

Chapter 16 : “1955/00 – Parliament of the street”

On March 24, 1955, the inaugural meeting of the Stockholm Republican Club took place. The initiators were a posse of 75 cultural radicals from Stockholm University and other stations of life.¹ [It had a prehistory in the social democratic youth movement (SSU) which is described other place in part 3: chapter 29 & 30.] The initiator is supposed to have been the editor of the magazine *Folket i Bild* Ivar Öhman (1914-1989). The author Kai Henmark (1932-1980) was elected chairman of the meeting. Later, writer Hans Haste (1924-1990) from the Workers' Educational Association (ABF) was elected regular chairman. It has been suggested that the writer Vilhelm Moberg (1898-1973), known anti-monarchist, had a role in the formation. That was not the case however. He only returned from America two days after the meeting. His daughter Eva Moberg (1932-2011) was on the club's board but disappeared after a while. Two other notable members were the social democratic agitator Einar “Texas” Ljungberg (1880-1974) who in 1909 actually spent a year in prison for speaking derogatorily of the monarchy and advocating republic and the social democratic trade union official Sten Sjöberg (1909-2004), a known anti-monarchist.

In contrast to the later mythology the clubs ambitions were rather modest: “The club would promote republican endeavours by spreading awareness of the issue. It would disseminate information, not attack the Bernadotte dynasty or individual member of the royal house.”²

Shortly after its formation, William Moberg published a pamphlet at *Folket i Bilds förlag* “Therefore I am a Republican” where he lined up a number of arguments that spoke against the monarchy. Over time it sold 40,000 copies. The main argument (at least the most cited) was about the servility that he believed the monarchy encouraged: “The monarchy evokes and develops some of man's most humiliating qualities: the desire to be in the favour of the high, the eagerness to fraternize, the willingness to submit to authority. The royalty makes the subjects humiliate themselves even if it is not their intention. The king and his court belong to the lackey, and the kingdom has always produced lackey souls or what we call courtier mentality: The burning desire to serve.”³ - “The Poet Laureate” Bo Setterlind (1923-1991) wrote a rebuttal “Therefore I am a monarchist”⁴, which Moberg cruelly executed. Setterlind is said to have complained about Moberg's worship of pure reason, which made him blind to man's need for poetry and symbols. This must relate to some other publication. In “Therefore I am a monarchist” Setterlind pointed out quite unpoetically that Stalin and Hitler both led republics. Apparently a more dangerous form of government than the monarchy. (The Royalist Association has since adopted the argument, in 2009 with Mexico as a cautionary example of the state of a republic.) Another rebuttal was the identically named “Therefore I am a monarchist” by the less well known Sven Svensson (1891-?): “Something that Moberg takes umbrage at is the lackey soul. But who is not a lackey to anyone else? Surely there must always be masters and subjects. Surely a society cannot exist without rulers, who have some authority over others.”⁵

Moberg was a hard-to-place left-wing radical who over time became something of a “people's tribune”. It seems that he, like many others of his generation, was disappointed that the suffrage reforms of 1909, 1918 and 1921 did not involve any fundamental social

¹ Republikanska föreningen. Historik. [Internet.]

² Sven Ulric Palme. *Blir lillprinsen kung?* Vecko Journalen, 1955:29.

³ Vilhelm Moberg. *Därför är jag republikan.* *Folket i Bild*, 1955.

⁴ Bo Setterlind. *Därför är jag monarkist.* Stockholm : Medéns, 1955.

⁵ Sven Svensson. *Därför är jag monarkist.* Vara, 1967.

changes. The rulers learned to live with them. In his writings he blamed a number of groups for allowing this. Moberg himself explained that he had already in his youth come to hate the monarchy after reading the anarchist Krapotkin & the young socialist (= syndicalist) newspaper Nya Folkviljan.

Most negative to the republican project was Labour historian John Lindgren, who referred to Marx, opinion polls, and facts on the ground. Marx: The state is the ruling class's apparatus of oppression. It may call itself whatever it wants. Opinion: In December 1943, 84 percent of the population wanted monarchy (93 percent of the bourgeois, 79 percent of those in the labour parties). Why not instead choose a battle you could win? Facts on the ground:

I can testify from my own experience about the devastating repercussions of Nazism on the interest in a republican form of government among young Swedish workers. During the first years of the 1930s, we at Brunnsvik folk high school used to discuss the alternatives monarchy or republic. I remember this as a number of lively and refreshing speech exercises - as a means of combating the then current rural dullness they deserve a high mark. In 1933 the curtain descended on our pleasant bouts. They stopped altogether. It was because of the obvious betrayal of democracy committed by President Paul von Hindenburg on the day he entrusted Hitler with the Chancellor's post. The following year, the president passed away and Hitler took over the powers of head of state. We thought it was pointless to whine any longer about our own adaptable monarchy. We were not alone in this view. As a reflection of the disastrous and threatening developments in Germany, many convinced republicans found reason to reconsider their previous views on the monarchy.

