

# Worlds of Women

**International Material in the Collections of ARAB**



**‘... the Swedish Party Comrades, Of Course, Never Need  
to Be Ashamed for My Sake’:**

**German-Speaking Refugee Women in the Holdings of the Labour  
Movement Archives and Library**

Ulf Jönson



ARAB-WORKING PAPER 6

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INTERNATIONAL MATERIAL IN THE COLLECTIONS OF ARAB

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Editors: Ulf Jönson, Kalle Laajala & Silke Neunsinger

Cover image: Elsa Pittig after her return to Germany (Source: Morgonbris)

Dear Comrade Pittig!

Because Comrade Wallin has retired, it fell to our lot to reply to the letter that you sent to him on the eighth of last month.

Circumstances have meanwhile become such at our organization that with Wallin's retirement and the considerable decline in the number of protégés, the death knell has thus sounded for our committee. We are now in the final phase of disbanding the organization, and in accordance with the decision taken by our highest authority, the committee must not take on any more guarantee commitments for visits and arrivals. Just as the party is itself unable to take on such commitments, there has then of late been an ever-growing number of applications.

We especially regret this in your case, but, unfortunately, as matters stand, exceptions cannot be made. Perhaps, without our assistance, you can, however, find a way to realize your desire to come here.

With our best wishes for your success, we send our kindest regards!<sup>i</sup>

The above-quoted letter concludes the contact between Elsa Pittig and Arbetarrörelsens flyktinghjälp (the Labour Movement Refugee Relief; LMRR). Pittig, who twelve years earlier had asked for and was granted asylum in Sweden, was back in Germany. The very comprehensive personal file that documents large parts of this course of events is a veritable gold mine of the conditions of a female political activist's life in exile.

In recent decades, much research has been published on the German-speaking refugees who lived in exile in Sweden and the other Nordic countries during the 1930s and 1940s. This research has examined the life of a refugee as such, the relationships with the receiving countries, relationships and also conflicts with other refugees, the attitudes of the receiving countries, the measures they took, etc. An important feature of this research has been what consequences this refugeeism has had for all the parties concerned: the experiences the refugees brought with them to the country of exile and perhaps even more the experiences they brought back after their period of exile, the networks and conflicts created and how these can conceivably have influenced the political situation and international relations during the post-war period. How Willy Brandt and Bruno Kreisky in their political work in West Germany and Austria, respectively, had been inspired by their experiences of Swedish democracy has been specifically highlighted. The question has also been posed as to which people remained in the country of asylum and why.<sup>ii</sup>

## **The Traces of Refugee Women**

There is thus a growing body of research. A more modest amount of research has been done on women refugees and their lives in exile and political activities before, during, and after their exile; their role in and outside the family during their period of exile; their networks; and what importance these refugee women and their networks may have played.<sup>iii</sup>

Is the small body of research due to a lack of women in the available archive material? Taking the collections of the Labour Movement Archives and Library (ARAB) in general, and in particular the LMRR archive as the starting point, the aim here is to examine and catalogue what means are available for improving the state of research on women in exile.

It should, in any case, be established from the outset that women are not absent in this history—not in reality and nor in the historical documentation. Hilde Weigel and Gabriela Wilszewski are two examples. Both came on their own to Sweden. The twenty-six-year-old Czech woman Hilde Weigel arrived in Stockholm in November 1938, and there she was entered in the LMRR's registers. She had been active within the *Česká strana sociálně demokratická* (Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party; ČSSD) and before that in its youth organization. As a switchboard operator at a social insurance office, she had belonged to a public-sector workers' union. According to a 'letter of recommendation' designed to facilitate her arrival in Sweden, a comrade in the ČSSD reported that in her job, Weigel had monitored conversations between Nazis in their homes and passed on information about this. On her arrival, a sum of money to be paid out by the LMRR was made available to her by the Czech Refugee Board. When Weigel arrived, she filled in both an 'Erhebungsbogen für Emigranten' (Questionnaire for Emigrants) and a questionnaire about her background, ability to work, and means of supporting herself. Weigel stated that she could contemplate office work, caring and educating children, working as a cosmetics model, crochet work, or factory work. She could also consider retraining and listed a number of occupations too, but agricultural work was, however, not of interest to her. Her file in the LMRR archive contains, apart from these questionnaires, several letters and covers the period between November 1938, when she arrived, and 1946, when she, on separate occasions, requested the remaining money from the amount owed to her in order, among other things, to send the money to needy friends in Czechoslovakia. Suffering from tuberculosis, she was at some point admitted to a sanatorium, but, apart from that, appears to have been employed by *Svenska Metallindustriarbetareförbundet* (the Swedish Metalworkers' Union).<sup>iv</sup>

