British Secret Services in Sweden 1939-41

Organisation, Activities and Achievements

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Acknowledgement[1]

Since I met SOE agent Armand Trønnes many years ago, I have been curious about what happened in Stockholm during the Second World War, and this master thesis in history gave me the opportunity to find out. Professor Emeritus Even Lange helped me choose this topic, and my patient and very helpful tutor Professor Øystein Sørensen has kept on challenging me making research questions and conclusions as clear as possible. During the last two years I have received encouragement and help from Ambassador David Cairns, the professors Janne Flyghed, Tore Pryser, Knud Jespersen and Michael Goodman, the former Chief Historian Gillian Bennett, dr philos Trond Spurkeland and John Latham. Dr Tony Insall has given me some very valuable comments on a draft text, of which I am most grateful. A very special thanks to Robert Pearson, Trevor Baker and Steven Kippax for their tremendous insight of the British archive system and helping me to access important files, documentation and books.

The writing and the analysis are my own, including the full responsibility for possible errors and the conclusions I have drawn.

The story told in this thesis is dedicated to my father Thorleif, and his friend Armand, that fought so strongly for the liberation and freedom of Norway. If they still had been around, I hope they would have found my text interesting.

Jan Solberg
May 2019

When it comes to general theory, I will refer to the historian Hayden Whites[2]: The Norwegian and British established story of the Second World War is a romance since the people gathered against the enemy, the enemy were driven out and peace restored. Maybe the British secret services in Stockholm can be studied as a tragedy since not all the objectives were accomplished and some agents were arrested, sentenced and expelled. The life at the legation in Stockholm and the many spies in Sweden can possibly be played as a comedy. The satire of the war has maybe yet to be written.

[1] This thesis is written in British English and with Times New Roman size 12, size 10 in footnotes and 1,5-line space. The Endnote version 9 is used for handling references and Chicago 16th footnote style is used.
[2] Hayden V. White, *Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (1974).

Summary

The history of the British secret services in Sweden at the beginning of the Second World War has been studied in parts by several historians, but not as a complete and holistic narrative. The overall research question is whether the performance was a success and helped to combat the enemy. The conclusion is that the British secret services in Sweden produced intelligence, in quantity and quality, according to the objectives of British foreign and war policy. This in contrast to some historians who have characterised the British activities in Sweden 1939-41 as problematic and in important areas as a failure. But many of these previous studies have been based on superficial analysis of the specific activities, repeating stories that go all the way back to the time the events occurred, not assessing the complete range of activities and not reflecting on the limited long-term consequences.

This thesis starts with how British secret services were organised in London, describing the objectives into the war and then laying out the organisation in Sweden. General intelligence, naval intelligence and special operations are discussed to understand the performance and achievements. The Swedish counterintelligence as the main obstacle is analysed. There were some setbacks, especially in special operations, with arrests and disclosures by the Swedish counterintelligence. This was an embarrassment to the diplomatic culture but had little consequence on the collection of intelligence and the ability to perform special operations in the long run. The organisation and activities were complex which resulted in challenges of coordination and cooperation. The newly recruited agents and diplomats were exposed to a much larger demand for volume of military and political intelligence in the light of an offensive enemy and Swedish counterintelligence. It was not always possible to perform according to standard procedures established before the war and talented improvisation was required. When almost everyone at the quickly growing legation in Stockholm worked on intelligence one way or the other, the relative position of Secret Intelligence Service at the legation was weakened, and the role of intelligence and information collected from the top level of diplomats, special operations and from the specialists on military and political affairs strengthened.

The British objective at the beginning was to bring Sweden on to their side, but after April 1940, the British interest changed to maintain the balance in Northern Europe using Swedish neutrality as a platform for collecting intelligence. Since Stockholm was a hub for many countries and their intelligence work, it was possible to access information from many countries and on many topics. The Swedish Security Police tried to control the British but were in most cases too late to stop British intelligence operations in Sweden.

Content

1 Research Questions, Methods and Theory

The **topic** of this thesis is the British secret services in Sweden[3] 1939-1941 with a focus on how the services were organised, functioned and what was achieved: Did the British secret services meet their objectives? The research is centred on five areas of **research questions**: Organisation, Objectives, Operation, Counter-intelligence and Achievements.

How did the **organisation** and structure of British secret services in Sweden develop during the two first years of the war, did it become a full-fledged, complete service and who were the leaders? What were the **objectives** and intentions, and were there any changes in the objectives during 1939-1941? What were the strengths and weaknesses of the **operation** of intelligence, propaganda, and sabotage by British secret services? Were the activities in Sweden managed locally or from London? Was collegiality and cooperation the prevailing working method or were there separate units and possibly conflicts? How and to what extent did the Swedish **counterintelligence** cause trouble, did they do a good job of obstruction based on a good understanding of the British secret services? What were the overall **achievements** and did British intelligence in Sweden fulfil the objectives?

1.1 Approach and Procedure

I will use traditional methods for historical research based on literature and archive studies. The documentation from relevant research literature will be presented and combined to answer my research questions. In addition, it will be used archive documents to complement the literature studies and be part of a discussion of the validity of previous research studies.

I will proceed by examining the central organisation and objectives of British secret services and to use that as a check-list when studying the British secret services in Sweden. I will go through the Swedish counter-intelligence system to get a grasp of the threats it represented to the British. Using these two out-sets, I will discuss the practical part of British intelligence and special operations in Sweden through intelligence (general, political, military and industrial) and special operations in the time period of this thesis. In the analysis, I will use some theory I will discuss later in this chapter. At different stages, I will summarise the results of my research. Finally, I will try to conclude on the research questions I stated in the beginning of

[3] British secret services are not one unitary organisation, but a set of organisations, structures and functions.

this thesis and discuss if some of my results are new or in contradiction to previous research studies.

1.2 Topic

It is a popular view among some historians and writers of history that the British secret services in Sweden in the beginning of the Second World War was not a successful story, some say it was a failure.[4] In this thesis I hope to contribute to the discussion about the validity of such a conclusion. My intention is to contribute to explanation and analysis of the structure and operation of the British secret services in Sweden 1939-1941 and to give an estimate of the overall performance. My focus is on management, cooperation, conflict and the achievements of operational intelligence and special operations in Stockholm and London, with examples of different operations.[5] I will discuss the traditional view of special operations in Sweden as a failure, other areas of intelligence as without results and that the agents involved were not competent.[6]

There is no holistic research on the complete British legation in Stockholm, how it worked and was organised, but mostly many fragments that are incorporated in different studies. In this thesis, I will attempt to put together some of these fragments to give a more complete story of the British secret services and I will use primary sources to fill in gaps.

The secret services will be mainly general intelligence (Secret Intelligence Service, SIS), naval intelligence and special operations (Section D of SIS and Special Operations Executive (SOE)), but also other parts of the secret service system will be discussed. To study the development in Sweden, one has to understand the organisation, decision-making and objectives of the central intelligence system in London. I will summarise the parent organisation, based in London, of the Secret Intelligence Service, of Special Operations Executive and other parts of the intelligence system. I will touch upon how the government and senior management of the ministries worked on secret services. For Stockholm I will give a description of the Passport Control Office, the Reading Bureau, Press attaché, Marine attaché, Military attaché, the Ambassador and other diplomats and agents and what they sent home of

[4] Professor Keith Jeffery (2010) refers to 'incompetence in Sweden', to 'Rickman debacle' and to 'SIS-SOE relations at their worst'. Professor John Gilmour (2010) refers to 'failure of operations'. Charles Greig Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986). refers to special operations as 'fiascos'.

[5] The literature has focus on conflicts and less on cooperation. This will be discussed further out in the thesis..

[6] Many of the people involved knew each other for instance having met at the Embassy of Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen or Helsinki before the war. Several also knew each other from the time of study in England.

their own gathered intelligence. The same officials also got concrete requests and orders from London. In addition, the legation worked with special operations in both Sweden and Norway. In the time covered by this thesis, agent recruitment and administration of air transport back to Britain was also important. The Swedish government and counter-intelligence in the General Security Police were a threat to the British secret services and the immediate factor behind encountered problems and possibly failures, which makes it an important part of this narrative.

1.3 The Selected Time Span

The selected time span for this thesis is from September 1939 when Britain declared war on Germany to the summer of 1941 when the attention on Sweden changed after Germany invaded the Soviet Union. It is the time for build-up and organisational development of secret services in Sweden and with pioneer agents of different nationalities.

In the first year of this time period Britain had an offensive policy for Sweden trying to get them on their side, but from the summer of 1940 there was a shift in policy with a focus to keep Sweden as a neutral country and keep stability in Scandinavia. In July 1941, the diplomat responsible for special operations in Norway, Malcolm Munthe, left Sweden as 'non grata' and ended the first year of Special Operations Executive in Sweden. Into 1942 the expectations of war outcome changed, Germany was not conceived to threaten Sweden, and Sweden did not obstruct the British secret services as it had in the beginning of the war.

During 1939-1941 in Sweden, regular intelligence work was established, and Section D and SOE had plans for and executed operations. It included two major interferences by the Swedish General Security Police, i.e. the revelation of Section D and the Barbara Gang, and two major agents, Alfred Rickman and Malcolm Munthe, worked in Stockholm. John Martin was head of station for Secret Intelligence Service and Henry Denham started to work as naval attaché.

The peacetime low level of intelligence activity, was transformed into a huge build-up in Sweden in 1939-1940 and even further 1940-1941 when Sweden was the sole neutral country of northern Europe, whereas after 1941 was more characterised by 'quiet' intelligence collection and supporting special operations in neighbouring countries,

1.4 Sources

The literature used in this thesis is listed in the appendix and appears in the relevant footnotes, and it will be discussed historiographical in the next chapter. Archive sources, in London and Stockholm, are also listed in the appendix and will be commented on here:

- The archives in The British Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the secret services in the National Archives in London. Of particular interest is correspondence with and about the legation in Stockholm.
- Swedish Security Police archive, court processes and the Swedish Foreign Office Archive in the National Archives in Stockholm. Of particular interest are person files for agents and diplomats.

The documents used in this thesis are mostly about the specific activities in Sweden, but there are also documents used to cover the organisation in London and on Cabinet meetings. The special challenge for secret services is strict secrecy, and that the public knew little. In addition, the agents did not know each other well, and it was communicated largely in accordance with line management and everything was based on the 'need to know' principle. In retrospect, it implies to a lesser extent to recreate something that was there at the time, but rather to create a concept of structures from scratch.[7] For Secret services, the amount of writing in many contexts were explicitly limited, and they shredded more documents for potential compromising content than compared with other areas of government activity. It was a deliberate guideline that documents would not cover decision-making and specific cases but remain oral, usually based on a 'need to know' principle so that exposure would to a minimum compromise others.

A main difficulty is that the archives of SIS are so limited available since they never were opened for the public. A more practical problem is the organisation of the files, both in the Swedish archives and in the British were documents with the same content often are spread around in numerous files. To benefit from the British files, it is in many cases necessary to know the code numbers of the diplomats and agents involved. Both Swedish and British archives are extensive and require skills and experience to be used optimally.

The files used in this thesis have been acquired by copies from Stockholm and London, and mostly by two two-day visits each in the Swedish and British archives. In addition, I have been able to access several electronic scanned files from British contacts. Few relevant documents are published on the Internet with free access.

[7] One hypothesis is that the further up of the organisational system, the clearer the notion of an overall organisation. The senior management of Foreign Office, Ministry of Economic Warfare, the Cabinet and the Joint Intelligence Committee were those agencies who could best explain 'secret services'. On the grassroot, on the operation level, it was in principle only knowledge of their own activity.

1.5 Perspectives

Historic approach: Decision-making cannot be based on future facts since we don't know the future. Whether or not a decision is good can only be based on the past and the present situation. Outcome can differ from what was anticipated, but the judgement of decisions can never be judged on knowledge of the outcome. Unfortunately, it is common to think about the past based on today's knowledge. One might even say that it is impossible for the human mind not to always take later gained information into account. I think most historians would say that history should be based on the facts and assessments at the time when it happened. Thus, the research is done without taking the outcome and later history into account. The study of history often, or always, cut out some parts of the historical development. Any story cannot take everything into account. We must simplify the causes and explanations of historical development to get history written.

Intelligence, special operations and counterintelligence: The theory of intelligence and special operations usually consist of the tools 'intelligence' and 'special operations' in both peacetime and during war. Intelligence will revolve around information retrieval and information processing about activities that are considered a threat to a country's security. Special operations are direct physical actions such as sabotage, propaganda distribution and even assaults against humans. The main objectives of secret services in war are:

1) Gather information on the enemy (and to some extent other countries) plans and activities to facilitate their own warfare, defence, and then winning the war. And it is necessary to counteract enemy and other countries' secret services through counterintelligence.
2) Damage the enemy at particularly vulnerable places through special operations.
3) Transmit information and propaganda behind enemy lines, and in neutral countries to strengthen morale and reduce enemy morale.

In the literature, attention has been given to the Swedish surveillance of the different foreign legations and whereabouts of the diplomats. That the different legations worked so much on intelligence made it easier for the Swedish counterintelligence. The British legation was maybe the only one active in special operations and had competence in this type of operations. There has been a significant bias in the historical research, focusing on special operations and to a lot lesser extent general intelligence. The reason presumably for this is that the documentation and sources have had relatively little documentation on general intelligence although all indications are that this was important and of a large volume, as I will discuss in this thesis. The analysis

of the British activities and operations in Sweden will be based on different perspectives to clarify and explain the performance and to the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats: 1) Rational, organisational or politically elements of decision-making, 2) the function of matrix organisations as theory of secret services in foreign services.

Rational analysis, national objectives and intentions: Most historical research of politics and organisational behaviour will be based on a rational model and intentions of decision-making.[8] It is assumed that the people involved will weigh pros and cons carefully and get to the 'right' decision. In the same way intentions are often also seen from a rational point of view. One start-scenario in this thesis is the notion of nations and governments in dialogue and conflict. Government action as choice is the central unit of analysis. The decision will come out of a rational choice of different options and their consequences by maximising the value towards the government's objectives. If costs or problems increases, the action becomes less likely and vice versa.

Organisational behaviour: The organisational perspective has interesting implications during war since the military and government is so much run by standard procedures, strategic and operational planning. The culture of organisations will play an important part. In special operations a main question concerns the perceived struggle between the diplomatic culture and the sabotage culture. This became an obstacle to performance. In this approach the question become what organisations are involved. What capabilities and constraints do these organisations' existing standard operating procedures (SOP) create in producing information about international conditions, threats and opportunities? How does their standard operating procedures create the menu of options for action? And how does the implementation work?[9]

The action will come out of organisations and their production. Typically, standard operation procedures, fixed programs and repertoires will be the limiting factor. In the short run actions will tend to be the same as earlier action, and in the longer run output will be limited by the organisation's views, capacities, programs, repertoire and routines. Some persons involved played a political game, but mostly the struggle came out of 'where you sit'. The alternative options of action were very much limited by 'standard operating procedures'. The most important SOP was the Swedish neutrality and the counterintelligence. The lack of thinking 'out of the box' limited operations and performance. The lack of operational planning led to

[8] Graham T. Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision : Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1999), a standard reference in the analysis of decision-making in a historical context.
[9] Ibid., p 389-91.

improvisation sometimes with success, but other times increased significantly the risk of something going wrong.

The understanding of British intelligence in Sweden in the beginning of the war in historical research has not been based on an overall understanding of the organisation of intelligence.[10] Swedish counterintelligence was successful especially in combatting British special operations but was not so much an obstacle to the work of general intelligence and propaganda.

The different players and organisations in secret services work in environments with their own beliefs, traditions and mind-sets (culture). Diplomacy culture[11] is stability, care, and order. Culture of espionage is secrecy, discretion and invisibility. Special operations are 'action', strongly trained agents with ability of improvisation. Bureaucracy is hierarchy, introvert, thorough and 'do as you are told'. Military culture can be like the bureaucratic culture but may have more of plan and the ability of precise implementation. Content and scope of competitive culture and desire for power is also an interesting historical explanation area. All such cultures entail different approaches in the way to solve problems and in communication in between.

It is debated and also researched[12] differences in decision-making between Nordic countries. In particular, the Swedish collective consensus culture has often been drawn up along with 'ordning och reda'[13] as a legal basis for decisions and a collective mind. The question is whether differences in British, Norwegian and Swedish decision-making and implementation culture have had significance for the progress and performance of the secret services in Sweden. The eager culture of the Swedish security police could be an example of Swedish implementation culture. Swedish culture could come in conflict with more self-conscious individualistic Norwegians culture and British 'gentleman's culture', collegiality and improvisation.

Politics, power and the role of individuals: The approach of politics is where government action comes out of political struggle.[14] The concept will be based on players in position (often

[10] A typical example of this is the 'Rickman case' which was a wording that came out of the Swedish press coverage in 1940, when actually Rickman was the head of SIS Section D work in Sweden, ref chapter 8.
[11] See for instance books of Iver Neumann on foreign Service and diplomacy, ref Iver B. Neumann, *At Home with the Diplomats : Inside a European Foreign Ministry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012).
[12] John Gilmour, *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).John Gilmour is also writing on what he calls the Swedish national culture.
[13] Swedish for 'order and readiness'
[14] Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision : Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. (1999)

local), their goals, their stakes and the process with deadlines. Power will be a central focus, and government action in this model comes out of bargaining.[15]

The question in this approach is who the players are and their views and values. How does this shape the menu of options? What factors shape them, influence their impact on the choices and what is their preferred action channel? We can see the political struggle on top level in British politics with characters like Chamberlain, Churchill and Dalton, with bureaucrats like Cadogan, Jeff, C and with the Swedes such as Boheman[16], Günther or Erlander. Or it can be seen at the legation with Martin, Mallet and Munthe.

Matrix organisations: A matrix organisation compromise two different lines of command where the horizontal dominates and with the vertical management facilitating the horizontal cooperation. The British intelligence system has been regarded as 'flat', focusing on skills working together and not so much on vertical line management. We can apply elements of the theory, design and operation of matrix organisations to the complete structure of British secret services. As I will discuss in this thesis, the British intelligence system is complex and not all a unified single organisation with purely line bureaucratic management. The Foreign Office system of working with other ministries and representation in embassies overseas will be discussed in a framework of matrix organisation. It is a unique system with so many in demand for intelligence, so many alternative structures and such a challenge with the overall coordination and assessment.

The management of a matrix organisation in an intelligence context is challenging, maybe mostly because of all the secrecy. The standard of using the legation as a basis for intelligence had severe limitations and made it easier for Swedish and other nations counterintelligence. The use of independent networks outside the diplomatic system is also difficult to manage. The internal operation of the intelligence system was challenging. The British did not operate according to good practice under all circumstances.

[15] Certainly, Churchill was a political player, but one can see this on all levels of intelligence and there were a number of individuals that had their own agenda of views and positions, such as major Grands in Section D, the struggle between the conservatives and labour in Britain, in Swedish politics and among the Norwegians in Stockholm and London.

[16] Erik Boheman, Permanent Undersecretary in the Swedish Foreign Office was probably the most influential Swedish civil servant during the war. He has written memoirs: Erik Boheman, *På Vakt. Kabinettssekreterare under Andra Världskriget* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1964). The same can be said of his opposite number in Britain, Alexander Cadogang, PUS in the Foreign Office, Alexander Sir Cadogan and David Dilks, *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan, O.M., 1938-1945* (London: Cassell, 1971).

2 Literature and Historiography

The literature has not given a complete organisational chart or overview of the British secret services in Sweden or explained the tasks of all diplomats, officers and agents involved. There is still some confusion about who was in charge in Sweden. Later in the war there was drawn an organisational chart for SOE in Sweden, but they did not explain the other areas in full. A lot of books identify agents in parts of special operations, but they are incapable of explaining the broader context and the total management system together with the headquarters in London. Some books will mention the Secret Intelligence Service, but I have not come across any who studies the full operation of that service in Sweden. This is the main missing area of research.

The strategy and objectives of the British have been studied in some detail as an issue of foreign policy keeping a control of the Nordic countries and more specific issues such as the control of the Swedish iron ore, roller bearings and other industrial products. Also, part of the military intelligence has been discussed. There has been less focus on the objectives of intelligence as such and most of the literature does not discuss the intelligence system overseas as mainly a collecting system of information, later to be handled in London. They have not addressed the importance of the relationship between consumers and producers of intelligence in full. No one, that I have come across, has studied the quantity and quality of British intelligence in Sweden for the collection of information to be handled for instance up to the level of the Joint Intelligence Committee in London.

The Swedish counterintelligence has not been studied in all its activities. I have not come across studies that look into how the secret police surveyed all interesting nations in Stockholm and how they cooperated with government, Swedish foreign (military) intelligence and other nations. Without such studies, it is difficult to put the threats and actions against the British activities into the right perspective.

This thesis can be placed under several different headings in the research literature, for instance:

- The history of occupation in Scandinavian countries and the war history of Britain.
- History and theory of intelligence and special operations
- Organisation of the public sector
- History and theory of diplomatic activity
- Neutrality history

There is a great deal of literature on the structure of the top level of secret services in United Kingdom, with general intelligence and for special operations, for the different parts and

attempts to give a more complete picture. To a certain extent the same can be said about Sweden. A lot has been written on British secret services at headquarters level in London, some of it very recent because of newly opened archives and new official history and other history written. On the local level, such as in Sweden, most of the research and literature has been on some part of the intelligence system and, there has been much focus on special operations and less on general intelligence and espionage. The reason has to do with the documentation, but maybe as much with the interest in more spectacular stories of special operations. A broad academic study of secret services would have attempted a better balance between the different intelligence activities and what the benefit from these were.

It has been written extensively about special operations in occupied areas. For Norway, there has been a tendency in the literature for such actions to be perceived as Norwegian actions and out of Norwegian national war policy, while research shows that it was British operations and most actions were planned and carried out from a strategy that Norway was peripheral and of less importance to the overall development of the war.[17] Much attention has been given to activities of Special Operations Executive (SOE). SOE was an organisation for the war: It came out of Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) and they merged it back into MI6 just after the war, a kind of parenthesis in British intelligence history. SOE should be studied together with SIS.[18] The archives for SOE were opened from 1970 mainly in the 1990's. There are still some parts of the SOE files that have not been released.[19] For SIS little is opened, and one must search other places than in the actual SIS for finding relevant documentation.[20]

The historiography behind this thesis has since the war evolved mainly in two phases. In the first phase until the 90's, the written sources were limited, and the literature largely based on information from participants in the war, while the second stage over the past 20 years has given the research literature a better documented foundation. The first stage was largely history from below with significant weaknesses as selective emphasis on positive stories of heroes, often

[17] Ian Herrington, "The Special Operations Executive in Norway 1940-1945 [Electronic Resource] : Policy and Operations in the Strategic and Political Context" (De Montfort University, 2004). The strategic foundation for SOE's activities in Norway, p. i: '(Norway) subordinate and peripheral position in relation to the main thrust of Allied strategy in Europe'.

[18] The Foreign Office and the SIS were opposed to establishment of SOE during the war and had opinions on many issues about SOE's activities. In 1942, the FO made an evaluation where the recommendation was quite clear that SOE had to return to the SIS after the war, which also happened.

[19] Inter alia, parts of the persons files are not available.

[20] Elsewhere, for instance, will be in the files of Cadogan in Foreign Office and Jeffrey Jebb in the Ministry of Economic Warfare.

without academic verification of the memories. Many stories were also not told because one felt committed by the secrecy promise.

As late as 2011 the official history[21] of the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS/MI6) by Professor Keith Jeffery was published. In 2014 the official history of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) by Professor Michael S Goodman was published. On SOE there has been a number of studies that started already right after the war with William MacKenzie's official history (published in 2000). Later Charles Cruickshank's book on SOE in Scandinavia (1986) has also been a standard reference. There has been less research on the predecessor, Section D in SIS, and the broadest book on this organisation came in 2017 by Malcolm Atkin 'Section D for Destruction'.

Norwegian research literature on secret services in the first ten years after the war were strongly empirically in stories of home front and special operations.[22] There was less room for superior organisational and policy analysis. The social history of most people and the economic history during the war have not been in focus before quite recently. In Sweden there is no 'hero' history like in Norway and the research literature is more about neutrality policy. In recent years it has been discussed among historians and other 'debaters' whether they based Swedish politics on 'small state realism'[23] or whether the neutrality policy was immoral. Sweden has, compared with Britain and Norway, a lot less academic literature on the war and has a different tradition with not so many 'heroes'. After the war most of the Swedish research was in the foreign policy area and how the policy of neutrality was handled, ref historians like Carlgren[24] and Hägglöff[25]. In studies of intelligence, Professor Janne Flyghed (1992) wrote about the war in Sweden with focus on civil rights issues and the secret police and he then started up a new discussion in Sweden about what had taken place during the war. At the same time in 1991 Maria-Pia Boëthius gave out her book on 'Honour and Consciousness' debating the moral sides of Swedes actions during the war. Her approach was a broader view where not only a countries self-interest was focused, but also moral obligations towards people in other

[21] 'Official history' in Britain is a scheme where professional historians in a special agreement with the government get access to all documentation, including the most secret, but has to accept that certain information in the end are not disclosed.
[22] The Norwegian war historian Professor Magne Skodvin has been criticised by other war historian, such as Hans Fredrik Dahl, for putting too much emphasis on the resistance. History debate 1997-98
[23] Gilmour, *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War*, p 271-74.
[24] Carlgren was head of the Foreign Office archive, ref Wilhelm M. Carlgren et al., *Utrikespolitik Och Historia : Studier Tillägnade Wilhelm M. Carlgren Den 6 Maj 1987* (Stockholm: Militärhistoriska förl., 1987).
[25] Gunnar Hägglöf, *Svensk Krigshandelspolitik under Andra Världskriget* (Stockholm: Norstedt, 1958).

countries.[26] In a debate in 2014/15[27] it is emphasised the significance of new research in the period from 1990 although the different basic views are still there.

In more recent time, two books about Sweden should be mentioned: C.G.McKay on intelligence and counterintelligence in Sweden (1993) and John Gilmour (2010) on 'The Swedish experience during the second world war'. When it comes to intelligence, Professor Wilhelm Agrell have also studied intelligence in Sweden during the war[28].

Present history writing about the Second World War takes place more 'undisturbed' and with greater 'coolness' than before, because the generations that participated in the war mostly have passed away. The research can be characterized as 'traditional western' [29] With descriptions of chronological relationships, collective entities with a prominent place (alliances, nations, specific authorities, intelligence services), many decision-makers comes forward clearly (politicians, bureaucrats, bosses, heroes) and the perspective is to illuminate history 'as it actually happened.' The current research literature revolves around concrete history research on political institutions, processes and intentions.

Memoirs and biographies: In all the years since war there has been a stream of books telling personal memoirs of the war or telling biographically stories. In this thesis, ref the literature list in the appendix, the following can be mentioned: Minister of Economic Warfare Hugh Dalton[30], the permanent undersecretaries Alexander Cadogan (with his assistant Gladwyn Jebb[31]) and Erik Boheman, Winston Churchill, Press attaché Peter Tennant, Naval attaché Henry Denham, Intelligence officer Noel Annan[32] and Malcolm Munthe. Gill Bennett's book about Desmond Morton, Churchills main intelligence adviser over many years, blends the personal story of Morton with the development of the British intelligence over a period of 40 years and gives special insight in the importance of economic intelligence.

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[26] Gilmour, *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War*, p 274-81.
[27] Tidskriften Respons Alf W. Johansson, "Något Har Gått Snett I Den Svenska Synen På Andre Världskriget," *Respons* 1-3 (2014). Klas Åmark, "Kan Man Forhandla Med Gangsters?," ibid.2/2014. Janne Flyghed, "Det Var Avstegen Från Neutraliteten Som Höll Sverige Utanför Kriget," ibid.3/2014.
[28] Wilhelm Agrell, *Stockholm Som Spioncentral*, Stockholms Historia (Lund: Historiska media, 2006).
[29] Ref reading literature Peter Burke, "Western Historical Thinking in a Global Perspective - 10 Theses," *J Rüsen (ed)* (2002).
[30] Ben Pimlott, *Hugh Dalton* (London: Harper Collins, 1995, 1985).
[31] Hubert Miles Gladwyn Jebb Baron Gladwyn, *The Memoirs of Lord Gladwyn* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972).
[32] Noel Gilroy Annan Baron Annan, *Changing Enemies : The Defeat and Regeneration of Germany* (London: HarperCollins, 1996, 1995).

2.1 Scandinavia

Ian Herrington's doctoral dissertation 'SOE in Norway' (2004) clarified that Norway's strategically was not especially interesting for the Allies.[33] The special operations in Norway were only justified in keeping sufficient German resources occupied in Norway and to keep up the Norwegian war morale. This dissertation represents a doctoral thesis structure, professional quality and an up-to-date presentation of British secret services directed to Norway.[34] The conclusions of Herrington's illustrates the important impact on British secret services in Sweden to prioritise Norway.

Charles Cruickshanks 'SOE in Scandinavia' (1986) was the first overall presentation of SOE in Norway/Sweden. The book utilises a lot of British materials and in addition agent information. This book covers for a large part the history of operations in Norway, for example the Vemork operation but does not provide any comprehensive analysis of causes and theories. Cruickshanks points to the view of poor cooperation and disagreements with Milorg as a factor that facilitated the British's attempt to manage planning and actions. Professor Knud Jespersen 'SOE in Denmark' (1998)[35] was one of the first books which was based on a more extensive material of documents on secret services in the national archives in London. Jespersen gave a complete presentation of SOE in Denmark. The image of the Danish operations came out more as London-controlled and the stories of Danish domestic resistance became more diverse.

Literature on secret services during the war in the United Kingdom, Norway and Denmark, until the 1990s was marked by a national narrative with strong impressions from the war and the liberation, often based on information from the participants. The Norwegian basic narrative revolves around Norwegian led activities and major resistance in the population against the occupying power. As the archives were opened, and new generations of historians have entered, this national foundation have been challenged. Research literature has emphasised Britain's strong leadership, the significance of the special operations has been reduced in favour of new stories of collaboration with the Germans, about the Jewish history, the Norwegian war

[33] Herrington, "The Special Operations Executive in Norway 1940-1945 [Electronic Resource] : Policy and Operations in the Strategic and Political Context."

[34] This is in part in contrast to the Norwegian early research that 1) Norwegian involvement and the desire for activity was a low priority due to the British view of the bad experience of the war in Norway in spring 1940 (Sverre Kjeldstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene: Hovedtrekk Av Den Militære Motstanden under Okkupasjonen* (Oslo1959).) and 2) The Norwegian government lacked policy and experience of secret services (Olav Riste, *London-Regjeringa: Norge I Krigsalliansen 1940-1945*, 2nd ed. (1995).).

[35] Knud J. V. Jespersen, *No Small Achievement : Special Operations Executive and the Danish Resistance, 1940-1945* (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2002).

profiteers, other parts of the secret services and many of the war's individual failures. This has given a more diversified Norwegian basic narrative.

Sweden has had another basic narrative based on a foreign policy perspective driven from the top. The basic narrative was that Sweden did what they had to do in a strong desire to stay out of the war for a small country through a clear neutrality policy. In Sweden the last twenty-five years there has been a debate on the national narrative about the Second World War. Archives have been opened and new generations of historians have rewritten the history of war. This turn of events may have been stronger than in Norway and other countries, because it has become a focus on morality/ethics, emphasis on major effects and negative consequences of Swedish policies on other countries citizens.

John Gilmour discuss the shift that arose around 1990 when the 'revisionist' debate[36] started in Sweden. Whether Sweden during the war performed in accordance with realistic small state policies for a neutral country, or whether it was all about immorality it, has characterised the discussion about the war in Sweden since.[37] Gilmour says his motive is to describe history so that today's readers can form their own opinion. He refers to the fact that the new generations of historians and social debaters have a more cosmopolitan attitude with greater emphasis on people in other countries in contrast to the strong national perspective that was the foundation during the war. The revisionist will therefore more emphasise the overall impact of Swedish politics outside the country's borders such as the impact on Norwegians, Danes and Jews. German sympathies among Swedish leaders also became part of the revisionist debate. The new generations of historians will be interested in forgotten stories, weak groups, and approach the history with more of today's perspective. Thus, the need to 'update' the established research increases.

An important part of the research literature I have dwelt is 'foreign' research literature, i.e. literature written by persons and in institutions outside the country of Sweden. McKay, Gilmour, Mackenzie[38] and Herrington, who all are British, writes about Sweden and partly Norway. Such literature, which is written in the English language, may have a broader international audience, but it can also 'break into' the established national narrative in Sweden.

