

Public Record Office, London
Reference: FO 371/37077
Date: 28 December 1942

[Obs: nedanstående är en avskrift, ej original. Meyer inleder med en redogörelse för andrakammarvalet hösten 1940 och konstaterar att det råder en markant enighet bland riksdagspartierna i de flesta frågor och att "det är svårt att tänka sig en reell regeringskris under kriget som skulle resultera i ett regeringsskifte". Meyer fortsätter:

[...]

Nevertheless there is a prospect of a government crisis in the event of changes in the development of the war and consequently in the international situation as a whole. I will now suggest four possible alternatives: 1. As a pure hypothesis a crisis might arise as a result of a great victory for Britain, Russia and the States. In spite of the strong anti-German feeling in the country such a possibility is scarcely being discussed at the moment. In the first place it would mean the departure from the Government of the pro-German members, first and foremost the Minister of Justice, Westman (Agrarian), and the Foreign Minister, Günther (no party). The man primarily envisaged by the anti-German circles as Foreign Minister is the previous Foreign Minister Östen Undén. 2. A crisis caused by a decisive German victory in the East and the resultant change in the war outlook and international situation as a whole, including the Nordic countries. This alternative is being considered and will be discussed in greater detail below. 3. A situation which brings Sweden into the war and creates the need for an effective war government with a strong sprinkling of military men. The reconstruction of the Government will then mainly depend on the nature of the war situation at the time. 4. A final German victory which changes the entire international situation and demands a complete readjustment of Sweden's policy, i.e. a government in defiance of the wishes of Parliament.

It is the second alternative, a German victory in the East and a change of situation for the Nordic countries, which will be chiefly dealt with - a situation in which the government in power would itself consider a reconstruction necessary in view of the need for a more openly pro-German government. This would have the King's support since he represents pro-German feeling and would in such a case undoubtedly exert a not inconsiderable influence on the composition of a new government. A reconstruction might be possible in which some of the most prominent Social-Democratic Ministers in particular would go, in the first place Ernst Wigforss, who has been Minister of Finance almost continuously since 1932, and Gustav Möller, the Party's old secretary, who was Home Secretary, Minister for Social Affairs and Minister for Trade in Sandler's and Hansson's Governments. A complete reconstruction of the

Government is more probable but there are many difficult circumstances to take into consideration in the connexion.

A new government might also be based on the support of all the government parties, but it could not be formed simply by means of an exchange of persons within the parliamentary party groups. This would merely mean that the party leaders become leaders of the groups while other leading members of the parliamentary parties got into the Government. New members must to a great extent be sought outside the party groups but at the same time the Government must enjoy the confidence and support of all parties. It must also be so constituted that in a time of crisis it has the confidence of both the King and of the people. It must moreover enjoy the confidence of Per Albin Hansson, since he is the leader of the only parliamentary group possessing a majority and he would regard a change of government as a temporary retirement while awaiting an improvement in the international situation such as would enable him to dismiss the Government and to construct a new parliamentary government under his own leadership.

According to the information I have received, the intention seems to be in this event to form a government of representative men from the great economic organisations and from the Army as well as some prominent party men. This government would therefore not be drawn from the parliamentary groups but would enjoy the confidence of all the government parties and would therefore have the same parliamentary support as the present government. Gustav Söderlund is mentioned as the leader of such a government. He was formerly chairman of the Employers' Federation and is now head of Sweden's Industrial Commission but still drawing some money from the Employers' Federation. The suggested members of such a government include the chairman of the TUC, August Lindberg. His closest friends and collaborators are violently pro-British, but he himself has kept in the background as is not regarded as an ardent representative of this view. In addition there would be a representative of the Cooperative Association, which in Sweden and Finland is very important and enjoys a very strong position and which it is of the greatest importance to take into account especially as it has in Sweden entered into collaboration with private capitalistic undertakings - Axel Gjöres and Albin Johansson are considered in this connexion. In addition there would be representatives of commerce and of the Agrarian party. As regards the Army, General Thörnell and General Rappe, who is regarded as more "realistically minded" and is said to be a person of some importance, have been mentioned. The former Social-Democratic Minister without portfolio, the Governor of Stockholm, Nothin, is also mentioned. Of the present government, two prominent members are likely to continue in office, the Minister of Justice, Westman, and the Foreign Minister, Günther. The former is regarded as the personification of "censorship" in Sweden, and the latter as the representative of a foreign policy in favour of concessions to Germany.

At this stage there appears to be no likelihood of the oppositional forces, which in Sweden represent a radical "new order", exercising any influence in the formation of such a government. There is neither enough strength nor enough cooperation. It is possible, however, that the situation may become such that questions will be raised concerning the representation of these forces in the government in order in this way to exclude the possibility of a dangerous opposition.

Of the above-mentioned government alternatives only the first one gives the Communists any chance. The other alternatives mean a step nearer to the ban on the Communist party. The groups around Trots Allt! (Ture Nerman) and Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning (Torgny Segerstedt) and the refugees who are chiefly supported by these groups are in the same boat.

[...]