



DÁIL ÉIREANN
BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH, 2.
(Dublin, 2).

21st April 1989.

Phone 789911 ext 554.

J.B. Moffatt,
Celtic League,
21, St. Germain's,
Peel,
Isle of Man.

RE: Nuclear Submarines in the Irish Sea.

Dear Mr. Moffatt,

Thank you for your recent correspondence and all of the information contained. I look forward to our continued contact as the information you have available would be valuable to any debate in the Parliament here on safety at sea, particularly the Irish Sea.

Arising out of your recent correspondence, Tomas MacGiolla T.D. Of the Workers' Party, amongst others tabled questions to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and I enclose a copy of the Dail Extracts for the 19th April 1989 for your information and attention.

I would welcome your comments and observations. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor pat McCartan T.D.
The Workers' Party.

encl.

QUESTION NOS. 12, 19 & 39

- 2 -

CHUN AN AIRE GNOTHAÍ EACHTRACHA : TO ASK THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

TO ASK THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN VIEW OF THE LEGISLATION PASSED BY THE HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS ESTABLISHING IRISH JURISDICTION OF THE SEAS WITHIN A 12 MILE LIMIT, IF HE WILL MAKE A STATEMENT ON THE USE OF THESE TERRITORIAL WATERS BY SUBMARINES POSSIBLY CARRYING NUCLEAR WEAPONS; IF HIS ATTENTION HAS BEEN DRAWN TO THIS PROBLEM; THE NUMBER OF TIMES THE IRISH LIMIT HAS BEEN BREACHED; AND THE STEPS HE PROPOSES TO TAKE TO ENSURE THAT THESE OCCURRENCES WILL CEASE. - MICHAEL D HIGGINS.

FOR PRIORITY ANSWER ON WEDNESDAY, 19TH APRIL 1989.

TO ASK THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS WHETHER THE PRESENCE OF NUCLEAR-POWERED SUBMARINES IN THE IRISH SEA WAS RAISED DURING THE RECENT VISIT OF PRESIDENT GORBACHEV TO THIS COUNTRY; WHETHER AN ASSURANCE WAS SOUGHT, AS A MATTER OF URGENCY, WITH REGARD TO THE SAFETY OF FISHING VESSELS, THAT SOVIET SUBMARINES WOULD AVOID THE IRISH SEA; AND IF HE WILL MAKE A STATEMENT ON THE MATTER. - GERALDINE KENNEDY

FOR ORAL ANSWER ON WEDNESDAY, 19TH APRIL 1989.

TO ASK THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IF, IN VIEW OF THE DANGERS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE RECENT ACCIDENT INVOLVING A SOVIET NUCLEAR SUBMARINE OFF THE COAST OF NORWAY, THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO TAKE ANY INITIATIVE THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS OR OTHER APPROPRIATE BODY TO HAVE ALL NUCLEAR SUBMARINES BANNED FROM THE IRISH SEA; AND IF HE WILL MAKE A STATEMENT ON THE MATTER. - TOMAS MAC GIOLLA

FOR ORAL ANSWER ON WEDNESDAY, 19TH APRIL 1989.

DRAFT REPLY

I WOULD PROPOSE TO ANSWER PRIORITY QUESTION 12, AND QUESTIONS 19 & 39 TOGETHER.

IN MY ADDRESS TO THE UN THIRD SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT IN NEW YORK IN JUNE 1988, I AVAILED OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO VOICE IRELAND'S CONCERN ABOUT THE GROWTH IN NUCLEAR SUBMARINE TRAFFIC IN BUSY COASTAL AND FISHING ZONES, SUCH AS THE IRISH SEA, AND OF THE POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL DANGERS POSED BY SUCH NUCLEAR POWERED VESSELS IN THE EVENT OF ACCIDENT.

THE SPECIFIC QUESTION OF SUBMARINE TRAFFIC WAS NOT RAISED IN DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT GORBACHEV AT SHANNON. HOWEVER I DISCUSSED WITH HIM THE QUESTION OF NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT AND UNDERLINED IRELAND'S FIRM COMMITMENT TO THIS GOAL. IT IS CLEAR THAT MOVEMENT TOWARDS NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT COULD HELP REDUCE THE NUMBER OF NUCLEAR SUBMARINES OPERATING IN THE IRISH SEA AND ELSEWHERE. THE RECENT INCIDENT INVOLVING THE SOVIET NUCLEAR SUBMARINE OFF THE COAST OF NORWAY HAS HIGHLIGHTED THE POTENTIAL RISKS POSED BY SUCH SUBMARINES.

