



# Reclaim Gandhi

**Indian-Nordic Encounters 1917-2006**

**Tord Björk**

**Folkrörelsestudiegruppen – Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**

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## – Indian-Nordic encounters 1917-2006

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# Introduction

When the Indian Muslim Sheth Habib in September 11, 1906, raised his voice against the British empire and the new racist laws, a new modern popular movement was born that is still of global importance. At a mass meeting with 3 000 participants with the police present at the Empire theatre in Johannesburg, Habib said that in the name of Allah he would resist the new law discriminating coloured people, making it illegal not to carry a passport declaring your race. He also told others to do the same. Mohandas Gandhi, who organised the meeting, had not had the idea himself to go as far as making illegal actions. But overwhelmed by the Muslim initiative not to obey the law in a nonviolent manner he soon followed and became the organiser of the first campaign using Satyagraha, the ethical force of those who have the truth on their side resisting oppressive opponents with open collective nonviolent actions. Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs joined hands and mobilised against the oppressive laws that made it easier to exploit their indentured labour. After 10 000 had been sent to prison the government had to give up and the nonviolent movement was successful in stopping the racist laws. The British Empire had been defeated.

Nordic connections with this movement started in 1917 in the midst of brutal wars among imperialist states. These contacts started after the first successful Satyagraha campaign in South Africa but before this way of changing society were used in India. Two Danish women, Esther Færing and Anne Marie Petersen both interested in education met with Gandhi in January 1917 shortly before he started his nonviolent civil disobedience campaigns in India which made him the leader of the nationalist movement 1919. Since this meeting Gandhi and Indian popular movements have continuously influenced Nordic popular movements and societies. This is especially the case when core values of the society are at stake. When issues as freedom of speech, global justice, environmental devastation and the role of the Nordic countries' position in the global imperialistic system have been addressed in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden.<sup>1</sup> To some degree influence has also come from the Nordic countries to India at crucial stages in the struggle for equality between men and women and the liberation of the country.

Gandhian and Indian influences are still important in the Nordic societies and especially among popular movements engaged in the struggle for global justice and responsibility. This text primarily deals with the political influence, especially when people are mobilised in societal conflicts.<sup>2</sup> Indian influence culturally, at the official political level and economically is of importance but is outside the scope of this study.

The Gandhian and Indian popular movement influence on other societies is of global interest. The predominant view on social change and popular movements is that they start in modern

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<sup>1</sup> When the peace marches in early 1960s revitalised all political cultures in the Nordic countries, much inspired from Gandhian philosophy via the Cmmittee of 100 and CND in Great Britain, Iceland had the strongest participation in demonstrations. But otherwise the Indian influence has been small or not existing.

<sup>2</sup> A systematic study has been carried out to support the claims of this article for the period 1940 – 1972. The earliest period has been well covered by Holger Terp. Later periods is the text basically built on oral history among popular movements with some additional search for litterature. The oral histories I have heard during my three decades as an activist in the environmental and solidarity movement. This oral history has been supplemented references in a work in progress on the Nordic alternative movement. It is my interest in global justice, the environment and popular movement mobilisation that have led me to searching for knowledge on the Indian-Nordic connection, not primarily interest in India or Gandhi.

Western societies, preferably Great Britain or the US, and then are spread globally.<sup>3</sup> But if the case can be proven that some of the most crucial societal conflicts in Western modern states have received some or its main influence from Indian popular movements through half a century or more, than there is something wrong with the idea that liberation and democratic challenges starts in the rich countries in the North.

The findings of this study thus challenge the present academic, governmental and corporate Western worldview. It has been carried out voluntarily outside full-time job as a teacher and commitment to voluntary work in the environment and solidarity movement. Under these limitations it has only been possible to cover the development in so many countries during a period of almost a century without going into details. Especially the first period of Nordic-Gandhian relationships have been very well studied by Holger Terp and E.S Reddy.<sup>4</sup> But the following periods lack systematic studies. Due to the dependency of the American university system, scholars dealing with nonviolent movement in the Nordic countries knows very much about the connections between Gandhi and the US and how the US influenced the Nordic countries, but less about the direct contacts between Indian popular movements and Nordic popular movements.

Much of the history here presented is with other words never before told. The knowledge on most of the connections have been scattered and is for the first time gathered here. Some of the most crucial mass mobilisations in the Nordic countries for freedom of speech and solidarity with the third world were started by a group inspired by Indian thought and values but the story have never been printed and only existed in oral form. International academic studies claim that the kind of actions undertaken by the Indian inspired group in Sweden to defend freedom of speech were of crucial importance for the whole youth and student movements of the 1960s, but wrongly states that this kind of actions took place for the first time in the US 1964 when the same thing took place in Sweden 1961. Nation-wide mass mobilisation for the third world at schools, also started by the Indian inspired group before similar actions has been documented in other countries, has also been ignored by academicians who either do not see this kind of actions as important or focus on actions undertaken by established organisations in smaller scale.<sup>5</sup>

This study concentrates on how Indian inspiration has influenced movements that are in conflict with the dominant order in society and its place in the world order. The criteria for being included and seen as relevant thus stems from two judgements. On the one hand, and primarily, if the movement and conflict presented can be shown to be historical both in terms

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<sup>3</sup> In his comprehensive research project *Ickevåldsaktion: En social praktik av motstånd och konstruktion*, 2005, Stellan Vinthagen states that non-violence is spread in the Nordic countries first in the 1970s. Vinthagen claims that nonviolence develops through four stages. The first being born in North Eastern USA during the struggle against slavery in the 1830s. The second being developed by Indian popular movements in South Africa 1906 and later in India with non-violent resistance through satyagraha, preparations for nonviolence in ashram communities by living collectively and through the constructive programme. The third stage uses the term non violent direct action and is primarily used by the American civil disobedience campaign, the defiance campaign in South Africa and the anti nuclear weapon movement on the UK. The fourth stage is when methods for networks of independent non-violent groups without charismatic leadership is developed at the actions against nuclear power at Seabrook in the US 1977. The claim of this book is that there is a Nordic tradition with direct links to India that has its own tradition and not is mainly influenced through the US, UK or South Africa. This tradition is especially strong in Sweden and Norway mixing with domestic popular movement experiences.

<sup>4</sup> The first period of correspondence with Gandhi and publishing efforts in all of the Nordic countries has been thoroughly investigated by Holger Terp and E.S.Reddy. Their findings are presented in *Friends of Gandhi*: and is also presented at the homepage of the Danish Peace Academy.

<sup>5</sup> The comprehensive study on Sweden and the liberation of Southern Africa by Tor Sdellström mentions some more established roots to this mass third world solidarity school action but not this first national support for a project in the liberated third world.

of a high level of confrontation seldom or never seen in the Nordic countries before or after, and in terms of creating new public space and awareness of profound societal and ecological problems. On the other hand to what degree the movement was explicitly aware of its Indian inspiration and acted accordingly.

In other words this is not a study on how Gandhian or other Indian thoughts best have been received in the Nordic countries, but rather how popular movements in India continuously have influenced popular movements in the Nordic countries and in this way both have contributed to the common aim of global justice and protecting the planet from ecological disaster. I am not a specialist in Gandhi's writings; my primary interest is how popular movements evolve locally, nationally and globally.<sup>6</sup> This means that if an Indian environmental movement partly inspired by Gandhi have strong connections to the Swedish environmental movement when there is a mass confrontation with the state is this of more importance than when smaller groups makes actions strictly according to the perceived rules of Gandhian nonviolence. The main focus of this study is on greater impact in strong societal conflicts or movements that grow from a small beginning to larger participation rather than on groups able of preserving Gandhian thought and make nonviolent actions in a small scale. Of course these smaller groups as well as the philosophical work are also of crucial importance. As both Gandhi and those studying popular movements know, smallness is not a criterion for being unimportant when society needs to be challenged. But the history of smaller Gandhian and nonviolent action groups in the Nordic countries is better described already while the Indian influence in wider societal conflicts and the building of mass movements is not.

A main concept in this study is popular movement. Similar terms are people's movement and social movement, the last term often used by academicians. This study sees as the core of a popular movement a lasting collective effort that at the same time tries to change society and live according to its own principles. This double task is often very troublesome. Most of the time the collective efforts ends by being integrated into market or state routines or disintegrated into individual or sectarian lifestyles. But the quality of living as you teach and promoting change of the existing social system whether this is national or global can continue to exist at some places. And suddenly a new mass movement can rise again and contribute to important social and other changes. In this study accounts for both such small collective efforts that combine living as you teach and challenge the present world order and how new popular mass movements emerge.

The Gandhian and Indian influence on Nordic countries can be summarised into four periods. The first is the dialogue, school building, work camp movement and liberation struggle period beginning with Danish women dialogue and pedagogic initiatives and continuing with international work camps and support for the liberation struggle. The second period is the anti-imperialism and peace struggle of the World Youth Festivals in the late 1940s and 1950s as central together with small but crucial alternative movements struggling for peace and global justice with inspiration from India both strands ending with joint mass peace, freedom of speech and solidarity mobilisations in the 1960s. The third is the global environmental movement period 1970-1990. The fourth period beginning at the shift of decades between the 1980s and 1990s is too early to put a label on but can be described as the antineoliberal global democracy period. Finally the present situation is dealt with more in detail including World

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<sup>6</sup> I mainly base my knowledge on secondary literature and speaking with Nordic activists who have better knowledge than I have on Gandhian philosophy. A key text is Stellan Vinthagen *Ickevåldsaktion: En social praktik av motstånd och konstruktion*, 2005. As this book his work claims that Gandhi is different from his Western predecessors in the way that he ....

Social Forum connections and recent initiatives to translate Hind Swaraj and organise Salt march jubilee in Nordic countries.

This study can be seen as a work in progress. It is based on an article made for the Salt March jubilee 2005. This article was mainly based on oral history and some Nordic material gathered on the internet. When an international Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam meeting at Tampere in October 2006 decided to publicise a material to be issued at the India Social Forum in November the article was extended primarily building on a work in progress on the Nordic alternative movement 1940 – 1970 by the same author in Swedish and an earlier studies by the author on the UN Conferences on environment in Stockholm 1972 and Rio de Janeiro 1992. The development of the movement in the Nordic countries after 1970 was extended until 1990, after this year there was not enough time to fully complement the first article. During this period the author have participated in the development of the environmental and solidarity movement an visiting regularly all Nordic countries except Iceland. The study of the movement has been carried out within the Popular Movement Study Group, a working group started by lay activists in Alternativ Stad 1983. The group runs the homepage [www.folkrorelser.nu](http://www.folkrorelser.nu) and organises seminars on popular movement theory and practice. Among the projects of the group are Summit protests since 1968, a global popular movement history the last 2 500 years, the history of Nordic Alternative Movement and a collection of dates from popular movement history.

The present text on Indian-Nordic encounters is in need of some further proofreading and addition of some material for the period 1990-2006. To make it accessible it is anyway here presented to those having special interest.

It has been a great pleasure writing the material. For some reason Gandhi and popular movements as a subject seems to create a great gift of help during the way and to find fascinating inspiring people doing remarkable things to change society that one never had heard of before. The help has made it possible in short time to get illustrations, help with the first proofreading, finding additional material, and getting the material copied for the India Social Forum. Anastasia Laitala have struggled with late night battles to make heavy emails coming through, and finally making the text copied for the India Social Forum, Marko Ulvila and Louise Pettersson has been the organisational back-up when needed and Vijay Pratap and Thomas Wallgren the supporters of the project. Jan Wiklund made his comments and improved the text, Unto Tähtinen and Ville Komsa helped with more knowledge on how Gandhi was received in Finland, Holger Terp allowed me to use his unique material on Danish women going to India as well as women's peace movement in the 1980s, Harald Bjørke sent immediate replies of all questions from Norway, Ragnar Arnalds corrected an embarrassing mistake in the text on Iceland and sent photos from his island, Björn Gustafsson sent his great treasure of fotografies from the UN Conference and actions in Stockholm in the early 1970, in Copenhagen Per Warming helped to get a picture of love between India and Denmark. Liselott Dahlin, Jakob Donner-Amnell, Jan Fjellander and Maximilian Björsten sent fotografies and Roland von Malmberg made it possible to photograph the many activist's items he have collected. More people helped.

I hope you as reader enjoy this study. The version here presented is a slightly more complete version than the material distributed at the Special Forum including some more text and pictures.

# Dialogue, Constructive Programme and Liberation Struggle 1917-1947

## Grundtvig meets Gandhi



*Anne Marie Petersen, Esther Færing and Ellen Hørup*

The first Danish - Indian encounter took place when Esther Faering and Anne Marie Petersen visited Gandhi's Satyagrahaashram at Kocharab, Ahmedabad, for three days January 6 to 9, 1917. There was immediate mutual understanding and care for each other. In a letter Gandhi wrote to Faering soon after they left. "You were hardly guests to us; you had become members of the family." It was followed by a continuous South-North dialogue through correspondence with Gandhi, visits and organising practical solidarity work in India and the Nordic countries.

Anne Marie Petersen was a woman of strong persuasion and practical mind who already when she arrived in India 1909 had a vision of establishing a Christian National School. She had studied at a free school and a folk high school and was greatly influenced by Niels Fredrik Severin Grundtvig, a philosopher, priest and educator. Grundtvig started a movement to set up folk high schools all over the country for people in common that should avoid focusing only on academic subjects and authoritarian methods of learning but be based on oral dialogue and include practical knowledge. The first folk high school was set up in 1844 and within half a century the idea was spread to every corner in all Nordic countries strongly contributing to democratising the society and making small farmers capable of joining hands and renewing technology thus modernising agriculture and at the same time spreading welfare to more people. Later it also became the tool for workers movement to Grundtvig also stressed that the gospel should be taught in the mother tongue respecting each person's community. His views gave rise to a church movement within the Danish Lutheran State Church, the Grundtvigians,

Anne Marie Petersen was in 1916 entrusted by the Danish Missionary Society to prepare plans to establish a high school for girls and was authorised to visit many educational institutions in India. Petersen felt that the church needed to be based in Indian culture in order

to influence the nation to accept Christianity. Students in missionary schools should not be forced to adopt the Western way of life and become alienated from their people.

Petersen took the younger missionary Esther Faering with her on the tour and thus they jointly arrived at Gandhi's Satyagrahaashram to observe the small school there. They were greatly impressed by Gandhi and the life at the ashram. His views on education and the way the school worked they found in harmony with the ideas of Grundtvig.

A strong relationship developed between the two women and Gandhi. In the midst of his great struggles for peasants and workers that during the rest of 1917 filled his days he found the time to send at least 23 letters to Esther Faering and continued to do so at times like in 1920 when Faering was under great pressure due to her support of the Indian liberation struggle even more frequently, other years less often.

In February 1917 Petersen wrote a report to the Danish Missionary Conference stating that teaching of students in English created alienation and learning problems. She proposed a national Christian girls' school with both practical and academic subjects teaching in the language of the people with emphasis on the history and culture of India in accordance with the views of Grundtvig. The board of the Danish Missionary Society approved her ideas and soon she left for Denmark to find financial support among Grundtvigians.

Left alone in India Faering continued her work as teacher in a girls' boarding house at Tirukoilur while adopting more to the Indian way of life wearing khadi and becoming a vegetarian. In 1917 she wrote her first article in the Danish missionary magazine *Dansk Missions-Blad* titled *A Visit to an Indian Ashram*, probably the first time Gandhi's Indian work was brought up in the Nordic countries.

She wrote frequently to Gandhi and began to identify herself with India and the struggle for freedom. This put her under severe pressure from the British authorities and the Danish Missionary Society. The board of the Danish Missionary Society disapproved of her correspondence with Gandhi and prohibited her from visiting Gandhi's ashram during Christmas 1917 and 1918. The missionary authorities tried to persuade her to stop all correspondence with Gandhi. In 1919 when Gandhi was involved in organising national mass resistance against freedom of speech by the British authorities Faering refused to dissociate from Gandhi. She wrote to Mahadev Desai, secretary to Gandhi, also called Bapu among friends, on March 24, 1919:

“When I came to India, I felt at once at home; and here I have found my living ideal, the incarnation of God in man. So next to the great experience when Christ became a living reality in my life, I have no other event for which I am so happy and thankful as the day when I first met *Bapu*; here I found the divine love shining forth clearer than the brightest star; and truth and humanity I found in him as nowhere else, and so I bow down in deepest reverence, love and admiration for true greatness. *Bapu* became for me the manifestation of the love of God and His aim with regard to man, so he came into my life as the living ideal, for which I have been seeking for years”.

Faering came under suspicion by the security police who inquired in Tirukoilur on her role in the ongoing campaign. In a new letter to Desai on May 4 she wrote:



”For me they can do as they like, only as I said before, I should rather stay several years in prison than leave India; I do not know how I should live outside India without having my heart completely here.”

In June the head of the Danish Missionary Society under pressure from British authorities asked Faering to cease all correspondence with all who were connected with any political work. In the same time Faering met E. Kuhn Menon, a Hindu medical student from Kerala. They fell in love and were soon to be engaged to be married. This was strongly opposed by the Mission. This made her to submit her resignation in August 1919. The Mission asked her to leave for Denmark but she refused. Gandhi tried to intervene by writing to the governor of Bombay and Madras allowing her to live at his ashram assuring that he had not the slightest desire to avail himself of her services in the political field. He requested his friend C.F. Andrews to go immediately to Madras to prevent her banishment. Faering received permission to travel to the Bombay Presidency which the ashram at Ahmedabad at this time was part of.

Meanwhile Petersen had gathered financial support in Denmark and came back to India shortly after Faering resigned from the Mission. Petersen stood by Faering, invited her for Christmas and began to correspond with Gandhi. In an interview with Gandhi in Danmarks Verdensmission Gandhi stated that:

“I would like to go to Denmark. It is one of the countries in the world we can learn most from. India is a large farming country; we need to learn from Denmark agriculturally, we need good public education, and we need unions, loan banks and cooperative societies as in Denmark”.

Petersen strongly supported equality between Europeans and Indians in the missions and opposed racism. When the Danish Missionary Society rejected a proposal for equality between Danish and Indian missionaries she too resigned in January 1920. Both Petersen and Faering now came under heavy pressure, while Faering’s health also deteriorated. Faering left for Denmark and was later followed by Menon were they both could marry without the immediate pressure from his family and the Mission who both had opposed the marriage.

In India Petersen continued her struggle for establishing a school for girls. She also became a strong supporter of the Indian movement for freedom and its constructive programme. She began to spin, wear khadi and use Indian products as much as possible according to the ideas of the nationalist movement. She saw the necessity of Christians participating in the freedom movement as essential to pave the way for Christianity in India.

On August 14, 1920 she participated at a public meeting in Vellore addressed by Gandhi. This she said in a letter to him shortly after had ”more or less decided my future”. The moral attitude of this Christian faced with repression from her Danish organisation and the British she expressed in these words:

”Truly it matters little what I, a lonely and insignificant person, may say or do. What is my protest against common current the race to which I belong is taking and (what grieves me more), which the missionary societies seem to follow? Even if a respectable number protested it would not be of any use. Yet were I alone against the whole world, I must follow my conscience and my God.”

Her religious beliefs and her relationship with India she spelled out clearly:

“I have thrown myself at the feet of India. At the same time I know that in Christ alone is my abode and I have no longing and no desire but to live Him, my crucified Saviour, and reveal Him for those with whom I come in contact. I just cling to His feet and pray with tears that I may not disgrace Him as we Christians have been doing by our behaviour in India... If we who bear His name were true to Him, we would never bow ourselves before the Powers of this world, but we would always be on the side of the poor, the suffering and the oppressed. But we are not, and therefore I feel myself under obligation not only to Christ but to India for His sake at this time of momentous importance for her future”.

Gandhi’s call to boycott government schools and establish national schools as part of a constructive programme especially appealed to her:

“Only by indigenous education can India be truly uplifted. Why this appeals so much to me is perhaps because I belong to the part of the Danish people who started their own independent, indigenous national schools. The Danish Free Schools and Folk-High-Schools, of which you may have heard, were started against the opposition and persecution of the State. The organisers won and thus have regenerated the nation”.<sup>7</sup>

Her letter was published in Gandhi’s paper *Young India* to show that the nationalist movement was neither anti-Christian nor anti-European.

On September 17, 1921 Petersen founded Seva mandir (Temple of Service) and a school for girls, the National Christian Girls’ school, at Porto Novo (Parangipettai), south of Madras. Gandhi laid the foundation stone for the school at a large public meeting. It was organised like an ashram. Here pupils got an intercultural education which combined the work of the hand with the work of the spirit. They learned to spin in order to produce their own clothes; grew their own food and learned to read and write as well as they had lessons about Indian history, religions and culture, much inspired by Gandhis as well as Petersen’s own ideas.

In November 1921 the government asked the missionaries to sign a declaration of loyalty. Petersen signed with a declaration that as a Christian she would collaborate with everything good and promote loyalty to God and not the kingdoms of the world. She was blacklisted by the authorities, made subject to restrictions and her school was excluded from government grants.

The school had hard times and was a small institution. In December the Menon couple came back from Denmark to Porto Novo and could not find any other ways of surviving than rely on the mission which put an extra burden on the economic situation for the school. But like no other of the national schools inspired by Gandhi’s ideas it was able to continue exist until liberation came and then finally became a centre in a new national education system. It survived on modest contributions from Denmark. From the beginning it was placed in the home of Petersen and had only 13 pupils in 1924, the year it was officially opened with its own building.

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<sup>7</sup> This and following footnotes on Danish- Indian early connections comes from Terp, Holger and Reddy, E.S.; *Mahatma Gandhi and Nordic countries*, 2001



*Anne Marie Petersen with pupils at Parangipettai*

Meanwhile the support group in Denmark started to criticise Petersen's effort. She was accused of making the school more part of the Indian national movement than a Christian mission. When she visited Denmark 1926 – 27 the support group dissolved itself. She was able to establish a new support group that agreed to give missionaries freedom of work but there was a drop in contributions from Denmark when the needs of the mission increased.

Petersen arranged soon after for Esther Faering to travel to Denmark for health reasons. Here she gave a series of lectures on Gandhi on the Danish radio 1928 and wrote a biography of Gandhi published in 1930 – *Gandhi: En Karakteristik og Fremstilling* (Gandhi: a Sketch and a Portray).

### **Building an international solidarity movement for Indian liberation**



*Ellen Hørup*

Ellen Hørup was another Danish woman that wrote extensively on Gandhi, Indian liberation and other international affairs in *Politiken*, a main daily in Denmark at the same time. Contrary to Esther Menon and Anne Marie Petersen who were devote Christians she was a modern feminist. Her first 40 years she had been very active in sports and not involved in politics or journalism. But when she got into writing her pacifism and radical anti-fascism made her the foremost if not the only female journalist writing on international affairs. As a

daughter of the anti-militaristic and liberal founder of the influential newspaper Politiken she was given space in spite of that it had turned less radical since its pioneer time and that women rarely if ever before the second world war in Denmark were allowed or asked to write about foreign politics in the press.

Hørup became interested in Gandhi in the 1920s when she lived in Rome. In January 1929 she travelled to India and stayed at Gandhi's ashram at Sabarmati for over a week. In the late twenties the first meetings about Gandhi and non-violence were held in Copenhagen.

In India the numbers of students at the ashram in Porto Novo fell to six but Petersen did not give up. When Gandhi launched the Civil Disobedience movement in 1930 and started the Salt march, she offered her services, and gave refuge to families of volunteers who went to prison. At a rally inaugurating the movement in south India she said Christian prayers.

In Denmark Hørup established *Indiens Venner* (the Friends of India Society) in Copenhagen in October 1930. She also established the first monthly magazine with the same name devoted fully to the Indian liberation struggle and Mahatma Gandhi outside South Africa and India that was issued during the years 1930 – 1938. In this first issue she reflected upon the importance of the independence movement:

”The opening of a new chapter in the history of the human race, where violence and weapons are abolished, and antagonism between races and nations do not anymore put a hindrance to understanding among people.”<sup>8</sup>

The Indian struggle for independence created great hopes but also acts of solidarity. There was censorship on news from India after the Salt March of 1930. Ellen Hørup, Carl Vett, a Norwegian barrister of the Supreme Court, his wife, Edward Holton James, an American barrister from Boston and Caroline (Bokken) Lasson, a Norwegian singer, actress and writer “created a little self-constituted commission, whose members all travelled to India on their own”, meeting once in a while in India. The group took an interest in the severe repression against the Indian freedom movement during the civil disobedience movement led by Gandhi. Together with Bokken Lasson Hørup stayed in India for four months 1930-31 meeting not only Gandhi but also other Indian leaders as Jawaharlal Nehru, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad and Subhas Chandra Bose as well as visiting Anne Marie Petersen's school in Porto Novo. The members of the informal international group distributed the suppressed news that they could find in other countries thus breaking the iron curtain the British had set up to isolate the Indians and make their liberation impossible.



*Caroline Bokken Lasson*

A feverish solidarity activity developed. In 1931 Hørup wrote the book *Gandhis Indien* (Gandhi's India), together with the Danish painter Cathinca Olsen she went to meet Gandhi

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<sup>8</sup> Quote made from *Indiens venner* in *Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon*, Ellen Hørup.

again during the Round Table Conference on Indian constitutional reform at the end of 1931, Caroline Bokken Lasson set up a Friends of India Society also in Norway and on October 6, 1932 Hørup organised an International Conference for India in Geneva. At the conference an International Committee for India was established with Hørup as honorary secretary. She soon moved to Geneva and became the organisational force behind the international solidarity movement for India.

A second conference was organised in March 1933, mostly with people based in Geneva and a third International conference on September 19, 1933. The speakers included Bhulabai Desai and Subhas Chandra Bose, leaders of the Indian national Congress and Mrs Hamid Ali with delegates from many European countries attending.

The committee published the magazine the "*Indian Press*", the first international magazine to support the Indian cause abroad with Hørup as a main contributor. There were problems though with the interest in India for international solidarity causing the magazine to close down 1935. The last number of the "*Indian Press*" quoted the *Modern Review* (Calcutta): "It was a mistake on the part of the Congress to have given up foreign work... It is true; we must win freedom mainly by our efforts. But the sympathy and at least the moral support of foreign nations are valuable" (August 1935). Ellen Hørup then wrote, "Because of the decision taken by the National Congress of India, we have decided to suspend the publication of our magazine for the time being. We will take it up again as soon as the Indian organizations themselves recognise the necessity of a propaganda campaign in foreign countries".

Hørup was one of the few contemporary Scandinavian friends of Gandhi who dared to voice criticism of Gandhi:

"Gandhi enters the great and admirable fight for the untouchables. He fasts for their right to get into the temples for which he is subject to attempted assassinations, and he gets the entire priesthood on his back. Gandhi has declared that there is no such thing as an untouchable in the holy writings, and even if there was, it would conflict with all humanity and therefore could not be divine truth. Everybody enthusiastically follows him on his Harijan-tour. But the untouchable is a by-product of the caste system, and Gandhi fights for the untouchable but wishes to keep the caste system."

In a speech to *Indiens Venner* in Copenhagen 1936 she explained her position. Gandhi was to her "the apostle who would bring, not only to India but to the entire world, the gospel of the future – the abolishment of violence from mankind." But she said also that she had her differences with Gandhi concerning many issues as regarding rights of women, birth control, class struggle, industrialisation and other matters that also were expressed by many contemporary Indian radicals.

In 1937 Friends of India society in Norway nominated Gandhi for a Nobel peace prize and Hørup gave full support. She wrote to a number of influential persons and organisations and received positive replies but the initiative did not succeed in spite of wide-spread support.

In India Anne Marie Petersen continued her efforts. As a member of the Rural Reconstruction Workers Association, Petersen was in 1939 invited to speak at the conference for the rural reconstruction workers at Kengeri. She was the only woman at the conference. Mrs. Petersen spoke of the need for educating women teachers and suggested that her school in Porto Novo

was developed into a women's teacher training college. During the war the school had to close for a while as money collected in Denmark during the Nazi occupation could not be sent to India. But Gandhi sent a small grant to show his support.



*Anne Marie Petersen in India*

After Indian Independence in August 1947 the Madras provincial government gave Petersen her right of residence without any restrictions and the school was recognised by the authorities and provided grants. In Denmark Ellen Hørup was one of the founders of the Danish-Indian friendship association and Fédération Démocratique Internationales des Femmes.

January 1951 Anne Marie Petersen, lovingly called Periamma, (great mother) died in India. Ellen Hørup died 83 years old in 1953 after having devoted her life to the treatment of children during the German occupation of her country which made it impossible for her to write about international issues and after recently had started a new magazine 80 years old. Esther Menon had to return to Denmark in the 1950s due to bad health that had followed her and her children during hardships in different places in India. She died unknown 1962. A first generation of Nordic people devoting much of their life in solidarity with the struggle for freedom for India passed away seemingly leaving no traces behind. One exception was the school at Porto Novo. After the death of Petersen a trust with two Danish and four Indian members ran the school that in 2000 had more than 2 000 pupils and 60 teachers.

Terp and Reddy concludes in a first version of their book *Mahatma Gandhi and the Nordic countries* on these first Danish-Indian encounters:

”Within the framework of the struggle for Indian political and social liberation Anne Marie Petersen and Gandhi pioneered a North-South dialogue. They were in India, but came from different cultures. Also it was an early North-South dialogue including development aid, because Anne Marie Petersen couldn’t have made her school (as big) as it became, without financial support from Christian friends and friends from the Folk High school movement in Denmark. Some of the concepts and terms they used in developing a national Indian school were later used in the development of the pedagogy of liberation, based upon *’the ethical indignation, the preferential option for the poor and finally the liberation of the poor and oppressed - and of the oppressor’*.<sup>9</sup>”

Although other Nordic countries were involved Denmark continuously was the most advanced in all aspects, publishing books and articles by Gandhi and on the Indian situation, corresponding with Gandhi and organising public solidarity work. But also in Finland a similar development took place with the interest in pedagogy as central. Here the missionary Lorenz Zilliacus left Finland to devote his life to education in India where he stayed until his death in the 1950s.

## Opposing Nazism and building an international work camp movement

The first Swede to meet Gandhi and stay at his ashram in India was the priest Birger Forell. He turned Gandhi’s nonviolence philosophy into his own.<sup>10</sup> 1929 he was sent as priest to the Swedish Victoria congregation in Berlin. Here his philosophy was tested many times when Hitler came to power until 1942 when his successors continued the same way as he had started. His family supported Jews and other oppressed people. When the repression escalated he was able to use the church as sanctuary with Gestapo installed across the street to control his congregation. His main task was to be contact person between Lutheran resistance movement inside Germany and the international ecumenical movement with its leaders in England. Messages were sent from people like Martin Niemöller with diplomatic mail to the Swedish arch bishop and then further to the bishop in Chichester. The church in Sweden also showed other interest in Gandhi by translating and publishing his books *My Experiment with the Truth* in 1930 and *Satyagraha in South Africa* in 1933.<sup>11</sup>



*Bertil Forell*

<sup>9</sup> Jacobsen, Marina: *Fra Barbari til værdighed*, RUC, 2001 p. 271.

<sup>10</sup> De svensktyska kyrkliga förbindelserna under och efter andra världskriget Björn Ryman, fil dr, adj universitetslektor, Uppsala university, researcher at the department of research and culture of the Swedish church.

<sup>11</sup> The two books were published by Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelse. Books with texts written by Gandhi were published already 1924 in Sweden, 1925 in Denmark and 1932 in Norway. But the interest in Gandhi came earliest in Denmark where articles written by Gandhi was published already in 1921 and literature on Gandhi and the Indian liberation movement was numerous. After the war Norway became the country with most interest in Gandhi while today it is in Finland the interest is most eager. For a list of books and some articles written or about Gandhi in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, see



The key lasting Gandhian influence in all of the Nordic countries came in the late 1930s and during World War II through the international working camp movement and Pierre Ceresole, the Swiss founder of Service Civil Internationale. But also this movement seemed to almost disappear before it later re-emerged. Ceresole met with Gandhi during his visit to Europe 1931 and got so inspired that he 1934 organised the first secular volunteer project in the Third world. Together with three others he went to Bihar in India for three years working side by side with local inhabitants rebuilding the community after a nature catastrophe. During his stay in India Ceresole became a Quaker.

Back in Europe Ceresole was invited to Denmark and Sweden. In Copenhagen there was already a great interest in his vision:

”I wish bringing to me the peace and joy, which can only be mine only if at the same time it belongs to all humans, and which I otherwise abstain from. National satisfaction and safety only for my country, while misery reigns in other – that is abominable.”

In Sweden German political refugees were spreading the idea, among them the radical pacifist Ulrich Herz. He together with Lennart Bergström, Inga Thorson and others started to collect money to enable to invite Céréssole to Sweden. Soon members were organised in a Swedish section of Service Civil Internationale and Swedish volunteers could be sent to work camps around Europe helping areas hit by severe natural or social problems while Inga Thorson kept the office in a shoe box under her bed. 1937 a first training camp could be set up at Tostarp in the region of Scania in Southern Sweden before embarking assignments in Europe. A similar organisation started in Norway 1939. The Quaker and German-Jewish refugee Wolfgang Sonntag succeeded in organising a Norwegian work camp team bound for helping Finland after its war with the Soviet Union. He had been inspired by the English section of the International Civil Service which he had met during his flight through Europe. When travelling through Norway making speeches at Folk high schools about Nazism he was able to engage young people to the volunteer Peace Corps. But before the group could go to Finland he had to flee again to Sweden when Germany invaded also Norway in April 1940.

When the war came the Swedish Section of Service Civil Internationale withered away. Herz was put in a concentration camp by the Swedish military as the 7th inmate among other pacifist social democrats and communists who the military saw as a threat to the state.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile policemen and military on private assignment burned the communist daily *Norrskensflamman* in Luleå in the North of Sweden killing five persons. The Swedish military together with ministers used all possible means to support the Northern front in the German invasion of Soviet union through Northern Finland in Operation Barbarossa, an invasion which had the goal to diminish Slavic people with 30 million and all communist functionaries and Jews, a goal that on occupied territories almost was reached. Radical pacifist and German refugees opposing Hitler was not very popular among the authorities in a nation afraid of getting invaded by the Germans and afraid of the Soviet Union. Surrounded on all sides by Germany and their allies the government and the population accepted many German demands like transporting German soldiers and weapons through Swedish territory.

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<http://www.fredsakademiet.dk/library/nordic/ganbook.htm> and  
[http://www.transnational.org/forum/Nonviolence/NordiskGandhiBibliotek/GandhiBibliotek\\_index.html](http://www.transnational.org/forum/Nonviolence/NordiskGandhiBibliotek/GandhiBibliotek_index.html)

In this situation Sonntag vigorously tried to re-establish interest in building a movement of peace volunteers willing to train themselves for international work camps reconstructing countries destroyed by the war. He was heavily guarded by the police and met almost no interest. Among established youth organisations there were no interest in how peace should be constructed outside Sweden after the war. Sweden seemed to be "the country without volunteers". But finally Sonntag found Frisksportarna (Healthy sportsmen), a popular movement that promoted simple lifestyle, healthy food and had nothing against practical work. In 1942, a study circle on the work camp issue received interest in this movement but the first enthusiasm faded away quickly. 1943 new initiatives were made and Internationella Arbetslag, International Work Camps was born with both young and grown-up volunteers and Quakers as supporters. Thirteen "peace volunteers" pledge themselves and urge others to do the same by participating in training courses and set up teams that when the war was over should be sent abroad. In an appeal the 13 peace volunteers declared it was necessary to "abstain from your privileges and your satisfied safeties in the 'neutral' Swedish society." When peace came 20 courses had already taken place, many that helped refugees practically in Sweden. But it was not easy. There was a tension between those that wanted to build a popular movement for peace and those that seemed more interested in adventure or practical work without any goal to also create knowledge and understanding among people from different nations.

A coherent tradition of nonviolent action and civil disobedience, not inspired by Gandhi, was developed in Norway during the German occupation 1940-45. Varying sectors of society took action against German and Nazi influence, mostly using non-cooperation as an action form. The first sector to react to German orders was sport. The two national sports organisations agreed not to cooperate in any form with the occupation authorities nor participate in sports events in Germany and stuck to this decision until liberation. Next were the lawyers. The Supreme Court took the decision to resign collectively rather than obey German orders, and went into resistance giving a kind of legitimacy to it. The Church followed suit, reading condemnations of German atrocities from the pulpit. Labour tried a general strike against the illegal practices of the occupation authorities in 1941 but it was severely repressed. The most famous action was fought by the Teachers' Union when refused to teach the children German superiority and encourage them to fight for Germany. A thousand of them were arrested and sent to concentration camps while the Germans tried to break them individually with threats to relatives and the like. But almost all refused to surrender, much thanks to one Tarald Eg who steadfastly refused to budge despite poor health and having many dependants. If the weakest of the weak had resisted, how could anybody else with their moral and social respect intact not do the same? The aim of the Norwegian resistance was to keep as much as possible of Norwegian civil society from German hands. It was never to get rid of the occupation; the Norwegians knew that the war would in any case be determined by the great powers.<sup>13</sup>

Finland struggled for its survival against an invasion of an overwhelming Soviet Union army. A population with 4 million people without any allies except some few Swedish volunteers stood alone against 1 million Soviet soldiers. In a courageous defence they at first stopped the invasion and caused severe losses for the Red army. But without foreign support the country had to make a peace treaty with the Soviet Union abstaining from parts of Carelia and its access to the Arctic Sea. Half a million internal refugees had to flee from these lost areas and find their living within the new borders. A year later Finland allied itself with Nazi-Germany against Soviet Union. The Northern sparsely populated and harsh part of the country became

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<sup>13</sup> This information on the Norwegian nonviolent resistance comes from Jan Wiklund. Ref <http://>

territory for the German army and its invasion of the Soviet Union in an attempt at cutting the support lines from Arctic harbours to Russia's mainland. The Finnish army remained in control in the South and invaded the Soviet Union. In recapturing the lost land the nation was united behind the army and the government but when Finland started to occupy also further into Russia there was some opposition. In these Eastern parts of Carelia half the Russian population was put into concentration camps and a racist administration was set in place. The Russian population was discriminated and food ransoms were differentiated so that many Russians died in the concentration camps. The reluctant Finnish-speaking local Orthodox population was subject to Lutheran propaganda and nationalist Finnish teachers. Nonviolence had in such a time great difficulties. Many but not all consciousness objectors were executed. The Soviet Union used more or less all its force against Nazi-Germany but towards the end of the war the Finnish army was attacked 1944. Finland once again had to make a peace treaty accepting the loss of land that was forced upon them during their first war with the Soviet union and once more taking care of half a million internal refugees.

