

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PRESS AND NEWSPAPER POLICY IN SWEDEN 1899-1909

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The main aim of this kind of newspaper research should be to examine the structure of the press and to study the factors which condition its development. This may be considered an important task, especially with regard to the tendencies to concentration which have long existed in the press.

In this article a special type of newspaper—the Social Democratic Party newspaper—will be examined in detail. The examination is limited to the period 1899–1909, during which a country-wide labour press was founded. The term “Social Democratic Party newspapers” is intended to include the periodical news sheets which were started in close connection with socialist or trade-union organizations and which had lives of more than three months. During the period covered by the investigation no less than 22 newspapers were founded which fulfil the requirements laid down in the above definition.

The European Labour Press

At the time when Karl Marx published the *Communist Manifesto*, the newspapers had not yet become valuable as general propaganda organs. The Marxist idea of the role of the press in social evolution was vague and Marx had expressed himself obscurely on this question. The first newspapers with a clear socialist viewpoint, like the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* founded by Marx, were rather ideological reviews for the budding labour movement than regular socialist news and propaganda organs.

In Germany, which was to have the most extensive socialist press in Europe, the first socialist party organ was founded in 1864. This was the *Social-Demokrat*, which was published in Leipzig and was the main organ of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein*. The *Arbeiterverein*, which was very centralized in its organization, never encouraged the starting of any local newspapers. However, there was a provincial press in sympathy with its aims.

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A press which was not only held together by a common ideology but was also organizationally linked with parties arose in the other branch of the German labour movement, *Die Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei*. Besides the party newspaper decided on at the party's constituent congress, several local newspapers were very soon founded. The central party leadership took a positive attitude to fresh newspaper enterprises and welcomed the competition of the local socialist newspapers with other radical newspapers. (Dokumente 1961. Koszyk 1958.)

The two main branches of the German Social Democratic movement were united at the party congress of 1875 under the name of "*Die sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands*". At the same time a new co-operative newspaper enterprise was founded and published *Vorwärts*, a newspaper which soon became the party's leading organ. On the local level Social Democratic associations started newspapers without the intervention of the party leadership. However, these newspapers became relatively quickly so numerous and met with such great financial problems that demands were made for central financial control.

During the period for which the Emergency Powers Act, which was directed against the socialist movement in Germany, was in force, the local journalistic activity was naturally also discontinued. Immediately after the Act was repealed, however, a large number of fresh newspapers were started. At the party congress in 1890 it was declared that it was the party's duty to assist local newspaper enterprises financially in cases in which the local resources were insufficient. (Dokumente 1961. Koszyk 1958.)

In spite of the fact that there was a clear connection between the central party leadership and the local newspapers, there was no central direction of the press. The main work was left to the local organizations. However, when in time the central party leadership was compelled to be increasingly restrictive in acceding to applications for loans, there may have been a certain amount of indirect control of the press's development.

In Denmark the socialist press developed according to a different pattern from that in Germany. The official organ of the Danish Social Democratic movement was started in 1871. In the 1880s a provincial press, to which the main organ contributed financially, began to develop. In 1888 a central press organization was formed, with the task of controlling and planning the local and regional newspapers. This organization systematically built up a nation-wide socialist press. The aim was to secure regional and local newspapers which effectively covered the whole country. This central press organization, which had representatives of both the trade-union and the political movements, may be said to have directed the development of the Danish socialist press. (Thorsen 1947.)

Here Germany and Denmark may serve as typical examples of how the relations between the party leadership and the newspapers might vary. In the other European countries a number of other variations occurred. In Norway the bonds between the local party and the central leadership were even weaker than in Germany. In Belgium the co-operative movement played a great part, as regarded the press. England had a socialist press at a very late stage.

Broadly speaking, it would seem to be possible to distinguish three types of relations between the central party leadership and the local press:

- a The newspapers exist independently of the central party.
- b The newspapers exist in regular and/or financial dependence on the central party
- c The newspapers are completely integrated into the central party.

The independent relations between party and press were characteristic of Norway and of the early developments in Germany. However, during the later period there was a certain amount of financial control in Germany. There was a completely integrated press in Denmark.

Aim

The above survey of the European labour press has shown that the party-press concept is not an unambiguous one. There are a large number of variants, far from all of which can be determined today, as the research situation is unsatisfactory in many quarters. In Sweden no attempt has been made, up to now, to give a collective picture of the Social Democratic press and the relations between the press and the party. The aim of this investigation is to make such a systematic and comparative study.

The question is, to what extent was the socialist press in Sweden integrated in the Social Democratic Party and, if it was integrated, what type of integration was it? Was it financial or ideological or of some other kind? How strong and how comprehensive was it?

The replies to these questions are of fundamental interest. They enable us not only to set the Swedish socialist press in its European context but also to get the concept of party press analysed in more detail. In so far as we can establish the existence of a special group of party newspapers—which have a different aspect and specific relations to the political parties and which exist, on the whole, under special conditions—this must be of importance, whether we are studying the development of the structure of the press or whether we consider it as a creator of public opinion.

In this article we shall accordingly investigate in detail the structure and aspect of the Social Democratic press. What were the financial conditions at the start? What circulations did it achieve and under what financial conditions did it exist? The contents of the first issues will be determined with the aid of a systematic analysis. To what extent did the political propaganda material predominate? Did the socialist newspapers differ, as regarded their contents, from the bourgeois newspapers? As regards the relationship between the Party Executive and the individual newspapers, the question is whether the Swedish Party Executive acted in accordance with a definite pattern. Can we speak of a central direction in relation to the individual newspapers? If so, in which domains did this direction take effect?

Finally, an attempt will be made to determine hypothetically the necessary conditions for the origin and existence of a Social Democratic newspaper. To what extent was the newspaper dependent on the local and central Party officials?

Material

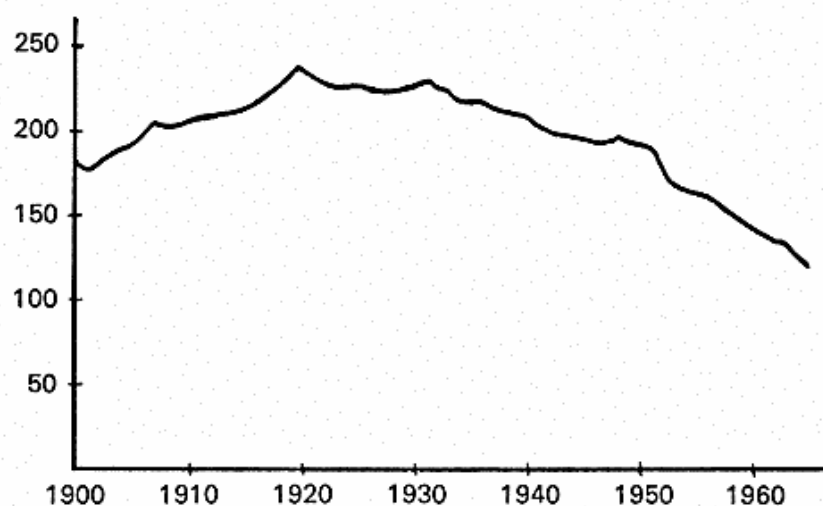
The material on which the investigation is based is, of course, primarily the newspapers themselves. Various quantitative analyses have been made of their contents. Besides the newspapers, an extensive central material derived from the minutes of meetings of the Party Executive and its Executive Committee has been used. As regards the local unpublished material, a number of case studies have been made, in which certain records made by the local branches of the Social Democratic Party and newspaper boards of management have been examined.

