

# Polish salesmen no joke

**H**ave you heard the one about the Polish salesmen trying to sell oil paintings in Sweden? No? Let me tell you — it's a good story, though not all that funny.

Swedish security reacted recently when it learned that a large number of Poles were trying to sell "genuine oil paintings" door to door. What aroused the Swedes' curiosity was not concern for artistic values but the fact that the wandering Polish salesmen seemed to be concentrating their efforts on residential areas close to Sweden's key military air bases.

The Poles were arrested and it was learned that they were compiling detailed lists for Soviet intelligence of Swedish aircrews and their home addresses — a mailing list of death.

Prior to the outbreak of any hostilities, Soviet Spetsnaz assassination squads would attack the homes of the Swedish aircrews and try to kill as many as possible. After all, it's far easier to kill crews than to shoot down fighter aircraft. Sensible, efficient and quite frightening.

Nor was this an isolated incident. In recent months Sweden has caught and expelled five Czech agents for spying. Outside the huge Bofors arms plant at Karlskoga, an East German tractor trailer, packed full of electronic equipment, was caught eavesdropping on the plant's internal communications.

Sweden, let us recall, is a neutral nation. This point is worth noting because, of late, the Canadian left has been loudly urging that we quit NATO and adopt neutrality as the best way of protecting ourselves.

A prime advocate of this position has been Star columnist Gwynne Dyer who has received much undeserved publicity for his TV show on war. Financed by our resolutely left-wing National Film

## Punch



For those of us who were hoping for a different ending to Casablanca.

## ERIC MARGOLIS



Board, the show worked hard to promote the notion that all military men are grown-up children playing with toys and that unilateral disarmament was the only hope for peace. Moscow could not have written it better.

Back to neutral Sweden. This small nation of 8.3 million cannot be considered a threat to the mighty Soviet Union. But it can mobilize 800,000 men in 72 hours. While lacking offensive capability, Sweden's citizen army would mount a spirited defence against any invader. The only possible invader would be, of course, the neighboring Soviet Union.

Sweden controls the Baltic exit at the Skaggerak and offers Soviet armor a way into strategic Norway. In the event of war, most Swedes believe that in spite of their longstanding neutrality, they might well be attacked by the Soviet Union. So does neighboring, neutral Finland: It can quickly mobilize 700,000 soldiers in an emergency.

Neutral Switzerland, as some readers will recall, has also been a frequent target of East Bloc spying. As I have said, there can only be one logical reason why the Soviets would spy on Swiss mountain forts — they pave the way for an attack by the Red Army moving westward through Austria. The tough Swiss, who can mobilize 580,000 men in 72 hours, are well aware of the Soviet threat.

What about Russia's northern neighbor, Canada? Standing on guard for us are some 6,000 soldiers. In the event of full mobilization, Canada, with a larger population than Sweden, Finland and Switzerland combined, might field 18,000 men. Pretty pitiful compared to the two million soldiers of Europe's neutral nations.

Today our Cousin Sam defends Canada. If we go neutral, who will provide the men and money?

Well, say neutralist ostriches, the Soviets only want to defend themselves; besides, no one can cross our Arctic.

Ask the Poles, Hungarians and Afghans about Soviet notions of self-defence.

Regarding impassable terrain, ask the French about the "impassable" Ardennes; the British about the "impassable" Malayan jungle protecting Singapore; ask the Soviet Navy, now cruising in Hudson Bay, just how "impassable" is the Canadian Arctic. Ask the U.S. why it has growing fears of a Soviet land attack on Alaska.

Polish painting salesmen are not funny. How many similar hit teams are ready to strike at Canada's feeble defences? We don't know, but I am certain they are here, waiting.

Neutrality is no defence. Neutral Belgium, Holland and Norway were among the first German targets in World War II. Will Canada be among the first in World War III?