

## Editorial Note

Mancur Olson's book, *The Rise and Decline of Nations*, has attracted widespread attention in Scandinavia and elsewhere. A basic question is whether the political and economic problems associated with the growth of government and strongly organized interest groups, particularly during periods of economic stagnation or slow growth, can be understood, and perhaps eventually solved, by the application of Olson's theory. *Scandinavian Political Studies* appeared to be a journal well-suited for a scholarly debate on such questions. The idea of a special issue was originally discussed between the previous Editor of SPS, Krister Ståhlberg, and Jan-Erik Lane of Umeå. It has now finally materialized.

This special issue opens with a general theoretical contribution by David Willis. Then Jan-Erik Lane and Svante Ersson perform a number of empirical tests on Olson's theory. The next two articles focus on Scandinavian countries known for their 'corporatist' organizations: Agne Gustafsson deals with Swedish developments, whereas Bjørn Erik Rasch and Rune Jørgen Sørensen deal with Norway. In the final article, Mancur Olson not only responds to critical comments and empirical tests, but also develops his ideas further.

SPS welcomes additional contributions to advance the understanding of the important problems discussed in this special issue.

*Erik Damgaard*