THE SAFETY OF IRISH FISHING VESSELS AT SEA HAS LONG BEEN A MATTER OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO THE GOVERNMENT. AS THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS PREVIOUSLY INDICATED TO THE DAIL, THE

GOVERNMENT HAVE BROUGHT THIS ISSUE TO THE ATTENTION OF ALL CONCERNED THROUGH THE CHANNELS OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION (IMO) WHERE WE SPONSORED AN INITIATIVE AIMED AT FOCUSING ATTENTION ON THE PROBLEMS POSED TO FISHERMEN BY SUBMARINE TRAFFIC. THE IMO IS THE INTERNATIONAL BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFETY AT SEA. THE INITIATIVE RESULTED IN THE UNANIMOUS ADOPTION BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE IMO OF A RESOLUTION ENTITLED "AVOIDANCE BY SUBMERGED SUBMARINES OF FISHING VESSELS AND THEIR FISHING GEAR". IT IS OUR HOPE THAT THESE EFFORTS WILL MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE AVOIDANCE OF INCIDENTS INVOLVING SURFACE VESSELS AND SUBMERGED SUBMARINES AT SEA.

IRELAND'S TERRITORIAL WATERS NOW EXTEND TO TWELVE MILES FROM OUR COAST. UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW, VESSELS, INCLUDING SUBMARINES, OF OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE A RIGHT OF INNOCENT PASSAGE THROUGH THESE WATERS WITHOUT NOTIFICATION - PROVIDED, IN THE CASE OF SUBMARINES, THAT THEY TRAVEL ON THE SURFACE AND FLY THEIR FLAGS. THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS NO RECORD OF TRANSITS OF THIS KIND BY SUBMARINES WITHIN OUR TERRITORIAL WATERS DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

INTERNATIONAL WATERS BEGIN AT THE EDGE OF OUR TWELVE MILE TERRITORIAL LIMIT. VESSELS OF ALL NATIONS, INCLUDING SUBMARINES, HAVE FREE ACCESS UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW TO THESE WATERS AND WE

HAVE NO RIGHT TO BAR OR LIMIT THEIR ACCESS OR TRANSIT. WHILE THEREFORE, I SHARE THE DEPUTIES' CONCERN ABOUT THE DANGERS WHICH NUCLEAR SUBMARINES PASSING THROUGH THE IRISH SEA COULD POSE, I HAVE TO SAY THAT IN THE PRESENT STATE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO BAN SUBMARINES FROM INNOCENT TRANSIT ON THE SURFACE THROUGH OUR TERRITORIAL SEAS OR TO BAN OR LIMIT IN ANY WAY THEIR PASSAGE THROUGH SEAS WHICH, BEYOND OUR TWELVE MILE LIMIT, ARE REGARDED AS INTERNATIONAL WATERS. I WOULD HOWEVER APPEAL TO THE SENSE OF INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COUNTRIES WHICH OPERATE SUCH SUBMARINES. I WOULD ASK THEM TO UNDERSTAND THE DANGERS WHICH THEY CAN CAUSE TO INNOCENT SURFACE VESSELS SUCH AS FISHING BOATS; AND, AT A WIDER LEVEL, THE EXTREMELY GRAVE DANGERS WHICH COULD FOLLOW AN ACCIDENT INVOLVING A NUCLEAR SUBMARINE IN A NARROW BODY OF WATER SUCH AS THE IRISH SEA.

P104JK

ALBA: COMUNN CEILTEACH
BREIZH: KEVRE KELTIEK
CYMRU: UNDEB CELTAIDD

ÉIRE: CONRADH CEILTEACH
KERNOW: KESUNYANS KELTEK
MANNIN: COMMEEYS CELTIAGH



CELTIC LEAGUE

CELTIC LEAGUE MILITARY MONITORING

Assistant Secretary: J. Bernard Moffatt
24 St Germain's Place, Peel, Mann
Telephone: Peel (0624) 84 3135

The Secretary General
N.A.T.O.
Director of the Secretary General's Office,
Mr. James Cunningham.

May 1st 1989.

Ref. - Exercise Sharp Spear. Autumn/89

Dear Mr. Cunningham,

With reference to the above exercise - as it will involve large numbers of naval warships and submarines operating in and around the British Isles, could we enquire,

- a) Will appropriate warning of areas to be used be issued to Mariners, and will this warning be specific where dived submarine operations are to be carried out?
- b) Will the participants be operating in the Irish and Celtic Seas, and if so, given the comparatively congested nature of these seas (viz a viz commercial traffic), do you think this is wise?
- c) Will the participants be operating near to the territorial waters of any non N.A.T.O. country, and what steps have been taken to avoid incursions into such states' territories?
- d) Notwithstanding comment in your ultimate paragraph (letter 6th April from your office to the League), will you be advising States involved in the exercise to respect I.M.O. Resolution A599(15)?