The fifty-year-old Gabriela Wilszewski, from Hindenburg, Poland, arrived in Sweden with a letter of recommendation issued by the *Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands*

(Socialist Workers' Party of Germany) in Poland, in which it was pointed out that the holder of this letter was the wife of Comrade Max Wilszewski from Hindenburg. Since the dissolution of the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany; SPD), her husband had been conducting illegal activities in Poland. Another letter, this time to 'Comrade Granath', confirms and supplements the information summarized as follows by the LMRR staff in a handwritten annotation on the back of the application form:

Lived in Hindenburg, by the Polish border, from where they were at the heart of leading the work of distributing illegal literature. The fate of the husband and the two children—18 and 20 years old—is unknown. The woman makes a favourable impression and can surely fend for herself.<sup>v</sup>

This was perhaps the correct assessment, because there are no other documents in her personal file.

The Swedish labour movement's organizations and individual actors have often been heavily involved in international matters and firmly stood up for refugees throughout the post-war period, and this involvement is clearly documented everywhere. This is especially true of the personal and political support from many quarters for the Latin Americans who made their way to Sweden and often had their political roots in the Left. However, when it comes to sources for the history of individual refugees or what it meant to live in exile in Sweden, the material on the German-speaking exile during the 1930s and 1940s is unique.

Of the just over 150 international collections at ARAB (of more than 5,000 collections in total), the German-speaking group dominates (43 archives, of which 36 are personal archives). In addition, there are those archives that will be described in greater detail here, and which were to do with the actual reception of refugees. The LMRR was often the first contact that the refugees had with Sweden, and this means their archives are a source for the actual reception of refugees and the best overview of who came here and what happened to them in Sweden. The personal archives are subsequently a result of individual refugees' activities in the country. Moreover, a number of such refugees were relief workers at the Labour Movement Archives and, therefore, saw it as natural to archive their posthumous documents at the institution. Of the personal archives, there are hardly any female ones; one exception is, however, the four-volume archive of the writer Nelly Croner (1894–1978), another is Anna Zammert (1898–1982), whose two-volume personal archive is, along with her husband Paul's, part of the couple's archive. More about this story can be read in Martin Grass' article 'The German-Speaking Émigrés Papers in ARAB's Stores' in *The World in the Basement*, the

guide to the holdings, which was published in conjunction with ARAB's hundredth anniversary in 2002 and is the main gateway to the international holdings of ARAB.<sup>vi</sup>

In light of the above, the archives of the refugee committees are interesting: for one thing, they reflect the contact at the individual level with both women and men, and, for another, not only the most prominent or committed refugees of all and their families, but also the more anonymous ones are found here. The refugee committees were set up in a Sweden which pursued a fairly restrictive refugee policy during the 1930s and 1940s. Refugees were not allowed to enter the country if it was feared that they were going to be an economic burden on society. Therefore, guarantees for the maintenance of refugees were required. Both private individuals and various refugee committees were responsible for this, even if, from 1942–43, the Government appropriated the funds for the reception of refugees. There were at least twenty-eight such committees, each one focused on its political, ethnic, or religious category. Some were voluntary and some received support from their home countries' exile governments. At ARAB, there is, besides the LMRR archive, also the archives of Arbetarrörelsens flyktingkommitté (the Labour Movement Refugee Committee) and Röda hjälpen (Red Aid). However, in addition to that, there were a number of organizations and initiatives, such as Insamlingen för landsflyktiga intellektuella (the Fund for Intellectuals in Exile), Stockholms centrala kommitté för flyktingshjälp (the Stockholm Central Committee for Aid to Refugees), the Mosaiska församlingens hjälpkommitté (the Aid Committee of the Jewish Community), the Svenska Israelsmissionen (the Swedish Israel Mission), and so on.<sup>vii</sup>

