

Former Agent of Swedish Security Police Dictated Amnesty Sweden's Stance against Julian Assange

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In December 2010 a close [collaboration between Sweden and the CIA and FBI](#) was exposed in the international media: an intelligence collaboration between Sweden and US agencies that was kept secret from the Swedish public, and even from the Swedish Parliament. [1] The Telegraph credited WikiLeaks for exposing the deal. [2] The revelations caused far more commotion internationally than in Sweden and, in any event, no government officials were ever held accountable for it. The Washington Post reported, quoting a Swedish Parliamentary investigation: "Although the Parliamentary investigator concluded that the Swedish security police deserved 'extremely grave criticism' for losing control of the operation and for being 'remarkably submissive to the American officials,' no Swedish officials have been charged or disciplined." [3]

This article explores to what extent  intelligence collaboration between Swedish and US security agencies might have relevance to, or [direct intervention](#) in, [the political case of Sweden vs Assange](#). [4]

Svenska Dagbladet (Svd), one of Sweden's leading newspapers, has now revealed that a well-known journalist and 'left activist' - who, among other things, exerted considerable influence with Amnesty International Sweden - was [a paid agent of Sweden's Security Police \(SÄPO\)](#). [5]

The government security agent, Martin Fredriksson, was mainly active during the years that former Foreign Minister Carl Bildt was dictating Sweden's foreign policy, when the "Assange Affair" was widely publicized on the home page of Sweden's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to statements Fredriksson [posted on Twitter](#), his "work" at SÄPO covered different periods between 2004 and 2010, the year Sweden opened its 'investigation' against the WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

The Swedish media establishment [awarded this SÄPO secret agent its highest investigative journalism prize, 'Guldspaden'](#) (Golden Spade), in 2014. The rationale on which the award was given to Fredriksson referred precisely to the work he had implemented as a paid agent of Sweden's Secret Police. [6] In the photo below, at the centre of the group, the ex-Security Police agent Martin Fredriksson.



The former SÄPO agent was significantly involved in the government's efforts to ensure that the Swedish section of Amnesty International (for brevity, hereafter called Amnesty Sweden) would not advocate for the Swedish government to issue guarantees against the onward extradition of Julian Assange to the US, as [called for by Amnesty International](#), Amnesty

Sweden's parent organization headquartered in London. [7]

In an email sent to Amnesty Sweden on 27 September 2012, Fredriksson asked a representative of Amnesty Sweden, Bobby Vellucci:

"Would Amnesty Sweden endorse the statement of Amnesty International on Assange? Meaning, that Sweden should issue guarantees that he shall not be extradited to the US? Should you not contact your mother organization (AI) and inform them that the Swedish legal system does not issue any promises or guarantees in advance, that the judiciary is independent of political decisions and that, practically, there are no legal possibilities to give Mr Assange any kind of amnesty towards the United States? ...In my view, Assange first shall be handled for the crimes he is suspected of in Sweden, and according to the existing law." [8]

The content, even the phrasing, of Fredriksson's message to Amnesty Sweden is nearly identical to remarks made in an interview just weeks before by the Swedish Foreign Minister at the time, Carl Bildt. [9]

Amnesty Sweden complied immediately, and fully, with Fredriksson's request. The following day (28 September) Bobby Vellucci [declared in The Local](#):


"We do not consider it to be appropriate or possible to ask the Swedish government to give guarantees ensuring Assange is not extradited to the US." And he added, "Amnesty's primary focus is the Swedish preliminary investigation and that Julian Assange's presence in Sweden would of course assist in the further investigation of the charges against him." [10]

By using the word "charges" instead of "accusations", Amnesty Sweden was further misleading the international public on the actual legal status of the Swedish case against Assange. [4]

It is important to clarify that the above statements by ex-SÄPO agent Fredriksson and Carl Bildt referring to the impossibility of issuing extradition guarantees are complete falsehoods. This was made clear in the filing submitted by Sweden's Prosecutor-General Anders Perklev to the Supreme Court in March 2015. With regard to the actual facts on the prospective extradition of Assange to the US, see the evidence I recently posted in "[Sweden's argument for refusing to issue non-extradition guarantees to Mr Assange is fallacious and hides real commitment to the US](#)". [11]

Four years later, Amnesty Sweden's stance on Julian Assange appears to be still under the influence of the Swedish government. In a recent statement to the Swedish news agency TT, the representative of Amnesty Sweden, Madelaine Seidlitz - commenting on the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention's ruling that he is arbitrarily detained - insisted on reaffirming the Swedish government's narrative:

"...We also say that it is extremely important that the investigation has to be completed." [12]

 In fact, lawyer Madelaine Seidlitz is the representative given as the contact person for Amnesty Sweden's press statement arguing against Sweden giving Assange any guarantee against onward extradition, the content of which exactly conforms with former SÄPO agent Fredriksson's request. The Amnesty Sweden statement [image at right] reads:

“It is neither appropriate nor possible to ask the Swedish government for the issuing of guarantees that Assange shall not be extradited to the US. Amnesty Sweden’s primary focus is the pre-trial investigation and that Julian Assange should be on site in Sweden...”

It’s worth noting that Amnesty Sweden’s statement has been modified several times since its original release and was eventually deleted entirely sometime around February 2016, but cached versions – such as the one reproduced in the image – still exist.