[36] Maria-Pia Boëthius, *Heder Och Samvete : Sverige Och Andra Världskriget* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1991).
[37] Article in the Swedish journal Response 1-3/2014, in which the defenders of the 'realistic small state policy' discusses the 'one-sided condemning and moralising approach'.
[38] Arnfinn Moland's translation of part of Mackenzie's book is called 'Kompani Linge seen with British eyes', thus implying that there are also 'Norwegian Eyes'.Arnfinn Moland, *I Hemmelig Tjeneste : Kompani Linge Sett Med Britiske Øyne*, 2. oppl. ed. (Oslo: Orion, 2001).

Such research literature, if made with good quality and independent assessments, will often be able to provide a somewhat different image or angle than the country's own historians provide. The national reader can be surprised that some obvious things are being explained carefully, that other conditions will be given a quick treatment and sometimes the researcher would be able to clearly break with established truths. A foreigner has the opportunity to see things that not the nationally raised researcher does. Therefore, such research literature, of good quality, is of particular interest. The literature gives explanations and theories, but it seems that the historians to a lesser degree argue against each other or give an overall presentation across the research from different countries.

2.2 Intelligence Theory

Secret services revolve around activities that may have a deliberately blurred organisation and invisible leadership and governance dialogue with higher authorities and with an anonymous position in the public and news image. The public knew little, inside the 'employees' knew little about each other, they communicated outside the 'management line' and everything was going on after the principle 'need to know'. Research literature of the type Shulsky and Schmitt (2002) *Silent Warfare*[39] can be helpful since it attempts to define secret services and, therefore, can help in the historical reconstruction to better see what one is 'looking for', for instance to distinguish between intelligence and diplomacy. The historical reconstruction of secret services can become more demanding than other types of political activities. Shulsky clarifies intelligence theory: Intelligence definitions, information gathering, analysis, special operations and counterintelligence, with examples and data from the war and the post-war period. This political science oriented, generalising research literature is a contrast to the typical British and Nordic historical research literature on secret services.

The relevant books are not critical to how this kind of history is best presented today, it gives the appearance of firmer organisation than what was the case and one is not always careful about understanding the role of people and organisations in the decision-making processes. Especially in the first 30-40 years after the war, occupation history in many countries had an empiricist touch. Mackenzie wrote an empirically oriented report (book) that to a less degree discussed theories and larger constructions, it had enough to account for the specific events for

[39] Abram N. Shulsky and Gary J. Schmitt, *Silent Warfare : Understanding the World of Intelligence*, 3rd ed. ed. (Washington, D.C. ; [London]: Brassey's, 2002).

the first time. The starting point is the 'headquarters' history and connected the construction of secret services as a clearly perceived organisation and actor.

Gilmour also makes a chronological discussion of the events and combines it with explanations and theories. However, he does not address the problem that especially British secret services in Sweden was a looser organisation than the well-organised Swedish Security Service. McKay gives less of the story behind and focuses on the story of events of the secret services. Herrington also analyse SOE in Norway from a picture of clear (collective) actors and the same applies to Knud Jespersen's presentation about Denmark.

Often, theories in historical research will consist of 'summarising statements about events in limited time and space'[40]. We also see this in the research literature I have chosen. However, in the Swedish case there are also higher-level theory especially related to foreign policy theory (neutrality policy)[41], i.e. how the war situation and Sweden's own determined neutrality policy limited the country's alternative courses of action, thus giving a causal explanation to the Swedish pattern of action during the war. That other neutral countries, inter alia Norway in trade negotiations with the United Kingdom[42] during the winter 1940, argued the same as the Swedes, can strengthen the neutrality theory as a more general theory. The research literature I am dealing with does not compare Sweden with other neutral countries in Europe. McKay shows that at the start of the war there were 20 neutral states and there were left six neutral countries at the end of 1944 (Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Spain, Portugal and the Irish Republic), but he did not go into a comparison for instance with Switzerland.

Gilmour pointed out that a strong vision of national unity in Sweden was an important factor in explaining why the Swedes did not worry about the effects of their policy for Norway and Denmark. But Gilmour does not go very far in this analysis regarding whether special features of the Swedish social culture, for instance in terms of more collective decision-making processes, which could differentiate from other countries cultures such as in Norway, Denmark and the United Kingdom. A comparative approach could have been useful as a model to explain the British secret services performance. Heinz-Gerhard Haupt discusses the method of comparative history[43] and provides an interesting presentation of possibilities and obstacles when one compares different circumstances or that the historical research has focused on different topics. Increased use of comparisons both among occupied countries and between

[40] Eirinn Larsen, lecture notes 2017 course HIS4010 University of Oslo.
[41] Rules for neutral countries were discussed in the design and further development of the Hague Convention 1907
[42] TNA FO 371/837/308 Trade negotiations Norway and TNA FO 837/563
[43] Haupt, Heinz-Gerhard, 'Comparative history – a contested method' Historisk Tidsskrift (Sweden) 127:4 2007

neutral countries, would have given new opportunities to make more relevant discussions of events.

With British secret services in Sweden, in the selected research literature, different theories and causal analyses are available on 'missing success'. It is pointed at both weaknesses at the legation, lack of expertise, lack of governance and management, disagreements in management, but also on a strong Swedish security police to combat the foreign secret services. McKay's theoretical perspective that legislation and agreements, nationally and internationally, provides the framework for both espionage and counterintelligence, leads the attention towards legal analysis and whether the Swedish legislation was tighter than in other countries.

Gender-related theory are absent in the research literature used in this thesis. There have been studies done about female British agents[44]. It might interest to look into 'gender and espionage' in Stockholm during the war. Although all British citizens mentioned were men, all the officials at legation had female secretaries (who had their own code names) which we must reckon had considerable insight into what was going on and that could also have specific tasks outside the office. There were also spouses of agents who had secret duties.

2.3 Secret Services and Counterintelligence

The first British history, based on the then secret archives, on the complete special operations during World War II in SOE, is William Mackenzie 'The Secret History Of SOE" written in 1946-1948, published year 2000. The book had some space for Norway and more limited about Sweden but was published too late to get the most central place in research development. The book of 800 pages is largely empirical and chronologically with few references and is an internal historical presentation and evaluation, not intended for publication and possibly on a mission for the service ('Official history'). They translated parts of the book into Norwegian.[45] At the time of publication, a significant part of the source material had been available for several years, and the book was too late to influence much the historiography.

For Secret Intelligence Service (SIS/MI6) the standard reference is Keith Jeffery (2010) 'MI6 The History of the Secret Intelligence Service 1909-1949'.[46] I will also refer to Philip Davies (2004) 'MI6 and the machinery of spying'[47] that deals with organisation development from the

[44]See For example Beryl E. Escott, *The Heroines of Soe : Britain's Secret Women in France : F Section* (Stroud: History, 2012). .
[45] Moland, *I Hemmelig Tjeneste : Kompani Linge Sett Med Britiske Øyne*.
[46] Keith Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, Pbk. ed. ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 2011).
[47] Philip H. J. Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying* (London: Frank Cass, 2004).

establishment 1909 and into the Cold War. MI6 culture was more withdrawn compared to the active sabotage culture of SOE.

As already referred to, the research literature on Sweden and in the British secret services in Sweden has evolved in recent years first through C G McKay 'From Information To Intrigue (1993)[48] and later by John Gilmour 'Sweden, The Swastika and Stalin» (2010)[49]. These books are state-of-the-art research on the neutrality policy, about secret services during the war on a broad basis of documentation and viewing Sweden 'from the outside'.

Professor John Gilmour (University of Edinburgh) is interesting by providing a wide entry picture for Sweden, before and during the war, as he then places the secret services into. This is traditional empirical research based on existing literature, updated sources and documentation, but also with theories and causal explanations. McKay (scottish background with Ph.D. in intelligence history) focuses on the British, German and Swedish secret services in Sweden. The books background discussion largely focuses on the legal basis of secret services, for example following the Hague Convention 1907 and the Swedish legislation.

This thesis puts together earlier research for a broader story of the British secret services in Sweden, and, this will be a new approach without any contradictions of earlier research. Still, when it comes overall achievements, the impressions one gets are all the problems the services encountered in this period. Cruickshank states that the operations led by Rickman and the Barbara operations were 'fiascos'. He also refers to Swedish secret police and states that it was controlled by a pro-German officer. In propaganda work he concludes that it stopped with Rickman.[50]

Gilmour states[51] that the revelation of Section D and Rickman made the Swedish Secret Police more on the alert and that it limited the intelligence gatherings of the British secret services for years but without referring to any specific documentation for this. The need for special operations in Sweden became less in the second half of 1940. Gilmour's judgement of the iron ore sabotage plans of Rickman states: '*The diplomatic difficulties that arose with Sweden went on for years*' and '*The damage to British interests was greater than the failure of the operation and the sentences for the agents*'. By presenting the explosions in Krylbo and Hårsfjärden in 1941 he also implies that these were SOE-operations.

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[48] C. G. McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45* (London: F. Cass, 1993).
[49] Gilmour, *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War*. (2010), new edition in Swedish 2016.
[50] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 60, 191 and 206.
[51] Gilmour, *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War*, p 140.

Jeffery refers to 'Section D's incompetence in Sweden' and to the 'Rickman debacle'[52]. He also refers to the arrest of 'Martin's agents in January 1940'. Tennant is also critical.[53] In the overall assessment many researchers have concluded that the British secret services in Sweden in 1939-1941 were not a success and in important areas it did not meet its objectives. The book that gives the best overview of British intelligence in Sweden is McKay (1993)[54], but he is softer in his conclusions and characteristics. Most of the research literature including the official history discusses only certain areas of intelligence and special operations. Specific activities in Sweden are used as examples of the overall activities of secret services. Jeffery[55] states that Sweden was "cooperation at its worse" but does not really justify that conclusion. Davies[56] gives an organisational view of MI6 and discusses the functioning of the services with consumers and producers that is useful to also understand the intentions of the system on central level.

The functioning of the system is not studied completely. The main cause is most likely the volume of the documentation, and one must look for information many places. It is a fact that the archives are limited for different reasons and especially that the archives of SIS are not open at all, but there is still so much documentation and documents appear in so many places in the archives that it is possible to find a lot more statistics on the amount of intelligence that was collected. For instance, the top diplomatic level did a large amount of reporting that has not been studied.

The literature is much concerned about the formal connection between intentions and results. For instance, the iron ore sabotage scheme is regarded as a failure because the sabotage did not take place (and they arrested the agents). The railway sabotage in Norway (Barbara) was a failure because the explosion harmed a Norwegian local train (and they arrested the agents). Munthe is made fun of because the Foreign Office in Sweden thought he was incompetent (actually agreeing with the Foreign Office in London) and that he became non grata. The literature has followed some of the stories that players at that time felt it was convenient to focus on and that in many cases also were supposed to cover their own backs.

[52] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 376-77.
[53] Peter Sir Tennant, *Touchlines of War* (Hull University Press, 1992), p 132.
[54] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*.
[55] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*.
[56] Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*.

3 British Secret Services 1939-1941: Organisation and Operations Central Level

When organising public services, one will look for effectiveness, unity, simple and easy for the public to understand and other well-known criteria from organisational theory. Intelligence could also organise this way, but with Great Britain (UK) it was more complicated. It is difficult to explain the structures and the way it operated. To understand the local structure at the legation in Stockholm, it is necessary to understand the top structure in London. That structure will be used as a checklist when this thesis goes into more depth about the secret services in the legation in Stockholm. Before the war, without international defence organisations such as NATO, the tradition was that major countries had its own complete intelligence service. They could cooperate on ad hoc basis with other countries to utilise the resources more effectively, but this did not become the standard before after the war.

Simplicity has not been the case for Britain for several reasons. Great Britain has long global politically and military ambitions. The large colonial system of the Commonwealth countries has required extensive use of intelligence in many ministries. This is for instance not at all comparable with Norway, or Sweden, during the inter-war period and after the war. Great Britain is a large country with a long institutional history and has also a lot of receivers (customers) of both secret and open intelligence. The inter-war years had intelligence challenges with the situation in Northern Ireland and the Spanish Civil War. The needs of internal security services were also more comprehensive than in most other countries.

The period I will investigate is quite complex and stressful. From the moment they revealed the true intentions of Germany from 1938 and on, many developments occurred, and they addressed many needs and challenges. When we look at the agenda and protocols of the War Cabinet[57], it is amazing how many serious war incidents that were discussed and handled. Great Britain was on the edge of disaster in the autumn of 1940, Germany attacked and was almost about to invade. A different path could have changed the overall outcome of the war.

To get a grasp of the local level of British intelligence in Sweden is even more difficult since the archives are so fragmented and limited. The approach I have chosen is to study the local level based upon the central organisation in London and the communication between London and the legation in Stockholm. Therefore, I need to go into somewhat depth on the central

[57] National Archives CAB 65/3-65/20 Minutes of War Cabinet

organisation which I do in this chapter. Then in following chapters I will elaborate on the British secret services in Stockholm using this chapter's structure as a 'check-list'.

Intelligence can be defined into four categories[58]

1. Collection of information
2. Analysis
3. Coordination and overall assessment and reporting
4. End-usage of intelligence

End-users (customers) of intelligence can be many types of organisations and interests. The military needs valid information about their enemy, capacities, movements, plans and intentions to be able to strike militarily at present or later, but there are many others that benefits from intelligence in war and in peace. Collection of information that might be of significance is a very large and diverse activity. It covers all kinds of open information and various kinds of illegally collected. The collected information will later in the process show its significance. Open source information can also be vital in building a picture of the enemy.

3.1 The Main Institutions.[59]

General Intelligence: The Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), established in 1909 (from 1940 also called MI6), reported to the Foreign Office and was responsible for all collection of intelligence in foreign countries (outside Britain) through official and non-official networks. SIS, as a government agency in London, was supposed to have an independent position and not under daily instructions from the Foreign Office. SIS collected political and military information. SIS had also responsibility for the Government Code & Cypher School (GC&CS)[60]. Approaching the war, the SIS had established its own short wave and wireless communication system at the global level. This was the main communication system besides diplomatic mail. The internal security service (MI5) had a military profile from the start, but it was more and more concerned with the civil and political issues in the United Kingdom during

[58]Shulsky and Schmitt, *Silent Warfare : Understanding the World of Intelligence*, p 8-9. Michael S. Goodman, *The Official History of the Joint Intelligence Committee* (Routledge, 2014), PP. Christopher M. Andrew, Richard J. Aldrich, and Wesley K. Wark, *Secret Intelligence : A Reader* (London: Routledge, 2009), p 3-11.

[59] Goodman, *The Official History of the Joint Intelligence Committee*, touches on all significant intelligence organisations.

[60] GC&CS was able to get special treatment and kept a relatively independent position. It was moved to MI6, but was never controlled by them. Richard J. Aldrich, *Gchq : The Uncensored Story of Britain's Most Secret Intelligence Agency* (London: Harper Press, 2010).

the war. MI5 is not the topic of this dissertation, although there are several points of contacts between MI5 and intelligence overseas.[61]

Military Intelligence: The main British consumers of military intelligence were the Admiralty, the Air Ministry and the War Office (called services). These were all in fact ministries and their 'ministers' met frequently in the War Cabinet.[62] These military ministries had, on the approach of the second world war in 1936 and on, each their own intelligence section. The focus of these services was military intelligence from other countries. Intelligence has been a long tradition within British military with their history of colonies, taking part in war in various parts of the world and with a strong navy.

Foreign Office: The Foreign Office through their worldwide information collecting system for political intelligence (embassies and private networks), had such a significance that it is a category by itself[63]. This system had as a main task to report back to London all sorts of information and assessments. They often based these reports on open source information for instance from media, but also own collected information through networks and sometimes illegally collected information. Open source information can sometimes be illegal information when put together systematically. All together the regular embassy reporting can contain intelligence and illegally collected information.

Every embassy sent daily reports to London about what was going on in that country, what was written in the press and events of various kinds. All this was for the Foreign Office to use in building its foreign policy involving that country. This also included secret or illegally gained information, but by far not as voluminous as the open source information. Later in this thesis I will go into how the British delegation in Stockholm produced their reports and where they were sent.

Part of the information collecting system of the Foreign Office was the technical solution for transmitting by diplomatic mail, by wire or by radio. The information was open or encrypted with need for translation when it arrived. The Foreign Office did this through their organisation for contact with the embassies throughout the world. They decided in the start of the war that the Foreign Office communication system had to be used for all secret transfers. Later parallel

[61] Christopher M. Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm : The Authorized History of Mi5* (London: Penguin, 2010).
[62] The British organisation of military services have combined political issues with operational military matters in Ministries. This is different from the tradition in Scandinavian countries that traditionally separated political ministries from operational military matters organised in a separate, and to a certain extent independent, military organisation. Ref also Kari Tvetbråten, "Forsvarets Øverste Ledelse: Reorganisering Av Ledelsesstruktur over Tid" (Oslo, 2006).
[63] Goodman, *The Official History of the Joint Intelligence Committee*, p 13.

systems were built up, from 1942 for Special Operations Executive (SOE). Throughout the war there were constant bureaucratic struggles on controlling the information stream by the different ministries and agencies in London. The military had other channels of reporting and transmitting through the war organisation of the troops 'on the ground', 'at sea' or 'in the air'.

Foreign Office had in peacetime no separate organisational structure that handled intelligence but used its ordinary organisation and established processes.[64] Foreign Office used information from embassies around the world as part of their ordinary procedures and reporting. They allowed for the service attachés at the embassies to have informal contact with their home office, but for formal reporting it should go through the embassy and Foreign Office in London. Since some of these reports had technical information, often Foreign Office just passed it on to the relevant service/department, but the Foreign Office assumed the right to have opinions about all reporting also without consulting the service. They also based this on a long British tradition of the Foreign Office as the main advisor about other countries and about war coming. The military services and departments accepted this.[65]

The way the Foreign Office operated in its relations with the other services, ministries and departments also lead to a division into political and military matters, without seeing them in combination. There were many issues of cooperation and organisation especially in the services in the period between the wars. One important milestone was the so called '1921 arrangement' which established a system of cooperation between SIS and the services[66] and others with needs and interests in intelligence. A problem was that SIS, being such a flat organisation, could not handle issues of cooperation important to the higher level of government. Such issues were brought up in the Foreign Office and for the Joint Intelligence Committee and into the cabinet level.

3.2 Cooperation and the 1921 Arrangement

In peace-time, between the wars, the need for coordination of intelligence between ministries and agencies was not as crucial as it would become when war was approaching. Still there were several attempts to improve cooperation and to reduce rivalry. One important process was how the end-users (customers) of intelligence could work with the collectors (producers) of intelligence.

[64] F. H. Hinsley, *British Intelligence in the Second World War : Its Influence on Strategy and Operations*, vol. Volume 1 (London: H.M.S.O, 1979), p 5.
[65] Ibid., p 6.
[66] The core of this arrangement was that the services had an office in SIS.

From the start the main function of the Secret Intelligence Service was to collect information from specific areas and world-wide through the British diplomatic system. They transmitted this information to the 'customers' of Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), i.e. ministries, the military services, the Foreign Office and other government agencies. The different end-users communicated their orders and requirements for information to the Secret Intelligence Service.

Since there were different criticism and dissatisfactions with Secret Intelligence Service, they agreed after the first world war that the main end-users could have their own office or section within SIS staffed with their own people. These offices were organised from 1921 on, and further developed during the inter-war years, in so called C-sections. This staff could then take directly part in prioritising the work, receiving and analysing intelligence. They called this system 'the 1921 arrangement'.[67] There was a parallel in the system of attachés at the British embassies. The 1921 arrangement was an important integrating factor between military intelligence, Secret Intelligence Service and Foreign Office traditional political intelligence. It put the Foreign Office in a central position of intelligence in the UK. The 1921 arrangement was by principle a matrix organisation. The organisation of the local legations had elements of the 1921 arrangement with attaches reporting both through diplomatic channels and to their home ministry.

At the legations around the world the main SIS contact (head of station) was the Passport Control Officer (PCO) in charge of the Passport Control Office. There were some good reasons it became so connected to the control of movement of people, spies travelling back and forth, informants, saboteurs on mission, counterintelligence etc. The PCO had their own revenue through passport fees which put it into a situation with less administrative attention.[68]

When the war started and as Germany occupied new countries, the British legations in those countries were closed and most of the staff returned to London and started to work in new country sections. They transferred some to the remaining legations, such as Stockholm. SIS had most of its staff from the services and other end-users of intelligence[69], and they knew of the need for good contact with their home department.[70] The operational side of Secret Intelligence Service was covered by the so-called G-sections which were divided according to geography or groups of countries.

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[67] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 162-64. Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*, p 13-18.

[68] *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*, p 68-74 and; Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*.p 314

[69] This is a consequence of the 1921 arrangement

[70] Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*, p 58.

Outside the diplomatic system towards the second world war, from 1936 on, it was also developed a network called the 'Z Organisation'[71]. This network would supplement the diplomatic system, being a 'spy-system' on its own (and even more secret) and it could function as a 'back-up' for the diplomatic system. In the Z organisation it was possible to utilize agents and informants in the civil society and in the business sector.

At the start of the war SIS expanded quickly, and additional resources and staff were set in both in London and around the world. During this built up period, there had to be set-backs and failures[72] and lot of time had to spent on responding to various kinds of such incidences. Later we will investigate how this build-up took place in Stockholm.[73] In the challenging time 1938-1941 with an emerging bigger organisation, the flat organisational structure connected with the 1921 arrangement was challenged and more or less failed.[74]

In 1939 and 1940 there were also made some organisational changes that later showed not to be so successful. The Z Organisation, that was supposed to be an alternative to the embassy-based system, was merged with the Passport Control Office into one area of responsibility within SIS.[75] This has later been seen as a major mistake and a important 'reminder' of this became the Venlo incident in the Netherlands in 1939 where the head of PCO in Hague was captured by the German secret police on the border to Germany together with the head of the Z organisation.[76]

3.3 Economic Intelligence and the Ministry of Economic Warfare

Between the wars economic intelligence became more in focus. One of the most important behind the organisation of such intelligence was Desmond Morton that during the war was special intelligence adviser to Winston Churchill. Gillian Bennett[77] has written the story of Desmond Morton and discussed his significance in the build-up of British intelligence, economic intelligence and warfare.[78]

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[71] Ibid., p 74. and Jeffery p 314-316

[72] The lack of prediction on the invasion of Norway and its quick surrender, was such an example, ref Goodman p 72

[73] As part of this period, innovative technology and sciences were used which resulted in the breaking of German signal codes and establishing a complete new wireless communication system on a global level.

[74] Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*, p 98-100.

[75] Ibid., p 100 'entirely unexplained'.

[76] Ibid., p 100.

[77] Gillian Bennett was 1995-2005 Chief Historian at the Foreign Office where she is still working.

[78] Gill Bennett, *Churchill's Man of Mystery : Desmond Morton and the World of Intelligence* (London: Routledge, 2007).

The Ministry of Economic Warfare was created right after the war started in September 1939 after a two year planning period.[79] One important unit in the new ministry, the intelligence section, had its roots in the Economic Section (Section VI 1926-28) in the SIS, transformed into the Industrial Intelligence Centre (IIC) staffed with SIS officers in 1931 and in 1935 moved to the Department of Overseas Trade. IIC was a collecting agency for information on industry and trade, and not an operative agency doing special operations. Into the thirties the interest for industrial intelligence increased rapidly along with many countries developing central plans for the development of their economies. The five-year plans in the Soviet Union had come about and also in Germany active economic planning was in focus with increased attention after the Nazi takeover in 1933. Economic Intelligence became more important for Britain. Desmond Morton, who led IIC, was given the task to develop the intelligence section of the new Ministry of Economic Warfare. Morton created the notion of economic warfare and had a long career in intelligence.[80] A separate committee for coordination and analysis of industrial intelligence had also been set up where IIC and other agencies gave input: Committee on Industrial Intelligence in Foreign Countries (FCI).[81]

War with Germany was anticipated at least from 1934 in the British intelligence system with a prognosis of 1939 for a German offensive, and by then Britain was hopefully ready. In January 1938 the estimate was that the war could start in April 1939.[82]

When Ministry of Economic Warfare was established, IIC moved there together with Department of Overseas Trade and parts from other ministries. The department of intelligence became the largest section in the new ministry. At this time the demand for economic intelligence had increased substantially and the start of this department was to collect economic data from many countries that was done previously by the Industrial Intelligence Centre.[83]

The increased focus on economic intelligence also laid the foundation for working with business networks in countries of 'interest'. These networks were often British representatives but could gradually expand to include natives of that country that the British had business

[79] Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*, p 63-66.
[80] Bennett, *Churchill's Man of Mystery : Desmond Morton and the World of Intelligence*; ibid.
[81] Ibid., p 143-49.
[82] Ibid., footnote 2 page 352.
[83] Gill Bennett discusses that this intelligence could be detailed and accurate, but sometimes missed the right overall realistic analysis. For instance, German capabilities were underestimated when one regarded shortcomings in Germany's economic infrastructures and supplies, such as iron ore supply from Sweden, would stop the war in a few months. This was the view of Churchill, based on analysis in IIC and MEW, in the debate in Cabinet in December 1939, ref CAB 66/4 Memorandum 162 Norway – Iron Ore Traffic 16 December 1939.

with.[84] In a later chapter it will be touched upon how this worked in Sweden. Economic intelligence in Germany had high priority following the industrial capabilities. In British counter-intelligence foreign economic intelligence became more important and for instance Soviet economic intelligence in Germany gave information also about Soviet economic and political development.[85]

3.4 Special Operations

Section D: In the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) in 1938 they established a Section D for special operations and sabotage under the leadership of Major Lawrence Grand. The task for this section was to work on the planning and implementation of covert operations different from the traditional silent information collection. It also covered counterintelligence. Section D started from the beginning on a more independent development than the 1921 arrangement should imply. In the two years Section D functioned within SIS, it was in a build-up phase recruiting staff in London and overseas. Into 1940 it was de facto a complete service within in the SIS organisation[86] with independent network in Sweden and other countries. The number of operations that Section D initiated in this period were not so many. One important, was the iron ore sabotage planned in Sweden in 1939 and into 1940.

Section D's main 'customer' in the British government was the Ministry of Economic Warfare. This ministry worked on all supplies to the UK, managed internal rationing systems, worked on trade agreements with other countries and was especially competent in knowing the economic structures of other countries. Since covert operations and sabotage often deals with the enemies' economic structures and supplies, it is natural that Section D worked with the Ministry of Economic Warfare and that this ministry had many requests for information and actions in other countries.[87] But there were also many other ministries and agencies that needed in depth information about foreign countries.[88]

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[84] H. Montgomery Hyde, *The Quiet Canadian : The Secret Service Story of Sir William Stephenson (Intrepid)* (London: Constable, 1989). William Stephenson played an important role in Sweden on the establishment of Section D's activities in late 1939 and the beginning of 1940. He was the business man with his own network that he 'offered' to SIS..

[85] Bennett, *Churchill's Man of Mystery : Desmond Morton and the World of Intelligence*, p 139.

[86] Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*, p 118 that gives a organisational chart. At the end of its existence in the summer of 1940 Grand stated that they had 140 officers employed and in 1973 he stated in an interview that there were 300 altogether including unpaid volunteers, paid foreign agents and contracted foreign groups. '*It had become a self-sufficient department of SIS with direct access to the Prime Minister, and its staffing levels rivalled the entire strength of the rest of SIS, with corresponding mistrust and envy*', ref Malcolm Atkin, *Section D for Destruction* (Great Britain: Pen & Sword Military, 2017), p 30 and TNA HS 8/214.

[87] Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*. p 119

[88] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 163.

After it's foundation Section D grew fast, recruiting officers at the head office and agents in many cuntries. All employees were paid in cash with no tax-reporting. MI6 often recruited officers from the main universities or with a military/bureaucratic background. Section D recruited more from the business sector because of their operational experience and often international connections. One interesting example is the advertising firm J. Walter Thompson that said they would put their whole organisation to the disposal of Section D. Their Director of Film was Gerard Holdsworth and head of advertising Ingram Fraser that we will see later in Sweden. The section for Scandinavia (D/G) was the smallest and least experienced team with no professional intelligence officers, no army officers and no mining engineers experienced with explosives.[89]

There were other recruitments from the banking world and from firms like Shell that also were seen in Sweden later. Recruits were checked by MI5 which could advice 'nothing against' the candidate. The centrally recruited officers in Section D had to work with many activists from different nations and with a variety of life experiences.[90] The activists were often better qualified spies and saboteurs than younger officers recruited from Cambridge and Oxford. Activists, often refugees, in different countries also in Sweden could have a tough personality, living a vivid life and not at all being used to bureaucratic hierarchy and culture. This caused all along conflicts and problems with diplomats that preferred well behaviour and politeness. [91]

In December 1939 there were 43 officers employed in Section D in London and at its peak there were a total of around 300 including overseas.[92] Ingram Fraser was from the start head of D/G Scandinavia which later was split up in D/G for Sweden and D/J for Norway.[93]

Special Operations Executive: After the Rickman case in Sweden, the Venlo incident in the Netherlands and the personal performance of Grands as head of Section D, there were more people being critical of the performance of SIS in special operations and sabotage. This was discussed on Cabinet level and Churchill personally followed the development.[94] It was decided to move Section D out of SIS and into the new organisation Special Operations Executive

[89] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 21.
[90] Ibid., p 17-21.
[91] Ibid., p 19. Atkin tells a story about a party given by Laurence Grand where afterwards Guy Burgess (later Soviet spy) were arrested for drunk driving. According to Atkin there were some heavy drinkers connected with Section D.
[92] Ibid., p 20. The total number based on an interview with Grand in 1973, presumably this also covers 'regular' employees overseas.
[93] Ibid., p 20. Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*, p 118.
[94] D. Stafford, *Churchill & Secret Service* (Thistle Publishing, 2013). Pp 189-193 and pp 206-209

together with the special unit MI(R) (Military Intelligence Research)[95] in the War Office which also dealt with special operations. The propaganda unit Spectra was also included. Section D together with MI(R) became section SO2 within SOE.[96]

The fundamental challenge in getting SIS and SOE (and before that Section D) to work together was that the culture of intelligence was 'peace and quiet' and special operation (sabotage) was loud noise, if successful. The cultural difference between these two operation modes caused many problems of cooperation throughout the war. Section D established its own organisation and network abroad and dropped a close cooperation with the PCO. When SOE was decided July 22nd1940 it took over the networks of Section D.[97] SOE was already from the start an independent organisation and not part of the 1921 arrangement. Section D had a fairly large central organisation with four sections. The execution section had several subsections, among them D/G for Sweden and D/J for Norway.[98] Section Ds operations before SOE were limited. It has been referred to the rescue of diamonds from Amsterdam in 1940, the rescue of general de Gaulle, the Rickman affair in Sweden.[99] Later it has been more focus on Section D's political operations for instance in contact with refugees, dissidents and opposition groups in Europe.[100]

Although SIS and SOE were separate organisations, there were also examples of cooperation. One interesting area of cooperation was training in the UK where there were several training schools in common.[101] From late 1940 it was cooperated in the Shetlands receiving agents and refugees especially from Norway and they administrated the Shetland-Norway boat shuttle. They assigned Leslie Mitchell, who had worked on intelligence both in Stockholm and in Oslo, to be the responsible coordinator.[102] It also involved MI5 in handling refugees.

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[95] Stuart Macrae, *Winston Churchill's Toyshop : The inside Story of Military Intelligence (Research)* (Stroud: Amberley, 2010).
[96] SOE was integrated back into SIS in 1946
[97] CAB 66-10 Cabinet Memorandum 19 July 1940 Document 271
[98] Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*, p 115.
[99] Ibid., p 117.
[100] Ibid., p 117-19.
[101] Some of the instruction material is published in a book: Denis Rigden, *How to Be a Spy : The World War Ii Soe Training Manual* (Toronto: Dundurn Group, 2004). In a report from Gladwyn Jebb to Alexander Cadogan in November 1941 summarising SOE achievements the first year, it is stated that competence of the agents and getting the right man for the job was the 'main trouble' causing failures, ref TNA FO 954/24A/47. In the same document it is referred to that 1350 men had passed through the training schools.
[102] Leslie Mitchell is an interesting example of a network of people who had worked together in different embassies before and into the war. Mitchell worked first in the legation in Stockholm until 1939 when he was transferred to Oslo to work with local head of SIS Frank Foley.

3.5 Coordination and Analysis: The Joint Intelligence Committee

It was vital for the effectiveness of the intelligence system that all significant information could be weighted together to produce an overall assessment to be communicated with main decision-makers. It was the Joint Intelligence Committee and its secretariat that was given the task, daily and some time on an hourly basis, to produce the overall assessments.[103] These reports were discussed and agreed upon in meetings in the committee and then were distributed to different end-users. The most important receiver of these reports was the War Cabinet itself.

This Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) was established by the Chiefs of Staff (COS) in 1936. Since then it has played a vital role in British military and diplomatic history. It is beyond this dissertation to dwell on the details of why this committee was established, but the main reasons were a felt need to avoid duplication of work and information, creating a more effective mechanism for secret service work, as war was approaching.[104] In the beginning JIC had to find its place with already established coordination bodies and committees, and it took some time to establish its agenda, working methods and who would be member.

The first meeting in JIC had representatives from the three (military) services and an observer from the Secret Intelligence Service. From the start, this was a military committee that adopted new members and became a committee dealing with the coordination of all sorts of intelligence. In the beginning it was criticised for not using the expertise in MI5, SIS and GC&CS and it faced problem of the Foreign Office not wanting to be involved, [105] but these issues were solved by 1940. In the autumn 1938 the Foreign Office became member, and from then on it was easier to work with both military and political issues. SIS was involved from the same time and became full member in 1940.

This committee took care of the overall assessment of all collected analysis and information on a senior level up against the Joint Chiefs of Staff (COS), the War Cabinet and the top level of ministries. In the beginning it worked on long-term issues, and as war approached there was a shift towards more short-term especially for daily reporting. A special unit, The Situation Report Centre (SRC), was set up to handle the short-term perspective. Its chairman was a Foreign Office (FO) diplomat, Ralph Skrine Stevenson. These two committees were merged in 1939 when Skrine Stevenson was appointed chairman of the consolidated Joint Intelligence Committee, and the FO would chair the committee for many years. By taking the chairmanship of this the Joint Intelligence Committee the Foreign Office had to accept clandestine and illegal

[103] Goodman, *The Official History of the Joint Intelligence Committee*, p 74.
[104] Ibid. Pp 13-31
[105] Ibid., p 19.

methods of intelligence gathering and that the legations would be central for such work. The Foreign Office had to understand that not only professional diplomats were qualified to deal with the international environment.[106] From this point in time the JIC had responsibility for assessments both strategically and short-term tactical. JIC could interfere with administrative arrangements throughout the intelligence system and address weaknesses. The JIC was now in the position both to discuss military and political intelligence.

The years up to 1939/40 and the outbreak of total war, was for JIC characterised by taking requests from the Joint Planning Committee (JPC, the top military committee to turn policy into action). JIC was not really working on its own views focusing on the major political issues, for instance, what were Hitler's intentions? The JIC did not see the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact coming in august 1939, had problems with prognosis for the German invasion of Poland and later Denmark/Norway. Background for this was too little resources between the wars with a lack of sufficient build-up of spy networks in Germany and that the UK lost a lot of the networks that had existed with the British diplomats returning to London from September 1939. The reports that the JIC produced in this period were for the most part about military matters.[107]

Top level: Chiefs of Staff (COS), Joint Planning Committee (JPC) and Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) represented the intermediate level of authority and decision-making. The top level was the ministers and under-secretaries in the main ministries. And on the very top the Cabinet with the prime minister. Winston Churchill was interested and personally involved in intelligence and its operation and organisation throughout his political career.[108] He had dealt with intelligence issues during and after the first world war, and when he became member of the cabinet, the War Cabinet and from May 1940, Prime Minister.

A central group of people were the permanent under-secretaries in the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Economic Warfare and the equivalent in the three service ministries. One of the most significant was Alexander Cadogan in FO (with his assistant Gladwyn Jebb up to July 1940, Henry Hopkinson to June 1941 and Peter Loxley after that).[109] Edward Wood was secretary from 1938 to Anthony Eden became secretary in December 1940 and for the rest of the war. When SOE was formed, Gladwyn Jebb was given special responsibility for that area

[106] The diplomatic culture could possibly be a key factor in explaining the success and failures at the legation in Stockholm. I will return to this issue later in the dissertation.
[107] Goodman, *The Official History of the Joint Intelligence Committee*, p 36.
[108] Stafford, *Churchill & Secret Service*.
[109] Later in this dissertation when analysing the situation at the British legation in Stockholm, Cadogan, Jebb and Loxley will appear in the correspondence.

in the Ministry of Economic Warfare. From May 1940 Hugh Dalton was Minister for Economic Warfare.

The Permanent Under-Secretary, with his assistant, has been regarded as the central actor in intelligence in the Foreign Office. When the War Cabinet decided on the Special Operations Executive 22 July 1940, Cadogan and his opposite numbers in the services together with Wood, Eden and Dalton were present in the meeting.[110]

There is today no British archive documentation that was located physically in Stockholm, and we have to rely on the correspondence documentation in London to find out who is who at the legation. In the next chapters of this dissertation, when the British legation in Stockholm is to be analysed, one method that will be used is to look into the correspondence which involves these top-level bureaucrats and politicians. In addition, the section for Sweden and later P-section for Scandinavia of SIS and the Scandinavian office in SOE will be targeted to look for how the communication and the running of the operations with Stockholm were set up.

3.6 Reflections

The British intelligence system involved many ministries and agencies. For collection of information and linking to the end-users, Secret Intelligence Service was the central agency with its global network through the Foreign Office. There were several users. Intelligence was coordinated to some extent in SIS, but main coordination and top-level assessment was done in the Joint Intelligence Committee and up to the War Cabinet.

Reflecting on the complex structure of intelligence organisation, the set-up seems to have several weak points. How can such a system work effectively when war threatens, and war is taking place? Changes had to be made. One important matter was that the flat structure of MI6 had to be tightened up especially by forming the Joint Intelligence Committee so that all collected intelligence could be better considered in an overall assessment. Another matter was the problems of MI6 to do special operations which led to the forming of Special Operations Executive. Third, it was a huge need to increase the capacity of the intelligence system i.e. to increase the number of intelligence collectors (spies) and establishing new networks that should have been built up earlier.

The Secret Intelligence Service was not able to predict Hitler's intentions in 1938 and 1939, and the start of the war with the invasion in Poland. It could not predict the invasion of Denmark

[110] The attendance in the War Cabinet meetings when discussing issues of relevance for secret services and the Swedish/Norwegian situation can be studied in the CAB-minutes.

and Norway and had also problems understanding what path the invasion of western Europe would follow. And last, the discussion of the different scenarios for Western Europe, and the possible invasion of the UK after France had fallen, was not adequate. The Norway Debate in the Parliament May 7th and 8th 1940 covered the failure of the war in Norway and especially in Narvik and showed the huge challenges and frustrations the political leadership of the UK had in the beginning of the war to bring 'their act together'. This led to the government crisis with Winston Churchill as new Prime Minister on May 10th, the same day Germany invaded Belgium and the Netherlands. Winston Churchill had in all his military and political work been deeply interested in intelligence and the secret services were now given better working conditions and more attention.[111]

The 1921 arrangement were put to a serious test when the war started. It was inadequate, but the direction was right, and it was agreed that intelligence had to work together to be able to make a sufficient difference. How to cooperate became a central issue of the British intelligence in action.

From the development of industrial intelligence from the twenties and the establishment of the Ministry of Economic Warfare in 1939, it is no surprise that SOE in the summer of 1940 became the responsibility of MEW. Special operations were to a large degree about sabotage of the economic infrastructure. The previous development of organisation and procedures led to this result. The background can be studied from the perspective of organisational behaviour. The arguments for the whole setup were always discussed and weighed based on a rational perspective. It was the right thing to do decided by in depth analysis and decision-making. The perspective of politics and positioning could also be the basis for explaining the development of the British intelligence system. In the end certainly the quest for power from politicians like Churchill, Chamberlain and Dalton, and the 'bureaucrats' like Cadogan, 'C', Morton and many others influenced the intelligence system. To sit on the right information, especially if it is secret, is a prime asset to play in politics and struggle of cooperation and conflicts across government organisation. Also, to have the right network, connections and gatekeeper positions is of the outmost importance for getting your points of view through. The most obvious example, when Churchill became prime minister he moved to the position of prime influence and decision-making power, compared with his earlier positions (last as First Lord of the Admiralty) where he had to struggle with others on his same level and being voted out on

[111] Stafford, *Churchill & Secret Service*, p 174-93, p 210-45.

many occasions. The iron ore question in Sweden was an issue where the power of different politicians and organisations came out clearly.

4 British Objectives for Secret Services in Sweden

4.1 British Foreign Policy

The British policy up to the war was to get Sweden, along with Norway and Denmark, on the British side of the emerging conflict on the continent of Europe. The first shift in policy started with all the Scandinavian countries declared neutrality in September 1939. In the following months the British focused on how to deal with export of strategically goods, such as iron ore, from Scandinavia to Germany. Trade negotiations became an important instrument to secure own supplies or to make obstacles for the enemy. In the period from the autumn 1939 to April 1940 the British uncertainty about Sweden increased and even an offensive action sabotaging Swedish iron ore installation was very close to be executed. The end of the Winter War in Finland and the German invasion of Denmark and Norway left suddenly Sweden alone in Scandinavia staying out of the war. The invasion of the low countries and France finally took the British attention away from Sweden and in the summer of 1940, Britain realised that it was in their interest that Sweden stayed out of the war and not rub the Nordic balance. This major shift in British policy moved the attention away from Sweden in itself and into the neighbouring countries for intelligence and special operations.

Militarily the British had different scenarios and thinking about what to do with the Scandinavian countries. There were offensive viewpoints to take direct control over Norway and Northern Sweden. And there were cautious views being careful not offending neutral countries. Some hoped for a German provocation so that the British cold move in.[112] The official foreign policy of Great Britain up to 1939 was to come to terms with Germany. On the other hand, British intelligence and military had been planning for war since 1934 and the estimate was that war could start in 1939.[113] The Scandinavian countries policy was to play a 'normal' peacetime role internationally and expected British policy accordingly. Britain accepted the foreign policy of the Scandinavian countries, but British intelligence followed the development quite closely and was active in all the Scandinavian countries and more so getting closer to the war. In this period Britain performed traditional collection of intelligence based in the legations in Oslo, Copenhagen and Stockholm and was not planning any special operations. Economic intelligence became more in focus, and trade development and industrial

[112] Trond Spurkeland, "Skandinavia Som Krigsteater? Noreg Og Sverige I Den Britiske Krigsstrategien" (University of Oslo, 2014). Discusses the british strategy towards Norway and Sweden from september 1939 to april 40

[113] Bennett, *Churchill's Man of Mystery : Desmond Morton and the World of Intelligence*, p 164.

capacities were especially followed in parallel with more attention on Germany's capacities and plans.

When Britain declared war 3 September 1939 a shift in the British interest for Scandinavia took place. War came closer to Scandinavia both with the invasion in Poland right across the Baltic Sea from Sweden and Denmark bordering directly to Germany. And the Winter War gave even more attention to the Nordic countries and how that region would play a role in the war. It became a British objective to help Finland to a certain extent without rocking the balance and to keep the situation within controlled limits. Britain supplied the Finns with aircrafts and other military equipment that MI(R) helped to deliver in the winter of 1940.

Britain also increased significantly their propaganda work both in the Scandinavian countries and towards Germany. The British legation in Sweden played a significant part in propaganda and information work to make sure that the British views were well known so possibly it could affect the war in the right direction.

In the period of Phoney War[114] military objectives were explicitly part of British policy in Scandinavia. This was clear in the blockade, the increased focus on intelligence and in planning for active special operations. Declared neutrality from Sweden and Norway did not stop the British planning for explicit illegal activities even though this was a topic of discussion in the British Cabinets processes on the iron ore question in Sweden. This process culminated with the laying the mines in Norwegian waters just before the German invasion in April. When Germany occupied several countries in April and May 1940 and with the unsuccessful British Narvik operation, the attention on iron ore was reduced because of the more important other fronts and the immediate threat to Great Britain fearing a German invasion. Sweden became then a place where stability was the most important and that Great Britain could use Sweden as a basis for activities towards Germany, Norway, Denmark and other countries, and it provided a channel for communication with the Russians.

Britain adjusted her policy in the time span from September 1939 to April 1940 and on, to the changing circumstances of war development. It ended up with a policy of balance and neutrality and seeing its advantage for the Allied. The stability from the summer 1940 where the advantages Sweden being neutral were focused, and that Scandinavia less likely would become an active war theatre with Allied military offensives to win the occupied countries back or to use Scandinavia as a final attack on Germany. [115]

[114] September 39 to spring 40

[115] Janne Flyghed, "Rättsstat i kris: Spioneri och sabotage i Sverige under andre världskriget" (Diss Stockholm Univ, Federativ,, 1992), p 413-14.

When the war in Finland was over in March and the battle of Norway ended in June, the situation calmed down and went into a new balance with the neutral Sweden in the 'middle', a stabilised situation in Finland and Norway/Denmark occupied by Germany. The military services and the Cabinet gave up for the time being taking Norway back and all offensive plans on the northern flank of Europe. Beside the Continuation War involving Finland and the withdraw of German forces in Finland and northern Norway in 1944, there were no more large military operations in the Nordic countries for the rest of the war. They secured the Allied victory other places.

The activities that followed had to be within what the Swedes could accept, i.e. it should not irritate Sweden in such a way that it could rub the new Nordic balance in the war and certainly not push Sweden into a closer contact with Germany. The order from London in the spring of 1940 to the British intelligence in Sweden was first to be cautious and see how the outcome of the attack on Denmark and Norway would end up and then later that spring to order stop in offensive operations directed towards Sweden.[116]

From the late spring of 1940 Sweden became the only 'free' country in northern Europe and many belligerents and other countries strengthened their diplomatic activities; - Stockholm became a major hub for espionage, counter espionage and propaganda. The British objective was to play a major part in these activities in Stockholm to get as much out of it as possible for their own war effort. The British secret services in Sweden collected information about Germany, Sweden, the other Scandinavian countries, the Soviet Union, Poland and other countries plans and activities to undermine the British and they counteracted other countries secret services through counter-espionage. Part of this was to harm the enemy at particularly vulnerable points through special operations. The British conveyed information and propaganda behind enemy lines and in neutral countries to strengthen morale.

4.2 Objectives British Secret Services

A key objective of the British secret services in Sweden was to gather widely provided information from other countries through the many contacts one had in the diplomatic community. But there were also many refugees in Sweden who could provide useful intelligence information. An overview of naval intelligence 1942 focused on two aspects of

[116] TNA HS 2/263

Scandinavian intelligence: '1) A means to judging enemy intentions and enabling our own operations in Scandinavia, 2) A window through which we can see Europe.'[117]

High Performance Secret Services: The main objective for the British secret services in Sweden was to effectively organise, work as professionally as possible and to deliver intelligence, propaganda and special operations according to requests from their superiors in London. They should deliver intelligence without 'noise' and problems with counterintelligence from Sweden or from other countries. In economic warfare and sabotage the objectives should be met without being discovered.

Basically, the organising was in accordance with principles that British government and intelligence had up to and into the war. There was nothing special about Sweden compared with activities in other countries: The legation (embassy) was central with one section for general intelligence with a 'head of station' and staff. Then there were attachés, military and others, and designated people for special operations. They connected propaganda work to other information and media efforts. And the top-management of the legation with ambassador, chargés d'affaires and other professional diplomats did the overall political intelligence and dealt with the communication with the top-level of Swedish authorities. Outside of the diplomatic system there were agent networks not directly connected to the legation and all diplomats could have their own informants and cut-outs[118]. Their contacts would be within Swedish government, military, police and counterintelligence or with other countries representation in Sweden and others, for instance refugees, with contact with countries of interest for the British.

Special operations are not only physical sabotage and distribution of propaganda. Intelligence is needed to perform special operations and intelligence comes out of the planning and execution. Therefore, personnel that are assigned to special operations plays an important role in intelligence collection as well, in many cases this is even more important than the special operations itself. This means that cooperation and sharing of information, between personnel assigned to general intelligence and personnel assigned to special operations, can be vital for the overall success. Being such a large system of secret services, the level of sharing and cooperation becomes one crucial factor in the analysis of to what extent the organisation was professional and effective.

[117] TNA ADM 223/464 Naval Intelligence 1939-1942 The overview underlines the different types of intelligence and its high quality produced in Stockholm.
[118] A cut-out is a 'middle man' typically linking agents in the field with intelligence officers in the legation.

The general focus of this intelligence system in Sweden was to gather as much relevant intelligence as possible,[119] not only information about Sweden, but any intelligence that seemed to be relevant and possible to gather. Although there are examples of information and activities relevant to other parts of Europe and even the complete war-effort, the main task was to monitor Sweden, the neighbouring countries and possibly Germany and the Soviet Union.

The Hague Convention of 1907 for warfare and the rules for diplomatic activities in neutral countries provided a framework for what the Swedes and the British could do. The main rule was that those with diplomatic status, working for secret services, could not be arrested and convicted in Sweden but only be expelled from the country. Several who did not have such diplomatic status were arrested and convicted.

Some point out that Secret Intelligence Service and the other intelligence agencies were not highly prioritised in the twenties and thirties.[120] There was no in depth understanding of what happened in Germany throughout the 30s, and the invasion of Denmark and Norway was not anticipated. When the war began, there was a rapid and comprehensive up-priority of British secret services and that these should play a key role in British strategies. The objectives, instruments and resources for the secret services were therefore significantly improved. This also meant that for the British secret services in Sweden, a significant and rapid organisational build-up under way from September 1939, was further strengthened after 9 April.

They extended the objectives of general intelligence in several steps during this time span. From September 1939 the attention the British secret services in Sweden on Germany became more in focus, and also Poland came 'closer' to Stockholm. After April 1940 similar intelligence from the neighbouring occupied countries were also part of the objective for the British secret services in Sweden. And finally, in 1941 the responsibility for Finland also increased when the British secret services in Helsinki withdrew to Stockholm. The time span of this thesis covers a tremendous growth of tasks and organisation in Sweden starting from being only concerned with Sweden to a full-fledged intelligence station for northern Europe.[121]

Sweden: The first of the more specific objectives for British secret services in Sweden was to monitor Swedish military and economic capacities and capabilities, politics and public opinion. This task was there earlier, and throughout and after the time span for this thesis, 1939-1941.

British secret services in Sweden in general were a collector of intelligence based on demand from London.

[120] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 245-48, p 78-81.

[121] As late as July 1942 at the meeting of Chiefs of Staff in London, SOE in Sweden was encouraged to build a stay-behind scheme in the event of German invasion and such a SOE network was also built up by dividing Sweden into areas and where radio broadcast equipment was placed. Ref also footnote 125.

After 9 April, it was especially important to get the best possible knowledge about the probability that Sweden would be drawn directly into the war. Especially in 1940, the Swedes were concerned about this possibility. The British collected intelligence about German plans, but also largely about Swedish plans and preparedness. After 9 April, Sweden was exposed to major pressure from Germany on troop transport by rail through Sweden to Norway. If Sweden did not collaborate, they feared that Germany would attack Sweden. Britain needed to know if Swedish preparedness and defence were sufficient.

Swedish Military Capacities: The Swedish military capability and intentions were to become a central objective for the British secret services. Sweden, as was also the case in Norway and Denmark, had not in the thirties increased its military capability in parallel with the rearmament that took place on the continent. Sweden was mostly concerned with the threat from the Soviet Union and they regarded conflict with Germany as possible but not probable.[122] They based the military strategy on that it would be best to hold back the Soviet Union by planning for conflict on Finnish soil. [123] There were problems combining political and military strategy and even the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in august 1939 did not change the focus more towards Germany.

Sweden's military equipment was lacking very much behind when the war started.[124] The equipment was old with rifles from 1896 and with reliance to a large extend of horses for transport artillery and other military equipment and with no tanks. The Swedish navy had a few and old ships, but it was foremost in the air that Sweden was outdated. The strategy was to bomb the enemy's air fields by bombers and not use fighters in the air. This was the opposite of the British and German approach.

Most of the military equipment in Sweden was supplied from overseas and the domestic production was very limited except for artillery from Bofors. The belligerent countries were unreliable suppliers when the war was going on since they needed the equipment themselves and they were not sure about what could happen to Sweden. Ships bought from Italy just before the outbreak on their way to Sweden ended up with the British and taken from the Swedes. Sweden had some bargaining power based on the trade agreements and the belligerents need for iron ore, roller bearings and other Swedish industrial production. Compared with the German war machine, in numbers and in strike flexibility in the air, at sea and with well-

[122] Gilmour, *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War*, p 210.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Stellan Bojerud, *Mundering Modell 39: Krigsmateriellfrågan och krigsorganisationens expansion inom armén*, ed. Bo Hugemark, Stormvarning : Sverige infor andra varldskriget ([Stockholm]: Probus, Svenskt militarhistoriskt bibliotek, 2002).

equipped and trained troops, Sweden could not defend herself against a German attack in the first two-three years of the war. Sweden was lucky that they stayed out of the war since it seems to have been easy for Germany to gain full control. But Germany saw no advantage to tie up more military resources in another Nordic country away from the main parts of the front in central Europe. [125]

The Swedish defence capability was of high interest both to all belligerents to be able to estimate the probability that Sweden could withstand a German or Allied invasion. The Germans and the British had different estimates and were maybe less optimistic than the Swedish leadership. The British estimated in June 1942 that Sweden the most could hold out for three months.[126] In 1943 the belligerents estimated that Sweden was catching up and the armed forces could possibly withstand an invasion.

Research on Swedish military capabilities have not received so much attention recently compared with the moral debate about Sweden's performance during the war. They never tested these capabilities in a combination with Sweden's deeper beliefs of what was the 'right' side. Sweden was concerned about all belligerents, but they responded foremost on German threats in their build-up of their armed forces. The political level stayed firm behind Sweden staying out of the war and hence the military build-up was well democratically founded. As the war went along, Sweden's capabilities increased, and it would have been more and more difficult for any of the belligerents to attack or invade. The military planning focused by tradition mostly on the Soviet Union, but the political level had a broad approach to what could happen. During the war the armed forces and its leadership in Sweden moved away from an elite to more democratic citizen-based, and they expanded the domestic arm industry Sweden could be more independent. The mass conscription and mobilisation throughout the war gave broad engagement in the Swedish population in its war morale. Especially lack of Swedish air-power in the beginning of the war made German threats of bombing and blitzkrieg more credible. This was one important factor in allowing transit-traffic.

Iron ore: The third of more specific objectives was the question of iron ore and strategical goods export to Germany. In parallel, the British wanted access to some of these goods themselves. The economic warfare and industrial intelligence connected to this became a

[125] Tony Insall told me, with the source TNA ADM 223/489, that as late as December 1942 the German general Bamler was instructed by the head of Chief of Staffs, general Jodl, to prepare a plan for the invasion of Sweden that was supposed to happen in the winter 1943/44, but the plan was abandoned when Germany started to loose on the East Front in 1943.

[126] National Archives FO 371/33068, ref Gilmour (2010) p 237 footnote 85: Possibility of a German attack on Sweden. Code 42 file 360 (papers 2831 - end)

central task for intelligence and special operations in Sweden. Iron ore was so important that the British was willing to harm the neutral country Sweden directly by sabotage. The objective was to secure as much as possible that Germany could not take advantage of Scandinavian raw materials and industrial products in their capacity build-up. In this period new trade agreements were discussed and agreed upon between Britain and Sweden and Norway. These negotiations were also about restricting export to Germany.

In this period stopping Swedish iron ore to Germany became a prime objective for Britain up the very top level for the War Cabinet. The Swedish iron ore question became one of the most important economic intelligence issues during the whole war when it comes focus on top level and the arguments for and against in economic warfare. The Industrial Intelligence Centre (IIC) in the thirties, up to the war and into the Ministry of Economic Warfare had built up the case for the significance of economic intelligence. Intelligence officers like Desmond Morton, with his cooperation with Winston Churchill, argued strongly that stopping Swedish iron ore to Sweden could in fact stop the whole war.[127]

Also, other raw metals in Norway and Sweden were of strategic importance. Sweden had also important industrial products to export such as advanced roller bearings that became vital for the production of airplanes and other military equipment. The Swedish trade agreements entered with Britain and Germany before 9 April with subsequent adjustments were also an important tool for Britain to influence the iron ore export from Sweden. Active attempts were made through British special operations to prevent this export to Germany.

There was considerable will among those who worked for the British secret services in Sweden to use a wide range of instruments without regard for formal limitations. In the example of the attempted sabotage attempt against iron ore transport in the winter of 1940, this attitude went all the way to Churchill, in an action that would be clearly illegal and contrary to Swedish and international rules.

In the Phoney War period from September 1939 to April 1940, the perception was that Swedish iron ore was of great war value to Germany and that it had to be stopped or reduced to hopefully stop the Germans from further aggression and expansion. They considered even a possibility for Sweden joining Great Britain directly in the war as an option in British policy. In December 1939 the War Cabinet had a comprehensive discussion based on several memorandums that involved this question and Winston Churchill wrote in his cabinet memorandum in connection with Narvik as a strategic target: *'The effectual stoppage of the*

[127] Bennett, *Churchill's Man of Mystery : Desmond Morton and the World of Intelligence*, p 195-96, p 204-6.

Norwegian ore supplies to Germany ranks as a major offensive operation of war. No other measure is open to us for many months to come which gives so good a chance of abridging the waste and destruction of the conflict, or of perhaps preventing the vast slaughters which will attend the grapple of the main armies.'[128]

Great Britain had the intention to prevent this with military means which would violate both Swedish and Norwegian neutrality. Part of this was Operation Lumps for iron ore sabotage in Sweden that I will return to in the chapter about British special operations in Sweden. The British also had plans for taking control over the iron ore mining and the transportation system in lieu of sending in troops to help Finland in the Winter War.[129]

Naval intelligence: The fourth specific objective was naval intelligence that was important because of Sweden's location and closeness to German harbours and the seaways in the Baltic, Kattegat and Skagerrak. After the occupation of Denmark and Norway, the British secret services in Sweden had to work even more on this type of intelligence in Norway and Denmark.

Special operations and resistance: The fifth of more specific objectives, was to work with resistance in and refugees from the neighbouring countries utilising the Swedish neutrality. This work started before the war when German opposition and others in trouble escaped to Sweden and to Britain. When the war started right away contacts with refugees were established, especially in propaganda work, but also in intelligence and other special operations. From April 1940 working with resistance in Norway and Denmark became high priority and remained so throughout the war. From the summer of 1940 the British objective was to use Sweden as a hub for working with resistance into the other Nordic countries. A target area for the British secret services in Sweden was to perform or support secret services, especially through special operations, in Norway and Denmark. Railway sabotage was a main priority.

Transport: The sixth of specific objectives was for special operations in Sweden to handle the logistics of transporting agents and others in and out of the neighbouring countries and securing their safe transport to England especially through the so-called Stockholm route from Bromma to Leuchars in Scotland. SOE in Stockholm coordinated, and sometimes decided, who would get this unique transport and at what time. Particularly important was the return of agents after actions in Norway. The Swedes also took advantage of this opportunity.

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[128] CAB 66-4 WP (39)162 Dec 22, 1939 p 96. Also referred in Winston Churchill, *The Second World War / Vol. 1, the Gathering Storm* (London: Cassell, 1948), p 490.
[129] Gilmour, *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War*, p 42. Churchills House of Many Mansions Speech 20 January 1940

The research literature shows that as the war progressed, the Nordic region became less important for the great war. It was a matter of tying up German resources in Norway and influencing Norwegian moral through selected sabotage and propaganda. This was also decisive for the secret British secret services in Sweden. In the second half of the war, almost all actions in Norway were directed directly from Britain, and Sweden had a minor role.

5 Swedish Counterintelligence

5.1 The Swedish Military Intelligence

Sweden reorganised its military top-level and established the Swedish Defence Staff[130] in1937 that covered all military services. This central organisation had an Intelligence Department that focused on military intelligence towards other countries such as the Soviet Union, Finland, Germany and Great Britain, and as the war progressed also focused on intelligence in Denmark and Norway. The Intelligence Departments Swedish Section (Home Section) was the link to the domestic counter-intelligence and police. The Swedish Section worked with information, propaganda work, security measures within the armed forces, industrial espionage and sabotage, counter-espionage, surveillance of suspicious aliens and training of police and customs officers.[131]

One important part of the Swedish Defence Staff was the Crypto Department.[132] One demand from the Germans after 9 April 1940 was to have access to parts of the Swedish cable system for telephone, telegrams and telex. The Germans used lines of communication between Oslo and Berlin, lines in and out of Stockholm and connections with Helsinki and Copenhagen. A major part of the telegram and telex traffic was encrypted, but from the summer of 1940 the Swedes could read this communication which gave detailed information about all German messages, plans and foreign policy, and Abwehr's[133] communication as well. The braking of the German encryption system (Geheimscreiber) was a major achievement.[134] It was not until 1942 that the Germans set in countermeasures.[135] One added effect was that the Swedes also could read part of encrypted communications to/from other countries, such as the United Kingdom.[136] The presence of foreign intelligence services in Sweden gave Sweden a unique access to information about other countries and their plans that could influence Sweden. In a

[130] Equivalent to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (COS) in the UK.
[131] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 25-26.
[132] In 1942 The National Defence Radio Institute (Forsvarets Radio Institutt, established 1938) as an independent authority reporting to the Swedish Defence Staff took over responsibility for all signal work and decoding. Radio traffic was also surveyed for instance during the winter war in cooperation with Finland.
[133] A thorough presentation of the German Secret Services, Abwehr, in Scandinavia during the second world war is given by Tore Pryser, *Tyske Hemmelige Tjenester I Norden : Spionsaker Og Aktører 1930-1950* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2012).
[134] C. G. McKay and Bengt Beckman, *Swedish Signal Intelligence, 1900-1945* (London: Frank Cass, 2005).
[135] One factor behind the success in encryption was based on the competence of the company LM Ericsson that made equipment for encryption.
[136] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 28 footnote 62.

very critical phase for Sweden in 1940 and 1941, fearing a German invasion, Sweden could follow the German military plans and troop movements in Norway. It was also possible to follow planning and operations of the northern flank of the Barbarossa operation in the spring of 1941 and thereby to find out that the German military movements were not intended for Sweden.[137]

The British secret services had good contacts with people in the Swedish Crypto. Especially the British naval attaché Henry Denham had contacts that kept him informed about German naval movements and plans. Also, via the Norwegian legation[138] (security officer Ragnvald Alfred Roscher Lund with long crypto experience) there was a link into the Swedish crypto organisation.[139] The Swedish Military intelligence organised a new information gathering unit, eventually called the C-Bureau, that started out working on border control and watches of travellers, refugees, sending agents abroad and running agent-operations. The C-Bureau worked often differently than the domestic security services having a more positive relationship with refugees and foreign intelligence organisations as a source of information. The C-Bureau, the MI6 of Sweden, remained a small organisation with a large network of external agents.[140] Another organisation part of the Swedish secret service system, was the Alien Bureau (Statens Utlänningskommission) especially represented by its control section with the task to check up on suspicious aliens.[141]

5.2 The General Security Service

The most important opponent to the British secret services in Sweden became the Swedish General Security Service (Den allmänna säkerhetstjänsten), the equivalent of MI5. This civilian agency was initiated by the Swedish Defence Staff in 1937 and was finally decided on 10 June 1938. On this day a secret decree (allmän säkerhetskungörelse) established the new service and provided the framework for its operation. The new organisation would do regular police-work and special surveillance. It was a secret organisation that became known to the Riksdag for first time in January 1943, almost five years after it went into operation. And the

[137] Agrell, *Stockholm Som Spioncentral*, p 20-24.
[138] Alf Skjeseth, *Nordens Casablanca* (Oslo: Spartacus Forlag, 2018).gives a presentation of the norwegian legation in Stockholm.
[139] Agrell, *Stockholm Som Spioncentral*, p 22.
[140] Ibid., p 12-16.
[141] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 26.

special decree was first made public in 1948[142] The General Security Service had seven districts covering the whole country, and most important was the Stockholm region with almost 200 employees at its peak. The staffed it from the beginning by transferred regular police officers.[143] Since it was integrated with the regular police, it could also work closely with them, for instance along the border to Norway. One Bureau in the service dealt with Soviet or Communist activity, a second with German or Nazi activity and the third Bureau on British and allied activity. The General Security Service reported to the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Secretary for Social Affairs Gustav Möller that was responsible for the Security Service during the war with junior minister (statssekreterare) Tage Erlander. The secret decree about the service was in full operation in all parts of the country from April 12, 1940, i.e. the Government defined the situation as being in war or that war was threatening.