### **In Search of the Individual**

By far the most abundant material on private individuals is found in the LMRR archive. The organization was first set up in 1933 as the Fackliga och politiska emigranternas hjälpkommitté (the Relief Committee of Trade Union and Political Émigrés), bankrolled by Landsorganisationen (the Swedish Trade Union Confederation; LO), and with officials appointed by Sveriges socialdemokratiska arbetareparti (the Swedish Social Democratic Party; SAP). They primarily focused their activities on Social Democratic refugees and these were, above all, Germans, Sudeten Germans, and Czechs. The relief came from the unemployment assistance. A more detailed description of the organization and the archive is given at the end of this article. Here, we are interested, above all, in the documents to do with private individuals, namely index cards and personal files. The relief register contains just under five hundred index cards, sorted in alphabetical order, containing general information on the applicants for assistance; many of the cards contain annotations on both the front and

back, and, in some instances, one card has not sufficed for a person. One brief card refers to ‘Amstätter, Andreas, textile worker, with wife and daughter’. Malmö, which is his likely route into Sweden, has been added in pencil. The date 27 December 1938 and the amount SEK 20 (twice) appear on the card. It is more likely that this date refers to the time of the contact with the LMRR and the payment of money than the time of arriving in Sweden. Furthermore, the catalogue card bears the number 616/17, written in red in the top right-hand corner of the card. Each card has a number, but the cards are not in numerical order. There is reason to assume that the cards, which have been put in alphabetical order, refer to a series of files that have been arranged as the applicants for assistance have registered and these have been filed in numerical order. (When working on the order, it has been difficult to discern any such classification, which is why the personal files have also been arranged in alphabetical order in the volumes.) It is also evident from these cards that families rather than private individuals are ‘the subject-matter’ for the LMRR and that the men are ‘main entries’ whilst the wives and children are ‘minor characters’. As has already been shown, there are, however, a number of cards with entries on single women.

A more detailed index card illustrates their usefulness and limitations: shop assistant Fritz Gedeck was born in 1907 in Danzig, was a member of the SPD (1921–1936) and the Deutscher Metallarbeiter-Verband (the German Metalworkers’ Federation; DMV) (1924–1936), and held a Danzig passport (1926–1941). His permanent address in Sweden was Norra Torngatan, c/o Johansson, Lidköping. On 27 September 1937, he found work in Lidköping, but it is not evident from the card what this was. His wife, Irma, née Schmidt, was born in 1907 in Danzig and was also a member of the SPD (1921–1936) and held a Danzig passport (1941). The address given was Birgittagatan 17. It is unclear whether the different addresses represent separate places of residence. Nevertheless, the allowance for them both was paid ten times in 1937 (since their arrival at the end of May) and eleven times in 1938. After that, there are no other annotations on the card—either this is because the couple had moved on or had been able to support themselves.

In his article ‘Den snäva solidariteten’ (The Close Solidarity), which is about the LMRR as well as the relief efforts of Missionsförbundet (the Swedish Missionary Society) and others, Pär Frohnert points out that the typical refugee ‘was a man and that his wife/life companion was an appendage’. Women were accounted for especially when they came on their own, but this was less common.<sup>viii</sup> A quick survey of the various refugee archives shows that Frohnert’s claims are true. The LMRR has a series of personal files that has recently been furnished with a name index, where it is possible to count the number: the index contains

1,383 name entries. Of these, 97 comprise at least one man with at least one woman, whilst 128 comprise single women or, at any rate, the woman appears as the ‘main entry’ since her name comes first on the line. Other name entries are single men or men with other men. There are many sources of error. Elsa Pittig, for example, the addressee in the letter quoted in the introduction, is not in the name index. There are undoubtedly other women who have been accompanied by men but who had not been noted when the counting was done. And it is evident from Mr and Mrs Pittig’s file, which we will look at, that even if the man is the main entry, the wife may have been extremely politically active and also in close contact with the LMRR. Nevertheless, it is absolutely clear that the percentage of men who fled on their own greatly surpasses the number of female counterparts and the presence of women at all in the LMRR’s registers.

