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THE MORAL CORRUPTION OF WELFARE STATISM

Eric Brodin, a Swedish economist who left his native country to become a professor at a U.S. university, is the answer to the Childs-spun mythology about Sweden which has deceived Americans ever since journalist Marquis Childs traveled there in 1936. Childs' book, "Sweden: The Middle Way," convinced many people that the Swedish Social Welfare State was the wave of the future and the best answer to social and economic problems.

Brodin's lectures at various colleges and articles in national magazines since his coming to the United States last year give an accurate and first-hand picture of life in Sweden after 4-1/2 decades of social welfarism. He shows not only its economic failure, but how it has corrupted the moral and social fabric of the nation.

A triumvirate of school, media and government has worked together to assault the family unit. Children are considered to be "loaned" to the parents for the first three years, and then are returned, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., to the collective state.

Private education has been virtually eliminated. There are almost no religious schools. Only 1/2 of one percent of Swedish children attend private schools. When Olof Palme was minister of education, he said, "The state does not wish to see that alternative."

Palme clearly understood how the schools could be used as agents of change. He said in 1967, "The school is without doubt one of the best instruments in regard to the structural transformation of society. The school's function is to change social reality." Indeed it has. Parents have no right to inspect textbooks or curriculum. Children are seldom given homework, so the parents do not see what kind of books are used.

The state monopoly of television (two channels) and of radio (three stations) is a powerful force to mold the collectivist society at the expense of family unity and individual rights. By law, 40 percent of programs must be "informative" rather than entertainment or cultural. Informative is a cover word for welfare-state propaganda.

The government wages an unremitting campaign, by a discriminatory tax policy and persistent television and radio propaganda, to move all mothers from the home into the

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labor force and all children into collective child-care centers. School curricula encourage the reversal of traditional sex roles in the home and in the workplace.

Employers are given bonuses for employing women in traditionally-male occupations. Certain social-welfare provisions, such as post-maternity leaves, are granted only to those couples where the male will stay home and take care of the baby. Such policies break down the traditional interrelationships of father, mother, child and home.

A 1979 law makes it illegal for any parent to chastise his child, even within the confines of the home. Any such acts, even a harsh word, are prosecutable on the uncorroborated word of an envious neighbor.

Loneliness has become a national disease, and Sweden has one of the world's highest suicide rates. On Saturdays, newspapers carry entire pages of "contact" advertisements. More than half of them include the words "lonely," "lonesome," or "alone."

The Swedish alcoholism rate is one of the highest in the world. Nine out of ten 15-year-olds consume hard liquor. Many school children bring vodka in their thermos bottles. Many confirmed alcoholics are in their early 20s, and many 25-year-olds are given pensions as permanently unemployable because of alcoholism.

There is very little home ownership, and the media carry on a constant propaganda campaign against all who own private housing. It's no wonder that there is little respect for private property and vandalism is a major national problem.

Oppressive and repressive taxation has turned a once-honest people into a nation of cheats. Cheating on income taxes, cheating on medical benefits, and cheating on social benefits, ranging from free sick leave to free taxi rides for the handicapped, has become a way of life.

Brodin confirms the central thesis of "The New Totalitarians," a controversial book written in 1971 by the Stockholm correspondent for the London Observer: "The Swedes are a warning of what probably lies in store for the rest of us, unless we take care to resist control and centralization, and unless we remember that politics is not to be delegated, but is the concern of every individual." Brodin thinks it is too late to save Sweden. Fortunately, it's not too late for the United States to turn toward freedom and away from the anti-family totalitarianism of the social welfare state.

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