

SWEDEN: LESSONS FOR AMERICA?

A Personal Exploration by Johan Norberg

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ERIE, PA (August, 2018) -- It's been suggested that Americans would be better off if the United States was more like Sweden. Do the Swedes know something that we don't?

Sweden: Lessons for America? A Personal Exploration by Johan Norberg delves into the economic and social landscape of the Swedish scholar's homeland. Join him to see that the lessons to be learned from Sweden may not be the ones you expect.

The one-hour documentary, which feeds on Saturday, Sept. 8 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. ET/HD04, accompanies Norberg on a journey through the history of Sweden's economic rise. The program illuminates key ideas and enterprises that sparked the reform and continue to help Sweden maintain its lofty economic position, including freedom of the press, free trade, innovation, technology, relief from tax burdens and labor strife.

"I want to share how we Swedes grew our nation from a truly impoverished country to becoming the fourth most prosperous country in the world," said Norberg, who also served as executive editor for the program. "I think our experience offers lessons for other countries around the world, even the U.S."

Norberg unfolds Sweden's history as he drives, ferries and bicycles his way through modern day Sweden, meeting people along the way who help enlighten aspects of the prosperous country's economic sensibilities.

His journey begins on a ferry to a region of Finland which was part of the vast Swedish Empire from the 16th-18th centuries, to introduce viewers to Anders Chydenius, a preacher-turned-politician, author and economist. Chydenius is perhaps most remembered as an outspoken defender of freedom of trade and industry, religion and press. He is credited with Sweden becoming the first country in the world to have freedom of the press written into its constitution...25 years before the Bill of Rights secured that same freedom for Americans.

Back in Stockholm, Norberg visits the offices of *Aftonbladet*, the first and largest Swedish newspaper and one that attacked abuses of power. Founded in 1830, the newspaper became a bastion of freedom of the press, having been shut down by the Swedish monarchy 26 times in its early days. Today, the *Aftonbladet* continues its mission under the leadership of its first female publisher.

Traveling north of Stockholm, Norberg meets with Peter Lageson, CEO of the innovative Swedish company, SenseAir. Peter's father ran a manufacturing business in the 1970s and 1980s and Peter compares business life in his father's time to today. During that time, the stressful business environment under the old tax and labor policies led some notable people and businesses, such as IKEA and Ingmar Bergman to relocate to another country.

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Norberg trades four wheels for two as he bicycles through Malmo to Hövding, makers of the world's first airbag bicycle helmet. Putting the helmet and his perfectly coiffed hair to the test, Norberg demonstrates the innovative technology that makes the helmet considerably safer than hard helmets. He discusses the outdated Consumer Protection Act regulations, which prohibit the Hövding from being sold in the U.S.

Returning to the public school he attended as a teenager, Norberg sees that it has become a private school and educates a wide socio-economic student body. The success is due in part to a nationwide school vouchers system. He talks pensions with senior Swedes in a riverside floating sauna, helps collect food and oil waste from restaurants to be converted into bio-fuel and climbs to the rooftops of Stockholm.

"We learned a hard lesson from our brief socialist experiment of the 1970s," said Norberg. "Join me as we travel around my home country and through time to understand the mistakes we made and how we recovered."

Sweden: Lessons for America? is a production of Free To Choose Media. James Tusty and Maureen Castle Tusty are producers. Thomas Skinner and Rob Chatfield are executive producers. Major funding is provided by DKT Liberty Project, Donald and Paula Smith Family Foundation, L.E. Phillips Family Foundation, Chris and Melodie Rufer and Sarah Scaife Foundation.

About Johan Norberg

International commentator Johan Norberg is an author, presenter and editor whose focus is globalization, entrepreneurship and individual liberty. He serves as the executive editor at Free To Choose Media and has presented nearly a dozen documentaries for public television in the U.S. He has authored several books, including his newest, [Progress: Ten Reasons to Look Forward to the Future](#). His book [In Defense of Global Capitalism](#), originally published in Swedish in 2001, has since been published in over twenty different countries. A Senior Fellow at Cato Institute, Norberg's articles and opinion pieces appear regularly in both Swedish and international newspapers, and he is a regular commentator and contributor on television and radio around the world.

About Free To Choose Media

[Free To Choose Media](#) produces thought-provoking public television programs and series, offering non-partisan, powerful stories that advocate for the well-being of every individual, as well as vibrant, fresh perspectives on a range of vital global and national issues. For more than 30 years, the Free To Choose production teams have traveled the world to explore topics such as the economic roots of the Arab Spring and the inspiring stories of entrepreneurs raising themselves and their communities out of poverty, and a look at how innovation and new technologies may be the answer to the world's growing energy needs. Headquartered in Erie, PA, Free To Choose Media is a television production initiative of Free To Choose Network, a global media company. For more information, visit the website at www.FreeToChooseMedia.org.

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