



Gunnar Hökmark: Om Europa var fritt - anförande vid DEMYC-congressen 1983

Talare

Gunnar Hökmark
Ordförande MUF

Datum

2 september 1983

Plats

Stockholm

Dear friends,

First of all I would like to wish you all, delegates, observers and guests from EDS, UEJDC and the United States, welcome to Stockholm and to Sweden. We are happy to here in Stockholm receive friends from nearly all West-European countries. It proves the strength of the Democrat Youth community of Europe.

This congress is a manifestation of the real peace-movement in Europe, bigger than those movements that in reality only are unilateral disarmament-movements. We represent 700 000 young people, active in politics and supporting the values of freedom and democracy, values that are preconditions of peace. Without those values no society can live in peace.

It is in the work for individual freedom we have our common political base. In free societies, as ours, every human being can develop his or her individuality.

We are talking not only about a dynamic and developing society. It is also a pluralistic society with all the possibilities that human nature can provide and take care of. The free society is a peaceful society, as the respect and tolerance of the individual's integrity are the best guarantees for peace.

The market economy is a peaceful way of providing growth and prosperity; it doesn't depend on the use of force and restrictions but on the free exchange of work, ideas and initiatives of free citizens.

Democracy is the best guarantee for peace, just as freedom of speech, open discussion and democratically elections are the best way to carry out the wish for peace that all people share.

I think it is important to emphasize these values, because together they found the concept of peace.

The social democratic parties of Western Europe seem to have forgotten this. In their march to the left, accelerated by the young socialist, they have become the parties of neutralism between dictatorship and democracy. I think there are two reasons for this.

The first is that for socialists, individual freedom and market economy are not so important, and because their collectivist attitude, they don't see the link between these values and democracy and peace.

The second is that they because of their ideological weakness, it has been tempting for social democrats to sell out a tradition of defence-positive politics in order to catch up with the so called peace movement.

In Great Britain, the labour party has turned their policy of security upside down. In West Germany, Vogel is denying the missiles-defence that Schmidt himself asked for. At the same time social democrats such as Egon Bahr, now a days well-known to the Swedish public, are raising the question about leaving Nato in order to establish a unified and neutralistic Germany, with a security based upon Soviet non-intervention guarantees. I think our German social democrats should look for submarines in the Kiel-channel before they trust the Soviets to much.

In Norway the Norwegian labour party has problems in security issues, because there is a deep rift in their attitude to NATO and to the double-track decision.

In Sweden the social democrats are disarming Swedish defence, despite the fact that we are living under an increased military pressure, symbolized by an increasing number of submarine incidents. As a compensation to defence capability they are talking about a nuclear free zone in the Nordic based upon guarantees from the same Soviets who are ignoring the borders of the non-aligned Sweden.

The Swedish Prime Minister Mr Palme, attacks those who calls for free elections in East Europe for falling back into the crusader mentality of the cold

war□ at the same time he claims that □devil-pictures□ of the Soviet Union are dangerous for our national security.

This is a new era in the tradition of social democrat parties. Their march to the left in ideological and domestic issues has led to their foreign policy being based on a neutralism that takes no notice of the differences between democracy and dictatorship.

Furthermore, its a neutralism that ignores, or hides, the fact that a totalitarian regime by definition believes it has the moral right to enforce their political ideas and interests by violating their own citizens and other countries. This neutralism is based upon an underestimation of what democracy really is, as it in the discussion of disarmament and peace equalizes dictatorship and democracy, regarding both their legitimacy and war-willingness.

This neutralism is dangerous for free countries. It has nothing to do with the policy of countries like Austria, Finland and Sweden. These countries are free, pluralistic societies, based on the same ideological values as other West European countries.

Our countries have chosen a security policy that has been seen as the best way to safeguard not only the freedom but also peace. It is neutrality that is not neutral to freedom and democracy, quite the opposite; it is a neutrality to secure our values, to defend or rights to act for freedom and democracy as much as we want.

This is not the case for the new emerging neutralism among social democrat parties in Europe; it is not a neutrality of nations but a matter of neutrality to values, between free societies and to socialist ones. It is the policy of "The third way", proclaimed by the Socialist International.

By closer relations to the communist parties, in West as well as in East Europe and in the third world, the socialist parties hopes to establish themselves as a force between communism and capitalism. What they forget in their eagerness to play an important role in world politics is that this is that the third way is a way between democracy and dictatorship putting the values of freedom and democracy aside.

