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ANTI-FASCISM IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Transnational Networks, Exile
Communities, and Radical
Internationalism

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Chapter 5

'Make Scandinavia a bulwark against fascism!': Hitler's seizure
of power and the transnational anti-fascist movement in the
Nordic countries

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'MAKE SCANDINAVIA A BULWARK AGAINST FASCISM!'

Hitler's seizure of power and the transnational anti-fascist movement in the Nordic countries

Kasper Braskén

On a global scale, Hitler's seizure of power on 30 January 1933 provided urgent impetus for transnational anti-fascist conferences and rallies. One of the first European, but almost completely overlooked major conferences was organised in Copenhagen in mid-April 1933 in the form of a Scandinavian Anti-Fascist Conference. This formed a transnational meeting point of European and especially Scandinavian workers and intellectuals that provided an important first response to developments in Germany. The chapter will use the Scandinavian conference as a prism to look back at anti-fascist activism in the Nordic countries during the preceding years, and to then follow its transformation after 1933. It will contribute to the global analysis of the transition period of communist-led anti-fascism from the sectarian class-against-class line to the inception of the popular front period in 1935.

What were these largely overlooked, first anti-fascist articulations in Europe, and how were they connected to the rising transnational and global anti-fascist mobilisation coordinated in Paris and London? As we shall see, on the one hand Hitler's seizure of power vitalised anti-fascism in Scandinavia but paradoxically, on the other, it further sharpened the communist critique of reformist social democracy and empowered social democratic anti-communism.

The Nazi seizure of power was not without its effects in the Nordic countries. It revealed several core dilemmas that most nations in the world were facing: to continue with, and develop foreign relations and trade irrespective of the new government, or be openly critical of internal German developments, perhaps even boycott Hitler's new regime. What space was there for anti-fascist activity in 1933 and what kind of restrictions and limitations did Nordic governments under pressure from the German foreign office impose on fighting fascism?

Between neutrality, appeasement and collaboration

Scandinavia might seem like an ideal location for anti-fascist exile. Fascist parties and movements in Denmark, Sweden and Norway remained extremely weak during the interwar period. No far-right party received more than two per cent of the electoral vote. Thanks to governmental crisis agreements that resulted in the formation of alliances between the social democrats and the peasants' parties in Denmark (1933), Sweden (1933), Norway (1935), Finland (1937) and Iceland (1937), Scandinavia remained 'free from fascism'. Finland was, for a moment, the exception as it headed towards serious political turmoil spearheaded by the far-right Lapua movement during the early 1930s. Although banned after a poorly staged coup attempt in February 1932, its leaders and many followers re-grouped in the fascist Patriotic People's Movement (*Isänmaallinen Kansanliike*, IKL).¹ Despite failures to form major political parties or membership organisations, fascism's indirect influences were significant. In Denmark, Norway and Sweden for example, the large conservative youth movements readily admired Hitler and were ready to implement Nazi ideology in their political programmes and propaganda.²

For sure, the social democratic turn from revolutionary socialism to wholesale reformism and broad peoples' parties played a significant role in isolating domestic fascisms. The wide social base of the so-called People's Home (*folkhemmet*), brought parliamentary stability through majority worker-peasant alliances, carried by strong populist rhetoric. This was especially so in Sweden and Norway. In this process, social democrats willingly detached themselves from Marxism in order to establish a stable centre-left alliance that was distinct from the left-alliances formed under the Popular Fronts in France and Spain.³ The social democratic tactic in the Nordic countries was thus to pacify rather than to directly challenge the far right. As the major social democratic parties co-opted far-right tropes on the 'people' and 'nation' they argued that the far right would dissipate and wither away. Right-wing social democrats in Sweden such as Rickard Lindström⁴ even described their political goal using the uncanny descriptor 'national socialism', irrefutably undercutting the far right's nationalist appeals and underlining how patriotic the social democrats were. But the crucial difference was that the social democrats positioned themselves as champions of a democratic society, fighting both fascist and communist dictatorships, and did not view liberalism or parliamentary democracy as anathema.⁵ Nonetheless, as this chapter shows, the process of partly co-opting fascist themes resulted in a strong response from the far left that claimed that these parties were willingly or inadvertently pushing Scandinavia towards fascism, what we today might call 'mainstreaming' fascist ideas.

When analysing Nordic responses to Nazi Germany, it is important to keep the relatively strong position of Nordic social democracy in mind. Nordic communist parties were electorally small and always a part of the parliamentary opposition. Anti-communism was common long before the emergence of anti-fascism and, for example in Finland, the bitter and bloody civil war between the reds and the whites in 1918, and the long common border with the Soviet Union, made anti-communism

a pivotal part of majority political culture, largely accepted by the social democrats as well as the far right. Finland was an ‘anti-communist democracy’.⁶ Even Finnish left-socialists who were pushing for a stronger social democratic anti-fascist position after 1933 were exposed to allegations by the social democratic party leadership of being ‘communists’, or sympathetic with the Russian Bolsheviks. This resulted in many being purged from the mother party.⁷

When the Nazis came to power, it quickly became apparent that the responsibilities connected to holding governmental office were difficult to reconcile with types of more militant anti-fascism as envisioned by the Social Democratic party’s rank and file. This became acutely clear in the case of Denmark where the Social Democratic Youth (DSU) developed a militant, anti-fascist strand of social democracy. They were inspired by German and Austrian social democrats and formed militant defence units in the DSU. In the end, the Danish Social Democratic party put the lid on their most militant and confrontational anti-fascist activists. As a rule all DSU members who participated in united front demonstrations with the communists were threatened with exclusion.⁸ During the Scandinavian anti-fascist conference in April 1933 the Danish communists acknowledged the important role of the DSU. According to the Chair of the DSU, Ivan Solgaard, it was apparent that there was a ‘great will to fight’ among the DSU members, although tragically the Social Democratic leadership was pressing the DSU not to engage in anti-fascism.⁹

When it came to it, the needs of governments overruled the needs of the social democratic movement; i.e. good foreign relations with Germany trumped efforts to form a strong anti-fascist position.¹⁰ As a small neighbouring country, the Danes quickly succumbed to a path of appeasement in the name of neutrality. Germany was Denmark’s second most important trade partner and the new German government was showing signs of being extremely sensitive to Danish criticism. Tellingly, on 1 March 1933, only one day after the cataclysmic German Reichstag fire, Thorvald Stauning, the leader of Danish social democracy and Prime Minister dictated a letter to H. P. Sørensen, the editor of the official organ of the Danish social democrats *Social-Demokraten*. Stauning insisted that *Social-Demokraten* should desist from attacking Hitler but blame the communists instead, because they had, according to Stauning, split the labour movement, empowered Hitler, and were essentially to blame for what was occurring now. The main attack was to be directed against communists not the new Nazi regime.¹¹ *Social-Demokraten* had initially strongly condemned Nazi Germany. Stauning now used his power as head of state and party leader to regulate its reporting. As a consequence, when reporting on events in Germany, it now did so with caution.¹² The German foreign office was also closely monitoring international press reaction. The head of the German legation in Denmark, Baron von Richthofen, approached the Danish foreign minister Peter Munch to protest against reports published in Denmark. On 2 March 1933, Munch urged the Danish press to remain neutral and to show moderation when choosing their headlines and caricatures. Moreover, they were instructed to desist from publishing interviews with people in Germany or anti-Nazi refugees.

