

**CARL BILDT'S ASSERTIVE SWEDEN:  
RHETORICAL EXIGENCE, NEW IDENTITY, AND PROMINENCE**

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**Chris John Carlson**

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**Title**

Carl Bildt's Assertive Sweden:

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Rhetorical Exigence, New Identity, and Prominence

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**By**

Chris Carlson

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## **ABSTRACT**

Carlson, Chris John, M.A., Department of Communication, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, North Dakota State University, November 2010. Carl Bildt's Assertive Sweden: Rhetorical Exigence, New Identity, and Prominence. Major Professor: Dr. Mark Meister.

This study examined the text of a speech by Carl Bildt, Foreign Minister, Kingdom of Sweden, in Stockholm on December 19, 2006. Analyzed through the prism of Lloyd Bitzer's (1968) "rhetorical situation" theory, a discourse of re-identification appears as a means to re-establish Swedish relevance and influence in the continent. The elements of exigence, audience, and constraints were analyzed in relation to the text, and emergent discursive themes discussed. A discussion of the inherent limitations and implications was also offered.

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## PREFACE

A quarter century ago I was an exchange student in Sweden, living on campus at a tiny 'alternative school' in the central Swedish province of Småland, on the outskirts of a town named Nässjö. This school, home to art students as well as adults keen to re-start their primary education, performed a unique function. These schools, *folkhögskolor*, are vestigial remnants of the original dual public school system in Scandinavia. Whereas primary and secondary schools were instituted for the education of the youth, alternative schools were created to educate the vast peasantry whose sole education prior to the introduction of the alternative system was cursory instruction in the Lutheran Catechism by the parish priest. The priest ensured that all could read the Ten Commandments and the Lutheran Catechism. Satisfied that all parish residents were instructed in the ways of the church, formal education for generations of Swedes ended there, at least until the institution of the *folkhögskola* system. Come the end of the nineteenth century, Swedish literacy increased hand in hand with an industrialization which demanded higher degrees of sophistication.

Adult education remains a central theme of *folkhögskolor*, but the mission of this system retained legitimacy through affiliation with movements, guilds, and associations. For me, a student within the 'general education' path, I encountered adults re-entering the society or the labor market due to contractions in industry, release from prison, or to improve academic standing prior to entry into university.

The far larger portion of the school was devoted to art education. Out of an enrollment of roughly 130 students, 70% were connected to the art program.

The year abroad satisfied many of my requirements for a Bachelors of Arts degree in Scandinavian Studies, created a fluency in Swedish that I have cultivated and expanded ever since, and fostered an interest in Sweden that remains strong to this day. Because of this experience, I am able to read, research, and analyze artifacts in native Swedish and apply a discerning eye. The tools of rhetorical criticism retain validity regardless of the language and culture employed.

Given the volume of interesting artifacts of oratory native to my homeland, it is a fair question to ask 'Why Sweden?' and in particular, 'Why Carl Bildt?' The answers to those questions have much to do with my interests, but touch also upon the nature of this discipline, which is to uncover the discourse unleashed by rhetorical endeavor. Events in my home country – the United States of America – are dissected and discussed to such a degree that I would find it difficult to apply necessary dispassion. But just as I have endeavored to participate and engage in the arena of public discourse in the United States of America, I have also been paying close attention to the developments and the discourse in Sweden.

In an attempt to help ground the historical basis for the following paper, a short overview of Swedish history is necessary. Swedish pre-history centers on the exploits of warrior and adventuresome Vikings who sailed from Sweden and spread eastward, occupying and pacifying the tribes along the Volga, and founding what would centuries later become a mighty Russia. The Vikings settled,

conquered, pillaged, and otherwise wreaked havoc, never colonizing in the modern sense. The trade routes established and opened by the Vikings became well-worn paths and allowed Scandinavia to influence, and be influenced by, the outside world, culminating in the adoption of Christianity. The organizing effect of Christianity brought Sweden into the fold of Europe and ushered in four centuries of relative peace, but hardly prosperity.<sup>1</sup>

Swedish historians often point to Gustav Vasa (1496 – 1560) as the founder of the modern nation of Sweden. That is as valid a starting point as any other, for although Swedish history predates that, Sweden as a kingdom has continued uninterrupted since the crowning of Gustav Vasa in 1523. He assumed that crown at the expense of the Danish royal house who ruled Sweden, with great difficulty and strife, for the proceeding 125 years. Prior to that, Sweden was a loose kingdom, a confederation of three tribes, united more or less through approval and acceptance of the church in Rome.

The House of Vasa reached its zenith with Gustavus Adolphus. His entry into the 30-years war in 1630 marked the beginning of what is considered the Swedish Empire in Northern Europe, dominating the Eastern Baltic and occupying

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<sup>1</sup> Ulf Nilson's *What Happened to Sweden* (Nilson, 2007) offers a succinct and interesting condensation of Swedish history as he compares the opposite trajectories of national power and relevance between Sweden and the United States beginning in 1630. His overview is valuable and brief.



what is modern-day Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and periodically parts of northern Germany. This period of glory was short-lived, and less than two hundred years later, at the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars, Sweden was left with the current territorial state and fought a brief war with Denmark, then Norway, to form a union with Norway that lasted until 1905.

The technological advances of the nineteenth century changed Sweden profoundly, beginning with the change in agricultural practices that would force the migration of peasantry from field to factory. Mass emigration from Sweden to the United States also occurred in the final decades of the nineteenth century, greatly influencing a peaceful transition from rural to urban existence. And yet, ideas and influences from the continent did occur, empowering the peasantry and working class with new-found collective power while correspondingly diminishing the power of the monarchy and established aristocracy.

Sweden was an early adopter of collectivism, setting the stage for cooperation between labor and industry and branding the Social Democratic party as the progressive articulation of that collective spirit through nearly the entire twentieth century. *Folkhemmet Sverige* (The People's Home) was the slogan which implied peace, prosperity, and non-alignment with either block, whether capitalist or communist. Swedish Social Democracy held power for nearly the entire century, with only brief periods of minority political status. Sweden thus avoided involvement in either world war, emerged from each with an industrial base intact, and prospered mightily as Europe twice rebuilt.

While still a prosperous nation, the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain left Sweden without the second rail and no middle ground between which to reside. The Social Democratic party suffered first the loss of their charismatic leader at the hands of an assassin in 1986, then electoral loss in 1991. The period of minority status for the party was brief, and the Social Democrats were soon in power again for another decade, but their ideology had changed due to Swedish integration into the European Union (EU) in 1995.

Currently, Sweden is governed by a Conservative coalition government (*Alliansen*) headed by the *Moderata Samlings Partiet*, a center-right party who have been second only in size to the Social Democratic party for nearly as long as the Social Democrats had been in power. The nominal terminology of conservative in Sweden does not contain similar connotation as the term engenders here in the United States. A conservative in Sweden is inclined to believe in the primary pillars of *Folkhemmet Sverige* including the institutions of the welfare state, but does so with a greater emphasis on open markets, less restrictive labor regulations, and greater integration into continental institutions and markets (Nilsson, 1988), a posture now made more capable through a membership in the EU.

Carl Bildt, the current Foreign Minister of Sweden and former party leader of the Moderate Party and one-time Prime Minister, is the focus of this paper. Bildt has been a long-standing proponent of European integration, and with his appointment as Foreign Minister, he was given an opportunity to articulate his position that through greater union with Europe, Sweden can prosper as well as

play a leading role in finding solutions to the problems vexing the world today.

Whereas the policies of the previous administration and the social democrats were beginning the process of realignment, historically Swedish social democrats were Euro-skeptic, and maintained enthusiastically Swedish exceptionalism.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The purpose of this paper is to provide a rhetorical critical analysis of a speech by Carl Bildt, current Foreign Minister and one-time Prime Minister of Sweden. Using a descriptive analysis of the speech along with the methodology of Lloyd Bitzer's (1968) "rhetorical situation", the analysis of this speech will seek to show how Bildt begins the process of re-shaping Swedish identity and creating the framework for a discourse on Swedish place in the world today.

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, the landscape of Europe has changed politically, strategically, and rhetorically. The winds of change even reached the remote, cold, rhetorically frozen tundra of Sweden, forcing the country to move from exclusivity to inclusivity, unilateralism to multilateralism, and from external critic to involved agent. The preceding fifty-year span of the cold war allowed a specifically Swedish mentality and identity of a "middle-way" of neither American capitalist nor Soviet communist to take hold (Childs, 1947), combining age-old stereotypes and cultural differences against entrenched geo-political realities. During that period, Sweden's "middle-way" mentality flourished, leveraging the rhetoric of neutrality and caution to maximize security and stability internally, and ambitions of continued relevance externally. Maintenance of stability within Sweden was leveraged strenuously in efforts to officially endorse stability across the continent, allowing Swedish rhetoric to freeze too into an idealism ultimately built upon unstable ground (Nilson, 2007).

An excellent example of the sea-change in Swedish rhetorical style can be found in the speeches of Sweden's Foreign Minister and former Prime Minister Carl Bildt. Bildt's speeches, beginning at least as early as December 2006, outline a theme of activism, inclusion, and involvement unheard of in previous Swedish pronouncements and official statements. *Ny Politik I en Ny Tid?* (A New Policy for a New Era?), a speech given by Bildt on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006, at the *Utrikespolitiska Institutet* (Swedish Institute of International Affairs) articulates the new values of Sweden. It includes an acknowledgement of history, a consideration of circumstance, a sober assessment of the Swedish situation, a repudiation of the rhetorical contradictions of the previous rhetorical style, and finally a clarion call to prepare for a future of a different, and out of necessity, an active Europe. Given at the dawning of the new conservative coalition government installed in the autumn of 2006, Bildt's speeches lay out the priorities and challenges faced by Sweden in relation to the world and the context in which such threats and situations exist.