And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.⁶

Bourgeois liberals and most social democrats believed that with the introduction of parliamentary democracy the monarchy was neutralized and could remain as a historical memorial. Its value as a tourist attraction was not to be underestimated.

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Further local Republican Clubs were established. February 12, 1956, on the initiative of the Stockholm Club, these were organized as "Sveriges Republikanska Förbund" (Swedish Republican League), which was a cooperation organization. The chairman was Sten Sjöberg, vice chairman Hans Haste and secretary Ingemar Mundebo (fp).

The organization I became chairman of was cross-party but the Social Democrats dominated the membership list. The most noted among these was second chamber member August Spångberg [1893-1987]. The secretary of the Stockholm Workers' Community, Sten Andersson [1923-2006], was also a member. He later became party secretary, member of parliament, minister of social affairs and foreign minister. The youth wing of the Swedish People's Party was represented by the upp and comers Per Ahlmark, Ola Ullsten and Ingemar Mundebo (all liberals). The latter was for a few years our union's energetic secretary. From the LO and its trade union there were many functionaries on the membership list. The syndicalists were very strongly represented. The magazine Arbetaren with Edvard Ramström as editor, was an

⁶ John Lindgren. Varför Sverige inte är republik. Lilla biblioteket (Tiden), 1955.

important mouthpiece for the republican movement. There were also some members from centerpartiet (centrists).⁷

Additional members or sympathizers were Herbert Tingsten (1896-1973), editor-in-chief of Dagens Nyheter 1946-1959, Per Wrigstad (1917-2002) editor-in-chief of Expressen 1960-1977, the MP of Folkpartiet Waldemar Svensson (1897-1984), historian Sven Ulric Palme (1912-17) and artist Karl Gerhard (1891-1964).⁸

The atmosphere of 1956 was heated. State Councilor Ulla Lindström, one of the initiators and later member of the constitutional inquiry, tells in her memoirs what happened when she refused to curtsy Queen Elisabeth on her state visit. Expressen: "She greeted her in the usual manner by a slight bow: 'looking her straight in the face' as the newspapers of the following day expressed it."⁹ - Ulla Lindström: "The next two days, two parties crystallized: curtsians and anti-curtsians. The "Curtsians" were shocked to the core by the shame that Ulla Lindström brought upon the Swedish nation. ... The curtsians didn't have words strong enough to describe my despicable behaviour. They wished that they had been standing behind me, when I visited Elizabeth, they would have kicked me in the behind so that I got on my knees. Socialist devil, dog cunt and cumbucket, born by my milkmaid mother fornicating a hunting party, I should return to the factory from where I came (?) and not demonstrate my lack of upbringing to the divine Elizabeth."¹⁰ Lindström was unmoved by the criticism: "I don't curtsy for my king so why would I do it for a 40 year younger girl even if she has charm."¹¹ (It sounds better in English: I can not give her more honours than I would my king! On Elizabeth's second visit in 1983, all five women ministers in the government of Olof Palme refused to curtsy, instead ticking their hands slightly. Not the same uproar this time around though.)

According to Herbert Tingsten, the monarchy was mainly supported by the state officials, by officers and by everyday monarchists, people "with undeveloped intellect, little knowledge and vulnerable to cheap romance - it is these empty and stupid faces that garnish the streets at parades and fill the churches at upper class funerals."¹² Since the state officials and officers were rewarded with service Orders, Tingsten agitated to abolish them, which succeeded. (A contributing factor was probably the enormous number of orders and medals that Gustaf VI presented during his tenure, according to a source about 5000 each year. That seems too many for a year - perhaps it was during his reign. It proved popular but it also devalued them.) Another republican, the historian Sven Ulric Palme, dedicated himself to attacking the royal representation: The royal trinkets and the festivities were not only expensive, they were a kind of agitation of the royal house to remain in power.

The Stockholm Club organized debates and 1958-1961 published a newspaper Republiken. The interest was at first great, for example, for the public debate between Vilhelm Moberg and journalist Ivar Harrie (1889-1973) at medborgarhuset on April 18, 1955, where many could not be admitted and the debate between Tingsten and right-wing party leader Jarl Hjalmarson (1904-1993) at the concert hall in Stockholm on February 20, 1956 with an audience 1500 strong. Hjalmarsson's strongest argument was that monarchy was superior to

⁷ Sten Sjöberg. Fackföreningsman och republikan. Sten Sjöberg & Bäckströms förlag, 1999.

⁸ August Spångberg. I tidens ström. Karlstad, 1966, s 45-48. [internet, pdf]

⁹ Expressen, 1969-01-09

¹⁰ Ulla Lindström. I regeringen : ur min politiska dagbok 1954-1959. Stockholm : Bonnier, 1969.

¹¹ Kvällsposten, 1976-01-19.

¹² Herbert Tingsten, Skall kungamakten stärkas? Kritik av författningsförslaget. Stockholm: Aldus/Bonnier, 1964.

republic because the monarch was brought up to office from the outset while a president had to be accepted as he was.