Developments in Sweden followed a similar pattern. The Swedish social democratic foreign minister Rickard Sandler valued good trade relations with Germany above all else. This was a form of ‘neutrality politics’ that advocated negotiation with Germany. As the Swedish historian Klas Åmark notes, Sandler did not perceive the situation after 1933 as a fight between ‘dictatorship or democracy’ but as a more traditional conflict between the great powers, where also the small neutral states had to find their place. At the same time Sandler criticised those in the social democratic party who were possessed by a ‘crusade mentality’, meaning those pursuing a critical anti-fascist policy. As in Denmark, Sandler invited the chief editors of a number of Swedish newspapers to discuss what could be published about the German Nazis and Hitler. The new regime was irritated about ‘pointed formulations’ and satirical drawings, especially those published in the Swedish newspaper *Social-Demokraten*.¹³ Even in Finland, Germans complained about the hostile tendency of parts of its press. The Swedish speaking left-wing press in Finland had been the most critical but the Finnish liberals (*Edistyspuolue*) and the social democratic press were also hostile to the new German government.¹⁴

How should we understand the restrictions made by democratic governments on the free press? The role of the press during the 1920s and 1930s – the golden age of newspapers and print media – cannot be underrated. The media formed the most significant platform for the formation of public opinion, and the censorship was clearly intended to appease Nazi Germany; it was the first, partly self-inflicted wound caused by neutrality.¹⁵ Here, it is equally important to remember that the Nordic reactions were in no way unique. Most significantly, the actions of the Soviet Union reveal that anti-fascism as a Soviet State policy was also undesired. As Bernhard H. Bayerlein shows, the official Soviet position viewed the developments in Germany not solely in a negative light: the destruction of the German Social Democratic movement (i.e. the ‘social fascists’) was seen as an inherently positive development despite the parallel breakdown of German communism. Moreover, it was believed that Hitler’s coming to power increased the conflict between the capitalist countries in the West, and therefore decreased the danger of an imperialist war against the Soviet Union. Already in 1933, the USSR’s highest leadership perceived Hitler’s domestic policy as an *internal* German development that the Soviet Union had no business to meddle with. Good foreign relations and the protection of mutual economic interests was more important, as the ratification of the Soviet–German trade agreement on 5 May 1933 perfectly illustrates.¹⁶ If the Soviet Union itself was pursuing a line of ‘neutrality’ or ‘non-intervention’, what did it mean for transnational communist-led anti-fascism in the immediate post-1933 period?

Nordic communists and anti-fascism

Before further investigating the initiatives of 1933, we need to locate the longer trajectories of Nordic anti-fascism. The Comintern’s sixth world congress in 1928 in Moscow had recommended that similar workers’ defence organisations as the

German Red Front Fighters' League were to be established by all communist parties. The Swedish Red Front League (*Röda Front Förbundet*, RFF) was officially founded at a first, largely unknown 'Scandinavian antifascist conference' that was held in Stockholm in 1930. According to a Swedish governmental inquiry into the communist movement, the RFF's anti-fascism had arisen as a reaction to the radicalisation of the Finnish far-right Lapua movement. The goal of the RFF was to unite all 'real enemies of fascism, men and women' into a nation-wide anti-fascist fighting organisation. The official purpose of the RFF was to function as a workers' guard against fascism. Although it is very difficult to assess the success of the anti-fascist disturbances at Nazi meetings in Sweden, they should be historically acknowledged. The far right was not left unchallenged, as also highlighted in Helen Lööw's pivotal work on the history of the Nazis in Sweden.¹⁷ The RFF had a separate youth section called the Anti-Fascist Youth Guards (*Anti-fascistiska unga gardena*, Antifa), which also closely collaborated with the Communist Youth Association (*Kommunistiska Ungdoms Förbundet*, KUF). According to the Stockholm police, the KUF had around 12,000 registered members in 1933. The youth Antifa was characterised in the government surveillance report as a reservoir for all working-class youths who were not prepared to directly join the KUF, but who wanted to be active in anti-fascist activities. Significantly, those involved in Antifa work were urged to fight against *both* their own social democratic leadership and the fascist menace.¹⁸

When the KUF organised a congress in 1931 in Stockholm its Central Committee member Nils Bengtsson urged all members of the KUF to visit the meetings organised by the Swedish National Socialists and to obstruct them from winning over any supporters. The methods to do this were, for example, singing or speaking at full volume and loud interruptions during speeches. If Birger Furugård – the leader of the Swedish National Socialist Party – was going to hold a public speech, Bengtsson advised KUF activists to take all their comrades along and attend the meeting. In a carefully organised and co-ordinated way they should form a circle around the podium and once Furugård had started speaking they would start singing, and irritate him and the crowd so that the speaker could not be heard. If this was unsuccessful, Bengtsson instructed, they should not hesitate to take the speaker by the collar. Bengtsson also warned the anti-fascists that the Nazis would be most likely armed with truncheons and they should prepare for things to get physical.¹⁹

In August 1932 a meeting near Copenhagen turned into a mass fight between uniformed members of the DSU and uniformed Danish SA members.²⁰ Later in April 1933, a newly founded 'Antifa-Committee' in Vesterbro, Copenhagen, described how, in its call for a powerful fighting front against fascism, comrades were becoming victims of Nazi violence. On 6 April 1933, merely two weeks before the Scandinavian Anti-Fascist Conference a 'young DSU comrade' who had been on his way from a meeting was suddenly seen stumbling into the premises of the Danish Communist Party in Vesterbro. When he entered the room, his entire body was shaking and he was about to collapse, but before passing out he uttered:

'It was the damn Nazis (*Det er de satans Nascister*).' The Antifa-Committee declared the young comrade a victim of the raw and ruthless 'Hitler murderbands' in Denmark. May it serve as an eye-opener to all workers, the committee declared in its bulletin, that in the current situation it is a necessity to form a strong united front against the 'fascist front of the upper classes'. Workers, working class women, social democrats, communists, and unorganised workers were urged to draw the proper conclusions from the attack: it showed what was waiting for them if they did not activate themselves.²¹ Such confrontations were a vital part of the growing Scandinavian conflict between anti-fascism and fascism, and highlights the importance of analysing Nordic anti-fascism not only as a response to an external threat, but that it was inherently connected to domestic developments where especially the communist and socialist youth movements were heading the anti-fascist fight against local far-right enemies.²²