The rhetoric of Carl Bildt stands in stark contrast to that of Olof Palme, the former Prime Minister and the person in whom the expression of Swedish social democracy achieved a world-wide audience. With Palme as a tireless promoter, Sweden achieved its role as an assertive neutral, a full-throated scold who found international relevance through detached criticism; a relevance that promoted the Swedish model of the "middle way" as the basis for moral authority (Nilsson, 1988). After Palme's death at the hands of an assassin on the cold wintry streets of Stockholm in 1986, Sweden became rhetorically adrift. The collapse of the iron curtain, symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall in November of 1989, removed the

basis for a “middle way,” and new challenges and threats grew that undermined the foundation upon which Swedish rhetoric long rested. Through articulating these threats while finding renewed basis for Swedish relevance, Bildt builds a new Swedish rhetoric separate and distinct from that which dominated Sweden for nearly a century.

### **Significance**

The significance of this speech is due to the change in government and the articulation of a new policy by a new regime. More importantly, however, is that this speech articulates the philosophical basis for fundamental re-alignment of identity away from nationalism to internationalism. Identity is a reflection of who one is, whereas policy flows from identity to define how one should act. This speech by Carl Bildt roots existing Swedish identity in past European interactions, including both successes and failures, as he builds a foundation for a new Swedish identity no longer bounded by national borders but instead as an integral piece of a European whole. Bildt begins the process of building a new identity through the use of historical milestones and common values, threats, and institutions. Through a process of re-identification, articulation of a new policy becomes natural and organic, not contradictory or contrary. Bildt is directing Swedish identity away from an identity rooted in social democratic exceptionalism but instead towards a new multinational Europe.

### **Who is Carl Bildt?**

Nils Daniel Carl Bildt, or Carl Bildt, is the current Foreign Minister of Sweden (beginning in 2006 under the Alliance Government, a conservative coalition

government). Born in Halmstad, Sweden, in 1949 to an aristocratic family, Carl's lineage includes generational service of distinction to the crown and country. This legacy remains intact in the biography of Carl Bildt, as he began involvement in Swedish politics, and the conservative party (*Moderata Samlings Parti*) during his youth and during his time as a student at Stockholm University (Sweden, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2010). Upon leaving university, it did not take long before Bildt was himself a member a parliament, beginning in 1979.

The move from back-bench unknown to prominence occurred abruptly for Bildt. A confrontation with, and special mention by, the long-time Prime Minister Olof Palme during the aftermath of the "Whiskey on the Rocks" incident of 1981 was the first nation-wide spotlight on Bildt. The incident, where a Whiskey-class submarine of the Soviet Union Baltic Fleet ran aground south of Karlskrona, Sweden, was a dramatic illustration that Sweden was not isolated from the military chess game being played across the globe by the two super-powers and their treaty-bound partners in the Warsaw Pact and NATO. Bildt's membership on an investigation committee after the grounding of the submarine spawned what became known as the "Bildt Affair" (Ekeus, Mossberg, & Arvidsson, 2001). The "Bildt Affair" revolved around a public reprimand by the sitting prime minister toward Bildt, a previously unknown minister and commission member investigating the submarine incident. Bildt's travels to the United States in connection with the investigation upset the government of Palme. Afraid that the Soviet Union would misinterpret such consultations as evidence of Swedish/US intelligence cooperation, Prime Minister Palme criticized Bildt for recklessness in pursuit of a

personal inquiry. This public spat brought Bildt into the spotlight of Swedish politics. The notoriety revolving around the “Bildt Affair” along with his marriage to the sitting party leader’s daughter propelled Bildt into succession as the party leader of the center-right Moderata party in 1986, then on to a term as prime minister from 1991 until 1994. His three-year term was unremarkable, but included the building blocks upon which Sweden eventually accepted membership into the European Union (EU). The momentum begun by Bildt’s government was picked up by the returned social democrats, and Sweden became a full member in the EU in January 1995.

With the election loss of the conservative coalition in 1994 and release from the weighty functions of running a government, Bildt became a United Nations (UN) envoy to the Balkans from 1995 until 2001, working to bring peace and stability to the war-torn nations of the former Yugoslavia. Later, Bildt became a fellow at the Rand Corporation until his appointment as Foreign Minister under the current conservative coalition (*Alliansen*) government of Fredrik Reinfeldt (Sweden, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2010).

Bildt is not a stranger to controversy. His appointment as Foreign Minister began a fairly lengthy period of scrutiny during which the tangle of financial investments and board memberships jeopardized his appointment. The current Prime Minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt, stood by Bildt, the various investments and memberships were unwound, and when politically necessary the investment was relinquished, allowing Bildt to continue at the helm of the foreign ministry begun in October of 2006.



Upon joining the government of Fredrik Reinfeldt - and with the controversy of his appointment brewing in the background - Bildt took to the podium in December of 2006 to articulate the objective and direction of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. With this speech and subsequent speeches continuing on to the present, Bildt charted a new course and a new tone for Swedish rhetoric.

The rhetorical situation into which Carl Bildt treads is a changing Europe, and in particular a changing Sweden. The first indication of change was the electoral loss by the social-democratic coalition government and installation of a conservative coalition government. Internal events ignited by external forces set the wheels of change in motion. Over time, Sweden became ever more aware of, and affected by, the forces of and vulnerabilities defined by the outside world. Sweden is too small and remote to change the pace, or progress, of world-wide events. The Wall came down regardless of Sweden's preference to walk precariously atop it. Disengaged criticism of the west and slavish praise of the ideology of the east brought Sweden a certain sense of smug self-satisfaction and perhaps the perception of stability, but also a contradiction of the fundamental idealism of a Swedish open society. Now the world lacked the structures upon which Sweden found its footing, removed the geo-political gap that provided Sweden space, and exposed the hypocrisy of Sweden's rhetorical flourishes.

The attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, was an important moment in creating the new world reality, but for Sweden a profound moment a short two years later further eroded what was a sense of comfortable insulation from the threatening chaos of the outside world when then Swedish

Foreign Minister Anna Lindh was murdered in a Stockholm department store on September 11, 2003, by the son of Serbian immigrants (Anna Lindhs Minnes Fond, 2003). This event, chillingly reminiscent of the assassination of former Prime Minister Olof Palme in 1986, removed the last vestige of Swedish innocence and the sense of internal safety or international 'apartness'. I am not suggesting that Bildt and the current Swedish government leveraged these tragedies in pursuit of a new policy, but rather in totality with all other radical changes in the European and world landscapes these occurrences formed the rhetorical situation in which Sweden now finds itself.

With the election results in, Sweden changed from a left-leaning, social democratic party lead government to a right-leaning, Moderata (conservative) party lead government in autumn of 2006. While a few interruptions of social democratic rule occurred over the previous half century, Sweden was dominated by the social democratic party who defined Swedish identity and ambition. The late Olof Palme, formerly Prime Minister, articulated a Swedish international role as that of activist and critic on the world scene, primarily criticizing the west and the United States in particular (Nilson, 2007). The long shadow of Palme continued to cover Sweden twenty years beyond his assassination. So entrenched were the principles upon which Swedish foreign policy built that Nilsson(1988) predicted a consequence of Palme's position in Sweden as the 'conscience' of the world would cast a shadow long after his death. Rather than scrap all remnants of Palme's vision, and the national identity upon which this vision took root, the election of a new government sought to re-define Sweden's role, identity, and ambition in terms of retaining

relevance in a changing world; a relevance that hinges not on detachment, but engagement, and is activated through advocacy, not criticism.

Today's Swedish conservatives are a different breed from that of a generation earlier. Whereas prior conservatives chafed at the notion of an international Sweden (Nilsson, 1988), today's conservatives in Sweden embrace internationalism, recognize the importance of globalization, and advocate for Sweden to participate. In brief, Sweden is no longer a majority owner of much of its industry, but instead a minority owner, a situation that exists throughout the world (Nilson, 2007). Globalization has come to Sweden, and to deny globalized Sweden is to deny reality.

### **Rationale and Justification for a Rhetorical Analysis**

In December 2006, the newly installed Foreign Minister of Sweden Carl Bildt gave a speech titled *Ny Politik I en Ny Tid?* (A New Policy for a New Era?), and with it set down the priorities Sweden must pursue given where the nation, continent, and world found itself. Approximately 5,050 words in length, or 40 minutes long, this brisk outline is not at all exhaustive in its approach to identifying the challenges of the era nor fully descriptive in the many ways to address all issues posed by the world today. Instead, this speech begins the rhetorical process of defining what it means to be Swedish and European in the modern era and the context within which decisions and actions shall take place. In later speeches, other themes further clarify Bildt's points and Swedish priorities, but the speech analyzed here sets the tone and the tenor for all speeches of policy thereafter.