Such a policy can turn a country like Sweden into a Middleland. A country neutral to the differences between democracy and dictatorship, with a policy aiming to be the third way between the third way in the west and the oppression in the east, vulnerable to political pressure as well as military. It can impose restrictions in the free debate and in this way manipulate the perspectives on the preconditions for security.

When you put socialism before freedom, you sacrifice not only democracy but also peace. Therefore, by walking the third way you are not supporting peace, you are betraying the fundamental concept of it.

The difference between democracy and dictatorship is essential. Dictatorships do not need to follow any agreement. They can neglect public opinion and the leadership can act carelessly, because they are not controlled by free press and free debate. For dictatorships, the use of violence is a day-to-day activity.

If we are successful in pointing out the values of freedom on the one hand, and the nature of dictatorships on the other, the basis of the neutralism of the peace movement will erode.

One way to understand the importance of freedom and democracy for peace is to visualise a free Europe, with free elections and human rights in East Europe as well as in West Europe.

In that case, we could at this congress have had delegates from member organizations from what today is called East Europe but what if so had been Europe. In that case I would have had the pleasure of welcoming Ilan Nadel, chairman of the Young Conservatives of Rumania, fighting in opposition against a social democrat party in government.

I could have welcomed Dimitrij Levlin, chairman of the young national liberals of Ukraine and wished him god luck in the coming elections, defending their majority against the Ukrainian agrarian- party and the socialists.

The delegation of the Christian Democrats from Poland may have been led by their international secretary Wojchek Walensa, a relative of the Walensa we know. He could have told us how the communist party dropped below the 3% level, losing their last 5 seats in parliament.

Some of these friends would have been working in opposition, some would have been supporting their government, just as Unge Høyre from Norway, Konservativ Ungdom from Denmark, just as Junge Union from West Germany with the difference that the representatives here from Junge Union would be representing the whole of Germany.

Some of them would have been satisfied with their recent elections, just as the Young Conservatives from Great Britain or the representatives from Junge ÖVP in Austria. Some of them would have been determined to get back into government as the Young Giscardians from France, or as Juventude Centrista from Portugal, or our Spanish friends.

Some of them would be working hard to improve their support in order to take a wider responsibility for their country, as our Finnish friends from the KNL, or from SUS from Iceland. Maybe the friends from Bulgaria would have suffered from the same repression of a Labour party as our Maltese friends, but we could then have used this meeting not only to express our solidarity, but also to discuss how to use international opinion, in order to put pressure on a government which mishandles democracy.

Maybe we could have had a membership application from the Democrat Party of Albania. We would then have discussed it at the same time as we at this congress will discuss the adoption of our friends from Greece, Cyprus and Israel.

The inspiring conclusion to this vision is, that if it was true today, we wouldn't in Europe be discussing the deployment of middle range missiles. We wouldn't spend vast amounts of money on expensive defence systems. We wouldn't read in the newspapers that a civilian airplane had been shot down in cold-blooded murder by the air force of a totalitarian state. We wouldn't experience foreign submarines training in the peaceful waters of other countries. How distant this vision maybe, it's important to keep it alive.

What is called for from our side is to show the free citizens of the world, that the ideals of freedom are just as valid for those who seek to flee from dictatorships, risking their lives over minefields or in unsteady boats, in order to reach free democratic countries, as for us.

Highlighting these ideas is a stronger argument against the neutralism of social democrat parties, than any complicated and matter of fact discourse on the balance between different weapon systems.

A vitalization of our common values will put the defence of free nations in the right perspective, in the service of peace and freedom. And as a consequence of this, the understanding of the necessity of mutuality as a precondition for disarmament will increase.

Let this congress be a manifestation of a true policy for peace, a manifestation of the fact that we, who are here, represent the vast majority of young people in Western Europe. We can see this not only in our total membership but also from the results in recent elections, in the part of Europe where elections are allowed. And let my welcome to you who are here also be a greeting to all the friends that could have been here, if our visions were reality already today.

Taggar

1980-tal, 1983, Man, Moderaterna, Politiska tal

URI

<https://www.svenskatal.se/tale/gunnar-hokmark-om-europa-var-fritt-anforande-vid-demyc-congressen-1983>