The Stockholm region of the General Security Service reported directly to the head of the security service and was also in direct contact with the ministries. Stockholm had all the legations (33 in 1941) and by far the most activity and arrests during the war.[144] When the decree went into full force, they moved all security resources from the Stockholm regular police to the new service.[145] The central organisation of the Security Service and its control units for each area of post, telegrams, telephone, radio and other traffic coordinated and managed the overall running throughout the country including Stockholm. In addition, Stockholm had its own surveillance department based on resources at the Stockholm police.[146] They could also use Stockholm region of the Security Services in other parts of the country to prevent sabotage.[147] And it used (paid) informants in Stockholm.[148] The surveillance department of the Stockholm Security Unit had four sub departments of which the third dealt with counter-espionage against the Allied, including Norway and Denmark, and was first led by Nils Fahlander and later by Otto Danielsen. In dealing with the operations of the British secret services, Danielsen frequently appeared in the documentation.

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[142] Flyghed, "Rättsstat i kris: Spioneri och sabotage i Sverige under andre världskriget," p 291-92.
[143] When regular police-officers were recruited they were not trained in intelligence. The competence of the staff in the beginning has been referred to and questioned. Flyghed discusses this several times, ref p 286-287. This is also referred to in Tore Forsberg, *Spioner Och Spioner Som Spionerar På Spioner : Spioner Och Kontraspioner I Sverige*, 1. uppl. ed. (Stockholm: Hjalmarson & Högberg, 2003).
[144] Flyghed, "Rättsstat i kris: Spioneri och sabotage i Sverige under andre världskriget," p 283.
[145] The sixth unit of the Stockholm Police that dwelt with political crimes were transferred. The alien unit was to remain in the police.
[146] 6. rotel in the Stockholm police which was moved to the Security Service.
[147] Flyghed, "Rättsstat i kris: Spioneri och sabotage i Sverige under andre världskriget," p 286.
[148] Flyghed refers to 59 regular informants of which 15 were foreigners including Norway and Finland.

The General Security Service objectives were two-fold: 1) Counter-espionage and censorship in war or when war threatens and 2) Prevent war intelligence to get in the hands of extraneous persons. The Service was supposed to be especially sensitive to the wishes of the Defence Staff and the head of the armed forces. The classified all information about the General Security Service secret and all personnel connected had to promise full confidentiality also after the war was over.

They arrested individuals with ties to the British secret services in Sweden and prosecuted them for spying according to Swedish law. This espionage benefitted Norwegian and British interests and against the German interests. The activities took place both in Sweden and Norway and were led by the British legation in Stockholm. Sweden might have been more flexible in their counterintelligence, but that would have led to Germany perceiving it as an active help to an enemy.[149] The Swedish Security Police was one of the most important instruments of the Swedish neutrality policy to keep control of the belligerent parties in Sweden and not challenge any of them.

5.3 The Legal Foundation: Neutrality and Security

Since Sweden had declared neutrality, the international conventions for neutral countries in war-time were the rules they tried to play within, particularly the Hague Convention of 1907. In the beginning of the war many European countries declared neutrality, but in the end of the war, there were only six left: Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Spain, Portugal and the Irish Republic. One important reason for secret activities in neutral countries was that such countries had the right to have contact, diplomatic and commercial, with belligerents on both sides of the conflict. How they practised that right would vary and depended on what the belligerents allowed, and how they defined legal contact and movements.

The Hague Convention (V) of 1907 Article 2 limited movements of soldiers and military equipment: '*Belligerents are forbidden to move troops or convoys of either munitions of war or supplies across the territory of a neutral Power.*'[150] In addition, Article 5 states that the neutral country must not allow it, which means it is a requirement for both sides. Further restrictions can be agreed for instance in trade agreements like the one with Great Britain that

[149] Assessment of the overall Swedish 'efforts' in the war is not the topic of my thesis but will be addressed in a limited way in terms of the Swedish Security Police performance.
[150] Yale Law School, Lillian Goldman Law Library, The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy

restricted the export of iron ore to Germany. The flow of goods and people from neutral countries to belligerents could also be restricted inside the belligerent country.

An important reason for more secret activities in neutral countries is that freedom of movement and other limitations on foreign activity is less restricted than in the belligerent countries. And a neutral country can attract refugees from belligerent countries that can be valuable for secret activities and espionage.[151]

A neutral country will tend to introduce regulations to keep secret foreign activities, collecting different information and potentially do special operations, under control. One special challenge is to deal with diplomats who are protected by other international conventions especially about their immunity from arrest and prosecution.[152] But this immunity may not apply if the diplomats do not obey the neutral countries laws, in which case the diplomat can be required to leave when the neutral country called the diplomat 'non grata'. If diplomats take part in espionage they can also be declared 'non grata' if they use other non-diplomats to spy for them. This became important to the British secret services in Sweden.

Aliens in Sweden needed a residence permit if they were to stay over three months. The government could according to the law introduce more restrictions for any individual. From 1938 there was a concern that more Jews would enter Sweden.[153] A census of all Aliens was made in February 1939. New restrictions of the movement of aliens were introduced in the neighbourhood of military installation. These regulations also applied to diplomats that had to apply for travelling permissions in certain parts of the country. When war started in 1939 visa became required to enter Sweden for citizens outside the Nordic countries. From April 1940 aliens could not enter certain harbours, railways and factory areas and this was further extended several times during the war. It was also in the beginning of the war set up internment to secure the entrance of unwanted aliens who could not be sent out of the country right away.[154] And hotels had to register information about their quest and provide it to the police.

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[151] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45,* p 6.

[152] The immunity of diplomats against arrests has been a basic principle since the Ancient time. Diplomatic activity was regulated in the Vienna Convention in 1815. The Convention regarding Diplomatic Officers (Havana, 1928) is an example on specific wordings where it states in article 14 that diplomats 'neither can be arrested nor prosecuted'. The Vienna convention from 1961 Article 31, which almost all countries in the world have signed, states the same.

[153] Flyghed, "Rättsstat i kris: Spioneri och sabotage i Sverige under andre världskriget," p 202-08. Political refugees became accepted, although Jews were not seen as such. Sweden and Switzerland proposed to Germany that the passport of Jews should be stamped by a 'J'.

[154] Ibid., p 201. Camps were set up in Långmora and Smedsbo. In addition to those that had served time for espionage but could not be sent out of the country also persons expelled of political reasons. This is discussed by Janne Flyghed p 210-215. Several of the British agents spent time at Långmora.

The Hague Convention on War on Land (1907) defines a spy and espionage as a covert action during war.[155] Since espionage can be performed very differently in peace and war, covert and open, this convention based on the experience of the first world war was inadequate for Sweden.

Chapter 8 of the Swedish Penal Code concerned treason and crimes against the security of the realm and was adjusted many times just before the war and during the war. The chapter contained many forms of security issues in addition to espionage for instance rebellion, recruitment of soldiers, spreading of rumours, foreign propaganda activities and others.

The first significant change in Chapter 8 in 1936 was that the collection of non-secret information also could be part of the definition of espionage and at the same time the government was given authority to act necessary to secure the general security and the defence of the realm. The distinction between secret and non-secret information was in depth discussed in the Riksdag and when it was decided to introduce non-secret information in the laws it was well founded in a democratic decision. In 1936 the law stated that the collection was a *systematic enterprise undertaken on behalf of a foreign power* to ensure that not any random collection of non-secret information became punishable.[156] In the debate it was referred to how diplomats in general worked keeping their home country updated on the developments in the country they were sent out to. Indeed, this has been the main work for embassies from all countries and we will see this clearly when we discuss the activities of the British legation in Stockholm. Especially interesting was the Press Reading Bureau (PRB) that was connected to the legation during the war where a up to 59 people (august 1943) daily read newspapers and magazines from Sweden, Germany and several other countries and sent reports to London.[157] This was clearly part of the British secret services, but Sweden did not make any arrests connected to this Press Reading Bureau although they must have been very aware of it. I assume the reason for this is that it was difficult to prosecute anyone who just read regular newspapers and made summaries of the content.

When war approached in 1939 it was regarded that not only military information could be of interest to spies, but all sorts of political and economic information in addition. At this time changes in the law (SL paragraph 21a) introduced risk for the continuity of supply for the public as punishable. In addition, and more important regarding the British secret services, intelligence activity that could harm the 'friendly relations with other countries' became

[155] Convention (IV) respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land its annex, The Hauge 1907 Art 29.
[156] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 13.
[157] Agrell, *Stockholm Som Spioncentral*, p 78-79; Tennant, *Touchlines of War*, p 54-55.

punishable. And this was also applicable for foreign citizens.[158] This change in the law was adopted to espionage that was aimed at other nations than Sweden.

We will see later that the 'friendly relations' paragraph was used frequently, also in the two main cases we will analyse when we discuss the British secret services. And in the Rickman case also the continuity of supply and the sabotage law. These changes also protected the Swedish trade both with Great Britain and Germany, especially iron ore and roller bearings. The revision of 1939 also introduced a new paragraph 21b that covered the planning of crime. All these changes focused on a change from internal security to the realm's outer security.[159] On 17 May 1940 the law was again modified with more restrictions. Now it became punishable to urge to treason, to receive money and to be in contact with foreign powers.[160] It was enough to have the intent to commit a crime according to the law and not require a more complete plan for espionage.

The 'friendly relations' legal concept became a bearing principle in the law. From 22 May 1940 all matters that some way or another could harm the 'friendly relations' with other powers could be punished as espionage. In fact, when Germany was protesting and criticising against foreign activities in Sweden or internal activities by Swedes, this could be the basis for arrest and conviction. Germany and other belligerents could interfere with Swedish internal affairs by for instance how the press performed.[161] The law in the beginning of 1940 was hence very broad and the government was given a very general authority to act and define what they would regard as a ground for arrest and conviction. In the debate in the Riksdag it was full support to the changes of the law.

In December 1940 new amendments and revisions of the law was made in Chapter 8 Penal Code paragraph 6 made clearer to punish sabotage against Swedish military interests in war or when war threatens and in Chapter 19 that also covered measures against sabotage.[162]

The extended right to telephone tapping and mail control that was introduced in 1939, became a very important instrument for the Swedish police. In the documentation of the arrests during the war in the cases relevant for the British secret services mail control and also telephone tapping was used. A special representative of government approved the use of such coercive

[158] Flyghed, "Rättsstat i kris: Spioneri och sabotage i Sverige under andre världskriget," p 227.
[159] Ibid., p 228.
[160] Ibid., p 231.Changes in paragraph 25 about being in contact with foreign powers were regarded as an important tool.
[161] Ibid., p 233.
[162] Ibid. The Rickman-case, that I will return to later in this thesis, was an important cause of the changes in Chapter 19.

means, in the beginning he had to notify the Justice Chancellor, but from January 1940 this notification procedure was abandoned.[163]

The law was also modified to extend the period an arrested person could be hold before making charges. It was permitted to keep a suspect up to 30 days and with the Chancellor's approval additional 30 days. These limits were reduced as the investigations and interrogations could go faster and later in the war it was generally up to 15 days without charging (formal arrest). The frequent practice of this can be clearly seen in the documentation of all the arrest during the war.[164] Through all changes of the law from 1938 and to the end of 1940, the sentence time limit was increased.

The conclusion is that Sweden was very much prepared legally for neutrality and the perceived threats. Sweden could arrest and prosecute just about anyone that they regarded as a security threat, foreign or native, whether the intelligence was directed towards Sweden or not.

My discussion has shown many paragraphs in the law that could be applied, and the police had to make their own judgment and make precedence. Since these laws were new, the Courts also had to make their own interpretation, set precedence and to judge whether the specific cases were inside or outside of the law. The Courts asked the government frequently about opinion for instance about whether specific cases potentially could threaten Sweden's friendly relations with other countries. This made the Court's work part of the Swedish foreign policy and in fact was a doubtful practice mixing the executive government with the supposedly independent courts.[165]

5.4 The Operations and Performance of the Swedish Security Police

The British secret services in Sweden had to operate within the legal Swedish foundation for their activities.[166] This does not mean that they followed these requirements, rather in some cases the opposite, but it was the legal framework for the counterintelligence and police-activity in Sweden. One must assume that the British knew the laws and regulations and tried to take them into account to stay out of trouble with the Swedish authorities.

The Swedish Security Police showed its capabilities in the first four months of 1940 with several coordinated arrest-processes against individuals that were assumed to be in conflict with Swedish national interests. It became clear that Sweden was willing to defend their neutrality

[163] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 21. This measure was re-introduced in July 1943.
[164] The Sandler Commission. Archive F4:1-3 Riksarkivet Stockholm
[165] Flyghed, "Rättsstat i kris: Spioneri och sabotage i Sverige under andre världskriget," p 105, 299 and 427-30.
[166] Laws and regulations are normative sources of history, i.e. practice might be different.

taking control of foreign hostile activities in Sweden and also in activities out of Sweden that could be a problem especially for its 'friendly relations with foreign powers', i.e. in most cases Germany. Sweden gave in to German demands for transit traffic in 1940 and 1941. Especially Germany, but also Britain, followed the development in Sweden closely on a day to day basis and protested regularly on Swedish government and public action that they thought were not in their interest.

The General Security Service revealed several operations and got British, Swedes and Norwegians arrested and convicted. There are pros and cons of connecting secret services to the English legation with the opportunities for diplomatic immunity it gives, but it will also be an easier task for the security police to find potential spies.

The special law[167] came into force in the beginning of 1940 and this introduced extensive mail and telephone controls, the surveillance of persons entering the country, aliens in the country and swedes in general. All arrests by the Security Service during the war were based on this special law which were incorporated in the decree about the service and gave nearly unlimited authority to coercive power.

The Security Police checked more than 50 million letters and packages during the war in all parts of the country. In 1940 more than 11 000 domestic telegrams per week were controlled and during the war more than 3000 telegrams were stopped and 5000 telegrams were censored. More than 11 million telephone conversations were tapped of which 365 000 were reported. All together led all these checks during the war directly to 324 arrest of which 113 went on to the courts. All work with letters and telephone calls did not lead to direct many arrests and prosecutions, but the effect was larger because this information could be used with other surveillance and police information. [168]

The Security Service put a lot of effort in keeping up registers of aliens, an employer's register and a special register of suspicious persons of special interest to the police. This list was called the S-list and was first put together late in 1939 and became an important source of information in planning surveillance measures. The police had a long practice of registering communists that was continued into the war. And more attention was also given to Nazis in a similar register.[169] Also, pro-British individuals were registered such as the so-called Tuesday-group, Fighting Democracy and Syndicalists which gave out a critical newspaper called the

[167] Tvångsmedelslagen 1939
[168] Flyghed, "Rättsstat i kris: Spioneri och sabotage i Sverige under andre världskriget," p 307.
[169] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 32.

Worker. These registers were supplemented by military security the Swedish Section which kept track of military personnel.

The different Swedish security and intelligence agencies worked both offensively and defensively with the belligerent countries. At the same time as active surveillance was going on, they cooperated both with the Allied and with Germany and in the documentation, we find several incidences were the Swedes actively transferred information. In March 1941 a high-level Swedish delegation visited the head of the German security services, Reinhard Heydrich, in Berlin. And at the same time the Swedes also provided the British with intelligence information.

The General Security Service arrested 1957 (687 for espionage) persons during the war of which 549 were prosecuted. [170]

Sweden had an efficient counter-espionage service different from many other places like the Balkans. The British secret services had to be careful so that the Swedish police did not stop their operations and arrested their agents. [171] The Swedish counterintelligence was quite effective in its surveillance of the legations but did not have adequate understanding of the organisation of British intelligence.[172]

Several in the Section D team were placed under such control and it was letters intercepted from Sweden to Germany that led to the first arrests and then getting on to Rickman. All together 33 persons were arrested from or connected with Section D. The letter that Birnbaum sent to Germany had direct reference to Alfred Rickman at a time when the Swedes did not understand his role. Actually, they did not understand the scope of Section D's work before they arrested Rickman and found the stored explosives in April 1940.

In the SOE operation Barbara, led by Munthe at the legation, the Swedish Security Police had a more direct track of who was involved through the surveillance of who was coming and going at the legation. But the Swedes did not understand the specific modus before they arrested William Millar 26 March 1941. The complete Barbara gang was also not uncovered before the last one was arrested and interrogated. In the uncovering of the Barbara operation, the Swedish Security Service worked in a closer cooperation with the police on the border towards Norway.

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[170] Flyghed, "Rättsstat i kris: Spioneri och sabotage i Sverige under andre världskriget," p 351.

[171] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 147. FO 371/29408 p 24: In a response 10 February 1941 to a request from London that head of the Danish section, Hollingworth, could visit Sweden and travel around, Mallet strongly advice against that referring to that the police easily would find out. At that time the legation had two years of substantial knowledge about the Swedish security police.

[172] This led to the police not keeping track of the passport control office on Birger Jarlsgatan. A lot of effort was put into postal and telephone control, but in the end, this led to no arrests of foreign spies and was almost always just a supplement to other surveillance.

Some of the people involved in Barbara were taken for questioning on the border although they were sent to Stockholm on their own. Finally, they were arrested in Stockholm. Since the participants both in Section D and in SOE told quite a lot about what they had been up to, one can imagine that they had effective methods of interrogation and interviewing the arrested agents. For instance, the interrogation of William Millar is documented in detail and one can see how the police build up their case addressing the issues from interview to interview in a way that must have been quite carefully planned. The security service and the court system had a lot of contact with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was on initiative by the service typically asking for the ministry's opinion in specific cases and on specific persons.

Sweden experienced a number of threats from the many foreign legations, refugees and others that were in Stockholm and other places during the war. Especially the professional secret services in the legations of the belligerent nations and in countries that were occupied by the belligerent. It was important for Sweden to hide weaknesses, political conflicts and foreign influence on independent decision-making. Saboteurs could destroy Swedish assets that were believed to help the enemy like iron ore production, transit traffic of belligerent nations and Swedish military sites. Conflicts in neighbouring countries could transmit to Sweden. It was also a risk for foreign recruitment of Swedish spies.[173] All this became objectives for the security police and for the military intelligence.

5.5 Conclusions and Reflections

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to look into the overall performance of the Swedish security system, intelligence operations and foreign policy during the war. The British secret services did however operate within the framework of Swedish policies and operations and the conditions in this period of history. The Swedish 'picture' and the operations of the British is therefore two sides of the same matter.

Section D's plans for sabotage in Sweden could have resulted in a clear criminal act, punishable in any country. The propaganda work towards other countries and even in Sweden is not that questionable, but the legal challenge was '*could hurt the friendly relations with other countries*'. Germany protested regularly to the Swedes on all developments they did not like.

As was the plan for Norway and Denmark before April 40, Swedish policy was to stay out of the war. Many developments from 1939 and into the war challenged this policy and the Swedes

[173] Gilmour, *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War*, p 133-34.

had to perform a tough balance between different concerns and objectives being in the centre of belligerent or occupied countries in every direction. Sweden thought, especially in the period from April 1940 to June 1941, maybe even later, that it was a real risk of a German invasion. This was also a concern among the Allied countries. Looking back today we can conclude that this was not a German concern, being more occupied with war other places in Europe and also that the Allied countries from the summer of 1940 did not see the benefits of bringing Sweden into the direct war. Scandinavia became a war area were all belligerents thought status-quo was the best. The possible exemption to this was the Soviet Union and the aggression on Finland, but also in that case the Russians never landed in Sweden.

Compared with other countries Sweden was well prepared for neutrality, and possibly war, in their establishment of organisations for espionage and counter-espionage. And they had top-level competence in signal surveillance. Most preparations before the war came to Scandinavia were about the adjustments of laws to the new circumstances where all instruments were given to the government to monitor and control belligerent interests. The foreign secret services, that were so well represented in Sweden, met a society that put a lot of resources and competence into controlling threating activities or activities inside or outside of Sweden that could result in irritation or harm the friendly relations towards other countries. It was a reality that Germany followed what was going on in Sweden closely and took every opportunity for criticism and threats. And Germany was given several exemptions from the strict neutrality. The Swedish authorities felt the 'heat' of the war and worried about everything that could go wrong and that could bring Sweden more actively into the war.

The Swedish Security Police, in cooperation with the regular police and government ministries and agencies, followed daily almost all of the diplomats and major agents, cut-outs and many informants. It cannot have come as a surprise that many were arrested and prosecuted no matter how good the spies were to avoid Swedish attention.

6 British Organisation in Sweden 1939-1941

When the war started there was a quick and comprehensive up-prioritisation of British secret services, and the objectives and means for the secret services were more significantly part of the agenda of the British government. This also meant that the British secret services in Sweden had to go through a significant and rapid organisational upgrade, further reinforced after 9 April 1940. The British Legation in Stockholm was the main centre for intelligence and special operations in Sweden for the British up to the war and through the war. Some of the activities were handled directly from London, but even then in some contact with the legation. There is in the literature used in this thesis no indication of independent networks handled directly from London that was not known by someone at the legation.[174]

Large amount of information, both secret and open, was transferred from British services in Sweden. Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) was the main body of general intelligence. This organisation mainly used the British embassies and other representation offices around the world as 'platform'. Secret Intelligence Service was organised under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Foreign Office). In the larger British embassies or legations, the Secret Intelligence Service was usually based in the passport offices and it was more or less a public secret that Passport Control Officer was equivalent to secret service. In addition, it was in the larger legations different attachés that also worked with their own intelligence, such as press attachés, service attachés, trade attachés and others. On top of this, reports from the ambassadors and other professional diplomats about the overall political situation in the country of location.

Head of station for Secret Intelligence Service and head of the Passport Control Office was John Martin (Lieutenant Commander), assigned in October 1937 with the diplomatic rank of second secretary.[175] On the diplomatic list of May 1939 Martin was number three on the list of the British Legation. In addition, in late 1939 there were three attachés for the military services (naval, military and air): Hector Boyes (Contre-Admiral), R Sutton-Pratt (Lieutenant-Colonel) and J C E A Johnson (Wing Commander). Air and naval had assistant attachés. The First Secretary, and second at the legation reporting to the Minister, was career diplomat W. H. Montagu-Pollock. The position of First Secretary (also functioned as chargés d'affaires) is

[174] Examples of such networks were Z-organisation and 22000-network, ref chapter on central organisation. The archive documentation has not yet revealed any such organisation in Sweden. There were tendencies in Sweden in the building of Section D's organisation outside of the legation in 1939/40 and possible networks in business and banking connected to Charles Hambro and/or the Wallenbergs.

[175] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 178. Stockholm diplomatic list 1939 where Martin is referred to as second secretary.

traditionally the person who runs the daily internal business of the embassy to unburden the minister with all details and giving time for him to representation outside the embassy.

And there were two third-secretaries: Career diplomat A D M Ross (later second secretary, working close to Montagu-Pollock, long diplomatic experience inter alia from Berlin) and Peter Tennant (press attaché, with two assistant press attachés). Lastly, on the diplomatic list there was from 1940 the commercial secretary Jack Mitcheson with an assistant secretary.[176] The minister of the legation was in 1939 Edmund Monson and from January 1940 Victor Mallet.[177] All other staff (personal secretaries and administrative staff) at the legation did not have diplomatic status.[178] Montagu-Pollock and Tennant were both educated at Cambridge, but most of the other diplomats were from Oxford or were military trained. Several of the diplomats had special knowledge about Scandinavia from education and/or work.

In Stockholm in 1939 the organisation with 14 diplomats was quite standard for British intelligence at legations. The head of SIS, John Martin, worked on general intelligence, the attachés on their respective areas and the traditional diplomatic 'line' worked on the general reporting from Sweden. When there were issues that needed special coordination or the involvement of the minister, Montagu-Pollock was the person who should secure satisfactorily processes. When needed, he was coordinator and head of all secret intelligence work at the legation.

As discussed in an earlier chapter, the British secret intelligence can be understood as a system of consumers, collectors and analytics. The collection part[179] based on British legation went through two main channels: One reporting through the diplomatic channel, in principle up to a certain level at the legation based on the authority given by the minister, to the Foreign Office in London. The other channel is as part of a matrix organisation reporting, typically from the different attachés, to their superiors or day-to-day contacts in London. Since all written correspondence went through the wiring system of the Foreign Office ending up at the ground floor in the ministry in London, the Foreign Office could all the time secure copies of any correspondence from the legation.[180] The legation worked primarily as a collector of

[176] Tennant, *Touchlines of War*, p 52. According to Tennant, Mitcheson had a hard job dealing with the trade agreements, the difficult Swedish import situation and many other commercial difficulties.
[177] Mallet transferred his credentials 23 January 1940 to the Swedish king right at the time the first arrests took place of two of John Martin's informants.
[178] Riksarkivet Stockholm Foreign Office: Diplomatic Lists May 1939-March 1945 P53 290 pages
[179] That meant that SIS would basically not be proactive in intelligence targeting but rather wait for requests from the consumers in London. An extreme example of this was the failure of taking Dakar in September 1940 when it was not known that the local forces would resist and when SIS had not on its own initiative collected information about this. Ref Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*. p 349
[180] From 1942 SOE got its own communication system

intelligence based on requests and strategies from the consumers in London, but of course in the specifics and in the daily work the legation picked intelligence that they thought was valuable to London. This meant that the legation de facto had some authority on their own to work on relevant intelligence.

The press attaché is vital in transferring information to and from Sweden, both as an informer to the Swedish public, but more important as a 'listener' reporting back to London about important developments observed from the legation. Peter Tennant was appointed press attaché in 1939 and at that time he had two assistant attachés working with him.

In London information coming out of intelligence activities in Sweden went into the larger arrangement of intelligence analytics and decision-making both in the different sectors and in the combined assessments in the Joint Intelligence Committee and the War Cabinet.[181]

In May 1940 the number of diplomats had increased to 26[182]: The naval sector had increased from 2 to 5 diplomats and air from 2 to 3. Tennant's press office was assigned three more assistant attachés (Parrot, Leadbitter and Montagu Evans) bringing them up to 5 diplomats, among them C C Parrott who became the head of the Reading Bureau.[183] The Press department became the largest in the legation and eventually moved to Linnégatan. And G A Urquhart was attaché for the administrative office on the same floor as the minister.[184] In October 1940 the number of diplomats at the legation is approximately the same and profiled persons as naval attaché Henry Denham and assistant military attaché Malcolm Munthe had joined the legation.[185]

In 1940, the agency for special operations was established, Special Operations Executive (SOE). This was largely a spin-off from Secret Intelligence Service, which from 1938 had its own Section D for special operations, a reorganisation and not a new function. It will be outside of this thesis to go into the details of this reorganisation, but it should be noted that even though there were several causes, what happened in Sweden for the secret services in 1939 and into

[181] It would be of interest how much of the Swedish intelligence that was taken into account in the work of the Joint Intelligence Committee but that will be outside the scope of this thesis. The detailed information and background documents for the work of JIC is not preserved, ref Goodman, *The Official History of the Joint Intelligence Committee*.(2014)

[182] One of the diplomats was Charles Jocelyn Hambro, the British banker, later to become head of Scandinavian Section in SOE and the head of SOE. He was assigned by letter 13th April 1940, a note that he and his wife were living at Karlavägen 57 by 6th May, and released by letter 20th August 1940, ref Swedish Foreign Office correspondence, Swedish National Archives P330 1920 Dossier System.

[183] Parrott was assistant press attaché in Oslo before the war and had worked with Tennant in the Ministry of Information in London.

[184] Tennant, *Touchlines of War*, p 50.

[185] The Swedish Foreign Office was informed about Munthe May 28, was appointed in writing June 9 1940 and further informed that Munthe was promoted Major August 20 1940. Notification of H M Denham was sent April 18 1940 and that he had arrived June 14. Swedish National Archives P330.

1940 was one of the arguments in London for creating SOE. Churchill personally agreed that MI6 did not seem to handle special operations adequately, referring especially to the lack of results obtained in iron ore special operations in Sweden.

One year later the number of diplomats is stable, and Ronald Turnbull is new assistant press attaché and also H L Carr appears as head of British secret services in Finland. And at the very end of the time period for this thesis Tommy Nielsen was responsible for SOE in Norway after Munthe, and Roger Hinks secretly joined the SOE team at the legation set in by the Foreign Office after a long discussion in London about the organisation of the Stockholm office.

The British legation was located in the beginning with the residence of the minister in Laboratoriegatan 8, right by the waterside. Then before the war most of the office moved to Strandvägen 82, today Nobelgatan 19, 200 yards from the residence. The passport control offices were located closer to the centre of the city in Birger Jarlsgatan 12 (where also Martin lived on the third floor). George Binney and Bill Waring running the operations to get through the German blockade at sea, worked from the residence which also had the wireless communication centre in the addict.[186]

The main tool in Stockholm was to use the general intelligence system through the Passport Office and the Embassy's diplomatic resources. A large production of daily reports were sent to the UK either as telegram or via diplomatic post. A diplomatic instrument was the overall networking and contact establishments in Sweden. The British diplomats, who were profiled and popular, had 'wine and dine' as a way of working. For example, the Navy Attaché Henry Denham lunched every month with the head of the Swedish military intelligence (C-bureau).[187]

New activities were introduced at the legation in 1939-1941: Section D, Special Operations Executive, The Press Reading Bureau and the Stockholm Route. The first two will be discussed in the following chapters, the latter two here in the following.

6.1 Press Reading Bureau

Press Reading Bureaus were set up in Berne, Istanbul, Lisbon, Madrid, and the largest in Stockholm. The Bureau reported on open sources media content which put together in a systematic way can give significant insight in the developments in enemy, enemy occupied countries and in neutral countries. The Stockholm Bureau organised 24 September 1940, was

[186] Tennant, *Touchlines of War*, p 49-59. Ref the Stockholm diplomatic list 1938-1942.

[187] The Norwegian delegation in Stockholm also entered into cooperation with the C-bureau. These contacts resulted in the British through the navy attaché receiving information about the Bismarck warship in Kattegat on 20 May 1941, a crucial intelligence that led to the ship could be sunk a week later outside of France.

led by attaché Cecil Parrott and focused on newspapers as a backup for Switzerland as the most important place for reading German newspapers. In addition, they read newspapers from 15 countries, among them Norway, Denmark, Sweden, the German protectorate Czech, Poland, the Soviet Union, Holland and Belgium. In November 1940 they were also instructed from the Foreign Office to read German medical and chemical periodicals focusing on health issues. In addition, they were instructed to read provincial press in the northern part of Germany all the way from Emden to Danzig. Parrott was also asked by London for information based on private resources in Stockholm and more focus on economic and military information. By the end of the period studied in this thesis, late 1941, there were 31 employees in the Stockholm Reading Bureau. The unit worked daily, receiving newspapers in the morning and finishing of report to London in the evening the same day.[188]

When Parrott visited London late summer 1941, he learned that the reports were well received especially in the Foreign Office (the Political Intelligence Department (PID)) and the propaganda unit Electra House. They reported that the Stockholm reports about Balkan were better than the ones they got from Istanbul. The War Office was also very pleased by the daily reports, inter alia the reports from Poland and eastern Germany. In Admiralty and in the Air Ministry the reception was more mixed. One challenge was that PID did not so well distribute the reports to other consumers of intelligence in ministries and agencies. The demand for this type information kept increasing and by the summer of 1943 there 59 employed from 15 different nations. There were some very qualified readers such as professors and a former minister from Hungary. The Swedish Secret Police followed was going on without ever really interfering also after the Bureau hired a Swedish reader. The Russians with a staff of 25 and the Americans with a staff of 15 set up their own reading services in Stockholm.[189] News in Sweden about British special operations in the form of arrests and court cases were also featured in the Swedish press. Parts of the Swedish press were also strongly critical of Germany, for example, Gothenburg Trade and Maritime Newspaper.

The Stockholm Reading Bureau was a significant success according to the good reception the reports received and to the growth of the unit. Open source intelligence can play a very important part in building an overall picture of what is going politically, military and in the

[188] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 103.
[189] Ibid., p 102-06. McKay refers to memoranda from Parrot of October 9 1941 and from Mallet of October 16 1941 both in the file FO 371/29669 Public Records Office, National Archives, London, Foreign Press Reading Bureau. Code 42 file 111

public. The Bureau was never hassled by the Swedes and this was also a significant achievement.

6.2 Stockholm Route

During the war there was civilian air traffic from Sweden to Great Britain, to Germany and other countries. The most interesting for the British Secret Service were the flights between Bromma and Leuchars in Scotland.[190] Right after the invasion of Norway and Denmark with the German and British blockades of Sweden, it took some time to establish a regular route. From 1941 this route functioned relatively well with both British and Norwegian planes. During the war six of these planes were shot down by the Germans. For the most part it was regular flights for 6-8 passenger on each flight. A large number of people wanted to fly to Scotland, and a tight screening system had to be set up. When the Soviet Union was invaded in June 1941, the route to Scotland was the only way to get to Britain. The secret services decided to a large extent who could be passengers on these flights. Many made request to fly or were recommended by London or the different British interests in Scandinavia. Ronald Turnbull (SOE) became the coordinator of these decisions in the legation in Stockholm, a responsibility he had throughout the war. From 1941 the route was served by two British planes and two Norwegian planes, both under the BOAC licence to fly on Bromma. In addition, occasionally a military Mosquito was used. In addition, these planes also carried cargo, especially special industry products such as roller bearings, and also diplomatic mail.[191] The successful Stockholm route was an important task for the British secret services in Sweden.