Trusting you will respond to these queries in line with your recent assurance that N.A.T.O. exercises are conducted in the safest manner possible.

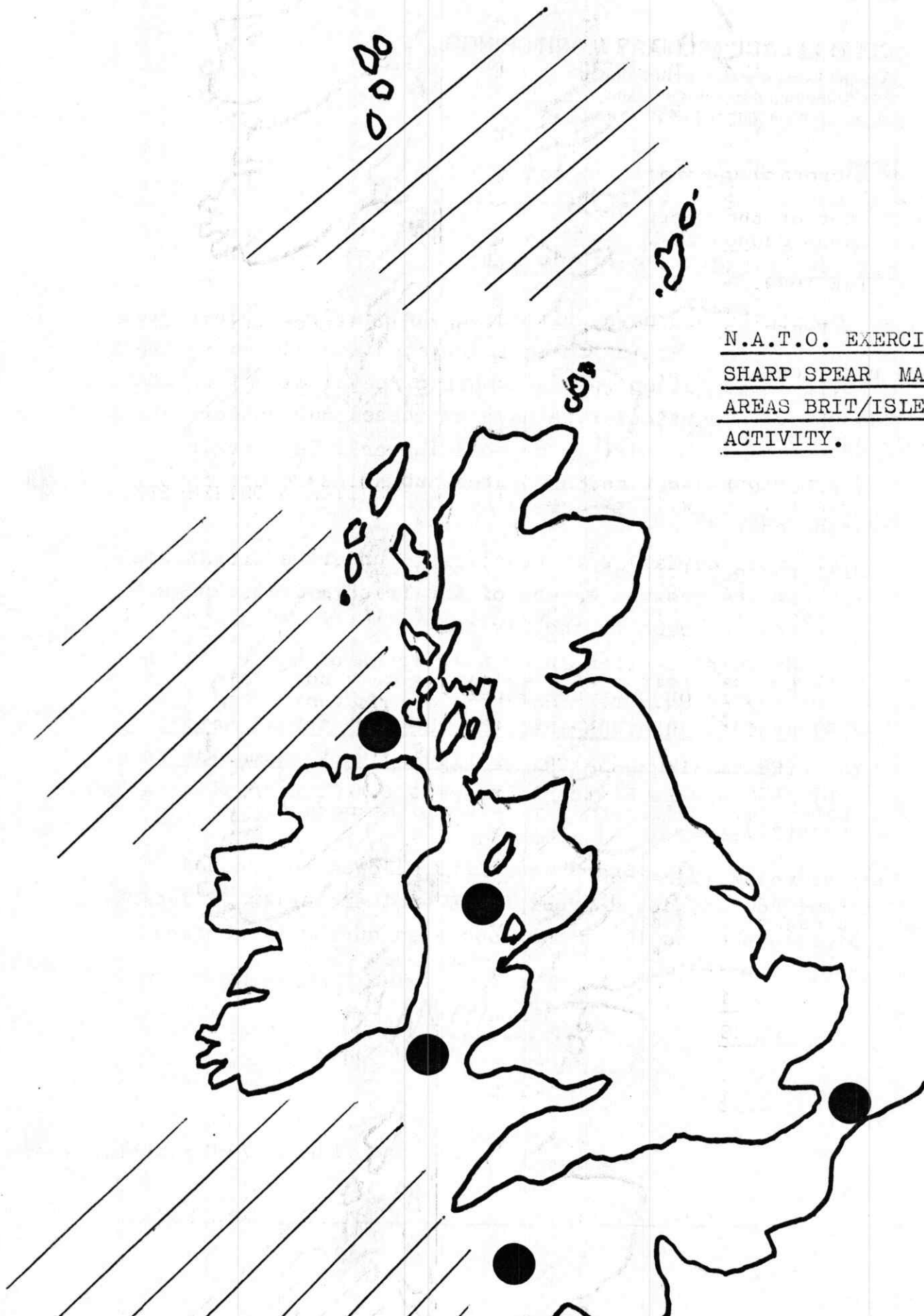
Yours Faithfully,

.....*J.B. Moffatt*.....

J.B. Moffatt.

MINESWEEPING & ANTI SUB EXERCISES

MAIN CONCENTRATIONS OF SURFACE & SUB. FORCES.



N.A.T.O. EXERCISE
SHARP SPEAR MAIN
AREAS BRIT/ISLES
ACTIVITY.