Since sweeping into power in October of 2006, the current Swedish government, and Bildt in particular, have articulated a position reflective of the new realities facing Sweden and the world and removed the vestigial attachment to a presumed "middle way"; in the absence of a bilateral world no middle ground is left to occupy. Rather than recoiling from the threats and dangers a new reality describe, the new government proposes engagement with that new reality. Upon the collapse of the Soviet Union, Sweden found itself free to seek membership instead of association in the EU (Dahl, 2006). Since joining the EU, Sweden has advocated for the expansion of membership in the union while also pressing for a growing world-wide political influence of the union. In Sweden's eyes, the EU can be the vehicle by which Europe can play an active role in resolving the chronic problems of the world.

Bildt leverages this convergence of time as an opportunity to begin a process and frame a discourse. The process begun is re-shaping Swedish identity not as exceptional and external, but rather engaged and integral. Swedish character remains intact in this conversion of identity, with retained ideals of openness, equality, national dignity, and integrity as guiding principles of Swedish identification. This discourse addresses how Sweden's new identity can improve the institutions of Europe and the world through experience, expertise, engagement and enterprise.

Sweden is not alone in its need to re-define identity in a world quickly changing. Institutions big and small, global, national, and communal are being lashed by the tidal waves of rapid change. Public discourse is a means through

which change is both acknowledged and applied. Change is inevitable; it occurs regardless of intent or preference. Maintaining the status quo is a fool's sport given the unstoppable nature of time and the impossible task of abating time's ravages. A discourse can instead ease the accommodation of change and steer destinations towards preferred outcomes.

Nations as large and powerful as the United States is equally susceptible to the ills of change. The vacuum created by the withdrawal of the Soviet Union was only partially, and temporarily, filled by the expanding reach of United States' moral and military might. That gap is now also being filled with a resurgent Russia, the industrial might of China, and the moral pronouncements of an extremist mullah in hiding. These voices are amplified through actions of military or monetary might. What voice exists in opposition to social, economic, or moral retreat? One important voice is that of Carl Bildt and his message to Sweden.

### **Rhetorical Theory**

The rhetorical critical analysis of the text of *Ny Politic i en Ny Tid* will be consistent with Lloyd Bitzer's "rhetorical situation" theory. In his defense and extension of Bitzer's "rhetorical situation" theory, Keith Grant-Davie (1997) outlines well the definition of the "rhetorical situation", and the components that make up the "rhetorical situation". Grant-Davie (1997) quotes Bitzer's definition of the situation as "a situation where a speaker or writer sees a need to change reality and sees that the change may be effected through the rhetorical discourse". According to Bitzer's theory, a rhetorical situation consists of three components; exigence, constraints, and audience. These three defining components will be

discussed in order to explore how the theory aids in understanding this speech from a critical perspective.

### **Exigence.**

Exigence applies to the matter and motivation of the discourse. According to Grant-Davie, (1997, p. 265) Bitzer defined *exigence* as “an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be”. In the case of exigence for *Ny Politik i en Ny Tid?* (A New Policy for a New Era?), the exigence was the sitting of a new government in Sweden, and the preparations for Sweden’s presidency of the EU two years later.

What was “other than it should be” is both policy and identity. Swedish policy was to be in line with the mandate of the newly elected government. This government promised a contrast from the decade of Social Democratic policies of the previous leftist coalition. A break was to be forged from the rhetoric of the Social Democratic party that was built over a half century or more.

In 1995 Sweden joined the EU. This occurred as a result of the groundwork laid by Carl Bildt during his tenure as prime minister from 1991 until 1994. The rhetoric of the social democrats was one of an aloof critic; Sweden was great because of its non-alignment and “middle-way” economy. By 2006, this rhetorical foundation was cracked and eroded away through the collapse of the bi-lateral world of east-west superpowers and the emergence of borderless threats in the form of terrorism, population upheavals, and globalization. The rhetorical tools of the past no longer fit the realities of today. A new reality did indeed exist, and Bildt seized the moment to shape the rhetorical discourse and frame the dialogue.

## **Constraints.**

The constraints are “persons, events, objects and relations which are part of the situation because they have the power to constrain the decision and actions needed to modify the exigence” (Bitzer, 1968, p. 8). While the term ‘constraints’ carries a connotation of limitations, typically Bitzer uses this term as a positive, active tool with which the rhetor performs the constraining of discourse using references to people, events, objects, and relations (Grant-Davie, 1997). In this way, the nature of the constraint can retain its positive or negative character, but is leveraged by the rhetor in pursuit of his argument and in context of the situation.

The constraints within the situation are many, and Bildt’s speech is a treasure-trove of overt constraints, while also powerful in allusion. Bildt enumerates situational constraints such as the political mandate to effectively govern, and to work within the established institutions of the state and the EU. Additionally, Bildt purposefully invokes the constraints of globalization, terrorism, poverty and inequality to accentuate the exigence, and to ground his argument.

The constraints Bildt enumerates include a subtle constraint of identity, which becomes his overt argument – that Sweden must re-identify itself as an integral and engaged participant in Europe and the world in order to affect the changes Bildt, and Sweden, wish to see come to pass. The identity of the past, an identity of aloof critic purposely non-aligned, is contradictory to Swedish interests, and Swedish values.

## **Audience.**

As defined by Bitzer, the rhetorical audience consists of those with whom the discourse can influence into becoming mediators of change. Bildt was speaking to a mixed and multi-faceted audience at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (*Utrikespolitiska institutet*). Articulating the priorities and positions of the newly formed government, the assembled press and civil servants served as both recipients and conduits for his message. Ultimately, the audience for the speech was the whole of the Swedish nation, its neighbors, Europe, and the world, for the urgency Bildt describes, and the changes he prescribes, begin locally but extend to Europe and the world beyond.

Reaction to the speech was positive. The left-leaning *Aftonbladet* characterized the speech as “interesting and visionary” (Klein, 2006), whereas the more conservative *Svenska Dagbladet* complimented the speech as a broad exposé covering Sweden and Europe, complaining only about the lack of specifics, but noting how context was added during the press conference conducted after the speech (Holmström, 2006).

In a greater sense, the national audience was precisely the primary target Bildt intended. This was not an intimate affair, but rather the official statement of a newly installed government. Because this speech was given in Sweden at a Swedish foreign policy institute, the speech was written and delivered in Swedish. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has however maintained an archive where an English translation can be accessed.



## **Summary and Direction**

The implications of this analysis will be discussed as part of this paper. In brief, this speech is properly analyzed through the prism of Bitzer's "rhetorical situation" because exigence, constraints, and audience converge and create the discourse necessary to acknowledge change and make preparations. Such preparations are necessary for muting the ill effects of change while retaining leverage, relevance, and a semblance of control. Indeed, the process of re-identification is discursive itself, and Bildt frames his discourse to include characteristics that should ease the identity transformation.

Subsequent chapters will further analyze the text, first through a descriptive analysis of the text, and next through applying the methodology of the "rhetorical situation". I acknowledge that there are limitations to fully analyzing this text by virtue of the theory and methodology applied. Implications and conclusions gained through the analysis will include these insights as well as limitations.

## CHAPTER 2. CONTEXT, TEXT, AND RHETORICAL THEORY

With this chapter, I first describe the rhetor, then deconstruct the text of the analyzed speech in a descriptive analysis as described by Campbell and Burkholder (1996). A descriptive analysis offers a base-line understanding of the speech from which Bitzer's (1968) "rhetorical situation" theory may be applied and analyzed for further insight into discourse and implications. This baseline understanding allows a three-step process to occur. The first step is to become familiar with the text, second to analyze the text, and the final step is to draw implications from that analysis.

As stated in chapter one, Carl Bildt is the current Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden; one-time party leader of the center-right political party called the Moderates (*Moderata Samlingspartiet*); short-term Prime Minister; and UN envoy tasked to finding a diplomatic solution and peace in the former Yugoslavia states. Born of privilege and title into an aristocratic family (Aftonbladet, 2000), Bildt became involved in the youth movement version of the Moderates as a young man. Shortly after leaving the university, he became the leader of the movement, eventually joining the party proper and becoming a member of parliament. Bildt's involvement in the Swedish government now spans four decades and many roles.

The artifact I am reviewing is titled *Ny Politik I en Ny Tid?* (A New Policy for a New Era?), a speech given by Bildt on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006, at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (*Utrikespolitiska Institutet*) on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Transcribed, this speech is approximately 5,050 words in length, equating to roughly 40 minutes of speech. Accounts of in-place audience size and

composition are obscure if even existent, but certainly there were journalists in attendance, as accounts of the speech by the Swedish press exist. Bildt references a video of the speech in his blog, but I have been unsuccessful in finding that link.

Upon the conclusion of his speech, Bildt conducted a question and answer session in the form of a press conference where he expanded on a few ideas and clarified a few points. Reports of the post-speech press conference reflect appreciation of such clarifications and expansions, especially in regard to the role of Russia and the situation in the Middle East.

### **Context**

In the autumn of 2006, eleven years after Sweden's entry into the European Union, seventeen years after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, Sweden changed governments from a Social Democratic led government to a right-leaning alliance. 2006 also represented 20 years since the assassination of Olof Palme, the lion of Swedish social democracy, a time span equal to the passing of an entire generation. The world too also experienced the dramatic terrorist act of September 11, 2001, and the initiation of two wars in response.

The autumn of 2006 saw the world still economically optimistic, but wracked by war. Sweden is intimately involved in these wars in two ways, first Sweden has involvement in the reconstruction of Afghanistan through United Nation assignment of troops to train and equip Afghan police. Second, Sweden is now home to thousands of refugees escaping the ravages of war in Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, and

this cumulative effect is turning the streets of Swedish cities into new tapestries of scents, sounds, colors, and peoples.