### **The Case of Kurt and Elsa Pittig**

The quoted letter, dated 29 March 1949 and addressed to Mrs Else [*sic*] Pittig in Feuchtwangen, Bayern—the US zone, is a draft copy of an outgoing letter that has been kept in the LMRR archive. It is, therefore, not evident who signed the original and sent it to Elsa Pittig, but it appears to be a person who wrote a large number of such letters and never reflected that they probably could have been written in Swedish (or did the letter writer just want to be absolutely sure that all the content was understood without any misunderstandings?).

For the letter was a reply to another one, dated Feuchtwangen, 8 February 1949; written in Swedish; and addressed to ‘Comrade Wallin’, and which was apparently one of the last occasions when the LMRR had contact with Elsa Pittig, who after many years as a refugee in Sweden was now trying to establish a new life in Germany. This correspondence brought to an end a contact that had begun just over twelve years earlier, on 7 December 1936, when Kurt and Elsa Pittig, around fifty and forty years old, respectively, filled in the LMRR’s Questionnaire for Emigrants, which showed that they both came from Dresden and were politically active, Kurt within the SPD and the DMV. On the LMRR’s form, Elsa is said to be an ‘Ehefrau’ (wife), but also a shorthand writer. She too was a member of the SPD (since 1914). This political involvement had forced them to leave Germany as early as 1933, when they escaped to Czechoslovakia. The married couple’s contacts with the LMRR fill a thick file in the organization’s archive; hence, a detailed study would be welcome. Elsa’s (at least gradually) more prominent role appears to be unusual but not totally unique.



After Mr and Mrs Pittig had filled in the LMRR's questionnaire, there follows a four-year gap in the documentation. It is unclear whether this is because they, as refugees, had managed to establish themselves in Sweden and had not required any assistance from the LMRR or parts of the correspondence are missing from the documentation. Nevertheless, the correspondence that followed after that seems, in part, run of the mill and is often about Christmas money; clothes money; help with problems with the authorities, such as renewing the passports; however, there were also some extraordinary requests when the family acquired a lease on a smallholding on an estate outside Stockholm. Over the following years (1940–1943), two or three letters were exchanged each year regarding these matters. The tone of these letters indicates what kind of relationship they had with the people who worked at the LMRR. The married couple occasionally turned up in person at the LMRR. The communication was obviously also made easier by the fact that the LMRR's 'Lieber Willy' (Dear Willy) had a good command of German.

The stay in Sweden undoubtedly meant a change in, but evidently no stop to, their political involvement. On 30 June 1944, a letter arrived from Kurt Pittig to Mr Emil Wallin, executive committee of the SAP. Pittig wanted to provide information about the state of the German overseas association's representation in Sweden, which, he claimed, was collaborating with Communists, etc. Similar letters arrived in January 1945, in which the LMRR was warned that a named person was sending letters with the aim of splitting the SPD and with reference to the refugee office's contact details. Kurt Pittig conducted all of this correspondence, with occasional references to his wife Elsa's bad health. Perhaps somewhat surprising is a letter from Elsa Pittig, typed in Swedish, sent in July 1945, in which she expressed her gratitude for the loyal assistance when her husband died. Only after this does Elsa Pittig appear as the correspondent with the LMRR: she tried (unsuccessfully), with the help of her German friends, to get a new place in the Stockholm area, and later, in 1946, she required financial assistance for her return to Germany. She pointed out that she was destitute and had heard that Sweden wanted to reduce its number of refugees and was, therefore, offering economic assistance for their return. She wanted to receive information from the LMRR about how she could make use of the options available.