The situation in Denmark had some similarities with Sweden, Norway and Finland. The country did not resist the German invasion, and could hardly have any chance to do it with its small size. The government stayed and accepted the German occupation. Denmark could thus gain economic profit from the war making its position similar to that of Sweden. German political refugees were immediately sent to Germany and killed. Making resistance to the German occupation was at the same time declaring civil war. This de facto civil war made Denmark closer to the history of Finland with its civil war in 1917 that for a long time shaped its political culture. After some time also communist members of parliament was sent to concentration camps and in 1943 the Danish authorities refused further collaboration and Germans administrated the country but with less severe repression than elsewhere in occupied Europe. Due to the German occupation Denmark all the time in this respect was similar to the Norwegian situation and in the end of the war also came closer when the collaboration ended. During the whole war this situation gave room for radical pacifism that did not resist the German occupation but could start the International work camp movement in Denmark. The radical pacifist movement No more war was strong in Denmark building on a more Tolstoy inspired nonviolence appeal to the individual to not bear arms and was not repressed by the Germans. The leader of the radical pacifist organisation in Norway was killed by the Germans in a concentration camp. 1943 the radical pacifists in Denmark could set up a fund for volunteer reconstruction work after the war, Fredsvenners Hjælpearbejde (Friends of Peace Aid) to work according to Service Civil internationals intentions. When peace came the initiative from the radical pacifists had gained wide support and 150 persons were trained to start working. When the government called for a meeting to organise post-war reconstruction abroad it was concluded that Fredsvenners Hjælpearbejde was best prepared and the courses received state funding. In June the first group of volunteers was sent to Northern Norway to take care of sick prisoners of war on Northern Norway. Contrary to the Swedish initiative put emphasis on being both practical and a popular movement built on ideas the Danish put the emphasis on the practical and soon became more or less part of governmental efforts. Fredsvenners Hjælpearbejde was soon well established and the radical pacifist origin was soon forgotten.

Iceland had a different story from the rest of the Nordic countries. In 1923 it was decided that the small country would be independent 1943. During the war it was occupied by the allies. 1944 the small country with 250 000 inhabitants gained their freedom after almost 1 000 years of Danish rule.

New national working camp organisations thus started to prepare for reconstruction work after the war built on volunteer efforts and international solidarity for peace. IAL started in Sweden 1943, Fredsvenners Hjelpearbejde in Denmark 1944, in 1949 renamed Mellomfolkelig Samvirke, Internasjonalt Dugnad in Norway states their origin already in 1939 and IAL in Finland 1947 (in Finnish Kansanvälinen Vapaeitonon Työleirijärjestö, KVT), in all countries with Quakers as central in supporting the initiatives. The Norwegians having the sharpest experiences on resistance in different forms, the Danes well-equipped, the Swedes most idealistic and wide in their concern and the Finns utterly aware of their balance position between East and West.



*Participants at Swedish International Work Camp in Hildesheim in Germany*

1947 saw the final goal of the Indian liberation movement ending British colonial rule but partitioning Pakistan and India in the polarised way Britain many times left their colonies. Soon thereafter, Gandhi was killed 1948 by a Hindu extremist during the many conflicts between Hindus and Muslims killing millions. The allied anti-fascist forces of the Soviet Union and the US brought hopes to many around the world with the liberation of India and the declaration of both political and social rights as indivisible in the United Nations Human Rights Charter as positive signs. But it became the end of a period and the course of events took a new direction.

What characterise this period 1917 – 1947 in the Nordic-Indian popular movement contacts is the vitality of nationalist movements meeting each other, nationalist movements striving for more social equality between country and town, men and women. When Esther Færing and Anne Mari Petersen meet Gandhi it is Grundtvig's mass movement meeting Gandhi's mass movement. But it is also liberation theology inspiring each other, whether Hindu, Muslim or Christian. Denmark had always had been independent and yet the kind of social forces that the Indian nationalist mass movement needed to make a meaningful contribution to the liberation of India were the same which Grundtvig mobilised in his national revival in the 1840s in a country that felt threatened and later was at war with Germany.

Denmark was the socially most advanced country among the Nordic states in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was here that the Marxist social democratic movement first established itself and then

spread to Sweden and other parts of the Nordic countries. It was here that this worker's movement first met repression forcing many pioneer leaders to leave the country and also here the first compromise was made between the social classes in 1899. In Norway which received independence as late as 1905 and Finland even later in 1918, the same capacity to be part of a fruitful theoretical and practical dialogue maybe could not yet have the same backing although both countries soon did take active part. Sweden though had the capacity and had as Denmark always been independent. But when Sweden lost Finland to Russia in 1819 the nationalistic aggression of the past lost its appeal and a new vision was formulated. What had been lost to the outside world should be regained within. Instead of continued national imperialism it was social development that should bring the country forward. Thus the popular movements in Sweden mobilised against drinking of alcohol by personal pledges and a constructive programme building cultural houses all over the country, for a free religion and for the interest of workers and farmers. Together these popular movements mobilised the broad masses of people in common against the ruling elite. In this type of country the kind of strong relationship that emerged between Denmark and India did not occur.

It was in the next period's great struggle for racial freedom that the same kind of strong connection between national liberation movements in the South and Nordic countries occurred again. Once more it was heralded by a missionary, Gunnar Helander, publishing articles criticising apartheid in South Africa in the Swedish press in 1941, Helander went to England in 1937 to improve his English before he went on a mission to South Africa. Here he became close friend to Kassim Lakhi, an Indian student from South Africa. When they both came to South Africa 1938 Helander soon became a committed opponent of apartheid when he saw how Lakhi was treated.

“We could socialize at his place or mine. But it could happen at my place that whites came in and refused to shake his hand, and then I had to say, either you shake his hand or you leave! I became furious.”<sup>14</sup>

This furious priest became the main initiator of the Swedish anti-apartheid movement carrying on an antiracist work that the Swedish priest Birger Forell inspired by Gandhi already started in Berlin 1933 against the oppression of Jews. The Swedish Christian intervention was in a less degree carried out in opposition against the Swedish state Church compared to the Danish interventions three decades earlier. Although Swedish antiracist priests met some obstacles and criticism from within the church it never had to oppose the church institutions the way the Danish missionaries had to do. Sometimes even it recieved support from well established institutions within the church that publish books written by Gandhi or replace Forell in Berlin when the German authorities throws him out of the country 1942 with two successive as stubborn priest opposing the repression. It would take many decades until the antiracist task became a task for the whole church but individuals were allowed to take their own path within the institution while others actively promoted racism and European overlordship. But to the most radical groups race oppression rather than national independence became important. This also meant a new period for Nordic-Indian movement relations. The cold war now set new hindrances in the way for South-North cooperation. To break that cold war thinking apart was not only necessary to built new South-North cooperation but also to renew domestic politics.

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<sup>14</sup> Thörn, 2006, p34.

## Peace and Solidarity against any imperialism 1948 – 1969

### Anarchism, Theosophy and Mao meets Gandhi



*Inge Oskarsson*

Margareta Schreiber met Inge Oskarsson 1948. Both were young, 21 years old. They fell in love. Margareta acted as if she was a disciple of Gandhi, could read Sanskrit and was intensely interested in Hinduism. "She and Gandhi seemed to be old friends" writes Oskarsson in his account of the time. While Schreiber seemed to have read most of Gandhi's books, Oskarsson had only read a few. His dream was to get a whole age group of men objecting to military service to stop war - in Sweden and globally. His fearless attitude and propaganda during his time as conscript ended in jail and isolation cell from which he recently was released when he met Margareta.

Very soon the young couple decided to hitch-hike to India to see Gandhi. They had no money but thought it should be possible anyway. They were prepared to "spread Gandhi's ideas to the Western world."

Two weeks after Gandhi was killed. They both mourned and felt that everything was in vain. And yet, "Gandhi is dead, but we are alive." New plans started to take shape.

It was in a difficult time. The global divide between the North and the South became evident 1948 when President Truman declared the American development doctrine stated to be universal dividing the world into developed and undeveloped nations. The same year the cold war became the dominant political agenda. US backed economic programs linked to demands to throw communists out of governments were seen as a threat by communist countries in Eastern Europe. Communists staged a coup d'état in Czechoslovakia.

There had been optimism among the youth that peace could be built. Hundreds of thousands of volunteers from many nations gathered in brigades to rebuilt Europe. The Swedish author Stig Claesson writes about this now forgotten time in his book *Det lyckliga Europa*, (The Happy Europe). Claesson begins his book with the words of Gandhi in the struggle against the British empire – "There is no road to peace, peace is the road." He imagines that what created such a commitment to volunteer work among the youth was that he and another youth no longer trusted any government. What was needed was to do something yourself. There was no road to peace, it had to be built and why not with sweat.

In London young social democrats, communists and liberals had joined their efforts. They started in 1945 World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY). When Europe still was in ruin and millions of people still were refugees and prisoners of war two main projects were started 1947. The first was to gather tens of thousands of youth volunteers to reconstruct Europe after the war. An international youth brigade was set up to build the Railway of peace 280 km to Sarajevo. For participants from the West this involved the risk of getting stamped as both communist and a traitor to your country. Contrary to many other countries during the war Tito and his partisans liberated Yugoslavia mainly on their own without the help of the red army. But the country was communist which made it a threat in the eyes of the West.

From Sweden more than 100 young socialists and communists participated in the brigade. In Bosnia they met with 250 000 others, mainly from Yugoslavia but also from other parts of the world. The Americans had to be smuggled in as part of the English delegation as US had forbidden them to come. The railway was built with much enthusiasm. But bad equipment and working conditions in a country devastated by war resulted in many deaths along the way. But the railway still goes there in the Nemila valley as a memory of proud volunteers and a happy Europe.

The same year the first World Youth Festival took place in Prague. WFDY together with the International Union of Students had succeeded in gathering 17 000 international participants from 71 countries. Many from the colonialisied countries participated. Hopefulness is a recurrent theme in reports from this first festival. The eyes of Vimla were shining according to one Indian observer. Vimla was a popular movement activist coming from the newly liberated India and recently elected vice chair of WFDY. She returned after the festival to a life-long commitment to trade union struggle at the local level in Chherta near Amritsar. The festival had from the beginning dangerous effects on authorian societies whether in the South, East or West. In 1947, Stalin's principal cultural politician Zhdanov was campaigning against

jazz. In Prague at the festival the communist Graeme Bell Jazz Band from Australia made great success.

The youth festivals continued to be an international meeting place for activists undermining ruling orders in many corners of the world in direct political or more cultural forms that in the long run might have been as effective.

Next year the global divisions became explicit between North and South, East and West. The American president Truman declared it between developed and underdeveloped countries. Communism under Stalin influence declared the division by staging coup d'état and other means to gain state control calling this "people's democracy" and Western countries calling themselves "free world" by staging wars against colonial people trying to liberate themselves. A cold war started that US with its overwhelming economic power dealt with by a mixture of containment and liberation, an attitude that also came to characterise the US and its Western allies relation to the World Youth festivals. A vacillation between making Western participation criminal or infiltrate the festivals trying to split the delegations.

But the divided world did not only become evident on a global scale. Also within the blocs small differences became wide gaps. When the international youth brigade this year should build a motorway between Belgrade and Zagreb there was simultaneously a split between Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. All other communist countries sided with the Soviet union against "titoism". Yugoslavia under Tito had its own independent politics both in relation to the Soviet union and the Western world, a position that now became almost impossible. At the international work camp the first to leave were the Albanians. Then the rest of the youth from East bloc countries left, and then many from the West. The only ones left were the British and the Swedes. Volunteer international youth brigades should continue but much smaller and without the hopefulness from the year 1947. Socialist youth camps were not anymore the same liberated way to build bridges between nations and create a new world. Every attempt to address issues of global concern was soon split into either for or against any of the two blocs.

There seems to have been at least one exception. In the summer of 1949 Margareta Schreiber and Inge Oskarsson cycled, walked, hitch-hiked and travelled all over Sweden building a new world citizen movement. They were untempered by the divisions that dominated their time. With a unique blend of anarchism, radical trade unionism and Gandhian thoughts they were able to carry out 100 meetings in the country from the very far North to the very far South. The tour started in Jönköping:

"I was very nervous. – Should anyone come? If people came, - what should I say? At several occasions I did try to write a speech, but it did not turn out well. I was hoping for inspiration when the audience was there. Still there was ten minutes to 8, but nobody had arrived. I sat and rested my tired legs on a coffin in despair of the thought that the day had been in vain if nobody came. ... At 8 pm there were some 70 persons that kindly had gathered around our posters which we had arranged with sticks and strings. I tried to gather my thoughts, but the inside of my heads felt like one whole muddle. Somewhere a church bell tolled and I had to start. Margareta had insisted in saying no. She should make the collect and sell Urey's and Hutkins' publications. I started by saying that we now lived in a totally new relationship as we no longer could defend ourselves with weapons. The weapons of our time would destroy us all. I remember that I ended by talking about population growth and global starvation. When the



speech was finished I received applause, then I invited to establish a local world citizen movement in Jönköping. It lively discussion started that lasted for one hour, during this time three persons signed up to become members of the movement. Margareta and I were invited to a couple who did not want to become members, but want to give us food and a bed. We were pleased by the invitation and went along. When should go into the house they were very occupied by making us sneak in without anyone seeing us. Well inside we couldn't stop us from asking why our visit had to be in secret. 'Well, we are communists', the man said, 'and it would not be good if t became known that you were staying with us.' I shuttered – were communists really that persecuted in Jönköping? I ensured that that the movement was neutral to party politics which meant that we could stay at anyone, even communists, and that we had nothing against that it became known that we stayed with them." I looked at Margareta for support and she nodded. "You do not know how it is to be a communist in Jönköping", the woman said, "we do not want that this persecution also should happen to the new movement."<sup>15</sup>

In Karlskrona, a main port for the Swedish marine, the two pacifists once again met problems with the police when trying to get permit for a public meeting and announcing it carrying sandwich poster in the streets. When the police after the successful meeting wanted to chase the public away the decision was taken to move out of town-limits were the police could not follow them. Before the crowd reached outside the control of the local police Schreiber and Oskarsson were forced into a police car and taken to the police station without legal grounds. The crowd got upset, engaged many more and soon 1 000 young persons, mainly soldiers headed for the police station. They threatened to storm the premises and liberate the pacifists taken by the police. After a while the head of the police and military police with machine guns could calm the situation down and the two pacifists were released. Afterwards the press tended to take side with the pacifists who never were accused of doing anything illegal and the police were seen as provoking the riot.



*World Citizen and War Resisters International buttons*

The rest of their tour to 100 places went with greater success. 500 members in the new movement were recruited. But Schreiber and Oskarsson felt the need to continue their original plan and go to India. In October they started with 250 crowns in their pocket, enough to get them out of the country but not much more. They hitchhiked through Europe but their attempt to reach India ended up in Northern Africa instead bringing back to the movement a stronger interest in liberation struggles.

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<sup>15</sup> Oskarsson, 1990, p146f.

Some very small groups like the World Citizen movement in Sweden and the international work camp movement, all with strong Gandhian inspiration started to confront the global development politics of the cold war states both built on centralised industrialisation, state power and division of the world in two blocs. Gandhian influence still maintained its stronghold in the pacifist movement during the 1950s but another movement became more important in Indian-Nordic contacts.

It was the anti-colonial movement where the World Youth Festival became the most important meeting point where activists from India, the Nordic countries and the rest of the world could find each other. In spite of the strong confrontations and splits within movements 1948 World Youth festivals could continue. Festivals were held after Prague in Budapest 1949, Berlin 1951, Bucharest 1953, Warsaw 1955, Moscow 1957, Vienna 1959 and Helsinki 1962 and they are still arranged today.



*Berlin Peace Festival flag 1951*

After the fall of the Berlin wall many thought these manifestations would disappear but third world countries have renewed the effort and last time it was held in Caracas 2005. The festivals were basically controlled by communist parties but had a lot broader participation and effects beyond the interest of ruling parties in the Eastern bloc. Each time more than ten thousand and sometimes more than 30 thousand international delegates participated and a million or more people from the host country. Jan Myrdal, a Swedish author and veteran in the solidarity movement, claims that the festivals were a unique opportunity to make contacts that became crucial in the anti-colonial struggle and the solidarity mass mobilisations of the 1960s. He states about the Berlin festival 1951 that:

”it was not actually mass rallies and demonstrations that became meaningful. It was the direct contact between youth from all countries. The talks. The gatherings. It was

this that the NATO tried to stop with violence and propaganda. Because in them race prejudices broke apart in personal meetings. Here in the streets and parks of Berlin also Swedish youth learned to know the reality in colonial and dependent countries and here the foundation was made for the world-wide anti-colonial and anti-imperialistic solidarity work that came to put its imprint the international youth movement during the coming decades.”<sup>16</sup>

From each Nordic country many hundred young people participated in the festivals fiercely condemned by the press, mostly close to one thousand from Sweden and Norway and at some occasions more than 2 000 from Finland. After going to World Youth festivals Myrdal went to India, China and other third world countries writing books on India and other similar matters making the Swedish people aware of the need for global solidarity and national liberation.



*Erik Stinus and Sara Mathai at the Warsaw festival 1955*

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<sup>16</sup> Myrdal, Jan, FiB/K

Erik Stinus, a Danish sailor and poet also participated in the World Youth festivals where he in 1955 met Sara Mathai, the leader of the Bombay festival Committee. A year later he sailed to India and they married. On the boat trip back to Europe they met the antiapartheid movement in South Africa before starting a life together in Copenhagen in the solidarity, antiapartheid, peace, women and other movements struggling for global justice. Stinus also edited a book on Indian – Danish relations. But the Indian influence through the World Youth festivals was primarily resulting in a joint struggle with all popular movements globally against colonialism and for peace, not contributing to the development critical aspects of Gandhian thought that during the 1950s also was marginalised in India.

The reactions against the World Youth Festivals and their organisers were strong. Both WFDY and IUS had their headquarters thrown out of Western countries from their original seats in London and Paris. No global organisation of political importance to civil society with members both in the East and the West was allowed to have the possibility of showing that they had strong roots also in the west. Committees or individuals going to the festival were regularly criminalised both in some Western countries and the South. A peak in the repression was reached at the Berlin festival 1951 when the West German border police with all means stopped thousands of West German youth from crossing the border. But many sneaked in anyway while one died in his attempt to cross the borders when the police forced a group of youth out into the Elbe River. In Communist countries connections with the other side of the bloc division was also suppressed, often more severely.



*Finnish textile  
symbol for the Berlin Festival*

In two waves alternatives to the festivals and their organisers was created. At first in the beginning at the end of the 1940s and beginning of 1950s liberals and social democrats set up their own international organisations and created international students cooperation where communists were excluded. It later became public in 1967-68 that these initiatives from early on were strongly financed by CIA, especially in order to infiltrate World Youth festivals and in general to communists out of international organisations. In all of them, Nordic young politicians had crucial positions from the very start.

This generation of Nordic young politicians was anti-communists but primarily believers in technological progress and liberation from colonialism. One of the key figures was Per Wirmark, a liberal who soon had more contacts with liberation leaders as general secretary of WAY than any other politician in the Nordic countries. He became a key person for mobilising the opinion against apartheid in Sweden and internationally among liberals.

Another was Olof Palme, a social democrat. Together with others he started a campaign among student to give blood to support South African students. Palme shared the criticism against communism for being unreasonable and sectarian. In the discussions on alternatives to the communist dominated IUS, Palme claimed that he saw it as important not to adopt an

anticommunist dependence on the US view. Instead it was important to develop an independent position between the two blocs and especially be occupied what happened in the colonised countries. The result was that an international secretariat for students was formed with Palme as a secretary. In this role he travelled a lot especially in Asia.

”It was in Asia I concretely experienced colonialism. It was especially thanks to the students that I discovered this. They understood how to put me eye to eye with reality. ... In Singapore I stayed 1950 for ten days in a university town, where Chinese, Malaysians, and Indians were living. The silent contempt they showed for the famous ‘white supremacy’ made a great impression. Self-confident, assured about that their victory would come sooner or later, they patiently waited for racism to disappear, that the oppressors would leave, they even showed some indulgence towards the excesses of the colonial classes. ... We visited the families of the students from very different backgrounds, we talked about poverty, the Asian nationalism, about how the society of the future ought to be organised. It was easy to talk: we did not only have the same values, we also shared the will to take action. We wanted to reshape the world, yes, but we also wanted to know how. ... In reality our discussions ended in the same thought: the madness of imperialism had to be defeated, and the poor nations had to decide their destiny on their own.”<sup>17</sup>

But his hard criticism against Western rule Palme kept in smaller circles until mid 1960s when young activists already had started to mobilise and make words like imperialism important again. In the 1950s young social democrats organised demonstrations for freedom against communism, but not for liberation of colonised countries. A view going beyond the two development models carried by the communist and capitalist worlds was not in the mind of Palme or many other young social democrats. On the contrary the young social democrats were for modernising Swedish defence and Palme himself was one of the strongest supporters of a Swedish atomic bomb. The radicalism of young social democrats and liberals in the 1950s was very limited in both political scope and even more in terms of forms of political action. What the social democrats and liberals did was elite oriented and all the time organised with an eye on the communists to exclude them from cooperation.

There was one exception when a mass mobilisation took place. It was in Norway 1953 when Folkeaksjonen for India (People’s Action for India) collected 3 million crowns for a fishing development project in Kerala in India which also received 10 million in state funding, a huge sum at the time. Against strong internal opposition the Social democratic party who ruled the country had decided to join NATO. Growing criticism against the new Norwegian foreign policy paved the way for the magazine *Orientering* in 1952 giving a voice to those sceptical of both the US and Soviet union. The campaign to support an “underdeveloped” country was seen as a way to please the left within the party and those demanding a wider global interest. In a letter to the strongly NATO friendly social democratic party secretary Hakon Lie from Anders Buraas at the party secretariat the purposes of the developing aid was spelled out:

”1. To cover a need among people interested in foreign policy who do not politically and psychologically agree with Norwegian foreign policy orientation and that lacks an outlet for their idealistic urge to do something in this new situation. Whether they will become passive observers or active participants the

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<sup>17</sup> Palme, 1996, p15.

plan will help them through the psychological difficult ties as Norway take upon itself a concrete work with great international perspectives.

2. To find occupation in idealistic work for many Norwegian 'intellectuals' that sees Norway's seemingly dependency on capitalist America to have imposed upon them an intellectual difficult ties in breathing and whose only occupation so far has been frequent outbursts against Norwegian foreign policy."<sup>18</sup>

A year later the time has come to act. The government had given Diderich H. Lund the task to select a country. He had participated in a "World Pacifist Meeting" in India and was known as a supporter of Gandhi. He was not a communist but a member of the Norwegian-Soviet union friendship society and eager to build bridges across borders. He explained his choice of country:

"I eliminated all colonial states where there was unrest which would create extra difficult ties. Preferably I would have liked to propose a state with a sympathetic democratic government. Then there was not so many to choose from. And since after the visit in 1949-1950 I became very occupied by the destiny of the country, I soon choose India as a cooperation partner."<sup>19</sup>

The result has been criticised. The modernising of the fishing culture by motorised vessels in Kerala did not only bring beneficent results to everybody but also problems for many who were excluded from the large scale development project. The development caused the need for investments and the investors without previous background in the industry who took over much of the fishing. Conflicts between different fishermen and new investors increased and resulted in over fishing. But local people were impressed by the more equal relationship between people at the workplace the Norwegians brought along.

The Kerala project became the beginning of the biggest national development aid programme pro capita in the world. Norway today gives a higher percentage of its GNP to foreign aid than any other country.

There was also a second wave when the World Youth Festivals once more provoked organising of alternatives at the end of 1950s. This time it was conservative youth. Swedish right wing students took the lead to start an international organisation. It got its first take-off when a mass campaign against the World Youth Festival in Vienna 1959 was organised. Social democrats, non-socialist parties, youth organisations, the press and CIA met secretly to find a common strategy against the festival. The press was supposed to neglect the festival if there were no scandals to report, liberals to infiltrate the festival and spread material financed by CIA while a new conservative youth coalition would attack the festival from the outside and try to convince delegates from the East to escape to search for asylum in the West. The plan was carried out but some 50 000 people participated anyway in outdoor cultural activities organised by the festival in spite of the silence in the media and it was decided to try again organising the festival in the West, next time in Helsinki 1962. But a new conservative youth organisation was born, later with the name European Democratic Union according to the proposal from Carl Bildt, later conservative prime minister in Sweden and now foreign minister.

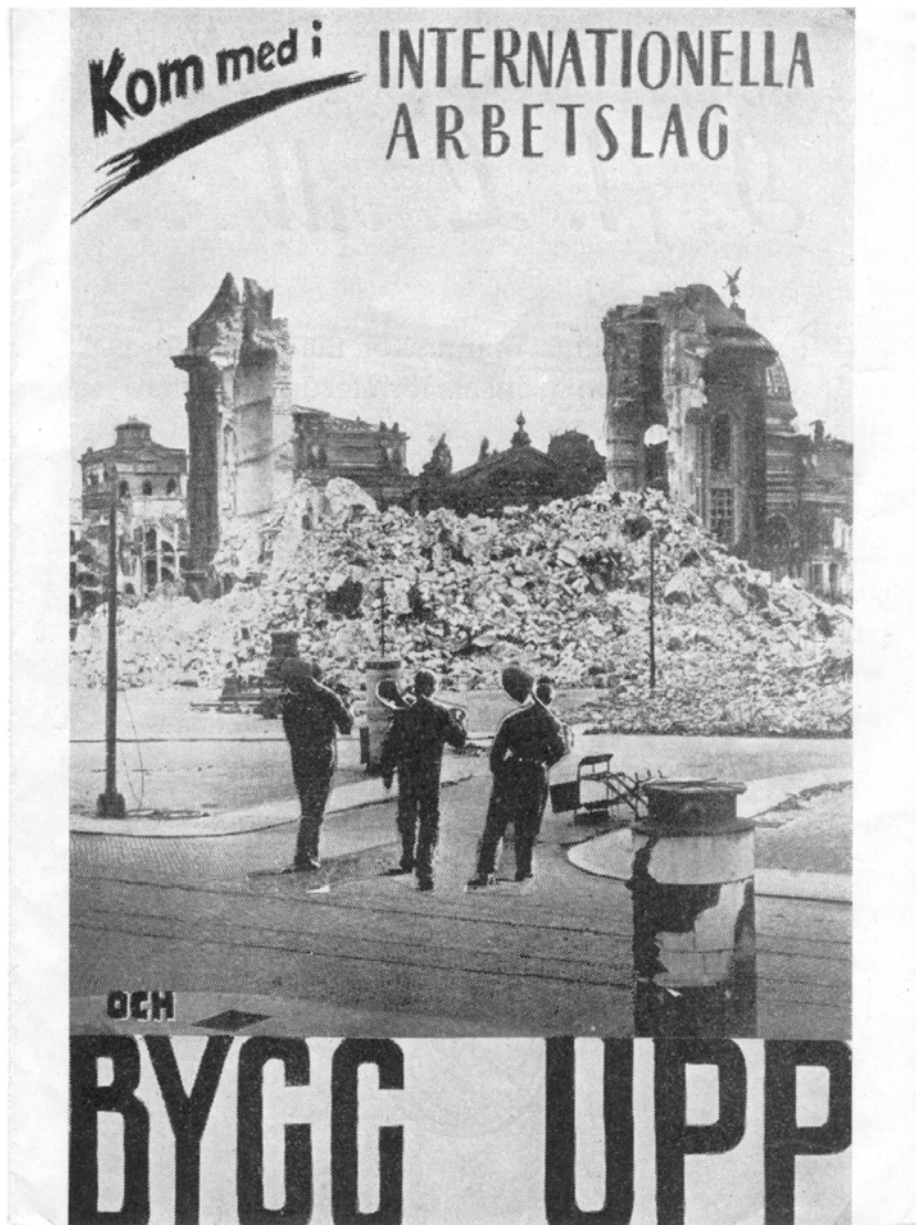
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<sup>18</sup> Quoted letter by Verdensmagasinet X no 5 1997.

<sup>19</sup> Verdensmagasinet X no 5 1997, quotes in the article from D. H. Lund, *Fra Norges fjell til fjerne kyster* (Oslo 1972)

In this polarised world it was necessary to break the limitations set to both international and domestic politics by the cold war. To this end movements inspired by Gandhi made strong contributions.

A key for survival of Gandhian thoughts in practice was the international work camps bringing all kind of people together with an interest in volunteer action which had received much inspiration from Ceresole's contacts with Gandhi and the first secular volunteer work in India in the 1930s.



*“Join International Work Camp and REBUILD”, poster from the 1940s*

This international solidarity volunteer movement organising work camps became a key factor and still is in a broader alternative movement. After the problems the first years findings ways to unite the participants this was gradually solved by adopting more consensus oriented decisions during the work. 1952 the Swedish section started international work camps in

Yugoslavia once more uniting people from the West and the East in Europe. 1953 Swedish IAL also sent observers to the World Youth festival in Bucharest. 1955 SCI organised an international work camps in connection to the World Youth festival in Warsaw. This became the starting point for renewing East-West international work camp tradition in Europe although not in the same enormous scale as before the cold war started. The International work camp movement started also to send volunteers to the third world. From Sweden in the early 1950s and organising own development projects from Denmark 1956 and Sweden 1957. In ten years the movement in Sweden five-folded their participation at international work camps that included both third world, poor regions in the South of Europe, antroposophical schools and Samic villages in the North of Sweden. This practical solidarity became an invisible cement keeping the alternative movement together.

Another influence was more philosophical inspiration from Gandhi and other Indian philosophy. This was strongest in Norway. Here the fierce nonviolent resistance against the occupation during World War II had created a wealth of experience that called upon clarifying thoughts. In 1939 Arne Næss became the youngest full professor in Norway ever when he entered the chair of philosophy in Oslo, the only of its kind in the country. Næss was 18 during the Salt march organised by Gandhi, a campaign that had influenced him a lot. When the German occupation came 1940 he and others at the university and many others in Norway had to reflect upon different ways of resistance. Næss made critical analysis of many of these forms of resistance and their outcome to deepen the interest in argumentation, a text that during many decades was obligatory to every university student in Norway and also have been used in Sweden. Næss was from the beginning a positivist influenced by his stay in Vienna in the mid 1930s but became more and more influenced in broader thinking on development and democracy. His broad philosophical and empirical interest made him central in shaping social sciences in Norway after the war. He was also a practical man and introduced new climbing techniques in Norway and headed the expedition to climb the Tirich Mir in Pakistan 1950. In 1952 he and other pacifists strongly opposed anticommunism and cold war propaganda. He also had a central position internationally as the head of UNESCO:s project Democracy, Ideology and Objectivity in the mid 1950s. Together with Johan Galtung, Arne Næss wrote the book *Gandhi i atomalderen* (Gandhi in the Atomic Age) in 1955. They both continued to be influenced by Gandhi and themselves influenced the discussion on peace, development and other issues. In 1958 the Norwegian branch of the international work movement, Internasjonalt Dugnad organised an international seminar at Emma Hiort's home close to Oslo on non-violence. Valli Chari, a disciple of Vinoba Bahve, from India came with the help of Service Civil international. Other speakers were Gene Sharp, an expert on non-violence and Håkan Holmboe, the leader of Norwegian teacher's non-violent resistance against the German occupation during the war.<sup>20</sup> In 1959 Galtung could in Oslo set up the first peace study institution in the Western world. Nonviolent action continued to be respected in Norway. When 200 youth activists threw black tennis balls into the tennis court and then occupied it to stop a game between South Africa and Norway in 1964 the police met them with respect. They were carried away. But many Norwegian policemen had the experience of being put in concentration camps by the fascists and explained that they stopped the protest only because they had to do their job.

In Finland the situation was different. Here the conditions for those putting nonviolence above loyalty to the state became even harder after the war as the punishment for consciousness objectors increased, something especially hitting the Jehova Witnesses. The conflict between

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<sup>20</sup> email from Harald Bjørke to the suthor, 20006-10-27.



radical workers and the state was also tense. In 1949 a strike at Kemi was seen as a communist threat to the stability of the state. Two workers were killed by the police. Social conflicts in many Nordic countries were not primarily seen as such but as a result of Soviet Union attempts to undermine society. A picture of Lorens Zilliachus still was hanging on the wall at his old school in Helsinki but there was not much interest in India otherwise. In this situation Unto Tähtinen left for India 1954 in his search for Gandhi and Gandhians. He became soon disappointed. Leaders at Gandhian institutions and organisations were often broad minded and inspired by Gandhi but to the rest at such places it seemed mostly a way to survive by clinging to some superficial Gandhians signs but lacking deeper commitment. Tähtinen went to the Benares University instead, to study non-violence and Gandhi instead.

In Sweden the grand old man G.E. Dahlberg in the main peace organisation and the oldest still working peace organisation in the world, Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society, wrote about liberation movements and nonviolent resistance: "Gandhi has shown how such a struggle shall be fought".<sup>21</sup> He saw him as an inspiration at the same time as he was among the first to start the interest in Sweden for the atomic bomb. Dahlberg was more than 80 years old and many started to follow him in his interest in atomic weapons but not regarding liberation movements and Gandhian methods. During the first international works camps in Germany after the war organised from Sweden there was also interest in Gandhi and not only practical work done. In the ruins of Hildesheim a peace center was constructed where peace ideas were studied, among them Gandhian philosophy, non-violence and satyagraha.<sup>22</sup> With the exception of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom the pacifist organisations as well as the new World federalist movement avoids cooperating with organisations including communists.

In Sweden not so much thinking is done as in Norway, instead the movement is busy doing it, often the Gandhian way in both method and goal and with strong international contacts. Primarily outside the pacifist organisations in the international work camp movement and especially in the world citizen movement advanced the ways to question the ruling imperialist order. In 1957 the World Citizen movement made a direct action by giving a spade to the guardsmen at the Royal castle. The spade had a sign saying "instead of weapons". All four activists participating in the action were sentenced by the court for disorderly conduct. It was a direct action that Gandhi would have been proud of.

The same kind of idea was strongly promoted the same year by P.A. Fogelström, a working class writer in *Folket i Bild*, an influential magazine distributed through the workers movement. All the money from the military budget should be given to development aid instead. A utopian Swedish peace and solidarity movement was born that was different from all other Nordic countries where the focus in the discussion became more narrow. In Sweden at the same time Inga Thorson who 20 years earlier had the office of the Swedish international work camp section under her bed in a shoe box now was the chair of the Social democratic women. Contrary to Olof Palme and the young social democrats the women were totally opposing a Swedish atomic bomb. A stronger ally could the peace movement not have. The women under the leadership of Thorson was not only opposing, they also threatened leaving the party if a decision to support Swedish atomic bombs were taken.

Yet to Sweden old and new forms of politics had to be integrated. The old hierarchical representative forms of organisations met with greater difficulties. Important institutions for

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<sup>21</sup> Quoted by P.A. Fogelström,

<sup>22</sup> email from Harald Bjørke to the author, 20006-10-27 and the book *Internationella arbetslag*.

such popular based public spaces as *Folket i Bild* soon had great economic difficulties and was sold to the commercial publisher Bonniers who turned it into a magazine with half pornographic content. The new horizontal action group organisation had yet not received any wider support and in the pacifist magazine there was a warning for using this kind of method to receive attention.

In this climate Swedish politicians took the lead in recognising the right for colonised peoples to liberate themselves in the case of Algeria. But so far it was only in words. The World citizen movement was also involved but more directly. Inge Oskarsson went to Alger and smuggled 52 French deserters out of Algeria at great risks. New forms of organisation emerged of self-selected intellectuals that excluded communists for tactical reasons and even liberals who had participated in international Peace committee manifestations, which to a high degree were under communist influence. 1958 the Action group against Swedish Atomic bomb presented itself to the public. Its two goals were to prevent Swedish defence to include atomic weapons and to discuss "the possibilities of using the resources, which now is being used for military purposes, for constructive purposes." This new form released a lot of political potential during two years and paved together with the Social democratic women the way for a Swedish no to the atomic bomb thus becoming the first country with the potential of getting the bomb and abstaining from it.

In Denmark there lacked the kind of small but crucial activist movement that used all of the Gandhian methods and perspectives. Instead the interest was separated in different fragments. Sara Mathai Stinus from India felt that people could come up to her in the street and admiring her for coming from the country of Gandhi, but it was in an almost exotic fashion among followers of the once pacifist Radical Left Party, a non-socialist liberal party were Ellen Hørup and her writings in *Politiken* had made strong impressions once upon a time. Political action to address current themes was not the issue here. To some the liberation of Algeria was an important issue among people feeling that something had to be done. But in Denmark in contrast to Sweden this resulted in a trotskyst socialist organisation setting up a weapon factory to support the liberation front with some key material for their military struggle. The strongest link to political action was within the pacifist movement and especially the radical pacifist movement *Aldrig mere krig* (Never more war) with many consciousness objectors in their ranks. But the dominating philosophy here was rather the individualistic appeal to the individual moral by Tolstoy who also once inspired Gandhi. This rather than the Gandhian mass movement opposing imperialism in its different forms was the main current among the most radical core of the pacifist movement contrary to Sweden were a constructive programme to end starvation and support development in the third world by abolishing military expenditure was the strategy.

#### **Four Gandhian and Indian influences changing Nordic countries**

What would bring mass participation to new popular movements in all Nordic countries were four Gandhian and Indian inspirations simultaneously being introduced in a large scale. These inspirations came directly or through African liberation movements often using the same kind of liberation methods and inspired by Gandhi and the Indian liberation movement. Especially ANC in South Africa and the liberation movements in Ghana and Northern Rhodesia/Zambia used mass civil disobedience and nonviolence in their struggle for freedom.

The four inspirations were boycotts against oppressive regimes, padyatras or long marches linked to direct action, intervention by direct nonviolent action in conflicts and mass support for constructive programmes to give humanitarian support to liberation movement territories. Between 1960 and 1964 the political landscape had been completely changed in the Nordic countries thanks to this Indian influence.

It began in March 1960. In all Scandinavian countries a boycott against South African goods was launched by the trade unions and the cooperative consumer organisations. Consumer boycott at a mass scale was a central part of the Indian liberation movement in their struggle against the British. Behind the campaign against apartheid and the demands for a boycott was mainly liberation movements in Asia and Africa whether they had reached independence or not.

In his assessment of the anti-apartheid movement and the emergence of a global civil society Håkan Thörn states that Western notions labelling the kind of mass actions that are used in the beginning of the 1960s as new politics are false. When "single-issue" strategies, civil disobedience and consumer boycotts were used in the North it was claimed as new methods in spite of that popular movements in the South had used them since very long. Thörn specially refers to the Indian liberation movement and the South African anti-apartheid movement. He claims rightly that academicians seeing new social movements as a new phenomenon in advanced countries limit the knowledge of the phenomena to a US/European perspective. New social movements claimed to be an important modern social invention in the most advanced capitalist countries are actually rather part of a global struggle for liberation with the liberation movements of poor and oppressed as the most advanced democratizing agent.

The first international consumer boycott campaign was called upon by All African People's Conference in Accra 1958. As the international trade union movement agreed to the proposal it was easy to make them participate. A time limited boycott was launched in the Scandinavian countries, often before or already decided before the massacre of 68 peaceful anti-apartheid demonstrators at Sharpeville in South Africa in March 1960.