The outspoken reformist strategy met with criticism:

There are Republicans who question whether partial reforms of this kind [abolition of the loyalty oath] really serve the greater cause, the complete abolition of the monarchy. They believe that removing some of its most striking abuses reduces the chances of effective criticism of the monarchist system. From this point of view, all the absurdities of the monarchy should be preserved in order to make the criticism as effective as possible.

This line of thinking may seem brilliant, but is probably wrong. The transition to a republic will be easier if the glory surrounding royal power is reduced and the powers of the monarch also limited by law. The transition to another system will then be easier and the reform seems less subversive. The word “King” is replaced by “President” and provisions on how to elect the President are inserted into the law.¹³

Interest in the question then quickly declined. As early as 1958, it was difficult to find monarchists willing to debate. On April 26, 1967, the Stockholm Club and the Republican League merged into a single organization, the Republican Club, with the same activities as before. The Republican Club also published a magazine in 1970-1973. After the constitutional reform was completed in 1974, the Republican Club was on December 12, 1990 transformed into the “Republican Foundation” which managed the remaining funds. At its peak there were about 2000 members. 1974 about 1000 members. At the end it was “double-digits”. The downward path was marked by both the electoral successes of the bourgeoisie and of Silvia:

Since 1973, the Republican League [=the club] has been in decline. “The parliamentary equilibrium that then arose made it virtually impossible for us to act on the issue of the abolition of the monarchy. Instead, we chose to cocoon,” explains Sten Sjöberg, who emphasizes that they will leave this state as soon as the political situation permits. “We do not want to be blamed for a social democratic election defeat,” says the trade union leader for 5,000 teleworkers in Stockholm.

When it became clear that a royal wedding would take place, Sjöberg could not act through his cocooned organization but instead chose his trade union - section 4001 of the Swedish National Employees' Union. The Sjöberg republic motion was adopted without reservations and among other things the following will be trumpeted in the beautiful June weather from the LO-castle congress just in time for the king and Silvia's wedding: ¹⁴

- That the Swedish monarchy is insignificant, peculiar and very expensive.
- It is absurd that 5.9 million should be allocated to the king's courtiers when the money could be used for much more sensible purposes.
- That it is supported by a small group hard core conservative politician and an upper class who deems it appropriate through the king to emphasize that rights should be inherited.

¹³ Hans Haste. Nyhetsbulletin, cirka 1958-02. Republikanska Klubben i Stockholm. Arbetarrörelsens arkiv.

¹⁴ Jacob Wennerberg. Kungahusets fiende nr ett! Göteborgs Tidningen, 1976-04-11.

- That this royalist hard core is surrounded by a soft core of emotionally vulnerable people.
- The fact that many of those who stop in their tracks to catch glimpse of the king on his national tour have little understanding of how democracy works.

Sten Sjöberg celebrated the royal wedding by clearing the garden outside his house on Rådmanö of weeds which he claimed was a symbolic act. He admitted to watching the wedding on TV, even the king. “A pseudo event though interesting as a phenomenon”.¹⁵ My own impression was that Sjöberg perceived the wedding as a mating ritual between two brightly coloured beetles.

The court's press spokesman Sten Egnell summarized the situation in 1976 as “The republicans had high hopes but they were dashed by the fact that the king quickly acquired a profile. People need tradition and the social democratic policy of needling him has not gained traction in the people's minds. In addition, we have the help of the weekly press.”¹⁶ [Aftonbladet, on the other hand, printed a stub for exiting the monarchy.]

Among the republicans, the importance of Silvia to the royal family was recognized the start. “It is due to her that we transformed [into a foundation],” says Sten Sjöberg. He is former chairman of the Republican Club. An activity converted two years ago [1990] into a modest foundation. Under the pressure of the Queen's popularity. Republican growth is in bad shape. But Sten Sjöberg points out that the old guard has not yet closed shop. “Young people say that the issue is not important. But that is because no one talks about the consequences. That the royal house costs us 24 million kronor each year. The “state propaganda”, he calls it. The weeklies and all the attention it receives consolidates the position of the monarchy. As the fact that they have not committed any serious error. At least not Queen Silvia.¹⁷

Sten Sjöberg's Silvia effect has been taken for granted. However, the number of members of the Royalist Association declined as well. After all the excitement of the legislation, the transfer of the throne and the marriage, apathy most probably set in. The republican message was not that inspiring either. Sjöberg wanted a powerless president of the West Germany ilk or as in Switzerland where the ministers take turns to represent the country.¹⁸

The alternative explanation was that the 1968 radicalism gradually subsided. In Norway, for example, the popularity of the monarchy increased so that King Olaf in 1985 was the country's most admired person. The republican message was no longer part of the zeitgeist.¹⁹

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In 1997, Sten Sjöbergs Republican Foundation was perceived as outdated and in its death throes. It was time for a generational change. That year, two students Magnus Simonsson (1976-) and Fredrik Grinder (f. Högberg) (1976-) wrote a letter in the newspaper Arbetaren on the topic of republic which they signed “Föreningen Republik 2000” (the Republican

¹⁵ Svenska Dagbladet, 1976-06-20.