Communist anti-fascism in Sweden drew from examples of social-democratic 'betrayal' starting with the German November Revolution of 1918, and the subsequent abandonment of socialist goals to preserve the capitalist Weimar Republic. The Swedish communists directly addressed claims in the social democratic press that the communists and fascists were comparable, and used the same methods in their struggle to create the 'bloody dictatorship of the few over the majority'. On the contrary the Swedish communist A. J. Smålan argued in 1933 that through debate and argument, they strove to win over the majority of the workers to the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' which, Smålan spelt out, meant real democracy as it represented the dictatorship of the great majority's over the bourgeois minority. Fascists, on the other hand, claimed that the masses had to be taught obedience and that a small group of 'expert' leaders would rule over the masses.²³ When the social democrats claimed that 'communism had been unable to hinder the fascist victory', Smålan retorted that the communists had never claimed to possess such a power. The communists were trying to turn the tables and blamed the social democrats for not using their power against the fascists, and for using it instead against the communists, against those who had been most eager to take up the anti-fascist fight. Perhaps the German communists could have gained the upper hand in 1933 in select cities, but what would have followed when the army, the SA squadrons and other fascist bands had attacked them? These uprisings would have drowned in blood and resulted in an unimaginable terror against the workers.²⁴ As long as the government tolerated developments on the far right and actively fought against the far left, the only remaining option was to form a united front of the workers from below. This was deemed both necessary and possible for it was only 25 years ago since they all had fought together as socialists, and it was the duty of the communists to remind social-democratic workers of these shared values and histories.²⁵

In Sweden, Rickard Lindström declared that bolshevism had played an important role in paving the way for the far right. Communist 'atrocious propaganda' had resulted in its 'natural counterpart in the extreme parts of the bourgeoisie'. For Lindström, the main lesson from Germany in 1933 was that only a working-class movement that was 'totally free' from bolshevism could protect itself against

fascism.²⁶ With such statements in mind, the idea of anti-fascist united or popular front alliances in Sweden could not be entertained. Arvid Wretling of the Swedish communists underlined that they did not want unity at any price, nor a platonic symbolic unity, but a 'fighting united front' of the working masses.²⁷

In Sweden, like in the other Nordic countries, defence of democracy was one of the most crucial questions related to anti-fascism. Was it the duty of the workers to defend this flawed form of democracy? According to the communists, the current system labelled democracy was in fact a 'capitalist suppression technique'. Still it was of outmost importance that the workers defended elements in the system that were vital for them, such as the freedom of association, freedom of speech, a free press, the right to strike, and the freedom to assembly. These were the valuable results of decades of working-class struggle and had to be vigorously defended. Paradoxically, those 'screaming most loudly for the defence of democracy' were the ones limiting and circumscribing these very rights. 'In the name of freedom and democracy workers' freedoms are banned and restricted', Fritjof Lager complained as anti-fascist efforts were being suppressed by the government.²⁸ With the Swedish National Socialist parties becoming ever more marginal after 1933, the social democrats and the democratic bourgeoisie were congratulating themselves for overcoming the fascist threat in Sweden, and started presenting themselves as 'saviours' of Sweden's freedom.²⁹ However, as in Denmark, where the conservative youth movement had been sympathetic to fascist ideas and practices, the same was said to be happening in Sweden in the '*Nationella Ungdomsförbundet*' (National Youth Association). Moreover, the creation and strengthening of the police, the bourgeois parties' urge to put down the trade unions and crush the communist movement, were seen as further proof of a *fascistisation* of Swedish society. The communists therefore remarked that the major threat in Sweden was not 'open' fascism, but fascism in patent leather shoes and suits in the halls of government.³⁰

Scandinavia and the European anti-fascist movement

After Hitler's rise to power, one of the first initiatives of the international communist trade union movement was to organise a 'European Workers' Congress against Fascism'. It was first planned to take place in Prague, but due to pressure from the Third Reich, the Czechoslovakian government banned the congress in early April 1933.³¹ On an extremely short notice, and general confusion, it was first re-located to Copenhagen for 14–17 April 1933, before it was finally held in Paris on 5–6 June 1933. The confusion has even led historians to believe that no anti-fascist conference was held in Copenhagen, and completely overlooked the Scandinavian Anti-Fascist Conference. In spring 1933, Copenhagen had in fact become a new global centre of the Comintern's operations.³²

Formerly top secret files in the Comintern archives reveal that the Comintern apparatus was initially uncomfortable with the realisation that the Scandinavian Anti-fascist Conference had a local Scandinavian origin. In March 1933 there were two competing communist-led initiatives: on the one hand, there was the

Amsterdam Anti-War movement which had been founded in August 1932. It had resulted in the creation of broadly based anti-war committees on a global scale, including the Scandinavian countries. These committees were set up under the global network of the World Committee against the Imperialist War (in autumn 1933 renamed the World Committee Against War and Fascism). Meanwhile, a separate initiative for a *workers'* anti-fascist congress and a European *workers'* anti-fascist movement was being led by the leadership of the Profintern (The Red International of Labor Unions). Typically for the international communist movement, a kind of turf war erupted between these two initiatives as the anti-war committees started to engage in anti-fascism, whereas the anti-fascist initiative strived to keep them separate. This became explicitly clear in the case of the Scandinavian Anti-Fascist Conference. The Anti-War movement under Henri Barbusse and Willi Münzenberg's leadership was based in Paris, whereas the preparations for the European Anti-Fascist Congress were co-ordinated from Copenhagen. The central liaison person in Copenhagen was Richard Gyptner, who from 1929 to February 1933 had functioned as secretary of the Comintern's clandestine Western European Bureau (WEB) in Berlin. From February to August 1933 he functioned as the secretary of the 'Organising bureau of the European Anti-Fascist Congress'.³³

