

ITEM NO. 9878/54

BS
November 11
II-2,133

CZECHOSLOVAKIA
SWEDEN

CULTURE /0800/
Film /0803/

CLOSE SWEDISH-CZECH FILM COOPERATION IN
SIGHT.

SOURCE STOCKHOLM: A well-informed businessman and a Swedish film producer.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Current period.

EVAL. COMMENT: This is a very interesting explanation of the background of the cooperation between the Czechoslovak and the Swedish film industry, which may be of use to our Cultural Program Editors. STOCKHOLM RFE Item No. 9756/54 supplied details on the visit of the two Czech film men mentioned in this report.

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The background to the visit of two Czech film-men to STOCKHOLM, which we reported in RFE Item No. 9756/54, is the following:

The leadership of the Swedish Social Democratic /government/ Party has decided gradually to nationalize the film industry of the country. It is calculated that this step will be realized during the next ten years and that it will be carried through without expropriation. The idea is that a limited company financed by the trade union federation would buy out all the other companies one by one and thus gain a monopoly. The existing company "Nordisk Tonefilm" has been chosen as the suitable firm through /more/

which to conduct the operations. The entire action is entrusted to Kalle KIHLBOM, a former Communist but now a Social Democrat. He does not act openly, however, and is not even on the board of "Nordisk Tonefilm" although he manages it in reality. In his recently published memoirs he admitted his former high position in the Swedish Communist party: when the Russian Communist revolution was still young, the Soviet leaders had entrusted their foreign fund to his care.

As the Swedish film industry does not produce many good films and does not have sufficient technical ability, the Social Democrats think that they need the benefit of the experience of another country to put it on its feet properly. Czechoslovakia was chosen as this country: it is not a competitor to Sweden, it has the experience of nationalized film industry and it is the only country -- with the exception of the Soviet Union-- from behind the Iron Curtain which stands on a high technical level.

The negotiations with Czechoslovakia are expected to lead to a greater exchange of films, too. However, what the Swedes are really interested in is the technical cooperation. They want to acquaint themselves with the Czech experiences and even import material from them, as the trade exchange with Czechoslovakia has hitherto been very much hampered by the fact that the Czechs have very little to offer to the Swedes while the latter could sell them a good deal. Of course, the Swedes will also import film material from the West but would first like to investigate the possibilities of getting as much equipment as possible from the CSR which might become a promising trade partner if it could sell anything to Sweden.

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