¹⁶ Intervju med Sten Egnell. Kvällsposten, 1976-04-12.

¹⁷ Tom Hansson. Bröllopet blev dödsstöten för republikanerna. Svenska Dagbladet, 1993-12-19.

¹⁸ Arne Sundberg. Störta kungen. Lektor, 1974:49.

¹⁹ Gudmund Hernes. Walking with Kings. Scandinavian Review, 1988:2, s 7-13.

Association) despite the fact that no such association existed. Afterwards, they were contacted by people who wanted to join it. This eventually led to a constituent meeting of the “Republican Association” (RepF) on November 6, 1999 with Simonsson as chairman until 2001. The Republican Foundation ceded its remaining money 71,390 kronor. Presumably this was in connection with Sten Sjöberg's death in 2004 when the Foundation appears to have been liquidated.

The Republican Association in its present form is a rejuvenated version of the Republican Club with similar statutes, objectives, arguments and members. Since 2001, it has published an online magazine *Republikanen*, from 2011 renamed *Reform*. Since 2002, the chairman is a member of the Parliament, which has had a big impact on the debate. Its motto is “We want democracy - total democracy”. A catchier version is: “Better crowd than genome.” (It sounds better in Swedish: *Hellre folkmassa än arvsmassa*.) In 2004, the club had 3,700 members and growing. In 2008, it had an online opinion survey on its website. The majority supported the argument “The monarchy represents an outdated view of society and humanity”, 2nd was “The monarchy is undemocratic”, 3rd was “The Royal House costs too much”. In 2004, after the Brunei uproar, the association planned a major campaign. The planning team included several prominent PR consultants.²⁰ However, this campaign as well as others seem to have stalled, when Birgitta Ohlson (fp; 2002-2005) ended her tenure as chairman. Politically, the movement is now reportedly split into “Red Guards, Watermelons, Leftists and Liberals”. Maybe a bad recipe. Since 2011, the organization has been considering an alternative constitution. There is also an independent online magazine “Republik! Nu!” (active 2001-2005; editor Henrik Arnstad).

The cost argument is not very persuasive. The Swedish royal house is very cheap in operation. CG's ceremonial is funded by a niggardly appanage and the costs of electing a president are avoided every 4 years. It even happens that CG contributes with private money. A president would probably have to make “more noise” to be noticed. In 1970, a comparison was made with other Heads of State. The empirical data was modest but the conclusion was clear: The more democracy the more expensive the head of state.²¹ However, precise figures of what the royal house costs are difficult to come by because its activities are also funded indirectly through the defence, police, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the property office, the municipalities, gifts etc. In contrast to government offices, the royal house does not bear its own costs.

In 2003, Birgitta Ohlsson founded the “Riksdagen Republikanska Sällskap” (RRS) (a parliamentary network), which has authored a large number of motions. That year, 273 of 349 MPs preferred a republic, but so many were not part of the republican network.²² The parties that have demands for a republic written into the party program are the Social Democrats, the Left Party and the Green Party.

There is a political party, the Republicans, with the program that the monarchy should be abolished. At the 2006 general election that party received two votes. The first name on the list was Bertil Ålund (1918-?), with the main qualification of having published an English translation of Vilhelm Moberg's pamphlet “Why I am a Republican”.

²⁰ Anna Careborg. *Aftonbladet*, 2004-11-12.

²¹ Så mycket kostar kungen & hans kollegor. *Hemmets Journal*, 1970:39.

²² SVT Rapport, 2003.

There is also an undergrowth of republican groups and associations. The ones I have found are “Refuse to pay Victoria's wedding” (2009-), “Day of the Republic” (2005-) celebrating a National Day without king and “Republican sailors” (1967-) who designated the National Day June 6 as Day of the Republic and that day organize a regatta:

The organization had to fight hard to be approved as Sailing Club. The Yacht Charter Association feared further associations such as the “Neo-Nazi Sailing Society” would be formed. Early member was Olof Palme. From 1970 the association had a two meter high fiberglass statue of Tage Erlander as a hiking trophy that was given in care to the person who during the past year carried out a commendable republican act. The winners include C H Hermansson (1971), Ingvar Carlsson (1986) and Annette Kullenberg (1990).

Unfortunately, the statue was left standing at restaurant Kvarnen at Medborgarplatsen after a dispute some time after 1991. As a replacement, the regatta “Kungakronan” was established, which consists of getting first to a royal equestrian statue made for the purpose and placed on a rock shelf at Solöfjärden in the Stockholm archipelago. The winner is allowed to snatch the crown from the king and through it into a watery grave at 44 meters below.

