

## 5. Sweden: swan song for Socialists

Things are changing in Sweden. A cameo appearance in the pornographic "I Am Curious" movies did not prevent Social Democrat Olof Palme from becoming Prime Minister several years later. But now, Palme's opportunistic attempt to capitalize on the environmentalist Three Mile Island hysteria may have irretrievably spoiled his comeback bid in Sweden's upcoming nationwide elections, three years after he became the first leader of his Social Democratic Workers Party (SAP) to lose a Swedish national election since before World War II.

Although Sweden does not go to the polls until September, the Palme debacle is having a more immediate political impact throughout Europe. Palme is a close Second International ally of West Germany's Willy Brandt, who is leading his party's European Parliament campaign on an environmentalist platform similar to Palme's. Brandt is under heavy fire from the European Labor Party for his environmentalist stance, and it is the ELP too which is leading the revolt against Palme's antinuclear program in Sweden. And the ELP is making heavy use of Palme's embarrassment in the continental European campaigns—where the impact of the ELP campaign will be closely compared with Second International balloting totals—and in the United States as well.

### Palme's debacle

For months prior to the Three Mile Island incident, the proprogress leadership in the Swedish union movement had been working with the European Labor Party-initiated Association for Nuclear Energy. During that period, Palme's SAP was maintaining a nominal position in favor of nuclear fission power in the face of a governmental policy hostile to industrial high-technology growth. When Palme took the cue of the Schlesinger-managed sabotage at Three Mile Island to turn against nuclear power, union leaders turned to the Labor Party's John Hardwick.

Beginning April 15, union leaders began circulating a petition in favor of nuclear energy. The initiators were Eric Lindstedt, an ombudsman of Metal Workers local 63 in the Stockholm suburb of Borlaenge, and

Leif Norlin, chairman of Metal Workers local 234 in the southern Swedish town of Tomelille. Both are on the board of directors of the Association for Nuclear Energy. After working out the petition with Hardwick, they circulated it particularly among their fellow metal workers, who comprise the major base for Palme's SAP.

By the time the petition was made public on May 17, it had over 20 names of union leaders, ranging from the town of Umeå in the north to Simrishamn in the south. The petition circulated rapidly. One local leader reported that he had gotten 30 signatures so quickly that he needed more petitions.

The petition, demanding that the labor movement's national political leadership "stop its orientation toward zero growth and low energy, and put cheap nuclear energy before the diffuse, expensive, renewable energy forms," has produced political shockwaves, becoming front-page news in the press within 24 hours of its circulation. "Revolt Against the Party Within the Trade Unions," said the conservative Svenska Dagbladet, the morning paper with the second largest circulation in the country. "Top Men Within the LO [the national trade union federation] Against Palme," said the headline of Expressen, the liberal evening paper with the largest circulation. Even the Social Democratic paper Aftonbladet, Palme's mouthpiece, ran the headline: "Metal Trade Union Leaders Attack Palme."

The action of the Swedish unions, taken in coordination with the Swedish collaborator organization of U.S. Labor Party chairman, Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., has challenged the rules of Swedish politics—where the SPD controls the entire trade union movement—in much the same way that a public split out of the Democratic Party for LaRouche would shake up the U.S. political map.

### Palme responds

At a May 18 press conference, Palme responded by accusing the unionists of carrying out an "impertinent political hoax," and charged that "the Party is behind it." "This CIA organization," Palme complained, "has been after me for several years"—

referring to the ELP's opposition to his former government's policies of austerity and genocide in the Third World.

The next day, every national radio network and television in the country covered the response of John Hardwick, a Labor Party official and head of the Association for Nuclear Energy. "Palme has nothing behind him," Hardwick said. "The European Labor Party is working to counter the witchhunt against supporters of nuclear energy."

On May 21, ELP chairman Kerstin Tegin charged Palme with political harassment of the Labor Party and the 25 labor leaders who signed the statement. Tegin linked the statement to the fight to inaugurate "Phase Two" of the European Monetary System, and declared that it was vital that U.S. Labor Party chairman Lyndon H. LaRouche win his bid for the U.S. Presidency. Tegin's statements too were carried widely in the press.

Canute-like, Palme has spared no effort to halt the

## Statement of Swedish unionists for A-power

*Following is the petition issued by Swedish unionists in support of nuclear power.*

Because of low energy costs as the basis for massive industrialization, Sweden, only a few decades ago, was able to take the step from the poor and unjust "statar" society to a modern and advanced industrial nation.

