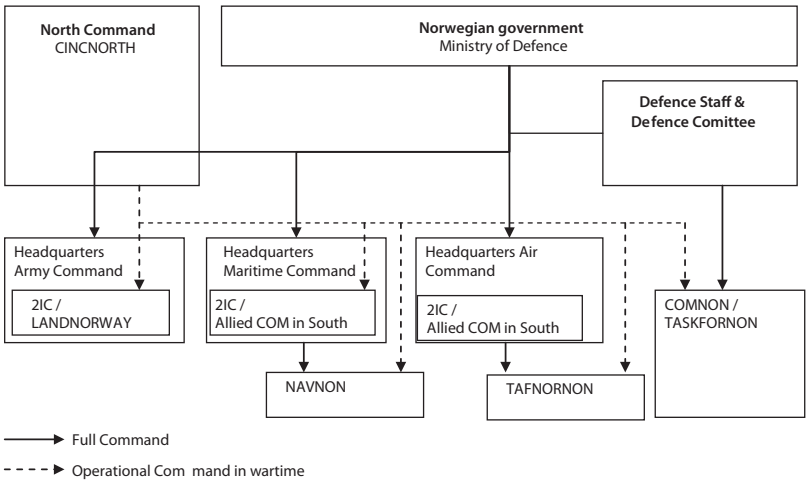
Regional Command South Norway 2003 –2005



Regional Command North Norway 2003 –



National and Allied Command Relationships in Norway up to 1970



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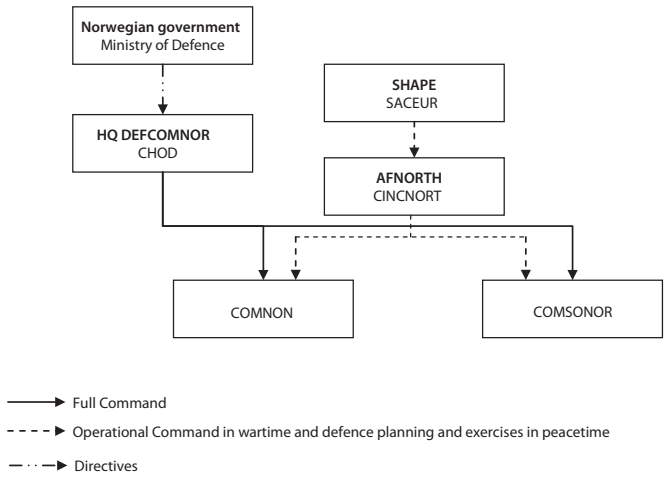

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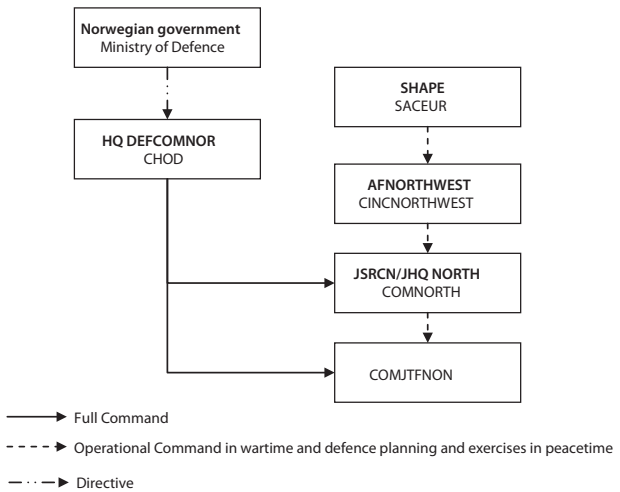

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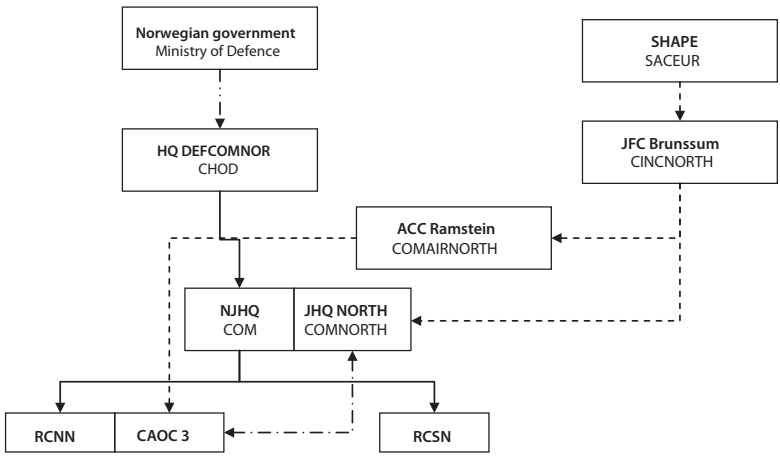

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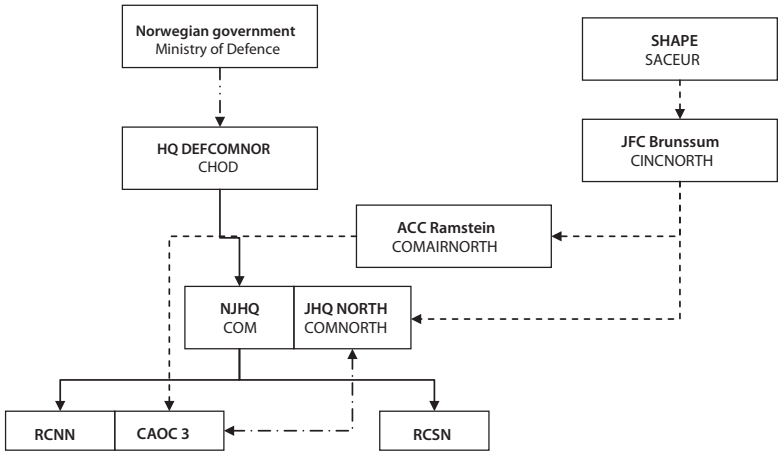

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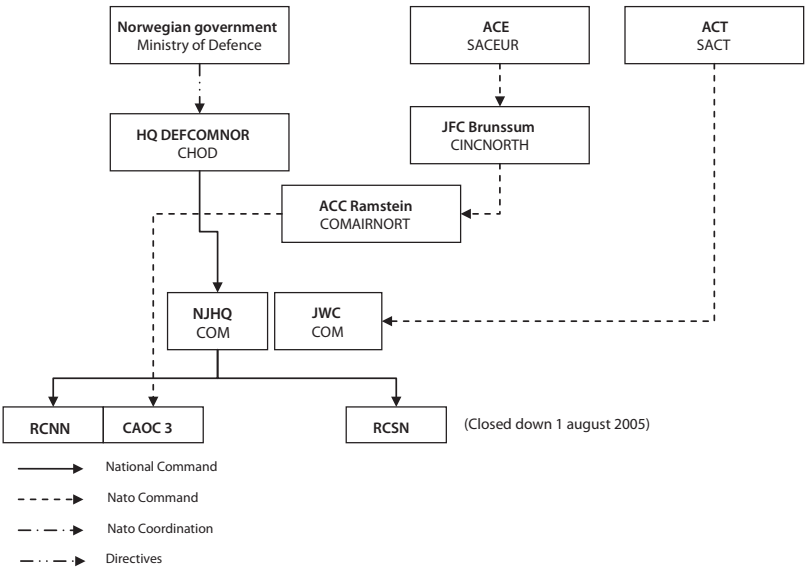

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