These two communist-led initiatives were colliding as the anti-war committee in Copenhagen had been planning a broad anti-war conference for Easter 1933, but the Profintern's workers' anti-fascist conference was set for the same date in Prague.³⁴ In Gyptner's secret report to Willi Münzenberg, sent on 3 April 1933, he advised Münzenberg and the Paris anti-war committee to *stand down* in its efforts to broaden the anti-fascist movement through the anti-war movement. This was, according to Gyptner, totally contradictory to the line of the Comintern and inhibited the development of the anti-fascist movement. An 'Amsterdam type' of conference in Scandinavia was according to Gyptner out of the question. Events seem to have escaped Gyptner's hands as on 5 March 1933 the Norwegian anti-war committee had suddenly, and allegedly without consulting either Copenhagen or Stockholm, released an appeal for the organisation of a Scandinavian conference against *both* war and fascism. Gyptner explained that the comrades in Norway had misunderstood the Comintern's line and believed mistakenly that the anti-war committee would also take care of all anti-fascist work. However, the Norwegian anti-war committee did not correct its line, but pushed their interpretation that their 'Amsterdam Committee would hold an Antifa-Conference'. The result was major confusion in Scandinavia. Undoubtedly, this phase of disarray was not limited to the Scandinavian countries, but was more or less symptomatic for the global movement as well.³⁵ The Norwegian communists were reprimanded by the Comintern for pursuing a 'right-wing' deviation as it had taken the initiative too far when it on 11 March 1933 had reached out to the Norwegian social democratic party (DNA) to discuss the formation of a united front against fascism and capitalist reaction. Despite this admonition, the Norwegian Communist Party organised an anti-war meeting in Oslo on 12 March directed against fascism, which

amplified the problem from the Comintern's perspective.³⁶ The situation would last until August 1933, when the Comintern finally notified Henri Barbusse that the anti-war and anti-fascist movements could be amalgamated. The Comintern realised that the rank-and-file did not understand why there needed to be two parallel organisations that separated the fight against fascism and war. Indeed, with slogans such as 'fascism means war' the dualism had become acute.³⁷

Before this change of line, Alfred Kurella, who was the head of the Comintern's Agitprop department, had directly instructed the anti-war committee in Copenhagen to convince the anti-war committees in Stockholm and Oslo to change the Copenhagen meeting from an anti-fascist meeting into an anti-war conference. Kurella even travelled to Stockholm to set the line straight, but as he arrived the party newspapers had declared on their first pages that the Scandinavian conference was an anti-fascist conference.³⁸ As Barbusse was one of the most prominent public figures of the Amsterdam anti-war movement, his personal attendance at the anti-fascist conference in Copenhagen thus signalled, some four months before the Comintern's revision of its position, that a merger of the anti-fascist movement and the international anti-war movement was occurring.³⁹

Representatives of the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish CP Political Bureaus were called to Copenhagen on 31 March 1933. Among those present was the Norwegian representative Strand Johansen, the Secretary of the Norwegian Anti-War Committee.⁴⁰ He was singled out as the person responsible for starting the whole debacle over the Scandinavian conference. Strand Johansen had studied at the International Lenin School in Moscow from 1927 to 1930 and been thereafter elected to the NKP's central leadership. Later during the Nazi occupation of Norway he would be arrested by the Gestapo and deported with his Russian wife Helene Sterlina to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. His wife was executed in Auschwitz while Strand Johansen himself survived and later became minister in the Norwegian government in 1945.⁴¹

As a result of the meeting in Copenhagen, an official call for a Scandinavian Anti-Fascist Conference was published. It was signed by the Copenhagen based 'Kampfronten mod Fascismen', the Stockholm-based 'Antifascistiska Enhetskomiten', the central leadership of the Revolutionary Trade Union Opposition (RGO) in Norway, and 'Finland's antifascists'. It was declared that Hitler's rise to power and the brown terror in Germany had empowered the fascist tendencies in the Nordic Countries. When explaining the urgency of the situation, the main focus was not on the open (and indeed minuscule) fascist movements, but on the dangers of *fascistisation*.⁴²

The offensive of the Nordic fascists was to be met with a workers' counter-offensive. In stark contrast to the position of the social democratic mother party (to pacify rather than challenge), the far right was now confronted with a radical opponent ready to fight. Criticism was levelled at the Danish social democratic ministers and party leaders in particular, who were actively forbidding the social democratic workers from taking part in the anti-fascist movement and often disrupted conference preparations. This was not coming from the social democratic

workers, the anti-fascists declared: they could feel 'the warm sympathy' for the anti-fascist cause that was emanating from working-class youths in Copenhagen and Oslo especially. They therefore called out to all social democratic, communist and unaffiliated workers, all working peasants and intellectuals to help 'make Scandinavia a bulwark against fascism'. Moreover, they urged all to organise meetings in trade unions, factories and mines, and all ships. The ongoing terror in Germany held an important position in the Nordic deliberations, as all were called to be active in solidarity campaigns with the German working class that was 'standing in the midst of a heroic fight against fascist barbarism'.⁴³

The Scandinavian Anti-Fascist Conference, 14–17 April 1933

Until recently, sources shedding light on the Scandinavian Anti-Fascist Conference, organised over the Easter weekend, 14–17 April 1933, have been scarce. The following description is based on two new sources. The first is a 15-page surveillance report by the German police. The second is a Danish conference report with detailed transcripts of the event covering over 40 pages, held in the Comintern archives, and previously untapped. On the basis of these two major sources we can, for the first time, get an in-depth view of how fascism and anti-fascism were discussed in Scandinavia in the spring of 1933. How was the fascist threat defined and what were perceived as the most effective ways to mobilise workers, intellectuals, women and youths against fascist influences in Scandinavia?

According to the German police report, 348 men and 46 women participated in the conference. It turned out to be a truly transnational affair with representatives from ten countries, according to the following numbers: Denmark (218), Sweden (120), Norway (29), Germany (11), Britain (4), Finland (2), Iceland (2), France (2), Czechoslovakia (1), Indonesia (1), and 4 representatives from the 'European Committee' whose nationalities are not mentioned. Politically we know that the communists dominated with 228 delegates. They were followed by 139 persons without party affiliation, 16 social democrats, 6 from the Nordic Workers Party (Nord.Arb.Partei), 1 from the British Independent Labour Party (ILP), 1 from the German Socialist Workers' Party (SAP), 1 syndicalist, and 2 anarchists. The majority defined themselves as workers (345 of 394), but the number of intellectuals (41) was also significant.⁴⁴

Aksel Larsen, the leader of the Danish CP and member of the Danish Parliament since 1932, marked in one of his speeches how the Danish press (from right to left) had sabotaged the conference by not printing a word about it. The entire press corps had been there to meet Barbusse at the airport, but no one mentioned that he was giving a speech in Copenhagen as a part of the Scandinavian Anti-fascist Conference. According to Larsen, the Scandinavian press was only printing Göring's official news bulletins, and ignoring the work of the anti-fascist committee. 'If we want to fight fascism,' Larsen elaborated, 'we cannot overlook how the social democratic leaders in Germany let Nazism grow strong.'⁴⁵ In *Antifaschistische Front*, that functioned as the European anti-fascist congress's newspaper, it was alleged

that the Danish social democratic leadership had threatened anyone attending the conference with expulsion from the party. Moreover the Social Democratic Party leader and Danish Foreign Minister, Paul Munch, had allegedly dispatched letters to all newspapers in Copenhagen with a governmental directive banning them from publishing a single word about the fact that an anti-fascist conference was taking place in Copenhagen. According to the *Antifaschistische Front* these actions had confirmed and strengthened the conviction of those assembled that anti-fascism would only be realised if taken on by the workers themselves.⁴⁶