Environment

If we study the press situation in Sweden at the beginning of this century, we find a steeply rising curve (Diagram 1). The peak was reached 1919 when there were 235 newspapers which had a publication frequency of at least two days a week and which had been published for at least a year.

Today 50 % of them have disappeared. Our knowledge is too limited to enable us to establish with any great degree of certainty what caused this "golden age" in the Swedish press. We may perhaps indicate a couple of factors which must be included in any explanation. These are the generally good economic conditions at the beginning of the century and the strong political activity—mouthpieces were required for a series of political views. We may also indicate the fact that it was very cheap to start a newspaper—no such enormous investment of money was required as is required today.

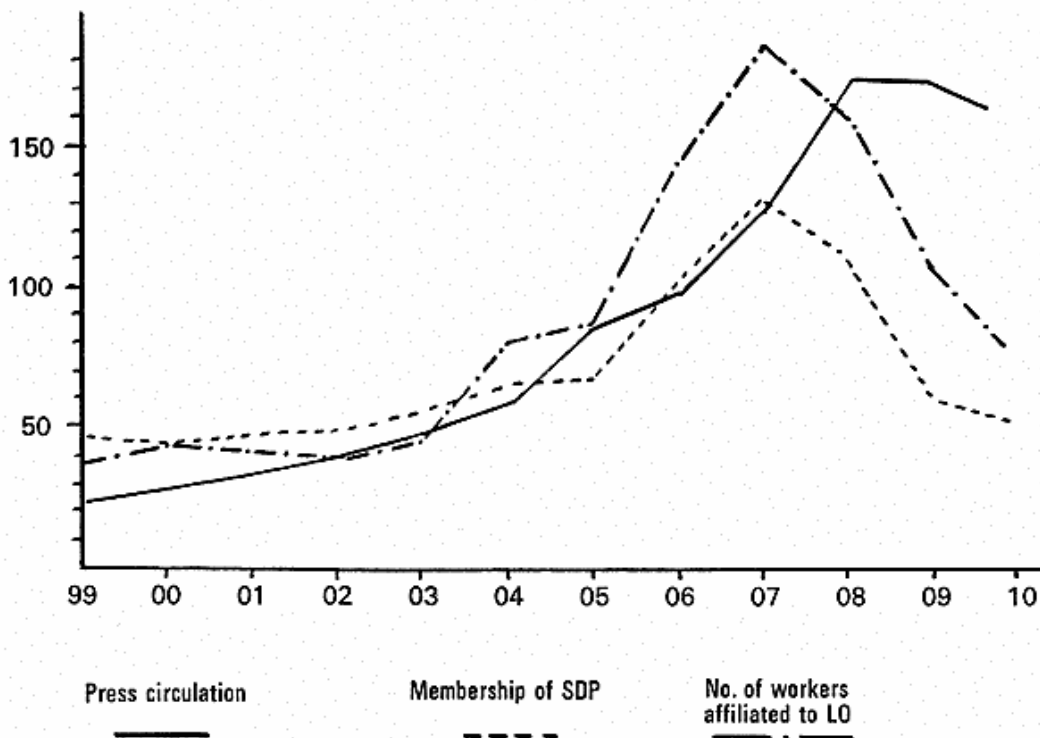
Diagram 1. Numbers of Swedish newspapers, 1900–60.



The most important readers of the Social Democratic newspapers may be assumed to have been the factory workers. However, during the period when 22 new Social Democratic newspapers were started and the total circulation of the socialist press

was multiplied several times, the number of factory workers did not increase to any appreciable extent. The great increase had taken place in the 1880s and 1890s and thereafter the group was relatively constant in number. What happened within this group of potential readers was instead an intensive formation of organizations. It was during this period that the organizations on the labour market acquired real strength. It was also during this period that the Social Democratic Party had its period of strongest development.

Diagram 2. The growth in the circulation of the Social Democratic press, compared with the memberships of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO).

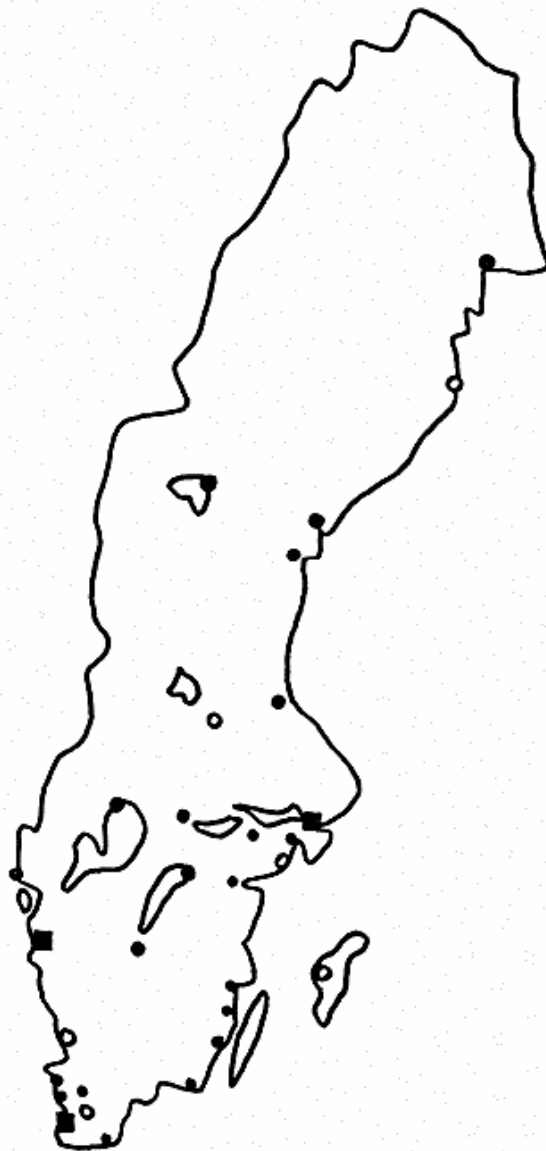


At the same time as the membership graphs of the Social Democratic Party and the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions rose, the circulations of the Party newspapers also rose (Diagram 2). However, when the rising trend of the labour did not fall at once. The total circulation did not begin to fall until the general strike in Sweden in 1909.

