



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series E: General Alphabetical Files. 1960-1992

Box 86, Folder 23, NBC "Holocaust" - Sweden, 1979.

[start]

Original documents
faded and/or illegible

1979.04.20

RECEIVED APR 21 1979

Mrs. Clara Leiser
Youth of All Nations
16 Saint Luke's Place
New York, NY 10014

Reaction in Sweden to the TV series Holocaust ("Förintelsen")

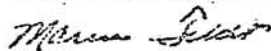
Dear Mrs. Leiser:

As promised when you called the Swedish Information Service last Wednesday, April 11, we have put together some representative clippings from three Swedish newspapers on the reaction to the television program Holocaust. These are enclosed.

The three papers are Svenska Dagbladet, Expressen, and Aftonbladet. They are all dailies and have a very large circulation throughout the country. There are over 100 newspapers in Sweden, as well as many magazines, and the TV series was written about and discussed widely in most of these. I am enclosing a factsheet entitled "The Swedish Press and Other Media" which will give some background about the Swedish press.

As I mentioned on the telephone, this office unfortunately has no facilities to help you have the articles translated, but we hope you will be able to read them anyway, with your knowledge of German.

Sincerely yours,



Marna Feldt
Information Officer

Enclosures: Expressen - March 9, pgs. 1, 6, 7, and 9.
March 12, pgs. 1, 2, 4, 6, 7.
March 13, "letters to the editor"
Aftonbladet - March 9, pgs. 1, 8, 9, 16, 17
March 12, pgs. 15 and editorial.
March 13, pgs. 3 and TV review.
Svenska Dagbladet - March 8, pg. 14.
March 9, pgs. 1, 14.
March 10, pg. 2 - editorial.

Fact Sheets on Sweden

The Swedish Press and Other Media

If one were to ask a panel of thoughtful and well-informed persons to state the most important prerequisites for a healthy mass media system, the following factors would be bound to figure prominently on any list:

- high levels of literacy and universal education;
- a working democracy with legally protected civil rights, especially freedom of expression;
- a civic-minded citizenry participating eagerly in public affairs;
- an advanced economy permitting a high standard of living;
- a reasonably equitable distribution of wealth and influence;
- a measure of technological sophistication, especially in the fields of communication and distribution.

In all these respects, Sweden would seem to measure up rather well thanks to her privileged condition of nearly 170 years of unbroken peace, her relative freedom from serious social disruption, her ethnic and cultural homogeneity, and her natural wealth.

No wonder, then, that international surveys of media density show Sweden in the lead, with the largest newspaper readership in proportion to population, with television approaching the saturation point—at well over 90 sets per 100 households—and with radio ownership at one of the highest levels in the world.

Yet the media scene is far from idyllic. While total newspaper circulation keeps increasing, the number of newspapers has been declining for decades. The radio and TV monopoly is a source of constant controversy. Increasingly, Swedes are asking themselves whether media performance is all that it ought to be.

Such as it is, the Swedish media situation is outlined here below, beginning with the legal framework and continuing with a few structural data.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND OTHER MEDIA

Sweden seems to have been the first country in the world to establish freedom of the press. In 1766, Parliament adopted a Freedom of the Press Act as a part of the Constitution. More recently, similar legislation has been passed for radio and television without becoming Constitutional Law.

After the promulgation of the first Press Act, the last decades of the 18th century witnessed a relapse into repression and censorship, but since the constitutional reform of 1809, freedom of the press has prevailed. The present Freedom of the Press Act dates from 1949, with several subsequent amendments.

As part of the Constitution, this Act is protected by special safeguards. Thus, to gain legal force, any amendment or abrogation of the Act must be confirmed by two successive parliaments, with general elections taking place between first and second readings.

Unique Safeguards

In Sweden, as in some other democracies, public censorship of the press as well as

other serious restrictions on publishing and distribution of printed matter are explicitly forbidden. However, the Swedish lawmakers set out to safeguard press freedom by an elaborate combination of measures unique at the time of inception and to this very day emulated only by a few other countries.

Foremost among these devices is the invention of the *responsible publisher*. Any periodical appearing four times a year or more must appoint a responsible publisher, who alone is answerable for the contents of the publication. He alone can be held accountable for any violation of the Freedom of the Press Act.

The responsible publisher is appointed by the owner of the publication. He must be a Swedish citizen domiciled in Sweden, and neither a minor nor an undischarged bankrupt. (An amendment extending eligibility to aliens domiciled in this country went into effect on January 1, 1978.)

