

INTERVIEW: *Ulf Sandmark*

A New Paradigm for Peace Is Emerging in Sweden

Ulf Sandmark, a 50-year organizer with the LaRouche movement, is the chairman of the Schiller Institute in Sweden, based in Stockholm. He is currently working with Humanity for Peace and the [International Peace Coalition](#) to build an effective peace movement in Sweden by uniting political factions of both the right and left in support of cooperation with the Global South for a [New International Security and Development Architecture](#). He was interviewed on August 8 by Kevin Gribbroek of Executive Intelligence Review. Subheads have been added.

Kevin Gribbroek: I have the great pleasure today of talking with Ulf Sandmark. Ulf is the chairman of the Schiller Institute in Sweden, and he's a 50-year associate of Helga Zepp-LaRouche and her late husband, the great physical economist Lyndon LaRouche.

I want to discuss various issues with you, Ulf, but I want to start with a demonstration which you moderated two days ago on Hiroshima Day in Stockholm. From what I understand, it was a very successful, well attended and well received demonstration. Could you tell us about it?

Ulf Sandmark: Well, basically, it was organized last year, because we took part in the mobilization with Humanity for Peace and the International Peace Coalition on the Hiroshima mobilization, where Humanity for Peace had demonstrations in many places of the world. And we succeeded to put together the [demonstration in Stockholm](#). That was very important, because it was the historic first demonstration where we joined forces from the nationalist side and the left side. I mean like what you had in the United States: people from the Libertarian Party, the People's Party, and the



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Swedish Peace Council chairman Hans Öhrn addresses the Humanity for Peace Hiroshima Day demonstration in Stockholm, Sweden.

Schiller Institute. And in this way, it set the precedent for starting to merge these forces, because the left piece is too weak to defeat this war mobilization of NATO and the West.

So, we need to join these forces, and it was very important that we succeeded in doing that last year. And that we were able to put together many of the same speakers this year was quite, quite easy, because we have kept in contact and made friends and have started to interview each other. We are breaking up the divide between left and right that was dividing us and splitting us. This has been going on internationally for quite some time now. We succeeded here to have people from the peace movement—the very old Swedish peace movement of the left—and then some of the new nationalist parties and what you could call alternative for Sweden people—similar to what you have in Germany [Germany's *Alternative für Deutschland*—ed.]; some of these people who have been working on the

nationalist right hand side. They have been interviewing us, and I was even on a program this winter for a long interview. They have a one hour interview during the vacation time; they make these kinds of interviews—so they made such an interview with me. In this way, we have been able to have a kind of operation going, to cooperate.

The ‘Kernel’ of a Peace Movement

We didn’t have a very big turnout; we had some 200 people. But what was *very* big was that there were 11 speakers, and then me, from many different groups. So, we have a kind of a kernel of forces to pull together to make bigger demonstrations. And, actually, during the Spring, we had this mobilization to stop NATO and to stop the special agreement with the U.S. to have American bases here—the [Defense Cooperation Agreement \(DCA\)](#). There were demonstrations with both left and right people joining together, and I was a speaker at some of those. So, in this way, we have now a new situation, and that is quite exciting. We now could be able to pull people together, from both the left and right, into seminars. But people have to know each other and learn from each other, and that’s what’s going on now.

Gribbroek: It sounds like what you’ve succeeded in doing is to create cohesion between the right and the left, which is precisely what Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the leader of the Schiller Institute, has been calling for.

Sandmark: Yes. This was the idea behind [Humanity for Peace](#). And you had the [Rage Against the War Machine demonstration](#) in Washington, D.C., on February 19 last year. So, that was a kick off for this kind of mobilization. We’ve tried to continue to do that. Still, we have not been able to pull out very big forces, and we were not able to stop the NATO membership because the whole establishment is just moving with a massive propaganda for the war policies. And that means that we only have the kind of social media of these alternative movements who are resisting this; the public media and the public national parties—even the Left Party in the government—propose and support the war policies. They support the delivery of weapons to Ukraine. Also, the environmental party and then the Left Party are doing that, as well as all the rest.

There is now a kind of populist, more right wing

party—nationalistic party—called the Sweden Democrats, but they backed down totally just to be part of the government. They changed their policy, without even telling the Parliamentarians, that they changed to support the NATO membership and then also the DCA. So, the whole resistance from that side just fell out, and also the left is very weak in the Parliament. So we are the resistance outside of the Parliament.