To many this boycott was considered a threat to democracy. Leading social democratic newspapers criticized the campaign on principal grounds to be a form of political act as it was a kind of citizen action making foreign policy without a parliamentary mandate. The conservatives and the business community did not like the boycott either. The defendants of the boycott claimed that such acts were legitimate and could even contribute to deepen democracy when the related demands has a broad appeal among the population but is neglected by the political elite.

During the following years the opinion against apartheid grew in the Nordic countries while politicians continued to refuse taking a stand in the same way they had done since Asian and African countries had called for action. 1963 a Nordic boycott started, this time with coalitions of national youth organisations as initiators and with no time limit. The boycott became the main organising tool and hundreds of local committees started to disseminate information to make people to stop buying South African products.

The second inspiration grew within the peace movement and got its first clear expression with Operation Gandhi 1952 in London. This grew into the more known mass movement in the early 1960s. It limited itself to only oppose atomic bombs or defence issues except for Sweden. This anti atomic bomb movement was also much inspired by Gandhi. In the Nordic

countries the influence came primarily through Britain. Operation Gandhi took place in front of the war ministry in London with a street sit-in blockade and collecting 136.000 signatures for a peace declaration. 1954 a mass movement grew in Japan collecting millions of signatures to protest against atomic bomb tests after a Japanese fishing boat had been hit by fall-out after an American test bomb. 1957 a single person marched from London to a nuclear site at Aldermaston followed by 800 the next year and 100.000 when the march went the other way and ended in London 1960. Bertrand Russell was a key figure both in initiating broader initiatives and himself participating in civil disobedience the Gandhian way. 20.000 activists participated in an occupation of the runways at Wethersfield air base, among them Oskarsson from the World Citizen Movement in Sweden. Hundreds of other Nordic people participated in the activities in Britain. They soon brought the ideas back home.



*The first Nordic peace march from Keflavik to Reykjavik 1960*

1960 the first Nordic atomic march took place in Iceland and later the same year in Denmark initiated by radical pacifists in No more war that made direct action sit-ins to stop rockets usable for atomic weapons from being unloaded, 1961 in Sweden and 1963 in Norway. In Finland as similar movement, the Committee of 100 started in 1963 to mobilise similar long demonstrations with a lot of music and more carnival looking participants than had been seen

before. On Iceland, Denmark and Norway with demands against atomic bombs on their own soil, in Finland concerning defence policy and in Sweden against the plans for a Swedish atomic bomb and to propose alternative uses for military resources. In Denmark organised in similar fashion as in Sweden two years earlier with a self-selected leadership excluding communists, in Sweden organised as membership movement with local chapters who welcomed also communists. The movement was successful and in some years the plans for atomic bombs on Nordic soil was for the time being dropped.

Discussions on non-violence and Gandhian methods rather than his whole ideology were crucial in this era that by its own activists and academicians has been described as the breakthrough of new social movements in the North. The Danish activist Toni Liversage writes in her memoirs "The movement against atomic armament in the beginning of the 60s thus was the first broad popular movement in the post-war period, where people decided to take an issue in their own hand and act, and the movement in this way became a predecessor of the grassroots movements of the 70s and 80s". Operation Gandhi started to have mass influence in many countries.

The third inspiration came from Gandhian peace army tradition or in Hindi – Shanti Sena. Already in the 1930s Westerners had made an attempt to set up international teams of activists willing to interfere nonviolently in conflicts inspired by Gandhi. World War II put an end to these efforts but in the end of the 1950s a new upsurge took place. In India Gandhians successfully were able sometimes to interfere with peace armies to prevent ethnic riot and disarming bandits. Among Christians in the US a small subculture of radical pacifists had emerged during the war making sit-ins against racial segregation and protesting for the rights of pacifists sentenced to jail. It was within these groups inspiration came to Great Britain inspiring civil disobedience and organising long marches against atomic weapons. But it went further. In 1957 the Quaker Lawrence Scott started Call to Non-Violent Action Against Nuclear Weapons. For a week a vigil was held at the testing ground for atomic bombs at Las Vegas in the US. The year after the action group became permanent under the name of the Committee for Nonviolent Action Activists with the support of Fellowship of Reconciliation, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, War Resisters League and a Quaker Peace committee. They started to sail boats into testing areas in the Pacific to prevent atomic bomb testing. The Gandhians from India, international radical pacifists, Christian from the US and others soon joined hands together with African states. 1959 – 1960 peace activists gathered in Ghana. With the support from many neighbouring African countries and peace organisations in the West three groups were sent from Ghana through the Sahara desert to protest against French atomic bomb test sites in Southern Algeria. All were caught by French military.

This action was followed by two attempts to make further interventions. At the War Resisters International's global meeting in India 1960, a proposal was made "to internationalise the Shanti Sena idea". A World Peace Brigade with section on the Asian, European and North American continents was going to be set up that should be able to interfere in different conflicts.

At the same time the World Citizen movement in Sweden had similar ideas as the Committee for Nonviolent Action in the US. Thus secular Gandhian anarchism meets Christian pacifist Gandhians. The result was the American - European March for Disarmament or Walk for Peace between San Francisco and Moscow 1960 – 1961.



*Carrying the World Citizen symbol marchers and supporters walk out of London towards Moscow 1961*

Inge Oskarsson from World Citizen movement had gained support from many pacifist organisations in Europe to organise a European march for unilateral disarmament starting in London after the Aldermaston march and continuing to Moscow. The negotiations with the East bloc authorities seemed to come out well. The Committee for Nonviolent Action saw the chance and a joint initiative emerged. The conflicts in getting the international team for the march in place were great. The Americans were used to consensus decision-making, the Europeans to majority rule. According to Oskarsson the Americans were well prepared supported by strong churches in the US and had no understanding for Europeans that wanted to beg to find food during the march. The Americans also wanted to limit participation in the team to 22 persons with 12 being American and thus in majority, the Europeans wanted everybody to be welcome. Conflicts continued concerning how persons participating in the march but not being official team members should be treated.

When the march was thrown out of French coast Oskarsson experienced the problems with consensus democracy – "endless discussions about what we should do, made me realise that Quaker democracy led to dictatorship under the most persistent." After many attempts to

swim to the beach the marchers had to give up and head back to England. But then something happened.

”A group of French demonstrators took our standards and continued towards Paris. The police took their banners and tore them apart, the French wrote on their white shirt, the police tore their shirt off, the Frenchmen wrote the text on their naked backs and in this way they were able to go to Paris and could meet us in Belgium”<sup>23</sup>

But this act was never included in the official report from the marchers as they did not belong to the ”team.” Oskarsson experienced too many problems in the encounter between the American and Europeans activists and finally he went home when German participants were not given any of the plentiful food. But the march could successfully come to Moscow because of his preparations and spread the same message of unilateral disarmament both in the West and the East in spite of harassment by the authorities in both blocs.

One of the participants in the North American European march was Gary Daechsler. On his way back from Moscow he turned up in Stockholm. Here the encounter between radical pacifism, Gandhianism and another Indian influence created a movement for freedom of speech at Swedish schools of a kind that was new to the Western world.

At two high schools in the Stockholm region young theosophists had their strongholds, Lidingö and Saltsjöbaden. Theosophy was inspired by Indian ideas about reincarnation and emerged as a kind of religious ecumenical philosophy in India during the 19th century. To the young theosophists, Indian leaders of their organisation was nothing special, third world leadership was rather the rule and when it came to ideas, Indian thinking was nothing foreign to them. When Daechsler with their help tried to make propaganda for total unilateral disarmament and becoming conscript objectors, this caused panic for the head of the two schools. At Lidingö the police came with a car that was stopped by masses of pupils making a sit-down action to prevent the policemen from arresting Daechsler. At Saltsjöbaden another attempt was made to stop Daechsler. He had gone to the headmaster’s expedition and said that he wanted to speak in the school. The headmaster said no and at the same time he put a finger touching the pacifist. Daechsler then fell to the floor and refused to go away. When the local policemen tried to carry him out, the experienced Daechsler made himself heavy and slippery. Finally he ended up in a cell at the police station where he sang peace songs and psalms.

Meanwhile Tom Alberts and Christer von Malmberg as a delegation of students came to the cell trying to convince Daechsler to follow them, but he refused as long as he had no permit to talk in the school. Alberts and von Malmberg then went to Lidingö where the important stencil machine was in the hands of the students. With a report on what had happened copied in their hand they went to the head masters office when they came back.

”There are a lot of false rumours about what have happened, the two stencil makers said and came up with the proposal: - Do you want to see this through, if there is anything wrong. The material was supposed to be distributed the next day and thus, we meant, it was of importance that there were no mistakes in it. The headmaster read through the text and could not find any. – If Daechsler is allowed to talk, do you have to distribute it then? he asked. This led to an

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<sup>23</sup> Oskarsson, 1991, p53.

agreement. Daechsler was allowed to speak to the pupils at 4 pm in the assembly-hall after school time but only in front of pupils from the two oldest age groups who were regarded as mature enough for the issue at hand.”<sup>24</sup>

Soon two young theosophist, Jan Fjellander and Anders Struwe organised Sveriges elevers press, SVEP (Swedish Pupils Press) to defend freedom of speech at the schools. At this time stencil newspapers were not included in the rights of expression and thus headmasters could interfere, stopping pupils from expressing themselves in their own newspapers. Soon the rights for grown-ups that could afford printed newspapers was also extended to pupils that only had stencil copying as their tool for making their voices heard to many.

Thus freedom of speech was brought to Swedish schools by a mixture of Indian Gandhian and Theosophical inspiration and radical pacifism. Daechsler’s stubbornness and the stencil machine in the hands of the pupils and their negotiation capacity gave result. Through a sit-down action to prevent the police in their work and an occupation of a headmaster’s office freedom of speech was secured and the radical pacifist could speak in front of the students. The same kind of actions to support freedom of speech is generally regarded as the basis for the whole rebellion among youth and students in the 1960s. But then it is the student actions at the Berkley University that is stated as the first of its kind although it took place three years after in 1964.

The young theosophists continued to live in the midst of international contacts and Indian inspiration. In 1961, a meeting in Lebanon established the World Peace Brigade according to Gandhian thoughts. The Asian section intervened in the Chinese – Indian border conflict being harassed by both governments. A training camp was set up in Tanzania. Here a team should be sent to Northern Rhodesia to intervene non-violently in the conflict between white settlers and the black majority. At Tived in the forest in the middle of Sweden a camp was also set up in 1962 to train people to participate in the action. But the liberation movement was successful enough on its own and the action was called off. The third intervention by Peace brigade was to send a vessel to Soviet Union to protest against atomic weapons. The sailing ship Everyman III visited Stockholm and the crew stayed at von Malmborgs’ house in Saltsjöbaden both on its way to Leningrad and on their way back.



*Button for Everyman III*

The kind of nonviolent interventions as a “living wall” according to Gandhi’s ideas continued to grow as a tool for interventions in social conflicts all over the world and is today better established.

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<sup>24</sup> Interview with Roland and Christer von Malmborg, 2004.



The fourth Indian inspired action became the corner stone in all Nordic societies third world solidarity model. This time there was no special Gandhian influence but another Indian influence that is the origin of the largest mass solidarity action in the Nordic countries.



*Songbook with world citizen symbol produced at home by Roland von Malmberg. Filled with 500 protest and other songs from the whole world it was much in use among the young theosophists and the alternative movement.*

All organisations of relevance to popular movements and politics with international linkages in the Nordic countries at this time to my knowledge had their global leadership in industrial countries either in the West or the East. The exception was the Theosophical society in Sweden which had a youth group, TUG, started 1955 by Gudrun Fjellander. Its first involvement with social action was in 1959 when the group "adopted" a Tibetan refugee child. Soon the members of the group became involved in the peace movement visiting the Aldermaston marches and active in the first atomic marches in Sweden and other more radical activities of the pacifist and world citizen movement. 1961 five young theosophists, Jan Fjellander, Roland von Malmberg, Christer von Malmberg, Margareta Homstedt, and Jan Rosenblom, decided to support 100.000 refugee children in the liberated areas of Algeria during the ongoing war with France where 1 million people were killed. They send out with the help of all TUG an information kit to all 1.500 schools in Sweden containing information on how to make a collect action and why the money are needed to enable the Lutheran Aid organisation to help the refugee children. 110 schools got involved and the result was more than the aid organisation could handle, 600.000 Swedish crowns were collected which was 20 percent more than planned and a lot more than the grown ups in the Aid organisation ever thought was possible.

The next year the established organisation for pupils, SECO, took over the campaign collecting twice as much money also to Algeria, 1964 the campaign became Scandinavian in a joint Danish-Norwegian effort supporting Peru, 1967 it became Nordic and Finnish schools also participated. Operation One Day's Work was born when pupils offered to help people suffering from oppression in the third world. They soon offered their service to the community and the payment went to solidarity with the third world. Money was raised also to

violent liberation movements like ANC, SWAPO and others in Southern Africa from 1969 and onwards, apart from common third world development projects often directed to education. 1974 the trade unions in Finland joined giving one hour's salary, and in 1978 the Finnish church. In 1985 alone 40 million crowns was collected in a joint Nordic project to support ANC, in 1990 28 million crowns was collected in Norway alone to support Amnesty human rights education project in the third world. No total estimate has been made of the sum collected but it is probably above half a billion ECU or US dollars since the beginning in 1961. It has gained full support from all of society both from authorities and the civil society with one exception - in Denmark right wing political groups attacked the work for supporting violent ANC and since the middle of the 1990s the Danish government has also tried in different ways to make it harder to make the solidarity action as a school activity, demanding that it should be organised voluntarily outside the school. The action has continued in large scale in spite of these efforts also in Denmark. The Indian inspiration to this Nordic mass solidarity model has never been made public and is unknown outside oral tradition among some few people. Nation state oriented history, both academic and other, tend to systematically make invisible the kind of democratic connections that exists between the third world and industrial countries as such connections do not fit into the ideal that democratic progress at every stage starts in the West.

Thus Indian influence was crucial in many ways when the Nordic countries opened up to the world and became aware of global issues. Contrary to many accounts that see this as a result of new democratising methods developing in rich countries it was rather inspired by small but influential groups that knew their inspiration to come from India. The methods used were first often experienced in large scale in the Indian liberation movement in South Africa and India, later by others in North America and Africa. The boycott, the long marches linked to direct action, the peace army and a constructive programme were many could participate melted together in a powerful vision of that something could be done.

## **Overcoming limitations of interpretation of Indian influences**

If these four Gandhian and other Indian influences were important in vitalising Nordic societies at the beginning of the 1960s, there were also limitations. These were dealt with in three ways. The first limitation was that much of what was claimed to be Gandhian ideology was actually European Tolstoyan thinking. Tolstoy inspired Gandhi and also both Christian and socialist propaganda to promote consciousness objectors in the Nordic countries and many other places in the world. But Gandhi developed Tolstoy further beyond the individualistic appeal and beyond a goal only related to lack of violence. Instead of Gandhi's collective movement to challenge imperialism and the dominant development model, the main focus in Europe was on individual moral. Absence of violence became more important than avoiding timidity in confronting imperialism. Thus Gandhi is more used as a more modern and exotic icon for the movement than actually listened to for his message.

The most influential mass movement is the peace movement and its main ethos is to be neutral between the two blocs. What has to be avoided is a nuclear war between the superpowers. If peasants in an Asian country rebel against US or European imperialism, the main thing to say is avoid violence and do not take sides as both sides are actually in the hands of opposing super powers.

This movement was very influential and renewed much of the political culture in the countries in the core of the world economy. An important result was that the cold war ideology lost its grip. This liberated a lot of creativity. But it was mainly a middle class radicalism with a focus to a high degree on individual moral. Economic realities tended to get out of focus as well as linking to already existing groups in opposition.

The second limitation is the authoritarian ways the movement is organised, often with a blurred relation to the state. The dominant mode of organising was selected teams of smaller elite groups or top-down organised campaigns excluding communists and local influence at the national level.

The third limitation was the lack of development critique. The Gandhian philosophy was deprived of its civilisation critical points of view and used as a technique for purposes that avoided challenging the development model.

These three limitations were dealt with in a combined way, sometimes along a conscious path, sometimes ad hoc as problems came up.

In Norway, two models emerged as the solution to the problem. Norway maintained a strong intellectual and ideological position in the public space for antisystemic thinking that gradually drifted from pacifism to left-wing opinions. The peace movement started in 1963 the publishing house Pax which became a central institution for antisystemic thinking the coming decades. Here the peace and solidarity movement and later women's and environmental movements were supplied with books and magazines bringing up their issues and put in a wider context. At its peak of influence in the end of the 1970s, Pax issued an encyclopaedia involving hundreds of intellectuals in writing often antisystemic articles on issues of interest to popular movements and society at large. Antisystemic thinking also maintained a strong position in the rest of society. Galtung's theories on structural violence were soon used not only to describe relations between rich and poor nations but also as a tool to understand the conflict between core and periphery inside Norway. Thus both imperialism and development critique could be addressed early at the intellectual level.

In ways of organising a movement two models emerged. One was to allow activists a high degree of influence within a frame-work of a national coalition of organisations, often youth organisations only. In 1963, youth organisations started Norsk Aksjon mot apartheid, NAMA (Norwegian Action against Apartheid). The South Africa Committee established in 1959, consisting of individuals from all political parties and many other important Norwegian institutions had refused to call for a boycott against the apartheid regime. This made it necessary to start a new organisation that soon could mobilise very wide support in solidarity with the majority population in South Africa. Here, youth political organisations from all parties in the parliament including the conservatives were active while also activists could enfold their creativity and work. In 1964 NAMA activists invaded the tennis court at Madsrud and stopped a game between South Africa and Norway, an action that inspired the anti-apartheid movement internationally.

This model of letting young activists get a lot of freedom of work within a broad coalition on narrow radical issues became a dominant way of challenging racialism in Norwegian political culture. It continued to be useful to a strong anti-apartheid movement trough 30 years, to stop Norwegian membership in the European Union in 1972 and 1994, to stop atomic power in Norway 1974 and build a movement against atomic weapons still working.

But this model lacked the capacity to challenge the Western development model and imperialism in a more coherent way. An organisational model to solve this limitation was then developed in the late 1960s. Single-issue organisations emerged dominated by activists who were linked together informally with other single-issue organisations through a generalist ideology organisation in strong opposition to the dominant political culture. The coherence of this ideology and input of new activists and resources to the generalist organisation was organised through ideological confrontations within different movements.

This caused a lot of conflicts within the movements but was also efficient in building a counterhegemonic Maoist party. The existing Norwegian Communist party was too weak to have such a position. The Maoists were capable of such things as establishing a national newspaper with respect in society, having a unique position compared to the situation in other Nordic countries. While effective in confronting the distribution of wealth domestically and globally this model was not able of challenging the development model as such. The direction of the development model whether under communist planned economy or capitalism was not challenged at its roots.

Finland followed a similar pattern. Here activists also were given room in organisations that either had close links to established institutions or were coalitions built by strong class based organisation. The activists often received much resistance in civil society due to a conservative culture and press. But at the same time some of them gained direct contacts with president Kekkonen who sometimes supported their case and saw it useful to get support for his foreign policy. Some new organisations were established like the Committee of 100 on defence, peace and development issues, the November movement supporting homeless and Group 6 on equality between the sexes. There were also new student organisations built to support the UN and international humanitarian aid of the kind that already existed in other Nordic countries. But in general fewer new organisations were created and there were much less activists than in the rest of Northern Europe. But these few activists could gain strong results in a society where some institutions like public service radio and television, the president, organisations built on the coalition of Center party and the left including Soviet union allied communists, Lutheran solidarity organisations and others.

In the late 1960s there also seemed to be a similar development as in Norway when more activists felt the need to deepen the system-critical perspective in the movement. A change took place within the established Finnish Conservation Society towards a more radical position questioning the domestic important forest industry but without close links to other movements. At the same time a very small Maoist movement started following the similar pattern as in the other Nordic countries. They challenged Soviet Union foreign policy, which was also opposed by the new left who was strong especially among Marxist social democrats. But Maoist and New left were not able to sustain any organisations and coalitions for a longer time with the exception of the Committee of 100. Among other factors the civil war when Finland became independent had created a divided political culture where the working class partly had their organisations criminalised and thus instead had built a strong cooperative movement which formed a basis for a counterhegemonic ideology. At the same time Finland had experienced the need to unite against Soviet Union during World War II. This made the space for a third position criticising the Western development model very small or not existing.

The outcome is that in Finland it is the Communist fraction allied to the Soviet Union and radical trade unions under their leader Taisto that gets a similar position as the Maoists in Norway. This communist fraction is comparatively to other Nordic countries strong although it is in minority within People's Democratic party. Within the communist fraction a strong system-critical ideological core is preserved while they also have close links with a whole range of more narrowly defined organisations for youth, solidarity and other purposes.

Denmark followed a somewhat different pattern. Here the interest in challenging society was from the very beginning divided into two organisation models. On the one hand there was the very narrowly defined single-issue campaign organisation. It could be against atomic weapons on Danish soil, against registration by the security police, non-socialists against Danish membership in the EEC, socialists against the same thing, solidarity with Algeria, South Africa and the like. Most of the time the leadership consisted of a self-selected group of people and there was no way of democratically influencing the national leadership from the rank and file. This model proclaimed itself to be anti-authoritarian while in fact it was self-delusive. Instead of the routines of representative democracy within a national organisation the self-selected leadership feels the need for new forms of political action in form and content and gives activists a model for doing so. This model is highly successful. The result is faster and more massive support for new social movements than in Finland, Norway and Sweden,

The other simultaneous model that develops is a more generalist action group that deals with any political issue that seems radical for the time being. These action groups define themselves all in different ways primarily through ideology and not issue or social group. Here activists can have the full democratic influence of what the action group is doing and thus democratically decide what the organisation should do. The ideology all these action groups have is in the beginning of the 1960s socialistic, either separated into different factions or consisting of members from different socialist and revolutionary groups. Later another hippie and anarchist action group, Provoerne, evolves dominant for a short period until it quickly fades away. The left wing action group maintain its strong influence. This model is successful in establishing new ideologically very radical organisations that gets inspired by foreign developments like Maoism and then by the Cultural Revolution in China. But in general it is in the beginning not very successful. The Norwegian activists can make more strong direct actions, sometimes with the support of all youth organisations in the country. In Sweden World citizen movement and other non-socialists can organise direct action and campaigns that receives more result than their socialist equivalents in Denmark. But the model is very effective in quickly adopting new issues within a left-wing tradition. It is also strong in creating a room for a lively political culture with magazines and the like.

The ideological diversity within the limited left-wing spectrum of politics is kept very wide. Denmark is earlier than the rest of the Nordic countries establishing an alternative to the communist party. The Socialist People's party gets started by the former communist party leader already in the late 1950s when the invasion of Hungary made the tensions among the Communists too strong. At the same time Denmark had a relatively strong Trotskyist organisation and developed early in the 1960s a vague anti-commercial ideology in a New left tone.

The model is also developing side by side with less political but similar action-oriented smaller groups that occupy a local space for building alternatives. This is very successful and Denmark becomes the leading country in the field of cultural experiments, starting the first occupation of houses, play grounds and communes.

The two main models, the narrow single-issue campaign organisation and the ideologically correct action group gets equally wide support, not during different periods. At its peak the narrow single-issue campaign against atomic weapon can mobilise 25 000 to listen to speakers from all political parties and the final of a long march in 1962. At its peak can also the Vietnam committees with their broader campaign against US imperialism mobilise 25 000 in a demonstration against the US embassy in 1968.

The end result of the two Danish models was lack of gaining hegemony in any decisive issue against imperialism or support to liberation movements. Instead at its peak 1968 – 1970 the state could intervene and split the movement with strong police repression against the weakly organised movement. When the repression started this was blamed on the radical groups by the more established organisations who choose to take the police point of view making it their own. The Danish political culture allowed extreme freedom in certain fields. When the student rebelled this was quickly turned into reform of the university and substantial student democracy. But when houses were occupied with substantial support from the neighbourhood and broad understanding among many in the population as housing was in very short supply, this was strongly repressed. But if a group strongly enough defended their local interests it could establish a free zone to develop their own practical alternative.

The outcome in Denmark is many strong pockets of resistance and lack of solidarity at national level between different groups in opposition of the ruling order. Instead of the Norwegian and Finnish model with one strong Marxist-Leninist organisation at the core and single-issue organisations connected by informal or formal ways to this core in Denmark there was more diversity. The strongest of the movement was focused on the Vietnam War. Its radical faction soon was less interested in the Vietnam War and turned its interest instead in general against Western imperialism and world domination while becoming smaller and smaller.

In Sweden Gandhian Satyagraha and other Indian inspiration continued to play a central role in renewing popular movements more than in the other Nordic countries. After the initial Indian influence in the beginning of the 1960s on form and content of the new popular movements it soon veined in Denmark, Finland and Norway. The inspiration was decisive in bringing the Nordic countries out of the cold war stale mate. But after this organisational models and content was developed that is hard to see as inspired by Gandhi or any other Indian source. Indian thinking maintained some influence at the intellectual level in Norway but had little influence in continuously inspiring movements during the 1960s. Sweden was the exception were the Indian inspiration continued to put its mark on history. This was not only through groups influenced by Gandhian or other Indian ideology like the young theosophist or nonviolent direct actions groups like World citizen movement. It was also influencing the anti-imperialist movement at its peak of radical mobilisation against the Swedish state. The end result of this sustained Indian inspiration was worthwhile. The opinion stating the need to support liberation movements in the Third World that at the beginning was held by action groups with the support of maybe one percent of the population had by the end of the decade support from political parties with 85 percent of the Swedish population behind them. Swedish pupils took the lead by unanimously supporting an institute belonging to the Mozambique liberation front with a days volunteer work, which resulted in a massive economic and moral support all over Sweden. Thus the school campaign started by young theosophists in support of children in areas held by the liberation movement in Algeria was fully carried out with the support of established Swedish youth organisations.

Sweden was similarly influenced by the boycott idea coming from the South and the combined marches and direct action against the atomic bomb coming from England inspired by Gandhian ideology. But when it came to direct action to intervene non-violently in conflicts in Sweden or internationally a broader range of issues was addressed and participation sometimes extended outside the inner circles of strong believers in nonviolence. When it comes to mass support for a constructive programme to help people in areas held by liberation movement Sweden was unique.

As in the other Nordic countries also in Sweden organisation models developed that had less or nothing to do with Indian influence after this initial period. The two countries where the new popular movements were most advanced were Denmark and Sweden. Compared to its Southern neighbour Sweden advanced faster from the stage of having self-selected leadership controlling national campaign organisations and excluding communists. In Sweden the Campaign against Atomic Weapons is a normal organisation. Everyone supporting the goals of the organisation is welcomed on equal terms and the leadership controlled by the members and local groups democratically.

Sweden is also different from Denmark in the terms of content. Here a constructive programme is often a part of a new popular movement campaign and different issues are linked together. Thus the Campaign against Atomic Weapons do not only opposes atomic bombs but also promotes alternative use of the military budget. This view is often supported also by established organisations. The most influential peace organisation, Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society demanded early on development aid. When an influx of new activists from the new campaign organisation became active in SPAS there was conflicts for a while but it soon settled and many SPAS groups whether they were dominated by elderly activists or young collected money for the third world. By the end of the 1960s many had changed their name to u-lands och fredsföreningar - developing country and peace associations. Thus the peace movement becomes a peace and global justice movement.

Also when it comes to organisation models for groups dominated by activists Sweden differ from Denmark. In Sweden there already exists since the 1940s the World citizen movement, small but influential among activists from 1956 and onwards. This movement was from the outset also broader in its content including both peace and global justice as well as questioning the national state and believing in waiting for multilateral agreements. Direct action in Sweden is thus not mainly linked to left-wing ideology groups but also, and maybe mainly to other radical pacifist traditions not necessarily mainly socialist in their origin. Sweden do not either use the sharp division made in Denmark between the decent campaign organisation avoiding any methods that might upset people and small actions groups that are left alone with these means. Instead it is one of the leaders of the social democratic party, Sten Andersson, who in 1962 is arrested by the police for carrying a banner saying that Verwoerd is a murderer, something the police claims is offending a foreign state leader. Andersson has the full support of thus party and he carried the banner together with others in a large May 1<sup>st</sup> demonstration. The Vietnam movement also stands up for the truth against oppression of freedom of speech. Action groups become the core of this broader campaign organisation in the struggle for supporting the liberation movement in Vietnam. In 1965 the activists refuses to follow the order of the police. They are then violently treated by the police and arrested with the result that they get support from important persons in the cultural life of Sweden and many others. In Sweden the action groups are more integrated in broader popular movements

and define themselves more according to issues than socialist ideology. Established persons or organisations that defend freedom of speech also support them.

Sweden develops also organisation models similar to the Norwegian combination. The youth coalition model where activists get good possibilities for making an effort and wide-spread support for what they are doing is also used in Sweden. But this model is challenged very early. Already in 1961 the international work camp movement together with the Swallows and other groups built on voluntary efforts and ideological interests that goes beyond state centred development models oppose the youth organisations view on how development aid should be organised. While the coalition of youth organisations demanded professionalism based on only theoretical knowledge the alternative organisations demands a mix of practical and theoretical knowledge and sees volunteer work as crucial to development. A small group that organises a Nordic training camp for third world volunteers carries this opposition. Soon in 1964 there is a democratic rebellion in the Emmaus movement against boards with people from the outside controlling the volunteer work at collecting sites in Sweden and the activists take control of their own work. The same year, the local South Africa Committee in Jönköping challenges the control that national youth organisations have over the South Africa solidarity campaign in Sweden. Soon members and the local groups have democratic influence and the secret agreement to keep out communists is gone.

Sweden differs also in relation to the other part of the Norwegian organisation model. Sweden is politically more similar to Norway than any other Nordic country. Thus in both countries Maoism gets a strong influence among system critical movements. But in Sweden the Maoist party do not get the same key position and its influence among popular movements is different. The Swedish model giving the campaign organisations and action groups a wider goal often linking issues gives less room for the idea that the generalist ideology has to be transferred from the movement to the party. What is the attraction in having key activists that are ideologically advanced due to their membership in an organisation outside of the movement struggling to unite as many as possible. This is less attractive, if some linking of the issues, and a constructive programme, can be carried out within the movement. Then the view has less room, that all generalist ideas have to be left to advanced political party organisations.

In Norway the Maoists wanted that the Vietnam movement should bring in more issues like saying no to NATO. At the same time the Maoists in Sweden made the opposite turn meeting the social democrats and other who started to talk about imperialism. While the Vietnam war campaign continued to be well organised compared to Denmark in the beginning of the 1970s international solidarity received mass support of a kind never seen in Sweden or any other country before. United at some key occasions the action groups of the Maoist dominated Vietnam movement were able to gain more and more support for their cause. By Christmas 1972 a mass signature campaign started against US bombings in Vietnam signed by 2,7 million Swedes, more than a third of the population and much more than any other signature campaign in Sweden before or after.

Compared to Finland there were also similarities with certain openness for new activists within established organisations. But the communist party developed very differently. While the strong communist fraction in Finland supported the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia the Swedish communist opposed it. There was a weak minority within the party that was supporting the Soviet views but it had little influence outside the party and a few trade unions in the Northern mining district. The model with a strong ideological core and a set of single-



issue organisations closely related to this core like in Norway and Finland was not developed so far in Sweden. But in some aspects Sweden was closer to Finland than any other Nordic country. It was the pupils in both countries that decided to launch a huge campaign in 1969 in support of Mozambique Institute controlled by the liberation movement. What could be decided in consensus in Sweden received strong opposition among a smaller conservative minority among youth organisations in Finland. In terms of mass support for liberation movements both among youth but also other organisations Finland and Sweden at times were in the lead.

The combination of organisation models in Sweden was the result of more influences from India than the other Nordic countries at the beginning of the 1960s. Single-issue campaigns including constructive programmes or linking some further issues like global justice or against imperialism. Radical activism carried out by both young activists and leaders of established organisations or other influential persons in society challenging professional leadership of the movement. Democratising movements controlled by coalitions of national organisations. And finally combining Danish diversity and Norwegian rigid party control by trying to avoid splits in the movements and having more vital generalist diversity within the movement and a broader goal. This combination proved to be open to continued Indian influence during the 1960s.

### **Young theosophists and antiimperialists continuous Gandhian struggle**



*Kenneth Kaunda and Jan Fjellander 1962*

The young theosophists continued to play an important role in the emerging alternative movement during more than a decade. TUG activist got involved in printing and smuggling election material into Zambia to the liberation movement led by Kenneth Kaunda, the Gandhi

of Africa. Here a mass movement developed that followed the Gandhian ideas of nonviolent resistance. As the printers were in the hands of whites that refused material from the party representing the black majority in the country, the material had to be prepared in Sweden and smuggled into the country. Stencils with pictures were made in Sweden to be used by the UNIP party inside Zambia, 40 000 small coloured miniposters were spread all over the country and three modern battery-driven megaphone equipments were smuggled in somehow from Stockholm.

The young theosophists were involved in boycotting South African goods and had the ANC secretary Nokwe as a guest at a TUG meeting in 1963. They were active against conscription and consciousness objectors and the first to be allowed to do alternative civil service in voluntary organisations, which was done at the UN Association. Two young theosophists, Tom Alberts and Roland von Malmberg started a mass-scale civil disobedience campaign in Stockholm filling every outdoor advertisement for tobacco with the word CANCER, a struggle that finally after trials used as a political platform ended with a ban on tobacco advertisements.



*Antitobaccoactivists adding cancerinformation to advertising in the subway of Stockholm*

The close connection to India was the main inspiration, changing the worldview among the activists in TUG. The Fjellander siblings were children to Ingrid Nyborg-Fjellander, world secretary 1957-1975 to Rukmini Devi Arundale, a leader in the theosophical Round Table, Indian parliamentarian and founder of the Kalekshtra cultural centre outside Madras.<sup>25</sup> Arundale also held a leading position in the Vegetarian World Congress that in 1964 invited

<sup>25</sup> Nyborg-Fjellander, Ingrid, *Leende biskopen: en modern sökares äventyr*, Stockholm: Larson, 1975, p48.

young Europeans to counteract the Western influence on young Indians. It had become a habit among many aspiring students in India to start to eat meat and wear nylon shirts inspired by the rumours on what lifestyle to choose to be modern spread by the fortunate few that had gone to universities in Europe. Thus a group of Europeans among them five from TUG youth made a tour through India, at one occasion talking together with a Jainist monk to a crowd of half a million people, at other occasions to thousands of students as European vegetarians and critical to the claims of all young Europeans being uninterested in a less wasteful way of life. The journey tilted the minds of the Swedish participants and further spurred their interest in changing the world and challenging the society they lived in.



*Roland von Malmborg 1965*

At the theosophical world congress in Salzburg 1966 the clash between the new concern for global issues among World Federation of Young Theosophists, WFYT, and the theosophical denomination became obvious. Without breaking with the values of theosophy and its philosophy, WFYT in practice separated from the main organisation when, to their disappointment, support was not received for the new socially, environmentally and globally oriented direction. This summer also brought strengthening of the contacts between Swedish young theosophists and the Provos in Netherlands where another European theosophical youth camp took place and Fjellander visited the newly elected local parliamentarian from the Provos in Amsterdam.

The TUG activists grew even more ambitious. They protested against the Vietnam War by sit-ins at the US embassy in 1965 and were active in organising initiatives to inform about environment and development in the same year. Next year they started the ProVie movement together with anarchists linking way of life issues with the protection of the environment, global politics and a refusal to take part in the cold war. Jan Fjellander had the American Deserters Committee office in his apartment 1967 when Sweden started to accept a hundred soldiers that refused to take part in the war.

When the anti-Vietnam war movement grew stronger, anti-imperialism and the left became the dominant anti-systemic thinking. The initiating organisation had been Clarté, a student organisation started as a socialist peace movement in 1920 that in 1965 ideologically and in

practice confronted the pacifist neutrality politics towards the war in Vietnam. Local groups were built in an anti-imperialist anti-war movement that radicalised all Sweden and soon also started to make the government more reluctant towards the US politics in Vietnam. Also here, there were links to India, to mass movements, Naxalites and other communist groups that have continued through the years by articles in Clarté and other magazines. This Indian influence did not have as central role as the Gandhian and theosophical connections had to the peace and alternative movement, where the Indian inspiration in some aspects can be seen as a key factor to the radicalism and capability to renew the form and content of political activism.

But at the most crucial point in the anti-imperialist movement, Satyagraha became the explicit tactic used in the battle for freedom of speech and changing Swedish politics away from imperialism.



*FNL in Sweden – A reportage of a popular movement during ten years - The book with the story how Satyagraha inspired the antiimperialists in Sweden.*

During the autumn of 1967 there were more and more confrontations with the police. By the end of the year 150 persons had been taken to courts. At regular actions against US Trade center the police interfered more brutally. To the movement it was clear that the social democratic government tried to smash the solidarity movement. In words the government protested against the Vietnam war and apartheid in Southern Africa, but it made no decision

to implement its stand in any way that would challenge the relations to the US and Western imperialism. Liberation movements were not supposed to be supported by any humanitarian or political means. This position was even stronger in other Nordic and Western countries.

In this tense situation Jan Myrdal, one of the leaders of the anti-war movement, was called by his mother, the leading social democrat Alva Myrdal. She informed him that Prime Minister Erlander had questioned her contacts with him and as long as he was involved with the solidarity work for Vietnam she found it not in solidarity with the rest of the government to meet him. He then choose to stop any contact with his mother for the rest of his life, who was in his eyes caught by a government more interested in preserving good relations with the US than good family relations. He then went to the FNL-movement office:

”A situation was on its way to develop were some were fine and decent and made speeches and wrote articles while others were beaten and taken in charge by the police and committed for trial. If this continued, the movement soon would split in one decent and one 'indecent' part and in this way made harmless. With other words, I and others who were known and had some international reputation should put this capital in the solidarity work through a satyagraha-technique. ... This is a tested political tactic. When the government continued to escalate the attacks in this way it should be possible to make the political cost op high for them that it was forced to change its policy in the issue at hand.”<sup>26</sup>

On December 20, 1967 the result could be seen. 1.500 FNL-activists at a meeting in People's Hall with Myrdal and other well-known persons unanimously decided to not obey the police order not to go to the US embassy to demonstrate. They burst out into the street where the police only could stop some of them. Then they chained themselves to each other arm by arm and broke through the police cordon from behind to set those activists not yet free able to break out of the police cordon as well. The battle continued in the midst of Christmas shopping all through the center of the city to the US embassy. Many were beaten by mounted policemen and Myrdal had his glasses destroyed and blood on his face.

Two months afterwards, Minister Palme went side by side in a demonstration together with the North Vietnamese ambassador and the FNL-activists behind, all protesting against the US war in Vietnam. US called its ambassador home, the conservatives furiously protested against Palme and the government but a shift had taken place in Swedish policy that soon resulted in recognition of both North Vietnam and the liberation movement FNL. The shift was all over; soon also Sweden backed the liberation movements in Southern Africa with direct humanitarian aid and political support, followed by Norway and Finland.