The distribution of the labour press over the country also provides proof of its dependence on the Party and the trade-union movement (Fig. 1). The majority of fresh newspaper enterprises started in southern Sweden—the part of the country in which the labour movement had its most powerful strongholds. The towns which had the largest newspapers were usually those with a large working-class population and a high organizational density.

Fig. 1. The geographical distribution of the Social Democratic press in Sweden, 1899–1909.

- = Town with newspaper started before 1895
- = Town with newspaper started between 1899 and 1909
- = Town in which a newspaper was planned between 1899 and 1909



The common feature of the new Social Democratic newspapers was that the promoters were local Party branches or trade unions. Of the 22 newspapers, half were founded by local Party branches, three by trade unions and two by another labour organization. Only two of the newspapers were founded by private persons, who both, however, had political and trade-union connections.

The financial resources that were available when the newspapers were started

The Social Democratic Press and Newspaper Policy in Sweden

Table 1. Places where Social Democratic newspapers were printed between 1899 and 1909 and distribution of printing works. The table concerns with the situation during the first months.

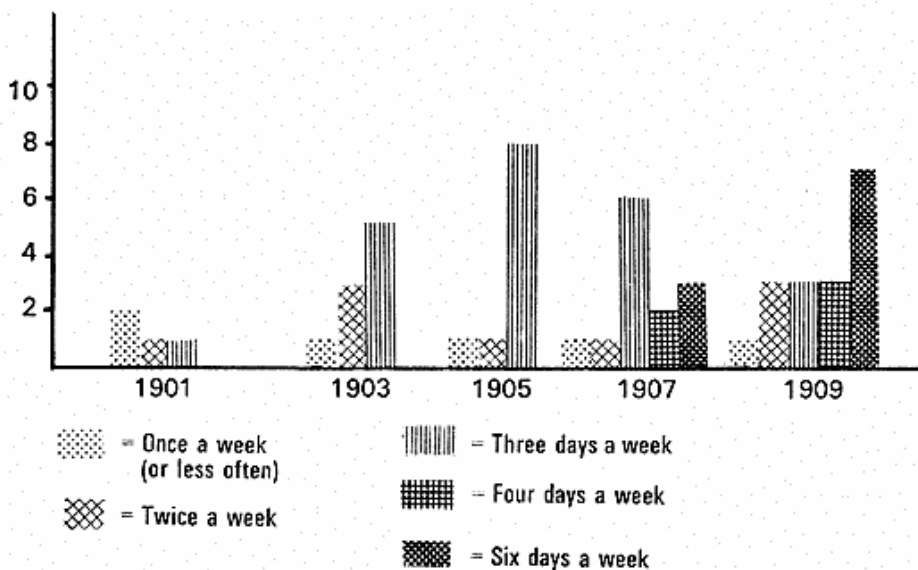
	Private printing works	Social Democratic newspaper	Total
Printed in place where published	8	5*	13
Printed in some other place	1	8	9
Total	9	13	22

* If a Social Democratic newspaper was printed in the place where it was published, this means that it had its own printing works.

scarcely even merit being called modest. Of the 12 newspapers of whose initial capital we have exact knowledge, eight had less than 800 kronor when publication began. One newspaper had about 3000 kronor, while only two had more than 10,000 kronor.

The small resources are also reflected by an investigation of the printing facilities available to the newspapers (Table 1). Only five of them had from the start their own printing works, while the rest had to have recourse to private printing works in the place where they were published or print on the machines belonging to another Social Democratic newspaper at some other place. In this connection it is worth pointing out that, in spite of the fact that several newspapers were printed at Social Democratic printing works, there was not in the Swedish labour press a subsidiary system on the Danish model. It is true that there was a considerable exchange of

Diagram 3. The periodicity of the Social Democratic press, 1901-9. The data refer to the beginnings of the respective years (with the exception of *Wiljan* in 1909). Subsidiaries are disregarded and *Södertälje-Kuriren* and *Södertorns Folkblad* are excluded.



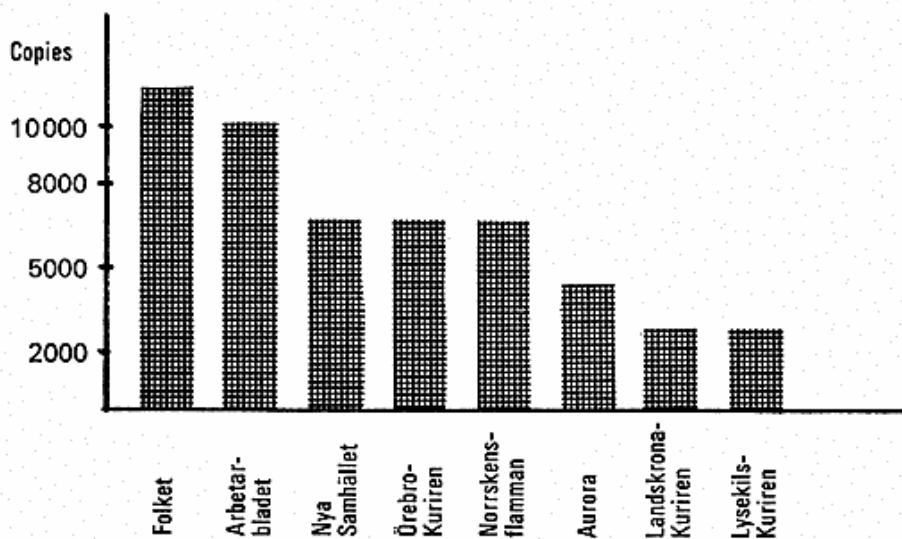
material between the newspapers, but there were independent editors with their own editorial staffs in 19 of the newspapers during the whole period.

The beginnings were modest also as regarded periodicity in the labour press. Most of the newspapers started as weekly newspapers—one was even a monthly—but they endeavoured and usually also succeeded in achieving a more frequent publication during the period (Diagram 3).

During the first few years for which the newspapers were published, it turned out that their weak financial conditions were to be fateful for many newspapers. Several of them had to be closed down when they could not maintain their circulations.

The circulation data of the Social Democratic newspapers—as of the whole Swedish press up to 1940—are extremely difficult to assess, since no independent circulation figures are obtainable. The research worker is, on the whole, obliged to have recourse to the newspapers' own information, given in the advertisement tariffs. Naturally these figures have to be used with very great caution. However, certain checks which have been made indicate that in most cases they do not essentially differ from the more exact data given in the few remaining auditors' reports.