Larsen underlined in his speech that it was not enough to sign protest resolutions against the terror in the Third Reich. They had to focus on the education of the workers. According to Larsen the workers in the Scandinavian countries were not yet conscious about the dangers of fascism. From Larsen's viewpoint, the current moment offered a unique chance to form the united front as the fight against fascism had become the most important mission of the working class. Thanks to close economic relations, geographic vicinity and similar languages (Swedish, Danish and Norwegian) it was presented as especially important to form a common anti-fascist centre in the Scandinavian countries. Moreover, the struggle was not supposed to be directed only against fascism, but anti working-class measures connected to fascism such as strike bans, demonstration bans, and all forms of capitalist exploitation. Fascism was growing in the Scandinavian countries and it was their duty to fight it. Larsen even envisioned that they could build Scandinavia into a pillar of the international workers' movement's fight against fascism.⁴⁷

Larsen himself was becoming a major thorn in the side of the Danish social democratic coalition government that was trying to maintain a position of neutrality. One of Larsen's more spectacular moves was made in August 1933 when during a rally he symbolically tore a Nazi Swastika flag to pieces while declaring it to be a 'murder flag'. It caused a major uproar in the non-communist press and the German government demanded that Larsen be set on trial for offending the flag of a foreign nation. Larsen was eventually freed of all charges, but put under strict surveillance so that he would not cause another major international incident.⁴⁸

When Henri Barbusse addressed the Scandinavian workers and intellectuals at the congress in Copenhagen, he stressed that the time of passing resolutions was over. Now was time for action. According to Barbusse, they needed to realise that the current situation was no longer about a general crisis, but the collapse of a whole system, and therefore he called for the united front of all workers, including social democrats, communists, anarchists, and syndicalists. Significantly, Barbusse explained to the Scandinavian public that they should not be misguided by the German fascist example. Fascism could take different forms in different countries, and for example in France, Barbusse claimed, fascism was taking on a more 'democratic mask'.⁴⁹ Larsen expressed in a similar vein that it was typical for international fascism to appear with distinct national peculiarities. In Scandinavia they were not going to get 'fascism with swastikas', just as in Italy, Germany and other fascist countries, fascism appeared in different guises.⁵⁰

Among the Danish intellectuals at the conference was Professor Jørgen Jørgensen from the University of Copenhagen. He argued that although the working class formed the ultimate bulwark against fascism, the fight against fascism needed to embrace all 'freethinking people'. When looking at Nazi Germany, Jørgensen identified three issues that had to be condemned: Firstly, political violence against those of anti-Nazi political opinion; secondly, the persecution of other races, especially the Jews; and lastly, the nationalist delirium. Unlike many communist speakers, Jørgensen asserted that there was no need to waste time on discussing who was to blame for the rise of fascism. Nevertheless, he directed a warning to those democratic parties (i.e. the social democrats) that had abstained from participating as they should be ready to carry the responsibility for undermining the anti-fascist front. In his mind, all those absent could not be described as 'enablers' of fascism. It seemed instead as if they had been stricken with a blindness that hindered them from understanding the gravity of the situation. Jørgensen's appeal to broaden the working-class base of anti-fascism to include the 'intellectual workers' was echoed in several other speeches.⁵¹

The famous Danish author Andersen Nexø also attended the Scandinavian Anti-Fascist conference. He delivered a speech titled 'Antifascism is Socialism'. He had recently broken with the Social Democratic Party and wanted to show that he was not a man for compromise. Nexø declared that in its very nature, the bourgeois part of humanity was fascist. Fascism and the bourgeoisie were two descriptors for the same thing. The only difference was that the bourgeoisie was using liberalism and democracy as camouflage applied to its left side to fool the proletariat. Fascism was thus deemed a bourgeois worldview that in effect represented 'unmasked capitalism'. If you were against fascism, you needed to be against capitalism and, ultimately, in favour of communism, Nexø elaborated. Notably, both Jørgensen and Nexø belonged to the presidium of the Danish Anti-War Committee formed in 1932. This illustrates further the early conflation of the Scandinavian anti-war movement with the anti-fascist initiative.⁵²

Among the international delegates attending the conference was the British representative William Payne of the Independent Labour Party (ILP). He assured the conference that despite the actions of the Labour Party against the united front, there was a growing mass movement from below in favour of the united front in Britain.⁵³ When returning to Britain, Payne penned the pamphlet *A London Busman Reports on the Fight against Fascism*, which was published by the 'British Delegation Committee of the European Workers' Anti-Fascist Congress'. Payne declared that 'the fascist danger is a menace to the whole European working class' and reproduced the fascism definition used by Aksel Larsen which identified fascism as the mobilisation of 'the most brutal and reactionary forces in capitalist society'. Interestingly, Payne tried to address the fact that although fascism was a brutal enemy operating 'in the interest of the big capital, the industrialists and the bankers' the fascists in Germany had been particularly successful in attracting working-class supporters (and therefore contrary to much Comintern dogma). Payne articulated a classic socialist belief in 'international working-class solidarity' and underlined that 'liberal protest and declarations about democracy' had no effect on stopping the fascist advance. The only thing that had enough power to hinder the fascists was the collective power of a united working class.⁵⁴

Jeanette Olsen from Norway was another voice underlining the sorry state of the international working class. For her, the social democrats, and the reformists in the trade union movement, should be blamed. Olsen had been the secretary of the Norwegian Communist Party's women's section, but had broken with the party in 1928. She had since remained active in the openly left-wing *Clarté* movement and the revolutionary trade union organisations.⁵⁵ Refreshingly, she urged all those assembled in Copenhagen to reflect on their own part in the process. 'Each and every one of us has a larger or smaller responsibility for what was occurring'. They had all committed mistakes along the road. As a long-time activist for women's issues, Olsen offered interesting perspectives on how the far right was overpowering them through their focus on women and the youth. Hitler's victory was based on their own weaknesses and, according to Olsen, it was especially important for them to reflect on how they could win over women to the fight against fascism. Olsen believed that fascism had been victorious because it had been so successful in winning over working-class youth. She thus connected their poor work among women with the rise of fascist youth movements for Olsen was convinced that youths were being influenced by the women in their home environments. If the working-class women were separated from the anti-fascist movement, it would have devastating effects in their ability to reach the youth as well.⁵⁶ Marie Nielsen from Bergen, Norway, confirmed in her speech that they faced great challenges in their work among women. In Norway fascism was, in Nielsen's mind, using women through 'masked' women's associations, such as *Hjemmets Vel* (in 1933 re-named *Norges Husmorforbund*). Asmusen of the Copenhagen's Workers' Defence Units also regretted in his statement that not enough agitation had been made among women.⁵⁷ As the attendance numbers of the Scandinavian Conference illustrate, only 46 women were represented compared to 348 men. There was obviously much to be done in winning over women to anti-fascism not only in Scandinavia, but globally. Still, it must be highlighted that several speakers at the congress were women, and they effectively elaborated on the crucial nexus between fascism, the youth, women and the family.