Being the only person who can be taken to court for what is printed in the newspaper, the publisher logically has the right to decide whether any given item should be entered in the publication or not. In theory, this would require him to read, prior to publication, every word intended for print, including advertisements and letters to the editor. As this is obviously quite unfeasible in most cases, the system implies an element of trust: The publisher must surround himself with discerning collaborators and organize the work of his staff in such a manner that violations of the law do not occur, reserving for himself the final say on dubious matters.

The responsible publisher may appoint a substitute and is required to do so should he be prevented from fulfilling his duties. Only in the unlikely event that neither of them could be taken to account would it be possible to prosecute someone else for violations of press law. In such exigencies, the Act provides a "chain of responsibility," according to which the legal responsibility is transferred to the owner of the paper. If for some reason even the owner should be unassailable, the printer is held accountable. As a last resort, the distributor may be held responsible—a provision that applies mainly to actionable matter in foreign publications imported to Sweden, as in such cases the prior links of the chain are not subject to Swedish law.

Only in the matter of damages can there be a question of shared responsibility. To make sure that an injured party obtains any damages awarded him while at the same time protecting the publisher from personal hardship, the court may decide that both owner and publisher are to be held accountable for the payment of damages.

Sources Protected

With the introduction of a solely responsible publisher, the lawmakers have deliberately created a scapegoat for all violations of the Freedom of the Press Act. By providing a person who—with his chain of substitutes—can always be held responsible for any transgression, they have quite intentionally exonerated the actual culprit. In fact, the law explicitly prohibits the investigation or disclosure of newspapermen's sources. It follows



specially designated companies, one each for television, national radio, local radio and educational broadcasting. This monopoly status has caused Parliament to impose certain requirements on programme activities. Thus, the broadcasting companies are required to observe demanding standards of objectivity and impartiality. A government-appointed Radio Council reviews programme activities and investigates complaints to ensure that these standards are met.

A proposal by a government commission in 1975 to integrate press and radio legislation into a single constitutional Mass Media Act, applicable even to the film industry, was never presented to Parliament. However, legislative work will continue to extend constitutional protection to other media than the press.

Motion Pictures—the Exception

The one exception to the general ban against pre-publication censorship concerns the motion picture industry. Motion pictures intended for public showing in Sweden are previewed by a National Board of Film Censorship which is empowered to delete certain sequences or ban the film altogether. Censorship is chiefly exercised in the interest of the very young viewers and directed against excessive brutality or prurience, on the ground that these may be detrimental to mental health. Repeated attempts through the years to have film censorship abolished have all been defeated.

The Press Council and the PO

For many decades, Swedish press organizations have been intent on guarding against abuse of the liberties guaranteed by the Constitution. As early as 1916, the Swedish Press Council—the first of its kind in the world—was set up by the Publicists' Club (the national press club), the Swedish Newspaper Publishers' Association, and the Swedish Union of Journalists. A journalistic Code of Ethics was first adopted in 1923 by the Publicists' Club. After several amendments, the present Code was adopted in 1974 and has been acceded to by both journalists, publishers, and the broadcasting companies.

The Code aims at upholding high ethical standards in general and, especially, at protecting the integrity of individuals against invasion of privacy, defamation and other damaging publicity. A special section is devoted to combating editorial advertising and other undue outside influences calculated to mislead the readers. A special committee watches over this type of malpractice.

In 1969, the office of Press Ombudsman (PO) was established to supervise the adherence to ethical standards. Public complaints shall be directed to the PO who is also entitled to act on his own initiative. He may dismiss a complaint if unfounded, or if the newspaper agrees to publish a retraction or rectification acceptable to the complainant. In clear-cut cases of minor importance, the PO may issue ex officio criticism of the newspaper.

When the PO finds that the grievance is of a more serious nature, he will file a complaint with the Press Council, which will then publish a statement acquitting or censuring the newspaper. The findings of the Council are published in the newspaper concerned and in the business papers of the press.

The Council is composed of six mem-

bers, two of which represent the general public while three are appointed by the press organizations and the sixth is the chairman who holds a casting vote. The latter has always been a member of the Supreme Court.

In addition to publishing a censoring opinion, the offending newspaper also has to pay a fine. In 1978 this fine was set at Skr 5,550.

In 1977, the PO received 420 complaints and initiated 36 more on his own account. The Press Council considered 101 cases, giving censure in 56 cases and acquitting 45. The PO himself reprimanded 27 publications.