The tone within the association is raw but hearty. Chairman Per Edström in 2000: “[I can] at the beginning of this new millennium just note that everything remained as it was and that the kingdom still is a millstone on our enlightened thinking. The Crown Princess has stepped out of the weekly press into a picture of an official Swedish stamp and is licked in the arse by all the Swedish people.”

At the time of its formation in 1967, there were 20-30 members. At its peak there were a few hundred. In 2002, only Chairman Per Edström remained. The regatta 2009 was cancelled, but membership 2010 was good, which is noted with satisfaction by the Republican Association to which RS appears affiliated.

On June 19-20, 2010, RepF and six other republican associations formed the Alliance of European Republican Movements (AERM). They meet but I have no information on what they discuss. Most probably AERM was a response to “Conférence monarchiste internationale (CMI)” established 2008 with 79 monarchic member-organisations all over the world.

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The Republican Association's counterpart “Rojalistiska Föreningen” (RojF) has its origins in a study circle about the royal house taking place in the autumn of 1976 and led by editor Gunnar Elde.²³ Another two participants were Patrik Åkesson and Leif Larsson. These formed a work group that contacted interested people. The royalist organization was founded on June 6, 1978, in the Historical Museum in Stockholm. Approximately 700 people registered. Magnus Rosensparr was elected chairman. He belonged to an older generation of monarchists whose motives for maintaining the monarchy, “The monarchist constitution of a Christian North is the basis for Sweden's existence in the European cultural community”, has disappeared from the debate. The association's statutes can be summarized as supporting the Swedish monarchy within the framework of the constitution. The members are solid middle class. In 1978, the newspaper *Rojalisten* was published. In connection with the foundation, a

²³ Patrik Åkesson. *Historik. Rojalisten*, 1998:3.

former association “Rojalistiska sällskapet” appears to have joined RojF. It was formed in 1966 with a last gasp in 1978 when the board of directors protested against CG's state visit to the Soviet Union.

Chairman Patrik Åkesson and 1st vice-chairman Lennart Stockblad in RojF were granted an audience to CG in 1997 & 2006. Otherwise, the association seems to lack direct contact with the court but is encouraged in detours. Most renowned member is Fredrik Reinfeldt, 2nd vice chairman in 1999. His monarchical views, probably identical to that of the association, was: “In this Sweden, where so much has been designed or governed by one and the same political sphere of power, we have a great need for an institution whose independence from party political considerations can never be called into question. ... Here the monarchy immediately appears as an institution which has not been or cannot be owned by social democracy. It makes it frighteningly enough almost unique as a phenomenon in Sweden.”²⁴ 10 years later RojF could best be described as a cultural association without a political agenda. The members seem to be tired of the monarchy issue degenerating into “political mud wrestling” and want to pursue their own agenda.

A new association “Rojalistiska sällskapet” is a breakaway association from RojF that did not allow local associations. “On 2/3 1988, some 50 members of the Royalist Association gathered at St. Gertrud in Malmö. There were discussions about a certain autonomy and a treasury of their own. After extensive discussions it was decided to form an independent association.”²⁵ Like RojF, RojS is a non-political support association for the royal house. Chairman 1988-1993 was Thor von Rahden, 1993-1996 Bertil Hedding, 1996-? Lord in waiting Peder Bonde. The society was not very active but met twice a year: “We begin by singing The King's Anthem, then we drink The King's toast in front of his picture. We end the meetings singing the national anthem.”²⁶ As it is sometimes pointed out, the monarchy is not just politics, it is a way of life and of socializing.

Another association, the student association “United Monarchists”, was formed in 2004 with alternating Michaël Lehman and Jacob E:son Söderbaum as chairman but now appears to be defunct. The association's ideals were conservative according to the old ideals. Lehman described himself as a “reactionary punch romantic”. Söderbaum was also reactionary: “It is vital for the monarchy that the members of the royal family live up to the sacred ideals that it by tradition is the princes' lot to live up to.”²⁷

The monarchists also organize their members of parliament. In 2003, “Riksdagens rojalistiska nätverk” (RRN) was formed with the moderate Henrik S Järrel as chairman. According to him, only two hours after the Republican initiative. He was succeeded by Cecilia Magnusson. She was the former public relations officer and now the 2nd vice chairman of the Royalist Association. In 2010, RRN had about 50 members from all parties except the Green Party and the Left Party. RRN and even individual royalist sympathizers are claimed to be on a mailing list from the information department of the court.²⁸

The Lund 30-November Association (1965-) and its counterpart in Stockholm The Narva League (1974-) are probably those that over the years most ostentatiously have praised the Swedish monarchy (or at least the houses Vasa and Pfalz power ambitions). The Narva

²⁴ Mats Ögren (red). För Sverige – Nuförtiden. En antologi om Carl XIV Gustaf. Bokförlaget DN, 2006.

²⁵ Rojalistiska Sällskapet. Stadgar. 1988.

²⁶ Martin Wingren. Skål för Konungen! Lokaltidningen Helsingborg, 2010-11-08.