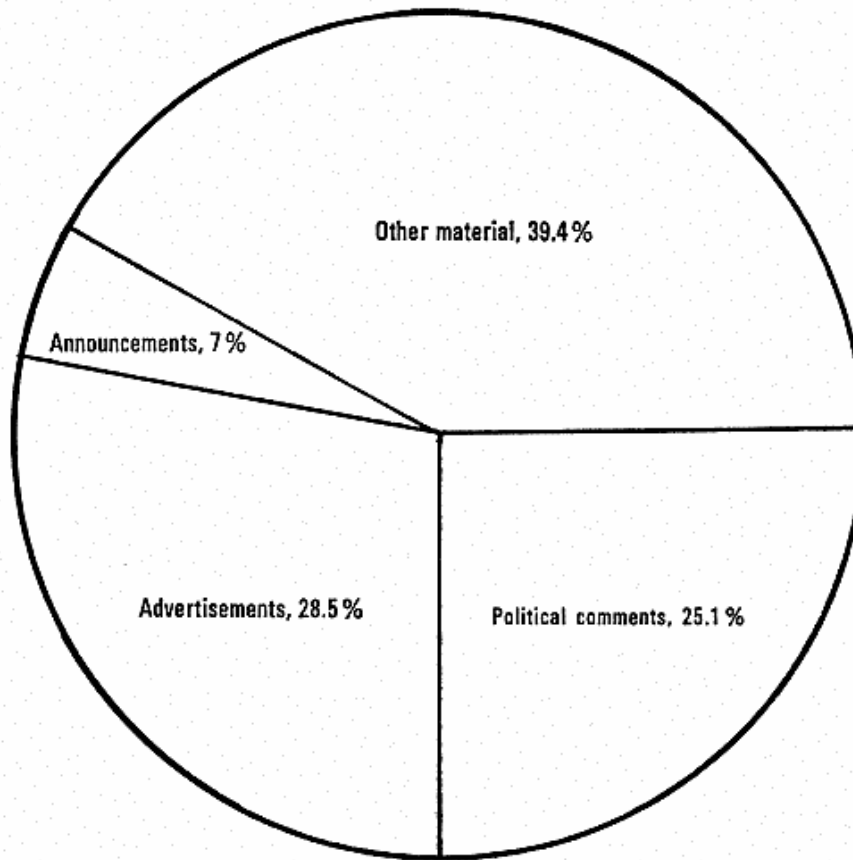
Diagram 4. The circulations of 8 Social Democratic newspapers, 1908–10, according to the Gumaelius advertising tariff.



The advertisement tariffs show that only three newspapers achieved circulations of up to or over about 10,000 copies per publication day. Several newspapers were also exceptionally small, with circulations of under 4000 copies.

The newspapers which had small circulations also differed in other respects from the larger newspapers. They were usually published in small localities, had less stable finances and generally had no printing works of their own. It was typical that the closures which affected the Social Democratic press during the period (eight newspapers) occurred in this particular group of less stable newspapers.

Diagram 5. The contents of the Social Democratic newspapers as percentages of the total content, 1899–1909.



Contents

What were the contents of the Social Democratic newspapers at this period? In order to get an objective picture, we have carried out a quantitative analysis of the contents of the first six issues of 20 newspapers, i.e. a total of 120 issues. If the material for all these newspapers is combined and distributed into the four main categories of advertisements, announcements, political commentary and other material, the picture given in Diagram 5 is obtained.

The proportion of *advertisements* in the labour press was slightly below that in the bourgeois press at this period. Examination of a small selection of bourgeois newspapers between 1899 and 1908 shows that the proportion of advertisements in them was about 35 %. However, in these cases it was a question of old newspapers well established in the locality.

The large proportion of *political comments* in the Social Democratic press is striking. In this respect this group of newspapers undoubtedly differs from the bourgeois newspapers. The commentators of the labour press were mainly engaged in commenting on social and trade-union questions. To a smaller extent they also discussed major political questions and ideological and international problems. Among

the social questions the newspapers busied themselves principally with the workers' living conditions and their status in relation to the big companies.

Announcements from various organizations made up only a modest proportion of the newspapers' contents. They were principally trade-union notices.

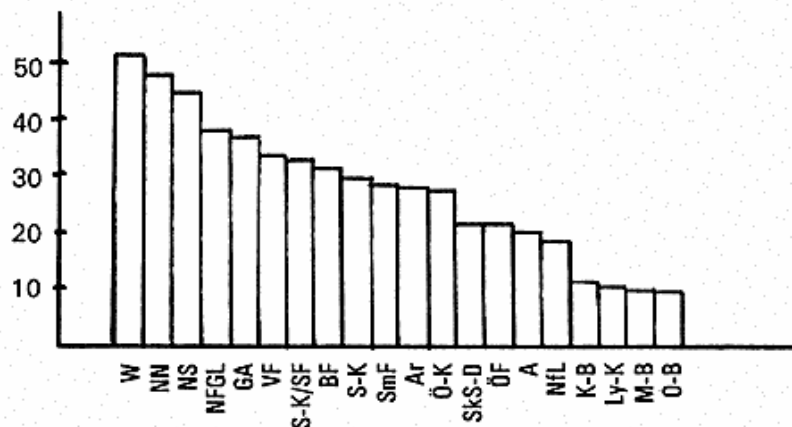
The *other material* included features, entertainment, general news and information. Material designed purely for entertainment generally had a small place in the Social Democratic press and consisted predominantly of serial stories, whose titles and contents often contrasted with the rest of the contents of the newspapers. The entertainment was inserted to please the women readers, according to the minutes of a meeting of the shareholders of one newspaper.

The large proportion of political material and the modest proportion of entertainment material are characteristic of the Social Democratic provincial press at this period. The question is whether there were any peculiarities as regarded the way of bringing out the political message and whether there are any objective methods of measuring this.

We may assume that the more lively a newspaper commented on political, social and organizational questions and thus carried on propaganda within this framework, the more ideologically conscious it was. This assumption may be made on the ground that Marxism was intended to give a complete explanation of all the phenomena in society and its adherents believed that it was able to do so. It was a question of conveying these explanations to the workers, in order in this way to make them aware of what was happening in what seemed to be happening. A piece of news without a comment was not worth publishing was the opinion of one German socialist editor and he was certainly not alone in holding that view. (Koszyk 1953.)

Thus, we could determine differences in views by quite simply measuring the proportion of comments on certain subjects objectively and testably and constructing a kind of right-left scale. The newspaper which had the most extensive commentary would thus have been the furthest to the left. Diagram 6 shows the proportions of comments in 20 newspapers.