THE SWEDISH MEDIA SCENE TODAY

Newspapers: An Uphill Struggle

Statistics show Swedes to be the most avid newspaper readers in the world. In 1977 there were 138 newspapers with a combined circulation of more than 4.7 million, or more than 571 copies per 1,000 inhabitants. For a long time, there has been a slow but steady increase both in total volume and in volume proportionately to population.

Meanwhile, the number of newspapers has declined sharply during the postwar era, from 216 in 1945. Most of the closures have affected newspapers competing with others of larger circulation in the same community. In consequence, an increasing number of communities have become "one-newspaper towns."

Newspaper Publication by Community

Number of newspapers in community	Number of publishing communities		
	1950	1960	1970
5 or more	2	1	1
4	3	2	1
3	15	6	1
2	31	23	17
1	42	56	62

The increasing concentration of newspaper ownership in fewer hands has affected even relatively large dailies such as the leading Social Democratic morning paper *Stockholms-Tidningen*, which was discontinued in 1966, and the Liberal *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning*, which ceased publication in 1973.

This trend has left Sweden with fewer and larger newspapers, and yet economic conditions have deteriorated to such a degree that the future looks very uncertain for a large number of papers. The implications of this development are aggravated by the peculiar political orientation of the Swedish daily press. Traditionally the newspapers have tended to sympathize with and even actively advocate political party programmes and ideologies. However, this political line-up has been anything but representative of the political preferences of the electorate. While Social Democrats and Communists have been sharing approximately half the popular vote for decades (with the Social Democrats being the overwhelmingly larger party), their share of the press amounts to only about one-sixth of total circulation. Conversely, non-socialist parties with a combined voter support of barely 50% have been supported by roughly four newspapers out of five.

As the Social Democratic press is younger and less well consolidated than

Circulation by Political Affiliation or Sympathy, 1975

Conservative, Liberal and Centre	72.9%	
Independent, non-socialist	11.0%	83.9%
Social Democratic and Communist		16.1%
		100.0%

(There is only one Communist daily, the *Norrskensflamman* with a circulation of approx. 4,900 copies, or about 0.1%.)

its competitors, it has seemed more vulnerable to the process of concentration just indicated. Thus, an unchecked continuation of that process could be expected to produce a political press structure even more disproportionate than at present.

Permanent Multi-million Subsidies

Hoping to arrest this development, the Social Democratic government prior to its defeat in the autumn of 1976 had commissioned a series of major studies (three press commissions within less than a decade) to propose ways and means of "maintaining the free formation of public opinion."

The cumulative effect of the consecutive recommendations of these commissions has been to create an elaborate system of subsidies which for 1977/78 total Skr 207 million. Proposed allotments are as follows: Skr 140 million in direct cash support to individual ailing newspaper enterprises; Skr 46 million in "collective distribution rebates" for newspapers willing to participate in joint distribution systems; Skr 12 million for a loan fund advancing investment capital to newspapers on highly favourable terms; Skr 4 million for a "seed money" fund to encourage any attempts to start new papers; Skr 5 million for incentives for technical co-operation and so forth. A further Skr 40 million subsidy to periodicals has been allotted after recommendations made by another commission.

Whatever the merits of the arguments for and against increased subsidies, it is an undeniable fact that press subsidies now total hundreds of millions annually and have reached a point of no return. It is inconceivable that the subsidy system could be abolished without immediately jeopardizing vast numbers of newspapers. Whether the Swedish press likes it or not, it will have to live with—and live by—a system of permanent dependence on the State and the taxpayers.

Pessimists consider this a very ominous state of affairs that might make newspapers extremely vulnerable to State pressures in a future crisis. Thus far, however, there has been no indication of arbitrariness or abuse of the power inherent in subsidies.

In any case, the press has no option but to hope that the force of Swedish traditions and democratic institutions will withstand any risk that might be conjectured from its economic dependence.

Variety Hallmark of Dailies

Certainly most newspapermen would object to an altogether gloomy and despondent picture of the daily press. Swedish newspapers are, on the whole, published from modern and highly efficient plants utilizing advanced technology—

that a person who contributes to a newspaper as a reporter or informant is not only protected against legal action, being unassailable, his identity becomes immaterial and thus inadmissible as a point of law.

It should be noted that this protection is extended even to State and municipal employees, who are thus free to give information to newspapers and other media without fear of legal repercussions or extra-legal pressures and intimidation.

The rationale for such extreme protection of media sources is that the mass media—the "Third Estate" watching over the conduct of the other two: Parliament and the Government—needs to have the fullest possible insight into the operations of society.