²⁷ Jacob E:son Söderbaum. Artikel om Daniel Westling. Expressen, 2008-06-06.

²⁸ Robert Aschberg. Intervju med Camilla Lindberg (fp). Radio 1, 2011-06-23.

Federation through a torchlight parade from Östermalmstorg to Karl XII's statue in Humlegården (from 1983 because of the counter demonstrations replaced with a wreath laying at Karl XII's grave in the Church at Riddarholmen), and the Lützen League which in 1976 and onwards had a wreath laying in honour of Gustaf II Adolf.²⁹ The connection monarchism - the extreme right no longer appears to exist because the advocates have died of or moved on to other activities. All that remains is a photograph from February 13, 1992, where CG, on a visit to the youth organisation "Fryshuset" in Stockholm, is photographed in the party hall Höder Dart with some members of the Sthlm Skins. Lipstick traces as it is called. Subsequent reactions from that direction have been decidedly hostile. At CG's re-inauguration of Sofielund School in Malmö on February 18, 2011, where most of the students came from Somalia, the reaction on the site nationell.nu was like "That's what to expect from a French Jew. I vomit over the Swedish monarchy". CG has also participated in Muslim and Jewish religious ceremonies.

An odd feature was the association Friends of the Royal Swedish Monarchy under the "supermonarchist" baron Knut af Ekenstam (self-proclaimed - in the civilian life usher) who, at irregular intervals 1976-1984, published a querulous newssheet. Other associations included the "Order of the Oscarians", the "Neogötian League", the "Royalist Club" (an association of former Sigtuna pupils) and the "Society for the Conservation of the Monarchy" (SMB) (1960-):

SMB was a small exclusive order society, nine people in 1965. Among the members were moderate politicians Håkan Hagwall and Kjell Treslow. The Charter consisted of a single paragraph: "The Society is responsible for preserving the monarchist form of government in Sweden." This was at first interpreted as eating only monarchist dishes such as castle steak, prince sausages, princess cake, the queens jam and Napoleon pastry. Later, however, Treslow together with Björn Tarras-Wahlberg wrote a debate book about the future of the monarchy.³⁰

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At the Social Democratic Party Congress on 1 October 1969, Tage Erlander was replaced as chairman by Olof Palme. Several motions expressed fear that CG would come of age before the ongoing constitutional investigation was completed. Österhaninge workers' association motioned for an increase in the age of majority for the heir to the throne from 25 to 30 years. This was rejected on the grounds that there were more important things to fight for and that you risked making fools of yourself. Ingvar Carlsson even made a proposal for 35 years.³¹

In fact, the monarchists were not entirely opposed to an increased age of majority. After all, it took a long time preparing for the equivalence position as president of the West German republic. Normally, you were not qualified for such an office until you approached the 50s. In 1994, the age of majority for the heir to the throne was reduced to the same age as for the rest of the population: 18 years. If Crown Princess Victoria dies prematurely, Princess Estelle gets an even tougher upbringing than CG.

²⁹ Thomas Hübinette. SNF – extremhögerns gubbmaffia. Expo : Demokratisk tidskrift, 1997:1, vol 3, s 10-15.

³⁰ Christina Ollén. Monarkister gillar prinsar också. Gaudeamus, 1965:2.

³¹ Leif Andersson, Ingvar Carlsson & Agne Gustafsson. Författningsreform - nytt alternativ. Tiden, 1963.

At the Social Democratic Party Congress on October 6, 1972, Palme claimed that the Torekov compromise reduced the monarchy to an uninteresting plume that could, when necessary, be removed from the constitutional hat. Sweden would thus only be “a stroke of the pen” from a republic. (What he was referring to was that the form of government was formulated in such a manner that the words “The King or Queen, who according to the law of succession holds the throne of Sweden,” in §5 could be replaced by the word “The President” without the text otherwise having to be changed. No news. This was already the case in the proposal of 1961.) Palme's analogy of plume is said to be taken from the final lines of the play *Cyrano de Bergerac*, where the dying hero exclaims that he has now lost everything but his plume.³² (A perhaps not quite well chosen analogy. The play refers to *panache*, which is synonymous with plume but rather associates with prowess, elegance and warrior glory.) None of the republicans appears to have been satisfied with the statement. A political process to dismantle even the symbolic power of the monarchy existed from the outset:

1. The formal opening of the Parliament (pursuant to the Act of Parliament 1723) was abolished.
2. The privilege of knighting ceased. (It had however not been applied since 1902 for the explorer Sven Hedin.)
3. The privilege to award the Seraphim Order, the Order of the Sword, the Order of the Northern Star and the Order of Vasa ceased. (These were awarded by the Head of State, usually only to senior officials such as chief executives and entailed membership of a lodge for which the Head of State was Grand Master.)
4. In 1975, the government agencies, institutions and embassies lost the prefix *Kungl.* This was done by an administrative decision since no political decision to introduce the prefix existed. The decision was, for some reason, only communicated orally. The initiator was Carl Lidbom (s).
5. The legal immunity of the Head of State was removed (but was reinstated in time for the bill).