ALBA: COMUNN CEILTEACH
BREIZH: KEVRE KELTIEK
CYMRU: UNDEB CELTAIDD

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1/5/89

PRESS INFORMATION.....
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N.A.T.O. EXERCISE 'SHARP SPEAR'

The Celtic League have written to the N.A.T.O. Secretariat urging advance warning to mariners about increased military activity this Autumn when a number of naval exercises get underway. In particular we have expressed our concern about exercise 'Sharp Spear' to be held in early Sept asking N.A.T.O. to request member States submarine forces involved in the exercise to:

- A) Avoid as far as is practicable undersea operations in the crowded waters of the Irish & Celtic seas & the approach to the Clyde.
- B) Exercise caution in or near areas of commercial sea fishery or busy sea lanes.
- C) Avoid incursions into the the territorial waters of non N.A.T.O. States, particularly by submarine forces.
- D) Ask members States to respect I.M.O. Resolution A 599 (15).

It is likely that 'Sharp Spear' if allowed to proceed without comment could precipitate another series of Sub/MFV incidents such as those that occurred during the Spring exercise period.

.....*J.B. Moffatt*.....
J.B. MOFFATT.

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1/5/89

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PRESS INFORMATION.....

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NO 'GLASNOST' BENEATH THE WAVES.

Despite the apparent sincerity of Soviet disarmament propaganda as epitomised by the attached article (Observer 30/4/89) the reality seems less rosy.

The Soviets have just completed a massive construction of Submarine facilities in the Kola region of North Region, on the Arctic ocean. The ability and capacity of these new bases will far outstrip the minimal demilitarization afforded by the retirement of some elderly 'GOLF' class SSBNs from the Baltic.

In addition the development accomadates the new Soviet naval strategy and includes support facilities and air bases to support Soviet sub. operations in the N. Atlantic & Continental Shelf. It should also be borne in mind that the build up on the Kola - one of the most massive military concentrations in the past twenty years - has proceeded alongside Soviet pronouncements about a new military realism.

Perhaps what is more revealing about Soviet intent is that despite the alleged 'Glasnost' the Soviet Union remains the only State who consistently refuse to respond to requests from the League for info. about their attitude to demilitarization of the comparatively shallow and congested sea areas such as the Irish & Celtic seas.

Also despite evidence of a strong Soviet Submarine prescence on the Continental Shelf the Soviets have never been found accountable for one of the many accidents which have been catalogued.

IT MAY WELL BE 'OPEN/NESS' **IN** EUROPE (ON THE SURFACE) BUT BENEATH THE WAVES THE SOVIET MILITARY MACHINE IS STILL A CLOSED BOOK.

.....*J.B. Moffatt*.....
J.B. MOFFATT.

(SEE ATTACHMENTS)

Macaroni to roll off Soviet production lines instead of tanks 30/4/89

Gorbachov retreat on Baltic N-subs

IAN MATHER ■ Stockholm

PRESIDENT Mikhail Gorbachov intends to scrap some nuclear submarines and withdraw more tanks and troops unilaterally.

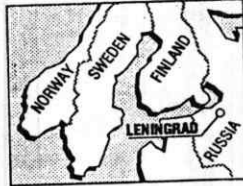
The initiative comes as Mrs Thatcher meets Chancellor Helmut Kohl in the West German village of Deidesheim today in a battle of wills over Mr Kohl's call for superpower negotiations on short-range nuclear missiles.

All Soviet nuclear missile submarines based in the Baltic will be dismantled, and substantial numbers of troops and tanks in the bordering area sent home, the Soviet leader has told a visit-

ing Scandinavian Minister. The new Gorbachov initiative in a highly sensitive region comes when neighbouring Baltic states have been expressing fears that Soviet forces now leaving Hungary and East Germany might be redeployed further north.

The Golf-class vessels, to be scrapped and not replaced, are the only four nuclear submarines now based in the Baltic.

Although elderly, they cause concern because of the 1400-kilometre-range SS-N-5 ballistic nuclear missiles they carry. The missiles would be able to reach Britain from the Baltic.



Where the N-subs roam

The Russians have already cut the number of Golfs in the Baltic to four by scrapping two, and Gorbachov has privately assured the Baltic states that the subma-

rines no longer carry nuclear missiles 'on a day to day basis', Swedish government sources say.

Although no nuclear missile submarines will be based there, the Baltic will not become nuclear-free. Nato and Soviet armed nuclear submarines and surface ships can still enter because it is an international sea.