The movement continued to use nonviolent tactics. In May 1968 hundreds of activists in the first national solidarity manifestation used all possible nonviolent means to stop a tennis game between Sweden and the racist regime of Rhodesia in Båstad in the South of Sweden. While political youth organisations staged a normal demonstration and sit-down at one of the entrance gates, hundreds of other activists struggled against water pipes at the other while activists with bows shot arrows with oil bags that destroyed the tennis court. The tennis game had to be cancelled and could not be played in Sweden.

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<sup>26</sup> Myrdal, *FNL I Sverige*, 1975, p180f.

In the largest nonviolent manifestation 1968 freedom of speech was the issue when pacifists and the anti-imperialist left cooperated. The pacifists occupied or rather refused to leave a conscription hall in the university town of Lund in the south of Sweden while informing conscripts about their rights. This caused interference by mounted police and taking people into custody at the police station. More and more students started to be involved in the protests during the day and the situation became more and more tense. In the end 2 000 students gathered at the Academic Society at the ground floor while prime minister Erlander participated in a celebration dinner for the university at the second floor in the same building. The students asked Erlander to come down and explain how freedom of speech could be protected. The prime minister came. He could see no harm in the pacifist urge to refuse conscript, a message that the police during decades and in the same day saw as a threat against the state necessary to intervene against. The police and the district attorney were furious but could not do anything and freedom of speech was finally won.

In some years during the 1960s a Swedish peace and solidarity movement had sprung up linking the anti-arms issues with the call for alternative uses of military resources and development aid, a movement that in different ways was inspired by Gandhi and India. In the pacifist movement, Gandhi always had a strong impact but India began also through other connections to have influence in Sweden. This movement built on Indian inspiration soon established a model for mass based solidarity work. It had its results spread all over the Nordic countries and is still maintaining the largest solidarity actions in the Nordic countries and a high level of support among the population and governments for the third world.

But when the Nordic societies needed to go beyond humanitarian efforts into real solidarity, the pacifists did not anymore have the courage to take the lead. Instead it was Maoists in the anti-imperialist Vietnam movement that challenged the ruling imperialist order by explicitly using Satyagraha. The pacifist sided with the majority of established organisations that only wanted urge peace in Vietnam but not taking sides against imperialism. The thinking was that every conflict, also the one in Vietnam, ought to be seen in the light of conflict between the two superpowers, and an open conflict between these two would be a disaster for mankind. Thus instead of confronting the Nordic governments' cooperation with the imperialistic world order the pacifists let the anti-imperialist left radicals to be inspired by Gandhi and win the decisive struggle to get the Nordic governments to support liberation in the Third world.

By the end of the 1960s a new crisis shook the two blocs development model of centralisation of industrialism and state power. Criticism from below in trade unions and among farmers globally as well as among young people all over the world challenged the legitimacy of both Western style capitalism and Societies built on planned economy. In economy, ecology and on the battlefields in Vietnam and other countries in the third world there was a crisis. Once more the situation for popular movements and relations between Indian and Nordic people's movements changed and once more Indian influence became essential to new strategies, this time confronting not only peace and global solidarity issues but also bringing new topics to the top of the political agenda.

## Global Environmental Movement Period 1970-1989

### Ecology meets Gandhi



*Sunderlal Bahaguna from Indian Chipko movement demonstrating together with Swedish tree huggers to protect forests and stop European Industrialists plan for a motorway 1987*

In 1969 three men in a Renault went on a trip to India that might be seen as the most important Nordic-Indian encounter so far. They were Sigmund Kvaløy, Johan Galtung and Arne Næss. All were experienced men with a lot of capacities. Their goal was to participate in

the celebrations of Gandhi's 100 years anniversary. Næss was for many years the only university professor of philosophy in Norway, appointed 1939 and with an influential position in his country as a consistent advocate of a broad scientific approach to social questions and an interpreter of Gandhian thought to the Western societies. Galtung also interpreted Gandhi, started the first Peace Research Institution in the West in Oslo 1959 and later became central in building future research. Galtung and Næss had written a book together on Gandhi's political ethic in the nuclear age together. Kvaløy was a jazz enthusiast, philosopher and activist.

In 1970 civil disobedience exploded in Norway, otherwise a calm society that had little signs of dissatisfaction. The state planned to construct a dam out of the second highest water fall on earth at Mardøla in the West of Norway. The water should be led to the Romsdal valley where the power station should be constructed while leaving the original Eikesdal valley with no waterfall except a small shower for tourists in the summer. To stop the construction environmental activists nailed themselves to the mountain with chains. Among them were Kvaløy and Næss. The police evacuated the occupation but during the night local inhabitants from the Eikesdal valley reoccupied the construction site. Now inhabitants from Romsdal valley took the matters in their own hand and threatened the new occupants. Finally the action had to be given up. The Mardøla action started a new era in Norwegian politics that also inspired similar actions in neighbouring countries.

The Mardøla action was initiated by a course on Gandhian philosophy at the Oslo University. Gandhian thinking soon became essential to the environmental, peace and alternative movement, not only as a philosophy of method but also in deeper development critical sense. This was due to an alliance between the most advanced university philosophy of the country where both professor Næss and small farmers in the rural areas like Arne Vinje played a central role. Small farmers maintained a philosophical interest and important role in the political culture of the country. Sigmund Kvaløy, Mardøla activist and eco-philosopher played a central role in establishing a globally conscious environmental movement. He went in 1971 to the Sherpas in Himalaya to learn more about sustainable living and became well-integrated in the local Buddhist culture. The environmental issues were linked to social questions challenging industrial growth society and urbanisation while at the same time contributing to the struggle against the European Union (at the time abbreviated EEC, European Economic Community). While all established organisations from labour, business and both right and left parliamentary forces as well as the mass media was strongly advocating Norwegian membership a popular movement alliance was opposed. The conflict resulted in a victory for the popular movement alliance against all the established forces in the referendum 1972, the only time except for Greenland 1983 and Norway again in 1994 when the opposition to the establishment has won in a referendum on membership in the EU.

The early 1970s was also a time with growing interest for nonviolent direct action and non-violent revolution. Gandhi used the concept direct action already in 1906 and non-violent revolution in 1928. But it was primarily in its Anglo-American form, once inspired from India, that the two concepts now were introduced in the Nordic countries. In 1941 the American Negro protest action, The March on Washington Movement, officially endorsed the principle of non-violent direct action. The same year training for non-violent action took place and in the beginning of the 1960s courses were held every month in Georgia during more than a decade. Institutionalised training courses during a weekend became a model for spreading knowledge on non-violence in a combined practical and theoretical form. Such course had occasionally taken place in Norway and Sweden at the first peak of interest in non-violence

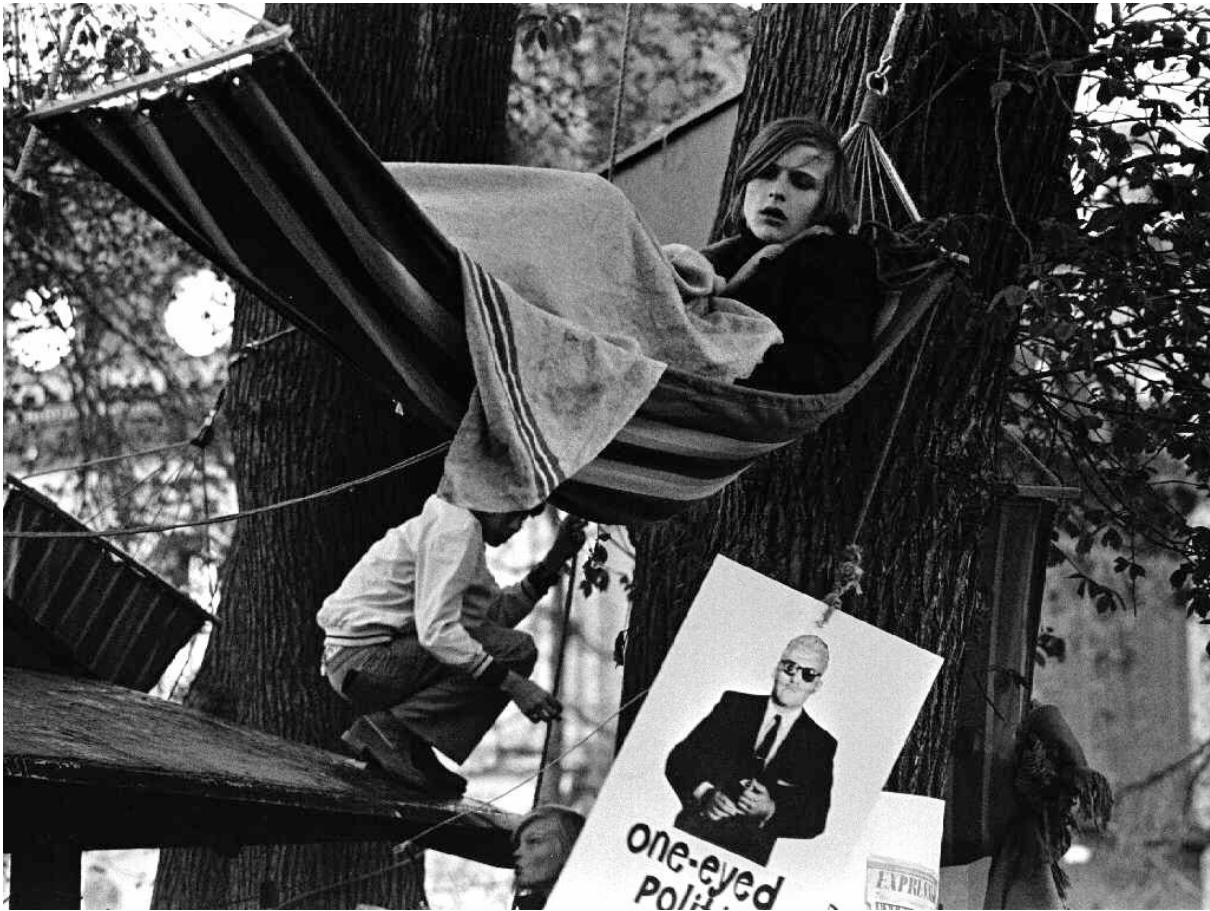


around 1960. But primarily non-violent direct action was learned from earlier domestic popular movement experience, participation in actions in other countries like Great Britain, US or Bulgaria or from visiting activists like Gandhian Valli Chari, radical pacifist Gary Daechsler or provo Jasper Grootveld.

At the end of the 1960s the radical pacifist organisation Folkereisning mot krig (Popular rebellion against war) and its Danish sister organisation Aldrig mere krig (Never war again) organised nonviolence courses in Denmark and at Bergen in Norway. The term nonviolence was used more and more frequently. It is helped by publications like the translation into Danish of the book Direct Action (Direkte ikkevolds aktion) in 1969 and the Danish magazine Ikke-vold (Non-violence) which changed its name from Pacifisten (The Pacifist) in 1970. In Norway Berit G. Holm edits Ikkevold og revolusjon (Nonviolence and revolution) and Nils Petter Gleditsch gets his book Kamp uden våpen (Struggle without weapons) published and soon it is translated into Swedish. In Sweden non-violence is addressed in the practical philosophy volume Etik, politik, revolution: Vol 2 (Ethics, politics, revolution: Vol2) edited by Guiliano Pontara. In a joint book the radical pacifst organisations in Noreway and Denmark together with the Swedish organisation for consciousness objectors issues the book Ikkevoldsaksjon: Nordisk handbok i organisering og trening. (Nonviolent action: Nordic hand book in organising and training). The book included 13 examples of direct actions undertaken 1968 – 1971 by Nordic activists, two focused on third world solidarity, six on environmental, one on educational, one on freedom of expression, one against EEC and one on housing issues. One was organised by WRI to support a free Chechoslovakia. Through simultaneous actions in Moscow, Warsaw, Budapest and Sofia the action distributed leaflets with the message that Warsaw pacts troops immediately should withdraw from Chechoslovakia.

The early 1970s was a time of growing interest in nonviolent direct action. The most militant took place at Myvatn, the biggest lake on Iceland in 1970. Here every woman, child and man went out and together they put explosives to a dam that caused environmental damage and was put in place to enable the construction of a larger dam. They made photographs of their action to prove to the press and courts that they were united and then blasted the dam making it harmless. When the dam construction and their action came to the court the local inhabitants used their farms as mortgages to afford to win the juridical battle. And they won.

The next year some thousand activists stopped, in a violent battle with the police, the felling of a stand of elm trees in a park some hundred meters from the Swedish parliament and governmental buildings in Stockholm. The decision to fell the trees had been controversial. 700 old buildings had been pulled down in the city centre to give space for modern buildings. Spaces for people in common to live and meet outside commercial relations had vanished in the city centre. One of the few places left which was still a meeting spot and not modernised was under the elms. Finally the city administration got support from the Swedish government. But politicians had to give up after the direct action and the long occupation of the elms that started after the victory against the police in the Battle of the Elms. 250 000 people are estimated to have participated in the three weeks of celebration that followed when the politicians changed their minds after one week. Known and unknown musicians all came to play their songs and people enjoyed the result of the battle.



*Activist occupying the elms 1971*

But the ideological interest in nonviolence came in the same time as most radical activists believed in the necessity of violent revolution against the imperialism. While the early 1960s was dominated by pacifism, in the late 1960s and early 1970s the interest in violent revolution had grown. This interest in changing the whole society also meant that the old pacifist organisations got challenged from within. In Denmark the sharpest confrontations took place. Young activists was often recruited from consciousness objectors. In 1967 they established their own organisation Militærnæterforeningen, as well as bringing about a shift of generations in AMK. The new young leadership saw the need to turn AMK into a movement for non-violent revolution of society. 1970 the name of the magazine made by the organisation was changed from *Pacifisten* into *Ikke vold – Tidsskrift for Revolutionær Pacifisme*, (Nonviolence - Magazine for Revolutionary Pacifism). 1973 the magazine was a magazine for resistance to war, liberation of sexes, collectivism, resistance against EEC and class struggle. The young challenged the model were the pacifist organisation only focused on issues relating to defence, war and non-violent individual behaviour while leaving to the members to have different opinions in general political issues. It conflict came to a peak in 1971 when a former chairman of AMK and member of parliament from the *Radikale Venstre*, a non-socialist mildly pacifist party, was expelled from the association. The argument was that he had not voted against all decisions on military defence issues in parliament. The most problematic with this outburst of radicalism and the biggest growth in membership since many decades was that it lasted for as long as there were authority figures to oppose but when the new generation was in full power most of them quickly disappeared leaving an organisation in disarray after them.

The two key organisations in Denmark, that carried the interest in India and non-violent social change, had lost their former capability of turning nonviolent inspirations from abroad into the spirit of the nation and change politics accordingly. AMK, the organisation that once initiated the sit-down actions against missiles capable of carrying atomic armament and with these actions sparked the strongest European mass movement against atomic weapons had lost its capacity to make vital contributions to social change. In the political party Radikale Venstre pacifism was an ideological notion with less and less practical consequences for its members or political work and Gandhian philosophy a vague memory from long times past. The political influence from India had diminished and there seemed to be no movement that had an interest anymore. There was one big exception. The interest in Denmark for Indian gurus teaching the blessings of meditation and inner consciousness enlightenment was much stronger here than anywhere else in the Nordic countries. But this Indian influence rather undermined the interest in participating in collective non-violent social change against imperialism. Individualism was supported instead of building resistance and popular movements. In 1973 the elections resulted in a sharp right-wing turn. The popular movements disintegrated further into narrow niches and single-issue politics, a very strong localism building practical alternatives and small political radical parties and theoretical intellectualism in different Marxist versions.

In Finland non-violence and pacifism had regenerated the political culture of the country in the 1960s. The young generation in Finland had not been able to influence the old Peace Union and thus established the Committee of 100 instead in 1963. It became key organisation in confronting the Finnish nation relation to defence and non-violence as well as global justice and the third world. This caused strong counter-reactions. The antagonism reached its highest point when the Committee of 100 started a campaign in 1966 to support consciousness objectors. Erik Schüller urged people to refuse compulsory military service even if the authorities had resigned their application for service without carrying arms. He was sentenced to 14 months in prison. Than 2 000 persons chose to commit the same crime, among them most of the young cultural and political elite of the country. At the same time a book exposed the extreme hardships for those who refused military service. The consciousness objectors were sent to a special camp under hard conditions where they had to stay twice as long as those doing their military service. After the war the conditions fro consciousness objectors had become even worse in 1959. The president Kekkonen went to the camp to see how the conditions were. After 120 trials the conflict came to an end in 1969 when the law was changed.

But at the same time pacifism and non-violence had lost its key role in influencing the political culture of the country. The Committee of 100 had turned themselves into the intellectuals of the movement leaving the street action to the single-issue organisations with strong Communist participation when the Vietnam War caught wider interest. A polarisation emerged, first between “seminarists” and “marchers”, and then between reformists in the field of defence and development cooperation and those claiming the need for changing the economic system. The seminarists and reformists in the Committee of 100 loose their key position step by step among young activists. At the same time can support or third world liberation movements get support from organisation built on coalitions of class based farmer and worker political parties. The strong Communist organisation also supports the need for analysing the economic system and change imperialism and class society. The pact with the Soviet Unions puts strong informal limitations to the political culture leaving some room for Co0mmunists with roots in the Finnish working class and friendly towards the Soviet Union. The need to build new organisations is less obvious in Finland compared to the rest of the

Nordic countries. The New left who dominates organisations like the Committee of 100 has less space. Together with the small Maoist organisations they become elitist and isolated from most young activists who find other ways to engage themselves in the broad Peace Committee or the solidarity organisation built on the same pattern of coalition between Communists and the Center Party. Gandhian and other similar Indian popular movement influence seems very far away.

In Norway Gandhi reached a peak in influencing the political culture of a Nordic country. The *Mardøla* action embedded in Gandhian philosophy became in general known as the birth of the Norwegian environmental movement. Like in no other Nordic country Norwegian publishers printed new books and booklets on Gandhian philosophy, civil disobedience and non-violence. Books on Gandhian ethics and relevance for the atomic age by Arne Næss and Johan Galtung were republished. Organisations like the peace organisation FMK, the environmental organisation *samarbeidsgruppa for miljø- og naturvern* (snm) and university courses developed the interest. It seemed like the interest in both Gandhian philosophy and practice would last in Norway.

In Sweden the situation more looked like in Denmark. The World Citizen movement had through two decades filled a central role in nurturing young activists capable of doing non-violent direct action in many issues. But at the end of the 1960s it vanished as the activists became more and more involved in the Vietnam War movement. When the conflict between the government and the solidarity movement escalated in the autumn of 1967 it was Yvonne Hoogendoorn, the former chair of the World Citizen movement and recently a member of the FNL-groups, who was presented as a role model to the local activists.<sup>27</sup> Throughout the 1960s she was the activist that had been put on trial most times. On a picture she symbolically carried chains around her wrists on her way to the prison was distributed showing her as a “political consciousness prisoners”. She was sent to prison as she refused to pay the fine for urging people to refuse compulsory military service in support of other activists who was on trial for the same thing earlier in the 1960s. Through the mass actions in Lund in August 1968 the victory for freedom expression was reached when pacifists and especially many left-wingers united in the struggle for expressing the opinion to urge others to not do military service. In the use of *satyagraha* the left also showed stronger commitment and capability of using Gandhian philosophy in changing Sweden’s relationship to imperialism and thus significantly contributing to a shift in foreign policy towards liberation movements in the third world.

The main Swedish peace organisation, SPAS, had more successfully integrated young activists already in the early 1960s compared to Denmark and Finland. Thus a broader perspective became part of the daily work of local groups supporting development aid and global justice issues. SPAS also continued to support consciousness objectors and gave space to different initiatives in their building in Stockholm. But Gandhian non-violence did not get stronger support in the organisation and the growing radicalism and the conflicts related to this among consciousness objectors developed outside SPAS. Nonviolent direct action was beginning to get widely used, but used among movements other than the pacifists. Parking lots were occupied to protest against cars, tennis courts occupied to protest against racist regimes in Southern Africa, strikes enacted by pupils to promote educational reforms and students went on strike successfully against teacher at the university who claimed that riots at Ådalen were directed by Moscow. In this Gandhian practice could be seen but no or very little conscious connection to Gandhian philosophy. Books were published on non-violence, but

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<sup>27</sup> Etzemüller, 2005, p150, FNL i Sverige, 1975, p110ff.

then mostly as a way to establish an alternative defence, not as a tool to promote social change in society. Sweden had seen a broad range of Gandhian and other Indian influences more than the other Nordic countries in the decades after World War II. Now it seemed to have lost its interest and capability of getting challenged by Indian impulses.

## **Challenging Western Environmentalism and UNCHE 1972**

But there was one exception. This time it was on the global level when the Western development model, whether in its planned economy or capitalist version, had to be challenged. This challenge made the Nordic countries central to establishing environmental institutions and a new model for popular participation in world politics.

Here there was Indian, but not mainly Gandhian, influence in the group that sustained the most long-term effort to support popular participation and criticism against Western models of thinking at both governmental, business and environmental movement level. But the effect on the Swedish political culture became less direct. It was at the global level this Indian Influence through a Swedish group became important, and then mainly as stopping the influence of environmental interests in direct conflict with the majority of people in the third world. It is here described more in detail although the national implications were uncertain. But the global impact deserves some attention.



*Conference hall in the old parliament building in Stockholm*

The United Nations Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm 1972 was the first time ever since the creation of formal meetings in the modern inter-state system that popular participation was enacted directly and open to wide lay person participation, and not only

through a limited number of representatives. It included a wide range of activities and interaction between popular and governmental spheres. One more time a group inspired by Indian ideas carried out the most sustained effort in creating this global popular participation and confronting Western and corporate strategies. There had been popular activities at international meetings before as when demonstrations were held and riots occurred against the World Bank meeting in Copenhagen 1970 but the interaction between the popular activities and the official meetings was minimal or non-existent except through mass media and security arrangements. There was business NGO influence also in the creation<sup>28</sup> and at the first meeting of the United Nations interaction between NGOs and the governmental level.<sup>29</sup> Later this NGO-UN relation was regulated through accreditation but there were no open direct popular participation in independent activities that through numerous ways interacted with the official United Nations gathering.<sup>30</sup>

The two actors that sustained the longest efforts that influenced the relations within the global the civil society as well as its relation to the official conference at Stockholm were young theosophists and a business NGO. Both were generally well-prepared and on their way to initiate processes on global issues and models for participations but from contradictory perspectives before UN decided to convene an environmental conference. The business NGO was a network of foundations in the US with the executive seminar Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies as the key actor and the chairman of Atlantic Richfield oil company Robert O. Anderson as founder.<sup>31</sup> The other was the theosophical youth group deeply involved with third world contacts of a Stockholm branch of a movement inspired by Indian religious philosophy and vegetarianism. As this history of how modern politics is formed at the global level through popular participation has not been put to print before it is here presented more extensively.

Teosofiska ungdomsgruppen, the Theosophical Youth Group, had sustained for more than ten years a growing amount of solidarity initiatives with the third world well integrated with peace, development, youth counter-culture and the emerging environmental movement since the early 1960s. Although the group as such did not participate in their own name as a collective at the conference their initiative ended with a coalition of a broad group of people from the third world coming to Stockholm clashing with the perspectives of the established Anglo-American new environmentalism, Northern governments and business think tanks. Their initiative in its content and international direction became highly provocative for both established interests and competing left-wing forces in the popular movements. Also the Oi Committee, an influential group of third world people that with a theosophist as local

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<sup>28</sup> Shoup, Laurence H. and William Minter, *Imperial Brain Trust: The Council on Foreign Relations and United States Foreign Policy*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977.

<sup>29</sup> For accounts of NGO-UN relations at the beginning see Seary, Bill, 'The Early History: From the Congress of Vienna to the San Francisco Conference,' in Willets, Peter ed., *"The Conscience of the World": the influence of non-governmental organisations in the U.N. system*, London: Hurst & Co. 1995, p 25-27.

<sup>30</sup> If one should not include exhibitions for the public arranged by the industry at Atoms for Peace conferences organised by the UN.

<sup>31</sup> The main source of the role of Aspen institute is *The Aspen Idea*, a book made for its 25th anniversary 1975 by Sidney Hyman. The detailed listings of NGO cooperation between the UNCHE secretariat and institutes confirms a central role for Aspen Institute and other closely related foundations and new environmental institutes (IIEA), Johnson, B. 1972, Feraru 1974. (McCormick 1989:96) also mentions Aspen institute but without describing its character and only in the role of sponsorship for IIEA. McCormick also mentions Robert O. Anderson, chairman of an oil company, as a seed founder of IIEA but that at the core of the network is regular meetings and seminars with up to a hundred executives involved remains outside of the picture. The journalist Mikael Nyberg (1996) have with the help of *The Aspen Idea* made the role of this business NGO visible in his assessment of the role of transnational corporations in international environment and development processes the last 30 years.

coordinator could intervene at the Stockholm conference has to a high degree vanished from later accounts.<sup>32</sup>

With Sweden and the US as pioneer countries, domestic but also global environmental issues became issues of public concerns in Europe and North America<sup>33</sup>. States started to react. Sweden became the first country to set up a government authority for the environment and to make a comprehensive environmental law 1968, while at the same time responding to widespread popular protests by forbidding the agricultural use of mercury. The Swedish UN Delegation headed by Sverker Åström brought up the proposal to organise an environmental UN-conference and this was approved in the General Assembly in 1968. In the UN resolution the formal original aim was "to provide a framework for comprehensive consideration within the UN of problems of the human environment in order to focus the attention of governments and the public opinion on the importance and urgency of this question". The reaction was reluctant from several countries but preparations went ahead. The established organisations whether UN, governmental or non-governmental already had their conceptual framework and working methods clearly defined for a conventional scientific conference, not an action-oriented one.

Business and internal and external colonialisation was challenged in the 1960s in the US by emerging movements. How to go beyond reacting by formulating new strategies was discussed at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies in the Colorado Rocky Mountains. Here business leaders met together with elite scientists, a few trade unionists and statesmen every summer since 1950. In the early 1960s, seminars on the public role of science, field biology and long-term historical climate change were held in at first disparate attempt to enlarge the scope of issues beyond the core executive seminars focusing on the greatest Western thinking. But it is first in the summer of 1967 things starts to get more focused. Joe Slater from the Ford Foundation becomes scholar in residence at Aspen Institute and gives his lecture on "Biology and Humanism" for the Executive Seminar. He is asked by the chairman of the board Robert O. Anderson to become director of both the institute and its main founder Anderson Foundation. After having finished the task of setting up an international broadcast institute, a "free-floating university" network of centres for advanced studies and renew an institute for biological studies he finally accepts in 1969. The main effort for his renewed humanistic strategy for the institute was the environment. Slater saw a problem in that "the old-line conservation organizations tended to focus only on single aspects of the environment". A positive solution was the creation of an international environmental institute.<sup>34</sup>

By the 1968 US elections, the population control of the third world got its strongest voice with the highly successful book *The Population Bomb* written by the biologist Paul Ehrlich. It included proposals for coerced vasectomy of every Indian man with more than three children and suggested to end aid to the worst off countries to curb the population growth. Business

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<sup>32</sup> An affair for the northern dominated international environmental organisations is what is left: McCormick 1989, Brenton 1994, Morphet 1995, Conca 1995, Willets 1996. The last time the third world initiative the Oi Committee International is mentioned is 1975 (Zacharias). Reminiscences of their voices are given by referring in general to radical opinions. But explicitly mentioned after 1975 apart from the established NGOs ICSU, IUCN, SCOPE and Friends of the Earth is only the American drug liberal hippie commune the Hog Farm.

<sup>33</sup> For broader accounts see Jamison 1995 p 228-9, Brenton 1994 p 19-27, and McCormick 1989. All three tend to give most examples from the US but Brenton points at statistics from many countries showing similar growing public concern, mainly for local and domestic environmental problems. For a comparative in depth account on France, Germany, Great Britain, Sweden and the US, see Brand, Karl-Werner ed., *Neue soziale Bewegungen in Westeuropa und den USA : Ein internationaler Vergleich*, Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 1985.

<sup>34</sup> Hyman 1975, p 252.

actors like the Rockefellers had a long interest in the population control issue and now a person and a message they could support, someone and something that caught wide-spread support also from an alerted new young environmentalist opinion in the US.

The environmental movement in the industrialised countries was closely linked to the student and youth movements, the anti-Vietnam War movement and the opposition against nuclear arms of the era.<sup>35</sup> But apart from the young theosophist with its linkages internationally and to the popular movements in Stockholm, no independent international popular initiatives of relevance for UNCHE are taken in Stockholm in this decade. The young theosophists got involved in local and international peace, ecology, counter-culture and solidarity movements in the early 1960s while maintaining TUG as a core group for unlimited discussions and as a community. A decade followed with every year bringing in new and wider concerns and organisational contacts ending with a full-scale attempt to bring in the third world perspective at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment 1972<sup>36</sup>.

Vegetarianism was strong in the group. This led to contacts with the health food movement 1962 and consciousness about the problem of "emissions" before the notion of environment was born and the influential book *Silent Spring* that is seen as starting the environmental movement was published. The first successful environmental organisation were the young theosophists were active was Educaids initiated by Bill Robertshaw, an immigrant from New Zealand. Educaids started to inform about development activities through U-kalendern, and Fröken M and Fröken U, telephone answering services on environment and development. TUG members carried out the first large environmental actions in Sweden 1966 together with anarchists and others in the ProVie movement, "for life". 10 000 no return bottles were disposed at the steps of the parliamentary building blockading the entrance in protest against pollution and wasteful use of resources.



*Jan Fjellander, Bill Robertshaw and others at a meeting in Sigtuna 1965 that started Educaids and other initiatives to inform about development and environment issues.*

<sup>35</sup> McCormick 1989, Brenton 1994, p 25.

<sup>36</sup> The young theosophists sustained and fruitful solidarity, cultural and environmental efforts has not been described in any literature. Academicians have either been interested in formalised organisations like states, companies or non-governmental organisations within defined issue area or their interest have been social movements at their peak of national mass mobilisation. Diffusion of ideas between countries have only recently been object for more intensive study and then only between movements within the same issue area. The kind of qualitatively influential movement in both its local and international context here described falls outside the frameworks made by hitherto academic conceptualising.



The Provie movement was closed but soon followed by others action groups in 1968. Neighbourhood groups started to pull down walls on backyards that had prevented people from the whole block to come together or to build a playground. The movement with support of a centre for experience-exchange, deliberately chosed new more open and spontaneous forms for cooperating avoiding the more formal association with a board. Anti commercial groups successfully stopped a teenager fair trade and immediately expanded their work and arranged Alternative Christmas celebrations all over Stockholm, the biggest at the art school Konstfack which was occupied when the invited homeless had nowhere to go after Christmas. One of the immediate outcomes was the foundation of Alternative City in February 1969, a group formed to continue the struggle for an anti-commercial culture, defend egalitarian and environmental values and mobilise against the prevailing city planning, today still active as the local Stockholm chapter of Friends of the Earth Sweden.

In the summer of 1967 the world theosophical summer camp took place in Sweden under the slogan Look In, Search Out, Try Out Camp, LASITOC. It was turned into a highly ambitious summer university trying to grasp the important global social, environmental and scientific topics. A group was formed changing the meaning of the last letter in LASITOC to committee. During the following four years this international core group with some ten people from Sweden, Great Britain, Netherlands, France and after a while West Germany met almost every three months to discuss and coordinate a wider and expanding ambitious agenda ending with an initiative to link with third world people and arrange alternative activities at UNCHE. The LASITOC group turned the idea of an informal university into practice by systematically contacting well-known intellectuals when they had their international meetings. In Stockholm, the youth theosophist Jan Fjellander started to work for the Nobel Foundation in the preparation together with an American scientific organisation of to scientific symposiums in their attempt to prepare for the start of a world university. A special youth group was set up mainly with Swedish participation but also some international members including the young theosophists Peter Harper and Juris Brandt with the task to help prepare back ground material for the meetings<sup>37</sup>.

The participation at the conferences and in the planning gave a lot of contacts with top scientists and especially those trying to take public responsibility and LASITOC became early aware of the UNCHE as one possibility to influence the world. But it also became more and more clear that the established scientists and the young theosophists had different agendas for their involvement. Whereas scientists hoped to influence through lobbying, LASITOC tried another path to mobilise people to act and build alternative public spaces not framed by the limitations of the content of the official proceedings. Except for the somewhat reluctant UN and the energetic executive seminar institute it is the young theosophist that makes the most concentrated effort that leads to Stockholm.

Early 1970 the international business community was ready for a concentrated effort to build a strategy for the management of global environment. Slater had found his man in Wilson to make a study on environmental activities world-wide to prepare for an international environment institute. Things had started to move in the direction Slater had envisioned when strategising with Anderson towards an environmental discussion were businessmen could "play a large and direct role in the search for solutions to the great problems of the day" and the time had come not only to discuss but to build global institutions and to act.

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<sup>37</sup> Mimeographed document FAQUEST 1969-02-14/150/JF.

Direct, indirect and parallel attempts started to bear fruit. In his environmental report Wilson wrote that at stake for "spaceship earth" if none came and took charge of the crew "through the political-social process" were among other things "access to resources in global short supply"<sup>38</sup> In planning for the International Institute for Environmental Affairs (IIEA) envisioned by Slater it was pointed at the Stockholm Conference as a crucial political opportunity and at the same time that a "real danger exists that the outcome could be more divisive than anything else. Almost inescapably, the Stockholm Conference will bring to a head an incipient but necessary political collision between environmental goals and development goals."<sup>39</sup> In Europe, 1970 was announced as a Conservation year and local official and unofficial activities blossomed. The US administration initiated with the financial support from Anderson<sup>40</sup> and others a nation-wide Earth Day in April with 300.000 participants or more<sup>41</sup>. At UN began the key phrase "action-oriented" to be widely used first in March 1970<sup>42</sup> when the 27-member preparatory committee with strong representation from the third world started its huge task to prepare organisation and documentation for the Stockholm conference<sup>43</sup>. But the head of the conference still was supposed to become "Director of Studies"<sup>44</sup>.



*Maurice Strong at a demonstration organised by Life Forum in Stockholm 1972*

In May 1970, Maurice Strong, a businessman and the Head of the Canadian International Development Agency, was approached to become leader for the Stockholm conference taking

<sup>38</sup> Hyman 1975, p 275.

<sup>39</sup> Quoted by McCormick 1989 from Thomas W. Wilson, Draft Plan for the International Institute for Environmental Affairs, 21 September 1970 (unpubl.).

<sup>40</sup> Hyman 1975, p 252.

<sup>41</sup> McCormick 1989, p 47.

<sup>42</sup> Stone 1973, p 19.

<sup>43</sup> Rowlands 1973, p 35.

<sup>44</sup> Stone 1973, p 19.

up his post officially as Secretary-General for the Stockholm Conference in January 1971<sup>45</sup>. Strong had not previously shown any specific interest for the environment<sup>46</sup>. He was on untrodden ground both concerning the content and the procedures and needed help. Slater and Strong knew each other since years past. One of Strong's first recruitments for the UNCHE secretariat was Wilson as a special advisor. Thus Strong, Wilson and Slater and others at the UNCHE secretariat, Aspen Institute and IIEA came to continuously cooperate closely in the preparations, during the UNCHE and the follow-up. The cooperation concerned key areas like a conceptual framework or ideology for UNCHE intended both for internal effects and the broad public, institutionalization of UNCHE and cooperation with NGOs. Business interests should have a low profile in the formal process and in the informal participation aiming at publicity<sup>47</sup>. Instead, the more invisible cooperation in core areas was so much closer.

LASITOC also becomes more ambitious and in the summer 1970 they arranged an international conference called Threats and Promises of Science at Kings College in London. The conference resulted in a broad strategy for working with the role of science in society. One focus was to arrange an international parallel event to the UNCHE. What was needed was an alternative scientific third world oriented treatment of the issue of human environment. Back in Stockholm, the situation was favourable. The local alternative and environmental movement flourished. Together with groups in Amsterdam they initiated an International Traffic Revolution with actions against cars in some 10 countries in October 1970. The Stockholm LASITOC group now expanded with some members outside TUG. It was renamed late 1970 to the Powwow Group and had a key position. It was soon realised by the group that people from the whole world and especially independent groups would come to Stockholm and it was time to prepare for sending out information.

To manage the conference, Strong initiated a set of activities to create a conceptual framework<sup>48</sup>. They included a "Distinguished Lecture Series", a "report on the human environment" an official Declaration on the Human Environment. To write the report René Dubos and Barbara Ward were commissioned to make *Only One Earth* with the help of IIEA in managing consultations with experts around the world and organize a workshop. Strong's senior press advisor Stone was positive about the book. "It led one to understand and sympathise with the captains of industry and their economic rationalisers who have got us into our present pickle, but it also glowed with humane and zestful optimism, with the sort of spirit that we need to get us out of the mess."<sup>49</sup>

The interest among NGOs was small at the outset; only 3 NGOs participated at the first PrepCom 1970. This changed at next PrepCom in December 1970 when the NGO participation in the formal preparatory process reaches its peak with 39 organisations present<sup>50</sup>. Different observers see an orientation towards scientific and technical NGOs with ICSU and IUCN pointed at as main cooperation partners<sup>51</sup>. Willets assess that "[t]here was

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<sup>45</sup> Åström 1992, p 164, Stone 1973, p 20.

<sup>46</sup> Åström 1992, p 163. See also McCormick 1989 p 110.

<sup>47</sup> Stone 1975 notes: "just about everyone or at least everybody that seemed worthy of consultation had a chance to provide some input to the conference. There was only one exception and that was industry." p 25, and "large scale involvement of industry was ruled out on political grounds" p 43.

<sup>48</sup> Quotes and the description of abstract levels from Rowlands 1973, pp 38-9.

<sup>49</sup> Stone 1973, pp 45-6.

<sup>50</sup> All NGOs at the 1st and 2nd PrepCom were accredited to ECOSOC. At the 3rd and 4th PrepCom 25 and 22 respectively participated, one each time not accredited.

<sup>51</sup> Feraru 1974, Morphet 1995, Willets 1996. In spite of the clear linkage between the Strong and the closely related Anderson Foundation, Aspen Institute and IIEA through key UNCHE projects is this grouping not mentioned except at random by the most comprehensive accounts as a technical help to the UNCHE secretariat for different initiatives.

little sense of the intense political controversy that could surround environmental questions and few signs of any desire to hear from NGOs at the grass-roots, tackling local environmental problems, or all parts of the environmental movement. Thus prior to the main conference Strong's approach was to make sure that governments had sound advice from 'experts', and NGOs were predominantly seen as groupings of relevant experts."<sup>52</sup> But the interests of Strong and the information and public relations officers of UNCHE as well as among close collaborators like Slater indicated early interest for popular activities and youth participation, in a form streamlined with business and government interests. Aspen Institute and Anderson were involved in Earth Day and the senior information advisor Peter Stone chosen by Strong searched for cooperation partners that could act as "multipliers"<sup>53</sup> to overcome the obstacles due to lack of resources.