6.3 Diplomatic Culture and Matrix Organisation

Most of the intelligence during the war had a military purpose, but some people were especially designated to such intelligence reporting to the military services in London, namely the three service attachés at the legation in Stockholm. Working within the legation meant that formally the diplomats reported to the Foreign Office. Since the 1921 arrangement were established for better communication and contact with the users of intelligence, this was a setup for a matrix organisation. The most important line of communication for these attachés was to the service headquarters in London. The local management (the minister) role would be to lubricate these working processes and cooperation, but with less authority than in a traditional line organisation

[190] TNA HS 2/257 Air Service contains documents of the Stockholm route in 1940 on. In the Cabinet meeting 17. March 1941 it was decided to dedicate a B54 plane, ref CAB 65-18 29(41) Item 6 p 153.
[191] Nils Mathisrud, *The Stockholm Run - Air Transport between Britain and Sweden During Wwii* (Stratus, Poland, for Mushroom Model Publications, 2015).

and was often less informed about the detailed work in each sector. The Foreign Office in London tried to keep track of what was going on the central level, but also here the challenge was the coordination between many agencies, ministries, offices and individuals.

The notion of a matrix organisation is not adaptable in full scale since the organisation on the central level is also fragmented, although one can argue that the Foreign Office was in some sort of central control at least as management. So maybe it is more correct to call it a composite matrix organisation.

When the 1921 arrangement was discussed in a previous chapter it was difficult to conclude firmly about the real functioning of the central intelligence organisation in London. The servants the agencies 'gave to' to SIS had one foot there and one foot in their mother agency. When the local organisation and working methods in Stockholm is hooked up to this central organisation, it is difficult to see clearly the lines of report. For instance, when one of the service attachés communicated with his mother agency, such as the Admiralty, we know that the physical contact had to go through the Foreign Office communication centre in Westminster, but the question is how it was distributed from there. Did it go to SIS office for the Admiralty (Section III) or did it go straight to the Admiralty, or did everybody get a copy?

The point is that a matrix organisation cannot be controlled and commanded in a traditional line management way. A matrix organisation requires cooperation horizontally and a manager that can support a flatter type of organisation. This was the challenge for the Foreign Office in London and the minister in Stockholm since they tried to control the work in a traditional line way when there was a strong need to understand the way a matrix composite structure can work at its best.

By working such an organisation one can hope to release talent and resources so that objectives can be met in a more effective way. And it would most likely be easier to adapt to changing circumstances which was the case in Stockholm. Then it is also possible to deliver value across the 'silos' and manage when the environment is more complex and interconnected. To get a matrix organisation to work well, the local management must be active promoting cooperation within the local organisation, trying to please all and not insisting on the authority of the local line management.

The way of operating secret intelligence service can make a matrix organisation difficult or sometimes even impossible. Intelligence officers (and almost everyone at the legation had such a role one way or the other) are trained according to 'need to know', making barriers using cut-outs and in all areas of work to keep documentation and tracks as limited as possible. Henry Denham in his memoirs says that 'none of us knew precisely what the other did' and 'we all

worked in watertight compartments'.[192] Denham even states that he had little in common with the two other military attachés for Air and Army. Peter Tennant did not know before very late in the war that one of his closest colleague's work was to be a controller of the SOE in Stockholm on behalf of the Foreign Office[193] and referring to the station head for SIS that the others did not ask 'any questions or knowing the answers'.[194] In such circumstances working together at the legation was very difficult. On the other hand, the local management could themselves then play a 'cut-out' role being the link between different groups at the legation ensuring that secrecy was kept. Peter Tennant describes the way of operating at the legation as: '*The general impression one had was that the individuals in the different departments of the Legation fought the war in their own ways with a certain amount of inter-service rivalry, rivalry between professional diplomats and the army of amateurs and between SOE and MI6*'[195]

The head of station for SIS (the PCO officer) with the staff reporting directly to him (and with the connected agents and informants) reported to the SIS in London. Since SIS, although an independent agency, was connected to the Foreign Office, it should have been easier to work within the legation compared with other areas of intelligence. There is no documentation about how SIS in Stockholm worked with the local management compared with the other areas of intelligence. SOE in London was an agency reporting to the Ministry of Economic Warfare which meant a more traditional matrix role. The same goes for the service attachés.

In the literature and the documentation on the British legation in Stockholm there is no findings of the minister playing an active coordinating role. Rather the opposite in the sense that when there was trouble in different areas of the legation, the minister was little informed and placed heavy critic downwards. And he in a very traditional way from organisational theory point of view complained about his own local staff and organisation upwards to the Foreign Office.[196] He was not able to handle and find solutions to conflicts within his own organisation such as SIS and SOE. The chargé d'affaires (first secretary) Montagu-Pollock role was to coordinate and lubricate and one can see this in the discussion about the SOE organisation in late 1941, but there is no documentation about him doing any specific coordination. There is no indication of team meetings on a weekly basis at the legation. The discussion about SOE late 1941 was for the Foreign Office and the local management to get control over SOE.

[192] Henry Denham, *Inside the Nazi Ring a Naval Attache in Sweden 1940-1945* (London: John Murray Ltd, 1984), p 26.
[193] Tennant, *Touchlines of War*, p 55. After the war Tennant understood the role of Roger Hinks.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid., p 58-59.
[196] Ibid., p 57.

The result was complaints about the lack of coordination. The worst example of this was when PCO John Martin did not inform Section D about the spies within the Section D organisation under Alfred Rickman. John Martin got away with his negative attitude towards others at the legation especially special operations in Section D and SOE.

The documentation indicates that Malcolm Munthe, SOE responsible for Norway, worked very independently at the legation (but in close contact with London). When Munthe got into trouble, the minister was upset.[197] There were several examples of the staff keeping actively information away from the minister. For instance, the explosives for the Section D work were stored with the help of the military attaché without telling the minister. And the minister did not know anything about the Oxelösund sabotage plan where 'he had not been informed either by London or his Military Attaché'.[198] The same goes for a lot of the problems that SOE and Malcolm Munthe got into for instance in the Barbara Operation that the minister did not know about before he was called to the Swedish Foreign Office to be notified about the Swedish concerns.

The diplomatic culture was conservative and characterised by careful approaches. This culture could easily come into conflict with saboteurs and other more active approaches. Typically, the minister was in favour of the 'silent' way of working. The coordination challenges were reinforced by the fact that intelligence was mainly conducted as an information collection, while the analysis took place at government level and high military level in London. Different ministries and agencies had request for information and even instructed MI6. One area of interest in this thesis is to look into if the intended system of cooperation and coordination based in London also was reflected on the field level, in Stockholm.

It took time to build the organisation and the immediate results were not good everywhere. Especially in Sweden, the development was demanding with problems both before and after the war started. When the start-problems were over late 1941, the British organisation and the resistance movement in Norway had become so well-functioning, that the special operations took place essentially in direct dialogue between the UK and the contacts in Norwegian. The most important contribution from Stockholm in the second half of the war in the case of special operations, was the so-called Stockholm route (flight connection to Scotland). However, in terms of general intelligence and espionage, Stockholm had an active role throughout the war.

[197] TNA FO 371/29408 Mallet even suggested that SOE-work could be taken over by Martin, which was completely unrealistic and questions Mallet judgement
[198] Tennant, *Touchlines of War*, p 57.

7 British General and Naval Intelligence in Action

In this and the following two chapters, the focus is to study specific operations and how it functioned in Sweden regarding the research questions of Chapter 1.

7.1 General Intelligence

Secret Intelligence Service had a station in Stockholm from World War I.[199] In the 1930's the British interest in Sweden moved more towards Germany from the previous interest in the Soviet Union. The Swedish Military Intelligence wanted to share information about the Soviet Union but had less to share about Germany. In October 1937 John Martin became head of station for SIS and leader of the Passport Control Office.[200] He worked on recruiting British and Swedes, especially from the business community, that had contact and networks in Germany. He had also links to Norway looking for potential agents and informants.[201]

SIS had a minimal operation in Norway during the interwar years and until 1938 there had not been a full-time representative.[202] Until 1939 Oslo had been a substation to Stockholm, but during the summer that year became an independent station with J B Newill as head, waiting for Frank Foley to be transferred from Berlin in September. Foley in Oslo had general responsibility for the whole of Scandinavia especially working with his well-established contacts in Germany and potential travellers to and from Germany. The instruction to Foley was also to work with Norwegians cryptographers familiar with German (and Russian) diplomatic, naval and military codes, and to put them in contact with the GC&CS in London.[203] With the German invasion 9 April 1940 Foley had to leave Oslo and back in London (with Newill as section head) was put in charge of operations in Scandinavia, the Netherlands, Belgium and those involving de Gaulle's Free French Movement. [204]

In April 1940 many agents and informants in the SIS Section D team led by A D Rickman were arrested. John Martin was very critically of Section D's performance and complained

[199] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 174.
[200] Ibid., p 378. He was station head till December 1942 when he was replaced as Passport Control Officer by Cyril Cheshire.
[201] Ibid., p 278.
[202] Ibid., p 279.
[203] Ibid., p 373. This was presumably people like Roscher Lund that became quite important in the Norwegian legation in Stockholm later. Lesley Mitchell and Margaret Reid worked with Foley. Mitchell came from the legation in Stockholm, became in charge of SIS/SOE on Shetland late 1940 and station head in Copenhagen in 1945.
[204] Ibid., p 374. In the following period there were also challenges of coordination between SIS and SOE both eager to establish operations in Norway. SIS put in two large groups of agents from Shetland in September (Skylark A and Skylark B)

that they made his work a lot harder, and when Millar was arrested in March 1941, connected to the SOE operation Barbara, Martin complained again directly to 'C', Stewart Menzies in MI6. John Martin became very critical of special operations both in SIS and SOE, and the relations between the traditional intelligence work in SIS and special operations were at its worst in Stockholm in this period.[205] The outbreak of war in Scandinavia turned the Stockholm SIS station into focus. John Martin had at this time not more than 10 agents that he could use. Some of these were arrested in the beginning of 1940 and sentenced to imprisonment from eight to fifteen months.[206] Additional staff was sent in and sub-stations in Malmö and Göteborg opened. John Martin's staff worked with Danish and Swedish cases and was also involved in Norwegian intelligence operations and Harry Carr, stationed in Stockholm after the second war in Finland, took care of Finnish and Baltic cases.[207]

The Admiralty as an important consumer of intelligence, had in late 1939 many requests that were of interest to SIS in Sweden: Intelligence about traffic around Germans ports, movements in 'the Belts and Sound', along the coast of Norway, Sweden and Denmark, the movements of large German warships under construction (for instance Bismarck), the readiness of the German fleet as such, submarines and mines. It was SIS that supposedly should deliver this intelligence, and observations from Sweden were certainly of vital interest.[208] The iron ore question was also connected to naval intelligence, not as an object for sabotage, but as of interest to know how much iron ore the German imported from Sweden watching ship traffic. John Martin had worked on setting up a network to watch marine traffic in Swedish harbours in the last part of 1939 for instance in Oxelösund where a shipbroker supplied information about the iron ore traffic.[209]This network was blown when five in that network were arrested in January 1940 including Martin's contact Donald Beach.[210] The broker was arrested January 13, 1940 and another arrested 1 February. The traditional intelligence overlapped with Section D and partly with naval intelligence, and it is not easily seen in the documentation that this was coordinated and agreed upon.

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[205] Ibid., p 377. The problems of special operations in Sweden indeed was one of the factors leading to the creation of SOE in the summer of 1940

[206] Ibid., p 376.

[207] The Norwegian operations included from November 1941 involved scientist with knowledge about the German atomic program.

[208] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 335-36.

[209] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 115-16.

[210] Arrest number 14: Sandler Commission 1946: F4:1-3 Arrests Security Police 1940-1941 Riksarkivet Stockholm, 370 pages.

In 1939 SIS reconnaissance of the Norwegian coast line was completed by using sailing yachts and crew from the Royal Cruising Club updating charts and looking for road connections and harbours.[211]

All intelligence is information. Whether information also is intelligence depends on how, and from where it is collected, how it is regarded when it is transmitted, whether it is a problem that the enemy or counterintelligence get access to the information and how it is used of the consumers and analysts of intelligence. If the information is regarded as secret by law by the initial holder of that information, we will normally think of it as intelligence. But also acquiring open information could be illegal as it was in Sweden by law if it was collected systematically for the purpose of foreign interest. Sweden's penalty law regarded any action, including the collection of open information, that possibly could hurt the friendly relations with other countries, as illegal and punishable. During war, more information becomes intelligence and secret because of the possible consequences if that information, acquired and held by the British, would have been revealed. It is a main task for diplomats of any country at any time to report back to their home country relevant information from the position they are located at, and in the case of war time this becomes of vital importance. All archive documents or files used in this thesis is stamped secret or top (most) secret. The conclusion is that most work, at least all the reporting to London, at the British legation in Stockholm was intelligence for the purpose of British foreign policy and winning the war. This was the case for specific intelligence, but also from more analytic political reporting from the minister and the top level of diplomats. The minister Victor Mallet had contacts on top-level of Swedish government and his transmission of information followed by analysis must have been regarded intelligence of high interest in London.

The work of the press attaché Peter Tennant and his staff often dealt with open information that became intelligence when it was systematically put together and analysed. The weekly reports from Peter Tennant to London appears in the secret files among other intelligence documents. And the Press Reading Bureau that only dealt with open information, organised from nothing to up to 50 people, was regarded by the intelligence units in London as valuable when it was asked for feedback in 1941. It gets even more mixed up when Peter Tennant had a double role since he also was SOE, responsible for Sweden and Germany.

[211] W. J. M. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of Soe: The Special Operations Executive, 1940-1945* (London: St Ermin's, 2000), p 21.

All the documentation used in this thesis was classified as secret, or most secret, and will be called intelligence, and not information.

All diplomats, attachés and other employees were working on intelligence, ref for instance the ministers and the press attachés stream of reports to London.[212] It is therefore difficult to understand the exact role of John Martin. In fact, we don't know much about John Martin beside that he was in charge of the Passport Control Office. Keith Jeffery[213] is the only one who have had wide access to SIS files, and he refers to Sweden in a few sentences on seven places in his book. According to Jeffery, Martin in the beginning tried to recruit 'Britons and Swedes with business connections with Germany' (p 278), 'Martin had no more than ten regular agents' in 1939 (p 376), 'Rickman demoralised Martin's most important single Swedish source' (p 377) and 'Martin worked with Swedish and Danish case, and assisted with Norwegian operations' (377). In February 1942 Martin was directly criticised by Menzies for lack of intelligence from first-hand sources in North Germany, German Baltic ports and Denmark (p 377) and Jeffery writes 'Martin continues to have problems...' (p 378) and finally refers to that Martin's successor Cyril Cheshire 'expanded and developed the work' (p 512). The above is all Jeffery refers to regarding Martin and the conclusion must be that Martin, and thereby SIS represented with PCO, could not have had a major position in British intelligence in Sweden.[214]

7.2 Naval Intelligence

Most of the intelligence during the war had a military purpose, and the three service attachés at the legation in Stockholm[215] were especially designated to such intelligence reporting to the military services in London. This military intelligence is the traditional 'quiet' work collecting information of interest to London. It is not 'noisy' special operations but gathering of information (spying) through open and secret sources using informants inside Swedish government, the other legations, among all the refugees or setting up dedicated networks of people. The traditional land-based military intelligence focused on Swedish capabilities, the

[212] TNA FO 371/24860 General Correspondence Sweden. Report 11 October 1940 Minutes from meeting between Mallet, Boheman, Charles Hambro and Marcus Wallenberg, presumably in Stockholm, where Boheman underlined the basic positive Swedish attitude towards Britain, the disappointment of lacking British assistance and the need for imports from Britain.

[213] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*.

[214] Since so little archive documentation is available about SIS, one must be careful not to underestimate or to overestimate the significance compared with the right conclusion. My conclusion of not so significant should therefore be studied more careful using all available sources to compensate for the SIS archives not being available.

[215] All three were active, for instance the air attaché regularly kept track of all air fields in Sweden, ref TNA AIR 40/1260.

transit traffic and troop movements in Norway. The air intelligence is not in-depth documented at the legation in Stockholm but it is known that it has regularly reported to London about Swedish airfields and capabilities.[216] In this thesis I will focus on the naval intelligence in the period 1939 to 1941.

Henry Denham was Naval Attaché in Stockholm during the whole war. He came from the position as naval attaché in Copenhagen, was first assistant attaché in Stockholm and then attaché.[217] When the new naval attaché, Henry Denham, arrived in Stockholm 8 June 1940, the attitude among many was that the war was soon over. And Denham found out that he had problems establishing his network of informants combatting Germany. He was looking for both enemy intelligence that either were of long-term significance or of immediate operational value. The first was about patiently collecting information, mostly by written sources, and writing reports to London. The other, operational intelligence needed personal contacts that on the minute could be used. And Denham used many sources like Danish and Dutch contacts in Stockholm, and the most important was his very close contact with the Norwegian Alfred Roscher Lund in the Norwegian delegation who had excellent contacts in the Swedish Military intelligence. Denham was able to receive reports on warships and ships movements from Swedish naval intelligence through Roscher Lund twice a week at night giving them back the next morning. A lot of this information was very accurate operational intelligence given by Swedish captains visiting German harbours.[218] This was the network that was used for the Bismarck intelligence 20 May 1941. The Swedish secret (military) service had access to all telegram correspondence on German military movements in Norway and through Roscher Lund the British had access some of this information.[219]

In the intelligence system Denham was partly in the SIS organisation reporting via the Foreign Office, but for the most part directly reporting to the Admiralty in London and also getting instructions from that service.[220] Naval intelligence was of very high priority for the British with the legation in Stockholm strategically located overseeing the German naval traffic especially from their harbours and activities on the eastern side of Denmark. The Kiel Kanal also connected the harbours of Bremen and Hamburg to the east side. Since it was an advantage

[216] TNA AIR 40/1260
[217] Denham, *Inside the Nazi Ring a Naval Attache in Sweden 1940-1945*.
[218] Ibid, File page 74
[219] Denham had from 1941 also access to German plans on attacking Artic convoys and had also accurate information both from British and German side on the sinkings. Then they could compare with the German telegrams back to Berlin and what Goebbels said about it the following day. Ref ADM 223/464 file page 81.
[220] TNA ADM 223/464 file page 172, documents the intense regular reporting on a daily basis for Henry Denham to London.

to sail in lieu of Denmark through the Sound and Belts, Stockholm became even more important. Of the three services it was the naval intelligence that was of the most concern in London and therefore became the most interesting area in Stockholm.[221] Denham was one of the most successful on intelligence out of the Stockholm legation.

Denham was involved in several specific events:

- The sailing of Bismarck and Prinz Eugen from Kiel in May 1941
- The move of Tirpitz and other German warships against Russian convoy
- The closing of the Falsterbo Canal
- The breakout of the group of ships blockaded on the Swedish west coast
- Information about rocket weapons in Travemünde
- Organising intelligence from Norway

Some of this information was passed on from the Admiralty to the Joint Planning Committee.[222]

It was Swedish pressure on Denham to be removed from Stockholm because of his espionage activities and also as a possible exchange with the Swedish naval attaché in London. Denham's main contact in London was Rear-Admiral John Godfrey, Director of Naval Intelligence in the Admiralty. Denham in his book never refers to the SIS or the Foreign Office as a channel for him. SIS had an office in 1939 called Section III ADNI Navy which was a so-called circulating office, i.e. the contact office with the Admiralty. This office that also had one foot in the Admiralty itself. In addition, they had an office that was the channel to Sweden, a so-called G-office, G-8 (for Sweden, Finland and USSR). This G-office turned in 1942 into an office for Scandinavia, by then P9[223]. According to the set-up, telegrams and operational contact with Sweden in naval intelligence went through the G-office that sent over communications to the office Section III that handled the information on behalf of the Admiralty. Where to distribute further would have been up to Section III, first inside the intelligence department of Admiralty. One would imagine that it would be John Godfrey that decided to send information upwards inside the Admiralty, or to the operational units in the Admiralty and possibly to the Joint Planning Committee and to the secretariat for the Joint Intelligence Committee. In Denham's memoirs he writes about 'keeping our Admiralty in London informed' and in 1942 about 'much

[221] TNA ADM 223/464 covers historic documentation and summaries of the naval intelligence 1939-1942
[222] Denham, *Inside the Nazi Ring a Naval Attache in Sweden 1940-1945*, Introduction by Ludovic Kennedy p xiii and xiv.
[223] Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*.

detail being available from Norwegian, German and Finnish reports enabled us to draft a comprehensive signal to Admiralty'.[224]

John Denham established contact with the naval attachés and other staff in other legations in Stockholm, not only with Alfred Roscher Lund at the Norwegian legation. Denham's approach to his work was to build up networks in many directions and take part in social occasions. Maybe the most important contact Denham had was Carl Petersén, head of Swedish Military Intelligence (C-Bureau) with whom from 1942 he had lunch with once a month.

20 May 1941 Denham received information[225] about the sailing of Bismarck and Prinz Eugen on a north-west course in Kattegat outside Gothenburg. He passed this information on to Admiralty the same day and one week later Bismarck was sunk west of France. This information came from the Swedish cruiser Gotland that spotted these two ships. The information went to the Swedish Admiralty in Stockholm and there Roscher Lund had an informant (Major Petersén in Secret Military Intelligence). This information came to London through the network Denham (and others) had built in Stockholm, by active effort of Denham, and by the Norwegian interest to hit the German navy.

Another naval operation, 'Rubble', led by George Binney was a success when five ships held back by the German blockade left Sweden and got to England with a large load of special steel and roller bearings.[226] After this, the 'safe conduct traffic'[227] was temporarily stopped from the German side. There were still ships left in Sweden, but Sweden set in additional obstacles for them.[228]

The naval attachés role in these operations was to keep good contact with the Swedish Navy and to Admiralty in London well informed so that they could continue to support these operations.

In his memoirs Denham write that intelligence from Norway was the most important and voluminous. They established some good networks in Norway as the war progressed and they were able to send many reports to London about warship movements along the coast of Norway. Sometimes these reports took quiet long time to reach Stockholm. Later direct W/T

[224] Denham, *Inside the Nazi Ring a Naval Attache in Sweden 1940-1945*, p 50.
[225] TNA ADM 223/464 file page 74 documents the process.
[226] SO2 Executive Committee 6 February 1941 (TNA HS 8/216) and 30 January 1941 (HS 8/216). Binney was assistant commercial attaché sent by Ministry of Supply in London. Operation Rubble could have been analysed in this thesis since it was a special operation and Binney not being neither SIS nor SOE, although it was done in cooperation with SOE and Charles Hambro.
[227] The sea transport through the blockade agreed with Germany.
[228] A new attempt (Operation Performance) in 1942 was not a success and ships were sunk and some returned to Sweden.

communication from Norway to England became the most common and communication from Stockholm was less important.

7.3 Reflections General Intelligence, Naval Intelligence and MI6

There is very little archive documentation of Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) that has been released. There are traces of their work in other places in ministries and services, and several have written books that touches on SIS. It is difficult to understand the operation of MI6 in Sweden. One important factor to bear in mind is that, after Germany occupied many countries in Europe, only six countries in Europe remained neutral throughout the war. Britain lost therefore most of its legations in Europe and the intelligence organisation had to withdraw back to London from these countries. This changed the whole system of British intelligence from 'safe' diplomatic representation in many countries to, at best, some secret networks in the same countries. But for the most part the intelligence staff was pulled back to London and became part of the central intelligence organisation there. Stockholm suddenly became one of the very few places with British diplomatic representation. This put a lot more focus and pressure on British secret services in Sweden which certainly made it challenging in the first two years of the war. Since it was not possible anymore to 'order' intelligence from a lot of countries, many activities were launched in Sweden, not the least since Stockholm had become a hub for espionage and refugees. [229]

The working methods of pre-war turned out to be challenged and inadequate. In Stockholm all diplomats, attachés and other staff reported intelligence, took part in the collection of intelligence or performing special operations. Military and political intelligence had to be mixed and the information needed was not only about Sweden, but about many countries in Europe. The station head for SIS, John Martin, experienced that 'everybody', in a quickly growing legation, were working on intelligence, which must have been a new situation for him.

One can assume Martin, as head of station, was authorised to collect any type of intelligence. According to McKay, John Martin worked on ship intelligence from 1939 establishing the group of Swedes to follow ship movements both generally and iron ore traffic.[230] Why did Martin work on intelligence that was clearly naval when there was at the same a naval attaché at the legation? One would think that according to the 1921 arrangement

[229] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 370 76.
[230][230] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 115-16 when J R Poland was naval attaché.

and a matrix organisation, Martin was the coordinator of all intelligence at the legation. Maybe this was the case in low-activity peace-time, but it was challenged in war-time.

Martin, with his 'quiet' work, was the minister's favourite[231]. He was the one that was the least likely to be caught by the Swedish Security Police, to the contrary of special operations agents. The attachés were somewhere in between since they also worked on operational intelligence that more easily could be discovered.

The naval intelligence was probably the most interesting military intelligence that came out of Sweden. As it was stated in a report: *'... a steady stream of intelligence, telling of troop and ship movements, ice formation in the Baltic, the construction and repair of warships, the building if roads and railways, fishing vessels, minefields, coast defences, labour, food fuel, sabotage, propaganda and morale. All this from Scandinavia itself; and, at the same time, a flood of information from every country in Europe had to find its way to Naval Intelligence Department in London. through Stockholm.*'[232]

Henry Denham used the same methods as John Martin.[233] The best for them could have been to cooperate, but that was not Martin's intention. John Martin followed the traditional line of reporting to London and letting them put intelligence from different sources together there (and not in Stockholm). Denham on the other hand thought that he should have access to Martin's clandestine networks and that it was not the task of the Naval Intelligence Department to appoint and employ agents. Because of the lack of cooperation from Martin, Denham had to use the methods of MI6 and also risk crossing Martin's lines. Martin thought it would be very risky for him to work with the naval attaché and that the only task he and his agents had were to report to London. Denham meant that if they worked together, they could send home a better report, but the view of SIS was that there were so many other sources that were collected in London that this could reduce the quality of the complete information to be evaluated in London. Referring to the complete British intelligence system discussed in Chapter 3, it seems that it was Martin that followed the principle way of working with MI6 as a system of collection according to orders from London. But the question is whether this was adequate during the tremendous pressure of wartime intelligence work in Stockholm. As we will discuss in the next chapter Martin followed the same line protecting his own sources

[231] TNA FO 371/29408
[232] TNA ADM 223/464 History of naval intelligence, chapter IV, file page 66. N.I.D. Naval Intelligence Department in the Admiralty in London.
[233] TNA ADM 223/464 file page 255-256 marked top secret, addressing the lack of cooperation between Martin and Denham.

working with special operations in Section D and later in SOE to the price of arrests and imprisonment of a large number of agents.

According to the 1921 arrangement and the organisation of MI6 in 1940 one would think that Denham would report to London through the Circulation Section III Naval Intelligence in MI6, keeping the 'production' line of Martin and the Scandinavian section (G8) in MI6 informed.[234] It cannot be concluded from the sources of this thesis that Henry Denham reported through MI6, rather to the contrary it seems that he had direct contact with the Admiralty for instance in the Bismarck case. On the other hand, reports and telegrams from Denham went through the Foreign Office communication centre, with distribution from there. The sources used in this thesis does not give any indication on whether the document went to the production section in MI6, the distribution sections of MI6, directly to Admiralty or whether the Foreign Office kept a copy. What is known is that The National Archive documentation on naval intelligence used in this thesis is located in the files of the Admiralty.

Comparing the general intelligence of the station head of MI6 and the naval intelligence in Stockholm, although some of the working methods were the same, there were not much cooperation. Naval intelligence was very active and providing a lot of different kinds of intelligence to London. The general intelligence work by the diplomatic management at the legation and the press attaché was substantial with a very large number of reports often on daily basis. It cannot be concluded about the MI6's representative work and results based on the sources of this thesis. John Martin could have worked on the same type of intelligence as the service attachés, Section D and SOE, the press attaché and the professional diplomats. It may seem that Martin could have been redundant, but this is not possible to verify since the documentation about Martin is not available. What can be concluded is that there were at least 15-20 persons at the legation that worked on intelligence that also could have been done by John Martin. The standard procedures of intelligence made PCO the centre of intelligence, but that did not work in Stockholm, and SIS (MI6) did not have the influence as they otherwise could have had. Maybe this explains why the Foreign Office was so dissatisfied with the activities in Stockholm.

[234] Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*, p 112.This book explains in detail the organisation of MI6 in London.

8 Section D in Sweden

8.1 Background and Organisation

Section D's head agent in Sweden Alfred Rickman[235] arrived Stockholm in this capacity July 1939. Rickman led a field organisation not formally connected with the British legation in Stockholm and the traditional British intelligence system. It followed the concept of a form of Z organisation, ref earlier chapter, and Rickman set up an organisation based on Brits, Swedes, some direct contacts in Norway and Germany and refugees from different countries. All were civilians working secretly in special operations and none of them had diplomatic status.

Alfred Rickman, 36 at the time of his recruitment by SIS, had no knowledge of clandestine activities or special operations. His background was from film making and music bands. His father recommended him to work for Section D when his acquaintance Grand asked him if he had any to suggest. Late summer 1938 SIS sent him to Sweden to build insight into the iron ore traffic[236] by writing a book about the Swedish iron ore, without himself knowing that he was working for Section D.[237] He travelled extensively in Sweden and did in fact write a book that came out in the august of 1939 with quite detailed information about the traffic set-up and how the harbours were equipped to take care of the iron ore.[238]

Rickman started out in 1939 being a regular spy involved with collecting intelligence in silent mode and, in addition, he trained on explosives and was regarded as having knowledge in that direction when he came to Sweden.[239]. He was now working for Section D and was in Sweden from July 1939 with 'cover' in regular business activities and his book about the iron ore.

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[235] The work that Rickman was involved in and that ended with his arrest and prosecution has been called the 'Rickman case' although the different operations and intelligence work he was involved in was led by the SIS and when it comes to the attempted iron ore sabotage, as one of the few operations during the war, specifically discussed on top level over a 4 month period and approved by the Prime Minister and The First Lord of the Admiralty. As I understand, it became the 'Rickman case' because that was the headline in the Swedish media and in the Swedish legal system since the Swedes did not know the organisational background of Rickman's work for SIS. Since Rickman's work ended up with his arrest, one can imagine that other parts of SIS did not want to be affiliated with his work. It is unfair to Rickman and overall completely unjustified to connect what was regular Section D operations with one specific individual employed by SIS in London. Rickman was part of an overall organisation and objectives of British intelligence. MI6 set up specific and independent networks for special operations and propaganda in several places in Europe, the Middle East and the Far East. Rickman has been connected to the Swedish iron ore issue, but in fact he mostly worked on the production and distribution of propaganda material

[236]Christopher M. Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service* (New York: Elisabeth Sifton Books, 1986), p 473. Andrew states that Grand picked both William Stephenson and Alfred Rickman for the Oxelösund operation, and Rickman is referred to at this time as a demolition expert.

[237] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 28.

[238] Published by Faber & Faber August 1939

[239] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 18.

