

Nevertheless, the Norwegian statements lent added impetus to the movement toward a Nordic NWFZ. In June 1981, the Soviets for the first time indicated a willingness not only to guarantee such a zone unilaterally (that is, even in the absence of corresponding guarantees from the Western powers), but also — and this was truly remarkable, given their earlier hardline stance described above — to consider the possibility of ancillary measures applying to adjoining Soviet territory. Thus, Soviet President Brezhnev told a Finnish newspaper that he would “not preclude the possibility of considering the question of some other measures applying to our own territory in the region adjoining the nuclear-free zone in the north of Europe.”¹⁶

Interest in the Nordic NWFZ proposal has remained fairly constant during the period since its revival in the early 1980s, despite the “Whiskey-on-the-Rocks” episode of October 1981 during which a Soviet submarine, believed to be carrying nuclear weapons, ran aground in restricted Swedish waters. Brezhnev’s successor Yuri Andropov reiterated the offer of a unilateral guarantee and the application of “certain quite substantial measures” (unspecified) to Soviet territory.¹⁷ Soviet General Nikolai V. Chervov finally indicated at least part of what Moscow had in mind, when he told Swedish television in March 1983 that the Soviet Union was prepared to withdraw its six *Golf*-class ballistic missile submarines from the Baltic as part of a Nordic NWFZ — an offer confirmed by Andropov in June of that year.¹⁸ This particular Soviet initiative distinctly failed to impress many Western observers. The submarines in question were very old, diesel-powered vessels that were not “counted” under the SALT agreements and spent most of their time in port. Some analysts had even speculated that the sole reason for their continued maintenance by the Soviets was in order to be able to trade them off in some future arms control negotiation. Nevertheless, by December 1984, as reported by Olof Palme at a meeting of

16. *Moscow Information* No. 50, 27-29 June 1981, quoted in: Steve Lindberg, “Towards a Nordic nuclear-weapons-free zone,” *Yearbook of Finnish Foreign Policy 1980*, Helsinki: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 1981, p. 38, fn. 42.

17. Soviet Embassy, Ottawa, *News Release* No.69, 11 May 1983, p. 3.

18. “Proposal on the Baltic Sea,” *NYT*, 8 March 1983, p. A8; and John F. Burns, “Andropov Offers Atom-Free Baltic,” *NYT*, 7 June 1983, p. A14.