

## Scandinavia by Lotta-Stina Thronell

### Swedish teacher battles youth culture

*Ann Ekeberg's book 'For Sweden, It Is About Time—an Exposé of the Youth Culture,' has started a raging public debate.*

**P**eople with sick brains are preaching to the entire youth culture," Swedish school teacher Ann Ekeberg stated in an interview to the social democratic evening paper *Aftonbladet* published Jan. 3, which featured her decade-long crusade against the brutalizing popular culture of today. With the 1991 publication of her book *For Sweden, It is About Time—an Exposé of the Youth Culture*, Ekeberg's work has touched off a raging debate in Sweden. As *Aftonbladet* wrote, her book "puts the entire world of pop music in the corner."

Ekeberg's efforts started 13 years ago, when a pupil gave her a piece of paper upon which the American slang word "motherfucker" was written. The pupil told her that he had learned it from a rock group. "This is spiritual rape," Ekeberg thought, and she started her work to get children and youth to turn their backs on this degrading culture.

The interview with Ekeberg was fairly objective. This proved too much for an entertainment-page staff writer who devoted a full page Jan. 4 to the defense of "sluts, vulgar queens, self-abusers, and other necessities in the necessary world of entertainment" against the "qualified moralizing hag," Ann Ekeberg. Readers were urged to call in and state their opinions to *Aftonbladet*.

On Jan. 5, *Aftonbladet* devoted two pages to the debate in an edition headlined "Stop Ekeberg—Not Pop Music." The author tried to slander Ekeberg for her collaboration with the "right-wing extremist sect" of the European Labor Party (EAP).

In fact, her book was published by Ny Solidaritet, a publishing firm which closely monitors the activities of American political prisoner and Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche, as well as the campaigns of the EAP in Sweden, in its newspaper *Ny Solidaritet*. But her book was written before she came in contact with the publishers—none of the established publishing houses would publish her book. They did not want to make her devastating criticism against the sacred cows of the rock industry available for common folks. On this point, Ekeberg and Ny Solidaritet found themselves in 100% agreement: The book had a mission to fulfill and should be made available.

*Aftonbladet's* journalist also quoted EAP spokesman Ulf Sandmark: "We think that Ann Ekeberg has sound ideas. We think that rock music is part of a conspiracy to turn human beings into idiots. Rock music is supposed to lure us into satanism and drugs in order to weaken us so much that a little power clique can rule."

On Jan. 9, *Aftonbladet* published an article by Ekeberg in which she attacked the rock journalists for "protecting themselves," and claimed that "the advantages given by the rock industry to the rock journalists are preventing a serious debate concerning pop music." Ekeberg also outlined her own philosophy: "We must change our concept about children and youth. We ought to see them as something valuable, not as something which one first and foremost can make money on or throw dirt at. We have to give the

youth a positive cultural choice and a mission in life. Many youth—and I assure you of this—are just waiting for that."

The statement might sound trivial, but for Swedes today, it is not. Parents have seen their children destroyed in the education system, have seen social workers receive the power of feudal tyrants under the social democratic welfare state, with an arbitrary right to take children away from their parents. Many Swedes feel that Swedish society needs to go through the same kind of change as the former communist countries in the East of Europe, away from totalitarian state control over family life. Citizens are now beginning to see a connection between skyrocketing violence in the once-peaceful cities in Sweden, and the glorification of violence in the youth culture, largely coming from the pop-industry of the Anglo-American world. This makes Ekeberg's book dangerous for the establishment, and indicates the potential for a change to a better cultural matrix which Ny Solidaritet and the small EAP have been fighting for since the mid-1970s.

It will be interesting to see whether *Aftonbladet* dares publish Ulf Sandmark's letter to the editor, in which he refutes the "right-wing extremist sect" label as well as an incorrect description of LaRouche: "The undersigned has, both as a member of the EAP and earlier as a member of the social democratic party SAP, worked for democracy, a just social system, and economic growth. Neither the EAP nor the presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche can be characterized the way *Aftonbladet* does, since they both, through the years, have been fighting for the rights of the trade unions, developing countries, and poor peoples to gain economic development. This can hardly be labeled a right-wing policy."