For us trade union representatives, a return to the slave economy of the low-energy society is completely out of the question. Instead, we see it as our task to work for progress in industry, technology, science and society. In this way we not only create the conditions for a richer life for Swedish workers, but we develop the necessary resources for us to be able to contribute to the industrialization of the developing countries. This is necessary to eliminate starvation and poverty and to secure a peaceful development on earth.

We see the development of nuclear energy as a decisive factor for creating this development. Nuclear power is the energy source which has the full capacity to meet the increasing demands for an abundance of cheap, clean and secure energy for social and industrial development.

Through the new reactor types which are developed, this energy source can meet many different needs and

produce great amounts of energy for hundreds of years into the future. Nuclear energy is a dense, concentrated energy source. This means that contrary to the diffuse, so-called renewable energy forms, it will always remain cheap.

The Harrisburg accident does not influence our judgment that nuclear energy is a safe energy source. On the contrary, when the hysteria fomented by the media now has calmed down, one irrefutable fact is clear: no one was injured by the much spoken-about accident.

The highly advanced nuclear technology in Sweden—almost unique in the world—and our great uranium resources make nuclear power even more important for our nation's development. A commitment for export of turn-key reactors, nuclear technology, and know-how, together with enriched uranium fuel would no doubt cause a massive upswing and create valuable and much-needed resources for society as a whole. Many tens of thousands of new industrial jobs would thereby be created.

For this reason we see with deep concern the 180-degree turn on the energy issue by the Social Democratic leadership and the increasingly loud talk about zero-growth and diffuse so-called renewable energy forms.

tide of union sentiment against him. He has sent the national head of the Metalworkers union, Bert Lundin, to pressure several of the initial signers of the pronuclear resolution to dissociate themselves from it. And he has followed his cry that the "ELP is CIA" with the claim that the labor leaders signing the resolution were unaware that their names were on it.

But twist and turn as he may, Palme's control of the labor base of his party is irrevocably shattered. After publication of the resolution on May 17, three national

trade union leaders have come forward to support its contents. These are the national chairmen of the Woodworkers Union and the Mineworkers Union, and Hans Ericsson, head of the Swedish Transport Workers Union.

The furor in Sweden has also attracted international attention. Germany's Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and the Agence France Presse news service have asked for interviews with European Labor Party spokesmen on the fight for nuclear power in Sweden.

—Paul Arnest

This new line is in obvious opposition to the traditional policy of growth, industrial progress and nuclear energy, which we have always fought for. A policy which so clearly opens the door for economic stagnation and a return to zero-growth and low-energy, must be condemned as dangerous for the nation and the workers.

No other country in Europe has reacted so hysterically to the Harrisburg accident as Sweden has done. Countries like France and the whole East bloc have instead escalated their nuclear programs further during the last weeks. If Sweden continues its dangerous policy, we will be driven into forced isolation from the rest of the world. We will not be able to take part in the great effort of continental Europe to industrialize the developing countries in the 1980s and 1990s.

With stagnation and higher energy prices, we will be deprived of our export markets. This will lead to wage reductions, unemployment and lower standards of living for Swedish workers.

We therefore urge the party leadership:

- to stop its orientation toward zero-growth and low-energy and put cheap nuclear energy before the diffuse, expensive, renewable energy forms;
- to openly distance themselves from all invitations to collaborate from the greatest enemy of progress in Sweden, the Center Party;
- to start a nationwide information campaign on the great possibilities of nuclear energy.

**Leif Norlin**, Chairman, Metalworkers Local 234, Tomelilla

**Erik Lindstedt**, Ombudsman, Metal Local 63, Borlaenge  
**Ivan Gudasic**, Chairman Metal Local 164, Trosa

**Algot Hansson**, Responsible for Worker Security, National Municipal Workers Union

**Henry Sundbaeck**, Chairman Metal Local 9, County of Vaermland

**Istvan Koran**, Chairman, Metal Local 160, Storebro

**Knut Maartensen**, Construction Workers Local 19, Skellefteaa

**Sigurd Edstroem**, Factory Council Chairman at IMO-Industries, Stockholm

**Werner Iversen**, Chairman, Factory Council, Stal Laval, Ludvika

**Kalle Andersson**, Chairman, Factory Council, ASEA, Vaesteraas

**Sture Dryler**, Ombudsman, Metal Local 230, Umeaa

**Kenneth Krantz**, Ombudsman, Metal Local 31, Helsingborg

**Aake Pamp**, Chairman, Factory Council, Helsingborg Shipyard

**Goesta Grenander**, Chairman, Metal Local 15, Simrishamn