Jeanette Olsen concluded that if they wanted to be successful in fighting fascism, they needed to attack social democracy. Olsen assumed that as the Nordic social democrats soon realised that the leaders of the German Social Democratic Party were also falling victim to persecution in Germany, they would join them in the anti-fascist fight. In the meantime Nordic social democrats might even join the fascist side and pave the way for a fascist rule in Scandinavia as well. Olsen concluded: 'Our mission is therefore to lead a ruthless fight against Social Democracy and the Trade Union Leadership.'⁵⁸

Knut Senander, who led communists from the Gothenburg area of South Western Sweden, elaborated in his conference speech how Hitler had actively used anti-capitalist slogans to attract workers into the Nazi ranks.⁵⁹ Senander was the author of a booklet published in 1932 titled *Nationalsocialismen – arbetarklassens dödsfiende* (National Socialism: The mortal enemy of the working class). Here we can trace the intellectual basis of his anti-fascism. Senander argued that it was completely false to characterise fascism as a 'postwar phenomenon'. This was an all too easy and

convenient explanation.⁶⁰ This was the standard explanation used on the social democratic side. In the major treatise on the dangers looming over democracy in interwar Europe, the chief ideologue of the Danish Social Democratic movement, Hartvig Frisch, in the monumental book *Pest over Europa: Bolshevisme – Fascisme – Nazisme*, clearly stated that fascist agitation in all fascist countries had originated from the fear of Bolshevism and from the real and presumed danger from the far left.⁶¹ Senander connected fascism instead to the bourgeois practice of working-class oppression. In this respect, Mussolini had not created anything original, but was simply following the lead of the Russian Tsar Nicolai II and the 'black hundreds' that advocated reactionary, anti-revolutionary, and anti-Semitic violence in Russia during and after the Russian Revolution of 1905. In Senander's view, everywhere where class conflict had reached such a critical level that the ruling class felt threatened and insufficiently protected by conventional means, there was political space for fascism.⁶²

When the Scandinavian Anti-Fascist Conference concluded, it passed a resolution to 'the working people of Scandinavia' and 'all Scandinavian anti-fascists'. It was the mission of the Scandinavian workers, just like it was the duty of the working masses of the entire world, to expose the lies of the Hitler regime. The unanimous conclusion of the conference was that the rise of fascism would never have been possible if the working class had remained united.⁶³

For Nordic anti-fascists, it was clear that anti-Semitism was being used by Hitler as a tool to distract the workers from his attacks against the workers' movement. Nationalist furor was being used to divide the workers. Scandinavian anti-fascists thus called for an even stronger worker unity between all peoples, and to raise the proletarian banner of internationalism even higher. According to the resolution, 'Hitler wanted to transform Germany to a workers' penitentiary, to freedom's grave, to a fortress of murderous fascism.' Scandinavian workers were called upon to show their solidarity with their German 'class brothers', to strengthen their common struggle, and to help them overcome Nazism. But as the means to help those in Germany were limited, the focus was on Scandinavia and the slogan crystallised to 'Beat fascism, beat capitalism in your own country! Smother fascism in the Scandinavian countries!' Hitler's rise to power thus triggered a direct rise in anti-fascist activism in Scandinavia. Slogans were suggested for the upcoming May 1st demonstrations to be staged across Scandinavia: 'Down with murder-fascism!' but also 'Bring forth the workers and peasants' rule!' At the same time, the objective was already set for the next conference: a larger European Workers' Anti-Fascist Congress in Paris, and the sending of Scandinavian delegates.⁶⁴

After the Paris congress, specific instructions guided anti-fascist work in Scandinavia. An important focus was the boycott campaign of the harbour workers and seamen directed against ships flying the swastika flag.⁶⁵ But the removal of the swastika was not limited to ships: anywhere, on buildings, posters, or newspapers, immediate action was required: 'No Swastika flag can be tolerated in Scandinavia (*Intet Hagekorsflag maa taales I Scandinavien*).' Taking inspiration from elsewhere, the recent example by British anti-fascists of chasing Hitler's foreign policy expert Alfred Rosenberg out of the country was to be followed with equal strength in Scandinavia.⁶⁶

When studying calls to action, it is always important to remember that these were not automatically turned into actual practice. Anti-fascist responses in Scandinavia were not always occasions of supreme anti-fascist consciousness. For example, in the summer of 1933 members of the Swedish section of the International Workers' Relief and the International Red Aid received a strongly worded reprimand for their lack of action. A global solidarity week for the victims of Nazism had been announced for 17–25 June 1933 but apparently it had passed unnoticed in Sweden despite intensive propaganda efforts. Demonstrations had only taken place in Stockholm and Kiruna, but in all other places 'the class enemy and the fascist butchers had applauded in malicious pleasure'. Despite elaborate published reports on the crimes committed in Nazi Germany during 1933, a general 'ghetto effect' was becoming increasingly apparent. Nordic publications on the question of anti-fascism and the relation to refugees and exiles arriving from Nazi Germany were soon limited to left-wing audiences. The cultural battle in Denmark was directly influenced by the government that demanded publishers and newspapers to take into account the preservation of good relations to Germany. As Hans Hertel shows in an elaborate analysis of the Danish literary and cultural scene, the official meddling into the tone of the publications soon became redundant as authors, editors, publishers and theatre leaders started to implement self-censorship. As a result of the polarisation, anti-fascism was equated with 'cultural bolshevism'. Instead, in the name of good political and cultural relations to Germany, 'cultural neutralism' became the norm. This provided space for 'salon fascism' and the spread of apologetic and sympathetic views on Nazi Germany. If one wanted to read critical reports on fascism and Nazism one needed to read the communist press and small left-wing publishers, but as these publications were not accepted into general distribution channels, their readership remained limited to certain circles of society.⁶⁷