The monarchists, for their part, obviously invested in a restoration program. In 1979 it looked like this:³³

1. That the position of the Swedish Head of State as a national symbol above the political parties is guaranteed by the office being inherited by a fully cognatic [gender-neutral] succession.
2. That the king, who is above the parties, forms the government.
3. That June 6 is designated a public holiday.
4. The reintroduction of the formal opening of the Parliament.
5. That the King's duties are given fair publicity.
6. That the prefix “Royal.” reintroduced.
7. That the king regains the right to distribute orders.
8. An active opinion-forming for the constitutional monarchy.

20 years later, the monarchists' list of demands was:³⁴

1. Reintroduce the prefix *Royal* for the state bureaus.

³² SAP-Congress, 1972:989-1012. Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Arbetareparti, Protokoll, 25:e kongressen, 1972, Vol. 2.

³³ Rojalistiska föreningen. Förslag till handlingsprogram. Rojalisten, 1979:4.

³⁴ Rojalistiska föreningen. [Kravlista.] Rojalisten, 1998, nr 2.

2. Reintroduce the right to award orders.
3. Reintroduce the King as Head of government.
4. Reintroduce the Kings right to award something similar to a Knighthood, maybe an honorary doctorate.
5. Reintroduces the coronation.

In the meantime the monarchists had in fact gained some traction for their demands:

1. Gender-neutral succession was introduced in 1980.
2. The Head of State presides over the National Day on 6 June (established in 1983 by Minister of Justice Carl Axel Petri, apparently as something of a private initiative; from 1996 commemorated by canon shots and raising the flag; from 2005 a public holiday).
3. The prefix Kungl. was reintroduced (in silence) for higher educational institutions and institutions.
4. The Seraphim Order can (since 1995) be awarded to members of the Swedish Royal Family. Medals now have the same function as Orders. The higher denominations are reserved for the crème de la crème of society.
5. There has been an increase (albeit from a low level) of the publicity about the Head of State's duties.

But the infighting continues:

1. The King is no longer the head of the Church of Sweden, as the church was separated from the state in 2000. But he continues to participate in the archdiocese's major ceremonies.
2. In 2004, the Government Offices stopped signing international agreements in the name of the Head of State and instead wrote "The Government of the Kingdom of Sweden". According to the lawyer, Nicklas Vabi, this was because CG does not have any role in appointing of the Government. CG's probably last signature was an agreement with Thailand in 2003 that Swedes could serve their sentences in Sweden.

The monarchists appear to be seeking a role for the monarch, similar to that of a German president with mainly representative duties and powers to intervene in government crises. The German President is regarded as a "pouvoir neutre" in the terminology of Benjamin Constant, which is in line with the Swedish position that the King is above the parties. The monarchy has in time acquired the features of a play. Everyone pretends it to be more important than specified by the Constitution. The republican historian Sven Ulric Palme had a special term for it: Shadow monarchy.

The trench warfare allegedly stems from the fact that the parties find the arguments of the opposition irrelevant. "On the royalist side, the most common arguments are those that say that the king does good PR abroad, that the king is better suited to represent the people than a president would be, and that the king is a unifying force in difficult times. On the Republicans' side, the most common arguments are that the monarchy is undemocratic, that it violates the ideals of equality and that the human rights of the members of the royal house are violated."³⁵ The personal attacks on CG may damage the monarchy's reputation but at the same time violate his civil rights. Royalists and republicans therefore have a common

³⁵ Daniel Blihdh. Monarkidebatten - En analys av de båda sidornas argument. Göteborgs universitet, Statsvetenskapliga institutionen, vt 2009.

enemy in scandal writers. The most likely effect of the scandal writings, that CG is replaced by Crown Princess Victoria, is not in the republican's interest either. A reformed royal house with a popular Queen is more difficult to abolish.

The accusations against CG's father of being a Nazi sympathiser appear to have played no part whatsoever in the constitutional discussions and been a debate on the sidelines. The three journalists Annette Kullenberg, Per Svensson & Staffan Skott, have based themselves on old articles from the time of Edmund's death where the allegations are rejected but the reader does not know who made them or how they were formulated. The most likely sources appear to be communists and Danish and Norwegian refugees who at the time and later strongly criticized the policy of appeasement towards Germany and in particular the transit of German troops to Finland. Gustaf V, Edmund & Sibylla have embodied this policy.

Nor has CG's sex life influenced the constitutional discussion. Individual MPs have distanced themselves from him as a person, and public support for the monarchy has dipped - but always recovered. It would probably have to be accompanied by evidence that the monarchy as an institution is destroying public moral. Such attempts have been made, but not convinced anybody. The latest attempt being that CG is only in it for the money, abusing his position by receiving money from the upper classes in exchange for favours.