Sweden grows evermore weary of accepting refugees, and the economic costs of foreign deployment. As part of the election, political parties articulated their platform on economic, refugee, and foreign policy. Bildt's speech is an extension of that process, addressing the priorities and policies of the newly installed government.

### **Descriptive Analysis of Text**

A descriptive analysis of the text is a helpful first step in understanding the text and later the methodological application. A descriptive analysis presents in a prescriptive format information on the purpose, audience, persona, tone, structure, and supporting material of the artifact being analyzed. These broad categories include the first building blocks of a standard rhetorical critical analysis.

#### **Purpose.**

The purpose of the speech refers to the argumentative conclusion (Campbell & Burkholder, 1996), or the justification for it. Bildt makes the justification for this speech with his first utterance: "[A] new Government is expected to bring a new foreign policy" (Bildt, 2006, p. 1) He continues with an unambiguous statement of European identity and comity. The emphasis is on Europe, rather than on Sweden, for it is Bildt's purpose to build the argument for Swedish policy to become once again involved and engaged in Europe, not peripheral and exceptional.

Bildt builds upon notions of peace and prosperity as the goal of the new Swedish policy, and to achieve these goals, Sweden must integrate and engage. The EU offers Sweden, and Europe, the platform to build a lasting peace, a peace that has arrived, he says, due to prosperity, a common rule of law, openness and democracy. In Bildt's words, "in our part of the world, we can see that our Europe has never been so free, so peaceful and so prosperous as it is today. And when I use the word 'never' I mean precisely that – never in history" (p. 7).

Bildt notes that this new policy is scaled from the local to the global, and is consistent at all levels, whether an immigrant enclave in Stockholm, the city area of Rinkeby, or anywhere in Europe or the world when he states, "[a] straight line runs through our policy, from our work to openness in the school playground in Rinkeby, through our belief in an open Europe, to our conviction that the forces of free trade and globalisation (sic) create the conditions for a better world" (p. 4).

Whereas Swedish peace and prosperity was previously dependent on disengagement, the world today compels Swedish integration and an engagement with Europe. Swedish interests are furthered by Europe leveraging its collective economic and moral power and encouraging the spread of peace and prosperity globally.

Bildt concludes his speech by again asserting his thesis. His summation highlights advantages Sweden has compared to other recently admitted members of the Union, and compares Sweden to the aspirational states now seeking inclusion.

[W]e Swedes make up only 0.15 percent of the world's population, and 1.2 percent of the world's economy – and even in the EU, we actually represent no more than 2 percent of the population.

But that does not mean that what we do is insignificant.

We have traditions of international commitment, entrepreneurship and cooperation that command respect.

Swedes are often in demand both when it comes to leading international companies and working for peace and reconciliation within the UN system and elsewhere.

We are more Europeanized and globalized than most people. This is something to be proud of and to see as one of our decisive advantages in the new world.

But this pride must not detract from the pride we feel for things Swedish – or for our local identity. (p. 12)

### **Persona.**

A descriptive analysis includes mention of the persona assumed by the rhetor. For purposes of strategy and credibility, the persona contributes to a rhetor's ethos and must denote authority in pursuing the discourse the rhetor has engaged (Campbell & Burkholder, 1996). In this speech, Bildt's persona is at minimum two distinct characters.

Bildt is by no means an unknown figure in Swedish public life. His time as a politician, and the various roles he has served within the government all contribute to the credibility Bildt leverages to promote his thesis. Therefore, Bildt's persona

as an elder statesman is sensed throughout the speech, and one that he reflects upon frequently, whether commenting on technological advances since first using a GSM mobile phone as Prime Minister, or as he reflects upon his role in applying for Swedish membership in the EU.

The role of elder statesman is important for engendering credibility beyond the position of departmental minister. An elder statesman is a person who is granted the opportunity to comment broadly on affairs, whether local or global, due to recognized experience in positions of authority and leadership nationally and internationally.

The persona of elder statesman is combined with the currently assigned and overt role of Foreign Minister, the express role he serves and the position from which this speech is given. Bildt's secondary but equally important persona is governmental minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and thus also the chief diplomat of the Kingdom of Sweden. In this capacity Bildt provides policy objectives of the government and carries the power to articulate and implement the policies of the government, not merely the opportunity to offer perspectives and opinions as a private citizen.

#### **Audience.**

It is an important consideration during a descriptive analysis to include the audience for whom the speech was intended, and to whom the message was addressed. As with many major political speeches, there is both an immediate audience and a mediated one. The immediate audience was presumably the assembled civil servants of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, officials within the

Institute of International Affairs, the public at large, and journalists. The mediated audience was reached through journalistic summations of the speech or via archival video of the speech available through the Institute.

The venue, the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, is an apolitical, academic venue whose mission is to offer a forum for debate, a research library and archival repository with a publication arm for expression of issues of international interest. Founded in 1938, the Institute continues to offer research, conference, and archival services for members throughout the world.

Whether immediate or mediated, the audience for Bildt's speech was intentionally broad, primarily Swedish, but not exclusively Swedish. The evidence for intentional breadth exists in the immediate transcription of the speech into English, while the speech was uttered in Swedish.

Bildt's primary purpose surrounds policy perspectives of the new Swedish government, and in connection to that the intended audience will be first Swedish citizenry. This primary audience is intentionally referenced in relation to their European identity. The greater European audience is intended to hear the commonality of Swedish and European ambition and purpose.

### **Tone.**

Elements of discourse, primarily language elements that suggest the rhetor's attitude toward the audience and the subject matter are referred to as tone (Campbell & Burkholder, 1996). Bildt assumes a variety of tones throughout the speech, including scholarly, authoritarian, urgent critic, and optimist.



Bildt's variety of tones comprises both subject matter and intended audience. The tone of scholar arrives early, in deference to the assembled audience of the venue, and returns periodically as he cites statistics or invokes terminology generally uncommon to a general public. Examples of the scholarly tone occur in the evocation of a historical perspective, citation of EU or UN statistics, or uncommon vocabulary, such as "forces of Schumpeterian creative destruction" (denoting capitalism's revolutionary means of innovation and reinvention constantly replacing existing means of production or less-efficient processes).

Bildt's tone also reflects stature and personal experience. Bildt states overtly his various positions of authority, or obliquely his experience as a UN envoy to war-torn former Yugoslavia, thereby assuming the tone of an authority figure both in title and through experience.

Bildt assumes a tone of critical urgency, especially when outlining the threats that exist today, or those threats seen building on the horizon. Bildt's tone compels his audience to recognize too the threats that surrounds them, and join in a united effort to confront those threats through adoption of the policies that build instead peace and prosperity, tempered with tolerance and equality.

Despite my tremendous optimism on the power and opportunities of globalization, I am one of those who regard the strategic perspectives of the next few decades with deep concern. And who are convinced that only a more intensive strategic discussion on the challenges we are facing will be able to lead to policies that move us forward.

Basically, what is important is to safeguard and further develop all the opportunities of globalisation (sic) for an increasingly open and better world – but to do this in full awareness of the strength of the forces that, if they succeed in growing stronger, risk throwing everything into disarray. (p. 8)

Bildt goes on to state:

...The trends are not difficult to see. Authoritarian states that lack legitimacy. Stagnating economies and rapidly growing populations. And at the same time, the increased role of religion in politics as well – which is not limited to the Islamic world alone.

Bildt further defines trends and threats:

...It is no longer possible for anyone to ignore the substantially increased importance that global environmental issues will have. Can we protect maritime resources from depletion so that we do not create risks for future generations? And the challenges involved in the significantly increased demand for energy can hardly be underestimated. The work to meet the new risks posed by new infections and diseases, in a time when viruses can also quickly fly first class between cities of the world, will also demand a new level of international cooperation. (p. 9)

While Bildt's sense of urgency is strenuously articulated, it is important to recognize too the optimism inherent in his tone. To simply enumerate the challenges without also recognizing inherent strength and opportunity would leave the audience gasping and resigned. Instead, Bildt chooses to counter his concerns with reasons for optimism, with the following illustration as example:

“No global era of liberation and new opportunities has lasted for ever. War and confrontation have not been written out of history” (p. 8). This obvious statement of realism is countered later with an expression of optimism that derives from European unity and engagement, such as when he states “[i]f we want to meet these challenges, and secure the better world that will so clearly be possible, there is no alternative to a stronger Europe – with its initiatives and as a partner in cooperation with others” (p. 9).

Bildt’s tone, or more accurately his spectrum of tones, bolsters the notion of credibility while also defining the threats and suggesting the solution. Through leveraging European experience and power, traditions and institutions, the seemingly intractable problems of the world can be resolved. Bildt offers no other alternative than European integration and engagement.

### **Structure.**

The structure of the speech indicates trajectory and arc of the argument. Structure is the means through which the argument is built. (Campbell & Burkholder, 1996) In this speech, Bildt takes the linear approach of time, first evoking historical lessons, then describing the present situation, and finally making prognoses of alternative futures based on action or inaction, effort or missteps.

Bildt first presents his audience with paradigmatic shifts in Swedish history during the historical phase of his speech. These paradigms are purported to be the great breaks in Swedish identity and history. These three paradigms also represent the trajectory of a country moving from obscurity to significance and then back again towards obscurity. Ultimately, Bildt’s narrative purpose is to rescue

Sweden, and Europe, from obscurity and irrelevance by learning from history, recognizing the forces and themes of today, and then squinting to see and prepare for the trends of tomorrow. To achieve the desired outcome of relevance and prosperity, Swedes must alter their identity and become engaged, inclusive, and collaborative.