Considering the fact-based risk assessment of the likelihood of Julian Assange’s extradition to the US [provided he is physically in custody on Swedish territory](#), [11] one plausible conclusion – now confirmed by the intervention of SÄPO’s former agent Martin Fredriksson – would be that Amnesty Sweden simply follows the Swedish government’s position, and indirectly, the US government’s design.

Amnesty Sweden – a persistent tendency to deviate from the stance of its parent organization, Amnesty International

After Svd’s expose, Researchgruppen – an organisation headed by Fredriksson that has done [a lot of work for feminist media](#) – distanced itself from its former CEO in a [statement](#) of 1 March 2016 (See translated excerpt of the statement in Notes & References).[13]

Amnesty Sweden, however, has not said a word.

It is high time for Amnesty International to intervene in this situation to maintain its prestige, both in Sweden and internationally. The Swedish section of Amnesty International has shown a persistent tendency to deviate from the stance of its parent organization – from which Amnesty Sweden derives both funding and prestige – on a variety of important geopolitical issues. That was the case, for instance, in Amnesty Sweden’s scandalous opposition to denouncing the arbitrary and inhuman detention of Palestinian children by the Israeli authorities. [14] Or when Amnesty Sweden’s executive board [rejected human rights initiatives proposed at its AGM regarding Assange and Snowden](#) following the persecution both have been subjected to by the US. [15]

Although Amnesty Sweden declares that, in principle, it is totally independent from the Swedish state, it receives government funding for the implementation of projects referred to as “training on Human Rights”. [16] [17] [18]

This is quite contrary to the stance we take in [Swedish Doctors for Human Rights \(SWEDHR\)](#). We believe that a sine qua non factor in a human rights organization’s credibility is total independence from government and corporate funding. [19]

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Notes and References

[1] M Ferrada de Noli, “[Who are behind the ‘Swedish prosecution’ of Assange, and Why?](#)” The Professors’ Blog, 5 Nov 2014.

[2] From The Daily Telegraph, 15 Dec 2010:



[3] In Craig Whitlock's article "[New Swedish Documents Illuminate CIA Action](#)", The Washington Post, 21 May 2005

[4] M Ferrada de Noli, "[Sweden VS. Assange. Human Rights Issues & Political Background](#)". Libertarian Books, Sweden, 2014 & 2016. 342 pages, free download PDF.

[5] Sam Sundberg: "[När verklighetens Salander sålde ut till Säpo.](#)" Svenska dagbladet, 5 March 2016.

[6] Arbetaren, "[Prisbelönad journalist avlönad av Säpo i årtal](#)" [*"Prize-winner journalist was during years paid by SÄPO"*]. 2 March 2016.

[7] Amnesty International, headquarters based in London: "[Sweden should issue assurance it won't extradite Assange to USA](#)", 27 Sept 2012.

[8] Email translated from its [publication in Flashback](#), a Swedish forum allocating a chapter on the Assange case; this is a thread exhibiting over seven million reader-visits (N= 7 089 375, retrieved 6 March 2016). Martin Fredriksson acknowledged the authenticity of the email.message to Amnesty in [a post on Twitter](#) done by @Researchgruppen. The email exchange was [first published in the abovementioned forum](#) on the 28 Sept 2012. There it referred the source "[http://www.martinfredriksson.net/wik...ange_vs_Sweden](#)" - a link which now appears blind. Here below the screenshot (click on image to enlarge):



[9] Carl Bildt, then Sweden's foreign minister, [declared in DN](#) 19 August 2012:

- Rättssystemet i Sverige är oberoende. Jag kan inte göra några uttalanden som binder rättssystemet på något sätt. Då skulle jag bryta mot den svenska grundlagen.

Previously, Bildt said during an [interview in Belgrade](#):

Sweden has "independent judiciary, guaranteed by law," and that "political authorities do not influence its work"

[10] Oliver Gee, "[Assange 'guarantees' spark Amnesty spat](#)". The Local, 28 Sept 2012.

[11] M Ferrada de Noli, "[Sweden's argument for refusing to issue non-extradition guarantees to Mr Assange is fallacious and hides real commitment to the U.S.](#)" The Indicter, 20 Feb 2016.

[12] [Amnesty Press](#), 2016, N° 1, page 28.

[13] Statement posted by Researchgruppen at [research.nu](#), 1 March 2016. Excerpts:

"Following the statements and information Martin Fredriksson has given on his Twitter account on February 28, 2016, Researchgruppen wishes to

clarify the following: It came as a shock and complete surprise to us when Martin Fredriksson revealed that he was paid over several years by the Security Police..." "Researchgruppen's position is that any journalism at all times must be free from official interference. Therefore, we are strongly critical of Martin Fredriksson's actions, and that he concealed his cooperation with the Security Police for us and everyone else."



[14] M Ferrada de Noli, [Swedish Section of Amnesty International voted to reject human-right actions on cases Assange, Snowden and tortured Palestinian children](#). The Professors' Blogg, 11 May 2014.

[15] Leif Elinder, [A democratic Swedish "Amnesty International" should support whistleblowers](#). The Professors' Blog, 8 May 2014.

[16] [Ett ljus som har brunnit i 50 år](#). Amnesty Press, 1 June 2011

[17] Anna Widestam. [Amnestyfonden](#). Amnesty Historia - fondens historia.

[18] Ulf B Andersson, [Amnesty i Sverige : Är krisen i Amnesty över?](#) Amnesty Press, 2 March 2013.

[19] SWEDHR: [Foundation Manifest](#) of Swedish Doctors for Human Rights.

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