Diagram 6. The proportion of political material in the Social Democratic newspapers, 1899-1909.



The newspapers which had the lowest proportions of commentary (*Kalmar-Bladet*, *Oskarshamns-Bladet*, *Mönsterås-Bladet* and *Lysekils-Kuriren*) were accused in different connections of being liberal or were regarded with disfavour by the Social Democratic Party. On the extreme left were the newspaper *Wiljan* which was influenced by the Party's left-wing youth organization and the norrland newspapers *Nya Norrland* and *Nya Samhället*. The investigation may be said to confirm a previous general impression but must, of course, not be taken as more than an experiment – an experiment to determine a newspaper's political colour by a quantitative method.

The results of this investigation of the intensity of the socialist press's commitment are confirmed by other investigations. The newspapers which have a predominantly political content usually also have a greater pregnancy in their presentation. This is clear from the fact that the articles are easier to categorize by subjects. Ninety-two per cent of the political material in *Wiljan* fell entirely within the content categories drawn up for the investigation, while this was the case with only 67 % of the political comments in *Oskarshamns-Bladet*.

An examination of the occurrence of political designations also confirms the grouping made. It appears that the words "socialist" and "Social Democrat" and the ideological designations (for example, "capitalist", "company rule" and "Marxism") are relatively considerably more frequent in the newspapers on the left. In *Wiljan* these designations occurred 105 times, in *Nya Norrland* 151 times and in *Nya Samhället* 144 times, while the same words were only to be found 11 times in *Oskarshamns-Bladet*, 19 times in *Lysekils-Kuriren*, 5 times in *Mönsterås-Bladet* and 20 times in *Kalmar-Bladet*.

By way of summary, it may be stated that the content analysis emphasizes the result which emerged from the examination of the newspapers' structures. There are a number of factors which enable us to speak of a homogeneous labour press in comparison with the bourgeois press. There is primarily the great predominance of political material. Among the content categories the socialist newspapers deal principally with social questions, while the bourgeois newspapers give more space to the question of the right to vote. The position of the labour newspapers, as regards advertisements in the place of publication, is also generally inferior to that of their local bourgeois contemporaries.

However, there are also factors which differentiate the Social Democratic newspaper group. These are primarily variations in the degree of political commitment, as it appears in the political commentary and in the use of political designations.

Party and Press

In this section the relationship of the Social Democratic press to the Party Executive will be discussed in more detail. An examination of official records of the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions, the Co-operative Union, and the Social Democratic Party shows that the Party was the only central organization which concerned itself with newspaper questions. Certain trade unions (for example,

the Swedish Typographers' Union) supported individual newspapers, but there was no endeavour to influence or to contribute financially to the press as a whole. The lack of interest shown by the Confederation of Trade Unions in the labour press was compensated by local trade-union support for the newspapers.

At its constituent congress in 1889 the Social Democratic Party adopted some rules which in part regulated its relationship to the press. Stipulations that Party organs should be approved by the Party Congress and that local branches should be partners in the ownership of the district newspaper showed that there was a weak regulatory connection between the Party and the press. When these rules were adopted, there were, however, only three Social Democratic newspapers which were in fact approved as Party organs.

After the great expansion of the Party press around the turn of the century, these initial rules began to be considered inadequate. Newspaper problems were especially actualized by a series of applications for loans from recently started newspapers. At the Party congress in 1905 a new section on newspapers was adopted in the Party rules. In this section the forms for approving Party organs, the financial conditions and the appointments of editors were laid down in detail. The Party's influence was increased at all points. In 1908 the Party's authority in relation to the Party press was further strengthened. However, a proposal that the newspapers should be placed under a common financial control was rejected.

The regulations in the Party rules indicated the external framework for the Party's actions. However, it was to be incumbent on the Party congresses and primarily on the Party Executive to develop in more detail the forms for the connection between the Party and the Party press. In that case, the first question is whether the Party Executive acted in accordance with any special aim in its newspaper policy.

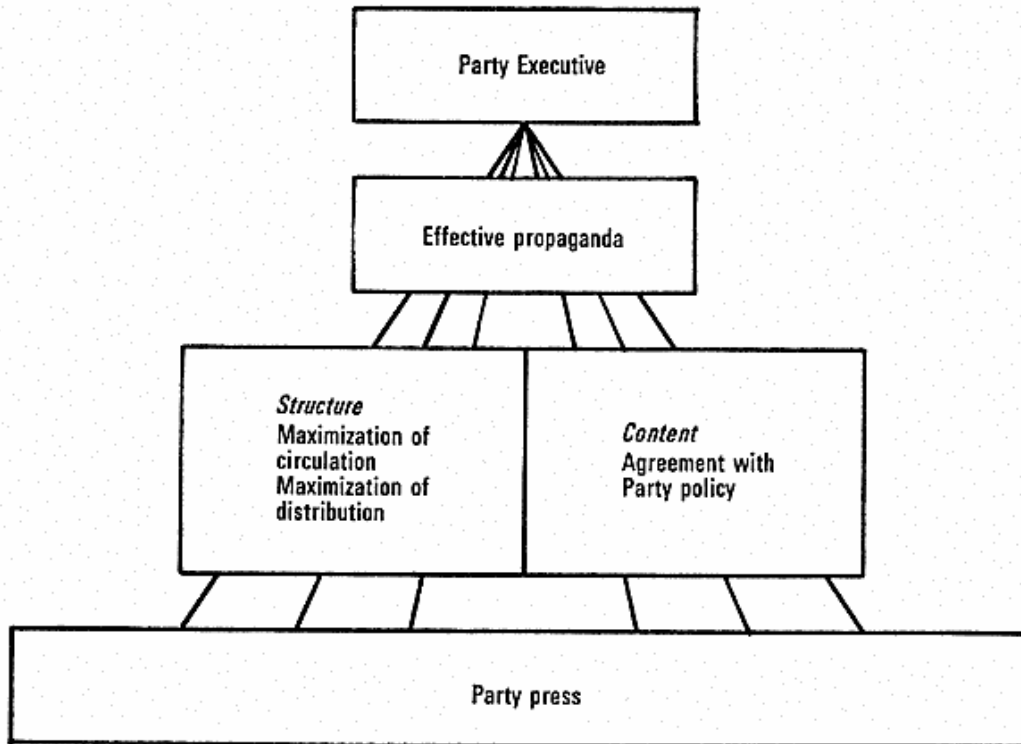
On way of investigating this is to examine the views and statements on the press of the leader of the Social Democratic Party and other prominent Party men. It then appears that Party men over and over again repudiated the bourgeois press on account of its venality, as the expression was. An idealistic newspaper – a socialist newspaper – should be independent of its income from advertising and live on the income from subscriptions. Hjalmar Branting, the Social Democratic Party leader declared that “the best thing one can wish a newspaper is that it may not become a business”. What should it be then? It should be a propaganda sheet for those of like mind. The press should propagandize for socialism. We get the same picture of the purpose of the labours press if we make a content analysis of the declarations which appeared, in accordance with tradition, in the first numbers of the newspapers. The most common argument was that newspapers were founded in order to enlighten the working class on the doctrines of socialism.