The correspondence between Elsa Pittig and the LMRR, from 29 January to 20 September 1946, concerned preparations for her return. She had succeeded in contacting her son (and only here it is evident from the personal file that she had one) and had been informed by him as to the whereabouts of her relatives. In the letter dated 20 September, the arduous journey home is described. Correspondence with the LMRR was maintained for a few more

years up to 1949. Even after her return to Germany, Pittig continued to ask for help with her passport in order to be able to visit again her husband's grave in Sweden, but she also provided information about life in Germany, what work she was doing at the time, and that her son worked for the news agency Deutsche Nachrichtenagentur. There is also an article attached which he had written about the reconstruction. In one letter, she acted as a suppliant on behalf of two German comrades: they had been Social Democratic functionaries in Dresden and had fallen on hard times. Evidently, she also got relief packages for these comrades. In 1948, she wanted to travel to Sweden and in that case needed Swedish money, something she hoped to earn by writing an article and sending it to the magazine *Morgonbris* (this was, however, not published). In the letter to the LMRR, she also offered, in return for money, to speak at meetings and inform the Swedish party comrades:

Over the decades, I have been a successful speaker at public and party meetings in Germany. Since my return to Germany, I have spoken at two public political meetings in Feuchtwangen and have been asked to speak in March at a 'Europa-Union' meeting in Feuchtwangen. This also demonstrates my present competence as a speaker. My knowledge of the Swedish language being sufficient, I expect that I could, without any problem, venture to also speak in front of Swedish party comrades and women's clubs. I am in the middle of my practical life; I don't just talk, but have really valuable experiences to reveal and the Swedish party comrades, of course, never need to be ashamed for my sake.

Elsa Pittig's last letter is sombre. It was sent in February 1949 and she had been refused permission to move closer to her son. Instead, she intended to move to the Soviet zone, where her parents and her husband's relatives lived, despite fearing that she would then disappear 'behind the Iron Curtain'. The letter contains another request for money in order to travel to Sweden. She gave assurances that friends would bear the cost of her stay. The last document in the file is a draft letter informing that 'Genosse Wallin' (Comrade Wallin) has retired and the work of the LMRR was being discontinued. The committee could no longer assist by being the guarantor for arrivals since there was a very large number who wanted such sureties. Exceptions could not be made.

It is certainly true that the personal file of Mr and Mrs Pittig's life before, during, and after their exile in Sweden is an exceptionally rich source of information, and there is no guaranteeing that studies of other files on either women or men will be just as fruitful. However, this example as well as the two previously mentioned women Hilde Weigel and Gabriela Wilszewski show, nevertheless, what kind of knowledge can be obtained by means of the LMRR archive and, moreover, it gives reason for some reflections.

The LMRR's personal files and indexes contain much biographical information. Here, you find out which people had to flee from Central European dictatorships and why, and their geographical as well as political roots. Moreover, their political roots were generally of a social democratic nature. Other relief organizations, e.g. Red Aid, criticised, of course, this one-sided party affiliation among those whom the LMRR dealt with. However, as we have seen, it was not the case that only people with a party-political background came—both male and female refugees with even various types of trade union experience. In the LMRR's Questionnaire for Emigrants, a refugee route that had not led directly to Sweden can often also be discerned. When the political climate worsened in Germany, it was usually the case that people fled first to other Central European countries, and as democracies collapsed, they moved on. Mr and Mrs Pittig came via Czechoslovakia.

Through the letters and applications to the LMRR, the everyday problems in the life of a refugee also emerge: how they acclimatize; how they find somewhere to live and a way to support themselves, and so on; which strategies were available in order to get by; and how the women/refugees employed these strategies. The files can thus function as a documentation of life as a refugee in Sweden during the inter-war period and the Second World War. This documentation also includes political activities, and as is evident from the Pittigs' correspondence, even the political networks of refugees can emerge.