That the impunity of informants might induce some of them to "leak" irresponsible, harmful or even untruthful statements to the media is not considered too damaging. The law may protect the informant but does not exonerate the crime. After all, the publisher has excellent reasons of his own for not risking publication of matters actionable by law.

Anonymity and its Limits

There are, of course, some exceptions to the general rule of impunity and anonymity of sources. If State employees, including military personnel, inform media of matters that could be detrimental to the security of the State, this could warrant legal action against informants (though the media would certainly hesitate to disclose them). The same applies when an official violates professional secrecy but only in the event that his observance of secrecy is prescribed by law.

Similarly, the protection of anonymity may be overruled in a criminal case which does not involve the freedom of the press, and where the court finds that the disclosure of a source is called for by an overriding public or private interest. This situation very seldom arises, however.

Recent amendments have re-inforced the protection of sources and the anonymity of informants. At the same time, however, the amended law explicitly withholds such protection in cases where the gathering or divulging of information constitutes or involves high treason, espionage or other related, severe crimes.

Access to Public Documents

Another remarkable feature of the Swedish Freedom of the Press Act is the principle of free access to public documents. This, too, is an expression of the lawmakers' intent to support the media in the role of public watch-dog.

The principle that every Swedish citizen should have access to virtually all documents kept by State or municipal agencies was introduced as early as 1766 in the first Freedom of the Press Act. It was unique then and has been adopted by very few other countries even today.

The principle gives anyone—actually even aliens—the right to turn to a State or municipal agency and ask to be shown any document kept in their files, regardless of whether the document concerns him personally or not. Officials are legally required to comply and even to supply copies of the document requested if this is feasible.

This right is of great importance to anyone concerned by any proceedings, lawsuits, and the like involving public agencies. But it is equally essential to journalists seeking information about what is going on behind the walls of officialdom. Their search for the facts is clearly enhanced by the right of Swedish officials to give oral information concerning their activities.

The right of access is jealously guarded, not only by the media themselves, but also by the Parliamentary Ombudsman (JO). Traditionally, the JO has considered it one of his major duties to supervise the implementation and enforcement of this right of access to public documents.

Restrictions on Restrictions

Of course, there are exceptions to the rule of access to public documents. However, these restrictions themselves are more restrictive and more clearly defined than in most countries. All exceptions from the general rule of accessibility are registered in great detail in the Secrecy Act (which is not part of the body of Constitutional Law and may thus be amended more easily). Any type of document not explicitly listed in this Act is by definition available to the public.

Topping the list of documents that may be withheld from public scrutiny are matters relating to national security and foreign relations. Other categories that may be exempt from the rule of accessibility are documents relating to criminal matters, private financial matters, and information concerning the personal integrity and safety of individuals. The rules permitting secrecy and stating the maximum duration of restrictions are not unconditional. On the strength of circumstances in individual cases, secrecy may be relaxed or waived altogether. Furthermore, decisions under this Act are not final. Cases may be reopened and restrictions lifted at any time before the expiration of the term of secrecy.

Requests for public documents may only be rejected with specific reference to a particular rule or rules of the Secrecy Act. The applicant is entitled to a written statement quoting the legal authority (in terms of the Act) for withholding the document, and informing him of his right to appeal against the decision. The highest instance of appeal is usually the Supreme Administrative Court. The only cases in which there can be no appeal against refusals to honour requests for public documents are those in which secrecy decisions are made by Cabinet Ministers.

Violations

Offences punishable under the Freedom of the Press Act are enumerated in the Act. Not surprisingly, they include crimes against the State (high treason, instigation to war, incitement to riot, conspiracy and sedition, etc.) as well as threats to or contempt of minority groups on grounds of race, colour, creed, ethnic origin, etc., and libel. For punitive measures, the Act refers to other laws, such as the Penal Code (e.g., for libel) or the Secrecy Act (e.g., for publication of documents whose contents should not have been divulged).

Legal actions against newspapers mostly concern libel. Pornography is no longer punishable by Swedish law. On the whole, both criminal cases and civil lawsuits involving press law are very rare.

Prosecution and Litigation

The legislators have tried to protect the media from legal harassment by creating special rules and institutions for cases under the Freedom of the Press Act. Public prosecution under this act requires a decision by the Chancellor of Justice and thus cannot be initiated by ordinary local prosecutors. As of January 1, 1978, the Chancellor is obliged to obtain the consent of the Cabinet before acting in cases with political implications.