Gribbroek: Not atypical of these political parties. I want to discuss a bit more in depth this question of NATO. As most people know, Sweden recently joined NATO, despite its tradition of neutrality. And what I’ve heard is that the Swedish government has actually come out openly supporting Ukraine’s attacks against Russian strategic nuclear air bases and early warning radar systems. Is that correct?

Poking the Russian Bear

Sandmark: Well, it’s the military spokesman who is on TV all the time; we call him the Baghdad Bob. He is on TV almost every day, speaking for the military, with uniform and everything—very elegant. He came out on National Public Radio and TV, and said that the Swedish state supports this policy to have Ukraine attack the strategic forces of Russia—[what they did against the radar stations in southern Russia](#)—but also the Engels air base south of Moscow. And after they were attacked, the Russians moved their strategic bombers north, close to Murmansk, on the Kola Peninsula, where they have the Olenya air base. This base was attacked on the 28th of July, and that base is very close to Scandinavia: It’s 400 km from Sweden and 150 km from Finland. This is, basically, poking a finger right into the whole strategic issue of nuclear forces, and that is a big thing in Scandinavia. I don’t know if your viewers know about this situation, but Russia has the biggest nuclear base in the world.

There are bases in the Kola Peninsula for the submarines in the north of Russia, also close to Scandinavia. And that has been the whole idea of Russia: to have these submarines as a kind of second strike possibility in case of attack. So, if these bases are threatened, the whole idea of a balance of terror is out of the window. This is absolutely a strategic issue for the Russians.

The Scandinavian policy, at all times during the Cold War, was to have a neutral Sweden and Norway as well as Finland, and these countries became a kind



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Participants in the Hiroshima day commemoration. The sign in front calls for peace—fred in Swedish.

of nuclear-free zone. Even in the NATO country Norway, half of Norway—from the middle up to the Barents Sea—that was free from nuclear weapons, too. So they had a policy to be very sensitive about the Russian bases there.

The whole idea of Sweden and Finland joining NATO is threatening these bases, and the cities of Saint Petersburg and Moscow are very much becoming a target. So, that means we have this policy of poking around, with the help of Ukraine, into the face of Russia on the nuclear issue. This is absolutely horrifying! I think that NATO is proposing that and pushing that, just as Ukraine has pushed the attacks on the radar stations in southern Russia, that are there to defend Russia against the ballistic missiles—So this is not helping.

The war in Ukraine is to create a tension around the Russian nuclear forces, not the conventional forces in Ukraine.... NATO is out to challenge Russia, not in Ukraine, but in Russia; to continue the war with Russia—that is the plan. If Russia were to pull out of Ukraine, that's not the end of the war, because the policy is to weaken Russia, with the idea to divide Russia into ethnic parts. And that would create a mess of many

states that could have a continuous war for a century or something.

Gribbroek: This is precisely what Russian President Vladimir Putin warned against; that were Finland and Sweden to give up their neutrality and join NATO, they would become a target of the Russian nuclear forces.

In terms of the average man or woman on the street in Sweden, is there—based on your experience—is there a lot of support for NATO, or not so much? Is there a lot of support for Israel—the genocide that's going on in Gaza? Ukraine? Also, is there an awareness of just how close we are to a potential thermo-nuclear war with Russia?

Massive Brainwashing of the Swedish People

Sandmark: Well, people are getting worried now, but basically there is massive propaganda against Russia. It's absolute massive brainwashing. They have Putin on the banner of the newspapers every day, although just in the last month or so, they have stopped doing that. But it's absolutely massive propaganda. So

people are inundated with the whole idea that Russia is dangerous and they will attack us anytime and they will not stop with Ukraine; they will go on against the Baltic States and Scandinavia. This is the massive propaganda going on, and people are caught up in that. There is also Russophobia here in Sweden too—going back centuries. But what we have now [in terms of Swedish propaganda—ed.] is that if NATO does not pursue the war policy in Ukraine, the next front to open will be here in Scandinavia against Russia. So they're preparing for war.

They speak about war all the time—war everywhere; not only war in Sweden, but also in the Middle East—Southwest Asia. And there, on the case of Southwest Asia, we have demonstrations every week now, basically with the left. There are also some people on the non-socialist side who are for a two-state solution and for Palestine. But officials from the government are not really serious to intervene; to support decisively a policy to stop Israel from pursuing this genocide—and the media is playing it down quite a lot. So that is the situation; it's a bit wishy washy. But the people on the left are now mobilizing, just like the students and the youth in the U.S. It's the same here—a very, very strong mobilization and very active demonstrations of thousands of people every Saturday—every weekend—and I have also spoken at those rallies.