This emphasis on participation with those having an interest by themselves and willing to spread interest for UNCHE caused unexpected "endless controversy". In general, the governments of the preparatory committee had been very positive towards new ideas and mobilisation of public opinion. What caused suspicion was projects involving "uncontrolled participation".<sup>54</sup> A proposal for a forum for the environmental movement and NGOs caused alarm. It became a conflict between those used to secret diplomacy and official messages to the public and those in desperate need for multipliers for publicity. One problem with this "had never been far from our minds: the risk that the Forum might turn into a 'counter conference'."<sup>55</sup> The idea Stone had was different "I had imagined an Environment Forum in the shadow of, but apart from, the main conference. It would be arranged more or less like an exhibition and anyone could put up a stall and do their thing, provided they satisfied a few basic requirements such as financial solvency and a genuine interest in the environment." The plan to avoid obstacles at the central UN level was to give the Swedish government responsibility for arranging the event. The Swedish United Nations Association (UNA) and the Swedish National Council for Youth Associations were commissioned to be responsible for the management.

Meanwhile in Stockholm, the Elms Battle described above exploded, involving up to 250.000 people and giving the local anti-commercialist and environmentalist group Alternativ Stad a huge boost.

The Powwow group started building their contacts in early 1971. At Easter a Powwow manifesto was finalised and translated into several languages. The platform opened up saying that "[o]ur planet is ruined. Economic growth has become a God in whose name all living is withering away, natural resources plundered and man enslaved." The manifesto points at both that "we must create a new way of life" and that "now we must find new ways of production that allow us to live with the resources of the earth instead of poisoning and eroding them." and "we must solidarise us with the oppressed fighting for their liberation in poor countries and at other



*Popular celebration at the Elms*

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<sup>52</sup> Willets 1996, p 69.

<sup>53</sup> Stone 1973.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, p 57-8.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p 65.

places." From the politicians, corporations and international organisations were little expected. They were seen as reacting on the intensified discussion of others and not "able to solve the problems we face." During the rest of the year contacts are taken with local action groups internationally and with other groups planning parallel activities in Stockholm like the IFOR (international Christian peace movement) initiative Dai Dong that among other things focused at ecological warfare and had strong scientific bias. Powwow also sent Fjellander and one other delegate to a global youth conference that was a cornerstone in the UNCHE preparations.



*Per Janse and Björn Eriksson informing about Powwow and the UN conference at Gärdet festival 1971*

Something unique happened at this International Youth Conference on the Problems of the Human Environment, IYCHE. For the first time in the whole process when popular organisations met internationally the majority came from the third world. The conference was held at Hamilton in Canada 20-30th of August 1971 and supported by the UNCHE Secretariat, UNESCO, IUCN, the International Youth Federation for the Study and Conservation of Nature, IYF and others. 163 young people gathered from 75 countries. The program was full of lectures by people from the North America and British with overpopulation as one of the most dominating topics. Growing disapproval among the many third world delegates and some from the North led to a take over by the participants of the conference and a complete shift of the program into working groups instead of listening to lectures. A new actor on the scene emerged rejecting the established Anglo-American environmental discourse and replacing it with notions of the need to redistribute "wealth and power both nationally and internationally". Their programme was comprehensive and wide in its environmental, social, cultural and political scope forecasting the later stronger cooperation in the 1990s of the environmental and development movements in the South and the North.

They demanded, with UN non-accredited NGOs and other independent voices in mind, "that the U.N. Stockholm Conference organisers initiate immediate machinery to provide an independent parallel conference of such excluded parties to be held in Stockholm itself for the duration of the Conference or Environmental Forum at present being planned but completely and distinct there from."

The popular movements were well-prepared in Stockholm and linked internationally both among environmentalists in Europe and with the Third world. A group of eleven third world participants that started the change of the meeting at Hamilton formed the Oi Committee International with Fjellander as a representative in Stockholm. Scientifically and more socially oriented environmental discourse started to gain momentum with Barry Commoner's book *Closing the Circle* that got wide spread attention internationally. UN was still on the defensive in getting the control of the NGOs, public activities and the total public image in Stockholm. The picture of a harmonious world was the powerful nations together with everybody started to seriously deal with the global environmental problems were challenged.



*Jan Fjellander and Tagi Farvar from Oi Committee at teach-in at the ABF house in Stockholm 18.3 1972*

The obstacles for non-accredited NGOs criticised by the youth at Hamilton was partly solved at the third session of the preparatory committee in September 1971. It was now formally sanctioned by the UN to arrange a parallel Environmental Forum under Swedish responsibility for wider participation from more than a number of selected NGOs. The forum is presented as independent for interested Swedish organisations but this is constantly challenged by suspicious organisations seeing it as a "radical alibi" calling into question that all proposals for the program are supposed to go to an advisory panel in Geneva for "review". The Powwow Group invites more organisations, and preparations begin for making an independent alternative conference called People's Forum without a leadership selected by the state and not sanctioned by the UN. Meanwhile, changes take place for the Environmental Forum. The full decision-power was transferred to Stockholm and better premises more suitable for debates were selected.

The Powwow Group continued its preparations together with the People's Forum. There were some problems rising at the horizon although they did not seem to be grave. The most important one was financing. Especially troublesome was the situation for the third world people in the Oi Committee who had now grown to 60 members from all over the third world, including a handful from indigenous peoples preparing themselves to come to Stockholm with reports. Key persons were Jan Fjellander as contact person in Sweden and Tagi Farvar from Iran. Another problem was a tendency among People's Forum organisations to prioritise the needs of local inhabitants and Swedes that do not understand English by demanding full consecutive translation of everything said at public meetings into Swedish and not allowing for an international discussion in English. But there seemed to be no bigger political divergence. People's Forum was well linked to the most important international initiatives Dai Dong and Oi Committee as well as new Swedish environmental groups from Stockholm and the national level. During the spring there was also an explosive interest internationally in new books about the environment like *Only One Earth*, *Limits to Growth* and *Blueprint for Survival*, selling in million of copies and translated into more than 20 languages. To be able to influence the UNCHE, Friends of the Earth in the United States initiated a Swedish sister organisation which started to introduced books to the Swedish public. The first to be published was *The Population Bomb*. Written by the biologist Ehrlich and launched by an environmental organisation the notion of population as the gravest environmental problem was given legitimacy by environmentalists.

Another American intervention came in March from Life Forum represented by the Kaplan Fund and the multi-millionaire Stewart Brand, a Californian drug liberal that became rich when making and selling the alternative lifestyle Whole Earth Catalog. The Kaplan fund had been used since the beginning of the 1960s to channel CIA money in the interest of the US government. Life Forum met People's Forum, Environmental Forum and the police. The authorities saw the Americans as a possible help in a problematic situation and especially



*Stewart Brand in Stockholm 1972*

the Hog Farm, a group linked to Life Forum proclaiming to be experts in crowd control at events like Woodstock festival. In People's Forum, the intervention caused a split between the Swedish and the international organisations. The Oi Committee could not guarantee to refuse money from the Americans, as the Swedes wanted. Also political tensions became so intense that Dai Dong and the Oi Committee saw no other solution than to leave People's Forum. By the end of April the third world participation was in jeopardy and nobody of his long-time Swedish cooperation partners supported Fjellander when his position in the forum became impossible.

In May 1st the biggest demonstration since World War II was organised in Stockholm. Five weeks before the UN Environmental Conference the two strands of the anti-Vietnam war movement joined hands in a common and unprecedented demonstration. The final meeting gathering 50.000 participants took place right outside Folkets Hus, the venue of the coming UN conference. The more established popular movements and the governing social democratic party had accepted the more radical demands of the youth radical left movement of not saying only peace in Vietnam but also specifying the US as an aggressor that had to withdraw from Indochina.



*Start of mass demonstration against US war in Vietnam. Activist sells Drog (Drug) – a paper from Förbundet mot droger (The League against Drugs) - the firmest opponents against Hog Farm.*

Some days later Fjellander came up to the office of Environmental Forum. There was chaos and the employees were going on strike against the conditions and lack of information. The UNA Sweden leader Ingrid Segerstedt-Wibergs tried to solve the situation. In the middle of the turmoil Fjellander was asked to help the secretariat. One problem he dealt with was wishes to have prominent lectures on the population growth issue at the Environmental Forum. There were plans for a series of lectures arranged by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) IUCN, WWF and other big international NGOs to be held at the Forum with Ehrlich as one of the key note speakers. Fjellander phoned Ehrlich and told him that the possibility for a key note speech was cancelled. He instead told the arrangers that



they had to stand in the line as everybody else with their proposals; a panel debate on the issue became the solution. Everybody was supposed to be treated in the same way without regard to richness or size nor possible prearrangements. Newsweek accounts for the embarrassing result of the equal treatment of everybody: "On the side U.N. is also sponsoring an 'environmental forum,' originally intended as a high-level scientific seminar on environmental issues but now degraded into political football by the arbitrary exclusion of such prominent American environmentalists as René Dubos."<sup>56</sup> Also IIEA was involved in pushing for the population issue to become central at the Environmental Forum together with the Population Institute in cooperation with the UNCHE secretariat. When they were refused to have a dominant role at the forum for their Distinguished Lecture Series they had to find other premises at the ball room of the Grand Hotel.

By 20th of May Fjellander presented the situation for the two responsible Swedish umbrella organisations. An Environmental Forum could be held with a twelve day program on many scenes as so many groups planned to come under all circumstances. The planning had to be ad hoc. There was one great problem though. As it looked, the overwhelming majority of the announced participants so far came from the US and almost all the rest from Britain or Western Europe, with a handful from the East bloc and the third world. By chance Fjellander said he happened to be in contact with 60 persons from the third world who since half a year had prepared themselves for making contributions on environment and development issues to international fora coinciding with the UN conference. Their participation could solve the predicament if the travel costs could be arranged. If this was not arranged Fjellander would state to the press that it was a political scandal. In two days development authorities pushed by Segerstedt-Wiberg had provided the funding and the whole secretariat of Environmental Forum worked day and night to arrange the arrival of the third world participants.



Well protected UNCHE delegate arrives

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<sup>56</sup> Newsweek 12.6 1972.

When the UN Conference on Human Environment started on June 5, 1972 the struggle about free speech, the forms of presenting contributions in public and control of access to different spaces continued all through the conference, with Hog Farmers contesting People's Forum in particular, as the most critical forum to the UN conference at also the Environmental Forum. At Life Forum's own public manifestation for a ten years moratorium on human beings at Sergels Torg, Strong appeared and spoke freely. He said that he was totally of the same opinion as the Hog Farm that we should love each other and not kill each other<sup>57</sup>. Then somebody reacted, went to the loudspeaker and said that this sounded very well, but that a spokesman of UN should try to stop the genocide in Vietnam. The audience applauded but one Hog Farmer tried to silence him by putting a hand on his mouth. Also at the final evaluation plenary session at the Environmental Forum the Hog Farmers intervened. When the topic of the Vietnam genocide was going to be addressed "American hippies" invaded the gallery throwing paper swallows crying out "action - not politics"<sup>58</sup>.

At the official conference NGO speech was very limited. The problems of bringing in the population and other issues were effectively solved. "[a]t the end of the opening plenary session Strong rapped his gavel to say: 'Our first plenary session stands adjourned, and we will now convene right here to hear the first of the distinguished lectures series in the series sponsored by the International Institute of Environmental Affairs and the International Population Institute'"<sup>59</sup> The official process was thus effectively linked to the well-financed civil society strategy to focus on population control in the third world.

What characterised the different activities taking place in Stockholm was that everything became contested ground. Politically, four controversial issues came into focus: drugs, whaling, the extensive spraying and destruction of forests in Vietnam as a US warfare method, and what caused the most heated ideological debate: population control. At the same time a shift in the international environmental debate took place to the benefit of the third world among both popular movements and governments.

The main controversial clash between the dominant Anglo-American new environmentalism with its support at highest business and political levels vs. the popular movements and the third world took place at the Environmental Forum on the issue of population control. In spite of many well-funded attempts, the population issue has never since this confrontation been able to catch the kind of charismatic function it had for the Anglo-American attempt to launch a global ideology for the environmental problems. The attempts were as we have seen large from the side of business think tanks and the biggest wildlife, nature conservation and population organisations to make the population issue central at all levels in Stockholm. They succeeded in making an issue at Grand Hotel for the selected elite but it was more important to make it an issue also in a more public debate.

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<sup>57</sup> DN 15.6 1972.

<sup>58</sup> Zacharias 1975, p 80. None of the two examples from how Hog Farmers tried or succeed in stopping criticism against the US war in Indochina is accounted for by Anglo-American observers.

<sup>59</sup> Hyman 1975, p 291. book: 1973 Who Speaks for Earth.



### *Environmental Forum*

At the Environmental Forum, the population debates proposed by the big NGOs had been dealt with by arranging the kind open panel debates where the public can participate after introductions. Peter Scott, an upper class Englishman from World Wildlife Fund, had been given the task to chair Ehrlich, the Swede Erland Hofsten and Landin Savane from Senegal. This composition of the debate made the third worlders in the OI committee upset. The way vasectomy was more or less forced upon oppressed and poor people in the third world and the way development aid had diminished while aid to family planning sky rocketed was for them highly provocative.

When the panel debate was going to start on "Aspects on the population issue" Dora Obi Chizea, a biologist from Ibadan in Nigeria was followed by three other OI members not to accept a discussion about population control of people in the third world and wanting to take over the discussion. Chaos occurred but the English gentleman and the proud female from Nigeria sorted things out and both became chairpersons for a panel enlarged with the three OI committee members.

The third world intervention in the population debate is the most controversial act during the UN conference 1972 for most observers. At the time many Anglo-American observers dwell upon the astonishing action. The conference newspaper ECO made by Friends of the Earth

and the Ecologist was especially upset.<sup>60</sup> The third world people were identified as "pseudo-leftist elite who claim to speak for the third world" and creating an atmosphere of "elitist conspiracy". Actually the third world people are not capable of leading themselves,

"Commoner, masterminding the debunking, ... lurked in the gallery (of the auditorium), ventriloquizing to his puppet army by means of scribbled instructions carried downstairs, while Farvar, his chief lieutenant, wandered round the forum prompting and orchestrating his O.I. boys".

ECO asked itself not only how the population debate could have gone so wrong, their accusation went a lot further, they asked

"How did Barry and his band of lesser commoners come to take over the Environment Forum and turn a potential meeting place for many views into a semi-Marxist monologue".

The two books written about the conference at the time by Stone and Rowlands draw heavily on the comments in ECO that starts a trend to denounce the third world participation as incompetent and left-wing irrelevance to the truly more objective and scientific discourse. None of the books asks itself why in the first place the whole discussion is so highly dominated by the Anglo-Americans and effectively hides the political content of the global youth meeting at Hamilton. Still in the 1990s a seminal book on environmental international negotiations, *The Greening of Machiavelli* by the English diplomat Brenton is upset about the way "so highly esteemed a figure as" Ehrlich was treated.<sup>61</sup>

What did actually happen? ECO says that Ehrlich from the outset was "facing a 2-1 panel" against his opinion, Savane and Hofsten being the opposition. In Ehrlich's own account Savane is called "bright" and "interested" while Hofsten, a leading Swedish demographer, is derided as "innocent of elementary demography". ECO also talks about how "the O.I. boys (and girls) moved in posse on to the platform and took over the meeting, adding four of their number to the three panelists." Stone says that "free speech was somewhat neglected" at the Environmental Forum, giving the example of Ehrlich being "howled off the platform"<sup>62</sup>. In his own account Ehrlich is strongly upset, but gives surprisingly friendly accounts of the new co-chair "Ms. Obi Chizea proved both intelligent and fair". Furthermore is also one of the added OI panellists, Yusuf Ali Eraj, given credit by Ehrlich for his opinions against the other OI committee panellists and "cohorts".<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Today the ECO initiator Ted Goldsmith have changed opinion and says that he and others were wrong at Stockholm and that Commoner was right in the population controversy between him and Ehrlich. Personal communication with Goldsmith November 1996.

<sup>61</sup> Brenton 1994, p 43. Instead of informing the reader about Ehrlich support of coercive population control against poor and oppressed people Brenton chose to talk about Ehrlich scientific merits and in a footnote on p 41 how Ehrlich puts an emphasis 1990 that the environmental impact of an American is the same as that of 35 Indians or 280 Chadians or Haitians. The advocating of coercive population control is still part of the first Swedish edition 1972 of Ehrlich's book *The Population Bomb* made in a Swedish edition to influence UNCHE. Ehrlich gradually emphasised population and consumption and then blaming especially industrial countries while deemphasising the coercive part of his message, especially after the controversy in Stockholm. This ignorance in accounting for the content of Ehrlich's ideas is systematic the case of those making the protest against his free speech the only important part of the story as if the third worlder's had no other reason for their protests than pseudo-leftism and undemocratic wishes to restrict the free scientific discussion. Apart from this narrative of suppressed scientific Anglo-American open debate in a global setting Brenton's book is highly informative and often less biased and above all daring in evaluating international environmental politics.

<sup>62</sup> Furthermore Stone is upset about that those organisations rich enough to invite those they want to deliver speeches is hindered full access to the public. Paul Ehrlich was not only "howled off the platform at the Forum", he was also "speaking on the invitation and the *expense* of the International Planned Parenthood Federation." (my italics) Stone 1973, p 133.

<sup>63</sup> Ehrlich 1972.

The content of the debate was heated but not totally lacking consensus. Some Oi committee persons and third world participants as de Castro at the first day of the Forum saw forced population control as genocide and emphasised social justice as a solution to overpopulation. Furthermore the need for self-determination was stressed instead of unquestioned acceptance of Western pre-packaged birth control programs. Stanley Hoffsten from the UN Demographic Office pointed at the possibility that the rich Western countries advocated population control to preserve natural resources for their own use.<sup>64</sup> After that Ehrlich pointed out that population control was only one half of the problem, the other half consisting of two factors, affluence and technology, influencing the environment the situation calmed down further.<sup>65</sup> But the Oi committee members still pointed at a severe unbalance in Ehrlich points of view as he did become specific when the environmental problem had to be addressed by population control but refrained from being concrete when he talked about redistribution of wealth.

At other fora outside the official conference, the population issue was also discussed or at least promoted extensively. At the Grand Hotel Aurelio Peccei, vice president of the transnational corporation Olivetti and president of the Club of Rome<sup>66</sup> made the typical dualistic explanation of the environmental crisis in population growth and something else, in his case urbanisation. His "nightmarish vision" was of "gargantuan megalopolis" and his solution was similar to so many Anglo-American environmentalists close to business interest, a call for "la dimension de l'homme", the human dimension.<sup>67</sup> Club of Rome's report Limits to Growth was effectively spread globally in 2,5 million copies with the help of funds received from Volkswagen and Ford Foundation. The message was clear. If the masses in poor nations get the same standard as in the West there will be an environmental catastrophe. What is needed to solve the crisis is more power in the hands of experts who can monitor the situation by using computers. To reorganise economy making it possible for everyone to live a decent life on earth according to Gandhi's vision: "There is enough for everyone's need but not enough for everyone greed" was not the issue. Changing social relations to save the planet and humanity was not to be discussed, only addressing people's individual moral and claiming that only the elite had the broad vision enough for controlling the situation.

Two elite groups played crucial roles in shaping the global environmental debate in the period when UNCHE was officially prepared from 1968 to 1972. Both consisted of people with similar background and their projects were financed in similar ways. One group brought forward visions of global management and a fatalistic world view claiming that humanity would face a catastrophe due to exhaustion of natural resources if the development was not changed. Population and production growth had to come to a halt and a zero-growth at a global equilibrium level was required. These ideas were put forward by the Club of Rome, a self-appointed group of businessman, scientists and high governmental officials funded by the Ford and Volkswagen foundation. The group was founded in 1968 and started what they called their "commando action" by launching the book "Limits to Growth" spread free to 15.000 decision-makers. It was translated into more than 20 languages and in total 2 1/2 million copies were distributed.<sup>68</sup> The book came to dominate the public debate in many countries. Its biologicistic paradigm stating that nature puts limits to society still is influential although its predictions have been wrong so far. Besides the limits to growth message the

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<sup>64</sup> The account of the discussion basically from Aaranson 1972.

<sup>65</sup> Gendlin 1972, p 28.

<sup>66</sup> Initiator of the influential report Limits to Growth 1972.

<sup>67</sup> Gendlin 1972, p 29.

<sup>68</sup> Kristiansen, 1989.

Club of Rome also had other views on how the necessary societal changes have to be prepared. In their view the majority of people have a very short time-horizon and capacity to think in broader perspectives. Also politicians have a to limited thinking focusing on next elections. But also “mental models” and the “human brain” are to primitive to grasp the complex and long-term nature of the problems facing humanity. What is needed is a elaborated computer programming and the insights among the elite capable of thinking in long terms.

The Oi committee in their final declaration opposed the Club of Rome and others by wanting to "reject models of stagnation proposed by certain alarmist Western ecologists, economists, industrialists and computer fans, ... We therefore strongly condemn the international agencies and aid programs for their involvement in population control policies which are against Third World peoples and which will perpetuate their exploitation."

The Stockholm became historical in terms of third world participation also at the official level. The Soviet bloc did not participate due to diplomatic problems with the right for GDR to attend as a delegate. For the first time Communist China was an actor at an international UN summit. China entered the scene as the great opponent of USA. At their first appearance after entering the UN they wanted the carefully prepared draft reopened for discussion, since they had not been able to participate in the negotiations. A diplomatic war started that continued all through the conference. While countries like USA and France were not interested in a declaration with legal precepts and thus not especially interested in a declaration consisting in more than a preamble, smaller industrial nations and the developing world wanted a declaration. The Chinese leaked through the ECO newspaper that what they wanted was a full discussion of their proposals but not necessarily everything included in as formal statements. What they specifically wanted to fight against was blaming the human being in general and population growth in particular for causing environmental destruction. For this they could find widespread support. More and more delegations found that behind the Chinese ideological glossary the Chinese wanted to strengthen the same legal principles as themselves. Finally the declaration could be agreed to after negotiations until 5.00 AM before the last day's plenary<sup>69</sup>. Rowlands notes that not only the US had hoped for less substantive action and legal principles promoted in the declaration, "If it can be said that international law is habitually developed by weaker nations to protect their interests from the stronger nations (who can look after themselves), Stockholm was proving to be no exception to the rule<sup>70</sup>. The strong Chinese ideological position for the interest of the developing countries was also part of a general trend of developing countries changing the hitherto environmental discussion focusing on pollution to a more balanced view.

Indira Gandhi was present as the only other head of government apart from the prime minister of Sweden Olof Palme. She saw hunger, disease and poverty as the main environmental problems in her and other developing countries. Many observers conclude that at the Stockholm conference the developing nations dominated much of the discussion and changed the narrow-minded pollution oriented and development uninterested environmental discourse of the industrialised countries and Northern environmental movements.<sup>71</sup>

For non-governmental organisations Stockholm became an innovative experimental field, more or rather totally due to initiatives from others than the already established and accredited

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<sup>69</sup> Stone 1973,

<sup>70</sup> Rowlands 1973, p 100.

<sup>71</sup> Aaronson 1972, Rowlands 1973, McCormick 1989, Williams, 1993.

NGOs in the UN system. The governments themselves and the UNCHE secretariat initiated many new avenues for NGOs wanting to influence the official process. NGOs were invited to take part in writing national reports or join national delegations or to participate in a semi-official NGO forum. People's organisations themselves had also taken initiatives to a forum and Friends of the Earth and The Ecologist to a daily conference newspaper followed by the Environmental forum that published one more. Peter Willets (1996:67) in his assessment of NGOs and the UN sees these innovations as historical,

"Each of these four procedures - input to reports, joining government delegations, holding a forum and producing a newspaper - first became a feature of a UN conference at the Stockholm environmental conference in 1972."

There was also established mutual reporting between the official conference and the NGO Forum as the main points at each of the parallel meeting was reported to other at plenaries and the forum daily paper distributed to all official delegates, a degree of interaction not accounted for at later conferences.



*Ingrid Eriksson and Per Kågeson  
at People's Forum*



As often NGOs were in the corridors lobbying, this time with the help of the high presence of the international media and the pressure from the many activities going on outside the official conference. There were little interest in making something in common and Mead and Ward had to push the NGOs together at coffee lunch tables to make a joint statement.

What provokes more lively descriptions than the NGO lobbying is the Environmental Forum.<sup>72</sup>

"The atmosphere of the building where the Forum was held was charged with excitement and controversy. At some sessions, more than 700 people jammed into the space of 500, filling the balcony, flowing out into the corridors which were already crowded by exhibits."<sup>73</sup>

<sup>72</sup> For the most comprehensive description of the Environmental Forum see Aaranson 1972.

<sup>73</sup> Gendlin 1972, p 28.



*Bill Robertshaw and others prepare the development and environment exhibition at Environmental Forum. The calender and telephone services were the outcome of Educaids meeting 1965. To the left exhibition against US ecocide in Vietnam.*

Many Anglo-American observers are critical against the Swedish organisers for letting the control over the forum come into the hands of a "pseudo-leftist elite" master-minded by Commoner.<sup>74</sup> It is as if the only explanation to the change in favour of some more third world perspective could only be the result of outside pressure from American leftists and not rest in internal interest of a majority of both Swedish organisations and globally as expressed at Hamilton. Even after the invitation of more third world participants Anglo-Americans dominated. 68 out of totally 149 panellists and chairs were Anglo-American, out of them 59 from the US. If we take away the added panellists and others during the population debate and also takes away the podium participants on criticised issues of political and cultural self-determination, Anglo-Americans are in majority, 63 out of 121 podium participants. The winners of the additions to the population issue and liberation themes were especially Africans who raised their participation from 9 to 20. The Swedish organisers felt pushed by the Americans wanting to be on the program and were unused to the kind of promotional attitude for books and services that Americans unashamedly used the meeting for.<sup>75</sup> That the planning was late was not made any secret but the Swedish organisers with UNA Sweden and the secretariat maintained influence of the program together with other persons like Mead that represented the NGO community at the official conference. They met daily to finally decide about the coming day. The content of the final program except for the interventions by Oi Committee which was solved and the Hog Farmers which was not solved was an expression of what the organisers wanted. A closer look in the program also shows that the main emphasis is on more narrow environmental themes. A difference from later environmental NGO fora is that working environment clearly is included and that most politically controversial issues were discussed.

<sup>74</sup> Stone, Rowlands, Ehrlich, Gendlin all quote ECO and their criticism against the Environmental Forum for being captured by Commoner and third worlders. Rowlands talks about a leader crisis among the Swedish organisers. The exception among Anglo-American observers is Aaranson. The dominant Anglo-American criticism still today survives in the literature, Brenton 1994, p 43: "This mass of bodies [NGOs] pursued a debate in their own forum, which displayed an energy and enthusiasm often depressingly absent from the formal negotiations, but also taking on a heavily new left and third worldist flavour"

<sup>75</sup> Interview with Ingrid Segerstedt-Wiberg 1997.



The accusations against the Swedish organisers for being dominated by a pseudo-leftist take-over motivate some investigation. The two key persons doing practical job after SIDA gave the money were Fjellander and Melander, none of them ever belonging to a leftist group but rather being considered by leftists to be non-socialists or belong to the opposite pole. The key politician was Ingrid Segerstedt-Wiberg, chairman of UNA Sweden. She was a senior liberal MP having a strong position in UNA circles, dominated by trade unions, churches and other organisations of different political colours. So the key actors rather stood to the right of the social democrat chief organiser Wettergren in party terms.

Any attempts of the Swedish government to interfere would have caused problems. Segerstedt-Wiberg's position, anchored both in parliament and popular movements and with a long record of independent opinions, made her hard to assail. Furthermore, unwritten law in Sweden says that once government and popular movement organisations have agreed on a mandate, movement organisations are supposed to have full independence so far they adhere to the agreement. The change towards more third world participation that made Anglo-Americans believe in a leftist take-over was thus caused by non-socialists with approval of the officially appointed Wettergren who was a member of the Social democratic party, long before the accused Commoner had arrived. Rather than reflecting leftist manipulations against scientific views, the Oi committee intervention reflected an unusual Anglo-American loss of control of international events. Both at Environment Forum and at Hamilton another kind of view succeeded in making its voice heard.

In spite of the tensions due to internal contradictory intentions from the official initiators and insecure practical arrangements the result was that Environmental Forum became an arena for independent voices from all over the world. The program and participation was such that it also by today's standard is surprisingly wide and relevant. The internal controversy among the Swedish organisers did not change a common attitude in relation to the importance of criticism of American involvement in the Vietnam War and third world opinions except when it came to the take over of the population panel. Without the change in some favour of the third world the program would have been biased towards American interests.



*Outdoor propaganda against US bombing during UNCHE*

The New environmentalism that had exploded in the US in 1970 with the joint governmental, popular and business sponsored Earth Day had produced a lot of strong expressions capable of making itself heard with a dramatically raised noise level. It was according to the US press already before the UN conference truly transformed into a professionalized actor that no longer was present at the streets. In Stockholm, this internal need for Anglo-American new environmentalism to transform itself also into a more coherent ideology dominated the global popular scene, or what can be described as the superficial part of the global civil society.

The way this change is described by an Anglo-American observer as if it is a question of how the whole global environment movement is transformed is clearly expressed by John McCormick in his assessment of the Stockholm conference in his book *Reclaiming Paradise: The Global Environmental Movement* :

"It [the UN conference] also marked a transition: from the emotional and occasionally naive New Environmentalism of the 1960s to the more rational, political, and global perspectives of the 1970s. Above all, it brought the debate between LDCs and MDCs - with their differing perceptions of environmental priorities - into open forum and caused a fundamental shift in the direction of global environmentalism."<sup>76</sup>

Rather than being a description of the transformation of the global environmental movement it describes the change in Anglo-American new environmentalism and coming to fore of such actors as IIEA and FOE.

Some of the Anglo-American initiatives are fruitful. ECO or some kind of daily newspaper about a summit becomes a key instrument for making NGOs important and influential and a standard model for almost all coming international events beginning at a meeting on nuclear power and energy already 1972. Friends of the Earth became the strongest international democratic popular movement organisation increasingly more socially oriented as third world members joined.



*Several outdoor posters against US war in Vietnam*

<sup>76</sup> McCormick, 1989, p 88. LDC and MDC is here abbreviations for Less Developed Countries and More Developed Countries or third world countries and industrialised countries.

The US press was afraid of the conference and wrote that: "It will provide a conspicuous soapbox for demonstrators against the US role in Vietnam." For the joint Swedish and American anti-Vietnam war movement, the UN conference was a success. The FNL movement had strong influence at both important public fora, the People's Forum and the Environmental Forum. The many years of polarised relations with the Swedish Vietnam Committee ended with the many actions in cooperation taken during the conference. The American critical voices against ecocide in Vietnam were welcomed everywhere except at the Hog Farm headquarters at Skarpnäck. Demonstrations, a special Swedish hearing on ecocidal warfare, interventions by NGOs and governments in the official proceedings and the Dai Dong effort accumulated a strong effect.



*Demonstration against US ecocide in Vietnam*

After the split in April, Powwow and the People's Forum never regained its spirit. The main idea of the strong local environmental group that the movement should be decentralised made it less interested in using the Stockholm event for building an independent international environmental movement. The strength of Alternative City was its capacity to mobilise the inhabitants of Stockholm, not to defend and contribute to the formulation of an identity and ideology for an emerging independent movement. The Powwow group was unable to break out of the progressively narrower message from People's Forum and build a long terms alliance with the third world position from Hamilton so close to their original declaration. When the first conflicts emerged of the nature of People's Forum the Powwow group did not defend the view that the Stockholm conference was an important occasion for a qualified discussion for forming an international movement and not only a possibility for a Swedish speaking audience to listen and form its opinion.



*Barry Commoner at People's Forum, to the left Björn Eriksson.*

The left could gradually increase its domination of the People's Forum. A polarised position was strengthened all through the conference by the interaction with Hog Farm. Even if one accepts the point of view of a strategy that maintains a strong independent position before compromising to get resources, the strategy of People's Forum is problematic in another sense. The self-chosen isolation from others that can accept money from CIA related funds is not necessarily the same as self-chosen isolation from the same group's political message.

The political disloyalty towards the environmental positions of the third world by the People's Forum is shown by the disinterest for the Hamilton documents. Instead of systematically linking and building on the message that here had defeated the kind of Anglo-American focus on population and apolitical environmentalism, the People's Forum changed itself into a school for local inhabitants telling yet another example on how capitalism is the main source for the problems in the world. Their disinterest in supporting the political momentum from Hamilton and contribute to the building of a third world oriented independent environmental movement delayed such a development with a decade and opened for the established and new Anglo-American environmental NGOs to dominate the international scene.

But the task of both maintaining a dividing line between popular movements and drug liberals as well as CIA-related funds was maybe ambitious enough. The strong independence of People's Forum left others enabled to have opinions in conflict with established interests. But basically People's Forum international impact became part of a colourful background for the professional NGO system and UN to educate and reform itself.



*Jan Fjellander, Oi Committee*

The youth theosophist attempt to get the third world perspective into the global environmental discourse came to an end. The discussions about how to continue the Oi Committee became coloured by extensive demands for representation from different regions and sub-regions while there were no resources and ended without any building of a third world dominated organisation. The Oi Committee manifesto that was worked upon during the twelve days at Stockholm was distributed and then lost to the organisers in the chaos and exhaustion that was

the final result.<sup>77</sup> Jan Fjellander was stamped by left activists as a traitor to the Vietnamese and portrayed as being a tool in the hands of Maurice Strong.

Population maintained its popular role among UN circles and private foundations. But the UN conference on population in 1974 became a continuation of the battle between North and South. Developing countries asked for more help to become more economically prosperous and thus making their population rate fall, the North did not want to give the help and thus were all population targets removed from the plan of action of the conference. Shifts in the domestic politics in the US towards more Christian moral values proved more important in deciding the deemphasising on population control than its popularity among global NGOs and intergovernmental organisations. A steadily increase of bilateral and multilateral population projects have anyway taken place and helped promoting growth. Especially China, which opposed much of the ideas of blaming the environmental problem on the growth of the masses in the third world, has carried out effective population control programmes partly with rather coercive means in line of what Ehrlich suggested. In India, population control programs became a controversial issue that caused great protests against the regime of Indira Gandhi, ending with and her fall from power. The catastrophic predictions of exponential population growth until cut off by famine are now less common in the debate.

Development was made an issue by the third world governments together with NGO-experts to address the issue in the dualistic way of seeing environmental destruction as caused by poverty and lack of development in the South and by lack of pollution control in the North. This view was included in UNCHE documents but development was of secondary priority and not really addressed in the official follow-up of the conference. The broader, less dualistic economical, political and cultural development critique of independent third world activists and the Powwow group was maintained among socially oriented environmental movements in the North and popular movements in the South but had difficulties to establish any more elaborated conceptual framework.

What became an issue at Stockholm in spite of its low priority on the agenda was energy. All non-state actors at Stockholm that had made early attempts to influence the UN conference made energy their next main point on their environmental agenda, the youth theosophists, the Powwow-group, the left-wing environmentalists in Sweden, Friends of the Earth, ECO and Aspen Institute. Energy also became the most controversial environmental issue during the coming decade in the industrialised countries. Furthermore, the activities at Stockholm radicalised the environmental movement in the energy issue. The peace movement was present with their long time experience of struggling against nuclear interests. They together with New Zealand raised the issue of nuclear bomb tests with some success. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom also opposed nuclear power before most environmental organisations and made an exhibition about it at Stockholm.

Aspen Institute was well-prepared for continuing its central role in influencing the global environmental discourse focusing next on energy and population issues. Strong offered Ward the role of leader for IIEA and she accepted under the condition that the headquarter moved to London and that the integration of environment and development became central. Thus IIEA changed name to International Institute for Environment and Development, IIED continuing

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<sup>77</sup> Nobody of the organisers saw the Third World manifesto made by the Oi committee again until it was found by the author of this text 33 years later. It was handed over in a ceremony by Friends of the Earth chairman in Sweden, Göran Folin, and Oi committee activist Jan Fjellander to Friends of the Earth International chair Meena Rahman in October 2005. For the full text, see appendix I.

its close collaboration with Aspen Institute. Strong had a key role at both Aspen Institute, IIED and other organisations as the Trilateral commission initiated by Rockefeller aiming at uniting the interests of the leading businessmen and politicians in Japan, Europe and North America. Business was well-placed and institutionalised for continuing their work for a conceptual framework of global environmental problems compatible with their interests.



*UN conference at the new parliament building at Sergels torg 1972*

For the UN the Stockholm conference became a new model for helping the image by arranging a series of theme conferences. The most successful one in terms of popular participation in the 1970s was the world conference to start the women's decade in Mexico 1975.<sup>78</sup> The institutional outcome of the Stockholm conference was United Nations Environmental Program, and UN unit without full power as an executive body with Strong as director.<sup>79</sup> Basically information, education and trying to coordinate others efforts became the way UNEP worked including administrating a smaller fund for environmental programs in developing countries.

The great influence of the Stockholm conference on the governmental level was the growth of nation state environmental machineries from about ten at Stockholm to 100 ten years later,<sup>80</sup> by 1985 more than 140 countries had environmental agencies.<sup>81</sup> The result was a solution to acute pollution problems in rich countries while the environmental degradation was becoming

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<sup>78</sup> Alter Chen, Martha, 'Engendering world Conferences: the international women's movement and the United Nations', *Third World Quarterly*, 16 (3), 1995, Connors, Jane, NGOs and the Human Rights of Women at the UN', in Willets, Peter, ed. 1995.

<sup>79</sup> McCormick 1989, chapter 6.

<sup>80</sup> Mostafa Tolba opening address on the session of Special Character of the Governing Council of UNEP, in *Uniterra* 2, 1982.

<sup>81</sup> McCormick 1989 p 125.

more complex and dispersed over larger areas.<sup>82</sup> "On virtually every front there has been a marked deterioration in the quality of our shared environment," Mostafa Tolba, the director of UNEP summed up the situation ten years later.<sup>83</sup>

The wider societal knowledge interest of the environmental movement changed with the Stockholm conference and early 1970s towards specialisation. Systematic holism was often separated into instrumental and fragmented energy research and philosophical deep ecology.<sup>84</sup> Established science and the political institutions need for scientific legitimation renewed itself by meeting the broader knowledge interest with elitist advanced study networks and future study institutionalisation outside the control of popular movements.<sup>85</sup>

For the established NGOs the follow-up of the Stockholm conference was times of open doors. Conference after conference was held where they were invited to discuss how the cooperation between UN and NGOs in the environmental field should continue. Also at the regional level in Western Europe an intermediary organisation started 1974 in Brussels to influence EEC and disseminate information having its roots in discussions at the Stockholm conference, the European Environmental Bureau. On the global level the result was finally the creation of Environment Liaison Center (ELC, Later ELCI, the I added for International) with its headquarter in Nairobi at UNEP. The ideology of the NGOs is already stated in the characteristic part of the name, liaison, middlemen between popular and other environmental organisations and the UN. What made Stockholm dynamic was excluded. Now organising actions were excluded as well as popular movements emphasising Their own role as changers of society criticising business, politicians and the UN.



