

Northern Flank by Lotta-Stina Thronell

Swedish elections unpredictable

With as many as 18% of voters undecided two weeks before the parliamentary poll, revolts appear to be brewing.

The last opinion poll before the Sept. 18 Swedish elections, on whether Sweden will have a socialist or a non-socialist government for the next three years, gave an unprecedented result: Normally, 2% of the voters are undecided two weeks before election day, while this year 10% are undecided, and 8% has been given to the environmentalist party, which so far has had no parliamentary seats. That suggests that 18% of the voters are undecided!

Social Democratic Premier Ingvar Carlsson admitted the uncertainty, stating that he foresees an eventual new early election if no basis can be found for a majority government.

The election campaign is a pathetic repeat of the one run by the Palme regime in 1985. The opposition then hoped to be able to replace the socialists. Instead Olof Palme of the Socialist International, with the support of the oligarchical elite, censored his own press as well as the opposition's so that *no* controversial issue would emerge. Two months after Palme's party won, in October, three revolts hit Sweden: The officers started a rebellion against the no-defense, pro-Soviet policy coming from the Social Democratic government, and farmers and workers protested strongly against the planned austerity policy.

Today, three years later, once again all real issues have been censored. Debate on military defense and combatting AIDS is suppressed. But revolt is already in the air. The chairman of the biggest mine workers shop in the far-north city of Kiruna, Roland Holmdén, blasted his own party, the

Social Democrats, for trying to be more green than the green party, in an interview with the liberal Stockholm daily *Dagens Nyheter*. He assailed Social Democratic Environment Minister Birgitta Dahl for "competing . . . to be the most radical on the environment issue, in order to capture the most votes." Holmdén added, "I think it is crazy not to use nuclear energy."

Moreover, a member of the conservative-leaning Moderate Party, Goete Pettersson, opened a new local party in the Kinda municipality near Linköping, Sweden's aerospace center. He told the press: "If the voters only knew a small part of what is going on behind the scenes in the dominating parties, they probably would get upset. . . . For a long time the Moderate Party has been ruled dictatorially."

Sweden is likely to see more "revolts" after Sept. 18. The chairman of the European Labor Party (EAP), Michael Ericson, a member of the international political movement inspired by Lyndon LaRouche, has announced that the EAP will continue to build a grassroots base for a Swedish defense based on joining NATO, as well as for an overall economic program that can stop the AIDS pandemic.

Although the EAP's policy paper on defense has circulated at the highest military levels, the national media have blacked out the EAP campaign. So Social Democratic opposition leader, Dr. Alf Enerstroem, joined EAP leader Michael Ericson in press conferences outside Sweden, namely, in the two NATO countries, Norway and Denmark!

Stating why he supports Swedish NATO membership, Dr. Enerstroem asserted that Sweden today cannot defend itself: In contrast to the immediate postwar period, its military power alone cannot match that of the enemy force, the U.S.S.R. He speaks for 50,000 Social Democrats opposed to the party leadership.

In the western Swedish city of Gothenburg, once a proud shipbuilding center, the EAP's campaign for NATO and nuclear power was covered by regional TV and regional papers.

Concerning the unpredictable results of the elections, foreign observers should know one important detail. Every party in the elections has to have its own ballot. Sixteen parties are participating this year, and all but the five parties represented in the parliament have to pay for and distribute the ballots themselves. For a new party to be heard, it has to either have a lot of money, or massive media backing, or preferably both. National elections are held every third year, and the voter then must cast three votes: one for the parliament, one for the "canton," and one for the municipality.

In the last official opinion poll, released Sept. 3, the environmentalist party, MP, which so far has no parliamentary seats, was projected to win as much as 8.1%, or 30 seats. This poll might be an attempt to give the "greenies" the so-called protest vote, but it does not reflect the real sentiment of Swedes. Another poll taken at the same time showed a 30% increase in backing for nuclear energy. Since the nuclear energy referendum of 1980, 20-25% had been favorable, but the latest poll suddenly showed that 49% of Swedes want nuclear power production to continue. One major factor may be that nuclear energy is three to four times cheaper than "alternative" sources.