Gribbroek: Here in the United States, yesterday, there was an FBI raid against former UN weapons inspector and Marine intelligence officer [Scott Ritter](#). And also, it was revealed that [Tulsi Gabbard](#), the former Congresswoman from Hawaii—she's also a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve—that she and her husband were put on the Homeland Security terror watch list. So there's a massive government crackdown here in the United States—and it's getting worse—against anybody who goes against the pro-war, pro-NATO narrative. Do you have anything like that happening in Sweden, against antiwar activists, yourself included?

Sandmark: Well, what we used to have, during the Cold War, was a “psychological defense.” And through that, the whole media was controlled in Sweden. This kind of policy is being dug up—reestablished—once again. The Swedish military was downsized some ten,

twenty years ago by the libertarian government here, because they wanted to save money. They said it was not so important to have a defense. So now, the Swedish government is speaking all the time about war, but it doesn't have any defense. The plan is to have NATO's nuclear weapons, and the United States, to protect Scandinavia—that's the whole idea—like the Baltic States, who are the loudest peoples shouting for war with Russia. And those are states with some 1.5 million people or so. They are certainly not those who do the fighting.

Sweden and the CCD ‘Kill List’

We have maybe one brigade we can send to the front from Scandinavia. It's absolutely ridiculous to speak about war from our side. But what the government does now is try to use the NATO membership and the cooperation with Ukraine to come after us [the peace movement—ed.]. In Ukraine, there is this death list of the Myrotvorets and this [Center for Countering Disinformation](#), the CCD, at the office of President Zelensky. And that organization is cooperating with NATO and setting up this list and, as you know, when they kill people, they make a red cross over that person in the picture on the Myrotvorets list. I'm on the CCD list, and another friend of ours is also on this CCD list. And, of course, Helga Zepp-LaRouche is on top of that list as well as other friends of the Schiller Institute—quite prominently. But what they did was to use NATO and Swedish psychological defense to pay the CCD and have conferences with the CCD. So, what they do is use Ukraine as a proxy to put death threats against us and against journalists and other politicians in the West; that's how they do it here now.

Gribbroek: So you're saying that Sweden is, along with the United States—like the State Department and the USAID—Sweden is funding the CCD?

Sandmark: Yes. And they have conferences together, in Ukraine and in the Baltic States. There are people from the different nations at these conferences—the military, the psychological defense—to discuss fighting against “disinformation.” There's a lot of talk about that. But, basically, they are doing the disinformation themselves, as all of you know, and that is what they throw against us—that we are doing the disinformation.

Gribbroek: That's a remarkable shift away from neutrality, isn't it?

Sandmark: Yes. Yes, absolutely. But actually, Sweden has been, for a long, long time, secretly working with the U.S. on these kinds of intelligence operations; to have this special kind of cooperation with Britain, with Australia, New Zealand. Scandinavia has had special kinds of cooperation agreements—Sweden, directly: After the Second World War, we set up listening posts here in Sweden. And those listening posts were equipped with American electronics and also on planes that were flying over the Baltic Sea, listening to Russia. Then we had a whole operation to educate people to become translators from Russian to Swedish, and to English. In this way, they were listening to all the military exercises in Russia, even down to the platoon level; the voices and all of the signals. And in this way they had a very thorough mapping of the Russian military, and that was shared with CIA immediately. It was basically a CIA listening post.

And now we have in northern Scandinavia a station for listening to satellites and downloading information; one of the biggest in the world for downloading information. Scandinavia is very close to the polar circle, and it's easy to have a whole city and people living up there: Because of the Gulf Stream, most of Scandinavia is populated very much to the north. If you go to our level, you have Greenland and very cold areas on the same latitude as Stockholm. But we can live here because of the Gulf Stream. We have the water. And that means that it's in a unique location—close to the North Pole—to be able to download from the satellites. So in that way, it's very important; a listening post for the U.S. This kind of cooperation has been going on all the time. And Sweden also, as a neutral country, had a kind of military-technical cooperation such that the Swedish Air Force was quite strong, but it was all the time American engines in



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The Schiller Institute in Sweden has brought together political groups from the left and right, a kernel of a unified peace movement. Shown, participants in the Stockholm Hiroshima Day memorial.

those aircraft, like the one the Gripen fighter jet uses today.