As regards the content of the propaganda, it is possible to trace an interesting development in Branting's utterances. To begin with, they were completely dominated by the Marxist ideology and the demand that the newspapers should enlighten the workers as to their role and as to the transformation of society that was necessary. Later he put forward more and more often the argument that the newspapers

should take part in the current political discussions – the Social Democratic newspaper should present the Social Democratic standpoints on the current questions and fight for an improvement in the workers' status. Thus, we may trace the same development in Branting's view of the press as that which Herbert Tingsten (1941) has found in Branting's view of the Party's task.

Effective propaganda, with a content in keeping with the Party policy, can thus be demonstrated as the aim of the Party's press policy. The achievement of this effective propaganda naturally required a structure of the press which would guarantee the greatest possible circulation and the widest possible distribution. The profit-maximization aspect, which is of primary importance for the bourgeois press, was only included in so far as it was desired that the newspapers should be financially stable (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. The party's view of the newspapers.



How were these aims to be achieved? In themselves, they would perhaps not need to be achieved by intervention from the central Party headquarters. One could – as, for example, in Norway – let the press develop without central influence and let it be a task for the local organizations. But one could also – as in Denmark – take over the whole responsibility for the Party press, its structure and development, i. e. let the press be completely integrated into the central Party organization. Such demands were also periodically made in Sweden.

Undoubtedly the most reliable way of getting an idea of the relationship of the Party and the press on these questions is to analyse the detailed minutes of discussions held by the Party leaders, in the Executive Committee and in the Party Executive. A quantification of the number of items of business concerning newspaper matters which were dealt with during the period 1899–1909 gives a clear and summary picture of the situation. In the first place, it appears that the number of items of business discussed by the Party leaders increased gradually during the period. The items concerned six domains: loans, reports (which in most cases concerned the financial circumstances of the newspaper), approvals as Party organs, newspapers to be started (questions and discussions on the publication of a fresh newspaper), appointments of editors and expansions (Table 2).

Table 2. All the matters concerning newspapers dealt with by the Party Executive and the Executive Committee, 1899–1909.

Year	Loans	Reports	Approvals	Newspapers to be started	Appointments of editors	Expansions	Total
1899	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
1900	3	—	1	—	1	—	5
1901	4	2	—	6	1	—	13
1902	5	2	—	2	3	1	13
1903	12	2	2	2	—	—	18
1904	7	—	1	—	1	—	9
1905	6	—	8	—	2	2	18
1906	9	5	5	2	14	3	38
1907	20	4	2	1	5	1	33
1908	22	16	2	1	4	6	51
1909	26	11	1	—	1	—	39
Total	115	42	22	14	32	13	238

It appears that the Party leaders principally had to discuss questions of loans but that towards the end of the period several items of business concerned reports from the press and appointments of editors.

On the basis of the information provided by the minutes, it is possible to state the methods which the Party used in order to effectively achieve the main aims it had laid down and the partial aims (*contents* and *structure*) which it had in mind. By appointing editors or exerting influence in such appointments and by approvals, it must have been possible to influence the contents of the newspapers. The structure of the press could be influenced by financial control and by making and not making loans (Diagram 7).

This may be described as a hypothesis drawn up with the previous analysis of

Diagram 7. The party's channels to influence the press situations.

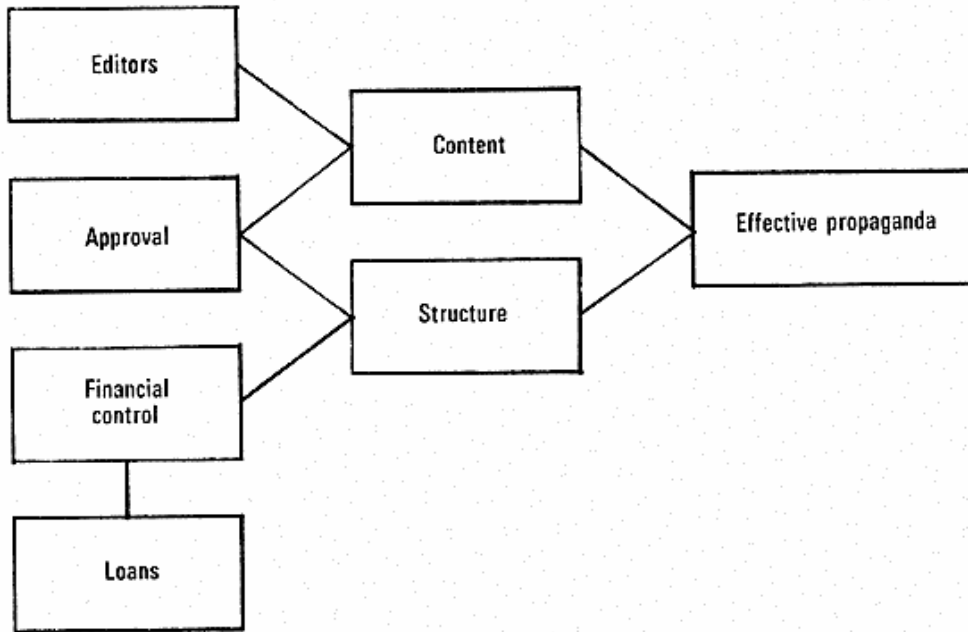
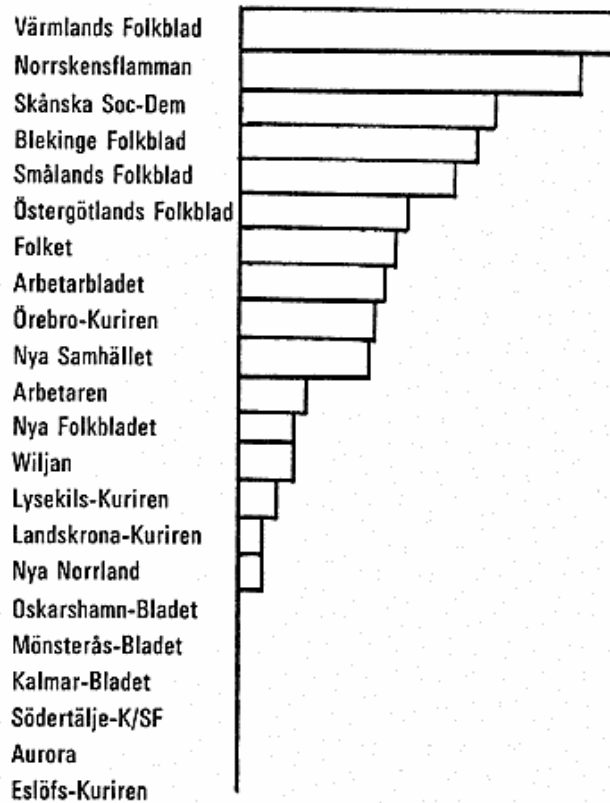