Gorbachov also said the Russians would cut numbers of troops in the Leningrad Military District by 20,000 men, an estimated 10 per cent of the region's total, and scrap 700 tanks. The scrapping of the tanks and submarines will not reduce Soviet military capability to a signifi-

cant extent, but forms part of a policy to produce a smaller, more efficient armed force.

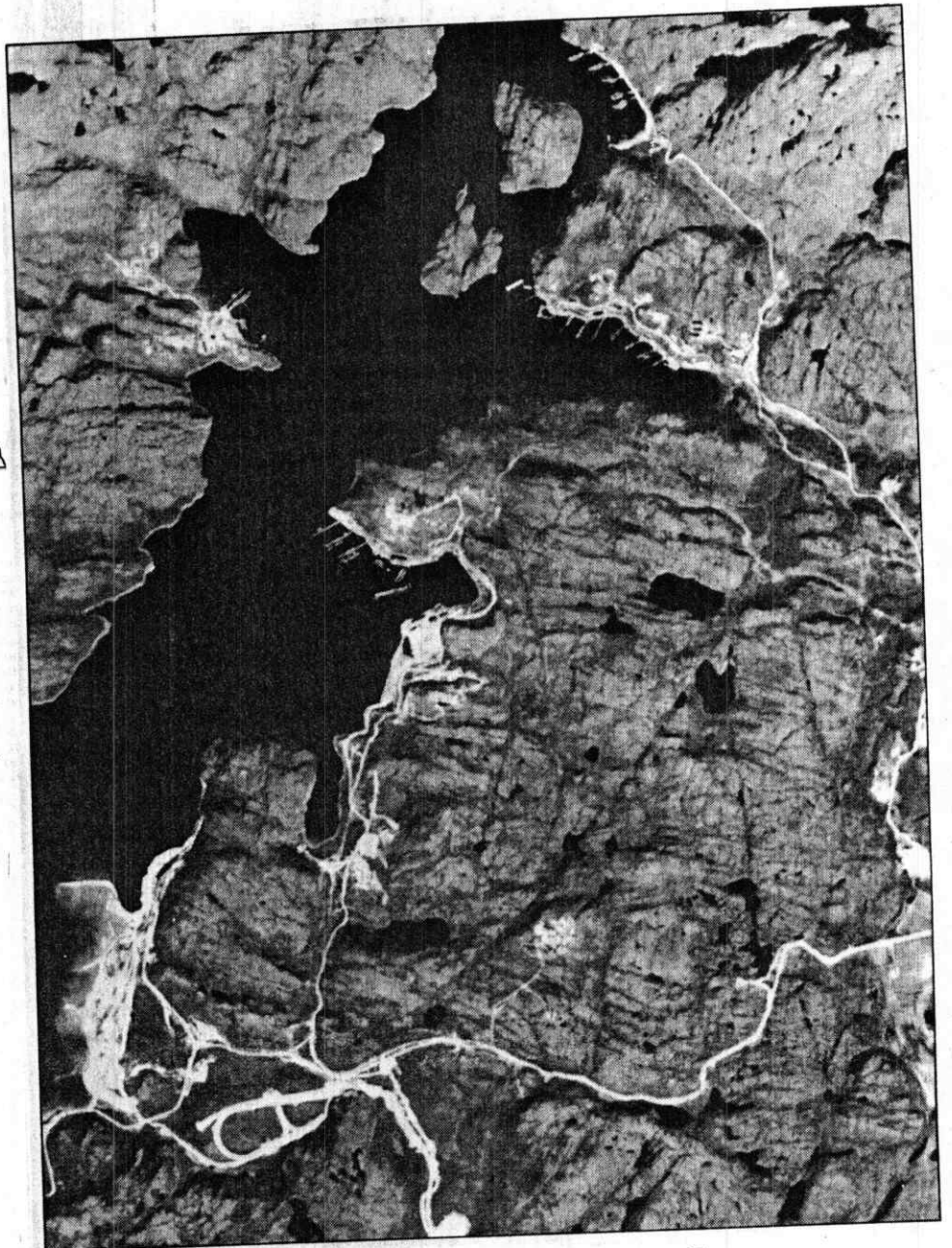
Finland and Sweden had expressed fears of a build-up of troops in the Baltic region. 'It has been called the sausage syndrome,' said Carl Aberg, chairman of the Swedish defence ministry's review body. 'If you squeeze a sausage in the middle it gets bigger at the ends.'

Gorbachov also told the visiting Minister, apparently seriously, that one tank manufacturing factory would change to producing macaroni.

THE FICTION.



KOLA BASES INCL.
AIR BASES AND
SUPPORT FACILITIES.



THE SOVIETS NEW MASSIVE COMPLEX AT ZAPADNAYA LITSA ON THE KOLA