The first paradigm Bildt describes occurs with Sweden's first national entrance on the European stage. In the seventeenth century, Sweden became a European empire through the opportunistic ambition of a war-time king. During the Thirty Years war, Gustav II Adolf (Gustavus Adolphus) Vasa landed in Germany in 1630 with the express purpose of expanding Swedish influence and putatively connected to enlarging and protecting newly established Protestantism. By the end of 1632 he was dead, but Swedish aspiration was not. His quick death in the battle of Lutzen in November of 1632 was the first harbinger of the difficulty of maintaining an empire, and was the first blow Sweden sustained as a nation of continental influence with ambitions of great power. Over the course of the next two hundred years, Sweden devolved back into a weak and peripheral national entity, albeit a process punctuated by periodic spasms of expansion and contraction, all within a nearly unbroken era of war with a rotating parade of European powers.

The second paradigm Bildt describes emphasizes stability and disengagement from European internal power-plays. This paradigm shift occurs in 1812, nearly two centuries after the first paradigm shift, and concurrent with the crowning of a new king, former French Field Marshal Jean Baptiste Bernadotte.

Newly christened upon coronation, King Karl XIV Johan Bernadotte ushered in an era of insulation and self-containment just as Napoleon was sailing off to exile in Elba, then St. Helena, leaving Europe internally a smoldering ruin and outwardly expressive of influence and might through colonialism.

According to Bildt, this second paradigm worked well to preserve what was left of Swedish treasure and pride and eventually began the rebuilding of Swedish wealth. Sweden, like other European countries, harnessed raw power and existing natural resources to the rudimentary elements of a national compulsory education and hitched a willing peasantry to the wagon of modernization, thereby undergoing its own Industrial Revolution. Eventually, inevitable internal labor unrest grew from the genuinely horrific working conditions of nineteenth century industry and mingled with external philosophical influence from the continent. Mobilized labor adopted social democratic idealism as a means to unify. A unified and politically charged peasantry eventually forced the election of Swedish governments that gradually reduced the power of the monarchy and aristocracy while strengthening democratic rule in the hands of the lower, yet vast, under classes (Karlsson, Kirudd, & Svantesson, 1983).

Equally important in the expansion of Swedish wealth was remaining uninvolved as the continent was twice ravaged by war, so the paradigmatic policy of non-alignment in peacetime, neutrality during war, formed the perfect rhetorical foundation upon which Swedish politicians built their definition of *Folkhemmet Sverige* (People's home in Sweden) and the benevolence of 'the middle way.' Or, as Bildt states:

This period has sometimes been portrayed as a long and uninterrupted period of what has been called a policy of neutrality. While it was scarcely that, the unifying factor in policy during this period was the constant endeavour of the small state to avoid being drawn into disagreements between the great powers.

It was this policy that in the decades after the end of the Second World War - and long shaped by the experiences of those years - came to be described as non-participation in alliances in peacetime with a view to neutrality in time of war.

In its hard core - supported by a defence (sic) that long remained strong - this was a policy that served our country well, and that we also believe contributed to a certain stability in our part of Europe.

Some of its rhetorical trappings did not always reflect the actual hard core. Sometimes there was a troubling tendency to let non-participation in security policy alliances drift into an ideological neutrality between democracies and dictatorships. Fundamentally, it was a policy that had broad national support. (pp. 1-2)

Acknowledging the geo-political reality that allowed Swedish identity and rhetoric to solidify into what he describes as the preservation of stability through a muscular maintenance of distance and disengagement serves to set-up Bildt's turn to the third paradigm - the reality in which we all, Sweden, Europe, and the world at large find ourselves today. Bildt claims the starting point for this third paradigm was membership in the EU. With Sweden's membership came also Sweden's

obligation to become involved in the active administration of Europe - setting policy, consulting, negotiating, and compromising in the pursuit of mutually beneficial solutions, while identifying emerging issues still on the far-off horizon.

*With Ny Politik I en Ny Tid? (A New Policy for a New Era?) Bildt (2006)*

integrates second paradigm priorities of stability and security as shared paramount priorities of the third paradigm, but lays out the necessity to abandon the previous regime's posturing of a 'middle way' as the means to achieving national priorities. The 'middle way' supported socialist revolutionary regimes world-wide, criticized Western democracies, and was suspicious of global free-markets as a means for peoples world-wide to succeed and thrive (Nilsson, 1988). According to Bildt (2006), all of these consequences of a pursuit of a 'middle way' have proven to be in opposition to Swedish values of openness, equality, and human rights, or patently proven false as a viable economic model. Bildt instead asks Sweden to embrace integration into a EU and articulate common European values as the necessary path to stability and security. In short, the problems are too immense, and too complicated, for Sweden to go it alone.

Concurrent to the third paradigm shift in Sweden, a new wave of globalization began in earnest. This new wave of globalization, according to Bildt, offers Sweden tremendous opportunity for growth, while also creating a new set of challenges to be overcome. To minimize these challenges, Sweden, and Europe, must become more agile, competitive, and yet strenuous in the articulation of its ideals. The idealism of equality, respect for the rule of law, and preservation of a

civil society must be safeguarded, according to Bildt, and again marks a rhetorical break from the precepts of the second paradigm.

History teaches us that open societies and open economies provide the best conditions for bringing about creativity, rather than confrontation, from the meeting between different cultures. Open trade also paves the way for open societies and open minds.

... When the forces of Schumpeterian creative destruction and the new openness sweep through the global economy, it is inevitable that they will also create economic and social unrest, and consequently political turbulence.

Those who fear losing out in these changes often seek refuge in a treacherous belief in the putative security of closed ideas, closed societies and the closed economy. It is often no longer ideologies that sustain politics - more frequently it is identities that define political antagonisms. (pp. 6-7)

Bildt then turns to internal threats that revolve around external issues to tie his thesis together:

... Third-generation immigrants from Pakistan are beginning to manufacture bombs in the new slums of old England. Elections in Iraq are becoming little more than an ethnic census. There are stormy debates about whether a Muslim country can also be European. Brutal nationalism is running amok in Russian Karelia... (p. 7)

Bildt is not blind to the challenges of today, but instead sees that the strength of Europe, and Sweden, lies in their openness – social, economic, and



political. These strengths manifest themselves through the flow of ideas, innovation, and opportunism. And yet, according to Bildt (2006), as these strengths increase, the power inherent in the position of Foreign Minister of a member state correspondingly fades, for as the walls of isolation and nationality grow weaker, the body of the whole that is the union gains strength.

This strength, according to Bildt (2006), rests in the rhetorical power of an ideal Europe that embraces challenges as opportunities, recognizes these challenges exist, and ultimately confronts them. To do otherwise, he asserts, is too great of a risk.

### **Supporting Material.**

Supporting material within an artifact lends credibility to the rhetor and grounds the argument in logic. Through syllogism, citation, and analogy, the argument builds the logical foundation upon which conclusions can be drawn. These materials also make the argument vivid and memorable (Campbell & Burkholder, 1996).

Bildt incorporates multiple sources and citations throughout his speech, which is clearly an expectation given the venue and the immediate audience. Bildt invokes institutions such as the EU, the International Monetary Fund, and the UN. Bildt also references philosophers and authors, such as Kant, Schumpeter, and Thomas Freedman.

Most vivid is Bildt's evocative allusion to the terrorist strike on September 11, 2001: "September 11 demonstrates the force lies in the combination of the modern technology and ancient hatred. At a cost far below that of an old tank, it

was possible to attack and threaten the world's leading power in a manner never previously seen" (p. 8).

Through allusion to known sources and shared experience, Bildt invokes familiarity, builds credibility, and strengthens the logical underpinnings of his argument. Supporting material is easily referenced and commonly understood.

### **Summary**

This fairly swift speech is a sweeping overview of the need for Sweden to alter and evolve its identity to incorporate the current situation and reap the potential benefits of a rapidly changing world. Only through re-identification and action can Sweden face the challenges of today, alter the course of possible outcomes away from a litany of threats, and remain relevant, secure, and to prosper.

As stated earlier, I am applying Lloyd Bitzer's (1968) "rhetorical situation" theory as the means through which I shall analyze this artifact. Bitzer's theory focuses on three components; exigence, audience, and constraints. The descriptive analysis above takes a conventional approach to describing the speech, whereas Bitzer's theory of the "rhetorical situation" allows analysis in more depth to occur. I shall pursue the analysis of Bildt's speech in Chapter 3.

### CHAPTER 3. THEORY AND METHOD

With Chapter 2 we familiarized ourselves with the text through the process of a descriptive analysis (Campbell & Burkholder, 1996). This exercise allowed us to draw from the text familiar themes and concepts that become more salient through refined analysis. With this chapter, I shall use Bitzer's (1968) "rhetorical situation" theory as the refining tool to further uncover discourse.

According to Bitzer (1968), a "rhetorical situation" gives rise to a rhetorical discourse. At its heart, "it is the situation which calls the discourse into existence" (p. 2) Furthermore, the "rhetorical situation" is one that contains three elements; exigence, audience, and constraints. These three elements define and frame the discourse, allowing a situation to be the impetus for change. My purpose in this chapter shall be to identify these three elements within the context of Bildt's speech, and draw conclusions and implications from that analysis regarding the discourse intended to effect change, specifically the change for Sweden to re-identify.