Rickman set up a firm for importing machinery that fit his background as knowledgeable in Swedish iron ore. He was to handle metal products from the British firm Jayandeff Ltd through its Swedish subsidiary, Skandhamn. In addition, he became sales-agent for French dental products in Scandinavia which became his main profile. He acquired the dental firm through a loan from Walter Wren, a British businessman that had contact with SIS and became head of propaganda work in Section D. [240] And in Norway, Skandhamn organised a branch with Helmer Bonnevie as manager and also there with contacts in the thinned can business. [241] It was Section D that set up the business contacts for Rickman initially through Walter Wren[242] that helped him out with organising his covers in Sweden. He installed his office for the dental firm in an apartment on Nächströnsgatan, himself living in Gärdesstaden close to the legation.[243] William Stephenson, that worked as a special adviser for SIS in several countries, also helped Section D and Rickman organise their activity in Sweden.[244]

Section D's activities in Sweden were organised according to standard procedures outside the official British system at the legation. But the (technical) communication link with SIS was supposed to go through head of station for SIS John Martin with his access to the communication system, although he did not work directly on Section D's operations but tried to help out. The same was the case for the military attaché Reginald Sutton-Pratt that helped with storing explosives and recruitment of agents.[245] Section D was introduced in Sweden based on cooperation and collegiality with the official system on a fairly 'flat' basis with no top management from the legation and the local minister. As will be further discussed, that can also be said about management in London, mainly because Section D was formally part of SIS with

[240] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 53 ref fotnote 12 p 264. According to McKay, Wren drops out of the picture after this and is replaced by Ingram Fraser as Rickman's superior in Section D. Wren, Stephenson and Fraser later worked together in America and it its noteworthy that all three of them visited Sweden between the summer of 1939 and January 1940, the last two several times. Stephenson was there in June 1939, October, December and January 1940. Fraser was there august 1939, September, November (twice) and in January 1940.
[241] TNA HS 2/239, HS 2/264 and Stockholm City Archives Protocol 1940 Rickman (SE-SSA-0140-06-03) gives an overview of the organisation and persons involved.
[242] Engineer Walter Wren was a friend of Grands that became part of Section D in London from the start in 1938. He was head of propaganda in Section D, D/P responsible for Neutral Countries Propaganda and D/L Postal Censorship, ref Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 20. Ref also chapter 6 about the top organisation of Section D.
[243] Ibid., p 159.
[244] William Stephenson who after Section D arrests in Sweden became head of British Security Coordination in the US during the war (ref ibid., p 202.), played a very interesting role in the build-up of the secret services in Sweden. It has been challenging to document his formal and practical role. Stephenson had up to the war excellent networks in Sweden, for instance in Elektrolux. One of his prime contacts were Axel Johnson, one of the most influential in business and with top government contacts, that actively helped with intelligence and was ready to take active part in the Lumps Operation, ref TNA HS 2/263.
[245] Ibid., p 148.

Foreign Office in fairly good control of the coordination. Rickman had close contacts with the British legation, supplied by money from the SIS head of station John Martin also discussing his plans with the military attaché Sutton-Pratt.

The main focus for Section D in the start in Sweden was the production and distribution of propaganda material to Germany and also Sweden. Special operations worked practically in the field, and distribution of propaganda material was then suitable. The transport and storage of sabotage equipment and stay-behind equipment was also a task.

Rickman recruited agents through the British in Stockholm, pro-British Swedes and German refugees. Ernest Biggs, a British tea-importer to Sweden since 1931 seemed useful for storing equipment in his store and being talented in marketing which could be useful in propaganda work.[246] Ture Nerman was also very capable of propaganda work. Kurt Singer, a refugee, could print the propaganda material. In addition, three German social democrat refugees Arno Behrisch (PD) an experienced activist from Dresden (arriving Stockholm august 1939) and an experienced activist, the exiled publisher Gottfried Bermann-Fischer, the printer Erich Brost and one person with the code-name Dago. In Norway Helmer Bonnevie was recruited as Skandhamn's representative.[247] Rickman's secretary and active participant, later wife, was Elsa Johansson.

Rickman has in the literature been connected with the iron ore sabotage scheme for Oxelösund south of Stockholm, Operation Lumps, but they only gave him a more active role in that plan from 22 January 1940 after they had discussed it for several months.[248] Up to that point in time he worked with propaganda and only handling storage of explosives and equipment. It was mainly William Stephenson in cooperation with Fraser that planned the iron ore special operation.[249] Wren and Fraser had direct contact with Rickman on Swedish soil. Stephenson was also part of SIS focusing on Sweden with his frequent travelling to Sweden as a business-man.[250] Stephenson and Fraser jointly worked out a report on the iron ore situation and sabotage plans in January 1940 when they both were in Stockholm.[251]

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[246] Biggs was recruited initially through Sutton-Pratt who handed his credentials over to Rickman and then it was a meeting in July 1939 where also Walter Wren took part. Wren invited Biggs to London in August and there he was recruited to Section D. Biggs returned to Stockholm as Rickman's principal assistant on propaganda and got £35 a month. At that point Wren left everything to Fraser to run.
[247] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 33.
[248] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 155.
[249] In 1939 the plan in London was that Knüpken could do possible sabotage in addition to his propaganda work into Germany, but he was arrested and imprisoned in November 39, ref 8.2 Propaganda.
[250] Mackenzie, *The Secret History of Soe: The Special Operations Executive, 1940-1945*, p 19 fotnote **.
[251] TNA HS 2/263

Ingram Fraser was head of Sweden Section D/G in Section D with Gerard Holdsworth (D/G.1) as his second in command.[252] Fraser communicated directly with Rickman by letter with invisible ink. Later letters were sent in the diplomatic bag to Sutton-Pratt and transferred to Rickman through cut-outs, for instance Harry Gill who was BPs representative in Stockholm. And also, wireless communication was used. On 13 May 1940 the second cable from Sweden to Britain was cut (the first was cut a month earlier). All signal traffic thereafter had to go by radio mostly from Gothenburg Radio which were operated by Sweden and handled regular open telegrams and also enciphered communications to/from the British legation.[253]

Section D of the Secret Intelligence Service has been discussed in a previous chapter for to its overall organisation and purpose. Section D did not have an assigned person at the legation in Stockholm in 1939 and into 1940 but was run to a large extent from London directly as we will discuss further on in this chapter. John Martin was not fond of special operations and preferred the traditional intelligence work. As we discussed in a previous chapter, Section D built up its own network overseas and did not rely so much on SIS in the countries with British legations.

Rickman and others working for Section D in Sweden visited quite frequently the legation and also socialised with the diplomats. This can be seen as part of a British collegial tradition and turned out to be a risk for detection and made it easier for the Swedish counter-intelligence and surveillance.

8.2 Propaganda

The main focus of Section D's activities in Sweden in 1939 and into 1940 was the production and distribution of propaganda material into Germany, ref the involvement of Walter Wren, head of propaganda in Section D, in establishing the network for Rickman in Sweden. In May 1939 Sutton-Pratt had made enquiries to recruit people with experience in propaganda. The British citizen Ernest Biggs stepped forward with his background in advertising and having a large network in the printing and publicity industry after 16 years of residency in Sweden. Sutton-Pratt gave Rickman information about Biggs, and in July 1939 there was a meeting between Rickman, Biggs and Wren. Biggs was then invited to London where he was recruited

[252] Davies, *Mi6 and the Machinery of Spying*, p 117 and chart p 18. McKay refers to 'Scandinavian Section', but it is uncertain whether such a section existed, but according to Davies there was a G-section for Sweden and one for Norway in 1940, but possibly later. Ingram Fraser (D/G) was head of the Scandinavian Section in Section D in London. Fraser had no background in intelligence being a former advertising executive.
[253] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 63-64.

to Section D and came to Stockholm as Rickman's assistant in propaganda work.[254] At this time Ingram Fraser, head of D/G Scandinavia section in Section D, took over the follow-up responsibility for Rickman (from Wren) and helped Rickman getting in contact (through Karl Otten[255] in London) with several refugees in Stockholm from the German Social Democratic Party: Publisher Gottfried Bermann-Fischer, journalist Immanuel Birnbaum [256] and in November typograph and trade unionist Arno Behrisch. They all agreed to produce and distribute propaganda (and only later some of them were introduced to sabotage). A large number of propaganda pamphlets and letters were distributed in Germany mostly through Denmark and also some in Sweden.

The propaganda work was mostly focused on getting materials into Norway, Germany and Poland, and possibly to use in Sweden too. The plan was that Hermann Knüfken[257] that was affiliated with the International Transport Workers Federation and established as an agent already from 1936, would take care of this distribution. D/R for Germany and Austria Monty Chidson in Section D became Knüfkens contact.[258] It turned out that Knüfken was well-known to the Germans and he also had opponents in the communist part of the German refugee community. Still he came to Sweden in October 1939 with strict orders, for security reasons, not to get into direct contact with Rickman or the legation. But in November he received some very important intelligence about German battleships and also the location of German aircraft factories that he thought it was best to get in contact. When he turned up at the passport control office with a false Danish passport, looking for Martin, he was unfortunate to meet a Swedish police informant and it ended up with Knüfkens arrest in November 1939 and they sentenced him to five months of hard labour. When he was interrogated Knüfken revealed nothing about Section D and it never came out internally in Section D or at the legation that he had been betrayed at the passport control office. After the sentence[259] he was interned until 1944 when

[254] Ref Rickman's background in film and music.
[255] LEX was a group German refugees in France and Switzerland, and of the founders was the former communist Karl Otten in London. The people in these groups had been central in the communist party in German and others on the left side. This is one of many examples where refugees were involved with intelligence and special operations to harm Germany. Some of these people located in England was under surveillance by MI5 according to Atkin (Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 59.). The LEX group worked in Section D activities in several countries.
[256] Birnbaum was under postal control for several months and the Swedish Security Police had studied several of his letters to Germany, ref ibid., p 161 about a series of letters that swedish censors had read from Birnbaum starting 8 February
[257] Ibid., p 57.
[258] Section D's links with the trade unionists were, by the way, communicated by Guy Burgess to the Soviet Union as a threat to the Hitler-Stalin Pact. Ibid., p 58.
[259] TNA HS 8/216 Progress Report 21 november 1940 stating that Knüpken's case was up in the Swedish Supreme Court 22 November.

he was flown to Britain. Even Peter Tennant did not know his background when he delivered messages to Knüfken in prison.[260] Section D worked closely with the Department of Information on propaganda. Section D did also finance propaganda work by the Press Attaché Peter Tennant apparently without Tennant knowing that he was working for Section D.[261]

Martin was told about the internal Swedish informer in his own passport office from his police informer took no action because he was afraid that it would have exposed his own contact.[262]

In August 1939 Fraser visited Sweden to study the possibilities for distribution of propaganda in Germany based on the Rickman team. Fraser found his own contacts mostly with British background such as the local Reuters correspondent and he worked on finding contacts outside of Sweden to print in German. Section D produced content in London and also produced locally in Sweden by the Rickman team (Rickman, Brost, Biggs and Behrisch) [263] and Berman-Fischer cooperated. It was in this process also Kurt Singer came into the process when Behrisch made him work for the team after-hours in his printing shop.

Late 1939 Fraser asked Biggs to draw up a plan for propaganda in Sweden focusing on editors in Swedish newspapers. The need for this decreased when Peter Tennant was appointed press attaché at the legation, but when more covert propaganda in Sweden was needed, Section D (the Rickman team) was supposed to be used. There was made different information material aimed at the Swedish public.[264] Section D had also connections in Denmark late in in 1939 by Fraser and he also visited Denmark on April 7, 1940 (and he was there when the war broke out but was accepted as a diplomat and sent out by the rest of the British diplomats in Denmark).

Ture Nerman, the editor of an anti-nazi newspaper Trots Alt, was one of Biggs contacts. From December 1939 he let Section D use his printing facilities. The problem with this contact was the Trots Alt's co-editor Kurt Singer turned out to be a police informant from September 1938 on. A further problem was that John Martin knew about this through a contact he had in the Swedish police, but Martin did not reveal it before in late March 1940 when Singer had done substantial damage to the Section D team.[265]

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[260] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 152. McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 119-22.
[261] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 151. and
[262] Ibid., p 152. According to Atkin, Martin did not have much success in his work only recruiting 10 agents in Sweden and the network he had set up for surveillance of Swedish iron ore blew and his agents were arrested and sentenced in February 1940 to prison.
[263] Sandler Commission, Swedish National Archives, volumes F4:1-3 number 98
[264] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 49.
[265] TNA HS 2/261, Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 150. Agrell, *Stockholm Som Spioncentral*, p 69.

A contact in Denmark who knew a helpful Danish customs officer smuggled in to Germany up to 10000 letters a week with German stamps to distract the German mail control. By April 1940 the had distributed more than 30 000.[266] Gestapo captured some letters and they concluded that the propaganda material was too professionally made to have been made in Germany. Section D then learned that all such propaganda material should look amateurish. Rickman and Biggs wanted to suspend the printing in Sweden, but this was objected by Holdsworth and Peter Tennant. But they had to accept the amount that the Rickman team was able to produce.

From March 1940 Section D produced the Swedish magazine 'Fronten' that was funded by the Ministry of Information in London. In April the Ministry agreed on the production of pamphlets for Norway and Sweden once a week written by Section D and under the inspection of the Ministry. In return Section D funded some of
the ordinary propaganda work by the press attaché Peter Tennant in Stockholm. Tennant did not in his book about the war reveal this although he participated in meetings about it with Fraser and Holdsworth in April 1940 asking for more production including support of the so-called Friday Club to revive Aftontidningen (pro allied newspaper) with £10000 to start up.[267]

Worse was that Martin had known for 18 months that Kurt Singer was not trustworthy and being a police informant.[268] This incidence was one of the most severe for internal cooperation and collegiality in the British secret services in Sweden. Martin was in a dilemma deciding not to inform, and the consequence was partly that Section D in Sweden broke down when the agents were arrested.

8.3 Sabotage Iron Ore

It was by a special operation planned by Section D and the Cabinet in London that the Swedish iron ore in 1939 and into 1940 really came into the centre of attention both on the British and the Swedish side.

In October 1939 in London a special report in Section D about the iron ore and possible sabotage in Oxelösund was discussed.[269] They decided to start preparing explosives for a possible sabotage. Rickman was in this stage involved in the storage of the explosives and not with the actual planning of the operation. This planning was handled from London. The

[266] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 150. Rickman claimed that in January alone 43000 leaflets had been sent to Germany. When Rickman was arrested in April the police found several address lists for major cities in Germany.
[267] Ibid., p 151.
[268] TNA HS 2/263 and ibid., p 150.
[269] TNA HS 2/263 Britain had been aware of the Swedish iron ore significance for Germany for a long time.

delivery 4 November of material could be used for a lot more than in Oxelösund. The material was partly stored in Rickman's flat, in his office and in Biggs tea company in Stockholm.

Later in the autumn of 1939 and into 1940 the planning and discussions in London about a possible iron ore sabotage in Sweden went on involving top-level decision-makers and in the Cabinet itself.[270] In combination with the practical difficulties and need for local adaptions, over three and half months, January to April, there were 'go and stop' decisions from London intended to go through with the sabotage 6-7 times which led in the end to a demoralization of the people involved on the ground in Sweden. On the top level it was a continuous discussion with Churchill pressing for 'go' and Chamberlain holding back.

There were plans for sabotage in Oxelösund, in Luleå and in Narvik. Only the plans for Oxelösund made progress. Fraser discussed the matter with William Stephenson who was an expert on clandestine operations.[271] It was discussed several alternatives for bringing explosives to Stockholm and it ended sending it directly as cargo. Customs did not pay any attention to this shipment in January 1940 that was declared in the documentation as 'books'. Sutton-Pratt received the shipment without the minister knowing.

2 January 1940 COS advised again the War Cabinet that something had to be done to stop the Swedish export of iron ore to Germany.[272] Chamberlain asked the MEW representative if this would shorten the war, the answer was not clear. On the same day Churchill authorised Section D to go ahead, but when the Section asked for formal approval the next day from the prime minister the answer was 'no' because in his judgement it could hurt the relations with Sweden (which Britain at this stage tried to get to join the Allied side of the war).[273]

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[270] Desmond Morton and Winston Churchill. Debate in Cabinet 22 December 1939, ref TNA CAB 65/4 p 162

[271] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 316-17. Examples of networks outside the traditional diplomatic system and the SIS was the Z organisation (ref chapter 7 of this thesis) and also the 22000 organisation that Dick Ellis was in charge of. William Stephenson had created his own clandestine industrial intelligence organisation which he offered to the British secret services. While Stephenson was in dialogue with SIS he established his own organisation in Sweden under the umbrella The International Mining Trust (MIT). Closer link with SIS was established when Ellis had developed his 22000 organisation more. IMT was, according to Jeffery, quite useful on providing information about German armaments. Both Ellis and Stephenson were in dialogue with Fraser and Rickman discussing the plans for operations in and out of Sweden. Ref also Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 154. where it is referred to a meeting January 8 between Fraser, Ellis, Stephenson and Menzies discussing the Swedish situation. This is an indication of the persons with influence on the secret services and networks in Sweden.

[272] Cadogan and Dilks, *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan, O.M., 1938-1945*, p 241-47. Cadogan's diary can be used for control of processes, dates and meetings in addition to indicate views and decisions. Cadogan was one of the most central decision-makers in Britain and was participating in many important meetings up to and throughout the war. He was the superior to MI6 and Menzies. According to the diary Scandinavia had high attention on top-level in Britain.

[273] An overview of the decision-making process is given in TNA HS 2/263.

Fraser and Stephenson worked out a new plan dated January 8 and with a recommendation to act three weeks later, but still the Cabinet was not ready. The told Fraser to bring Stephenson home for consultation. Although Stephenson had lost confidence in the Rickman organisation, he worked out another plan that was ready 2 February. This plan involved Helmer Bonnevie that would take care of transport to Oxelösund in his Norwegian registered car. It was decided that the cranes were the prime target for the sabotage. When Rickman visited Oxelösund with Behrisch and 'Dago' on 9 February, he reported that now there were workers at the dock and an attack had to be ruled out. Rickman came up with new ideas, but the Cabinet and prime minister were still negative.[274]

5 March Churchill had a meeting with Grand to ask for update on the plans for sabotage. Churchill took the question up again directly with Chamberlain and on March 8 Section D was informed that the prime minister had authorised to go through with the sabotage.[275] This seemed to be a final central decision when Grand in Section D sent order on going forward with the sabotage to Rickman. But then there were additional problems in Stockholm when Behrisch and 'Dago'[276] became very anxious of the risk for them to be affiliated with the British secret services and pulled out of the scheme and suggested some other SDP members that could do the job. They thought it would be very problematic for German Social Democrats in Sweden if it came out that they were involved. When Holdsworth arrived in Stockholm on 16 March, the plan became that Rickman, Bonnevie and Holdsworth would do the job, but this was turned down by C. Fraser then suggested to recruit some Finns, but an offer from Sutton-Pratt to help with this recruitment was turned down by Mallet. At this frustrating time Rickman asked London again about the priority of the whole scheme and it ended up with an unclear answer from Section D.[277]

The same day 8 March London gave clearance for the operation, there was an incidence in Stockholm where Behrisch had been questioned about some money he had and that he had received from Rickman. Rickman suggested that all the fuzz in the planning process and the difficulty in getting approval in London, was the important factor behind the problems the operation at this time were facing. Behrisch suggested that they could still help but that the operation itself had to be taken care of by British personnel, which was out of the question for

[274] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 36.
[275] TNA HS 2/263 Minutes of meeting with the First Lord.
[276] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 155. 'Dago' was probably Rudolph Halbe, another member of the German Social Democratic Party.
[277] TNA HS 2/263 and TNA FO 1093/232 Letter from Hankey to Cadogan 18 December 1940: '.. the Oxelosund operation is off..'

London. Section D was frustrated when approval was given, the operation could still not go through. After the invasion of Norway started, Holdsworth flew 13 April to Stockholm to take charge.[278] They instructed him to go through with the destruction in Oxelösund if the Germans invaded Sweden.

Rickman at this point got again approval of going through with the operation, but in a meeting with Holdsworth 13 April they agreed that new military guards at the docks in Oxelösund did not make it possible. The explosives were redistributed to other possible targets. Holdsworth instructed Elsa Johansson to rent a house north of Stockholm that could be used for possible operations into Norway connected with Allied forces taking back parts of Norway.[279]

Holdsworth had also orders to work with activities in Norway when he arrived in Sweden April 13, 1940: Sabotage, establishing arms dumps and building resistance groups. Holdsworth had been in Norway in September 1939 to do preliminary investigations. After that he established relationship with E M Nilsen Moe who owned several fish canning factories, and they agreed to use Mermaid Preserving in Helgeroa for storing explosives coming in fish cans from England to await collection. At the same time Helmer Bonnevie, who was Rickman's agent in Norway for Sandhamn established an office in Oslo. Bonnevie was looking for more exciting activities and the cooperation with Rickman suited him well. Jacob Lund was chosen to be an intermediary between Sandhamn offices in Sweden and Norway.

Holdsworth instructions about Norway on 14 April when he arrived in Sweden was to prepare for a British invasion in Norway finding harbour, Norwegian contact, supplies and many other tasks. Of course, this was not possible after 20 April single-handed since the Germans in Norway quite quickly were in full control along the southern and western coast.

In April the attention was storage of the explosives. Section D ordered on 6 April the spread of the explosives on smaller dumps, and on 9 April Norway and Denmark were invaded. Fraser was then stuck in Copenhagen initially under arrest. Rickman worried about a German invasion in Sweden and on his own made another attempt to do the sabotage by finding some English aircraft mechanics on their way to England after delivering Gladiators in Finland. 11 April again received a 'go' message from Section D. Holdsworth returned to Stockholm on Saturday morning 13 April and found that the legation was preparing for a German attack and Sutton-

[278] Holdsworth who was number two in section D/G worked mostly with Norway before April 9th but was moved to Stockholm to take over the whole of Scandinavia when Germany invaded Norway. He was supposed to work on Swedish operation but also to establish resistance and sabotage in Norway. Ref Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 168. It is an interesting continuity in the plans for Norway before the war, in the intermediate period in the spring and summer of 1940, the build-up of SOE and the work of Malcolm Munthe.
[279] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 37-38.

Pratt and Martin said the whole Oxelösund plan was a 'lousy idea'.[280] Sutton-Pratt refused to give Rickman petrol for his car which lead to significant problems handling the storage of explosives and the travel to Oxelösund. And at this time 16 April an order came from Section D of a general halt in all activities in Sweden until the whole war situation was clearer. [281] After 9 April Rickman and Holdsworth were supposed to organise supply lines into Norway and planning the Norwegian resistance, but none of this happened in the aftermath of the Rickman team's arrests.[282]

The plan for the iron ore sabotage was at length discussed at the highest level in London. It was very difficult to get to a decision about when to strike, especially since Chamberlain and Churchill had different views of the project. In April time was running out for the operation and within a few days most of the people involved were arrested. In fact, the invasion of Denmark and Norway meant that the iron ore sabotage was called off. Britain needed to reflect on the situation and review their plans and objectives. A sabotage of the planned magnitude in Sweden at this time could have triggered an unbalance of high risk. This means that it was not the iron sabotage that was stopped in the next couple of weeks by the Swedish Security Police, but actually only the people involved and that would possibly be assigned to new activities. In the days after 9 April Section D instruction was only to do the sabotage if Germany attacked Sweden.[283]

8.4 Disclosure

The disclosure of the Section D team was connected to the planning of illegal action and not a completed sabotage. It was the anti-climax of many months of discussion originated at the very top-level in London. It was never the intention that Rickman would do the sabotage when he was brought into the plan in early 1940, but rather all along that German refugees would do it. When Rickman asked if British could do it, London said no. In the very end of the planning process Rickman choose three British airmen to do it, without documentation that London was aware. Still, Rickman was never supposed to actually do the sabotage personally.

[280] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 158.
[281] TNA HS 2/263
[282] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 167-78.
[283] Although the sabotage plans were again approved by London on 10 April, the following days the orders were that London would need 24 hours to approve and then, after another day, on 16 April that London required 48 hours to approve and then a PM the same day said the plans were on hold, referring to the possibility that Sweden would declare war on Britain if the Germans had accused the British of the sabotage.. TNA HS 2/263.

The Swedish Police had for some time pieces of information through their informant Kurt Singer. The postal control of Birnbaums letter naming Rickman directly, triggered the arrest of Rickman and the others and then eventually gave the police insight into what had been going on with the planned iron ore operation in Oxelösund. Through the general postage control a letter from Birnbaum to Berlin was checked and it referred to (in invisible ink) the British Alfred Rickman (director of Dental Material AB) as a potential British intelligence officer. [284]

Rickman had contact with German refugee journalist and others, especially Emmanuel Birnbaum who turned out to inform contacts in Germany about Rickman. Saturday 13 April 1940 Immanuel Birnbaum was arrested after his letters to his German friend. He confessed and gave a lot of information about the Rickman team, and it was at this point in time that the Swedish General Security Police started to understand the broader content of Section D's activities. It was after they arrested Rickman the following Friday that for the first time all the explosives that Rickman had stored were revealed.[285]

The Rickman team was on 18 April ready to take the explosives to the house Elsa Johansson had rented, but this transport was postponed for two days. Rickman was supposed to pick up two suitcases with explosives from Gill on 19 April, but Rickman did not show up and then Gill called him. Elsa Johansson, who was already arrested, took the phone and tried somehow to warn Rickman. Gill went then to Holdsworth who stored the suitcases in the legation. Both Rickman and Biggs had now been arrested (19April at 19:15 and 23:40 respectively).

Holdsworth was also arrested in the morning Saturday 20 April but released after an hour because of his diplomatic passport. When Gill was arrested 3 May, it became clear that the Swedish General Security Service had insight in the set-up and most people involved. This case became the main success story for the Swedish police during the war.

After further reconnaissance, Rickman is held together with 30 other people. Of these, 19 were released or expelled and four people were sentenced.[286] In addition, eight English aviation engineers were expelled to England.[287] The sentences were finally confirmed by the Supreme Court 23 December 1940: Rickman 8 years of hard labour for risk of hurting friendly relations with other powers and the continuity of supply to the public, Biggs 1 year for the same, Elsa Johansson 2,5 years for hurting continuity of supply and Behrisch 3,5 years for risk of hurting

[284] Documents provided for the Sandler Commission for the control of Swedish secret services during the war. Sandlerkommissionens archive volumes F4:1-3 22 persons held in custody and 9 were interned at Långmora.
[285] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 58-61.
[286] Not counting Birnbaum who was working for the Germans
[287] These engineers were actual on their way home from Finland after delivering British aircrafts to Finland.

friendly relations with other powers. Helmer Bonnevie was arrested in Oslo in August because of his contact with Rickman. Immanuel Birnbaum (working for Germany) was sentenced in Stockholm Town Court and got 8 months hard labour.[288] Gill was also arrested but got away with a fine.

The British legation became connected to Rickman after his arrest. Sutton-Pratt had been mailbox between Rickman and London, one of Sutton-Pratt's staff had helped transfer the explosives and there was a letter that connected to Fraser. Martin was also involved transferring funds to Rickman. The secret notations were revealed Rickman being D/1 and Fraser represented D/G. It was even referred to Section D in the material Rickman had.[289]

Holdsworth had problems with finding a good explanation for his stay in Sweden and in preparation for an inquiry, or possible arrest, had a plan to hook up to a new setup for a Norwegian Relief Fund that influential people were planning to establish. Holdsworth was arrested [290] for a few hours but was free to go with reference to his courier's pass. Carl Joachim Hambro heard of the arrest and went to see Günther, the Chief of Police and on to the minister Mallet. Holdsworth was summoned to the Minister and asked for an explanation for the secrecy of Holdsworth's plans for establishing the Relief Fund, since this was an open issue that many were involved with. Holdsworth said he was genuinely involved with the Fund and that he did know nothing about Hambro's approach to Swedish authorities protesting Holdsworth's arrest. After a discussion at the legation it was decided that Holdsworth should leave the country. Just after he had left for Finland on 2 May 1940 it was published in The Times that the Norwegian Relief Fund was going to be established on 17 May and Holdsworth had failed in using a position in this Fund in Sweden as a cover for his activities. Holdsworth suggested that he could return to Sweden and use his new cover, but that was rejected.[291]

Section D was incorporated into Special Operations Executive, formally from late July 1940 and, in reality, a couple of months after that. The severe problems Section D had with its Swedish operations in the first half of 1940 had as consequence that Section D was more or less out of function after the arrests and trials in the spring of 1940. In Stockholm the milestone for the change from Section D to SOE was when Head of Scandinavian Section in SOE in London, Charles Hambro, visited Stockholm in October and early November 1940, setting up the SOE

[288] Sandler Commission, Swedish National Archives, volumes F4:1-3
[289] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 61.
[290] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*. P 39-40. Sandler Commission did not have a trace of this arrest.
[291] Ibid., p 40.

structure and responsibility.[292] From that moment special operations were well grounded among the diplomats of the legation that were assigned to SOE work.

8.5 Analysis

It was the arrest 13 April of Immanuel Birnbaum (who was involved in propaganda work and not the iron ore special operation) that triggered the revelation of the Section D team. The police were not aware of the iron ore sabotage plan before they found the storage of the explosives on Friday 19 April and Saturday 20 April. Rickman had in his apartment documentation on participants and plans. In the interrogations, several in the team were open about what they knew, and they even revealed Bonnevie in Norway that led to his arrest.[293]

One factor that led to the end of the Section D organisation was Biggs contacts with Ture Nerman who was under surveillance by the General Security Police. An informant in the Swedish police warned John Martin that Biggs could be arrested, and Martin informed Rickman, but he did not take it seriously enough. Rickman did take Biggs off work but let him still visit the British legation and meet with the staff there, also socially. The police informant was surprised that Biggs had not been taken off everything since he was shadowed all the time and that he could lead the police to the others in the Section D team.

Rickman would have got into trouble anyhow because of Birnbaum's letter to a friend in Germany that was traced 13 April 1940 by the postal control of the General Security Police. The German refugee Jew Birnbaum was tried recruited by Rickman already from late 1939 (after recommendation from a German refugee in London).[294] At that time, he suggested that Erich Brost could be willing to help on the printing of propaganda. Birnbaum on invisible ink in the letter in April told about how he was approached by Rickman, main persons included in his team and also referring to the top man as 'Wilson'. This was sufficient for the revelation of the Rickman team.[295] That this was the main background for the arrests of the Rickman team is also documented by the arrest of a person by the name of William Wilson that proved totally

[292] Ref that Charles Hambro also was in Stockholm from May to August 1920 assigned as Attaché for Financial Services
[293] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 161 and p 65.
[294] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 42.
[295] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*. McKay discusses at length the case of Birnbaum, called 'Kant'. McKay discusses that Birnbaum could be an agent for Gestapo. Birnbaum stated in dialogue with Rickman that he was not a Nazi, but also that he was not a traitor. Birnbaum was sentenced to 8 months of hard labour as a German informer. It is outside of the scope of this thesis to go into detail about Birnbaums role, but the case suggests that Rickman had at least two disloyal persons close to his team (Singer being the other). Both were very important in the role up of the Section D team in Sweden.

innocent and was released after two days.[296] The revelation by the Swedish police of the Section D team came out of the propaganda work in Germany rather than the plans to sabotage the iron ore in Oxelösund. In fact, the General Security Service was very surprised when they found the explosives and discovered the iron ore sabotage plans.[297]

It was the Swedish General Security Service with its strong instruments for postal control that caused the downfall of the Section D organisation in Sweden.

Alfred Rickman and the other arrested told the police a lot about the organisation and the people and plans involved. There were several factors[298] that led to the outcome and it all started with the indecisiveness in London about the iron ore sabotage plan which exposed Rickman's team over a long period in Sweden. At crucial times of the iron ore scheme the top level in London, not the least prime minister Chamberlain, was very indecisive.

The participants were not sufficiently professional in their clandestine operations not keeping the network completely secret from the different participants in the network. Biggs attracted a lot of attention and Behrisch and 'Dago' were out at a very critical moment. Holdsworth understood that surveillance was going on, but Rickman did not fully get it (which Sutton-Pratt thought was very careless).

The team was under business cover. John Martin complained to London about their incompetence referring to 'all the hard work and time I have given up helping them'.[299] According to Martin it also hurt an important Swedish informer that hesitated after the arrest and trial of Rickman.

The Swedish Secret Police, with the legal tools at their disposal, was superior to and underestimated by the British. The Police had started systematic postal control, had set up informants connected to Section D and had started general surveillance of the legations in Stockholm. The British had also their informants and they knew about the Swedish informers, but as discussed earlier the information from these two networks were not connected and given to the Section D team.

The activities of Section D in Sweden were directed towards Germany, to some extent Sweden itself, in its propaganda work. The iron ore sabotage plan was directed towards Sweden which made it impossible to look through the fingers, that maybe was a little easier with the

[296] Sandler Commission, Swedish National Archives, volumes F4:1-3 number 97 ref Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 42.
[297] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 61.
[298] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 43.
[299] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 377.

propaganda work. The planning and execution of sabotage on Swedes soil would have been strictly illegal under any circumstance and also under traditional law. In all other plans Sweden was just the base for special operations in other countries.[300] Germany followed the development in Sweden in detail on a daily basis from the start of the war and protested on any allied activity that they disliked. The German legation in Stockholm with Abwehr did also communicate intelligence they had they felt could be positively received in the Swedish secret services. The Swedish secret services could also communicate with the Germans if they regarded that as in their interest and in their counter intelligence.