Diagram 8. Decisions of the Party Executive on newspapers questions in the period 1909-9 distributed between the different newspapers with respect to the papers' life-times.



the minutes as a basis. It is now a question of investigating the relations in more detail. Did the Party Executive intervene in these ways in accordance with any definite pattern? Had they any consistent idea of the ideal structure of the press? Did they attempt to direct developments so that the reality came to resemble the ideal picture? Was there any consistent direction in the ways indicated from the central headquarters in opposition to the local bodies?

An analysis of the newspapers which were up for discussion by the Party Executive and of the decisions made may yield answers to these questions. It appears that there were great differences in the Party Executive's treatment of the different newspapers (Diagram 8).

We may in principle distinguish two main groups of newspapers. There are, on the one hand, newspapers which are seldom or never mentioned in the Party Executive minutes and, on the other, newspapers whose names occur regularly in the minutes. In the former group there are 12 newspapers, all small and short-lived; only three survived after 1910 and none became a Party organ during the period under discussion. They were local newspapers with only modest circulations and small distributions outside the place of publication. These newspapers almost always received negative replies to their applications.

The second group includes 10 newspapers. Of the 238 items of business concerning newspapers which were dealt with, no less than 200 concerned these newspapers. Their typical feature was that they were all approved as Party organs. Most of them were regional newspapers which were published in the main localities of the party districts. In this connection it is appropriate to refer to the differences between various Social Democratic newspapers which were indicated above (page 56 and 58f). It is newspapers with large circulations and positions in the middle of the political scale which become Party organs. Extremist newspapers disappear.

By analysing in this way the Party Executive's behaviour towards the individual newspapers, it becomes clear that the Executive had a clear idea of the *structure*, which the Social Democratic press in Sweden should have. The provincial press should consist of regional newspapers which had a rational financial management and close contact with the Party. They then tried in an effective way to guide developments so that the reality came to correspond to the model they had set up. They made loans only to newspapers which satisfied the Party's requirements of a Party newspaper. In these cases they could go very far in the way of direct intervention and even take over the assets of companies in a far-advanced state of insolvency. As regarded other newspapers which did not conform with the Party's view of newspapers, they refused to grant even small loans. These small newspapers were allowed to die, with the answer that they should merge with a newspaper with a larger distribution area.

This applied to the *structure* of the press. As regarded the other aim – the *contents* of the newspapers – the direct influence was very limited. In the Social Democratic Party there was no central office which distributed material to the press. The method chosen, as regarded influencing the political views of the newspapers, was a different and perhaps a more effective one. The Party Executive took action

in the appointments of editors and in this connection it is possible to observe during the period a more and more effective control being established. The Executive made use of the right under the newspaper regulation of 1905 to express their opinions in the appointments of editors and almost without exception the persons recommended by the Executive were appointed. The editors who were placed in charge of the newspapers by the intervention of the Party Executive or a local party body were not primarily newspapermen, though several of them had some kind of practical experience on newspapers. An examination of the editors' educational backgrounds shows that the great majority of them had no formal schooling above the primary school (Table 3).

Table 3. The social composition after education of the editors-in-chief of the Social Democratic press, 1899-1909. The total number of editors in the group investigated was 40.

	Previous work in press		Total
	Yes	No	
No university-entrance examination	10	20	30
University-entrance examination	6	2	8
No information as to education		2	2
Total	16	24	40

We may assume that the editors belonged to the working class – as a matter of fact, several of them had labouring occupations, such as stonemasons, mechanics and navvies. The qualification for promotion was service in the Party or the trade-union movement. The editors were, on the whole, products of the Party (cf. Kantorowicz 1922).

Under these circumstances it was not necessary for any direct central action to be taken, as regarded the newspapers' political views and editorial presentation. Through the influence exercised on the appointments of editors, the Party Executive secured adequate control of the contents of the newspapers. It became just as natural for the editors to follow the Social Democratic Party's ideas and programme as it was for the Party's propagandists and other officers to do so. Like them, the editors of the Party newspapers were incorporated in the Party machine.

Scheme of Analysis

It may be stated that one *necessary condition* for the founding of a Social Democratic newspaper was the existence of (i) a Party branch organization or (ii) a trade union in the place of publication. Without investigating all the local Party branches in the country – including those in places where no newspapers were founded or projected – it would seem to be impossible to establish definitely whether any special requirements were made on the local organization concerned. However, it is clear that it was not only large and powerful local branches and trade unions that sponsored newspapers.

Thus, if we lay it down that the existence of an organization in the locality is a *necessary* condition, this is not to say that it is a *sufficient* condition. A releasing factor is also necessary. Studies of the individual newspapers have shown that the releasing factor in an increased *need of propaganda*. Such a need may arise for (i) political reasons (for example, a general election), (ii) trade-union reasons (for example, a local labour dispute) or (iii) organizational reasons (to strengthen the labour movement in the place of publication).

However, there are a number of towns which had organizations of a trade-union or political nature and where there must have been a need for propaganda but where nevertheless no newspaper was founded or (which in this connection is just as interesting) was able to survive. The towns Falun, Halmstad, Östersund, Nyköping, Landskrona, Motala, Västerås and Linköping may be mentioned. It is clear that in these towns there were both local Party branches and a need for Party propaganda (manifested by newspaper associations, amongst other things) but that newspapers of a Social Democratic complexion never appeared there or that they were compelled to close down. Why was this?

The explanation is to be found in the results of the investigations of the actions of the central Party Executive. These results may be summarized in the following points.

1. The central Party authorities interested themselves in questions concerning local newspapers.
2. There was control from central headquarters.
3. The Party Executive had a definite idea of how the Social Democratic press should be structured.

In all the towns mentioned above the Party Executive intervened. They either prevented the founding of newspapers or refused to help a newspaper already started. Similarly there were cases in which they intervened actively, in order either to initiate the starting of a newspaper or to keep alive newspapers already started.