From Nihilism to a Cultural Renaissance

Gribbroek: Very interesting. I want to shift gears a bit. One of Helga Zepp-LaRouche's many initiatives that she's been calling for—really since the founding of the Schiller Institute—but she's put a very great emphasis on this in recent times, is the need for a cultural renaissance in the West, which has become extremely, extremely decadent. This was on full display with that obscenity we saw during the opening ceremony of the [Olympics in Paris](#). Has Sweden experienced the same type of cultural collapse and decadence we've seen—in the United States, for example? And what are your thoughts on how to reverse that?

Sandmark: Well, we have, absolutely. The music and the culture are very much in the nihilistic direction, going for a kind of extreme nonsense and modernism, both in theater and music—and that is promoted. It has in part come from the CIA project called the Congress

for Cultural Freedom (CCF), where all these kinds of things were paid for by the state and promoted through the public service radio system. And in that way, we have a degeneration, where people have lost a sense of what is the truth. That has eroded the whole Swedish culture and education system very much. And therefore, we are very vulnerable.

If you are American, you would say that we are a socialist state, with no religion, and with no idea of morals—and that is how it looks. People who come to Sweden, they see a lot of churches and so on. But these are churches that are not so much used by the Swedes. So, basically, people find out that Swedes are not religious at all—they are atheists. They have the kind of private religions with nature and so on, and try to be nice to each other. But the Christian basis in Sweden has basically been crushed by this long, long campaign for nihilism and for modernism. That's why we have a big problem in relaunching a cultural renaissance. We have some very, very beautiful and good Swedish culture in the background. In the time of Mozart and Beethoven, we had the same kind of music here, sounding like Mozart. We had some Swedish Mozarts; some Swedish Beethovens—Swedish and absolutely beautiful.

We have been relaunching a humanist academy here in Sweden with some of our campaigns. Then we had a very strong campaign—anti-drug campaign—against the drug trade that was using the rock music to promote the drugs. Sweden is now the main promoter of pop music in, actually, in the world. You have ABBA; you have other kinds of things—and they have been promoting the drugs very much.

If you look to the Nazi groups internationally, they have publishing houses in Denmark and in Holland and so on. But they also have a music publishing house in Sweden. So, because the CCF had this idea of conditioning people, we had this very dark rock music, and the Nazi groups were spreading this music all over the world from Sweden.

So, we have a very big problem with that. But what we can do is promote the real idea of Swedes connecting to reason, and that is through science and especially through the technical and engineering developments. We have a very good engineering tradition in Sweden. People are very proud of the big Swedish companies like Ericsson, like ABB Group, We have these kinds of very big companies, like Electrolux, Volvo, Scania trucks, Saab. So, with

the help of that, we will try to restart industry on a productive basis. And that's what we hope to use to relaunch a renaissance.

Moving the Peace Process Forward

Gribbroek: Very good. I want to ask one more important question—and it has been a pleasure speaking with you today; I've learned a lot myself—but given the success of your Humanity for Peace demonstration two days ago, what are your plans to move this whole peace process in Sweden forward over the immediate period ahead?

Sandmark: Well, what we want to do is to have more of this exchange between the different groups, and to pull together seminars and things. So, this is what we are in a very strong position to do now, because people are very open to cooperate with us. And the big thing we have, is working with the International Schiller Institute to connect people into the international peace process. That is how you survive in Sweden: you work with people abroad, for development.

I've been myself working in Syria, and we have very active policies in other parts of the world to promote the Belt and Road Initiative, and other things like that. In this way, we create the ability to move forward. If you are in Sweden, you feel that you are alone; everyone is crazy around you—you get crazy. But if you can talk to the people of the Global South—and they speak with us on the governmental level—then you find out that you are not crazy, because there are people you can relate to.

In this way, it's very good to see that you can work together with people internationally. And, actually, when we work together—to promote the Belt and Road, to promote the Global South—it comes back as a strong policy—actually stronger than any of the policies from the other parties and organizations in Scandinavia. We can influence Sweden much more by working on this international level. So, together, we try to push these kinds of development policies. And in this way, we can both survive ourselves mentally, and also help to bring this process for a new just world economic order forward—and stop the war, this crazy war policy.

Gribbroek: I certainly couldn't agree with you more. We've just got to keep on fighting.

Sandmark: Yes, absolutely.