In the legation Martin and Sutton-Pratt knew quite well Rickman and what was going on since they were involved in communications and in the storage of explosives. It is fair to say that the legation did help the Section D team both through the military attaché Sutton-Pratt and the SIS head of station John Martin. The top level of the legation with Mallett and Montagu-Pollock were little informed, and it came as a surprise to Mallet the magnitude of what happened since 1939 and to April 1940.[301] Mallets superior in London, with Cadogan in the lead, knew a lot more about the plans for iron ore sabotage than the Minister. It came down to weak SIS procedures and the fragmentation (lack of coordination) of all parts of the British secret services.

SIS was in Sweden long before Section D. At the time Section D and Rickman arrived SIS was involved in traditional intelligence with John Martin as the head of station. The Section D team and the traditional SIS team had a significant amount of contact, - the documentation shows that the Section D team used the legation and the British diplomatic arrangement and that the legation helped.

One can imagine that John Martin was taken by surprise of how Section D was established in Sweden. It was the same agency that was in charge of both John Martin and Alfred Rickman, but it seems that these two 'channels' never really cooperated, and we know that John Martin was very frustrated with the Section D team's competence and how it discredited Martin's even more secrete activities.

John Martin never protected the team from Kurt Singer or from his passport officer Helm. John Martin knew for 18 months that the leak to the General Security Police in Rickman's group was Kurt Singer, but he never told Rickman because he did not want to lose his other main contact with the Swedish police. Kurt Singer was Ture Nerman's partner. There was a

[300] I will return to British alleged operations in Krylbo and Hårsfjärden in 1941,
[301] TNS FO 1093/231 Letter from Mallet to Jebb 12 May 1940

meeting between Nerman, Biggs and Fraser that Nerman told Singer about.[302] Martin's police informant heard about it from Singer and told Martin. It was not before the end of March 1940 that Martin told Rickman that Singer was police informant that helped the police connect Biggs, Nerman, Fraser and the Legation. If Martin had told Rickman about this earlier it could have led Rickman to drop Singer, Martin's police informant would then have understood that this came from Martin and that he was also implicated in the Rickman team and Martin would then have lost his valuable informant in the police. In a letter of 28 March to Rickman, Martin confirmed the severity of the matter and demanded that Biggs were taken off the activities and that Rickman did not tell anyone that Singer was working for the police.[303]

8.6 Reflections

It is evident that the the Section D team was an independent field team not inside the legation. It recruited especially German refugees as agents. The Section D team worked on propaganda and not much on iron ore sabotage that many historians have focused on. The work the team was involved in practical work and 'silent' spying, as for most of the sabotage work in SIS and later in SOE. A lot of intelligence was needed to do special operations and also a lot of intelligence came out of the operations during and after it took place. Therefore, Section D team in Sweden was mainly an intelligence and propaganda organisation. It planned for sabotage but ended up only with a couple of operations in Norway in the summer of 1940.[304]

What happened in the British secret services in Sweden in this period was quite complex and involving a number of channels of collecting intelligence, both the traditional ones and the irregular. Many individuals of several nationalities with no connection to the legation were involved. And there were several internal hostile informants for Sweden and Germany. Handling the security in such a large organisational system became a challenge.

The arrests of Section D did not stop any iron ore sabotage since it was already stopped from London. The main consequence was that it stopped any future work of the team for instance in propaganda work, but also possibly sabotage. Since Britain objectives were about to change to work with resistance in Norway (and Denmark), the Section D team could have changed its efforts to outside of Sweden. The main consequence was a possible negative effect on the activity in Norway because of the arrests in Sweden.

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[302] It was Martin who in February reported about this meeting. This was actually specific information that he received from this police contact, but Rickman thought it was only general surveillance. Ref Atkin, *Section D for Destruction*, p 150.

[303] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 41-42. TNA 2/261

[304] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 54. The team had very little competence, if any at all, in sabotage.

After the collapse of Section D in Sweden it was only possible in the short run to plan special operations in Scandinavia from Britain. At the end of Section D as part of SIS, it was set up a transport from Shetland that left for Norway 29 May loaded with explosives and arms with the aim to do sabotage in the larger Bergen area. They were able to store the equipment and returned to Shetland June 10. Five days later they returned to do the operational sabotage with success. Another attempted operation in August 1940 and the Norwegians involved were executed for espionage in Norway on August 11.

As these developments in special operations took place in the autumn and winter of 1939/40, other parts of SIS collecting intelligence worked on in Stockholm: The three services attachés, especially the naval attaché, set up their own networks. And the general reporting from the legation to London was going by the Press Attaché, the Counsellor and the Minister.

The problems of Section D in Sweden were one of the most important reasons for the creation of Special Operations Executive. Chamberlain, Churchill and other on top level in London had followed the development in Sweden closely and must have been disappointed when it ended in arrests and prosecution. But by then the World War had taken another development and Great Britain moved from Phoney War to Hot War. The iron ore and other challenges in Sweden turned not so important.

Section D in Sweden in 1939-1940 was quite successful in intelligence and propaganda. In the attempted sabotage they were in trouble, due to indecisiveness in London and an effective Swedish counterintelligence. The consequences of the arrests were limited since propaganda was about to be integrated with information work by Peter Tennant and after April 1940 it was British policy not to harm Sweden and its neutrality.

9 Special Operations Executive: Red Horse and Barbara

Malcolm Munthe 'invented' the imaginary 'Red Horse' as his superior and cut-out with the 'British High Commands'.[305]

In May 1940 the general and military intelligence based in the legation continued their work but special operations were down with broken back. In June the legation recruited new competence in special operations when Malcolm Munthe was appointed assistant military attaché, during the summer Special Operations Executive became the new platform for special operations and by the early autumn Sweden was again on the map for a wide variety of British intelligence, propaganda and special operations.

The Military Intelligence Research (MIR) was an office in the War Ministry with it's own network overseas. This organisation was active in Scandinavia in 1940.[306] Malcolm Munthe, a MIR officer, came to Stockholm 29 May 1940 and was appointed assistant military attaché 9 June 1940. He came from Norway where he had been involved with a MIR network and operations from April. They assigned him to the Stavanger area and had an adventures escape through Norway and into Sweden. Munthe had a quite relevant background from Scandinavia. His father Alex Munthe was doctor for the Swedish Royal Family, wrote the famous book 'The Story of San Michele' and had several large properties in Europe. Among them a large (summer)house in Dalarna from 1911 where Malcolm must have spent many summers growing up.[307] Malcolm Munthe certainly knew about Sweden through his father and one would think that he had some knowledge of the Swedish language along with his knowledge of French. One source says he spoke Norwegian.[308]

Malcolm Munthe graduated from London School of Economics and started in his first job 1938 in the office of General Sir Neill Malcolm, the High Commissioner for refugees in Britain. At the same time Munthe became Parliamentary Candidate for the Conservatives. He signed up for the war by volunteering at an office in Buckingham Gate where he later the summer of 1939 joined under the parent regiment The Gordon Highlanders. After a short while he was to report

[305] Malcolm author Munthe, *Sweet Is War : To Them That Know It Not*, [New] edition. ed. (1954), p 120-51.
[306] HS 8/261 and HS 8/263. The history of MI(R): Macrae, *Winston Churchill's Toyshop : The inside Story of Military Intelligence (Research)*.2010
[307] Munthe, *Sweet Is War : To Them That Know It Not*, p 188 Afterword by Barnaby Rogerson. Rogerson is not impressed by Munthe's book. Björn Fontander had an amusing meet with Munthe many years after the war when Munthe not all was willing to talk about anything about the war. He was mostly interested in a tame owl he was in the posession of. Ref Björn Fontander, *De Onda Åren : Sverige 1940-1945* (Stockholm: Carlssons, 2007), p 175-87.
[308] Interview Armand Trønnes 1989

to the War Office in London where he, together with Andrew Croft, was assigned to MIR in the autumn of 1939.[309]

Malcolm Munthe and Andrew Croft first assignment with MIR was to escort British military equipment to Finland during the last part of the Winter War that ended 13 March 1940.[310] After that at the outbreak of the German invasion in Norway he was sent to Stavanger to prepare for receiving the British forces in a counterattack (which never happened). Andrew Croft was assigned the same to Bergen. Munthe came to Sweden in a spectacular escape from Norway late May and was appointed Assistant Military Attaché 9 June in the British Legation in Stockholm, reporting to Sutton-Pratt. As a MIR agent reporting to the War Office in London, that was a perfect fit to the Military Attaché line of report. [311]

Malcolm Munthe[312] arrived in Stockholm after the invasion of Norway and after the Section D agents were arrested. Malcolm Munthe was the first professional officer at the legation with some training in special operations with his background in MIR. He was known to the Swedes police from the first day of his stay in Sweden. When he came in a small rowboat to Sweden at Svinesund 19 May 1940 he was registered by the Swedish military guard. And he was arrested 21 June 1940 by the Swedish Secret Police and released immediately because of his diplomatic status. The future strategy was unclear, but the British government realised it was best to keep Sweden out of the war and gave up on the strategy to get Sweden onto their side.[313] The focus since April had been to help resistance and do intelligence in Norway.

When Munthe arrived in Stockholm Charles Hambro was also there as attaché for financial services. Charles Hambro at that time was heading the Scandinavian office in the Ministry of Economic Warfare and worked inter alia with trade relations and trade agreements. Charles Hambro was transferred to the Scandinavian office of SOE in august 1940 [314] and until December when Harry Sporborg took over that section and Hambro was given a wider responsibility. SOE was a directorate under MEW and one would imagine Hambro had easy access to the planning process of the new organisation.

Charles Hambro was in Stockholm in October 1940 to set up the SOE organisation. Peter Tennant was assigned responsibility for Sweden and Germany, while Malcolm Munthe was

[309] Munthe, *Sweet Is War : To Them That Know It Not*, p 11-28.
[310] Ibid., p 29-49. Ref that pilots/mechanics that came to Finland also were involved in Section D in Stockholm on their way back to London.
[311] Ibid., p 50-119.
[312] The files of Malcolm Munthe by the Swedish police and foreign office are more than 250 pages (Riksarkivet P1237 1-4) and in addition several thousand pages on the Barbara court case.
[313] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 59-60; McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 41-42 and 63-64.
[314] TNA HS 2/257

assigned Norway. In addition, Ronald Turnbull would be responsible for Denmark when he arrived early 1941. This division made sense since Sweden and Germany were about propaganda work, while Norway was focusing on resistance and sabotage. Malcolm Munthe could spend all his time on SOE work towards Norway, while Peter Tennant could integrate his SOE-work with the communications he already was responsible for. After the problem of Section D, it was more focus on coordination with the other intelligence tasks at the legation, and therefore the counsellor Montagu-Pollock became more involved as overall coordinator of intelligence, special operations and other tasks at the legation and of course to make sure that the minister was better informed than in the first year of the war.[315] Still in the coming year SOE, like Section D, got into some serious trouble operating in Sweden, and the story ended with Foreign Office putting a lot of effort into achieving better control, inter alia they put in their own controller directly from London (Hinks). From the beginning of 1942 the situation was under control, fewer arrests, and no scandals.

The SOE-team in Stockholm in the beginning of the war was Tennant, Munthe and Turnbull. They were all supervised (at least formally) by Montague-Pollock from 1941. Tennant was connected to SOE through his tasks in information which connected him to propaganda work. Munthe was working on the British main objective, supporting Norwegian resistance and operations in Norway. For Denmark, Tennant helped out until Turnbull arrived in the beginning of 1941. There was not a strong single leader figure of SOE in Stockholm, but the SOE-team was supervised and instructed from London on what to do.[316]

In the same period MI6 and the service attachés continued their work. John Martin was replaced by Cyril Cheshire December 1942 and the productivity increased according to Jeffery.[317] John Martin had some major challenges in his period 1939 to 1942, also coping with the problems of Section D and SOE. At least the Minister had confidence in him when he ended his assignment.[318]

According to Munthe's memoirs he was involved in several operations during his time with the legation in Stockholm: Johnny Pevik in Trøndelag, Bergen-Oslo railway sabotage

[315] At least this was the intention ref TNA HS 2/262 PM 19 November 1941.
[316] There have been different theories of who was in charge for SOE in Sweden, but the fact was that the three in the SOE-team worked each by himself directly under supervision and leadership from London. In the Barbara file of 221 pages, there is only trace (25 times) of Munthe (4301) and no reference to Tennant (4401) or Turnbull which is a clear indication that Tennant had no responsibility in that operation in a leadership role. In a letter 5 February 1941 to Henry Hopkinson, private secretary to Alexander Cadogan, Victor Mallet wrote that Malcolm Munthe is 'Hambro's sole link with Norway', ref TNA FO 371/29408 p 38.
[317] Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 378.
[318] Ibid., p 378.

November 1940 with SOE equipment [319], help on the same railway December 1940 assisting RAF bombers, Jan Güettler[320] (courier to Norway) and the Barbara Operation. There was even a plan to assassinate Himmler when he was visiting Oslo in March 1941.

SOE in Stockholm continued the work on propaganda combined with information work of Peter Tennant. Not much happened in Denmark at least not before Ronald Turnbull came to Stockholm in 1941.[321] In addition to the general intelligence that was performed by SIS and the military intelligence performed by the attachés, Norway became the centre of attention for SOE in Stockholm under the leadership of Malcolm Munthe.

9.1 Operation Barbara

Operation Barbara (railway sabotage in Trøndelag) was one of the major special operations planned and executed by Malcolm Munthe after the SOE organisation was set up in Stockholm in November 1940. The request for this operation started with telegram from Charles Hambro (S) to Malcolm Munthe (code 4301) 13 December 1940 asking for a sabotage on the Trondheim-Storlien railway.[322] 31 December 1940 Munthe confirms that he is working on a scheme.

William Serviss Kinnear Millar[323] became Munthe's cut-out in the Barbara operation. Millar was born in Trondheim and lived before (and after) the war in central Oslo (Bogstadveien 39). In 1939 he was in contact with the British consulate in Oslo offerings his services.[324] Having a British passport and being a Norwegian working in an import business in Oslo, he could possibly have worked with the British legation in Oslo before the war. After the war he

[319] Mackenzie, *The Secret History of Soe: The Special Operations Executive, 1940-1945*, p 201.
[320] Jan Güettler and his Norwegian wife Liv worked with Munthe together with three others as couriers to/from Norway collecting intelligence from Norwegian contacts and transmitting orders from SOE. Jan and Liv Güettler were arrested 9 December 1940 and were in January sentenced to respectively 7 and 6 months prison. This triggered major complaints from the Swedes toward Victor Mallet asking for Munthe to be sent home, ref TNA FO 371/29408 Letter received 5 March 1941 from Mallet to Hopkinson. Tore Pryser explains the role of Güettler and the Norwegian Christian Acker, ref Tore Pryser, "Pm British Intelligence in Sweden (Unpublished)," (2018), unpublished.
[321] The most important agent for Denmark, Ebbe Munck, was in operation in Stokholm from July 1940. ref Jespersen, *No Small Achievement : Special Operations Executive and the Danish Resistance, 1940-1945*.
[322] TNA HS 2/207 telegram to 4301 asking for sabotage on the Trondheim-Storlien line '*deraling a train in a tunnel or cutting when heavy snow-storms are imminent'*. Munthe in his memoirs connects this with heavy german guns being transported through Sweden to Trondheim. In the same telegram Munthe was asked to be in contact with Vestad (4333) in Drevja by Mo I Rana for a ferry sabotage at Hemnes. At this time SOE evidently had set up a network in Norway.
[323] William Millar TNA HS 9/1035/2 and Swedish Secret Police P2157
[324] Svenska Riksarkiv Säkerhetspolisens arkiv personmappe P2157-4. After the war Millar became assistant representative for trade in the British Embassy in Oslo. 18 May 1946 Millar landed on Bromma as a representative of the British Embassy in Oslo, but he was expelled from Sweden in 1942 and had problems getting in.

became the head of the commercial section at the Oslo-legation. He came to Stockholm 16 December 1940 and it looks like he was engaged by Munthe immediately which can be an indication that they knew Millar beforehand from Oslo.[325] As Munthe's cut-out, his job was to find potential agents and doing practical parts of the Barbara operation. This was about railway sabotage in Norway by sending a team from Sweden. The team consisted of five Norwegian refugees and one Swede: Gunvald Frøiland (alias Fredriksen), Thorleif Andersen[326], Armand Trønnes[327], Holger Westin, Frans Johan Hellstrøm, Gudmund Nygård. In addition, Henning Werner Olsen and Svend Brundin participated in the start.

The Barbara gang left for Norway 6 February 1941, inspected the potential railway sites in Trøndelag and went on to Shetland for training. On Shetland Lesley Mitchell[328] was in charge for the training centre that was a joint SIS/SOE project.[329] The group returned to Norway and regrouped into three sabotage teams whereof one team did go through with sabotage at Gudaa station. Then they all returned to Sweden where they were arrested by the Swedish Security Police and were sentenced to imprisonment. The disclosure of the operation in Sweden started with William Millar's arrest 26 March 1941.

After Hambro had set up the SOE organisation in November 1940, Munthe planned for special operations in Norway in cooperation with Norwegian refugees. He worked with Johnny Pevik and Jan Grüttler as couriers and informants about Norway. There is no documentation of how the detailed planning came about, neither the details of the sabotage objects in Trøndelag or the route they were going to take. It is not likely that Munthe himself had detailed information about this part of Norway and the network there that could be used safely. Millar had presumably knowledge of Trøndelag with his family background from Trondheim, but there is no documentation that he knew the farmers that were used for staying overnight during

[325] It has not been possible to verify that Millar was known from Oslo. In his file by the Swedish Police (P2157) there appears a correspondence 25 November 1939 between Millar and the British legation in Oslo were Millar offers his services
[326] TNA HS 9/32/3 SOE Personal File
[327] TNA HS 9/1485/8 SOE Personal File
[328] Lesley Mitchell is another example of a British that 'circulated' between countries and tasks just before and into the war. He had been in the legation in Stockholm, worked with Foley in the legation in Oslo in 1939/1940, was in Shetland, worked in London and was SIS head of station in Copenhagen right after the war. Jeffery, *Mi6 : The History of the Secret Intelligence Service, 1909-1949*, p 312 (picture) and p 685-86; Michael May author Smith, *Foley : The Spy Who Saved 10,000 Jews* (London: Biteback Publishing, 2016), gives a broad picture of Lesley Mitchells work with Foley from the time in Germany throughout the war.
[329] TNA HS 8/216 5 December 1940 Progress Report for the SO2 Executive Committee

the transit of the Barbara gang.[330] Maybe Johnny Pevik helped[331], and some information must have come from London.

The training detour to Shetland must have been incorporated in the plans as a suggestion or requirement from London, and Lesley Mitchell on Shetland was quite familiar with Norway and Sweden and the legations there. The explosives were to come via Shetland, and they needed a place for safe landing of this in Norway so that the Barbara gang on their return could pick it up and go through with the sabotage. No member of the Barbra team came from the district the sabotage and transit were planned for.

Munthe informed London about his plans in message 1 January[332] and more specifically 19 January where he informs about the nine men he is sending for 'among other things' the railway sabotage and asks for a place to pick up the explosives.[333] In both these telegrams Munthe also reports about other intelligence. 21 January Scandinavian section reports back that there is no local dump for explosives in the area for the railway sabotage and asks for more information so that London can help for an alternative scheme.[334] 29 January Munthe informs London[335] that there would be a delay in the departure of the nine saboteurs because of rumours about this operation in Stockholm and that the police were onto the case. Therefore, he had to lie low for a few days.[336] 3 February Munthe again reports to London about the overall scheme for the Barbara Operation and ask about how fast the boat can be there. 6 February Scandinavian Section approves of the plan and informs that they needed 5 days' notice to get the boat there unless especially unfavourably weather. 11 February Munthe asks about how many people the

[330] It looks like it was Frøyland who had the initial ideas about the raid into Norway, although Munthe already in december were asked about such an operation. In his dialogue with Millar, Frøyland was told to get into contact with Jon Svinsaas, Storås in Norway who would instruct them about directions and places to stay in Norway. Ref TNA HS 2/207 interview with Frøyland in Shetland.

[331] Johnny Pevik worked closely with Munthe in autumn of 1940. Munthe helped him with 'arms, money and ammunition' and also instructions about what to do. Munthe was informed by Pevik about his contats and friends. Munthe, *Sweet Is War : To Them That Know It Not*, p 126.

[332] TNA HS 2/207 document 2 where Munthe (4301) confirms his planning of railway sabotage as a response on telegram of 16 December. This document also deals with some other issues such as suggestion about bombing targets on the Bergen-Oslo railway line and on camp at Ulven outside of Bergen. According to 2/207 this information was transferred directly to D/Air. The background for this kind of proposal by Munthe is not documented. Munthe also informs about new passport and transport procedures inside Norway. It should be noted this type of information coming from Munthe in Stockholm, information he must have received directly or indirectly from Norwegian informants or possibly in cooperation with MI6 in Stockholm.

[333] Telegram 19 January from Munthe to Scandinavian Section SOE London in NTA SOE 2/207 4A

[334] NTS HS 2/207 document 5A. London communicates other type of intelligence about Norway to Munthe. On the documented is a noted a reference to operation Claymore in Lofoten. In telegram 30 January London states that all present dumps can be known to the Germans and it is asked for proposals for new locations.

[335] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 188. Ref telegram 29 January from Munthe to London. TNA d/207 p 6A/214.

[336] Cruickshank regarded it not likely at all that the Swedish police would 'forget about it'.

boat can carry, and London answers the day after up to 10 in addition to the three in the crew and states that the boat will stand by from 17 February. 12 February Scandinavian Section informs Lerwich about the coming 'visits' and give orders about the boat needed[337] and Lerwich confirms with a few questions the day after. 14 February it is informed about the actual names of the saboteurs and their short names.[338] 18 February the name of the operation is changed from Freddie to Barbara. Sporborg informs Wilson (MZ, at the time head of SOE training) in a note of 18 February with positive answer the day after about the need for demolition experts to teach the Barbara gang in Shetland. 12 March the Barbara gang visited London. SOE in London was steering this operation all along in direct contact with Munthe and Shetland. Barbara was part of the overall activities in the different areas of SOE operations as seen in the reports to SO2 Executive Committee.[339]

Cruickshank refers to the information in the telegram of 14 February that the gang thought they worked for the 'Red Horse' without knowing about Munthe or the British legation, but this is contradicted by information from gang members.[340] I gather that Shetland was not supposed to talk too much about the background for the operation to the gang and not refer to the British legation in Stockholm.

1 March Munthe reported that the gang was located south of Kristiansund waiting for the transport to Shetland and the fishing vessel (the Shetland Bus) arrived 5 March and the arrival at Lerwick was 8 March with all eight men.[341] Shetland was not impressed by the qualifications of the gang members and they should have been better informed before leaving Stockholm. In the training report from Shetland it is said that the Barbara Gang was not well prepared from Stockholm and that they had chosen the wrong man as leader just because he was the one that initially approached the legation in Stockholm and was the best talker of the group. In an additional statement 8 April, it is underlined that the specific places of sabotage must be chosen by experts and not by not so well-prepared saboteurs. This was communicated directly to Munthe 9 April 1941 where it was added that saboteurs should be dressed in different styles to better blend in. One of the gang members left while in Norway, but it was concluded that the risk of him informing the enemy was very slight. Two of the gang were to handle the explosives

[337] NTA HS 2/207 document 13B
[338] NTA HS 2/207 Frøiland, the leader of the group, was assigned 4339. The others did not have code. At this time the operation was called the Freddie gang after the former code name for Frøiland, Fredriksen. Ref document 16a.
[339] TNA HS 8/216 SO2 Executive Committee Progress Reports 13 and 27 March and 3 and 23 April
[340] Ref interview with Armand Trønnes 1989. In this telegram Munthe also refer to if this group was successful, a new group could be expected.
[341] Cruickshank, *Soe in Scandinavia*, p 189.

and its storage and then return to Shetland and the other 6 would form 3 pairs each with one railway target in Trøndelag. They returned to Norway on 10 April.

It seems that all went well and according to the plans for the whole expedition. Three railway sabotages were planned and, in the end, only one was done, but that was also according to orders. The plan and its execution was criticised for not being coordinated well enough and that the process of target selection was inadequate. This criticism does not seem valid since London had a lot of time before the actual sabotage in April to intervene but did not. The causes of the arrests in Sweden afterwards were another matter and with other causes, since there is no documentation that the Swedish police had informants in Norway about the operation.

The impression is that Malcolm Munthe was quite alone in the delegation working on the Barbara Operation. In the documentation there is no trace of others except the minister when he had to be in dialogue with the Swedish Foreign Office after the arrests. William Millar was active evidently being in close contact with Munthe. It seems that the people and the proposals Frøiland had, fitted a demand from London for sabotage in Trøndelag, and Millar and Munthe accepted the concept that Frøiland had but introduced the training in the Shetlands possibly after suggestion from London. The Scandinavian Section in London together with the staff in the Shetlands were very active in handling the training and preparing for the transport from and to Norway. Munthe kept London informed all along about the progress of the planning of the operation and London had plenty of opportunity to change the set-up, but never did. London provided the money needed, set up the training grounds in the Shetlands and must have given some intelligence from Norway of use to the operation. Shetland was not satisfied how Stockholm had prepared the agents especially on how demolitions took place and the effect that had on the selection of targets.

Both Millar and Munthe, that were in the files of the Security Police from the day they arrived in Sweden, had been under postal control in Sweden for some time.[342] Millar was registered when he arrived in Strømstad 16 December 1940 and, after contact with the Swedish Foreign Office, was granted temporary visa travelling on his own to Stockholm. Already 11 January 1941 it was decided on control of his postage. It seems that the surveillances of both Millar and Munthe were intense and the arrest of Millar 26 March came about not on a direct and specific

[342] Munthe was connected to some arrests in January 1941 and the Swedish Foreign Office complained about him. Victor Mallet promised that Munthe was not to continue his clandestine work.

link to for instance the Barbara Operation, but on several suspicious activities that the Police wanted to question Millar about.[343]

In the interrogation of Millar, the police in detail went through his diary with a number of appointments and notes. In fact, several of Millars network were noted in his diary, inter alia the complete names of the whole Barbara gang which became important to the police later in the interrogation process when the members of the gang were arrested. In the fifth interrogation the day after the arrest, the topic was Millars contact with Munthe.[344] Millar was also asked about his contact with 'Johnsen' that presumably was identical with Hugh John Marks, Munthe's assistant.

All members of the Barbara gang were sentenced to prison.[345]

The Swedish Foreign Office warned the British minister early in 1941 that Munthe was a problem and that they wanted him to stop working in intelligence or leave the country. In May Munthe was formally non grata in Sweden. The Foreign Office pressed for a quick leave for Munthe, but still weeks later he was in Sweden. The Minister excused the situation by referring to that there was no space on the flight to England. Finally, on 19 July Munthe left from Bromma.[346]

Hugh John Marks, Munthe's assistant (non-diplomat) led an attempted spectacular escape of Millar 4 sept 1940 when Millar was imprisoned waiting for his final sentence.[347] Marks was also closely followed by the Swedish police since he arrived in Sweden 19 September 1940 with postal control from 29 March 1941. Marks was never arrested and convicted in Sweden but was allowed to leave as if he was a diplomat.

Munthe left 19 july 1941, Marks in October 1941, the Barbara gang in 1942 and Millar in June 1943. Then all the agents and diplomats involved in the Barbara operation had left Sweden.

The Barbara Operation was a major operation by SOE Sweden. The arrests and prosecution of the Section D team and the Barbara gang with the expelling of Munthe, were the two largest success-stories of the Swedish secret police. Of the two operations Barbara did in fact go through with the plan they had although only one of the sabotages was done with a somewhat

[343] Right before the arrest Millar was connected to two swedes Unger and Alhquist that were involved in suspicious activities close to the Norwegian border.
[344] Millars personal file P2157 in the Swedish Security Police archive contains detailed minutes from each interview with Millar.
[345] The files of the court cases cover several thousand pages. An overview of the operation seen from the Swedish Police is the protocol of investigations of 12 May 1941. Riksarkivet nr 756 (7 May 1943), ref Supreme Court 661/1941.
[346] The same day as the explosion in Krylbo.
[347] Tore Pryser, ref unpublished memorandum 2017. This event has been covered by many authors.

smaller impact that what was planned. Both operations gave the British secret service a significant learning experience that secured other areas of intelligence and operations. From a Swedish point of view these operations (Section D and Barbara) could look similar, but from a British point of view they were organised by two different authorities, with two different objectives, planning processes and people involved. Both became victims of the Swedish counter intelligence. The Barbara Operation was part of the British new policy towards Sweden and Scandinavia from the summer of 1940 trying to keep the balance in Scandinavia, not troubling Sweden and with focus on activities in the neighbouring countries.

In the end of January Munthe informed London that the police were on to them and possibly threaten the Barbara operation. Millar was arrested 26 March when the Barbara gang not yet had finally left Shetland.[348] There is no note of Millars arrest in the Barbara file as a warning to the Barbara gang before they left Shetland. It is difficult to understand that the Barbara gang returned to Sweden in April after the Swedish Security Police had held Millar for several weeks. The police had surveilled Munthe and Millar for months and the interviews with Millar shows that they had quite a lot of information about them, even though it was not before after the arrest of Millar that the police understood about the railway sabotage.

In the period from the forming of SOE and into the summer of 1941, i.e. the first year of SOE in Sweden, it seems that the SOE organisation worked more on its own with Munthe in the lead and with Marks and Millar as helpers. Munthe kept frequent contact with SOE in London and the conclusion is that it was more centrally run in this period than in the Section D period the year before.[349] It seems that SOE worked less with John Martin than Section D and maybe SIS thought of Munthe as even "worse" than Rickman.

The War Cabinet lost some of its attention towards Sweden after the iron ore strategy in 1939/1940, but there was still a high level of attention in the British Foreign Office and the arrests after Barbara and Munthe non grata, became a concern. This led to a discussion in London how Stockholm SOE should be organised and especially the Foreign Office views got

[348] The first attempt to leave Shetland 24 March got into engine trouble and had to return to Shetlland. The gang left again 7 April.

[349] In my analysis I have mainly used the Barbara operation as case in this period and not investigated the work of Tennant (Sweden/Germany) and Turnbull (Denmark). The Scandinavian section in SOE London was active in this period.

more attention to keep SOE Stockholm under control. The implication was that the diplomatic leadership in Stockholm became more influential and a special controller was set in.[350]

The same day Malcolm Munthe left Sweden, there was a fire and an explosion in a cargo train at Krylbo in a railway station just north of Stockholm. None was killed but twenty-four Swedes were injured. Some of the cars in the train were loaded with German goods, possibly ammunition. The explosion was thoroughly investigated, but the police could not conclude such that anyone were arrested. The report stated that sparks from the train wheels could possibly be a cause. The official history in a report in the SOE files states that this was a SOE sabotage, and also Malcolm Munthe indicates in his memoirs that he was responsible. The plan was supposedly that the explosives would go off in Norway, but by mistake it went off in Sweden. This was seen as a reprisal from Britain to Sweden allowing transit traffic by the Germans.[351] It is very unlikely that this was a SOE operation out of Stockholm: The train cars actually came from Norway (possibly Arendal) and was heading for Finland and they were not specially marked. According to eyewitnesses[352] it started with a fire and not a bomb. It was contradictory to British policy at the time as a Swedish operation. Most important, there is no trace of this in any SOE-files in London that would have been the case since all other operations of this kind were cleared and managed by London.[353] This was a possible criminal act directed towards Sweden, even though some say the plan was that the detonation would take place in Norway. It has not at all been proven that Munthe was behind this incidence, but it still symbolises the end of Malcolm Munthe's time in Sweden.

After Munthe had left, on 7 September 1941, three Swedish destroyers in Hårsfjärden were set on fire after an explosion in one of them. Some also connects this with SOE,[354] but this is even more unlikely than the Krylbo incidence: It must be seen as a pure military operation and not an industrial sabotage, the objective must have been unclear, and it was in complete contradiction to British policy towards Sweden at the time. Tennant was never involved in any sabotage on Swedish soil. It was not in the British interest at this time to weaken Swedish military capabilities. There is no trace of planning of this incident in London and it would have

[350] In a report from Jebb to Cadogan in November 1941, TNA FO 954/24A/47, it is referred to that Ministry of Economic Warfare had successfully made sure that all operations in neutral countries were done at the approval of the Foreign Office or the local minister. It is also referred to that Stockholm had been problematic, but it was set in a new coordinator and FO representative there (Hinks).
[351] Gilmour, *Sweden, the Swastika and Stalin: The Swedish Experience in the Second World War*, p 140.
[352] Summary report 20 October 1954 (Archive of Svenska Järnvägsklubben) gives in detail the statements of the train and station crew.
[353] In unpublished pm from Tore Pryser 2017 there is a discussion of who could have been responsible for the Krylbo event. Pryser refers to the Norwegian Erling Stub Orve and writings by Rolf Dahlø
[354] Victor Lundberg, "'Karlsson', the Amiable Spy: Sedish Experiences of Allied Espionage and Sabotage During World War Ii," *Diacronie, Studi de Storia Contemporanea* 28/4/2016 (2016).

had to be on top-level since it would have a real problem for British-Swedish relations. This could not have been a SOE operation.