In the final analysis, Norway stands out in relation to Sweden, Denmark and Finland. The initiative for the Scandinavian anti-fascist conference had originated from the Norwegians; the Norwegian labour movement was characterised by a stronger internationalism compared to the rest of Scandinavia.⁶⁸ Halvdan Koht of the Norwegian social democratic party (DNA) acted as Norwegian Foreign Minister from March 1935 onwards and took a firm stance against German efforts to hinder critical reporting in the Norwegian press. The German ambassador Heinrich Rohland was so unsuccessful in influencing the DNA's *Arbeiderbladet* that he was called back to Berlin in 1936. His successor, Heinrich Sahn, had the worst start imaginable as only two weeks after his arrival in Oslo, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced that the 1936 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Carl von Ossietzky, the German socialist author and anti-fascist imprisoned in Nazi Germany. The German government perceived the nomination as a hostile action by the Norwegian government. The symbolical act of awarding the Peace Prize to Ossietzky marked the darkest moment in Norwegian–German relations that they would never recover from.⁶⁹ Ossietzky's Nobel Prize was perhaps one of the symbolically most powerful anti-fascist actions against Germany made in the Nordic Countries during the 1930s. Significantly, it was not hampered by the usual

'ghetto effect' but noted widely on a global scale. Certainly, neither Denmark, Sweden, Finland nor Iceland ever achieved such anti-fascist credentials. As the German anti-fascist exile Kurt Rosenfeld tellingly noted in the USA, what had particularly enraged Hitler and his followers was that this act of resistance had been realised by their supreme 'Aryan' blood brothers, the Nordic master race.⁷⁰

Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated that even before 1933, anti-fascism had been a vibrant part of the Scandinavian left, expressed in violent confrontations between fascists and anti-fascists. The events of 1933 then created a unique moment that invited engaging debate on the nature of democracy under pressure and the limits and possibilities of united anti-fascist action. The Scandinavian Anti-Fascist conference marked a historic highpoint in transnational anti-fascist activity within and beyond Scandinavia. It was organised at a crucial juncture in the development of the Comintern's global anti-fascist position, and played an important role in uniting the anti-war and anti-fascist causes. Anti-fascism invigorated transnational co-operation within the Nordic Countries and constituted an often overlooked radical, oppositional alternative to the hegemony of the centre-left alliances under social democratic leadership. It also led to bitter discussions on the origins of fascism and the role of communists and social democrats as enablers of fascism. Since the governments of Sweden and Denmark were strongly intertwined with social democracy in 1933, it quickly revealed the price of neutrality in historically uncomfortable acts of appeasement and collaboration especially in the field of anti-communism and 'anti-anti-fascism'. The communists tried to invite the broader civil society to think more openly about fascism as a political and societal phenomenon and warn against the *fascistisation* of society. If Scandinavia was to be made a bulwark against fascism, they needed to be vigilant and call out all fascist tendencies, sometimes at the cost of blurring the lines between fascism and capitalism.

The case of Scandinavia finally illustrates the power of the Nazi foreign office and how Nordic civil societies could be directly affected by Germany. Paradoxically, anti-fascists were charged at home with meddling in German internal affairs, while at the same time the German foreign office was permitted to interfere in the civil societies of the smaller nations. It shows how international diplomacy and transnational civil society activism were already deeply entwined, further blurring the lines between national and international history, or fascism as a domestic and international threat. In all too many cases the primacy of good foreign relations subdued the need to judge 'internal' German developments, and led to the suppression and limitation of anti-fascist activism in the North.

Notes

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- 2 Knut Dørum, 'Conservative Fascist Sympathies and Anti-Fascism in 1930s Norway', in Kasper Braskén, Nigel Copsey & Johan A. Lundin (eds), *Anti-Fascism in the Nordic Countries: New Perspectives, Comparisons and Transnational Connections* (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 82–85.
- 3 Donald Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism: The West European Left in the Twentieth Century* (New York: The New Press, 1996).
- 4 Rickard Lindström (1894–1950) was engaged in the Swedish social democratic movement from 1918 onwards. He was an advocate of revisionist socialism and polemicalised strongly against 'vulgar Marxism' already during the 1920s. Later during the Second World War he became a controversial figure as he advanced a very appeasing and understanding position towards Nazi Germany's demands, especially 1940–1942, although he at the same time resisted Nazi influence in Sweden's domestic affairs. See further in Kent Zetterberg, 'K A Rickard Lindström', *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, online at <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/Sbl/Mobil/Artikel/10703> (accessed on 10 January 2020).
- 5 Ulf Lindström, *Fascism in Scandinavia 1920–1940* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1985), p. 173; Sheri Berman, *The Primacy of Politics: Social Democracy and the Making of Europe's Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 162–176, 204–205; Steiner Stjernø, *Solidarity in Europe: The History of an Idea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 109–118.
- 6 Oula Silvennoinen, *Geheime Waffenbrüderschaft: Die sicherheitspolitische Zusammenarbeit zwischen Deutschland und Finnland, 1933–1944* (Darmstadt: WBG, 2010), pp. 32–39; Tauno Saarela, *Suomalainen kommunismi ja vallankumous 1923–1930* (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 2008).
- 7 Tauno Saarela, 'Finnish Socialist Intellectuals on Fascism and Anti-Fascism in the 1930s', in Kasper Braskén, Nigel Copsey & Johan A. Lundin (eds), *Anti-Fascism in the Nordic Countries: New Perspectives, Comparisons and Transnational Connections* (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 171–172.
- 8 Charlie Emil Krautwald, 'Three Arrows against the Swastika: Militant Social Democracy and the Radical Opposition to Fascism in Denmark, 1932–1934', in Kasper Braskén, Nigel Copsey & Johan A. Lundin (eds), *Anti-Fascism in the Nordic Countries: New Perspectives, Comparisons and Transnational Connections* (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 104–106.
- 9 Bericht über Kongress in Kopenhagen (hereafter 'Bericht'), RGASPI 495/174/65, 42. On Sogaard and the DSU, see Jesper Jørgensen, 'Portræt af en ungkommunist. Ib Nørlund 1932–1940', *Årbok*, 2005, pp. 51–73.
- 10 Karl Christian Lammers, 'Faschismus-Interpretationen und Antifaschismus in den skandinavischen Arbeiterbewegungen', in Helga Grebing & Klaus Kinner (eds), *Arbeiterbewegung und Faschismus: Faschismus-Interpretationen in der europäischen Arbeiterbewegung* (Essen: Klartext-Verlag, 1990), pp. 227–229.
- 11 Henning Grelle, *Thorvald Stauning: Demokrati eller kaos* (Copenhagen: Jyllands-Postens Forlag, 2008), pp. 344–345.
- 12 Viggo Sjøqvist, *Danmarks Udenrigspolitik 1933–1940* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1966), pp. 42–43.
- 13 Klas Åmark, *Att bo granne med ondskan: Sveriges förhållande till nazismen, Nazityskland och Förintelsen* (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 2016), pp. 69–70; Åke Thulstrup, *Med lock och pock: Tyska försök att påverka svensk opinion 1933–45* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1962).
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- 15 Brian Klitgaard & Jens Melson, 'Die Flüchtlingspolitik als Bestandteil der dänischen Außenpolitik 1933–1940', in Hans Uwe Petersen (ed.), *Hitlerflüchtlinge im Norden: Asyl und politisches Exil 1933–1945* (Kiel: Neuer Malik Verlag, 1991), pp. 85–87.
- 16 Bernhard H. Bayerlein, 'Deutscher Kommunismus und transnationaler Stalinismus – Komintern, KPD und Sowjetunion 1929–1943', in Hermann Weber, Jakob Drabkin, Bernhard H. Bayerlein & Alexander Galkin (eds), *Deutschland, Russland, Komintern: Vol. I: Überblicke, Analysen, Diskussionen* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), pp. 275–285.
- 17 Helene Löw, *Nazismen i Sverige 1924–1979: Pionjärerna, partierna, propagandan* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2016); Helene Löw, *Nazismen i Sverige 2000–2014* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2016).