To begin, Bitzer (1968) makes a general proposition that rhetorical discourse comes into being to effect change. More specific to his task, Bitzer states that a "rhetorical situation" gives rise to rhetorical discourse through the convergence of exigence, audience, and constraints, because of "some specific condition or situation which invites discourse" (p. 4) Additionally, in defining rhetoric, Bitzer states that "[t]he rhetor alters reality by bringing into existence a discourse of such a character that the audience, in thought and action, is so

engaged that is becomes mediator of change. In this sense rhetoric is always persuasive” (p. 4). Bitzer proceeds to say:

Let us regard “rhetorical situation” as a natural context of persons, events, objects, relations, and an exigence which strongly invites utterance; this invited utterance participates naturally in the situational activity, and by means of its participation with situation obtains its meaning and its rhetorical character. (p. 5)

### **Procedures**

In order to analyze Bildt’s speech through application of Bitzer’s “rhetorical situation”, I shall examine the three elements of the “rhetorical situation” and isolate the rhetorical discourse these elements together form. Exigence, audience, and constraints are each unique elements that form the basis of a “rhetorical situation”, and give rise to the intentional discourse created by the rhetor in response to this situation. I will first address each element, then discuss what such an analysis reveals regarding the discourse. A discussion of the limitations and alternatives shall follow in the final chapter of this essay.

### **Exigence.**

Previously, I discussed the situation that gave rise to this rhetorical discourse. The specific situation was the election of a moderate-right coalition to govern Sweden after twelve years of Social Democratic rule. Furthermore, looking back over the previous century, the dominance of the Social Democratic party was felt in nearly all expressions of domestic and foreign policy, creating the Swedish welfare state, and establishing the identify of a ‘*folkhemmet sverige*’ (People’s

home in Sweden) that persists to this day, along with the policy of neutrality in war and non-alignment in peace. In general terms, breaks from the political domination by the Social Democrats allowed change to occur around the periphery, scaling back presumed excesses of the welfare state but not challenging the notions of exclusion and separateness, non-alignment during peace and neutrality during war, and the 'middle-way' that Swedes would identify as the root of their prosperity and international relevance.

The primary exigence for the situation is installation of a new Swedish government, with Carl Bildt as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Fredrik Reinfeldt as Prime Minister. Briefly stated, "we have a solid parliamentary majority on which to base the policy we seek to conduct" (Bildt, 2006, p. 1). But the installation of a new government is not necessarily "urgent", whereas the issues that gave rise to the election results are both situational and urgent. The issues surrounding the ascendance of the moderate-right coalition include a changing landscape beyond the boundaries of Sweden as much as those issues contained within, so Bildt (2006) immediately follows his proclaimed right to make a policy statement to say that the purpose of his speech is "to focus on the new tasks we face in the slightly longer-term perspective" (p. 1). This longer-term perspective implies tasks that extend beyond the mandate of a newly elected government.

These "new tasks" are predicated upon the exigencies of security, prosperity, equality, globalization and cooperation. The first task is in regard to immediate security concerns. Bildt notes that "[t]he progressive collapse of the Soviet system in the late 1980s and early 1990s fundamentally changed the

European scene and also set the stage for the paradigm shift in our own foreign and security policy” (Bildt, 2006, p. 2). The second task is to address stability and opportunities for prosperity that exist for those countries in the doorway to European integration and beyond, or as he states: “[i]t also concerns the far more important task of contributing to freedom and democracy in the area around the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea that has historically always been so significant” (p. 3). The third task is to counter the forces that work to close societies or economies, whether on a local scale or international level, whose work prohibit their citizens from benefiting from the bounty that globalization brings. These forces exist in nationalist movements, religion-based discrimination or hatred, and authoritarian regimes. The fourth task relates to harnessing the power of globalization through “building better networks for international cooperation that can provide globalisation (sic) with new opportunities” (p. 10). Ultimately, the final and most important task is to focus on “strengthening European cooperation which can make us, together, the force in the service of peace, freedom and reconciliation that the world will be in ever more desperate need of” (p. 10).

These tasks have implications far beyond Sweden’s, and Europe’s, borders. “There are risks here that a combination of slower economic development, unresolved political issues and tendencies towards religiously based friction will create the conditions for a perfect storm of violent unrest, conflict and even war,” says Bildt (p.8). Such threats are not idle, as we know from the events on September 11, 2001 when two commercial airplanes were commandeered and

pressed into service as missiles, or July 7, 2005 when suicide bombers took to the tunnels of the London Underground. Sadly, there are more examples to provide.

Enjoining these tasks is the basis for urgency, especially given that the consequences of avoidance are so dire. Chaos, calamity, and collapse, danger, destitution, and destabilization – these outcomes lurk in the shadows if Sweden shirks its national and international responsibilities. The mandate provided by the electorate, the policy positions of this new government, and the inherent national character provide the recipe for effectively taking on these tasks, and with that, creating a better world from Skurup, to Europe, and beyond.

#### **Audience.**

Bitzer (1968) is not merely literal when describing audience. To Bitzer, the audience extends beyond those capable of hearing or reading the speech, but is defined instead as those whose function is as mediators of change. This rhetorical audience “consists only of those persons who are capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change” (p. 8). But, let us begin with those to whom this speech was addressed, both immediate and mediated. While it is difficult to find direct sources of the exact audience, it can be reasonably assumed that the immediate audience consisted of officials and functionaries from within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, assembled academic personnel from the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, members of the general public, and media. Beyond, the mediated audiences were those who were made aware of the speech through the mediated service of the media in attendance, and consisted of recordings, journalistic appraisals, and archived video.

It is likely that it is the mediated audience that is most relevant, as it seems that this audience was the audience Bildt addresses himself to. In particular, Bildt refers to the audience in a generic but inclusive manner, often including himself as a presumed recipient of his claims.

The audience, whether immediate or mediated, contain both supporters and opponents to this new government. An objective of the audience is to either validate support, or sense opportunity to lend support. Many mediated audience members are expected to receive the message of Bildt's speech through the filter of a media that is ideologically aligned. Swedish newspapers lean left or right editorially, and that lean is detected whether a morning or evening edition.

Helle Klein, columnist and blogger for Aftonbladet, a left-leaning evening print media, gives the speech a cursory stamp of approval while providing a pass-through link to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs transcribed speech. Her comment translates as "[i]t was an interesting and visionary speech, even though I don't agree with everything said" (Klein, 2006). Dagens Nyheter, a widely read national morning newspaper, gives an overview of the speech, highlighting Bildt's suggestion of Europe's soft power as a means to solve problems in the world (Molin, 2006).

Carl Bildt presented the same themes to parliament in February, 2007, and by then the opposition was ready with criticism and alternatives. According to Dagens Nyheter, criticism centered on the short-term economic imbalances brought about by globalization and the absence of criticism for Sudanese actions in Darfur (Carlbohm, 2007). Aware of such criticism, Bildt wrote an editorial in



Svenska Dagbladet, a widely distributed Swedish morning newspaper, repeating his stance that globalization does reduce the gap between rich and poor rather than exasperate it (Bildt, 2006)b.

This final example illustrates that Bildt acknowledges and continues to engage his rhetorical audience. The exigence exists, and change must occur. The change Bildt is attempting to effect nationally is not a switch. Change of the type Bildt advocates is instead a process of re-identification, and through re-identification building a movement to integrate into and actively engage the institutions capable of effecting global change – to address the urgent imperfections Bildt enumerates.

### **Constraints.**

If the purpose of a discourse is to move an audience into action so as to modify an exigence, it is not any action that is intended, but rather a specific action or group of actions are desired. Bitzer's (1968) descriptions of rhetorical constraints include attributes of the audience themselves, such as attitude and character, traditions and history. Further, Bitzer says, constraints may be situational-dependent, or arise only as a result of the situation, such as the characteristics of resiliency, stubbornness, and resolve. Finally, the rhetor too has constraints, and these constraints include logical proofs, the personal character of the rhetor, and style.

Bildt (2006) leverages first the constraint of history. In particular, history is leveraged in order to illustrate dynamic change in the relationship Sweden has with the world at large, but most notably Europe, over the course of four centuries.

Evoking history serves two purposes and contains two constraints; Sweden has held relevance (a constraint) on a continental and global plain, and Swedish pride (also a constraint) is well-founded as evidenced by its relevance. This historical overview establishes a discourse constrained by a historical perspective.

Upon conclusion of the history lesson, Bildt turns to policy, and specifically the policies of neutrality and non-alignment that held sway with the nation for over half a century: “the unifying factor in policy during this period was the constant endeavour (sic) of the small state to avoid being drawn into disagreements between the great powers” (p. 2). Policy is a constraint that is wielded by an authority, such as a government, and in this speech Bildt is the authoritarian because of his position within the government. His opening statement states clearly his intention to form a new foreign policy:

In our foreign policy, we speak more clearly about the European identity and the commitment to Europe. We have a clear perception of the importance of the transatlantic link. We want to be an even clearer voice for freedom and democracy. We are investing considerably more in a capacity to contribute to stability and peace operations. (p. 1)

Bildt is in the process of replacing policy, and the previous policy of neutrality and non-alignment is being replaced instead with a policy of cooperation and engagement. Or, as Bildt stated about the previous policy:

It was this policy that in the decades after the end of the Second World War - and long shaped by the experiences of those years - came to be described

as non-participation in alliances in peacetime with a view to neutrality in time of war.