After Munthe left Sweden in the summer of 1941 SOE in Sweden went through a reorganisation with more focus on FO coordination also of the SOE activities. And the SOE worked mostly with helping Norwegian and Danish resistance and sabotage, giving shelter and help to agents in operation in Norway and Denmark, operating the air transport to Scotland and training of especially W/T personnel for operations in the occupied countries. And they assisted in propaganda and general intelligence work.

9.2 Reflections

The Barbara Operation came about after a direct request from London. The operation had as end target a medium sized sabotage on two railways in Trøndelag in the middle of Norway. It was a lot more comprehensive operation since it involved testing out transport to/from Shetland, training in Shetland and utilising contact networks in Norway. It is not documented any long-term plans for the Barbara gang, but maybe the intention was that it could be the start of using the Barbara team for a series of special operations in Norway. Again, the Security Police through the tools of surveillance and tapping understood that something was going on, but without any detailed background information. Millar was arrested and was interrogated, and the Security Police worked with local police along the border to Norway to arrest more of the Barbara gang. The police knew Millars cover-name (Mortensen) and was also aware of the connection with Munthe.[355]

They arrested Millar 26 March three weeks before sabotage at Gudå station on the Trondheim-Storlien railway and 12 days before the Barbara gang left Shetland. One can wonder why the gang was not warned about Millars arrests, ref also that Munthe already in January had rumours that the Swedes were on to them. The Swedes Security Police could just sit and wait for the Barbara agents to return to Sweden and then arrest them, and this was what happened. The archive documentation does not reveal anything about why they were not warned.

In a letter dated 5 February 1941[356] to Henry Hopkinson, private secretary to Alexander Cadogan, Victor Mallet discusses all the trouble he had had with Malcolm Munthe and SOE. In detail over 13 pages he explains the dialogue he had with Erik Boheman that complained

[355] The Security Police Files and the following court proceedings of the Barbara operation shows in detail the interrogation and the Swedish analysis.
[356] TNA FO 371/29408, letter received 2 March 1941. This file was opened in 2017.

about special operations activities after the arrest of Jan Güettler 9 December 1940 and four others that had been working with Munthe as couriers to/from Norway. Mallet was very much critical to SOE work and believed that he could be at risk for a 'non grata' decision if Munthe's work was continuing. He asks for Munthe being sent home to England. In London Charles Hambro and Gladwyn Jebb are very negative to Mallet's letter believing he could have done more to help Munthe and that he could have defended him more towards Erik Boheman. Henry Hopkinson sends thereafter Mallet a reply asking him to cooperate, to be more helpful and stating very clearly that SOE would do operations from Swedish territory. This must be regarded as a rare situation asking Mallet to comply in such a clear manner, and the conclusion must be that Munthe had support from London in his work. Of course, a few weeks later the Barbara gang were arrested and that led to Munthe leaving Sweden 16 July 1941.

In a report from Jebb to Cadogan from November 1941summarizing the achievements of the first year of SOE it is referred to that the main achievement for Scandinavia has been setting up networks of agents in Norway. More specifically, it is referred to releasing the five ships blocked in Sweden, the raid in Lofoten and sabotage on the Oslo-Bergen railway in September 1940 and it is not referred to Barbara.[357]

[357] TNA FO 954/24A/47

10 Conclusions

10.1 Organisation

The British secret services in Sweden were organised according to standard principles seen in most European countries before the war, to become the largest in a neutral country by 1941 and the largest in all of Europe since the occupied countries and Germany did not have British representation. The legation in Stockholm had all major intelligence functions with agents and informants outside. A large majority at the legation and outside worked on regular political and military intelligence including propaganda. A few worked on sabotage operations.

The political intelligence came foremost from the professional British diplomats at the legation and with the work of the press office including the Press Reading Bureau. These reported daily to London, based on their broad network in Sweden, on their contacts in the Swedish government and within the over thirty diplomatic representations in Stockholm. From 1940 propaganda work was part of the press office.

The military intelligence was performed by the offices of the three service attachés. As discussed in this thesis, the Stockholm legation reported on a wide range of military issues, such as naval intelligence, from Sweden, Norway and other countries.

Dedicated staff of special operations and sabotage work were also present. In 1939/40 this was part of Section D's activities in Sweden although much of the planning and all the main decisions were taken care of in London. Most arrests by the Swedish security police in this stage were people involved in propaganda work. In 1940/41 when SOE started to work in Sweden, they assigned only a few people for this work at the legation, although there were several non-diplomat agents involved.

SIS and SOE headquarters in London spent a substantial amount of resources on Sweden in defining and prioritising the activities. Even higher levels in London (the leaders in several ministries, the Joint Intelligence Committee, the Joint Chief of Staffs, the Cabinet, Chamberlain and Churchill and others) followed British intelligence in Sweden.

For the total use of resources, most of the 26 diplomats in the British legation in Stockholm in the spring of 1940 worked on intelligence sending reports to intelligence organisations in London. Then there were additional people working in the press department and over 30 in the Press Reading Bureau. External agents and informants in this period were a few on the iron ore sabotage plan, somewhat more on propaganda work, around ten on Barbara and other

agents/informants at least 15-20. A lot more personnel were set in for regular intelligence work and propaganda than in sabotage, which was out-dated in Sweden from 1941.

The British intelligence worked at a high level of activity in Sweden involving all diplomats and employees in the legation. Work and reporting of the Minister and the top level at the legation was a main contribution of political intelligence made available for consumers in London, such as the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and in-depth analysis in several ministries and into the Joint Intelligence Committee. The press attaché and his staff reported weekly to the Ministry of Information on all developments in their Swedish network and from the diplomatic representation of other countries. Top-level at the legation with excellent networks into the Swedish government at the highest level worked with several people they also knew before the war.

In the time span for this thesis, industrial intelligence and networks in the 'private' sector were present in 1939 and into 1940, but it has not been possible to document full-fledged networks of Z-type. However, an interesting phenomenon was the international network of the financial sector that in the Swedish case had connections with intelligence. The well-known banker Charles Hambro, who worked in the Ministry of Economic Warfare, became head of the Scandinavian section of SOE and at one time was head of the whole SOE, had excellent contacts in Sweden through Enskilda Banken and the Wallenbergs. And the Wallenbergs, well connected to the top-level of Swedish society, played an important part of Swedish relations with Britain and Germany during the war. The archives of Enskilda Banken has not been open for this thesis.

One special organisational issue is whether it made a difference in how special operations were organised in Section D and later in SOE. Both periods ended with arrested agents, but the circumstances were different. It cannot be concluded that SIS could have handled special operations better than SOE did from 1940, but the separate SOE gave special operations more focus, on the account of less cooperation and sharing of information with the traditional intelligence. The Foreign Office worked very hard to integrate SOE in the diplomatic system with more authority for the minister in his coordination and leadership at the legation.

Naval intelligence was of high importance to Britain and a lot of activities tracked naval movements in the Baltic, through the Sounds, in Kattegat and Skagerrak. The most famous naval intelligence was the information about the battleship Bismarck in Kattegat in 1941 that came through the naval attachés Swedish and Norwegian network in Stockholm. In addition, some of the intelligence that came out of Norway was naval intelligence tracking movements along the coast and then communicated with Stockholm.

The different intelligence positions at the legation are quite clear after this study and the sometime confusing outlays in the literature can be put aside: John Martin was PCO, three service attachés, press attaché Peter Tennant, three SOE, first secretary and minister. All had additional staff.

10.2 Objectives

The objectives set out for the British secret services in Sweden followed British war policy and general objectives for secret services, with the adaption to Sweden and the developing circumstances of the war in Northern Europe. In chapter 4 the objectives of the British secret services in Sweden were discussed. The foundation of the services when being a collector of intelligence was to be a high-performance secret service that produced as much intelligence as possible in accordance with the orders from London. It is important to take into account that it was London that did the analysis of the information received. Stockholm should not judge the relevance of the information they gathered, or coordinate information across the legation. What was relevant was up to London to judge when they asked for specific intelligence from the British intelligence in Sweden.

Examples of specific objectives were the request for intelligence about Sweden, such as Swedish military capacities, Swedish iron ore, naval intelligence, and gather intelligence from the other countries' legations in Stockholm. Helping resistance and gather intelligence from neighbouring countries also came into focus, and last, supporting sabotage projects according to specific orders.

Several priority changes took place during the first two years of the war. Before 9 April 1940 the intelligence focused on Sweden, and thereafter the neighbouring countries and the legations of other countries in Stockholm. After that shift, offensive special operations in Sweden were not relevant anymore. At the end of that two-year period sabotage work was altogether not relevant since Britain managed this from London in cooperation with Norwegian authorities and the resistance in Norway, using The Independent Company Number 1 ('Lingekompaniet') as recruitment for agents. Intelligence about Germany was relevant all along, as well as working with German refugees in Stockholm.

In special operations, propaganda work and sabotage, the objectives were quite specific and usually given by direct orders from London.

Sweden was during the years 1939-41 very much a part of British war objectives foremost as part of overall war strategies on the northern flank. As a hub of intelligence for many

countries[358] and as a place for working with resistance in other countries, Britain paid much attention to Stockholm. 1939 and into 1940 it was also believed that making obstacles for iron ore export to Germany could change the overall development of the war.

The objectives and organisation of the British secret intelligence in Sweden came out of rational deliberate decisions about the best way to proceed according to the overall objective to defeat Germany and win the war. As the war developed in 1939 and 1940, Britain assigned more people and resources to Stockholm. The decision to calm down the 'offensive' strategy towards Sweden in the summer of 1940 changed the objective into keeping a Nordic balance and to use Sweden as a platform for intelligence towards other countries. Considering the challenges Britain had in many parts of Europe at that time, that seemed to be the rational strategy.

The British secret services were to collect intelligence without making any harm or 'noise', and London was responsible for the analysis and assessment of the intelligence and to take the military or political action. In the long run British secret services in Sweden delivered this intelligence in a constant loop of dialogue and feedback from London in order to be as much in line with the needs of the central government and the military.

In the early stage of the war, when it was difficult to forecast the development, there were some strong scenarios of Scandinavia playing a vital part in the development of the war. Some thought the war could have stopped if the Allied had done a better job during the Phoney War. After the Winter War, the short war in Norway and when Sweden's role stabilised, it was more a question of keeping a balance in the north, not rocking the boat, but without ever letting the belligerents and others be quite sure that nothing would happen.

10.3 Operation

The British secret services in Sweden 1939-1941 operated in **all major areas of intelligence** and also in special operations. Political and military intelligence was collected through military attachés, press attaché, professional diplomats, Passport Control Office (SIS), Reading Bureau and special operations agents for propaganda and sabotage purposes. All had informants or external agents. The reports were on all intelligence types and geographical areas in Sweden and neighbouring countries in accordance with the objectives of the secret services. The British intelligence worked on Swedish military capabilities, politics, industrial issues, public opinion

[358] In TNA FO 371/24864 Mallet reports on main diplomats from different countries represented in Stockholm where he regards some as competent but others as quite incapable and problematic to work with.

and media. Maybe even more important was the contact with other countries intelligence in Stockholm and with the neighbouring countries such as the other Nordic countries, Germany, Poland and the Soviet Union. To some extent there were also special operations, planned and executed, in Germany and Norway in the time period chosen for this thesis. In Sweden there were executed propaganda activities and the rescue of the Norwegian ships stranded at the start of the war.

The operation of intelligence became **unique** because Sweden turned into one of the few neutral countries in Europe and the only neutral country in northern Europe. At the same time British intelligence lost its network of intelligence centres in most countries which had the consequence that Stockholm became of vital importance to the British. In addition, over 30 other countries with representation in Stockholm also upgraded their intelligence work and turned Stockholm into a spy hub for all major belligerent and neutral nations. Sweden became a hiding place for many refugees from Germany, Denmark, Norway and other countries, of importance for recruitment to both general intelligence and special operations.

The basic mode of work for the local level in Sweden was to **collect** intelligence based on requests from headquarters in London and report back for further analysis and assessment. Since it was not up to the British legation to report collectively weighing all information together or to take major initiatives for gathering new intelligence, the conditions for cooperation and collegiality were not there. This was in contrast to the collegial way of working in London according to general principles of British government which was also the set-up for the secret services, according to the role of Secret Intelligence Service and the 1921 arrangement of cooperation with the consumers of intelligence.

This way of operation is also underlined by **all the telegrams** going back and forth to London informing, asking for clearance and giving orders. In the documentation this is clearly seen for special operations work that was mostly run from London. In the area of general political and military intelligence there were a lot of regular reports based on standing orders of interesting areas to investigate and based on general long-term practice.

Frequent visits to Sweden from SIS and SOE in London and also representatives of the armed services, are documented. Head of Scandinavian office as part of Section D and equivalent leaders in SOE visited Sweden several times and also spent time there during longer periods. The operation was based on a close cooperation with the headquarter in London. The work was basically not collegial cooperation, but mostly each had their own instructions directly from London. The organisation was flat with little reporting upwards locally at the legation.

Between the wars a **cooperation** system of intelligence connecting the consumers of intelligence with the collectors in the Secret Intelligence Service was based on the so-called 1921 arrangement. Looking into the operation and complexity of secret services in Sweden 1939-1941 it seems that this system was insufficient. It has not been possible to document that the reporting from and to Stockholm followed the principle of using the central SIS-organisation for handling the intelligence. It is possible that the agents in Stockholm did not fully know the organisational system in London and the system of 1921 arrangement. For instance, the naval attaché might have thought that he communicated with the Admiralty when he actually had contact with Section III in SIS, but this is difficult to verify. Based on the documents available it looks like communication was directly with the specific agency in London. Indication of this were all the problems the Foreign Office expressed with the coordination in Stockholm. This was exposed by the minister Victor Mallet but was also a major concern of Cadogan and Loxley. In the discussion about how SOE should be organised after Munthe left Sweden in the summer of 1941, the Foreign Office became very eager to place their own person to coordinate better especially the SOE work with other activities at the legation and to make sure that the minister and the Foreign Office were better informed. There is no documentation that PCO John Martin coordinated.[359]

Since so many institutions and individuals were involved in Sweden and in London, this way of operating led to **complex decision-making** and conflicts. There took place decision-making based on a *rational* weighing of arguments. This was the case at the top-level in London when developing the objectives for the secret services in Sweden. All involved did not agree, but they did try to balance the different risks and consequences for instance when challenging the Swedish neutrality. *Organisational* issues and the culture of secret services also played an important role. The governmental culture of Great Britain was possibly contrary to the Swedish one with its determination to proceed when decisions have been made and with strength according to organisational procedures which can be compared with the British collegial and "flat" way of working. Britain had many committees, while the Swedes had their fixed procedures and legal basis which was a better position for execution, and resulted in less discussion and second thoughts. There were a lot of *politics and power* struggle centrally and at the local level at the Stockholm legation. The power struggle in the British Conservative

[359] In a Memorandum to the War Cabinet in 1942 the new Minister of Economic Warfare, Roundell Palmer (Selborne), states that by then it was decided that the Foreign Office would be in charge of all coordination in neutral countries including SOE, ref TNA FO 1093/155, WP (42) 70 22 April 1942. This marked the end of the struggle for FO to gain control with SOE. It is outside of the time for this thesis to look into how this worked in Sweden from 1942.

Party and the many different views on the way forward, the handling of the Labour Party with the formation of the War Cabinet and the many discussions between the ministries, certainly limited the operation in Stockholm. It was maybe politics and positioning that was the greatest challenge for the British intelligence system. The struggle between Chamberlain and Churchill about the Swedish iron ore is one example. The development of the intelligence organisation in London was influenced by personal ambitions and struggles. And politics concerning the Conservatives vs Labour in establishing the War Cabinet and giving the Ministry of Economic Warfare to Dalton. And the huge debate in the Cabinet in December 1939 and the Norway debate in Parliament in May 1940 shows how much was at stake for the different players. The positioning of different agencies were also reflected on the ground in Stockholm with the SIS dislike for SOE, with negative consequences and the diplomatic system clashing with the secret services.

The operation in Sweden was anchored in **the British diplomatic system**, reporting to the Foreign Office in London and with the dominating diplomatic culture of management. The British foreign service was used to have representation from others than the professional diplomats brought up in the Foreign Office, but still this led to challenges of coordination and empathy. Although Secret Intelligence Service was an agency reporting to the Foreign Office, it was still an independent agency. When one adds on the number of reporting lines from the legation to other ministries and agencies in London, it is very likely that the whole operation became quite complicated.

All work in Stockholm had to comply by **centrally decided** security instructions, codes, use of communications systems, instructions for diplomatic mail, salaries etc. The professional diplomats that had worked for the British Foreign Office at other legations were used to take instructions and asking for clearance from London. Other personnel that did not have an earlier diplomatic career or not even a military career, was more unfamiliar with the bureaucratic system of British foreign service. Some of the principles of the operation of this kind of organisation can be studied as a matrix organisation where practical workprocess is done along the horizontal level and with line management performing a role of coordination and support. One of the findings in this thesis is that the British minister in Stockholm did not fill his role so well according to these principles. There is no documentation on his supporting role, he often came in late and was surprised about what had been going on without his knowledge.

The organisational system had strong elements of ***matrix*** **handling** different consumers and producers of intelligence. In all the work that was done in Sweden we cannot say that top

management and diplomacy were close to all processes, and performing coordination, resource management and lubrication that is needed for a matrix organisation to function well.

Intelligence was set up as a system of **customers and producers**. In London SIS and the foreign office global diplomatic system worked in a collegial and matrix kind of way. The situation in Stockholm was more mixed, but basically the minister was the local manager and the different departments communicated in a matrix way with their superiors in London. Victor Mallet did not seem very active in his local coordination. When 'things' went wrong he had to speak for the legation when he was called for by the Swedish Foreign Office.

The documentation and the literature do not explain **the role of the PCO** in daily work. It is certain that the PCO should collect intelligence and keep espionage networks and informants, but there is no mandate for coordination and leadership of the other diplomats or attachés. The PCO John Martin was not a man of cooperation but rather dealing with own matters and opposing others that could cross his lines or be a threat to his agents. The lack of cooperation between SIS, Section D and later SOE, the naval intelligence and others, became an important obstacle to the achievements at the legation. It seems that it was PCO John Martin that was the most reluctant to cooperate. At the extreme this happened on some important incidents in the Section D period when possibly the whole disclosure of Section D could have been prevented if Martin had told Rickman that the Swedes were on to him and that there were internal spies in the Section D organisation. Also, the naval attaché Denham complained about Martin. The traditional military and political intelligence through the Secret Intelligence Service headed by John Martin at the Passport Control Office had informants in different parts of Swedish society and government. Unfortunately, most of the documentation of the SIS during the war has not been released from SIS itself and therefore it has not been any in depth study of what SIS did in Sweden and the quality of the intelligence they collected.

Special operations were mainly about activities in the 'field' such as sabotage and distribution of propaganda but also on intelligence that came special operations way either as for the planning of such operations or as pick-up from the practical operations. In Sweden there were plans about iron ore sabotage and also military plans about occupation of the mines in the north of Sweden, but none of this actually happened. There was not any British sabotage operation on Swedish soil, but there were several acts of sabotage in Norway and Denmark that Stockholm was involved in. General intelligence work and propaganda took place both in Sweden and in neighbouring countries, including Germany.

It has been argued that British agents and diplomats were not particularly skilled, especially at the beginning of the war and they did not follow the guidelines for spies and secrecy, but I

have not found any such discussion in the research literature. The **training of the agents** became better and they gained more experience in avoiding the Swedish Security Police.

10.4 Swedish Counterintelligence

The main obstacle to British secret services in Sweden was the Swedish Security Police and the Swedish government. For Sweden it was an act of balance to stay out of the war and it was uncertainty if that could be achieved during the whole period covered by this thesis. The Swedish government regarded it as vital to not get into real trouble with Germany because of too easy handling of the Allied using Swedish ground for intelligence and special operations. The German intelligence and diplomats with attention from top-level in Berlin followed the situation in Sweden on a daily basis and protested on any negative issue for them. Britain protested on the German transit traffic through Sweden and other issues where they thought Sweden was too lenient with Germany. Reality was that a German invasion was far more likely, than that the British would invade or do much about a German invasion. Sweden was more or less forced to keep a close eye on the British in Sweden. This does not mean that the Swedish counterintelligence did not work against other nations intelligence, including Germany. Looking back today we see Sweden and the Swedes clearly pro-British and that the British understood that from their intelligence at the time. In other areas the Swedish authorities cooperated with Britain for instance in military intelligence exchanging information as we have discussed in this thesis when it for instance came to naval intelligence and troop movements in Norway. The Swedish surveillance of the German telegrams came also to some extent to the benefit of Britain.

The Swedish Security Police was the effective instrument to keep control of British secret services in Sweden. As has been discussed, Sweden had introduced all kinds of legal instruments for the surveillance and the prosecution of espionage and special operations based on Swedish soil. The British made it easier for the Swedish counterintelligence by using so many diplomats in intelligence work. Sweden established their secret security police as late as 1938, - earlier this was regular police work. This branch of the police were given a quick build-up staffing it with former regular police officers and the level of secrecy was very high. Although Swedish security police did not understand the organisation and objectives of the British secret services, the thorough surveillance revealed that something was going on and arrests could be made. Often it was through further interrogation that they revealed more about what was really the plot. The Swedes did not know about the plans for iron ore sabotage and

they did not know about the Barbara operation before they made their arrests. The Swedes were mostly occupied with parts of special operations because of its easiness of tracking, and most of the regular British intelligence never came to their attention. There is for instance no indication in the documentation used in this thesis that they understood the role of John Martin, ref his very small personal file in the Security Police compared with Munthe's file.

Swedes are generally regarded as being loyal and good at sticking to decided procedures. The British made a big effort in hiding their activities using codes and all sorts of cover not only because of Swedish counterintelligence, but maybe from the start even more because of German counterintelligence. The different British secret services, according to the documentation used in this thesis, did not have a general plan to cope with the Swedish counterintelligence and it looks like they learned as work progressed. In the documentation there is not any trace of the British being especially knowledgeable about the Swedish counterintelligence law or that they referred to the consequence of the Swedish policy of neutrality. It might be concluded that the British underestimated the problems the determined Swedish counterintelligence could cause them.[360]

The Swedish counterintelligence in the period February 1940 to June 1941 made 127 arrests of agents in British service or in other ways working for Britain. Many of the arrests were made after the operation was executed or called off which only gave a delay before things were reorganised. In the area of propaganda work 1939/40 after the Section D arrests, the whole organisation had to be rebuild together with general information and press work.

The Swedish security police did make trouble for the propaganda work in 1940 and there were also a few arrests of John Martins informants and some working as couriers on Norway, but the Swedish counterintelligence did not really cause major problems for this traditional espionage.

10.5 Achievements

To assess the achievements, one should address in principle the full range of objectives, instruments, activities and resources put in. As discussed in this thesis, British secret services in Sweden 1939-41 covered most areas of intelligence and special operations, but there is no research literature based on a holistic approach.

[360] Part of the underestimation was that The Swedish Security Police was repeatedly tipped off on British activities by the German counterintelligence in Abwehr, ref McKay, *From Information to Intrigue : Studies in Secret Service : Based on the Swedish Experience, 1939-45*, p 78.

General British intelligence (political, military and economic) in Sweden worked steadily throughout the war and contributed important information in all areas of objectives useful for further processing in London.[361] This was information about Sweden and the neighbouring countries, but also about the conflicting parties through the large network of representation in Stockholm. Practical all diplomats, agents and informants contributed with general intelligence as their main task, or as part of special operations or other assignments. The archive documentation indicates a high volume of general intelligence, in several areas on a daily basis forwarded to London. The press attaché's weekly reports and the top-diplomats regular reports were important. The feedback from London in 1941 about the Reading Bureau's daily reports were of high quality. The offices of the service attachés of more than 15 people including secretaries had a wide variety of informants on naval, air and other military issues. In some areas London requested more information, for instance from the work of SIS head of station John Martin. The most resources[362] were used for intelligence at the legation, and not special operations, and there is no documentation of strong criticism from London about the steady production of intelligence from Stockholm. On these grounds it is possible to conclude that the British secret services in Sweden did meet its objectives.

One shall not be misled by the impression that special operation was the most important in Sweden because of the attention some of the British problems received in the media, in London and in later research. The arrests and setback of Section D agents in the spring of 1940 were a problem for the British reputation in Sweden but did not have any severe real long-term effect. Most of the arrests were Section D agents involved in propaganda, a work which was about to be taken over by the press department at the legation. The sabotage plan for Oxelösund was called off before the arrests due to the German invasion of Denmark and Norway, and further sabotage activities in Sweden were ruled out when Britain realised the benefits for them of keeping Sweden out of the war. The disclosure and arrests of Section D **did not stop** the iron sabotage since it was already called off by the British. The consequences for the operations were limited since the propaganda work was taken over by the press office, sabotage was not relevant in Sweden from the spring of 1940 and because the build-up of sabotage work in Norway had to be established anyway after 9 April. Similarly, the revelation of Munthe's red horse operation and the Barbara gang did not stop that specific sabotage and the consequence

[361] PCO work in Sweden is discussed in Chapter 7 where the shortage of documentation on John Martin is focused.
[362] Counting all diplomats, Reading Bureau, estimated agents and informants, less than 10 percent on an avarage worked on special operations. 1939-41, most of the war even less.

was limited because of the small size of the SOE organisation, and sabotage work in Norway from the summer of 1941 was managed directly from London. The arrests that were connected to general intelligence were few, but possibly as important. All these arrests and the publicity they were given hurt the British reputation in Sweden and possibly made it more difficult for them to operate. But the total picture was that these revelations made a lot of noise but had limited consequences for the performance of the British secret services in the long run and all together direct sabotage actions were **not significant** for the British secret services. Except for Operation Rubble rescuing Norwegian ships held back in Sweden because of the German blockade at sea, there were no documented sabotage special operations on Swedish soil. What became important was working with resistance in Norway and especially taking care of agents coming back from operations in Norway. And the air traffic from Stockholm to Scotland became an important element in special operations and intelligence in Norway.

The British could not stop the iron ore export from Sweden to Germany, but this would not have been possible to achieve through sabotage, without most likely involving Sweden directly into the war. Only a full military attack taking control of iron ore mining in Sweden would have stopped the export completely. There were British thoughts about an attack, but they did not develop into operational plans, and was thus far from being executed. The British worked on the iron ore question through trade negotiations and diplomatic efforts, and intelligence monitoring the production, export, naval transport and by establishing networks. The iron ore export volume remained the same in the first two years of the war. As Atkin writes '..the sabotage plan itself was sound and it may have succeeded without the vacillation of the Cabinet and the Foreign Office'.[363]

Had SIS and SOE cooperated more, maybe some arrests of agents and informants could have been avoided. Better coordination and management at the legation, the right awareness of Swedish counterintelligence and better training in secrecy and interrogation, could also have resulted in fewer arrests. Rickman, Millar and several of the other arrests gave away important information about the agents involved when they were interrogated by the Swedes. The central coordination and leadership of intelligence were not always well handled and helpful from London. The diplomats, other employees and the agents were extremely determined to do a good job and make the local adaptions necessary.

When we summarise, the achievements of the British secret services, the production of political and military intelligence and propaganda work seemed to be in accordance with the

[363] Atkin, *Section D for Destruction,* p 167.

objectives of high performance and focusing on Swedish politics and military capacities, enemy dispositions and plans in northern Europe and other information from northern Europe. The conclusion is that the British intelligence in Sweden 1939-1941 gave London the information that was needed to follow the development in Sweden and gave important contribution to the development in the neighbouring countries. All together the conclusion is that the British secret services did a good job in Sweden meeting the objectives that were set as well as possible, in light of the circumstances of the war and the Swedish neutrality.

The conclusion can altogether not be a failure as some historians have pointed at, but rather that the British secret services in Sweden 1939-41 operated on a very high level of activity providing London with relevant intelligence. The set-backs in special operations did not have devastating consequences for the further work. To right out conclude with success would require a more in-depth study of the quality and relevance of the intelligence provided and the support functions performed, but the documentation used in this thesis does not rule out that the British secret services in Sweden played a significant role of substantial and necessary value to Britain's war efforts.

Most of the discussion about failure has been connected to arrests by the Swedish Security Police which led to a lot of publicity and focus on the 'noisy' side of secret services in special operations. The focus has not been on the large number of diplomats and agents involved in regular intelligence. The internal history has also been coloured by many, like Victor Mallet and John Martin, trying not to be associated with these problems, combined with very few actually knowing what had happened.

The view of failure is quite wrong and maybe success is a better word. The story of British intelligence services in Sweden during the war was not crucial for the total outcome of the war, but it was one puzzle that could have changed the development if it had not been there. What happened in Scandinavia during the war had little to do with the final victory over Germany and the Nazis, but it kept the belligerents and the Scandinavian people busy to such an extent that the major countries like Germany, Britain and Russia had to take them into account, although the military war was won elsewhere. The reason for the traditional view of 'problems' in Sweden is partly that the 'noise' of special operations took the attention away from other more 'silent' intelligence work, and that the documentation of general intelligence has been very limited. It is just recent that research has started on a broader explanation of British secret services to reach a better understanding of what happened in Sweden 1939-1941.

Archive documentation

Archive	Key	Name	Document
Riksarkivet Oslo	Regjeringen i London	Notat krigsmedaljen 8 august 1942	Captain Tronstad
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Almänna Säkerhetstjänsten	P1237 1-4	Malcolm Munthe
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Almänna Säkerhetstjänsten	P3150	Noel Croft
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Almänna Säkerhetstjänsten	P2921	Montague-Pollock
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Almänna Säkerhetstjänsten	P2630 1a-4a	John Hugh Marks
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Almänna Säkerhetstjänsten	P716	Thornton and Martin
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Almänna Säkerhetstjänsten	P1596 2A 1A 1R	Peter Tennant
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Almänna Säkerhetstjänsten	P2157	William Millar
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Almänna Säkerhetstjänsten	P2122	Thorleif Andersen
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Högsta Domstolen	Nr 756 7 May 1943	Undersøkelsesprotokol og domsbeslut May 1941
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Sandler Commission 1946	F4:1-3	Arrests british norwegians swedes
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Swedish Foreign Office	P330 Gruppe 53 Ba: 99(Munthe)	Correpondence diplomatic legations 1940-41
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Swedish Foreign Office	P330 Gruppe 53 Ba: 93(Denham)	Correpondence diplomatic legations 1940-41
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Swedish Foreign Office	P330 Gruppe 53 Ba: 53(Mallet)	Correpondence diplomatic legations 1940-41
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Swedish Foreign Office	P330 Gruppe 53 Ba: 77(Montague-Pollock)	Correpondence diplomatic legations 1940-41
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Swedish Foreign Office	P330 Ba: 95, 94, 85, 84, 73, 69, 70, 101, 105	Correpondence diplomatic legations 1940-41
Riksarkivet Stockholm	Swedish Foreign Office	P53	Diplomatic List May 1939 - March 1945
Stockholm Stadsarkiv	Rådhusrätt Avdeling 5	140/06/03 Hemliga Mål	Hemliga Mål 1939-1946 list
Stockholm Stadsarkiv	Rådhusrätt Avdeling 5	SE-SSA-0140-06-03	Protokol Rickman
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The National Archives	FO 1093/231	Rickman and Section D	
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The National Archives	FO 371/24832	11 May 1940	Operations in Norway
The National Archives	FO 371/24859	General corresponcence Sweden	Weekly report pressattaché
The National Archives	FO 371/24860	General corresponcence Sweden	Report 11 10 1940
The National Archives	FO 371/24864	General corresponcence Sweden	Report Mallet
The National Archives	FO 371/29408	General corresponcence Sweden	Letter from Mallet to Hopkinson
The National Archives	FO 371/29669	Foreign Press Reading Bureau	
The National Archives	FO 371/33068	Possibility of a German Attack on Sweden	
The National Archives	FO 371/837/308	Trade Negotiations Norway	
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