*

The republicans of the Parliament have over the years submitted an impressive number of motions that vary between the radical (completely abolishing the monarchy) and the petty (abolishing the mounted high guard which took place in 1987; it is currently underfunded and continues through private donations). In 1988 (?), the LO newspaper suggested doing the same with the royal house. Those who wanted to keep it could pay for it. If the most important argument against the monarchy is that it represents “an outdated view of society and humanity”, one can sense a difficulty in translating the opposition into legal paragraphs. On the one hand, each paragraph is an attack on the voters' view of human beings, not so appreciated, and on the other hand, the monarchy has a sense of self-preservation keeping it modern if trailing 50 years behind. A brief history:

In the old terrible times, the kings were autocratic or by God's grace. The Bernadottes have never legitimized their reign in this way. For example Gustaf V thought of the monarchy roughly like this: “It is my firm opinion that a constitutional king should not, under normal circumstances, behave as a leader in one direction or another, except in exceptional circumstances. However, in the current major world crisis (of WWII), I have considered it my imperative duty to on several occasions try to help the country out of its present difficulties.”³⁶ “Symbolically” this means that the nation is the most important, next to the monarch and the people. The Constitution is of less importance. “With the people for the country where we were born” as Gustaf V put it in his motto. This created conflicts throughout his reign in 1907-1950.

A modern-style constitutional monarch is subject to the laws and serves the kingdom. “Duty above all” as Gustaf VI put it in his motto. Symbolically, this means that the Constitution is the most important, next to the nation, the monarch and the people. The monarch is more of an official. This worked well throughout his reign 1950-1973.

³⁶ Kung Gustaf V. Tal på 85-årsdagen den 16 juni 1943.

(The nickname of Gustaf VI was indeed “Mr Duty”.) Ideally he had wanted the rights of the British monarch: “The right to be consulted, the right to encourage and the right to warn”.³⁷ These are rights which CG has taken upon himself on various occasions but which have always (rightly or wrongly) been protested as a violation of the Torekov compromise.

CG's motto “For Sweden – With the times” is more about adaptation and survival. A 2003-2004 interview study with CG and others summarized it as “the royal five R's”:³⁸ (1) Royal: “Being royal is a state of being: of someone set apart normally through an official ceremony or the constitution.” (2) Regal: “Being regal is acting in a royal manner appropriate to the circumstances.” (3) Relevant: “Being relevant means sharing an affinity with a large number of stakeholder groups.” (4) Responsive: “Being responsive means to evolve with changing times.” (5) Respected: “Since the monarchy no longer is taken for granted its existence depends on earning the respect of the people.” CG later stated that “The Swedish people are indirectly making demands on how their monarch should act.” Or as the Americans put it: Every people has the governance they deserve.

The fact that the king as a national symbol has to act in the event of need continues to be an argument. According to CG, the monarch's greatest task is to unite the country in difficult situations.³⁹ In connection with CG's tsunami speech in 2005, the Norwegian political scientist Carl-Erik Grimstad argued that the Torekov compromise must be interpreted as a royal right to “warn” the political system.⁴⁰ This was denied by the Social Democratic Party Secretary Marita Ulvskog. Historically, the Republicans have always dismissed this argument: “Only in abnormal times [such as wars and disasters] can the monarchy function normally. ... It is in view of this eventuality that the king [Gustaf V] holds himself with 120 courtiers in rank from colonel to field marshal. It seems a bit over-ambitious.”⁴¹ But still in 1978, 16 percent of the population believed that the king had the right to intervene personally in a serious crisis situation.⁴²

The Torekov compromise was essentially about what the Head of State should not concern himself with. The remaining obligations were enough for perhaps 2-10 weeks' work per year. What would the regent actually do when he or she did not govern, so that he or she did not turn into an anachronism? On the 20th anniversary of the constitution, CG was lauded for against all odds having succeeded in “filling his office”. It seems to have been done partly under the radar and according to the principle “everything that is not protested is allowed”. But how it happened belongs to another chapter.

An odd feature at the 20th anniversary was all those die-hard republicans who, despite their previous attitude of “the hammer in the head and the sickle in the throat” felt compelled to congratulate CG. The most beautiful political music is when opponents grind their teeth.

³⁷ Stig H:son-Ericson. *Memoarer : Vita havet. Segling i kungliga farvatten*. Bonniers, 1976.

³⁸ John M T Balmer, Stephan A Greyser, Mats Urde. (aug 2004). *Monarchies as Corporate Brands*. Bradford University School of Management. Working Paper No 04/24.

³⁹ Mats Nyström: *Kung i tiden - Intervju med Carl XIV Gustaf inför 60-årsdagen*. SVT1, 2006-04-30, kl 20:15-20:45.

⁴⁰ Carl-Erik Grimstad. [Debattartikel.] *Dagens Nyheter*, 2005-01-23.

⁴¹ Hans Haste. *Stockholms Republikanska Klubb. Odaterad. Omkring 1955*.

⁴² Sifo, 1978-04. I: *Aftonbladet, Dagens Nyheter & Svenska Dagbladet*, 1978-05-30.