*Pollution Olympics at UNCHE.<sup>86</sup>*

Not even the NGOs themselves had energy to make much out of their self-limiting role that made them popular guests at official meetings. In 1974 more than 150 NGOs had registered to attend the annual UNEP Governing Council and by 1980 it had fallen to less than 20.<sup>87</sup>

Instead of broader dialogues with popular movements the big international environmental NGOs IUCN and WWF developed together with UNEP a general World Conservation Strategy 1980 with the aim to integrate environmental concerns in all different policies. In a

<sup>82</sup> For accounts of the problems facing the governmental agencies, see McCormick 1989 pp 125-7, Brenton 1994, chapter 4.

<sup>83</sup> Tolba, opening address, *Uniterra* 2 1982.

<sup>84</sup> Jamison 1996, p 230.

<sup>85</sup> Elzinga 1984.

<sup>86</sup> Numerous actions took place during the summit. The two "olympic" activists are Chris Ryan and Peter Harper. The latter inspired Jan Fjellander in his global environmental concerns at an international theosophic meeting in 1962. He is today the leader of an alternative technology centre in Wales.

<sup>87</sup> McCormick 1989, p 101.



way where the distinctions between NGOs and official organisations are more totally blurred<sup>88</sup> than in any other sector the ideology of sustainable development was born.

The Anglo-American environmentalism successfully institutionalised itself in professions and organisations like Friends of the Earth while the public opinion in both the US and UK slumped.<sup>89</sup> In the US the kind of dense networking between different social movements building a movement culture was not fulfilled as in Northern Europe. The influence reversed across the Atlantic and in the late 1970s Northern Europe popular movements with their occupations of nuclear power sites were inspiring the Americans at Seabrook.<sup>90</sup>



*Noah's ark, Danish environmental organisation on visit during UNCHE*

For popular movements in general, the Stockholm conference ended in a stalemate. Business, governments and established NGOs were not capable of creating an ideology and practice that got hegemonial acceptance. Nor could the popular movements build a sufficiently broad vision. The struggle continued after Stockholm, now within more narrow issue areas. Nuclear power became the central way to challenge established economic, political and military interest, especially in Europe and Latin America.<sup>91</sup> Gradually the third world showed their

<sup>88</sup> Talbot's account for the non-governmental organisation IUCN at Stockholm is illustrative: "Russell Train, head of the US delegation, and I at that time were both members of the IUCN executive Board and there were people associated with IUCN who therefore had substantial background in conservation serving on many if not most other delegations." Talbot 1982.

<sup>89</sup> Brenton 1994, p 55 notes that the intensity having rocketed in the 1960s fell back in the 1970s but not to the same low level as before from which it had started. In opinion polls in the US 40% had stated the environment as the most important problem in 1970 and only 10% by 1974-75 after this lowering further. In the UK and France interest dipped in a similar way. Only in northern Europe was the popular environmental concern unaffected.

<sup>90</sup> Kitchelt, Herbert, 'Zur Dynamik neuer sozialer Bewegungen in den USA. Strategien gesellschaftlichen Wandels und 'American Exceptionalism'', Karl-Werner Brand ed., 1985.

<sup>91</sup> Although later in Latin America. The internationalisation of the popular environmental movement in Latin America came first with anti-nuclear gatherings in the end of the 1980s, in a setting where no division between nuclear power and nuclear weapons was useful as the military often was responsible for both.

organisational strength and made the environmental movement more aware of politics and issues of social justice. In this process people like Anil Agarwal from India, who participated with the other third world representatives at the Environmental Forum played an important role.<sup>92</sup>



*Alternative sight-seeing bus organised by Alternativ stad to show visitors environmental problems that the authorities prefer to hide during UNCHE*

Popular movements played a crucial role in establishing a new pattern for interaction at the global level between governments and non-governmental organisations. At every step in the process popular actors were ahead or parallel in their efforts. Through their sustained independent endeavour the semi-official forum initiated by the UN developed into an independent NGO forum with direct linkages to the official conference. This is of historic importance as it is the first time since the establishment of the modern inter-state system in the 17th century that such a parallel process and independent level in direct linkage to an inter-state meeting is established. This new pattern have since the Stockholm conference become regular not only at UN theme conferences but also for the World Bank as well as outside the formal UN system when EU, APEC or G-8 organise summits, with different balances between a more popular independent character and a semi-official NGO process.

That the end result of the Stockholm conference was a stalemate between the governmental, business and popular actors is substantiated by the shift among almost all leading popular actors in the UNCHE process choosing to focus on nuclear power and energy issues with the beginning at Stockholm. Although the issue was not high on the formal agenda and not so controversial at the time it rapidly became so. In this issue the popular movement could regenerate their momentum and confront industry and governments, now with Northern Europe as leaders and not the US.

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<sup>92</sup> He later established the influential magazine Down to Earth in India. Most of the other third world activists present at UNCHE disintegrated and lost contact with each other and the international environmental movement.

## Anti-nuclear Power and Alternative Movement

In Sweden, the Powwow group and a commune initiated by young theosophists played crucial roles in establishing the first cross-political anti-nuclear power movement in Stockholm and Sweden in 1973. It would take 23 years before the development of the Swedish environmental movement could rid itself of splits stemming from the extra-ordinary course of events in the Stockholm conference process. In 1995 Friends of the Earth Sweden and Environmental Federation, a coalition of local environmental groups merged.

Powwow and the Oi committee had effects on the form of popular participation at Summits and continued capacity to challenge corporate environmental strategies. But the ideology behind and the Indian and theosophical roots were forgotten as well as the whole third world perspective that the Oi Committee and the Hamilton conference brought forward. It remained as a vague memory in the Swedish environmental movement and influenced the discussions on growth and strategy. No to growth never became an issue as the whole growth concept was seen as socially neutral and not of relevance, and thus sustainable growth that was launched later was not an option either. Most clearly, the difference was seen when the environmental federation at its summer camp in 1981 decided against the concept of thinking globally – acting locally. The Environmental federation at this time was highly involved in building local alternatives like cooperatives for distributing ecological food. But this was seen as part of a wider movement that had to act in a larger scale, thus the conclusion was Think globally, act globally.

It was in Norway that Indian thinking developed more and was an explicit inspiration for the movement all through the 1970s. The success for the ecologically inspired popular movements in the referendum on membership in the European Economic Common Market, EEC resulted in strong self-confidence. This made popular movements in Norway influential and made them have a leading role in Nordic cooperation through the 1970s. This cooperation was mainly organised at Nordic environmental camps. In Norway Gandhian philosophy maintained a strong position both at academic and environmental movement level and as inspirator of civil disobedience. In 1981 it came to a climax. Sigmund Kvaløy had contacts with the Samic indigenous people in the North of Norway. There were plans to build a dam at Alta right across the biggest canyon in Europe in the heartland of the reindeer Samic land. Mobilisation started against this project already early in the 1970s but from 1979 and onwards there was strong opposition. But the authorities continued to start the construction work. In January 1981 Samic activists together with environmental activists from all of Norway occupied the site chaining them again but this time to each other and the ice they were sitting on. The occupation continued for a week in minus 30 degrees Celsius. To break it the government brought every seventh policeman in Norway to Alta carrying the activists away and keeping them from coming back. The battle was lost but the Samic people soon got their own Samic parliament with more political influence than they had earlier.

Simultaneously as the struggle at the Alta River gained momentum another battle even more according to Gandhian strategy was carried out in the valley of Innerdalen in central Norway. South of Trondheim a dam project was opposed by a constructive programme. Activists started to reclaim land that was going to be put under water and used world hunger and the need to use all fertile land as an argument against the construction of the dam. When the construction site was occupied by activists the police carried people away. There was not enough strength to carry out two large actions at the same time and the battle was lost and to a large degree forgotten unlike the battle at Alta.

In Sweden both the peace movement and the Syndicalist trade union maintained an interest in non-violence. In the early 1950s Syndicalists was the main support for the World Citizen movement before it made a right turn and saw the antimilitarism of the World Citizen Movement as a threat against the Free world in its struggle with totalitarian Communism. When new movement vitalised the political culture the syndicalists became an important factor in the alternative movement bringing in the ideas and experiences on direct action and revitalising its anti-militarisation work. A key figure was Ulf Norenus, a Syndicalist and board member of War Resister' International. In 1977, Norenus was one of the organisers of Svenska Fredslägret, (Swedish Peace camp). Norenus trained people through group dynamics. During the occupation of the block Mullvaden in Stockholm Jordcirkus (Earth Circus) organised a more physical form of non-violent training. Inspiration came from Chris Torch and his experience with the theatre group Living theatre and War Resisters' League in the US.<sup>93</sup> The same year SPAS was the first single-issue organisation in Sweden to decide that they did not accept the narrow-mindedness of being only peace organisation but declared themselves part of the alternative movement. At the same period the environmental movement occupied the forests in most parts of the country to stop spraying the trees with dioxine.

Already in 1974 Sweden had a leading role in mass mobilisation against nuclear power and together with other Western European countries shaped a strong international ecological movement that at the beginning had been inspired by nuclear criticism in the US. A mass popular education campaign started to discuss nuclear power and energy issues involving up to 100 000 persons in study circles all over the country. Sweden already had established the largest nuclear power programme per person in the whole world before opposition started to develop internationally at the beginning of the 1970s. In 1972 the Center party became the first parliamentary party to question nuclear power in the world. By the year 1973 the local opposition had grown firm. In Sweden the role of local government is strong and at this time there even was a limited right to veto development projects. At a proposed site at Brodalen in the Bohuslän region on the West coast the nuclear plans had to be cancelled. It was enough with a threat by a majority of the local political parties to use the veto and mass meetings were people refused to accept a nuclear power plant that made the authorities to drop the plans. Since then no sites for any part of the nuclear cycle has been possible to establish outside the four already established construction sites at Oskarshamn, Ringhals, Barsebäck and Forsmark. All sites whether being proposed for uranium mining, power plants or waste storage has been met by fierce successful local resistance in Sweden through mass campaigns, occupations or sabotage against investigations.

This movement against nuclear power turned more and more into massive civil disobedience. The strength seemed to come from complete different sources than what the student movement and left wing leaders of the late 1960s thought was possible. To the Nordic countries this kind of rebellion was not new as had been seen already in Norway and Iceland in 1970. In 1974 local inhabitants in a rural Western community non-violently stopped representatives from the authorities and sabotaged the state power company investigation on possible future sites for nuclear power. If the locals saw it, there would be no nuclear site at their village under any circumstances and thus there was no need for an investigation. A broad national coalition of youth organisations from all political parties and other organisations was established, a signature campaign started and in short time the Norwegian government said no to nuclear power.

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<sup>93</sup> Vinthagen, 2005, p134, footnote continued from previous page.

On the continent strong local resistance to nuclear power was more of a surprise. Here the national political culture had small possibilities to be influenced from the local level, and thus the confrontations grew stronger. One source of inspiration was Communaete de L'Arche (Community of the Rainbow) in Larzac in Massif Central in France. Here a Gandhian ashram had been established by a French follower of Gandhi who he met in the 1930s. The community was central to the local small farmers resistance to the expansion of a military testing ground. Through nine years civil disobedience was successfully carried out against the state. At the most intensive mobilisation 100 000 people gathered at this high plateau far away from cities in the heart of France in a non-violent invasion of the fields to protect them from the military in 1974. This struggle inspired the small farmers at Wyhl in Southern Germany where there were plans to construct a nuclear power plant. In 1975 local inhabitants occupied the planned nuclear construction site at Wyhl, after the police throw them out it was reoccupied by 28 000 people, now with support from many other places. The battle cry of the movement became *Kein kernkraftwerk hier und auch nicht anderswo* (No nuclear power here and nowhere else either).

In 1977 the influences had crossed the Atlantic Ocean once more and inspired similar mass actions against nuclear power in the USA. At Seabrook a new stage in the global development of the non-violent movement took place as many thousand activists organised in small affinity groups carried out non-violent direct action in common. It is inspired by Spanish anarchism with roots in tertulias in the 1880s, which were small discussion and action groups, a model later becoming central to the whole anarchist movement during the 1930s.<sup>94</sup> 1 414 were arrested during the action which became an inspiration to a new organisation model - a network of self-organised non-violent groups. Vinthagen concludes: "After Gandhi and Martin Luther King non-violence develops into a more decentralised and active participatory direction where the action repertoire, forms of organisation, capacities and knowledge is distributed to all movement activists and specialised techniques are developed."

In the forests of Sweden, the valleys of Norway, the mountains of France and periphery of West Germany and United States a non-violent direct action movement develops, building on a rural-urban solidarity that gets more and more interconnected. Simultaneously a movement against globalisation develops in the third world against IMF and the World bank as well as similar protests as in Western countries to protect the environment. This international wave of movements was at the global level strengthened by a new form of organisation. Action groups united transnationally in networks with the lay activists at the centre of the organisation. At international meetings with the participants sleeping on the floor of friends apartments and on small funding action-oriented networks challenged Industry and the established NGOs dominated by professionals. It started with the International Baby Food Action Network, IBFAN in the end of the 1970s shortly followed by a series of global single-issue action networks on pesticides, rivers and rain forests. IBFAN was soon supported by SIDA, the Swedish development agency which for the first time funded activities that simultaneously was carried out both to change society in the North and South by protesting against infant formula while promoting breast milk feeding in all parts of the world. The campaign focused on boycott against Nestlé promotion of infant formula in the third world. During its most intensive period about 25-30 million people in the US alone participated in the boycott campaign.

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<sup>94</sup> Vinthagen, 2005, p.134f. Also influence from other antinuclear mass actions and the Vietnam War movement might have played a role, see footnote 5.

In this international atmosphere also Finland finally developed an alternative movement that could challenge both the development model of planned economy and capitalism. In the end of the 1970s especially Swedish-speaking Finns developed an anti-nuclear power movement well-connected to the rest of the Nordic environmental movement. This anti-nuclear movement met strong opposition, not only from the government but also from the Communists that dominated many broader popular movement coalitions. The Finnish communists were still in the hands of old style technology optimism and did not support the new kind of technology criticism, especially when also nuclear power in the Soviet Union was put under question. While the left and most Communists in the rest of the Nordic countries had changed their minds already in the middle of the 1970s and started to question nuclear power under any system, in Finland it took more time.

A movement developed later than in the other Nordic countries. But when it started it all happened at once. 1979 a dam site was occupied at Kojjärvi, houses was occupied in Helsinki by young people, a new peace movement emerged, workers striked and a mass movement to support the third world grew out of the idea to give a one percent volunteer tax on your income to development projects. 1979 is also a year when Finnish interest in Gandhi was expressed through the book *The Core of Gandhi's Philosophy* by Unto Tähtinen published in New Delhi.<sup>95</sup> When the activists came to occupy Kojjärvi they were met by Ville Komsu who explained how the direct action was based on Gandhian thought.<sup>96</sup>



*Activists carrying stones to stop exploitation of lake at Kojjärvi 1979.*

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<sup>95</sup> Listed as the only Finnish book on Gandhi in english in the book *Finnish Peace Making* edited by Kimmo Kiljunen, Folke Sundman and Ilkka Taipale, Peace Union of Finland, 1987, mainly covering the post war period. In an interview October 14 2006 Unto Tähtinen told that whne he came back to Finland in the early 1960s the interest in his knowledge of Gandhian and non-violence philosophy was limited. He only got invitations to speak at the university.

<sup>96</sup> Thomas Wallgren interview, Solovetsk, 2004.

A strong boycott against Nestlé was also organised in Finland. Third world and fair trade shops were established in many towns. The greatest success was the Percentage movement. Its goal was to raise the official development aid from 0,18 to 0,7 percentage of the gross national product according to the goal set by the UN, a goal reached since many years in the other Nordic countries. It also demanded that the aid should be given to the poorest of the poor among the Third world countries and support “self-reliant” development there. It also promoted a shift towards sustainable and globally responsible lifestyles and consumption patterns in the North.

The movement appealed to Finnish people to give one per cent of their wages to different Non-Governmental Organisations that were implementing development co-operation programmes in the South. During the peak of the campaign between 100 000 and 150 000 people joined it and started to pay their voluntary percentage tax to about one hundred different development and solidarity organisations. Thus 2-3 per cent of the population participated contributing large sums in the most active years 1979 – 1985. With the weight and credibility of this self-organised aid the Percentage campaign also put strong pressure on the official Finnish development aid budget. It was raised from Finnish Mark 350 million to almost Finnish Mark 4 000 million reaching the 0.7 per cent goal of GNP.

In a critical assessment Risto Isomäki states that there were limitations to the success of the Percentage movement. During a deep recession in the beginning of the 1990s the official aid budget was drastically reduced. The major aim of the movement to promote sustainable and globally responsible lifestyles did not receive as much publicity as the demands related to international development co-operation. The movement also “Failed in its efforts to influence the quality (content) of the aid package. The official development co-operation funds were not used in projects that assisted the Finnish export companies to create new bridge-heads in the third world countries.”<sup>97</sup>

In Denmark a mass movement developed against nuclear power from 1974 and onwards. As the country had no nuclear programme on its own the movement demanded that Denmark should plan an energy future without nuclear power. To this end volunteers of the movement distributed to every household a leaflet with a plan how Denmark could support alternatives like energy efficiency, solar and wind power. At the same time the movement organised demonstrations and long marches through Denmark against nuclear power. The Norwegian anti nuclear power movement also had the need to mobilise abroad as they already had won a victory in its own country. At Nordic environmental summer camps with hundreds of activists from all Nordic countries the Norwegians launched the idea to make a joint Nordic march against Barsebäck. This nuclear power plant was situated 19 km from the capital of Denmark in Sweden. At its peak in 1977 there were 20 000 Nordic demonstrators marching 30 km through the countryside to the nuclear site at the sea. Early in the 1980s the Danish movement succeeded in stopping all Danish plans for nuclear power.

In Denmark there was also a strong practical alternative movement building sustainable technology and collective ways of living all over the country. 1977 the biggest wind power mill was erected at the Tvind people’s high school with the help of many volunteers. Through a myriad of small workshops, energy companies in the hands of local population, popular

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<sup>97</sup> Isomäki, 2003, p120ff.

education and centres for information an alternative technology movement emerged. Soon Denmark had the biggest wind power industry in the world.

There were few confrontations in Denmark after the big riots at the World Bank meeting in Copenhagen in 1970. But there were unsolved problems. The social democratic lord mayor in Copenhagen declared his goal that old houses in Nørrebro should be pulled down to give space to new buildings. A new plan should be developed for this central township called “The Black Quadrangle”. This district had housed the poorest workers of the capital since hundred years. It had been the backbone of every large popular rebellion in the country for the interest of the workers or against German occupation. Now the plan was to take all old houses away and replace them with new, regardless of if these houses were in bad shape or not.<sup>98</sup>

The development started in big style. A whole range of houses was pulled down in 1972 without a plan what to do next. 1973 Nørrebro beboerforening (Nørrebro neighbourhood association) was established. They constructed a playground for all the children in the black quadrangle on the empty space. It became a success and after a year the municipality overtook the administration of the playground. By the year 1979 it was time to construct new houses. The neighbourhood association tried to stop the proposal but the politicians did not listen. In 1980 they occupied the playground. Now a battle between the inhabitants and the police started. With the help of the police the playground was removed, than hundreds of local people reoccupied the site and put the things for the playground back again. One week later two bulldozers violently pull down all buildings on the playground including the stage with people on the roof. The police help to clear the place of all people and stays until the devastation is done. Now activists in hundreds starts to build a ring barricades in the area. Municipal busses are turned to block the streets and the air taken out of their rings. The police tries to remove the barricades but after have to give up. In the night there is intensive work going on while the playground is rebuilt. While the neighbourhood association tries to direct the energy towards rebuilding the playground also some looting takes place. During three days the police gets the situation out of hand. At this stage the neighbourhood association believes there is an agreement with the police to calm the situation down and wait with demolishing the playground until the municipal parliament has its meeting. This is a mistake. The police uses all force, all material and buildings at the playground and on the streets were removed all local demonstrations forbidden and people in the street brutally attacked. The social democratic lord mayor was very pleased and saw it as a great victory. Two decades of escalating violence between police and activists occupying houses or making political protests. The climax was reached in 1993 when the police shot at demonstrators with live ammunition and 120 bullets, and wounded 11 persons, by chance none died. Denmark had chosen the opposite path of Sweden were a similar action after a time of social democratic restructuring of the city core resulted in the Battle of the Elms 1971. In Sweden the police pulled back after they at first was defeated and the politicians made the choice to back from their disagreeable development plan. In Sweden there were still room for non-violent influence and Gandhi continued to have some impact also during the 1970s, in Denmark there was much less space.

At the end of the 1970s the organisational models from the 1960s had been somewhat revised in the different countries. In general mass movements developed that were separated into women's, environmental, solidarity with the third world and peace movement. All of them were dominated by the middle class except for Finland where the presence of communist trade

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<sup>98</sup> Heinemann, 1995, p37ff.



unions and peace and solidarity organisations including communists had stronger connections to the working class. Each movement had a tendency of developing an ideology promoting an aspect of society as the key to understanding why the specific movement was the key to changing the system. Patriarchy to the women's movement; big industry and technocracy to the environmental movement; imperialism and lack of support for national independence to the solidarity movement; and the military industrial complex to the peace movement. These ideologies tended to delink the issues from each other focusing more on moral than economic interests. In the 1960s there was rather a general ideology for most movements that dominated the discussion. In the beginning of the 1960s liberal cultural radicalism that saw the need in abolishing old traditions and conservatism like colonialism or sexual taboos but not change the system as such. By the end of the 1960s this turned socialist or Marxist ideology. Now economic interests were in focus and the need for another society became addressed. In the 1970s the socialist and Marxist interest turned into organising competing groups of generalists, primarily promoting different epochs of the different traditions of the political party dominated Internationals belonging to the workers movement.

But there were differences also in ways of organising. In Norway activists and intellectuals of all ages united. They jointly were carrying out civil disobedience, established an ecological organisation and developed a deep and social ecological understanding of society. This vitalised Norwegian political culture and was a challenge to the establishment but also to the Maoist party. The ecological organisation was also helped by FMK, a radical pacifist organisation that also maintained interest in non-violent direct action. A model for social change emerged. The militant activists were integrated in national radical organisations with a broad perspective. The activists were also integrated in campaigns organised by broad coalitions of organisations often including all political youth organisations. Thus the new model transgressed the limitations from the 1960s. The strength of broad coalition on narrow subject that challenge established views was maintained. But instead of leaving the development of generalist criticism of the society to a Maoist party or academic intellectuals now an ecological organisation also developed such a broader perspective. Young militant activists was also integrated with the highest level of intellectually acknowledged life in the country. Some important professors from the university were active in different civil disobedience campaigns and gave good arguments for the right of everybody to be disobedient in the satyagraha way.

A repertoire also developed making it possible for all movements to use ways of escalation from the information stand on the street and direct action of a few activists to national mass information campaigns and when possible make the issue at stake a referendum. At its peak the Norwegian popular movement model could distribute to every household in the country its own newsheet. After the last public service television news a national editorial team appointed by a popular movement campaign coalition made its last comments, distributed the manuscript by phone to printing houses all over the country and could have its message distributed by volunteers to the mailboxes before people went to work the next morning. Also in periods lacking this kind of intensive mass mobilisation organisation it was possible to distribute mass information to 10 per cent of the population by using the many local chapter in the organisations who's national organisations were members in campaigns coalitions on issues like atomic power, to protect coastal fishing district or continue to inform about the EEC.

But after 1975 the Norwegian organisational model was challenged from two sides. The Maoist Marxist-Leninist party maintained a strong presence in many popular mobilisations

and was also able to establish an influential daily. On the other hand the old authoritarian way of organising a movement by a self-selected leadership and a dominating information centre at the core of the organisation re-emerged. This model common at the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s was once more used by *Framtiden I våre hender* (Future in our hands), an organisation promoting third world solidarity, global justice, environmental protection and a change of lifestyle. It was established in 1972 by Erik Dammann, due to the great response his book by the same name received. The movement developed quickly and by the end of the 1970s it had 20 000 members and smaller sister organisations with the same name was established in both Denmark, Sweden and Finland. 1977 local chapters demanded internal democracy in the movement. This was turned down with the help of established names supporting Dammann and the way the organisation was organised. Internal democracy was described as bureaucratic and a threat towards developing a movement. Instead every self-organised group that wanted to do something in the name of the organisation was asked to do, as long as they argued in what way their initiative was in congruence with the original goals and it was done in the name of the self-organised group within the Future in our hands movement. The result was that the main office strengthened its grip on the leadership of the organisation. Local groups could not accumulate any experiences by democratically coordinate their efforts by controlling the resources of the movement, Those who wanted resistance against global injustice and cooperation to coordinate local action were marginalised. Future in our hands turned more into a list of magazine readers, a professional staff that produced reports on global justice, sustainable lifestyles and environmental issues and local groups that slowly lost their firstwhile enthusiasm.

Organisations attempting to combine a generalist critique against the present development model with direct action like the ecological organisation (snm) had problems to survive and after 1980 it disappeared. Squeezed between the better organised Maoists and the professional Future in our hands there were no more room for the organisation that so successfully had changed the political culture of Norway strongly inspired by Gandhi. Left were more specialist action networks on issues like dam building or ecophilosophy and the radical pacifist organisation FMK. The Alta and Innerdalen actions were rather the last massive expression of an era than a sign of times to come.

In Sweden activists and intellectuals were parts of the same movement. Many middle-age and elderly also participated in the militant actions all over the country. But leading intellectuals did not formulate any distinct argumentation to promote civil disobedience. If there was broad popular participation such actions anyway received a high degree of legitimacy. The organisation model was in this respect developed in the same direction as before by bringing in more common people into direct actions and bringing up a wider range of issues.

The campaign model also developed integrating more issues in the mass movement. The antinuclear campaign did not only oppose nuclear power and promote alternative energy solutions. It also included the need for another society that did not waste natural resources. To promote a generalist perspective in the mass movement studies on a low energy society and alternative energy scenarios were conducted made by the movement or by like-minded academic institutions. The results were popularised and widely distributed. At the yearly Nordic summer camps a generalist view was developed with a strongly influenced from Norway. Existing and new organisations like the national organisation for environmental groups, Friends of the Earth, Future in our hands that was more democratically organised in Sweden compared to Norway, the peace organisation SPAS, Animal right groups and the Syndicalist trade union developed a generalist interest further while at the same time

promoting or looking positively at non-violent direct action. Many also started local alternative projects and communes in the countryside and the cities. New cooperatives were established. Many local environmental groups started them to distribute ecological products. Left wing parties were less of a problem in Sweden compared to Norway. None was very strong and many of their members committed work in the environmental and other movements.

Thus Sweden developed the kind of organisation model that existed already in the 1960s with more generalist organisations as the most new tool. The action repertoire was further developed strongly influenced by Norway. The Ecophilosophy books by Arne Næss and Sigmund Kvaløy were translated into Swedish while the campaign methods of mass distribution of information material and focus upon on a referendum also was utilised at the end of the 1970s. Sweden lacked the kind of broad public space ere all youth political parties united to challenge the established leadership on specific issues. In Sweden the conservative youth was more right wing and would not as its Norwegian sister organisation be come a strong part in the mobilisation against nuclear power. The Social democratic youth might have shared the political opinion of some of the campaigns but refused to cooperate based on the principle that they did not participate in any organisations other than those closely related to the social democratic sphere of influence. But broad campaigns could anyway be organised in the field of solidarity, environmental, women's rights and opposing urbanisation.

Authoritarian models of organisation regained early some strength in the environmental movement in the early 1970s of similar kind that later emerged in Norway and Denmark. But this was solved by the active local environmental groups that established their own new organisation outside the control of the authoritarian leadership that opposed a more generalist view and claimed that civil disobedience was a threat against democracy. The new organisation Environmental Federation soon became stronger force than the organisations left behind.

The new movements had one problem. There was a lack of institutional capacity to produce intellectual material. Civil disobedience and other strategies that popular movements could use to confront the state and promote social change could not become articulated with the support of established institutions like in Norway. The intellectual life outside academia and independent of commercial forces was to a large extent dominated by the left who also had little interest in the matter. Sweden lacked the kind of big publishing house as Pax was in Norway were both the left and the new movements had the possibility and support to have books being produced developing their knowledge and shared with other in a joint system critical public sphere. In Sweden important experiences as the UN Conference on Human Environment and the alternative activities never could be discussed more widely. A manuscript was written but no publisher wanted to print it, something that probably not would have happened in Norway were such a important event to many movements would have resulted in publishing a book about nit. When there were institutions that were closely connected to the movement like the Institution for Human Ecology at the Gothenburg University the government decided to prevent it from getting further resources and instead established well funded competing institutions under leadership of academicians belonging to the Social democratic party. Contrary to Norway with its backing from the high levels of university and strong publishing organisations close to the movement, Denmark with a well organised diverse publishing industry interested in most new experiences made by any movement and Finland were the new movement from the beginning were more strong at the intellectual than at the activist level, the situation in Sweden was partly the opposite.

But the response against this development of the organisational model was different from that of the earlier decade and from any other country. The Social democratic welfare state had met popular protests by coopting every movement as fast as possible by sectorised research and reforms. In the 1970s this was not enough. Now the old popular movements were mobilised against the new. The Social democratic youth initiated in 1974 the popular movement campaign inviting the traditional worker's, abolition and free church movement as well as cooperatives linked to both workers and farmers. Together with politicians the present situation and the future of popular movements was discussed. The new solidarity and environmental movement was excluded. Instead books were written claiming that popular movements only were organisations and that only organisations that had existed for a long time deserved to be labelled popular movements. The new popular movements were excluded from a collective dialogue with the older popular movements when the future was discussed in many seminars and books during the rest of the decade. The other method was to give resources to individuals within the new movements to develop their own ideas outside the collective ways of working in the movement.

The end result were movements constantly in the need to respond to different reforms launched by the state in their field, lacking own collective resources for intellectual development and much resources for handpicked individuals outside the context of the movement to produce material while the understanding and argumentation for the militant forms of popular movement mobilisation was excluded from discourse at established intellectual institutions.

Instead the movements had its strength on the pragmatic level. Believing in the need of winning a referendum on nuclear power in early 1980 the environmental movement got caught by the idea of building a necessary unity with parliamentary parties and lost its radical position. The movement became tied up in parliamentarian manipulations making it possible to vote between three alternatives and not a clear yes or no. The alternative in the middle won with a small marginal backed by the Social democrats claiming phasing out nuclear power but first finish the construction that already were in progress at the sites where nuclear power already was established. The pragmatism of the environmental movement led it astray. But one month after the referendum the local inhabitants occupied a site at Kynnefjäll in Bohuslän on the West coast to be tested for storing nuclear waste. The research equipment was blocked and the site on top of a mountain occupied. It continued for almost 20 years day and night until the government finally declared explicitly that the mountain never again should be subject to tests for storing nuclear waste. This was the longest occupation in Europe. At the national level the movement felt as if it lost, but some strength was regained at the local level.

In Finland the organisational model made one new invention. Instead of separating the intellectuals from the most radical actions and mass mobilisations this time they became closely united. In chains together at the Koijärvi occupation, making militant actions at the footsteps of the parliament showing naked bottoms towards the politicians to express how disgusting the lack of Finnish support to the third world was or at intellectual seminars with most leading intellectuals of the country present, the intellectuals/activists collaborated and avoided the divisions of the 1960s. There were less elderly in the action and among the intellectuals. Survivors of the new movements in the 1960s could contribute from their positions in magazines like *Ny Tid* (New Time), the Swedish speaking new left journal or *Ydin*, the magazine of the Committee of 100. But the unification of activists and intellectuals made a great impact that also influenced established organisations of all kinds.

In Denmark the organisation model from the early 1960s was once again mobilised, this time to stop nuclear power and with the same narrow limitation of the content of the campaign but more run by the leading activists, still without internal democracy. Also other campaigns followed the same pattern. A more generalist perspective was carried by some different models for organisation. New was Noah, an environmental organisation that developed similar to new environmental organisations in Sweden but were not as much involved in mass campaigns against nuclear power or direct actions against spraying of forests like their sister organisations in Sweden. Here a generalist perspective developed but with less contact to mass mobilisations or direct local action. In Sweden it was local environmental groups that carried out the most militant civil disobedience actions while they at the same time they democratically coordinated mass campaigns against nuclear power, carried out alternative energy plans or supported the struggle in the forests of Sweden. In Denmark the links were seldom as close. Old were the Marxist groups and political parties in strong competition with each other trying to influence the movements as well. Another generalist model was the lively intellectual life well organised through publishing houses, many newspapers open to debate and new initiatives to formulate a vision for another society. The book *Revolt from the Middle* received great interest when it was launched in 1977. The writers were key intellectuals in the Danish establishment. One was the chair of the Danish Science Academy and an opponent of Atomic power, another was the chairman of the Radikale Venstre, the mildly pacifist social liberal party, and one a prominent writer and member of the Danish Academy. As in Norway an organisation was established to promote the ideas of the book, an organisation less resourceful as *Future in our hands* in Norway and also competing with *Future in our hands* in Denmark. The ideological content was mainly a modernisation of the dominant idea from the beginning of the 1960s, to find a balance between capitalism and communism when growth brings more problems than it is useful, to state that both Liberalism and Marxism had failed. The main utopia is the local municipality and ideas how to strengthen local democracy. When the Norwegian leading intellectuals criticised the present development model, they was inspired by Gandhi and went out to make direct actions together with others to stop development projects. When the Danish leading intellectuals criticised the present development model, none of the many books listed that had inspired them was written by any third world person and the only connection to a more action-oriented philosophy was a reference to a book on Ecophilosophy by the Norwegian Arne Næss.

The fourth way were generalist views could develop was at the local level were ideas and practice flourished, at times well defended by the surrounding society. 1970 a national summer camp was organised by the new society in Copenhagen at Thy, placed at the very periphery of Denmark on the North West Coast of Jutland. Some thousand participants tested new forms of democracy and lifestyles. It created an utopian atmosphere shocking to many common Danes. In Copenhagen an old military ground was occupied and Christiania established in 1971, a commune with a thousand inhabitants in the middle of the capital run by its own administration to some degree living up to its self-proclaimed role a free state. In every corner of Denmark production collectives and communes popped up. Here a generalist vision was nourished as well as capacity for making non-violent direct action. An action centre was Christiania were the theatre group Solvognen (The Wagon of the Sun) carried out street theatre that combined political action with culture. Dressed as Santa Claus hundreds of street theatre activists/artists entered a shopping mall taking goods from the counters giving it to children as a gift or dressed up as American Indians protesting against US imperialism interfering in the annual national celebration at Rebild of the US national Day in Denmark. Thus generalist views and direct action still could stimulate each other but in general no new

organisational model developed in Denmark during the 1970s. At specific occasion there could be an outburst of solidarity. When the symbol of freedom at the local level, Christiania, was threatened by police intervention ordered by the politicians, as much as 30 000 people put themselves up on telephone lists to be able to come to protect the commune if necessary. The politicians backed. The threats against the free commune have continued to be renewed every time now and then but it still remains. In general though the lack of solidarity at national level between different groups in opposition of the ruling order continued.

At the beginning of the 1980s the four Nordic countries entered into a period of strong international mobilisation, continuing against nuclear power in some countries but now also including nuclear missiles that NATO and the Warsaw pact was going to set out in Europe. While the campaigns in other parts of Europe generally limited themselves to demanding stop the missiles and in some cases stop the missiles and liberate Europe both in the East and the West, in the Nordic countries an alternative mobilisation developed in two ways.

### **Nordic peace, future studies and anti-imperialist initiatives**



*Peace march 1981 walks out of Copenhagen towards Paris*

In the beginning of the 1980s Nordic women made a joint initiative linking the environmental and peace movement building within the broader vision from the 1950s to not only oppose arms but also demand better uses of military resources. Now this kind of campaign also was used in Denmark. Danish women in a small village on the countryside were the initiators. In some months half a million signatures were collected demanding disarmament and that the arm billions should go to food. Soon the Nordic women were marching for peace, first time to Paris 1.100 km with a core of 40 Nordic women, 10 from each Nordic country except for Iceland and thousands supporting them<sup>99</sup>. Next year they went to Moscow, after that to Washington DC and later through Central America. The inspiration for this women's peace movement was civil disobedience initiated by women that was carried out at the Greenham Common air base by at most 30.000 people continuing the struggle against the NATO missiles and armament. In the book *Fra Gandhi til Greenham (From Gandhi to Greenham)*, the Danish Women for Peace activist Toni Liversage wrote in 1987 on how the movements have emerged with the ideas of Gandhi, civil rights movement in the US, anti atomic bomb movement of the 1960s, environmental movement of the 1970s and the new peace movement of the 1980s.

In the Nordic countries there existed also a broad alternative movement alliance against the development model including opposing the liberation of financial control across borders involving 90 peace, women, environmental and solidarity organisations. It was based on two initiatives, one Swedish and one Norwegian. In Sweden environmental, peace, women, animal rights and solidarity organisations saw the need in jointly promoting alternatives at the local, national and international level. A moveable tent exhibition toured the country and an action day was proposed at equinox to celebrate global equality. In Norway Future on our hands and the conservation society saw the need in making a future study on how society could be changed making it sustainable built on global justice. The two initiatives were combined and jointly launched in all Nordic countries in March 1982. In Sweden by manifestations and collecting money to a school in Chile using alternative pedagogy, alternative technology centre in Tanzania and support to Eritrea. 120 alternative local and national organisations also started a weekly. In Norway the action day was organised all over the country in similar fashion to support the third world with local activities. In Finland a cap for the whole alternative movement was held at Suomosalmi in a remote Northern part of the country. Here the municipality had decided to become ecological in practice and theory. This was supported by the movement. In all countries future studies started to envision a sustainable society built on global justice.

In Finland the study was disconnected from the movement and turned into a small academic enterprise. In Denmark many organisations lobbied the parliament to receive support but failed. Other alternative campaign activities were small and the cooperation faded away. In Norway the campaign for getting resources was a great success. In total 50 million Norwegian crowns was given to the aim to study an alternative future. The result of this effort became the defeat of collective searching for knowledge in the movement and dragging the teeth out of the radical ideology of the hitherto strong alternative movement in Norway.

In Norway this could not be done with the help of political parties. The strong civil disobedience to protect the rights of the Samic people and stop the dam at the Alta river caused a great loss of legitimacy for the parliamentary system. The state won the battle but lost its moral prestige as a good representative of the public will. Small Green or Left-wing

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<sup>99</sup> Liversage, Toni (1998), p52

parties that could divert the generalist interest of the movement did not exist with sufficient legitimacy in the alternative movement. Thus could the generalist interest take a strong expression as the will of many environmental, peace and solidarity organisation that society had to consider. The movement was also helped by the fact that such future studies, common in Sweden, had not been initiated before in Norway.

