

**SOME ASPECTS OF THE RECENT  
FOREIGN POLICY OF SWEDEN**

BY

**ERIC CYRIL BELLQUIST**

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**“A small State can culturally be a great power, from which ideas go out over the world and whose judgment is respected among the large States.”—HERE WOHLIN, in the Lower Chamber of the Swedish Riksdag, March 3, 1920.**

## PREFACE

For many years Sweden was the leader of the northernmost nations of Europe. Someone has said that the history of that country is in a large measure the history of her kings. Certainly the recorded chronicles of the activities of some of the members of that category include the exploits of some of the most illustrious figures in European and world-history. Under the House of Vasa, Sweden was freed from Denmark and strove for a *Dominium Maris Baltici*. In so doing she strayed too far from her native peninsula and for a hundred years the political history of Scandinavia was the story of the frustration of a great Baltic empire.

Not only during the seventeenth century but more recently has Sweden assumed the initiative and a place of leadership among the countries of northern Europe. In the morass of events and descriptions thereof which have followed the conclusion of the world war perhaps too little emphasis has been placed upon the part played by some of the smaller powers in the shaping of international relations. Particularly true is this with respect to those states which remained neutral during the war, and among these, most of all the Scandinavian countries.

To be sure, Stockholm is somewhat removed from the maelström of European politics and the people of Scandinavia are inclined to accord more attention to internal developments than to external complications. This has not, however, prevented them from actively participating in the efforts to promote international cooperation and to achieve international peace and security, which have to no little extent characterized the post-bellum period.

Of the countries of northern Europe Sweden has been in the best position to make her efforts carry much weight in the scale where at times the fates of nations are decided. Her area and population have assisted in this and it was but a little more than two decades ago that Norway became a separate state. The union before 1905 was of course purely personal in nature but in it Sweden was predominant. Denmark has also been somewhat subordinated, especially since the loss of Schlesvig in 1864. The superiority of Swedish armaments and her close contact with the continent have served to augment her status as Queen of the North. Hence it is not surprising to find



that during the world war Sweden was the leader in maintaining a program of neutrality and after the conflict was perhaps the most active in supporting the new order of things and endeavoring to bring that order into realization.

It has been my purpose in this discussion to portray the part played by Sweden in international relations during the decade following the war by looking at some of the trends of her foreign policy during that period. In sketching this, the major emphasis has been placed upon the relationship of that country to the League of Nations and the work of her statesmen toward a more stable organization of peace.

In writing this essay I am indebted chiefly to the publications of His Majesty's Office of Foreign Affairs at Stockholm, the communications of His Excellency the recent Minister of Foreign Affairs, J. Eliel Löfgren, the Protocol of the First and Second Chambers of the Riksdag, which were made available for my use at the Hoover War Library at Stanford University, the collection of treaties and documents kindly put at my disposal by His Majesty's Consul-General at San Francisco, Herr C. E. Wallerstedt, the official publications of the League of Nations, and the data supplied by the League of Nations organization in Sweden through its secretary, Alida Jakobson.

Usage has made a completely consistent spelling of names and terms difficult. Accepted American spellings are at times retained, but where the Swedish is easily intelligible I have tried to adhere to it. For instance "Aland" seems to me to be simpler and more descriptive of the islands between Finland and Sweden than the Americanized "Aaland."

Finally I wish to express my appreciation to my father and mother under whose early care I obtained a knowledge of the Swedish language, to Dr. David P. Barrows who first suggested the possibilities in this field to me, to Dr. Frank M. Russell under whose supervision this essay was written as a thesis for the M.A. degree, to Dr. Frank E. Hinckley, whose criticisms and suggestions were of great assistance, and to Mr. Verne B. Brown and Mr. Farnham Bishop, who have aided by reading the manuscript.