Furthermore, the regular courts of law are modified in a special way when trying press cases. On the theory that laymen tend to be more favourably inclined towards frank and aggressive media than the judicature, press cases are tried by jury (unless both parties agree to refrain from jury trial). The jury—an institution otherwise alien to the Swedish judicial system—is comprised of nine lay members selected from a list after the parties have had the opportunity to exclude jurors they might consider biased or otherwise unsuitable. The task of the jury is to uphold or dismiss specific accusations submitted to it by the court concerning the guilt of the responsible publisher. For a conviction, at least six jurors must be in agreement. The judges of the court may acquit a person despite a jury verdict of guilty but may not overrule a finding of not guilty.

This benevolent "bias" in favour of the media is further emphasized by a special "court instruction" in the Freedom of the Press Act, prescribing that accusations be tried with a view to the spirit and intent, rather than the more or less careful wording, of the utterance in dispute. The instruction also lends added weight to the time-honoured judicial rule that the accused shall have the benefit of any reasonable doubt as to the culpability of the contested utterance.

It should be noted that this outline of press legislation has been mainly concerned with its reference to periodical mass media. However, apart from special rules relating to the responsible publisher of periodicals, the same basic principles and safeguards also apply to non-periodical publications. The most important difference is that legal liability for non-periodical matter normally lies with the individual author. Otherwise, the chain of responsibility is largely the same.

Through a recent amendment to the Act, its protection has been extended to cover publications not produced by conventional printing presses, such as mimeographs, photo-copies and the like.

Radio and Television

The electronic media were too late arrivals to be included in the Freedom of the Press Act. Instead, they are covered by a special Radio Act and a Broadcasting Liability Act that went into effect in 1978. The new legislation, while not yet embodied in Constitutional Law, is modelled after the Press Act. Thus, censorship of any programme by public authorities is prohibited. For each programme, one person designated beforehand carries sole legal responsibility. The rules for the press regarding libel and other offences, prosecution and court procedures also apply to radio and television.

However, the special situation of electronic media in Sweden also calls for some special regulations. Exclusive broadcasting rights are granted to four

largely computerized—and operating a fast, dependable distribution system. The best of them seem to stand comparison with most foreign newspapers in terms of editorial content and make-up.

The three largest cities (Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö) produce papers appearing seven days a week. Six-day publication is more prevalent in other parts of the country. Most provincial papers appear in the morning, while the three big cities also put out large and successful afternoon tabloids. The "typical" or average Swedish daily newspaper shows a circulation of 32,000 copies and appears in the morning. This symbolizes a widely varied information output.

The largest dailies are listed below (1977 weekday circulation figures).

<i>Expressen</i> (liberal)	544,438
<i>Aftonbladet</i> (Social Democratic)	448,038
<i>Dagens Nyheter</i> (independent)	419,427
<i>Göteborgs-Posten</i> (liberal)	304,303
<i>Svenska Dagbladet</i> (Conservative)	175,106

The Stockholm afternoon papers *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen* have a near-nationwide readership and operate printing branches in Jönköping, Göteborg and Malmö. Metropolitan morning papers command large circulations in the surrounding regions. Important regional papers are also put out in Boden, Gävle, Jönköping, Karlstad, Linköping, Norrköping, Sundsvall, Uppsala, Västerås, Örebro and some other towns.

Thousands of Periodicals

Between two and three thousand publications qualify officially as "periodical publications." Of these, only 138 are of "newspaper" nature, i.e. are published daily or at least once a week. The balance is accounted for by periodicals with longer fixed intervals between issues.

Most significant among these in terms of circulation are popular weeklies and other light magazines. As of 1976 there were 45 of them with a combined circulation of 6.9 million copies and more than 90% of the Swedish population included in their combined readership.

The average Swede regularly reads more than three periodicals, which places Sweden foremost even in international periodical statistics.

The largest popular weeklies are (1977): *Aret Runt* with a net circulation of 387,150 copies and *Hemmets Veckotidning* with 341,369 copies. Two specialized weekly consumer magazines should be mentioned: *ICA-Kuriren* (668,850 copies), sponsored by the retail grocery trade and devoted to home and family matters, and *Vi* (301,036) with serious reporting on social and economic issues, published by the Co-operative Union and Wholesale Society.

Magazines for debate on economic, political and literary questions are comparatively scarce in Sweden, probably due to the exceptionally ambitious sections for this type of material in the daily press.

Another important group of periodicals consists of some 500 trade and professional journals of varying size. The largest of these are published by trade unions and organized agricultural interests.