The defeat of this generalist interest was shaped in two steps. The political parties that supported the project with the Social Democrat prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland as the most prominent had only one condition. This was that it had to be a research according to academic standards. The outcome was not to be prescribed by the movements, it had to be a free research once the original mandate was written by them.

This caused a position of power inside the project to the established scientific institutions that started to try to put the effort into normal academic ways of working. The symbol of the project became a space rocket. At the decisive moment when the project after a long period of preparations should take off the professor in charge stated that now there was not the need of so much people anymore that to this point had been involved in the preparations. Now a selected few had to finish the task.

The way the established and other Norwegian scientists made the future study into an elitist project of their own was done in three ways. Firstly the mandate was ignored. In spite of that the mandate asked for how the change should take place towards an alternative society at all levels this was ignored. Instead the scientists claimed that there should be two levels. At the macro-level limitations and possibilities should be investigated. The level where changes could take place was the local macro level. The so called mezzo-level between the two, where popular movements were included for a while, was in the last minute of the preparations excluded.

The scientific arguments for this stymied model was clearly argued against on scientific grounds, both by academic professors and lay activists. It did not help. The unscientific misinterpretation of the mandate had the backing of sufficient numbers of highlevel academicians to be accepted. Compared to earlier intellectual achievements of academicians and activists in Norway it was a failure.

The other way the scientists made the future study into an elitists enterprise was to demand that every issue that should be included in the project needed to have such a scientific quality that it contributed to new knowledge. To this end two years manpower for each specific subject was needed. The mandate did not ask for anything like this. Contrary it asked for an investigation into the matter, which could include or not include new research. But with their prestige the scientists were able to turn a wider generalist knowledge interest into specialised internal academic discourse.

The third way was to denounce earlier knowledge. The strong system-critical thinking in the Norwegian environmental and non-violent movement was almost totally marginalised by the scientists and the representatives from Norwegian movements. Also the Swedish experiences were wiped out during the preparations that included Nordic participation. Sweden had a long tradition of institutions and movements doing for future studies involving the public but this was ignored. The emphasis on how the change should develop with collective action as an important tool was accepted by the Norwegian organisations but not by the scientists who refused to bring this perspective into the project. Future studies pretended to become a tool for



democratic discussion about the future. This was done by simultaneously making material to enable discussion and making reports and research. In Norway the scientists did not see any point in informing the public about the issue at hand until the research was finished, and investigations and other material during the way was seen as irrelevant. After a long battle the movements were capable of winning some resources for this task but as a side event. The advanced Swedish studies that had researched the same issues that now were under study in Norway were ignored. Ten years later after the huge resources were used in Norway a report by the Alternative Future project concluded that the study Sweden by the year 2010 made by Björn Eriksson and Karl-Erik Eriksson still was the best study of its kind. Finally the project was totally integrated into established scientific structures.

In Sweden the many tasks exhausted the alternative movement. The weekly quickly got a number of subscribers, far more than competing left-wing and green papers. But as there was no political party behind the project there was no state funding available which was generously given to the competitors including the new weekly of the Green party. With this subsidised competition the project could not survive. But other projects within the Alternative campaign did manage to get some results. The Alternative future initiative challenged the already existing institution for future studies with social democrats in the leadership. At the same time established scientists and the Green party ideology of change starting at the local level was challenged. This caused a long ideological struggle between the movements and established institutions and their representatives. The same conflicts as in Norway accounted related to the distribution of resources to scientists and popular education and debate. The movement was told that if it did not accept the terms that the resources should be given to the scientists directly there should be no resources at all. The scientists then followed a similar path as in Norway stating that local experiments and alternatives had to be built. The movements, that organised many of the practical alternatives that the scientists asked for, opposed this perspective. They asked for a less naïve understanding of social change and wanted an investigation in how popular movements, old and new could contribute to this change. The stalemate ended when social democrats made the project end with a failed application. Meanwhile the established Future studies institution started a project under social democratic leadership discussing the future of popular movements but delinked from a vision of a common goal of global justice and sustainable society. Here also new movements were invited but as individuals or restricted in such a way that the generalist knowledge interest was still controlled only by scientists chosen in advance. At the same time there was a shift in the ideological climate. In 1985 the social democratic Prime Minister Olof Palme appointed a new director of the Future studies institute. He was supporting the idea that the society needed more communication infrastructure with more motorways and airports, a vision opposed by the alternative movement.

The initial problems with the alternative campaign made some groups to re-evaluate the situation in 1983. The idea to promote local alternatives was good but not sufficient. Also at the national level the movements could formulate a programme with demands in many fields. But the limitations for creating a change towards an alternative society were not only at local and national levels, they also existed at the global level. Thus confronting imperialism and global economic power structures was important as well as finding a tool that was capable of challenging established institutions. As this tool was seen simultaneous popular movement struggles in different countries and cooperation across borders. The Popular Movement Study group was set up by lay activists to promote discussion and knowledge about popular movements in history and the future.



# DELA LIKA

**Den 17 mars** på Dela-lika-dagen i anslutning till vårdagjämningen ordnar Nordiska alternativkampanjen en solidaritetsmanifestation över hela landet.

Vi vill med denna manifestation visa på samband mellan olika former av förtryck och bekämpa imperialism vare sig det är bolag, stormakter eller små länder som utövar den. Vi vill solidarisera oss med förtryckta grupper och folk i världen. Därför har vi valt följande insamlingsmål:

## **Stöd: 3:e VÄRLDENS FOLK I KAMPEN MOT MULTISAR**

Insamlingen går till internationella konsumentorganisationen IOCU. Denna sammanslutning av konsumentrörelser i ett 50-tal länder har med Malaysia som centrum tagit initiativ till många bojkotter mot multisar. Dessa har bl a riktats mot Nestlés oerwärliga marknadsföring av modersmjölsersättning i fattiga länder, som lett till många spädbarns död, och mot läkemedelsindustrins och kemibolagens försäljning av giftiga produkter i tredje världen som ofta redan är förbjudna i de rika länderna.

## **Stöd: AFGHANERNAS KAMP MOT SOVJETS OCKUPATION**

Insamlingen går till Svenska Afghanistankommitténs humanitära arbete i Afghanistan. Detta är ett stöd för de afghaner som fortsätter motståndet inne i landet. De lever under oerhörd svåra förhållanden och lider brist på kläder, mat, mediciner och sjukvård. Insamlingen syftar till att upprätta fältkliniker, utbilda afghanistansk sjukvårdspersonal, skaffa läkemedel och andra icke-militära förnödenheter.

## **Stöd: INDIANERNA I KAMPEN MOT STORA KOPPARBERG**

Insamlingen går till indianernas kamp mot det svenska skogsbolagets planer att bespruta skogen och vattendäktet i Nova Scotia med bekämpningsmedel som är förbjudna i Sverige. Genom ekonomiska utpressning har Stora Kopparberg lyckats stoppa protesterna från alla utom indianerna. Pengarna går i första hand till kampen i Nova Scotia. I andra hand blir de en grundplåt i en juridisk kampanj för rättgångskostnader och böter som drabbar dem som strider för sin överlevnad, speciellt till dem som försvarar urbefolkningarnas rättigheter.

Med denna solidaritetsmanifestation i anslutning till vårdagjämningen vill vi utnyttja symboliken att ljus och mörker är lika fördelat över jorden. Men för mänskligheten består den ojämlika fördelningen, orättvisan och förtrycket. Vi måste dela resurserna lika och vi måste alla delta på det sätt vi kan i kampen för rättvisa i solidaritet med förtryckta folk.

Dela-lika-dagen anordnas av Framtiden i våra händer, solidaritets-, miljö-, freds- och andra lokala grupper i Sverige och Norge sedan 1980. Då uppmanar alternativrörelsen människor att dela lika, dvs ge halva sin dagsinkomst eller avstå en del av sin tid till något de tror bidrar till en rättvis värld.

Stöd Dela-lika-tanken du också!



ALTERNATIVKAMPANJEN

Sätt in pengar på **pg 50 88 04 - 2**. Alternativkampanjen. Ange Dela lika och om du vill att pengarna ska gå till något särskilt av projekten. Nordiska Alternativkampanjens organisationsråd ansvarar för att de insamlade pengarna vidarebefodras dit de ska.

Blir du medlem i någon av de nämnda organisationerna, så kan du också bidra till Dela-lika-tanken i våra händer, svenska freds- och miljöpartier, Riksförbundet, Miljöpartiet, Jordens Vänner, Nordiska Samfundet och olika ungdomsorganisationer.

### *Leaflet for collecting money against imperialism 1984.*

In 1984 the alternative campaign, backed by the same peace, environmental, solidarity, women's, syndicalist and animal rights organisations as earlier, launched a new action day to promote solidarity, self-reliance and sustainability. This time money was collected to support Canadian Indians fighting against Swedish multinational companies spraying the forests where they lived with pesticides forbidden in Sweden, to the consumer unions in the third world struggling against multinationals and to humanitarian aid in the guerrilla areas of Afghanistan. This was put in the context of the need to confront all imperialism, whether it was a Western country like Sweden, multinationals or Soviet Union that imposed its will on others.

But the leftwing organisations as well as the Green party saw this as a threat, challenging their own hegemonic position as system-critical leaders. They ignored and at occasions attacked the alternative movement alliance for being too radical and broad in its scope, not understanding the role of popular movements being to have a single-issue mind. To the young communists closely related to the Left parliamentary party it was not acceptable to state that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was a question of imperialism. In the Green weekly a campaign started claiming that the alternative campaign was in the hands of Moscow and leaders of the party stated that it was wrong that animal rights and environmental organisations should become anti-imperialists. The Syndicalists weekly did not bring any general information about the campaign where the syndicalist trade union participated. Instead

articles criticising the alternative campaign were generously given space. At the same time Ulf B. Andersson, the ideologue of the paper, concluded by stating that the environmental movement was uninteresting as a source for change of society as it was only a single issue movement.

Thus left-wing intellectuals, left political parties and the Greens jointly did what they could to maintain a position where political parties and left-wing intellectuals have monopoly on generalist visions and the movements are a pre-stage for people before they come to the insight that it is needed a more generalist view on society than what the movements can provide.

At the European level the Nordic alternative peace movement met the same kind of response. At the European Nuclear Disarmament Convent in Berlin 1983 with 3 000 participants the Nordic vision to campaign for ending hunger by taking the money from the military budget was something put outside the agenda. Here consequences and phenomena on European soil was the sole theme. If other questions than weapons and defence were discussed, it was the need for a free civil society. As this was put within a European limitation the relatively free civil societies in Western Europe were seen as separate from their bases in economic oppression of the South. The outcome was a double issue movement against missiles and to liberate Eastern European countries while global power structures and another development ending hunger instead of starting war were kept out of question.

The peace movement that in the beginning of the 1960s had heralded a growing global interest in solidarity, gender and environmental issues now did the opposite. In spite of mass mobilisations of millions the outcome was rather diminishing political perspectives than opening new arenas for struggle with the important exception of Eastern Europe. An era of middle class based single-issue movements had come to an end.

This era had in the Nordic countries been strongly influenced by four Indian influences enabling many to participate in a movement as in the boycott against the apartheid regime, a combination of long marches and mass manifestation together with civil disobedience as a way to make changes, non-violent direct action to intervene in conflicts and a constructive programme like the Operation Days work to support third world projects.

These influences had their greatest impact in Sweden contributing to changes in policy towards liberation of third world countries and US imperialism. The influences had its deepest national impact in Norway during the 1970s where it contributed to the birth of a fearless environmental movement and a rural-urban popular movement alliance capable of defeating the established interest to integrate the country on the EEC and defending the interests of local communities all over the country. In Denmark the Indian influences were more of memories from the past although the marches against atomic weapons gained strong interest. In Finland influences from India were something that the movement only very late started to be aware of. In all countries the influences from Gandhi his followers started to be disintegrated. Attempts to combine the kind of elements that the Indian popular liberation movement used as in the Nordic Alternative campaign failed. There were still some new interest. In Sweden the syndicalist Ulf Norenus wrote the book *Att vägra leva på knä* (To refuse to live on your knees) in 1983 on all aspects of nonviolent resistance which included a piece on the Indian liberation movement. Smaller groups in the pacifist movement and among the antimilitaristic Syndicalists maintained an interest in Gandhi an especially nonviolent direct action. But in general Indian influences had decreased.

## **New struggles and influences from India 1983-1988**

At the same time in the beginning of the 1980s an alternative to the limited European perspectives evolved in the South. In Malaysia a dense cooperation between the consumer union, an environmental organisation belonging to Friends of the Earth, and global coordination of rain forest activism created a powerful counterweight to the Northern domination. The kind of initiative that Oi Committee represented in 1972 finally could be institutionalised when Third World Network was established with Malaysia as its headquarter in 1984. Social issues could no longer be separated from environmental questions for popular movements when working on global level. With this emergence of lay person international action commitment and the growing organisational strength of the third world did the trend change towards more interest.

In Europe better coordination among multinationals helped by the EU created a new powerful actor confronting all popular movements with its strategy. In this struggle Indian popular movements again would become an inspiration to the struggle against the ruling system in Europe. In 1983 P.G.Gyllenhammar, Chief Executive Officer of Volvo car company in Sweden initiated European Round Table of industrialists, ERT. Their plan was to diminish social welfare, built motorways and strengthen business through a single European market with freedom for goods, services, finance and hire labour. Thi strategy would effect both EU and states having economic cooperation with the EU like Sweden, Finland and Norway.

In Sweden the environmental movement reacted to the ERT plan by building an international alliance and trying to continue a broader opposition against the corporate social and environmental strategy. When the Environmental federation thus tried to initiate joint social and ecological struggle against the ERT neoliberal program, the left and the trade unions did not respond. They were also involved in a struggle for social justice but at the domestic level and were not interested in a joint popular movement battle against European corporate neoliberal plans. The radical left had no interest either except for some individuals who contributed by writing important articles about the ERT plans. The rest of the left plotted different strategies for using the situation of unrest among workers at the domestic level to set up a new workers party. The environmental movement had to take up the task themselves. When the Swedish government decided to support the ERT plans by building a motorway at the West coast through one of the forests most severely affected by acidification, opposition soon grew into mass civil disobedience.

The solidarity movement in Sweden had since long good contacts with India. The Bangla Desh-India division of the Swallows in Lund, a group within the Emmaus movement started in 1963. In 1965 Nordic Emmaus organisations together sent a Danish volunteer to India for the first time, followed by more Nordic persons that developed the contact with Sweden. The Swallows was the first to make the tree hugging Chipko movement in the Himalayas known abroad. Inspiration now came from India when the activist climbed the trees and hugged them to protect them. Soon the protest movement was nick-named tree huggers by the press. Somewhat reluctantly in the beginning the activists accepted the label which since than has become a general concept in Sweden applied to anyone protecting what she or he holds dear, welfare huggers for those who wants to protect social welfare and less common but ironically used asphalt huggers for those wanting to build motorways etc. The protests against the building of the motorway had a strong global aspect to it, Sunderlal Bahaguna from the

Chipko movement in India visiting Sweden marched side by side with the Swedish local activists in demonstrations and global environmental impact was debated. The Swedish environmental movement soon started to coordinate motorway actions days throughout all of Europe in the European Youth Forest Action, a network initiated by Swedish organisations in 1986.

The battle against the motorway at the West coast was lost. 400 people were sentenced for obstructing the construction at court in the biggest political trial in modern Swedish history. The left lost their parallel battle as well, ending it with endless internal splits on the issue on the necessity of building a new workers party. 1988 the Greens entered the parliament after a successful election campaign addressing environmental catastrophic issues. They were not as aware of the global economic strategies promoted by the industry, EU and other globalisation institutions. Sweden became one of the most aggressive neoliberal countries. In a few years the former domestic agriculture policy was dismantled and turned into one of the most market oriented on earth. Thus the basis for the alliance between Center Party, with its original base among peasants, and the Social democrats, with its original base among workers, was lost. This common interest had been the basis for the Swedish reformist state since 1932 when the two parties started their struggle for a welfare state giving both rural and urban population equal opportunities. This resulted in the longest terms for any left government in the world elected democratically. Now 50 years of reforms, mostly under social democratic rule, sometimes jointly with the Center party and some few years with a non-socialist government started to becoming dismantled by neoliberal policies under social democratic rule. The new policies resulted in speculation with the money that was released through tax reforms. The economy went out of control resulting in a deep financial crisis for the whole national economy. ERT could continue their plans for Europe promoting further integration of the economies under neoliberal conditions at the benefit of multinationals.

In Norway a dual political culture developed contrary to the integrated generalist intellectual-activist movement inspired by Gandhi. The generalist intellectual development of the movement was defeated by the Alternative future project. The same highest levels of academic institutions that once fostered the connection between intellectual generalists and activists now destroyed the connection. The memory of a system-critical past was maintained in the movement as a vague notion of being against growth with less and less substance to it.

While the generalist intellectual development retarded and critical reflections on the intellectual development of the movement and the role of the Alternative future project was missing pragmatic activism was supported. But nonviolent disobedience, that had such a strong role in the country, now primarily became the task of young activists, especially from radical pacifist organisations and Natur og Ungdom (Nature and youth) and professional activists from new organisations similar to Greenpeace. Radical pacifists climbed the walls of a prison to enter it and claim that they were as guilty as those imprisoned for refusing military service as they were of the same conviction. Environmentalists climbed chimneys to protest against pollution. They dug out drums filled with poison that had been illegally buried by industries. They occupied places where roads were planned in Norway and together with their friends in the mass actions against the motorway project in Bohuslän at the West coast in Sweden. Nature and youth tripled its membership in five years and became the most central youth organisation in Norway under female leadership. It was radical in action but more pragmatic regarding ideology.

In Denmark the popular movements are confronted with a campaign against supporting the antiapartheid movement. The youth wing of Venstre, the liberal party attacks the united Nordic Operation One Days Work whose aim is to support ANC. This is stamped as support of terrorism and communism. South African intelligence plants similar messages to schools all over Denmark to stop them from participating. The polarisation in Denmark grows. The organisations become less and less connected to a generalist critique of the society and present world order. They also become less involved in active resistance. Young activists become more generalist instead. In the beginning of the 1980s they occupied houses to get places to live and meet others. In 1986 they start sabotage against Shell stations to protest against apartheid. At the same night 27 Shell stations all over the country are attacked and sabotaged. This is widely denounced and the organisations in Denmark become even more afraid of being connected to activism.

In Finland little was left at the end of the 1980s of the strong movements that had been so present ten years earlier. The emphasis had been on informal structures rather than building new membership organisations. The generalist interest had been split in two. On the one hand did many in the alternative movement support the creation of a Green party. On the other hand the original close contact between activists/intellectuals was maintained with a generalist interest. A lasting contact was established with the Popular Movement Study group in Sweden with similar generalist interests. But the activists in Finland had no organisation like Environmental federation to be part of. Instead their circles became smaller and smaller. In 1987 the remnants of the Action Groups that once started the Percentage movement joined strength and formed a network together with some environmental groups, the Coalition for Environment and Development. The NGOs that had benefited from the money received through the Percentage campaign established with the help of the state, Service Centre for Development Co-operation, (SCDC) a large well funded organisation implementing the Finnish Volunteer service on behalf of the Finnish Government.

During the end of the 1980s a further professionalisation of the environmental, solidarity, peace and other new social movements took place in the Western countries. This was also the case in all Nordic countries. The environmental movement became NGOs and administrators of funds for supporting environmental projects in the South or giving environmental advice to companies and consumers. The solidarity movement became NGOs and administrators of development aid projects. The peace movement became NGOs and administrators of peace information funds and conflict resolution initiatives. The generalist interest disintegrated in the movements.

Instead an official generalist ideology was presented as the solution to the global environmental and social crisis. In 1987 the World Commission on Environment presented the Brundtland report, named after its chairperson, the Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland. The idea was to solve the crisis with cooperation to enable sustainable growth, a solution that proposed that everyone could win by believing in new technology which could give all both more wealth and prosperity as well as less environmental damage. How this technological change could be taken out of its social context and as a whole become more sustainable was not explained. The report caused great enthusiasm. At a UN conference in New York the peace movement together with NGO development organisations started to become integrated in a global NGO-system built on the ideology of sustainable development and dominated by the Western world. The preparations started for UN Conference on Environment and Development, UNCED, to be held in Rio de Janeiro 1992, a conference

soon followed by other UN conferences were development NGOs together with different sectors of popular movements became integrated in the global NGO-system.

But it was also necessary to involve a whole national political culture in the project to raise its credibility. Here Norway and its popular movements played a central role. The government gave huge grants to the movements for organising campaigns and become part of the preparations of UNCED at national, regional and global level. This caused more enthusiasm for using the generous funds than for system-critical thinking. At the marginal of the process a Nordic seminar in Stockholm managed to coordinate some of the more radical groups in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark in a joint critical initiative.



*Göran Eklöf and Maud Johansson in India*

The Swedish alternative movement maintained links with India. The Swallows sent Maud Johansson and Göran Eklöf to build contacts and support the Indian environmental movement. The result was solidarity work with the Narmada movement, many other environmental protests and projects and the book *Påfågeln flyger* on the Indian environmental movement in Swedish. Göran Eklöf was finally refused re-entry into India due to his contacts

with the Indian anti-nuclear movement. Through the Indian contacts the Swedish environmental grew more sceptical towards development. Contact had been established with Lokayan in India already in 1984. It resulted later in an article in the Indian magazine but no deeper involvement.

The Narmada movement also received support in all other Nordic countries. One more time Indian popular movements started to influence the Nordic countries. But this time it is the present popular movements that influence the Nordic political cultures, but those popular movements that tended to have roots in Gandhian ideas. Vijay Pratap from Lokayan, Sunderlal Bahaguna from the Chipko movement, Medha Patkar from the Narmada movement and Vandana Shiva were welcome guests from India.

Internationally the former planned economies under communist party rule fragmented and a new period started. The global development model divided in two blocs collapsed with the falling of the Berlin wall. This time again Indian influence became crucial for Nordic peoples' movements in maintaining and further developing radical positions, in the beginning with strong Gandhian influence but later more and more through radical modern Indian people's movements and their global alliance building through People's Global Action.



## The Global Democracy Period 1989 – 2004

### Solidarity meets Gandhi



*Vijay Pratap at Reclaim Gandhi - Salt March action talking to Red Green Alliance politician at the Danish parliament 2005*

The fourth period is not marked by any massive action inspired by India but Gandhian and Indian influence has continued to grow or has been maintained.

By 1989 the alternative movement in Finland had expanded their scope and organising capacity. At a seminar in Karjaa this year with participation from almost all solidarity organisations in Finland the dominant Western NGO thinking was challenged.

“The third World Connection Seminar held in Karjaa in May 1989 aimed at deepening the dialogue between the people’s movement in the North and in the South. The initiative was based on the assumption that the co-operation between the movements in the South and the North will remain at a superficial level unless it is based on deep understanding of the cultural, political and socio-economic context of the cooperation partners, and on mutual efforts to assist each other’s self-reflection processes.

For this reason the Finnish organisations invited to Finland seven representatives of popular movements in the South – two of whom came from India and one each from Philippines, Zambia, Bolivia, Ecuador and Mexico – and organised with them a lengthy, two-week process of dialogues in order to find some real, solid ground for political co-operation. The role of the Indian participants who participated in either the Karjaa seminar or its follow-up meetings became particularly important for the process.”

Indian participants made it clear that they did not want more development aid, they were critical towards development as such. Instead of helping the third world it was the whole way development worked that had to be changed. The idea of the critical segments of the Finnish third world solidarity movement was at the outset to shift the focus from improving official aid to support people’s movements and NGOs of the third world countries. Thus a better way of promoting self-reliant development could be promoted than through other kinds of development co-operation. The Indian participants at the seminar presented very strong argumentation against such a plan, some known already by a few Finnish activists. But

“some of them were new and amounted to a most unpleasant revelation to many of the Finnish third world solidarity activists. Especially important were the arguments related to the various structural impacts of foreign funding on the movements in the South. By structural impacts I mean influences that are caused by the combined activities of a large number of different development organisations channelling funds to local initiatives, which do not become visible in evaluations that only look at the impacts of the individual development co-operation programmes. The Finnish third world movement had been almost totally blind to this impact, which included the fragmentation of various people’s movements and the demoralisation of the movement activists and civil servants.”<sup>100</sup>

The discussions at the Karjaa seminar led to a new stream of thinking inside the Finnish third world solidarity movement. This stream looked for alternative modes of cooperation and reacting to the movements in the South. Changing the North became an important strategy rather than trying to interfere in the South.

Indian activists also participated in the struggle against a motorway project to be built between Helsinki and Turku. Long marches inspired by the Indian Padyatra tradition were organised 1990- 1991 knocking on people’s doors along the way where the motorway was supposed to be constructed. Global issues were addressed in terms of the climate effects, emphasized by the Indian participation. The struggle was successful for the time being when an economic crisis started and the plans were reduced from building 2,400 kilometres to 600 kilometres.

A Finnish criticism emerged against the official ideology of sustainable development promoted by the UN, business, governments and environmental organisations all over the world strategy. Finland became the only country where this ideology did not get a hegemonic position. In the rest of the world the interested popular movement accepted or tried pragmatically to use the new sustainable development process as a pragmatic tool to put their

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<sup>100</sup> Dreams of Solidarity, p 122f. The following also comes from personal participation.

issues on the agenda. Fundamental criticism was abandoned, or as in Sweden somewhat marginalised.

The Finnish sustainable development critique became important to the Nordic cooperation among environmental movements in the Rio process, resulting in a more action oriented approach. At the regional preparatory conference in Bergen May 1990 Solidarity, Equality, Ecology and Development, SEED Popular Forum, was formed by Nordic popular movements. It became a gathering of more than 500 activists from more than 150 popular movements and organisations in 40 countries. It was not only organised to respond to the shortcomings of the official UNCED process but also something new in its own right to discuss common concerns and new forms of cooperation among popular movements.



*Vandana Shiva with A SEED activists in Madrid at Bretton Woods 50 years anniversary*

In 1991 A SEED, Action for Solidarity, Equality, Ecology and Development was established by youth organisations inspired by the SEED Popular Forum, a network that soon had regional contacts on all continents. Another result was global climate action days in 70 countries coordinated by the Finnish solidarity organisation SCDC and the Swedish Environmental Federation. Among Nordic environmental movements, or at least the Finnish and Swedish it became a saying the most important solidarity work was to change the development model of your own country as it was built on exploiting the third world. But in general business, NGOs and governments were successful in establishing sustainable development as the solution to the global environmental and social crisis including at the Rio conference free trade as a main solution to the problem. Neoliberalism had received its human face with the legitimisation of the global NGOs.

In 1990 a seminar on democracy and development critique was organised by the Finnish Ympäristö ja Kehitys (Coalition for Environment and Development) and the Estonian Green movement in Estonia in connection to the European Nuclear Disarmament convention in

Helsinki and Tallin. Here, more in depth discussions were carried out in the Sauna, in the lake and other indispensable place for philosophical interchange on what is development, what alternatives are there, Gandhian socialism and practical mobilisation. Unfortunately (or good?) a report never came out of the seminar but linkages were built on an international scale opposing the sustainable development model and proposing mass mobilising padyatra marches and local action days. Climate action days was successfully carried out in 70 countries and 500 places around the world through the Swedish Finnish cooperation as well as strengthening broader initiatives like Alliance of Northern People on Environment and Development, ANPED ahead of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro.



*International Climate Action Day meeting in Madrid 1994.*

But in general, the sustainable development ideology also demobilised participation in the movement making it harder and harder to combine local activities with mass action at hot spots. NGOs were able to split the movement into a local level separated from an international lobby level where the professionals were advocating issues on behalf of local people that they had no democratic relation to.

In Norway the global neoliberal civil society built on replacing development critique and lay movements with sustainable development management of projects and advocacy could gain hegemony. Thousands of people became professional advisors to the government or NGOs funded by the state forgetting about connecting global issues to local and national popular mobilisation and instead developing a successful niche as global lobbyists.

In Finland, the Indian connections continued to develop but for the rest of the Nordic countries Gandhian ideology became more and more forgotten as well as other Indian influence. In Norway some actions still continue. The Indian embassy was symbolically flooded by FIVAS activists in the early 1990s, as a protest against the Narmada dam project.

To the alternative movement the referendum on EU issues in the Nordic countries in the beginning of the 1990s were important. EU was seen as threat to democracy and a tool for the European industrialists to promote economic globalisation in the interest of corporations. Denmark held two referendums at the beginning of the 1990s. At the first the majority voted

against further integration of Denmark into a European union. The politicians then reworked the same issue and now the majority said yes. After this result activists clashed with the police and the police wounded many when shooting at the demonstrators with live ammunition. 1994 Finland, Sweden and Norway were going to have referendums on membership in the EU. In Finland all the main parties, trade unions and interest groups except for the farmer's union was for membership. The result was 57 per cent for and 43 against membership. In Sweden the situation was the same with the exception that the main farmer union was supporting membership and the Green and left party against. The result was 53 per cent for and 47 per cent against. In Norway a well-organised popular movement campaign were also the Center party participated on the side of the critical voices resulted in victory once more. Norway was still independent.

Gandhian inspiration strongly re-emerged at the end of the 1990s when the Karnataka farmers and their chairman M.D.Nanjundaswamy took the leadership in forming People's Global Action, PGA, centered on the principles of non-violence and refusal to cooperate as the main tools in the struggle against the neoliberal world order. The use of violence was not explicitly excluded but the emphasis was only made on non-violence with the inspiration from the Gandhian style mass movements in India and the impressive demonstration with half a million participants against WTO in Bangalore in 1993. Many other movements were also present when PGA Geneva 1998, mainly mass movements from the third world like the Landless movement from Brazil, the black movement from Colombia, Ogonis from Nigeria, Maoris from New Zealand, the Indians from Ecuador, trade unions from Argentina, Nicaragua and Canada, farmer movements from everywhere and the Zapatistas from Mexico as well as Friends of the Earth from Finland, Sweden and Uruguay and the small farmers organisation from Norway.

The kind of mass mobilising long marches dreamt of at the Estonia seminar in 1990 had meanwhile emerged all over Europe. It was the movement of the unemployed that staged star demonstration from the corners of France and Spain ending with manifestation in the capitals, Paris in 1994 and Madrid in 1995 at the EU summit.

In 1997 The Euro-march against unemployment and exclusion started in Ivalo in Northern Finland, Tanger in Morocco and Tusla in Bosnia and other places walking two months along 14 routes making one thousand meetings on its way ending with a mass demonstration at the EU Summit in Amsterdam 1997. PGA came in the right time to radicalise and broaden the scope of the movement. Soon international action days against finance capital and WTO were carried out all over the world and the multilateral investment agreement, MAI, defeated. The third world mass movements and some NGOs like Third World Network managed to leave the era of struggling for a lobby place at the sustainable development negotiation table behind making it impossible for mainstream NGOs to maintain a reformist marginal change attitude to MAI and later WTO. The anti-globalisation movement emerged with summit protesters and PGA as key actors.

PGA also influenced Nordic movements. Some PGA activists were brought to Finland at a development meeting with governmental representatives, at the Nordic counter power summer camp in Falun 1999 initiated by Friends of the Earth Sweden a representative from the Karnataka farmers came, at the EU Summit in Gothenburg 2001 PGA organisations from Bangla Desh and Indonesia participated as speakers at demonstrations and seminars. PGA included anti-capitalism in its platform at its meeting in Bangalore 1999 making Friends of the Earth in Sweden and Finland to stop being active in the network as this goes beyond an

anti-neoliberal alliance. The direct action oriented movements were especially inspired by PGA. They established a Nordic Anti-Capitalist Network including Globalisering underifrån (Globalisation from below), in Sweden, Globale Rødder (Global Roots) from Denmark and a social center from Helsinki. This Nordic PGA network was influential among radical movements in Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden also having an impact on Social Forums.

In general today, Gandhi and Indian influence in the Nordic countries is maintained through publication of articles, spreading of civil disobedience ideology, of PGA confrontational and non-violent tactics, NGO style environmentalism of the Vandana Shiva kind and radical trade union and Marxist analyses of Indian and global matters.



**U.S. COULD BOMB IRAN NUCLEAR SITES IN 2007 (AFP, Nov 22, 2006)**



In Sweden there is even a magazine Gandhi Today with Jan Viklund as an editor. At first printed in Swedish and since 1997 on the internet in both Swedish and English versions. In the peace movements articles on Gandhi are continuously published. Norway is still the country where Gandhian philosophy is mostly read and established at the university and in popular movements as an inspiration to civil disobedience in a non-violent way. Recently a seminar was held on Gandhi with popular movements and the Indian embassy involved. In September 2004 the main solidarity and peace organisations issued a magazine, The Gandhian View with articles by prominent writers as Arundhati Roy, Kenneth Kaunda and others on nonviolence and global justice movement. In Denmark, once the leading Nordic country in a South-North dialogue with India and Gandhian thought there are very little traces left. But

there is a Gandhi statue in Copenhagen, given by Indira Gandhi on her visit to Denmark in 1984. It is placed in Nørrebro, the most radical part of Copenhagen which has seen many battles between police and activists the last 60 years. In Norway the South African bishop and leader of the liberation struggle, Desmond Tutu inaugurated a statue of Gandhi in the Northern university town of Tromsø at a visit there.

In Denmark the work to systematically study Gandhi's Nordic connections is carried out by Holger Terp, an activist in the radical pacifist organisation No more war but in isolation. No More War that once initiated both the main solidarity and peace movements of Denmark has more or less no more activity than through the very ambitious Peace Academy home page were Terp continuously updates a thousand year time line on peace movements and peace actions globally month by month.

The Danish influential peace researcher Jan Øberg was not able to establish a center in Denmark and started Transnational Foundation for Peace, TFF in Lund in Sweden instead. This center is actively involved in conflict resolution in former Yugoslavia, was opposing the Iraq war and has contributors from all over the world. Øberg recently made a pilgrimage in the foot steps of the Salt march in India meeting old participants from the 1930 mobilisation and reflecting on the Gandhian philosophy in a report publicised in the homepage of the peace center. TFF also published late 2004 a bibliography on books, articles, videos and links in Danish, Norwegian and Swedish on Gandhi or written by him dating almost 80 years back.

In Sweden one can also find other traces in the peace movement. The local chapter in Tyresö of the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society started solidarity work with India in the late 1960s which is still carried on and in a café on the west coast one can find Gandhi's Dreams which are cookies made by the owners, two long time pacifists and friends of India, Ola and Erni Friholt. A café at which in the summer of 2004 a jubilee seminar was held with Johan Galtung and others that wrote books on alternatives and the movements in the 1980s.

Folkrörelsestudiegruppen, Popular Movement Study Group in Sweden have carried out a study on global popular movements the last two and half thousand years by Jan Wiklund and a study on the global NGO system by the author of this article. In these two studies Gandhian popular movement strategy is given a key place in developing lay person movements opposed to specialist and generalist professionalisation in American style NGO civil society model or Russian one-party state model.<sup>101</sup> Of intellectual importance is also a dissertation made by Stellan Vinthagen published in 2005 stressing nonviolence as practical knowledge and a social relation. Vinthagen is a long time plowbill movement activist and sceptical towards making Gandhi into an ideal outside history and social circumstances interested in linking normative nonviolence ideas to social movement theory.

In Finland the strongest connections with India and Gandhian thoughts are developed today but mainly on the practical and political level. The cooperation starting in 1989 has developed by exchange of activists between India and Finland through the 1990s. This contributed to further cooperation among popular movements in Finland and wider perspectives on issues as privatisation, unemployment and democracy. One of the results of the wider perspectives was the creation of the Pro Demokratia movement that has contributed to the struggle against privatisation and forming Social Forum in Finland. Finland has had good connections to the World Social Forum and its international committee that enabled building connections

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<sup>101</sup> [www.folkrorelser.nu](http://www.folkrorelser.nu)

between Brazilian and Indian actors bringing the WSF to Mumbai in 2004. The South-North exchange programme also included politicians after a while, among them ministers from Finland and former prime ministers from India. The result has been the establishment of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – Democracy Forum including both activists in popular movements and politicians. At WSF in Mumbai Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam in Finland and India organised a seminar with Finnish and Indian speakers on Gandhi, the only at Mumbai and WSF so far bringing up Gandhi.



*Finnish activist Anastasia Laitala speaks at Asia Social Forum 2003*

In Norway Gandhi is still best established, recently confirmed by a new book by Næss on Gandhi, quickly interpreted also into Swedish. In the peace magazine *Transformator* articles on Gandhi are published. Norway is also the only Nordic country where a systematic study on civil disobedience from 1799 until today has been carried out published by the organisation FMK. Institutionalisation of Gandhian thought is stronger in Norway than any other Nordic country. Here many popular movements ideologically also states that civil disobedience in the Gandhian way is central to a strategy for changing society. But in spite of this Norwegian



movements are more blatantly than any others in the Nordic countries failing the system-critical Indian popular movement tradition. The civil disobedience originally inspired by Gandhian thought has become a political method and not part of cultural and social opposition to the development model. Here the Nordic PGA network is weaker than in any of the other countries.

But the popular movements have successfully been able to link globalisation issues with domestic concerns. Here social forums were organised before they started in Porto Alegre. This forums called conference on globalisation have yearly since 1999 gathered all popular movements interested in globalisation issues. When similar forums became popular also in other countries the Norwegian event changed its English name into Norwegian Social Forum. The struggle have also been well coordinated against neoliberal domestic policies through an action to defend the welfare state supported both by many trade unions and other popular movements as Attac. In the election campaign all antineoliberal movements untied their efforts and launched a campaign including both demands for cancellation of debt to third world countries and no to privatisation in Norway. The campaign became a success. A new center-left government was elected.

## **Gandhi Today**

At present what can be seen is a separation of the influence from India and Gandhi in the Nordic countries. On the one hand Gandhi is used as a repressive tool against civil disobedience activists if they in the face of growing repression and precarious work conditions use violence to defend themselves. At the same time as parliamentary forces especially in Sweden have given up to confront the repressive measures against demonstrators they adopt themselves to media trends and use their resources to declare violent demonstrators as the main problem. At the same time as Gandhi is used as a tool against those who refuse to be passive in the present situation the same forces avoids more and more the radical civilisation and development critique of Gandhi. He is used to a high degree in a stymied way.

At the same time are the radical global movements inspired by the Karnataka farmers' attacks on corporate rule and other mass movements in the third world at the fore front of influencing young activists of the kind that is under heavy criticism from self-proclaimed Gandhians. In an economic and political situation where a neoliberal agenda is carried out by both Green, Left, Social Democratic, Center and Right parties in all Nordic countries there is much less room for building lay person movements based on horizontal solidarity. The so called new social movement proclaimed to be horizontal and democratic are in fact to a high degree very hierarchic structures due to easy funding for donor-driven professionally administrated projects. This is the preferred model for fragmented mobilisation in the neoliberal political culture. Especially the Danish but also other Nordic NGOs have specialised in developing NGO management also on an international scale. In such a culture there is little room for sustaining and growing a broader movement able of addressing issues in people's daily life linked to global development issues. It is hard already when issues are limited to distribution of wealth and even more so if linked to the question of the content of development the way Gandhi always did.