With the work of the LMRR going right up to 1950, you find in the archive evidence of the return to 'normality', people returning to their home countries or remaining in Sweden, what help they required, and how their lives turned out. Elsa Pittig's attempt to find her bearings in the new Germany, with family and friends in different occupation zones, provides concrete insights into everyday life and necessity. As previously mentioned, the numerous German refugee archives at ARAB bear witness to those who remained in Sweden and their subsequent lives. Here, it would be interesting to continue to follow the evidence from the material in the LMRR archive in other organizations to see how prolonged the contacts between the new life and the old country of exile were and, if so, what shape they took. For example, can we find more on Elsa Pittig in the archive of Sveriges Socialdemokratiska Kvinnoförbund (the National Federation of Social Democratic Women in Sweden; SSKF)?

The long connection between the LMRR and Mr and Mrs Pittig shows another interesting relationship that may provoke some thinking. As long as Kurt Pittig was alive, it was he who, on behalf of the family, had contact with the LMRR, and this part of the correspondence gives an obviously questionable impression that the wife was a reserved minor character in delicate health and without any real political identity of her own while the

husband was responsible for the political involvement. After Kurt's death, Elsa—as far as the archive documents can give an answer—appears in somewhat of a new light, with her persistent and active attempt to influence the LMRR to meet her needs and interests, but, above all, with her own political involvement and contacts in both Germany and Sweden. If her husband had not died, then this picture might have never emerged. Other personal files can possibly provide another picture, but what is probably reflected here is a division of roles within the family, where different people maintain contacts with various parts of the surrounding world. We should not allow ourselves to be fooled by the silence.

### **Carrying on the Search...**

There were many relief committees in Sweden during the inter-war period and the archives of many of them are kept at ARAB. These are listed below. They have had different focuses and methods of working and, therefore, contain somewhat different kinds of documents. The LMRR is unique in that it has this considerable number of personal files on refugees. In the list below, some of the most important are highlighted and commented on briefly. A more complete list of these archives can be found in the previously mentioned article by Martin Grass.

*Archive 4246, the LMRR*, described in the article, contains approximately fifty volumes, a list of which has recently been made and has therefore been divided into series according to the national archival system. Series that are of interest are index cards and personal files on refugees; there is, however, also correspondence with other relief organizations. The Relief Committee of Trade Union and Political Émigrés was set up on 15 May 1933 by LO and the SAP. LO was responsible for financing the assistance, the Social Democrats the administrative resources. From 1939, there were also government funds. A chairman and a secretary, both of whom were SAP members, headed the organization. In 1938, the name was changed to the LMRR.<sup>ix</sup>

The LMRR worked very closely with the government agencies, which could turn to it for information about refugees. A person who had been accepted as a refugee by the LMRR did not usually have any problems being granted political asylum in the country.<sup>x</sup> After the German invasion of the border regions of Czechoslovakia in 1938, the secretary of the LMRR, Axel Granath, went to Prague himself to 'choose' suitable Social Democratic refugees who would be allowed to come to Sweden.<sup>xi</sup> Relations between the LMRR and Red Aid, whose focus was on Communists, were frosty. The LMRR came under heavy criticism from Red Aid for its one-sided focus on Social Democrats, even though, for example, the

financing came mainly from LO, which, of course, also had Communists among its members.<sup>xii</sup>

The financial assistance that the LMRR gave came from the unemployment assistance and was not huge. To be accepted as a refugee and, with that, entitled to assistance required a need for assistance as well as the applicant being a member of any labour movement organization—political or trade union—and because of their work within it they were being persecuted in their home country. As has been mentioned, the LMRR focused, in actual fact, primarily on Social Democratic refugees. In 1937, the number of people who received assistance from the LMRR was 132, and, in 1939, it had risen to 570. Germans, Czechs, and Sudeten Germans dominated, and among the refugees there was a clear male dominance.<sup>xiii</sup>