Radio and Television

All radio and television programmes in

Sweden are broadcast by four programme companies, which are independent subsidiaries of the same parent company. All broadcasting in Sweden is operated under a State concession which amounts to a virtual monopoly for these specially designated companies. The share capital in the parent company is apportioned between private industry holdings (20%), the press (20%) and the national popular movements (60%). The Board of Governors of the parent company consists of 15 members, of which the chairman and six other members are appointed by the Government. Five governors represent the share holders and two the employees. The fifteenth member of the Board is the Director-General of the parent company. The four subsidiaries each have a 14-member Board of Governors, all but two being appointed by the Board of the parent company—these two representing the staff.

Programme production is financed from licence revenues. Physical distribution facilities are owned and managed by the National Telecommunications Administration, which makes it possible to hand over an intact distribution network to a new licensee if the present arrangement were to be discontinued.

The current fee for a TV licence is Skr 340 per year with an additional charge of Skr 140 for colour TV. There is no charge for only radio.

General broadcasting policy is laid down by the Radio Act and an Enabling Agreement between the broadcasting companies and the Government. Programmes must be impartial, objective and calculated to satisfy a broad range of tastes. The Government exercises no control over programmes prior to broadcast. However, a Radio Council is empowered to raise objections to specific programmes—or consider complaints from the general public—after they have been transmitted, if they are found to have violated the Radio Act or the Enabling Agreement.

Radio—an Early Start

From the inception of regular radio broadcasts in 1923 until 1955 Sweden had only one home service. There are now three radio channels, each having its own general character, and they are not in direct competition with each other.

P1 offers a broad range of light and serious programmes with particular emphasis on detailed newscasts and in-depth social reportage. P2 specializes in educational programmes during the daytime and serious music at night. P3 features light music and entertainment round the clock, interspersed with frequent headline news summaries. The programmes from the 24 local radio stations are carried by P3. The three radio channels are at present shared by the three subsidiaries: nationwide radio, local radio and educational radio. The Government has, however, decided to create a fourth channel for the broadcasting of local and educational radio.

Radio Sweden, the nationwide radio's international service, provides listeners abroad with programmes in six foreign languages (English, German, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian) and in Swedish.

The TV Landslide

By international comparison, Swedish television has expanded with remarkable

speed. From a feeble beginning in late 1956 (23,000 licences in 1957, the first full year), TV ownership increased to 369 per 1,000 inhabitants (3,050,931 licences, of which 2,004,486 were valid for colour TV) by Dec. 31, 1977. It should be noted that each licence fee is valid for an unlimited number of individual TV sets.

Virtually the whole country is capable of receiving the two Swedish TV channels, and border regions are covered by the networks of neighbouring countries as well. During 1977, the Nordic Council began considering plans for a co-operative regional TV relay satellite, which would consolidate the Nordic countries into a single TV audience of more than 22 million people served by seven different channels.

The two TV channels are separately organized in two programming networks, but they share technical and administrative facilities within one independent subsidiary company.

The channels enjoy broad autonomy in programming. However, to avoid less desirable effects of competition, a measure of programme co-ordination takes place to prevent productions of an overly similar nature from being broadcast simultaneously by both channels.

Broadcast advertising is not permitted. An official commission has been investigating the feasibility of introducing commercials on a very limited basis: spot commercials in separate transmissions, with no possibility for advertisers to influence regular programme content through sponsorship or otherwise. However, the idea of financing the electronic media, even in part, through ad revenues has virtually no popular or political support outside the business community.

Late Comer: The Local Network

The latest addition to the media build-up is Lokalfradio AB, an independent subsidiary operating a nationwide network of local radio stations with a total of 24 stations covering all of Sweden.

Protagonists of the provincial press have been critical of the new network on the basis that it may threaten the position of ailing local newspapers. The new stations are, however, short of both staff and funds. Moreover, the network is still so thinly spread that it will probably have to settle for something less than the kind of intensive, in-depth reporting that might seriously infringe upon the local press.

For further information please contact:

The Swedish Embassy or Consulate
in your country (in the U.S.:
The Swedish Information Service,
825 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022)
The Swedish Institute,
Hamngatan 27, P.O. Box 7434,
S-103 91 Stockholm, Sweden

This fact sheet is produced as part of the Swedish information service abroad, and is intended to be used for reference purposes. It may be freely used in preparing articles, speeches, broadcasts, etc. No acknowledgment is necessary. Please note the date of preparation.

[end]

Original documents
faded and/or illegible