The present neoliberal political agenda across the party spectrum creates severe daily problems for people. In Sweden the population at large feels twice as stressed as in the 1980s according to a recent study and young people three times as stressed. More and more of the

security net and public service are privatised while at the same time many people are permanently unemployed. Especially immigrants and young people are forced into precarious work or social exclusion as groups in society useful for keeping outside the more privileged positions held by the majority of people. The conflicts in society have thus developed special tensions along class lines declared as ethnic or generational problems. Racism has resulted in violence including killing immigrants, burning mosques and restricting the rights of refugees. Segregation continues to grow for every integration programme that is launched. Youth fighting against marginalisation and the privatisation of the public sphere is seen as a provocation and often ends in confrontations with the police.



*Demonstration against privatisation, militarization and European Monetary Union at the EU Summit in Gothenburg 2001*

The movement with young activists addressing privatisation of the public sphere, racism, refugee and the worsening job conditions for marginalised labour as well as global justice has stepped into growing confrontations with the state. These confrontations reached a peak at the EU and Bush summit in Gothenburg 2001 when some 200 activists clashed with the police violently in the streets and destroying shopping windows refusing to be non-violent when the police decided to attack demonstrators. This caused a political party and media panic as well as a strong reaction among the public. 90 percent in gallups made immediately after the riots strongly condemned the demonstrators. In trials the demonstrators often were accused on vague evidence for even more vague crimes and were sentenced in total almost 50 years in prison compared to in total maximum two months after similar riots in Seattle, Prague and Nice.

The response was among Green-Left movement and parliamentary parties to attack the activists that supported or declared their understanding of those making riots. Gandhi or non-

violence fundamentalism was often used which was especially questionable for the Green and the Left party who both belong to the parliamentary support for the government that is responsible for the growing repression of the system-critical movement. The same forces also did what they could to destroy all networks where different strands of the movement cooperated claiming that no cooperation whatsoever should be allowed with groups who claimed understanding of the use of violence in domestic conflicts. Especially important was to split the Network against racism that successfully had united radical anti fascist action groups with all kinds of less radical and often much better financed but lacking committed activist organisations. This anti-racist network had successfully avoided being co-opted by state attempts to divide and rule by only giving resources to well funded professional antiracist campaigns that only addressed issues of daily life social racism and completely avoided state racism in the form of political decisions on refugees and the like. The actions of this network had never resulted in any violence. Anyway Green and Left parties as well as nonviolence ideologists claimed it should be splintered apart and excluded as a cooperation partner. Many established organisations left the network.

Instead a NGO was established called Centre against racism. It received generous funding from the state. Internal and external criticism claimed that the NGO did not produce any material in spite of its many resources and did not do much other work either. When a new government was elected the funding for the centre was not included in the budget.

Meanwhile the radical activists in the Network Against Racism joined their efforts with the Swedish church. Some NGOs also joined and a coalition was formed to demand sanctuary to refugee children. In 2005 a signature campaign was organised by the coalition that received more support than any signature campaign in two decades. The government had cynically believed that racism and xenophobia had to be stopped by adopting to stricter policies against allowing refugee children to stay in Sweden. Now with a strong popular opinion against them the government changed plans.

The result of the use of Gandhi against young radical activists in an anti-violence propaganda devoid of Gandhian antisystemic confrontation with the injustice of the present development model is that Gandhi today probably is more denounced than ever in Swedish history among young activists struggling for global justice. Greens, "hippies" and nonviolence propaganda makers are denounced as provocateurs in the hands of the police, politicians and media. While Gandhi and Gandhians in earlier radicalisation periods have been admired or seen as mildly irrelevant and idealistic lacking the necessary firmness against oppressors, today Gandhi and Gandhians are seen as part of the violent repression used against those refusing to be passive during the corporate neoliberals attacks on people. If Gandhians are known at all and not totally ignored.

Racism continue to flourish with the biggest Nazi demonstration since the second world war held in Salem in Sweden late 2003 with more than 1 000 participants. The xenophobic political party Sverigedemokraterna (The Swedish Democrats) almost got seats in the last Swedish parliamentary elections with 3 per cent of the votes. The organisations attacking the radical antiracist groups have not been able to mobilise any significant counter campaigns against the growing racism. On the contrary, the political parties continue to propose sharper demands on immigrants adopting to the polices proposed by xenophobic political movements. The anti-racist network has shown to be the most important mobilisers of continued action against the Nazis and state racism. The attempts to split it did not succeed and even less so attempts to build well funded NGO alternatives as these projects lacks

capability of mobilising on the streets against racism and the daily threat that Nazism represents in Sweden.

At the same time as the Nordic Gandhians have failed to bring radical Indian influence into the present situation in the Nordic countries other Indian forces have done so more successfully through People's Global Action Network. Here the PGA principles to a large extent formulated by late Karnataka farmers' leader Nanjundaswamy have inspired the radical groups fighting racism and capitalism. On the one hand Gandhian propaganda lacking mass participation and devoid of system critical confrontation with the established system, on the other hand Gandhian confrontational principles from today's Indian people's movement devoid of fundamentalistic antiviolence.

What is lacking in both the antiviolence propaganda approved by the established system and the anticapitalistic PGA network is a more profound criticism of the present development model. There is an understanding that globalisation is not the problem, instead the way globalisation is organised is questioned. Thus terms like globalisation from below are popular putting the main emphasis on the social side ignoring the material biological side of globalisation.

In other Nordic countries the situation is similar although less polarised. Gandhi is used against the few young activists who openly address the injustice of today's society and global world order by confrontations that sometimes can become violent rather than as a tool against the present system. Gandhi seems to be the concern of those unable to mobilise system critical actions in the daily life and streets sitting on offices making professional campaigns on global issues or of some few elderly idealists.

In a time where the old modernist state with its attempts at least in rich countries to include everybody in a corporative society is replaced by a postmodernist, or with the word of Zygmunt Baumann floating modernity states, built on excluding people. Social control built on supervising people at the workplace, at school and other places inside institutions is replaced by a constant threat of being excluded from privileged institutions into insecurity. There is a constant demand to be personally responsible for being flexible. Individually you are responsible for being valuable to the company or organisation that for the time being is interested in the human capital you can offer. It is no longer the company that supervises its employees but the employee that has to show his or hers usefulness. Such a society is becoming less and less a society but more of a post society where individuals learn to live under constant insecurity threats whether they are inside or outside established institutions.

In such a system using Gandhi as an argument for utmost self-control becomes compatible with the modern repressive neoliberal state. The demands are directed against the individual who regardless of resources for successfully training and participate in nonviolent struggles or the situation are asked to live up to moral standards that well established middle class more easily can mobilise than today's working class and excluded people. In a situation where the society as such where moral authority can be used against an oppressor is undermined are demands against individuals for not living up to perfect ideals instead of constructive work to collectively rebuilt commons where society can be reborn contra productive. It is no coincidence that neither Green or Left parties have made any organised effort to jointly campaign against the state repression after the EU-Summit in Gothenburg and in such a way collectively rebuilt a society where it is valuable to restrain oneself from violently confront an opponent. This in spite of that the repression after Gothenburg has been more severe than

during the whole previous century in Sweden in terms of total sentences to the prison after political violent confrontations. This also in spite of that many has been sent to prison without having participated in any violent action at all and all cases successfully have been shown by writer Erik Wijk to be built on questionable evidence as well as arbitrary many folded sentences between 10 and 17 times higher then during the 1990s for the same crime.

Both left parties and greens have a tendency to live in the old days of the corporative state where disciplined efforts were rewarded by society both at work and in political life. Today's new flexible job market and politics through mass media puts hard restraints on people feeling the need to protest in their daily life against insecurity or for global justice. Movements are harder to build when organisations, with the political parties and NGOs as prominent examples, makes themselves less and less democratically dependent on their members and more and more get access to a donor driven financial state and private market.

The left can handle this situation easier in the short term than the alternative movement built on more civilisation critical and Gandhian traditions. The left have their different parliamentary and revolutionary traditions polarised against each other to fall back upon offering the radical activists the choice they prefer. For Gandhian inspired movements the situation has been more difficult at least in short terms. Gandhi is split in two. Only one half is used as a repressive argument against those that do not live up to individual perfection in the face of police repression and lack of collective solidarity. The other half demanding constructive work and unity among oppressed as well as a stronger criticism against those passive than against those using violence is forgotten.



*PGA activists at anti World Bank demonstration in Oslo 2002: Global Intifada – Smash capitalism*

PGA shows that this is not the only way to bring Indian people's movement influence to the Nordic countries today. There might be a possibility to blend some of the system critical Gandhian tradition with the PGA tradition and address some of the profound problems the Nordic societies have in the transition from corporative welfare states to more neoliberal oriented models. Such a blend might also have international importance like it had in the 1970s- and 1980s. During this period Nordic countries with Gandhian inspiration in the most radical popular mobilisations also contributed to globally important strategies like ecosophy and the struggle against the EU neoliberal project spearheaded by mass civil disobedience.

But this requires openness from both those inspired by Gandhi and the radical young activists as well as a willingness to formulate a deeper system critical philosophy that goes beyond antineoliberalism, antiviolence instead of nonviolence and anticapitalism addressing also global ecology and the fundamental social order of professionalizing issues through the combined NGO and state system. Such openness will necessarily confront vested interest not only among state, parliamentary and business circles but also many NGOs were some are stating their belief in Gandhi.

### **Mumbai x 3**

In such a search for new steps ahead Indian interventions in global popular movement politics might be useful. Three kinds of events took place at Mumbai in January 2004, all three having their impact in the Nordic countries. Besides the official World Social forum IV there was on the one side Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam that among others organised separate meetings with dialogues between center-green-left political parties and movements on environmental and social issues as participation of party representatives is not allowed at WSF. On the other side was Mumbai Resistance 2004 organised by farmers, fishermen, indigenous people and revolutionary parties as an alternative to WSF for radical movements and excluded organisation as they were parties or groups that could use arms in their liberation struggle.

Those three strands in the global justice movement have existed before. But it was first at Mumbai they were well-organised and had their positions more clearly expressed. PGA, Via Campesina and Gandhian networks had friends both at Mumbai Resistance and WSF, one can guess also at Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. Green parties could fully participate in the Green Corner organised by Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam as an alternative to WSF together with social democrats and others.

In the Nordic countries the new articulation of the three strands had a prominent place in the public debate on World Social Forum and the global justice movement. Vandana Shivas criticism against Mumbai Resistance was published in Aftonbladet, the biggest daily in Sweden. She claimed that WSF represented the global justice movement and that Mumbai Resistance was late-coming splinters. A false description of the history as the Zapatistas in PGA widely is known as pioneers in the struggle against neoliberalism and initiators of uniting the global justice movement. The Karnataka farmers in PGA that with their anti-WTO demonstration in Bangalore 1993 sparked much environmental interest in the struggle against neoliberalism were among the organisers of Mumbai Resistance. Shivas position has not received much attention in spite of a growing debate in some newspapers on WSF after Mumbai. All six social forums organised in Sweden so far has been regional and the most successful in Lund twice with more than 2.000 participants involves all three strands from Mumbai, PGA groups, NGOs like Amnesty, environmental and solidarity movements, social

democrats and Marxist-Leninist revolutionary parties. At other places political parties have been excluded but their affiliated youth federations included. PGA aligned groups in Sweden (and Denmark) have chosen to influence the social forums successfully. The exclusion of Zapatistas from social forums has been discussed. Social democrats like the minister of development aid and the social democratic journalist Petter Larsson has participated in the WSF debate, by stating the need for social forums to be open to debate with political parties and by proclaiming the need to focus on a programme of political alternative demands similar to the ideas of French Attac founder Bernard Cassen. Also Arundati Roy received attention by getting her inauguration speech at WSF reprinted in Aftonbladet, the biggest daily in the Nordic countries.

A more hotly debated Indian intervention in the Swedish discussion on WSF has been the translation of Aspects of India's Economy magazine special issue on the subject. It has been published by FiB/kulturfront (People in Pictures/Cultural Front), a membership organisation and magazine based on defending freedom of speech and anti-imperialism with long-lasting relations to India. This Indian criticism focus on how WSF splits the global justice movement in the liberal shape of a civil society apart from political parties turning the movement into reformism, the role of NGOs, exclusion of revolutionary parties and foreign Western funding. Aron Etzler, attacked this booklet. He is one of the founders of Attac Sweden, and the editor of Flamman, the left party weekly. He denounced the booklet as "rubbish" in a tone seldom seen in the Swedish debate. Especially he criticises what he claims to be uninformed claims that WSF not had taken a stand on the Iraq war and points at that the leader of the anti-G8 demonstrations in Genoa at the same time was involved in the WSF process thus stating a split between summit protesters and WSF is false. Etzler finds only the information on Ford foundation funding of interest. Aspects of India's economy have answered that the information on the lack of deciding against the Iraq war came from Teivo Teivainen, the Finnish member from Network Institute on Global democracy in the international WSF committee. The accusations from being uninformed when the lack of information on who, what and when actually decides on WSF content and positions is systematically hard to know or contradictory even for insiders becomes somewhat of a boomerang. The booklet also caused another kind of discussion about the lobby dialogue strategy from Attac that tended to take away the necessary focus on mobilising people in common in Gothenburg against privatisation of health care and dismantling of public health services. A kind of Attac strategy that also could be seen at social forums according to the revolutionary communist youth, an organisation that in practice is one of the strongest initiators of nation-wide local anti-war demonstrations that by many often are used as the best example of WSF political success.

It is clear that by moving WSF to India the process has been firmly democratised due to extraordinary efforts from all three kinds of meetings in Mumbai. Aspects of India's Economy have comprehensively summarized some of the criticism against WSF in a way that cannot be ignored. Jai Sen has contributed to openness in the official WSF process in India and globally by very open-minded reflections and co-editing the most ambitious book on WSF so far, Challenging Empires. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam has through its newsletter and homepage made both the political party participation in Mumbai and the overall picture more visible and thus more democratically transparent.

It is too early to estimate the result of this attempt at global democratisation in the Nordic countries. It shows anyway that Indian influence still is vibrant. Much of the globalisation critique is monopolised by the left dividing itself into polarised fractions, one focusing on the need for national sovereignty together with international solidarity and the other on

establishing and strengthening transnational political institutions like the EU and a global civil society. Both can find their positions strengthened by Indian interventions like that of Shiva, Roy or Aspects of India's Economy.

A key organisation in the preparations for social forums in Sweden has been the democratic membership based Ordfront, the most-read magazine in Sweden and a publishing company printing articles and books by Shiva, Roy and Noam Chomsky. A special Ordfront delegation went to WSF in Mumbai and visited afterwards Shiva's ecological center. Ordfront is now in a severe internal crisis due to a conflict between the two polarised leftwing positions. An interview with Diane Johnstone critical towards Western politics during the breakdown of former Yugoslavia and the demonizing of Serbs was publicised in Ordfront magazine. It contained some false information on a prison camp erected by the Serbs and mass murder in Srebrenica that caused strong criticism in the liberal press blaming Ordfront for supporting genocide. The criticism against Ordfront resulted in the firing of the long time journalist responsible for the interview. The editor of Ordfront made the highly questionable statement that genocide had taken place in former Yugoslavia backed by the board. At the annual general meeting the members decided to criticize the way that the board had given in to the liberal attack. Roy and Chomsky have written a statement supporting freedom of speech and Johnstones contribution to the debate. The crisis in Ordfront continued with an extra AGM announced on grounds that has been questioned. This time the extra AGM reversed the decision from the ordinary AGM under strong pressure from the established press. The polarised conflict is a sign on a general crisis for left wing strategy between a new NGO and global civil society orientation and an older national sovereignty and popular movement orientation stressing the need for allowing all opinions heard. What is new or at least very seldom takes place is direct interference from the third world in an internal discussion in Sweden like that of Roy.

What are lacking in the internal left wing polarisation are both a deeper development critique and a stronger commitment to personal responsibility for taking action against social injustice. This can be contributed by a renewal of Gandhian thinking and the way Indian movements have democratised the global justice movement by strengthening simultaneously all three strands, the non-violent confrontational PGA or revolutionary way, the reformist NGO and global civil society position and popular movement making dialogues with center-left political parties. It is too early to estimate the possibilities for such a development beyond the polarised positions of the left.

## **Reclaim Gandhi**

A small attempt in this direction under the call Reclaim Gandhi! was made in 2005. It all started at an international work camp on the Islands of Solovetsk at the White Sea close to the polar circle in Russia. Here Finnish activists and members of Coalition for Environment and Development had organised a project to support ecological tourism. The idea was to build a foot-bridge across marches to enable tourists to come down to the beach and watch Beluga whales. If more tourists came watching by boat they would become disturbed but as they normally came close to the beach they could also be watch from there. The motive for increasing ecological tourism was that more people have to come close to the richness of wildlife to be interested in saving nature.





*Carrying planks for the foot-bridge on the Solovetsk islands 2004*

50 persons carried planks surrounded by mosquitoes. It was an atmosphere worthy of these islands. Here a monastery was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by orthodox monks, a well fortified establishment where the tsar sent his most important political prisoners, later followed by Stalin who used it as the first Gulag, again for political prisoners.

On the way back from this work camp the idea was born to celebrate in the Nordic countries the 75 years anniversary of the Salt march.

Soon preparations went ahead. In Finland 100 persons volunteered to translate each one page of Gandhi's book *Hind Swaraj* into Finnish. In the South of Sweden and Copenhagen a joint Swedish-Danish Öresund committee was established and a manifesto written (see appendix II). Denmark participates in the occupation of Iraq and is a country with more public support for this war than in any other Western country. With a conservative government and a xenophobic party with a strong impact in parliament the conditions gets worse for immigrants and groups supporting resistance against imperialism.

The war on terror have given the result in many Western countries that liberties of expression and organising solidarity with liberation movements have been criminalised. Even the rule of law stating the right of the accused to know his bill of indictment has been dropped and many other rights as well. In Sweden three citizens lost their right to have economic transactions. The US gave a list of persons they wanted to be forbidden to use money to the UN that became an EU list and than automatically implemented by the Swedish state against its own citizens, one of them a social democratic politician. People started civil disobedience to support the persons deprived of their right to receive any money. After many years the last of the three persons was without explanation taken out from the list and his right restored. On Swedish soil CIA kidnapped two Egyptians accused of terrorism and transported them to

Egypt with the approval of Swedish foreign minister Anna Lindh. In Egypt the kidnapped persons were tortured. It is against Swedish law to deport persons to countries where they risk being tortured. Some Nordic citizens have been held at Guantanamo by the US for years without knowing why and without trial.

In Denmark people decided to do something more than protest. They started to openly disobey the law making it illegal to economically support liberation movements. A campaign started to give money to FARC in Columbia and PFLP in Palestine. The association Oprør (Rebellion) started with 700 members.



*Sara Mathai Stinus gives salt to parliamentarians at Salt March 75 years jubilee in Copenhagen 2005*

Among the rebellious activists were people interested in celebrating the Salt march jubilee. A manifesto was written and action plans went ahead. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 2005, parliamentarians from the non-socialist Radikale Venstre, the Socialist People's party and the Red green alliance were given a bag of salt and the manifesto to celebrate the Salt march reaching the Sea the same day 75 years earlier. In Stockholm the same action took place. After meeting the parliamentarians the participants in the manifestation marched to a Christianshavns square listening to Vijay Pratap from Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and other speaker. The activities ended with a seminar where Toni Liversage spoke about the role of nonviolent action with her life long experience.



*Toni Liversage speaks at citizens' house in Christianshavn at Reclaim Gandhi seminar 2005*

Activities were organised at 15 places in the Nordic countries to celebrate the Salt march with exhibitions, seminars and film shows. This was half of the activities that were organised in the whole world to pay attention to the anniversary. These Nordic actions also seem to be the only that put the anniversary into the context of today's struggle against imperialism and oppressive neoliberal policies.

In Denmark the struggle continued to defend the right to inform about the initiative made by Oprør and to give money to FARC and PFLP. A Swedish appeal to support the Danish initiative was observed in Norway. The result was that the new left government decide to hold on to old Nordic principles and not put up FARC and PFLP on their list of terrorist organisations as EU have done. Now what is a crime in Denmark is fully legal in Norway. In Sweden a Palestinian is accused in 2006 of giving money to Hamas that is illegal according to the EU rules. Thus an organisation that 75 per cent of the people have voted for is illegal to support. Solidarity movements are criminalised.

Participating in the Salt march action was also young activists from the International Solidarity Movement in Sweden. They send volunteers to intervene non-violently in the conflict between Palestinians and Israel. So far 400 have travelled from Sweden to participate in the actions in Palestine to support the Palestinian people as the kind of "living wall" Gandhi envisioned to prevent conflicts to become violent. Coming to know more about the Indian liberation struggle and Gandhi through the Salt march anniversary activities they recognised how similar it is to Palestinian mobilisation today.

During 90 years a continuous Indian-Nordic dialogue has had an important impact on Nordic political culture and popular movements, an impact that continuously built on renaissance for Gandhian thinking but also other Indian popular movement experiences.

What can be stated after this study of Indian influence in the Nordic countries is that the established views on how world politics is influenced must be revised. The common claims in the West backed by the global university industry claims that the West is the origin of democratic movements and the rest follows suite is false. It is of democratic and global importance to systematically denounce this false ideology built on disinterest in empiric evidence and vested interest theory, a task for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and others interested in a South North dialogue and search for knowledge that can help us towards social justice and saving our planet.

Tord Björk

## Appendix I

### Declaration of the Third World and the Human Environment

Written by Oi Committee International

an international committee of young scientists and scholars for a critical and holistic approach to development and the human environment

We participants from 41 nations in the Conference on Problems of the Third World and the Human Environment, sponsored by Oi-Committee International, have come together for an independent and critical analysis of the problems of the human environment, parallel to the efforts of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm June 4-16, 1972. On the basis of prepared papers and discussions in specialized working parties and plenary sessions, we have come to the following understanding.

#### DECLARATION ON THE THIRD WORLD AND THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

By using the concept "THIRD WORLD" we focus attention on problems common to peoples who have the shared historical and ongoing experience of being dominated and exploited by other nations. This domination has sharpened the conflict of certain classes ruling over others in our respective societies in the underdeveloped as well as the industrialized regions of the world. The common root of these expressions of domination is in the socio-economic system which allows and favors "development" for one part of society at the expense of another. The price is hunger, disease, environmental deterioration and lack of freedom, lack of access to vital information and of participation.

The HUMAN ENVIRONMENT is the total reality of man's world which includes physical, social, economic, cultural, and political components. We strongly oppose the narrow ecological approach which emphasizes the relations of "nature and man", ignoring the fundamental issues of relations between man, societies and classes. Any approach to the problems of the human environment is meaningless unless the economic, social and political inequalities that exist between, as well as within the countries are considered. Our analysis stresses the crucial importance of understanding and solidarity among all oppressed peoples of the world irrespective of where they are living.

#### Development of the Environment

Development must necessarily consider the well-being of all the people. It must involve the total conscious participation by the people in all decisions that affect their lives. Equal distribution of resources and the means and control of the means of production combined with decentralization, and reject private material and status incentives and sanctions. Incentives must be for society as a whole.

In each society the social system must be developed based on its own priorities and needs and must integrate all aspects of the human environment. The environmental crisis in both the industrialised countries and the third world is due to the faulty nature of development

technology and the social and economic systems that are organized for private gain and the achievement of military power, and not with regard for human needs.

We strongly reject models of stagnation, proposed by certain alarmist Western ecologists, economists, industrialists and computer-fans [1] and assert that holding economic growth per se responsible for environmental ills amounts to a diversion of attention from the real causes of the problem which lie in the profit-motivation of the systems of production in the capitalist world. Likewise we state that the level of consumption (affluence) per se is not a cause of environmental problems. Therefore the bulk of the so-called "ecology movements" in most industrialized countries that stress personal ethics of recycling and non-consumption are at best diversionary tactics which fail to put the primary emphasis on the destruction of the profit-oriented system of production.

### Agricultural Development

Most specific problem areas in the environment follow the analysis above. For example, the programme of agricultural development known as "the Green Revolution", which is lauded as the answer to the world's food problems, rural unemployment and social stratification, is in reality a package solution involving pesticides, fertilizers, "improved" seeds, irrigation and mechanization, which does irreparable harm to the human environment. This approach has caused severe chemical pollution, elimination of irreplaceable genetic plant materials, increased vulnerability of the agricultural production systems, crop failures, famines, threats to human health from new diseases and malnutrition, and dispossession, dislocation and unemployment of large rural masses as a result of mechanization and the monocultural approach. Although some of the individual elements in this approach may have validity for increasing food production under certain specific conditions, the entire package has, in effect, caused the reverse of its proclaimed aims of social justice. In fact, the wide-spread introduction of this technique has impeded the essential task of immediate redistribution of resources.

In summary, far from serving the long-term interests of the rural masses, the so-called Green Revolution has resulted in more profits for the agricultural-business complexes (chemical, machinery, etc.) of the expansionist industrial states.

### Public Health

In the field of public health the same disparity and diversionary approach is evident. For example, the present distribution of malaria corresponds closely with the boundaries of the Third World. Malaria eradication programmes based on massive spraying of DDT and other persistent pesticides, have failed to dislodge the disease from developing countries. In Central America and Mexico the incidence of malaria is just as high or higher now, in spite of well over a decade of intensive spraying with DDT and other pesticides. In other places such as Ceylon, India, Iran and Ethiopia, there has been considerable resurgence of the disease following the apparent initial success. Meanwhile the world's greatest accumulation of pesticides in body-fat and human milk has been reported in countries like India and Guatemala, where the intensive insecticidal campaign against malaria as well as agricultural uses have been practiced for a long time. We therefore demand the immediate institution of environmentally more positive biological and cultural methods.

We assert that the present disease eradication programmes based on simplistic chemical strategies are a diversion from the more urgent and effective task of social reorganization

which would lead to better living and health conditions and facilities and would ultimately free the people of the Third World not only from malaria but also from other diseases.

## Population

"We hold that of all things in the world, people are the most precious." [2]

It has often been suggested that the root cause of environmental problems is that the world is "overpopulated"; thus population control is demanded as a solution. We assert, on the contrary, that population growth is neither the most important nor- the most decisive factor affecting the human environment. In fact, when population is considered in relation to the development of the environment, there is a vast, as yet underutilized and wasted human energy which can be used to promote development. The question of population is inevitably linked to the question of access to resources. Most arguments for population control are based on the concept of an optimal population size, ignoring that the world is not under one system.

On a global scale, the population problems of the developing countries have arisen primarily since the colonial expansions of the last two centuries, due to the virtual exclusion of the populations of Asia, Africa and Latin America from full access to their own resources. This process of economic exploitation still continues in spite of the nominal independence of various former colonies and dependencies.

We also reject the thesis that the onus of population control must fall on the industrialized countries. Recognizing that in the latter the mode of production of economic goods is a much larger contributor to the environmental crisis than population growth, it is clear that the emphasis must be on changing the modes of production, which, we believe, implies a fundamental change in the socio-economic systems governing the means of production. Nevertheless we do not deny that there may be an eventual need to stabilize population growth. This should not be achieved through exerting external pressures of manipulating people to go against their immediate individual interests. Such an approach is intrinsically inhuman and demands a constant technical control over people.

What is needed, in our view, is a process which releases the internal mechanisms by which a population stabilizes itself. The emphasis must be placed on generating a consciousness among people to relate their immediate interests to the broader and long-term interests of the community as a whole. This consciousness, of course, must be preceded by a reorganization of society and the system of production for an equitable distribution of resources.

We therefore strongly condemn the international agencies and aid programs for their involvement in population control policies which are against Third World peoples and which will perpetuate their exploitation.

## Rural Development and Urbanization

In many Third World countries expansionist and capitalist technologies such as the "Green Revolution" have replaced human labour by capital-intensive technology. This has forced rural people to migrate to the cities, resulting in high imbalance between urban and rural areas. This in turn has produced gross social, economic, and political injustices.

We denounce the United States' bombing of the countryside in Vietnam which has intentionally forced the people of Vietnam into urban conglomerates where they are easier to pacify and control.

The location of industries designed for high profits in large cities does not consider the development of the human environment. A clear example is that cities in the Third World continue to serve as mere centers for the collection and export of raw materials and the import and distribution of finished goods from the metropolitan countries. We advocate the decentralization of industry into rural-urban communities in order to realize a meaningful development.

#### Self Determination, National Liberation, War and Weaponry

Modern warfare by the expansionist industrialized states, including the threat of nuclear or bio-chemical war, presents the greatest urgent single threat to human survival. These states, chief among them the United States of America, are today engaged in their most barbaric drive against the people of the Third World, of which the Indochinese people are the most notable victims. Likewise, the United States is involved in an anti-liberation campaign against the people of Zimbabwe, Namibia, South America, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Palestine, Eritrea and others by providing materials to the colonialist wars of Portugal, Israel, Ethiopia, etc. Such domination is vital to the preservation of the U.S. capitalist economy. The armed forces of the United States and other expansionist states are an extension of their policies through which their imperial hegemony is maintained by maneuvering the Third World countries into dependent economic, political and military relationships.

In any discussion concerning the development of the environment, a high priority must be given to the fact that whole cultures and peoples are being decimated, displaced, dispossessed, and in some cases, threatened with imminent extinction.

Many groups who have and wish to maintain their cultural, racial, religious and national identities are victims of "double oppression" [3]. In addition to being oppressed in the same way as other exploited peoples, they are persecuted because of their particular ethnic, racial, cultural character. these blatant injustices, particularly against the Indians of North and South America, must be exposed and condemned. We affirm our unequivocal solidarity with their struggles to retain their cultural identity and to defend their right to exist.

We advocate and support the inalienable rights of the peoples of each nation to determine their own socio-economic and political systems. We also believe that when a government is unjust and perpetuates oppression, the oppressed have the right to resort to armed struggles for their liberation movement. We therefore affirm our unconditional support to the liberation movement in Indochina, Africa, and Latin America. We condemn the imperialist and neo-colonialist countries for their naked aggression in these areas.

#### Humanizing Technology

The carelessness of technology is the product of market-oriented economy where the maximization of profits and price-free social costs are the governing factors. In this manner multi-national corporations and national elites are enriched at the cost of environmental deterioration and human degradation. Ecologically faulty technologies such as the production of synthetics (pesticides, inorganic fertilizers, detergents, plastics, synthetic rubber. etc.) can

only be justified by market-directed corporations for distorted economic reasons. Processes of this kind have stifled the production of finished natural goods in the Third World, created unparalleled industrial pollution, destroyed socio-economic structures and forced the dependency of the Third World on the expansionist industrialized world.

Technology must be reoriented towards more egalitarian goals to account for the social welfare of peoples and their liberation from oppression by privileged and powerful classes with vested economic interests. Furthermore, the concept of the "transfer of technology" which is supposedly designed for the adaptation of technology to Third World environments is a myth and purely paternalistic in outlook. It fails to consider the social and economic context in which decisions are made regarding the adoption of technologies.

A humane technology for the Third World must necessarily come out of the incentives of the people themselves. This can only happen after a far-reaching social revolution has achieved the goal of total participation by the masses. The new technology must also reinforce many already existing ones such as traditional farming and medical techniques; it must direct innovation in accordance with human needs and environmental imperatives.

### Science and Social Responsibility

The new technology must be based on a new concept of science intended only for the social well-being of all peoples. This requirement dictates that for science to benefit the people it must develop out of the struggle for the liberation of mankind. Scientists and other workers alike have the responsibility to participate in the economic and social development of all peoples and in the struggle for the liberation of mankind as a whole.

We reject the concept of "neutrality of science and education". They can be used to enslave man or to liberate him. Man is a social and historical being and as such has the capacity to change his world of today, which is one of oppression, to the world of tomorrow, which will be one of liberation.

We denounce the exploitative values forced on children through competitive education based on individual achievement. We condemn the attitude of the superiority of "intellectual" over manual labour. Education must enhance self-awareness and social concern and lead to a new consciousness for greater participation of the people at all levels of decision-making.

Finally, we do not believe that the United Nations organization will be able to find solutions to the problems of mankind so long as it is directed and controlled by the very powerful expansionist industrial and military states which oppress the peoples of the exploited world. It is absurd to expect the oppressors to initiate and implement the process of liberation of the oppressed. We assert that the problems of this world can only be solved by the people. Therefore we call on all the people of the world to intensify their struggle against the forces that oppress us.

[1] See, for example, D.H. Meadows et al, *The Limits to Growth, A Report of the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*. New York, Universe Books, 1972; and *Blueprint for Survival*, *Ecologist*, January 1972.

[2] Speech by the Chairman of the delegation of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, June 1972

[3] Declaration of Barbados. Symposium on Inter-Ethnic Conflict in South America. January, 1971.



## Appendix II

The Oeresund Committee for the Salt March Jubilee:

### **They marched to the sea to gather salt Manifesto of the Salt March Committee 2005**

#### I. Resistance

It is 75 years since Gandhi marched to the sea. The people followed him. The Empire taxed salt and prevented the poor from gathering it. They marched to the sea to take the salt, and in the end that same salt dissolved the Empire.

Still they march through the world. Still we march through the world: a resistance movement growing more and more global in form. Themes such as global inequality, environmental destruction and the erosion of the social conditions of life have become more and more visible, more and more urgent.

We are challenging a world system, historically unique in its power and in its extent. A civilisation unique both in its inequality and its abuse of resources, and in its knowledge and awareness of itself as such a system.

The world in our time represents a global system of apartheid. The repressive withholding of vital resources from the vast majority of the people, characteristic of historical forms of apartheid, has emerged again at a global level

#### II. To undermine power

The privatization of the right of access to resources and the destruction of the commons has intensified through recent decades, in rich as well as in the poor countries. The resistance movement today is an international movement against dominant international political and economical structures. It is a conflict of totally different projects of internationalism or globalization. The goal the resistance movement is to undermine the legitimacy and the power of the current world order. This is the road to the sea. This is the Salt March of today.

In Gandhi's non-violent confrontation with power, the violence of power is revealed and will in the end undermine itself. The violent manifestations of power will contribute to its own demoralization.

When resistance challenges the dominant order in such a way as to create inner instability and crisis, the reaction of the state has always been to criminalize such resistance. This was the case when Gandhi confronted imperial power: beatings and imprisonments. Today, the criminalization of social protest is both more severe and has been transposed to an international level.

### III. From the social state to the security state

Anti-terrorist legislation and the so-called 'war against terror' are the culmination of a process that has been evident for several years. Social and political strategies have been replaced by models of repression, by enhanced power to police and security forces, by criminalization and restrictions on the rights of citizens in relation to the interests of the state.

The social-liberal model of reform has been replaced by the use of power, and in the long run, by military force, by war and occupation. The Danish state is now at war as part of the 'coalition of the willing', and future wars threaten. Through extensive arms exports the Swedish state is also deeply integrated into the insatiable market of war.

In these years, movements from occupied territories, movements of persecuted minorities, movements in societies marked by deep inequalities and state oppression have all been proscribed as terrorist organizations. Today the confrontational strategies of Gandhi would without doubt be included in such a definition.

Anti-terrorism legislation and the so-called 'global war on terror' are directed against popular resistance to global economic policies which in so many countries in the world have led to the exclusion of growing masses of the people. Anti-terrorist legislation and the 'war against terror' are the disciplinary means of states in support of the enforced market liberalization which is the global agenda of capital.

Also in international development aid policies, state security has replaced political and social models of development. In a movement away from the humanitarian ideology of development aid, the focus is now less on the eradication of poverty than on the threat posed by the poor. The potential of the poor as a source of political upheaval and terrorism has come to the fore.

### IV. The miracle of survival

The answer to the present crisis of the people is not a regression to 'fundamentalism', but a radical humanization of global economical processes where the marginalized and the outcast, both individuals and cultures, are reintegrated in a democratic and ecologically sustainable world society.

The global resistance movement is the subject of history. It is made up of those who appear to be the objects of history, broken by power, made homeless by it, silenced by it, banished by it, without rights or reparation, confused and even despairing - in the never-ending struggle for daily life. There are the peasants still clinging to the soil; the landless and those driven off the land, driven in their millions to the metropolises of misery where survival is a daily inexplicable miracle. This is the contrasting image of power: to be deprived of everything.

The upheavals caused by the process of neo-liberal expropriation are still of a more local character. In local unrest and war, often defined by ethnic or religious identity, the victims of global policy are themselves the first victims. The destructivity of global policies is turned inwards. This state of local disorder will not remain local, in the years to come it will grow and extend to a global level.

## V. A struggle for life and for the Earth

In the marginalization and exclusion of peoples throughout the world, a room for new voices is being shaped. In the confusion of questions and answers, one can hear these voices. It is a cacophony of religious revival and fundamentalism, of land occupations and exorcism, of orchestras and organizations, of commotion and choruses, of magic and migration, of crime and carnival, abuse and misery, salsa and salt march.

It is an army, armed only with life, the short lives of the humans, a resistance sometimes unseen, but always on the move. The new resistance has no center, no leadership, and no one organizational principle. Instead, there is an endless diversity of positions from which the power is challenged, locally, nationally, regionally and globally.

It is the struggle for the earth, for water and the air. A struggle for life and for the earth against the expropriation of land and life by capital.

In a learning process of unseen historical dimensions, power will learn of its own vulnerability. The movement will come to know the vulnerability of power, and learn too of its own vulnerability, and the outcome is still to be seen and is still to come.

The salt is being gathered. The salt of the sea and the salt of the earth. The Salt March is winding through the world.



Reclaim Gandhi – Indian-Nordic Encounters 1917 – 2006 is the story of the connections between popular movements in India and Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden and the Indian impact on Nordic societies during almost a century. It is the story of Anne Marie Pedersen and Esther Færing, two Danish women that are thrown out of their Missionary society when they establishes a national school for girls according to their own and Gandhi's ideas. Ellen Hørup that starts organising the international solidarity movement for the liberation of India. Birger Forell, the first Swede to visit Gandhi in India, becomes influenced by his nonviolence philosophy and than as a priest comes to Berlin in the midst of nazi terror. It is the story of courage and failures. It is the story on how Gandhian and theosophical influences from India inspires mass actions for solidarity with the third world, against racism, the atomic bomb and for freedom of speech. At almost every step in the struggle against the present world order in the Nordic countries Indian influences have been present, often due to continuous contacts between popular movements in these two parts of the world. This influence has helped the Nordic societies to find new direction and forms of resistance that unites many behind a firm opposition against imperialism and the environmental strategies of industrialists. This book challenges the view that civilisation and progress comes from the North and then influences the South. It also challenges the view that Gandhi's main message was nonviolence. Thus this book calls for resistance against oppression. Reclaim world history and Gandhi.