... Sometimes there was a troubling tendency to let non-participation in security policy alliances drift into an ideological neutrality between democracies and dictatorships. Fundamentally, it was a policy that had broad national support. (p. 2)

Next, Bildt leverages the constraints uncovered by his review of history along with the notion of policy to remind his audience that Sweden, and also the world, are living during a period of change, and that policy too must evolve and account for the changes occurring, or as he states it, paradigmatic shifts in process. One paradigmatic shift to have occurred in the modern era is the expansion of the EU, and Sweden's inclusion in that expansion. Sweden's membership in the EU is a positive constraint allowing Sweden a voice in the direction and action of the EU. According to Bildt, "[f]or what we did then was to join a political alliance with far-reaching ambitions not just in the area of economic integration, but also in the area of foreign and security policy" (p. 2).

The justification for a change in policy was a change in the dynamic of maintaining security. As Bildt (2006) states, "the situation in Europe was based on the ability of military deterrence to keep war away, until such time as a genuine peace could become possible" (p. 2). But a fundamental change forced a re-evaluation of the policy equation. The cause for the change was the end of the east-west ideological divide. Bildt goes on to say "[t]he progressive collapse of the Soviet system in the late 1980s and early 1990s fundamentally changed the

European scene and also set the stage for the paradigm shift in our own foreign and security policy” (p. 2). Sweden could not straddle a middle that no longer existed. In absence of a middle, there was a solution, and the solution “that we too ended up aligning ourselves with was that now there was a chance to build a lasting peace by a progressively more far-reaching economic and political integration of an increasingly large part of our continent” (pp. 2-3). To further drive home the point, Bildt ends his lesson with a reminder of the concept of value within this constraint: “we are convinced of the importance of building this new European framework for peace - and that we wish to play our full part in building it” (p. 2).

The logical progression here is easy to read; history begets policy, and as history unfolds, policy must evolve. Whereas historically the nation-state was the nexus for change and the basis for policy, many of today’s challenges are borderless and in fact already global.

[W]e see more clearly than in many other places that we are no longer living in the international system that came to be codified with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Since then, the international system has been a system of basically independent, sovereign states, and international politics basically a question of relations between them. (p. 8)

Bildt proceeds with his description of the change in diplomacy:

... Diplomacy was a matter of envoys between the courts of the monarchs. It was when armies ventured over the borders - not at all unusual - that the world changed.

Today, states and their unions - and our European Union is the primary example - are still the most important single actors in the international system. But it is becoming increasingly clear that other forces and actors are becoming more and more important. (p. 8)

Today, the situation is such that in place of conflicts between nations there are aligned on one side quasi-institutions such as Hezbollah, al-Qaida, Taliban, Janjaweed, and more, along with organized crime cartels that fight insurgencies and traffic contraband, and on the other unions such as the EU and the UN, and alliances for trade, security, and development. Collectively, our industries pollute, and our activities further add to global climate change while our security agreements fail to safeguard us from these borderless threats of terrorism and climate change. Such challenges as posed by these diverse threats are impossible to confront by the institutions of individual states, and instead must be met with the collective capacity of the many that disarm through moral might, economic opportunity, and mechanisms for reconciliation. The constraints of membership and engagement allow Sweden an opportunity to work for solutions to the intractable problems of the globe.

Still, there is value in being Swedish. Admittedly, Sweden is a small state with a small population, and the effects of Sweden alone are minimal. Sweden is but .15% of the world population, or roughly 2% of the population of Europe, and collectively make up only just over 1% of the world economy.

But that does not mean that what we do is insignificant.

We have traditions of international commitment, entrepreneurship and cooperation that command respect.

Swedes are often in demand both when it comes to leading international companies and working for peace and reconciliation within the UN system and elsewhere. (p. 12)

Bildt points out Swedish constraints of tradition, of being in demand internationally, and of commanding respect. These constraints are not mere pandering comments meant to stroke a national ego, but are accepted truths found in examples as diverse as Dag Hammarskjöld, IKEA, BP, and even Bildt's role as UN envoy to the Balkans in the 1990s.

A further constraint is the power of globalization. Globalization has unleashed an opportunity for prosperity heretofore unseen. Yet, even globalization has a duality that must be reckoned with. "In our globalised (sic) world, both security and insecurity are also globalized (sic)" (p. 9). Additionally, "No global era of liberation and new opportunities has lasted for ever. War and confrontation have not been written out of history" (p. 8). And yet, Bildt is a believer in the positive attributes of globalization as a means to fuel development, expand prosperity, and reduce inequity and poverty. The ability to harness globalization is found in the collective power of the EU. The collective task of Sweden and Europe is to build "networks for international cooperation that can provide globalisation (sic) with new opportunities" (p. 10) because Sweden's "prosperity has always been based on [their] participation in European and global economic integration" (p. 10). Bildt cautions that we cannot be blind to potential threats inherent in globalization:

[I]t is the developments in the forecourts of Europe - over towards Hindu Kush, down towards the Strait of Hormuz, the Horn of Africa and the cultural dividing lines of the southern Sahara - that represent the most serious threats we must be able to face in order to have faith in the future potential of globalisation (sic).

If we want to meet these challenges, and secure the better world that will so clearly be possible, there is no alternative to a stronger Europe - with the examples it sets, with its initiatives and as a partner in cooperation with others. (p. 9)

Sweden, according to Bildt, has a multitude of characteristics in common with Europe that make the process of greater integration easier. Bildt (2006) mentions national characteristics such as a charitable attitude to the world, "democracy, the rule of law, a market economy, and civic rights and freedoms" (p. 11). Such constraints upon Swedish society are to their advantage for integration. In brief, Sweden "has increasingly become both more Europeanised (sic) and more globalised (sic)" (p. 10).

An additional constraint Bildt mentions often is the trait of openness. It is a trait that Swedes have in common with much of Europe, and it is a trait that lends itself to prosperity and stability. Specifically, Bildt states that "[h]ere at home, we want our Sweden to be an open society with an open economy, and similarly, we want to have an open Europe that also sees it as an important task to work for an open world" (p. 3). Bildt counters the value of openness with:

This is far more than a matter of mere fine phrases. The forces that want to see more closed societies, a closed Europe and a world in which walls of distrust are raised again must absolutely not be underestimated. We see them constantly in the distrust towards that which is different, the fear of that which is unfamiliar and the siren calls that try to entice us to seek security in the closed communities that are ultimately defined by distrust towards those who are not willing, not able or not allowed to join in. (pp. 3-4).

Bildt links openness to prosperity and security with his “conviction that the forces of free trade and globalisation (sic) create the conditions for a better world. ...This line is the vision of an open Sweden, an open Europe and an open world” (p. 4).

Together, these constraints of history, policy, character, membership, globalization and openness are the very constraints that allow Swedes to re-cast their identity from isolated and separate Sweden into an integrated Swedish European with a global influence. Note here that Bildt isn't suggesting the abandonment of a Swedish identity, but rather an evolutionary perspective that adds to the essence of Swedish identity. Swedes cannot escape the fact that they are changing. The very notion of being Swedish today is not static. In Sweden today, “[m]ore baby boys are named Mohammed than Fredrik - even if so far, Carl seems to be holding its own” (p. 11), an obvious moment of levity at the expense of the new Prime Minister, but likely true given that approximately “one million people living in our country were born in other countries” (p. 11). To Bildt, this is a constraint of strength, and one Swedes can use with pride, for it is evolutionary



and not an abandonment of what is, essentially, the nature of being Swedish.

Underscoring this, Bildt's (2006) final words are precisely these:

We are more Europeanised (sic) and globalised (sic) than most people. This is something to be proud of and to see as one of our decisive advantages in the new world. ...But this pride must not detract from the pride we feel for things Swedish - or for our local identity. (p. 12)

## **Discussion**

On the face of it, Bildt's speech is a tenuous policy statement that has the simple premise of re-orienting Swedish policy towards global engagement through established institutions of Europe. His premise is that we are living in a global environment where actions anywhere have an impact on Sweden's economic and security interests. And while actions anywhere have an impact, Swedish response in isolation is insufficient.

The subtle foundation Bildt builds his thesis of policy change is constructed upon the notion of identity. He strives to first define a Swedish identity based on past glory that quickly hit a zenith long ago and then dissipated to near irrelevance. The way by which Sweden was able to reconstruct an identity that included international relevance was through cunning positioning between geopolitical machinations in the name of neutrality and careful ideological placement (non-alignment) between competing ideologies of east and west. While this strategy effectively maintained relevance and gave the illusion of security, it was ultimately unsustainable if not also cynical and contradictory to Swedish values.

The end of the cold war forced Sweden to change. While Swedish international policy long focused on neutrality during war and non-alignment during peace as expressions of Swedish security, Sweden also strove to find a 'middle-way' ideologically that borrowed heavily from traditions of both western and eastern bloc. Both premises were illusory, for Swedish security was expressly dependent upon secret agreements with the west to shield Sweden in the event of east-west conflict, while Swedish criticism of the west and silence towards the east contradicted Swedish values of human rights, democracy, and an open society (Nilson, 2007).

Bildt leverages that common understanding of former policy as a means to justify movement to the new policy he outlines – a policy of cooperation, integration, engagement, and active involvement on a continental scale, no longer primarily nationally. But policy is subtext for his real intention, which is to re-cast Swedish identity into a globalized identity.