The LMRR archive has been arranged in sections. Moreover, it is part of the inventory of German material at ARAB that was carried out in 1979 by Martin Grass at the request of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, but most recently and most thoroughly in the spring of 2011 by the trainee archivist Michael Horvath. The archive contains fifty-four volumes divided into eight series, where the emphasis is on material on individual refugees (three volumes with index cards and twenty-three with personal files, in alphabetical order according to the surname of the applicant for assistance, and the first of these volumes, F1:1, has been furnished with a personal index). Reports of proceedings, annual reports, and accounting documents are obvious features; however, apart from the personal files, of particular interest are thirteen volumes of correspondence with government agencies, other refugee committees, different kinds of refugee associations (Sudeten German, German, Austrian, and Latvian), foreign labour and refugee organizations, etc.

*Archive 5046, Demokratiska hjälpkommittén för Tyskland (the Democratic Relief Committee for Germany)*, originally Hjälpkommittén för tyska och statslösa offer för koncentrationslägren (the Relief Committee for German and Stateless Victims of the Concentration Camps), was founded in 1945 and did not work with refugees in Sweden, but organized relief supplies for the Germany that was starting to be built after the war. Nevertheless, there is material on people since the committee's relief supplies were, among other things, intended for homes for mothers, children's homes, and youth homes. Thank-you letters and children's drawings are some of the features in the archive's correspondence. The whole archive comprises thirteen volumes.

*Archive 2266, Internationella Röda hjälpen, svenska sektionen (the International Red Aid, Swedish section)*, was formed in 1930, primarily to help Finnish refugees who had been expelled by the Lapua Movement. The archive contains lists of refugees who had received

assistance, including information on their nationality. Women are also on these lists, which evidently include families as well. However, there is relatively scant information on individual people.

*Archive 6431, Sygruppen hjälpsamhet, Enskede (the Assistance Sewing Group, Enskede)*, one volume, was active between 1933 and 1952 and initially focused on sewing; knitting; collecting money, clothes, household utensils, provisions, etc., in order to help disadvantaged families in the Stockholm suburb of Enskede. However, during and after the Second World War, it then focused on the rest of Europe and worked with Rädde Barnen (Save the Children) and Svenska Europahjälpen (the Swedish European Relief), and others. In the context, the archive is, if anything, of interest due to the profile of women being on the helper aspect. There is no personal information to speak of in the holdings.

There are also some *relief committees* whose focus was on Finland and the children of Leningrad (during the long siege), but these have principally worked with various kinds of collections and relief supplies. Their archives do not contain any personal information.

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## References

<sup>i</sup> Letter, 29 March 1949, personakt [Personal File] Pittig, *Arbetarrörelsens flyktinghjälp* [The Labour Movement Refugee Relief] serie [Series] F1, Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek [Labour Movement Archives and Library] The original text reads:

Werte Genossin Pittig!

Da Genosse Wallin in Pension gegangen ist, erhielten wir Ihren unterm 8.v.Ms. an ihn gerichteten Brief zur Beantwortung überwiesen.

Inzwischen haben sich die Verhältnisse bei uns so entwickelt, dass mit Wallins Ausscheidens und der bedeutend zurückgegangenen Zahl unsrer Schützlinge auch für unser Komitee die Sterbeglocke geläutet hat. Wir befinden uns in letzten Stadium der Abwicklung unsrer Tätigkeit und lt. Beschluss unsrer höchsten Instanz darf das Komitee keinerlei Garantieverpflichtungen für Besuchs- und Einreisen mehr übernehmen. Ebenso wenig kann sich die Partei selbst solcher Verpflichtungen mehr annehmen, bei der in letzter Zeit immer grösser gewordenen Anzahl derartiger Ansuchen.

Wir bedauern dies besonders in Ihrem Falle, aber leider liegen die Dinge so, dass Ausnahmen von der Regel nicht gemacht werden können. Aber vielleicht findet sich für Sie doch noch eine Lösung ohne unsre Mithilfe Ihren Wunsch nach hier zu kommen zu realisieren.

Mit den besten Wünschen für Ihr Wohlergehen, zeichnen wir mit besten Grüßen!