- 18 Rapport över den kommunistiska verksamheten i Sverige [1933], Arbark, pp. 46–52, 238, 264–265.
- 19 Rapport över den kommunistiska verksamheten i Sverige [1933], Arbark, pp. 256–257.
- 20 Krautwald, ‘Three Arrows against the Swastika’, p. 99.
- 21 Antifa-Komiteen, Vesterbro; Copenhagen, April 1933, RGASPI 495/174/65, 3.
- 22 See also Johan A. Lundin, ‘Social Democratic Youth and Anti-Fascism in Sweden, 1929–1939’, in Kasper Braskén, Nigel Copsey & Johan A. Lundin (eds), *Anti-Fascism in the Nordic Countries: New Perspectives, Comparisons and Transnational Connections* (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 111–123.
- 23 A. J. Smålan, *Fascismens banbrytare* (Stockholm: Förlagsaktiebolaget Arbetarkultur, 1933), pp. 1–6. Smålan was the alias of Johan Albert Johansson according to Yvonne Hirdman, *Den röda grevinnan: En europeisk historia* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2010), p. 214.
- 24 Smålan, *Fascismens banbrytare*, p. 19.
- 25 *Ibid.*, pp. 31–32.
- 26 Rickard Lindström, *Tyskland och socialdemokratin: Vad har vi att lära?* (Stockholm: Tidens Förlag, 1933), pp. 26–29.
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- 28 Fritjof Lager, *Fascismen i knektstövlar och lackskor* (Stockholm: Förlagsaktiebolaget Arbetarkultur, 1934), pp. 15–16.
- 29 *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.
- 30 *Ibid.*, pp. 4–9.
- 31 Organisationsbüro für die Vorbereitung des Antifaschistischen Arbeiterkongresses Europas; Copenhagen, 8 April 1933, RGASPI 495/174/65, 5.
- 32 Holger Weiss, ‘Tallinn–Stockholm–Hamburg–Copenhagen–Oslo: The Northern Dimension of the Comintern’s Global Network and Underground Activities, 1920–1940’, in Mary Hilson, Silke Neunsinger & Iben Vyff (eds), *Labour, Unions and Politics under the North Star: The Nordic Countries, 1700–2000* (New York: Berghahn, 2017), pp. 290–292. Morten Møller, Niels Erik Rosenfeldt & Jesper Jørgensen, *Den røde underverden: Hemmelig kommunistisk virksomhed i Skandinavien mellem to verdenskrige* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2019), pp. 122–126.
- 33 On Gyptner, see his autobiography (Lebenslauf) in SAPMO–BArch, RY 5/I 6/10/95, 83; ‘Mg.’ [Magnus alias Richard Gyptner] to ‘Willi’ [Münzenberg]; Berlin, 3 April 1933, RGASPI 495/60/242, 2–3.
- 34 Münzenberg to Piatnitzki; Paris, 22 March 1933, RGASPI 495/4/237, 14.
- 35 ‘Mg.’ [Magnus alias Richard Gyptner] to ‘Willi’ [Münzenberg]; Berlin, 3 April 1933, RGASPI 495/60/242, 2–3.
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- 37 Protokoll (B) Nr. 329 der ausserordentlichen Sitzung der Politkommission des Politsekretariats des EKKI, 9 August 1933, RGASPI 495/4/256, 4; ‘Streng vertraulich: Resolution über die Vereinigung der Internationalen Antikriegsbewegung (Amsterdam) und der Europäischen Antifa-Bewegung’, RGASPI 495/4/256, 12–14.
- 38 ‘Mg.’ [Magnus alias Richard Gyptner] to ‘Willi’ [Münzenberg]; Berlin, 3 April 1933, RGASPI 495/60/242, 2–3.
- 39 ‘Mit voller Kraft Antifa-Kongress unterstützen!’, *Antifa-Jungfront* [Nr. 1], April 1933.
- 40 ‘Mg.’ [Magnus alias Richard Gyptner] to ‘Willi’ [Münzenberg]; Berlin, 3 April 1933, RGASPI 495/60/242, 2–3.
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- 43 *Ibid.*
- 44 Bericht über die in der Zeit vom 14. bis 17. April 33 stattgefunden Skandinavische Antifaschisten Kongress in Kopenhagen; Berlin, 20 April 1933, BArch, R 1501/20474, 109–109a.
- 45 Bericht, RGASPI 495/174/65, 20.

- 46 'Skandinavische Antifa-Konferenz: 400 Delegierte rufen zum Europakongress!', *Antifaschistische Front: Herausgegeben vom Organisationsbüro zur Einberufung des Antifaschistischen Arbeiterkongresses Europas*, Nr. 6, 20 April 1933.
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- 48 Kurt Jacobsen, *Aksel Larsen: En politisk biografi*, 2 ed. (Copenhagen: Vindrose, 1995), pp. 133–136.
- 49 Bericht, RGASPI 495/174/65, 39.
- 50 *Ibid.*, 22–23.
- 51 *Ibid.*, 21, 42.
- 52 Børge Houmann, *Kommunist under besættelsen*, 2 ed. (Copenhagen: Vindrose, 1994), pp. 28–30.
- 53 Bericht, RGASPI 495/174/65, 38.
- 54 William Payne, *A London Busman Reports on the Fight against Fascism* (London: European Workers' Anti-Fascist Congress, British Delegation Committee, 1933), pp. 35–41.
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- 56 Bericht, RGASPI 495/174/65, 36–37.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- 58 *Ibid.*, pp. 36–37.
- 59 Bericht, RGASPI 495/174/65, 18.
- 60 Knut Senander, *Nationalsocialismen – arbetarklassens dödsfiende* (Kristianstad: Västra Sveriges distrikt av SKP (Sektion av Kommunistiska Internationalen), 1932), pp. 3–5.
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