Through a critical analysis of Bildt's speech using Bitzer's theory of the "rhetorical situation", Bildt's speech comes into better focus as not a policy speech so much as a process speech that intends to reconstruct Swedish identity beyond the traditional psychological and political boundaries of Sweden. Bildt himself says so much with his opening statement, but contextually his definition could be understood as the "official" Swedish identity.

Bildt as a rhetor carries a persona of statesman and public figure. Often considered arrogant by opponent and ally alike, he also has a history of accomplishment and engagement. Bildt's audience consists of a media and public

who characterize him as hostile and arrogant, two words that comprise common adjectives associated with Bildt in wide-distribution newspaper opinion pages. And yet, there is also a hint of begrudging respect in the editorial opinion pieces, for if nothing else than his damnable habit of being so often right.

Swedish identity is changing, and there is little that can be done to stop or slow that process. Immigrants and refugees now constitute over ten percent of the population, as Bildt aptly points out, and with that there now exists diversity in the faces and dress of fellow shoppers, students, commuters, and officials. Blonde hair and blue eyes still form a majority, and the language is still Swedish, but in both cases there is a change in hue, texture, and lilt. In Bildt's speech, this is a positive attribute, and a strength for meeting the challenges of a globalized economy.

### **Summary**

Accepting change and evolving identity, both shall help Sweden transition and again lead. Bildt's rhetorical audience, the citizens of Sweden, are asked to recognize their attributes, accept change, and accelerate adoption of their new identity. Bildt's global audience is asked too to recognize the attributes of being Swedish, acknowledge the changing character that is Swedish, and make room for them at the global table. Opposing change, closing instead of opening, such actions are counter-productive and threaten not only prosperity, but threaten the essence of what it means to be Swedish. The identity Sweden is moving to isn't too different from whom they already are – it is instead a function of primacy. Bildt's goal is to change identity from Swedish-European to a European-Swede.

Such an identity already contains familiar characteristics such as a commitment to an open society, the supremacy of democratic rule, faith in the rule of law, admiration for entrepreneurship and market-based economic solutions. Such familiarity should ease the transition, and also ease their integration into Europe and beyond.

Chapter four will discuss the limitations and implications of Bitzer's (1968) theory of "rhetorical situation". Further, chapter four shall discuss the success of Bildt in altering the identity of Sweden to be inclusive, engaged, and Europeanized.

## CHAPTER 4. LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

With this chapter, I intend to address the limitations inherent in application of a specific theory and methodology. I shall also address the implications of the uncovered discourse Bitzer's (1968) theory and Bildt's (2006) speech provide.

### **Limitations**

Performing a rhetorical analysis of an artifact is fraught with limitations and problems. Questions arise regarding the appropriateness of the rhetorical analysis tool employed, the depth of penetration and the richness of the revealed discourse. Utilization of Bitzer's (1968) "rhetorical situation" as the method was a choice I made as a fitting tool, but surely other tools would be useful, whether Kenneth Burke's dramatist theory, or Bormann's fantasy theme analysis. Other tools offer varying perspectives that illuminate potential discourse. In the case of Bildt's policy unveiling, the methodology offered by the "rhetorical situation" and the emphasis on the elements of exigence, audience, and constraints seems most fitting.

Edwin Black (1980) might surely disagree, for with Black, the problems arise precisely at the moment of fixating on a particular methodology and theory. His criticism is valid, for as he states "A problem of applying any pre-existing theory to the interpretation of a rhetorical transaction is that the critic is disposed to find exactly what he or she expected to find" (p. 333). Black further clarifies this point, "[t]he critic begins with a fixed idea about how a rhetorical transaction is to be apprehended; apprehends it in accordance with that fixed idea and in no other way; and then, apprehension having been achieved, the fixed idea is regarded as

having been confirmed” (p. 333). There is little in regard to refutation I can state based on Black’s criticisms of rhetorical theory apart from the validity of his statement. The best I can hope to state is that application of a rhetorical theory and model for method has been enlightening and edifying precisely due to the nature of this exercise.

Other critics of Bitzer’s original “rhetorical situation” theory focus on aspects of the various elements. Richard Larson (1970) takes issue with Bitzer’s narrowness in defining rhetorical discourse and the scope of the conditions that engender it. By broadening the definition of discourse, relevant questions can be addressed, such as whether alternative actions are available to an audience; what is the probability of an action resolving the imperfection presented; what is the cost of failure to resolve the imperfection; and of multiple exigences – what is the most pressing? Larson is not interested in tossing Bitzer’s theory, but instead broadening it to encompass a greater analytical outcome.

Richard Vatz (1973) is the anti-Bitzer, turning every premise and postulate of Bitzer around as he focuses attention on the concept of ‘meaning’. Vatz proposes that “rhetorical situations” do not merely appear external of the rhetor, but instead are invented by the rhetor. A rhetor makes conscious choices regarding what are salient facts, using creative vocabulary as a matter of choice for the audience to determine urgency. “[O]ne never runs out of context. One never runs out of facts to describe a situation” (p. 156). To Vatz, rhetoric is not situational, but rather situations are rhetorical.

Vatz's criticism was muted, to a degree, by the argument of Scott Consigny (1974). Consigny agrees with parts of both Bitzer's and Vatz's definition, bridging the two regarding rhetor as separate from or inventive of situation through the expanded definition of rhetoric as an art that requires the rhetor to take into account the particularities of the situation and employ them artistically to form discourse.

Grant-Davie (1997) integrates criticisms of the theory by Consigny and Vatz by offering a broader analysis of the constituent element exigence; elevating the rhetor to the same level of 'element' as audience; then suggests that any of these elements may be plural.

Each of these theorists provides valuable insight into the "rhetorical situation", allowing the theory to expand and account for more than Bitzer's original theory accommodated. I consciously chose to limit my analysis and method to Bitzer's original theory for purposes of purity. Accounting for these variations in application and extensions, or turning the whole analytical process inside out as suggested by Vatz, would have been counterproductive to my exercise. While doing such as suggested by any of these three may reveal more nuance and insight, it is my preference to remain true to the original theory without amendment.

### **Implications**

The themes of Bildt's speech were reiterated and expanded upon throughout the mandate period following his presentation in December, 2006. Since then, Bildt has called upon the EU to expand and refresh the institutional tools contained within the union to better address the threats he outlines in the

speech analyzed here. Furthermore, Sweden held the ceremonial position of President of the European Parliament in the second half of 2009, and chose as their primary goal an international agreement on carbon emissions. To the frustration of Sweden in general and Bildt in particular, there was not an agreement meted out, with the United States again playing the role of spoiler in achieving international consensus.

Larson's (1970) question about the outcome is relevant here. If the discourse unleashed by this speech is intended to alter and evolve Swedish identity into a European identity so as to better address the urgent imperfections of the world today, how has Bildt done? At best, one can see mixed results. On the face of it, the ills of the world are still unchanged. Peace has not descended like a dove upon the middle-east, carbon emissions continue unabated, and terrorism still threatens enterprise. Furthermore, instead of prosperity the world has faced a devastating recession due to a financial meltdown in the United States, and continues to threaten financial stability in all of Europe as tenuous states face near collapse from debt maintenance.

I would argue that the exigence still exists, but that does not diminish the discourse nor desired action Bildt proposes. The exigence continue to offer the urgent need for Sweden to complete the process of identity change, to integrate more fully into Europe and invigorate the institutions of the EU to be engaged and active in finding solutions to intractable problems.

As evidence of the mixed results in changing Swedish identity, Sweden recently conducted an election as the mandate period for the government had



concluded. In September of 2010, a peculiar election result was returned. The party of Bildt and Reinfeldt, the moderates, received the largest percentage of votes in their history, whereas the social democrats suffered the greatest loss of a century. This offers evidence that the policy of the existing government is supported, but implications of the underlying discourse are suspect by half the population. But the whole story does not end there, for neither a right nor a left coalition achieved a necessary parliamentary majority of 175 seats, and a fringe anti-immigrant party (the Swedish Democrats) scored their first awarding of seats in their brief history of twenty seats. The discourse championed by this anti-immigrant party is opposed to Bildt's (2006) message of inclusivity and engagement on a continental and global scale. But in support of the penetration of Bildt's premise of inclusivity, it is important to note that both coalitions, right and left, have held firm in their refusal to allow the Swedish Democrats to become king-maker.

More to the point, does the emergence of an empowered anti-immigrant party prove the failure of Bildt in evolving the identity of Sweden? I would again argue in the negative. Post-election, Swedish discourse has centered on a backlash against the seating of the party. The two coalitions remain firm in not inviting the party into forming a majority government. If anything, this development could hasten the process of re-identification and clarify anew what Swedish identity really means.

## **Summary**

Sweden, and the world, is in the process of fundamental change as threats and opportunities no longer are defined by national borders. Sweden's capacity to influence and adapt is growing irrelevant on a national level, but Swedish characteristics and values remain invaluable on a global scale when used in concert with continental and global institutions, trans-national alliances, and economic unions whose moral and economic might amplify relevance.

Sweden's identity of exclusive power and aloof critic no longer serves the national goals of its people. The same is true for all nations who share the values of openness, equality, and economic prosperity. Sweden is in the midst of re-identification. In order to harness positively the powerful energy of change, Sweden must prioritize identity based first on global participation and secondarily on national pride. Borderless influences cannot be met with limited capacity, but instead with the collective agreement and active engagement by the world at large, starting first with the existing institutions contained within the European Union.

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