<sup>ii</sup> Helmut Müssener, *Exil in Schweden: politische und kulturelle Emigration nach 1933* (München, 1974); Klaus Misgeld, *Die "Internationale Gruppe demokratischer Sozialisten" in Stockholm 1942-1945: zur sozialistischen Friedensdiskussion während des Zweiten Weltkrieges* (Bonn-Bad Godesberg, 1976); idem,

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‘Willy Brandt och Sverige – Sverige och Willy Brandt’, in Ingvar Carlsson & al., *Willy Brandt från Hammarbyhöjden* (Stockholm, 2003); idem, ‘Politik för Österrike: Bruno Kreisky och Sverige’, *Arbetshistoria* no. 125 (1/2008); Ragnar Björk & Alf W. Johansson (eds.), *Samtidshistoria och politik: vänbok till Karl Molin* (Stockholm, 2004); Jan Peters, *Exilland Schweden: deutsche und schwedische Antifaschisten 1933-1945* (Berlin, 1984); Hans Uwe Petersen, *Hitlerflüchtlinge im Norden: Asyl und politisches Exil 1933-1945* (Kiel, 1991); Einhart Lorenz, Klaus Misgeld, Helmut Müssener & Hans Uwe Petersen (eds.), *Ein sehr trübes Kapitel? Hitlerflüchtlinge im nordeuropäischen Exil 1933 bis 1950* (Hamburg, 1998). This list is not intended to be exhaustive. In Klas Åmark, *Att bo granne med ondskan: Sveriges förhållande till nazismen, Nazityskland och Förintelsen* (Stockholm, 2011), the current literature is cited, in particular in the section on Swedish refugee policy and reception of refugees between 1933 and 1947 (pp. 463–637).

<sup>iii</sup> Tina Jacobsen, ‘Frauen im dänischen Exil 1933-1945’, in *Ein sehr trübes Kapitel*, pp. 125–156; Birgit S. Nielsen, ‘Frauen im Exil in Dänemark nach 1933’, in *Hitlerflüchtlinge im Norden*, pp. 145–166; Siegfried Mielke (ed.), *Gewerkschafterinnen im NS-Staat: Verfolgung, Widerstand, Emigration* (Essen, 2008); Thomas Pusch, *Politisches Exil als Migrationsgeschichte: Schleswig-Holsteiner Emigrantinnen und das skandinavische Exil 1933-1960* (Hamburg, 2003).

<sup>iv</sup> Personakt no. 564 Hilde Weigel, *Arbetarrörelsens flyktinghjälp* serie F1, Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek

<sup>v</sup> Personakt no. 1093 Gabriela Wilzewski, *Arbetarrörelsens flyktinghjälp* serie F1, Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek

<sup>vi</sup> Martin Grass, ‘The German-Speaking Émigrés Papers in ARAB’s Stores’, in *The World in the Basement*, (Stockholm, 2002), pp. 25–34.

<sup>vii</sup> Müssener, *Exil in Schweden*, pp. 77–91; Pär Frohnert, ‘Den snäva solidariteten: Arbetarrörelsens flyktinghjälp, Svenska missionsförbundet och flyktingarna 1933-1945’, *Arbetshistoria* no. 118-119 (2-3 2006), pp. 37–38. On Red Aid, see Marc Engström, ‘Svenska Röda Hjälpen 1930-1939: en undersökning i hur flyktingorganisationen Röda hjälpen bedrev sitt hjälp- och propagandaarbete och om hur det ledde till förändringar inom organisationen’ (B-uppsats [B Essay], stencil [handout], Historiska institutionen, Stockholms universitet, 2005).

<sup>viii</sup> Frohnert (2006) p. 38.

<sup>ix</sup> Müssener (1974) p. 77.

<sup>x</sup> Müssener (1974) p. 79.

<sup>xi</sup> Peters (1984) p. 78.

<sup>xii</sup> Frohnert (2006) pp. 38–40.

<sup>xiii</sup> Müssener (1974) pp. 77–78.