As regards explaining why a Social Democratic newspaper was started or closed down, regard must be paid to both the central and the local plane. The conceivable explanation is sketched in Fig. 3. It is clear that an interaction is required between the central and the local body for a *Party newspaper* to come into existence. If a negative reaction comes from the central body to a newspaper already started or to a projected newspaper, the newspaper must be closed down or cannot be started (i. e. it is completely eliminated).

However, it is clear that it is possible for a newspaper to both come into existence and survive without any form of contact being established with central Party headquarters. Thus, three newspapers – *Nya Norrland*, *Aurora* and *Lysekils-Kuriren* – have been able to survive uninfluenced by the central Party Executive's view of newspapers. They have been able to do so because – for different reasons – they have not needed to request help or support from the Party Executive or been dependent on the Party Executive.

Fig. 3 shows, hypothetically, the conditions for the origin and continued existence of a Party newspaper. It shows that during the period of the investigation an inter-

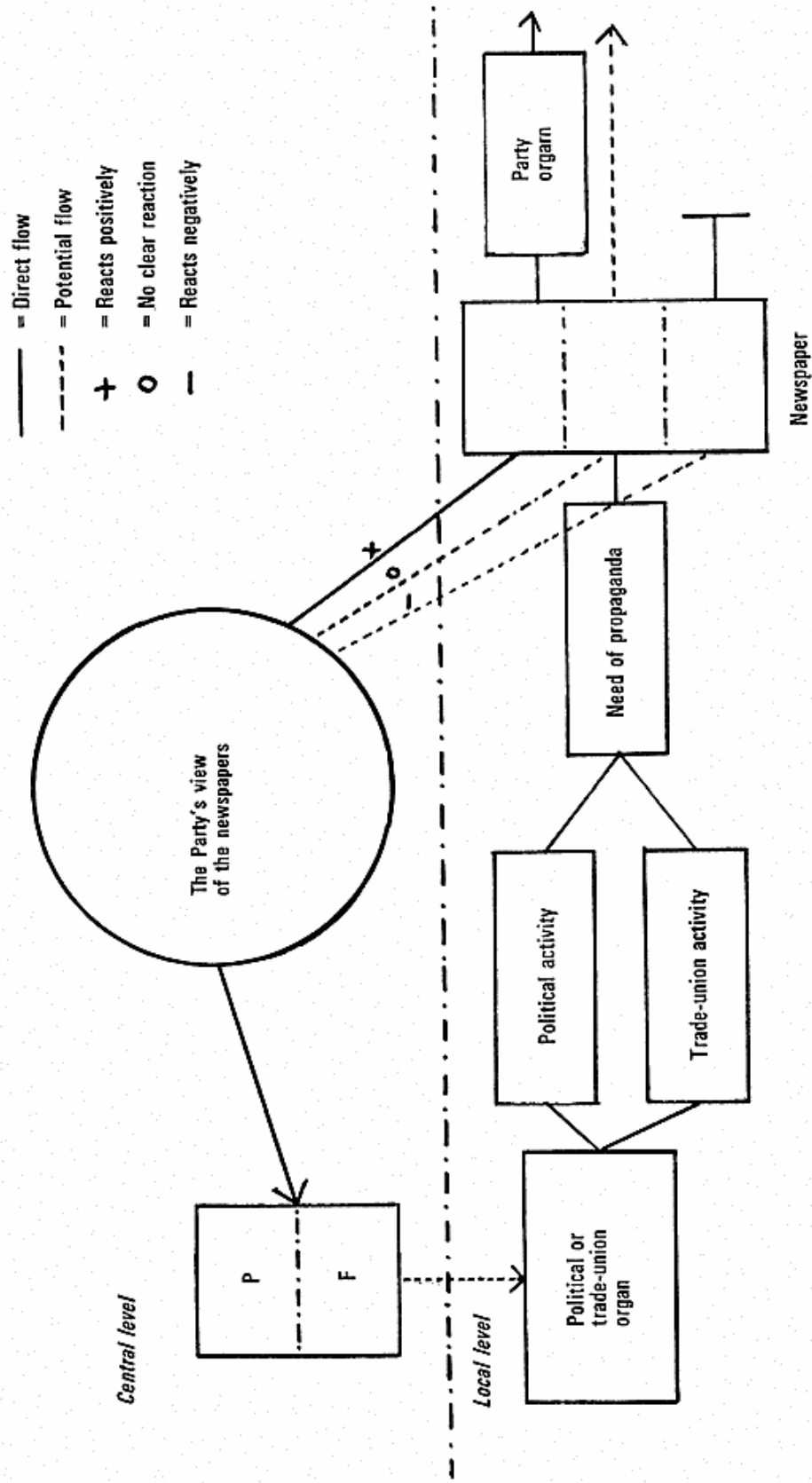


Fig. 3. The founding of Social Democratic newspapers, 1899-1909.

action was generally required between the local and the central body, with a common need for propaganda, for a Party newspaper to come into existence. The newspapers which were founded in this way between 1899 and 1909 have been described from a number of angles in this investigation. It is clear that – to link up with the groupings previously made – “Party organs” did not in any case belong to the “deviating” groups, as regarded structure and contents.

It has been possible to analyse the Social Democratic Party press on the basis of investigations of its financial circumstances, its contents and its contacts with the central Party Executive. This press consisted of a group of newspapers which in all probability differed radically from the other contemporary newspapers, not least as regarded its aims. They stood outside the free play of the circulation market. They could survive in spite of their poor finances. Their aim was not to be financially profitable but to circulate the most and the best possible propaganda within a certain area.

In *local* quarters there was much enthusiasm and goodwill. The *central* headquarters was compelled to make a realistic assessment of the resources and possibilities. In combination this resulted in a Party press that covered the greater part of the country. A new type of newspaper consequently appeared in the Swedish provinces – the Party newspaper. It was dependent for its existence on the bodies which had sponsored its origin – the local and central Party authorities. It is obvious that they did not definitively stand aside from the developments in the circulation and advertisement field in the place of publication. But they could survive even though they did not have a first-class or even a second-class status in this place. The main thing was that their existence corresponded to a need of the local and central Party authorities.

The Party newspapers constituted a press with a different aim, different financial conditions and different contents than the bourgeois newspapers. In evaluating these newspapers, regard must be paid to their peculiar nature. The scheme of analysis presented in Fig. 3 should also be borne in mind in evaluating the information flow from the Social Democratic newspapers. The question is, how far the scheme which has been outlined is still of current application and to what extent special rules still apply to the Social Democratic press. This is an important subject for research.

It is also important to investigate whether other parties than the Social Democratic Party also had a party press which existed mainly in virtue of party support instead of on the basis of market conditions. Investigations on the existence and messages of newspapers cannot, it seems, disregard this approach to the problem.

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