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## Never Say Never To Nato

A Qualitative Analysis on How the Social Democrats Communicated their Fundamental Shift  
Towards Applying for Swedish Nato Membership

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## *Foreword*

*This thesis began when the winter finally started melting away and Sweden officially joined Nato this year in March. When the debates of different opinions on the matter started circulating, it led us to wonder - How did the Politicians actually communicate this shift to the public? The writing process then gained its first momentum when we were fortunate enough to be assigned our exceptional supervisor, Howard Nothhaft. His enthusiasm for our chosen subject and his encouraging words greatly motivated us to delve deeper into the research. We are immensely grateful to Howard for his guidance and support throughout this journey. His assistance has been instrumental in the completion of our work.*

*Thank you Howard, for your invaluable contribution!*

*Lastly, we affirm that both authors have made equal contributions to this study.*

Lund, May 14th, 2024

Alexandra Buskas



Louise Talmet



# Abstract

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## **Never Say Never To Nato**

This thesis investigates the communication strategies employed by the Social Democratic Party regarding their significant shift in stance on Nato membership over a seven-month period, influenced by Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24th, 2022. The two research questions examined are how this radical shift has been discursively justified and framed, as well as how the tone and content have changed as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24th, 2022. Key political figures analyzed include former Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson and former Defense Minister Peter Hultqvist. Employing a qualitative case study approach, the research utilizes a thematic discourse analysis with framing as the primary theoretical framework. It considers the historical context of the Social Democrats' longstanding commitment to military non-alignment as the optimal strategy for Sweden's security. The study draws on prior research that uses the fear of abandonment to explain the radical shift, examines strategic communication within international relations, and analyzes Angela Merkel's significant policy change regarding nuclear power. The findings suggest a notable transformation in the discourse's tone and language, highlighting that the shift was framed differently pre- and post-invasion, while the justification for the shift was minimally communicated and supported by other factors. Additionally, the discussion highlights the effectiveness of the strategic communication tools used during the shift. However, it raises questions about the justification of the shift, given that it was not communicated transparently. This study contributes to strategic communication by illustrating how political communication must evolve rapidly in response to critical events.

*Keywords:* Nato, Framing, Diagnostic Framing, Prognostic Framing, Motivational Framing, International Relations, Public Policy, Social Democrats, Fundamental shift, Political communication, Strategic Communication, Discourse

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# Sammanfattning

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## **Säg Aldrig Aldrig Till Nato**

Den här avhandlingen undersöker kommunikationsstrategierna som använts av Socialdemokraterna under deras betydande omställning mot ett medlemskap i Nato under en sju månaders period, påverkad av Rysslands invasion av Ukraina den 24e Februari 2022.

Studien fokuserar på två forskningsfrågor som undersöker hur den radikala förändringen diskursivt har rättfärdigats och inramats, samt hur tonen och innehållet har förändrats till följd av Rysslands invasion av Ukraina den 24 februari 2022. De politiker som analyseras inkluderar tidigare statsminister Magdalena Andersson och tidigare försvarsminister Peter Hultqvist. Genom en kvalitativ fallstudieansats så har en tematisk diskursanalys används med gestaltningsteorin som primärt teoretiskt ramverk. Den tar hänsyn till det historiska sammanhanget av Socialdemokraternas långvariga åtagande till militär alliansfrihet som den optimala strategin för Sveriges säkerhet. Studien bygger på tidigare forskning som använder fear of abandonment-teorin för att förklara den radikala förändringen, undersöker strategisk kommunikation inom internationella relationer och analyserar Angela Merkels liknande policyförändring angående kärnkraft. Studiens resultat tyder på en märkbar förändring i Andersson och Hultqvists diskurs, ton och språk, vilket framhäver att skiftet inramades olika före och efter invasionen. Motiveringen för förändringen kommuniceras minimalt och rättfärdigades av andra, utomstående faktorer. Diskussionen visar också att de strategiska kommunikationsverktyg som användes under skiftet var effektiva. Den väcker däremot frågor om huruvida skiftet var berättigat, med tanke på att det inte kommuniceras på ett transparent sätt. Den här studien bidrar till strategisk kommunikation genom att illustrera hur politisk kommunikation måste utvecklas snabbt som svar på kritiska händelser.

*Nyckelord:* Nato, Gestaltningsteorin, Diagnostisk gestaltning, Prognostisk gestaltning, Motiverande gestaltning, Internationella relationer, Public Policy, Socialdemokraterna, Fundamentalt skifte, Politisk kommunikation, Strategisk Kommunikation, Diskurs

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# 1. Introduction

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*In the subsequent chapter, the background of the study is introduced followed by its problematization. Additionally, the study's problematization, objectives, research questions, and the empirical material that underpins our analysis is outlined. Finally, the limitations of the study are discussed.*

## 1.1. Background

For many years, Sweden's culture and society have been shaped by socialist values, emphasizing peace, neutrality, and military non-alignment. These principles have been strongly advocated by the Social Democratic party, contributing to Sweden's reputation as a welfare state. Since its founding in 1889, the Social Democratic Party has consistently prioritized Sweden's peace by avoiding military alliances with other nations. This approach has contributed to Sweden's longstanding foreign and security policy of non-alignment, aimed at declaring neutrality in the event of war. This doctrine has been a core value for both the Social Democrats and Sweden for over 200 years. (Socialdemokraterna, 2024) The stance was also characterized by the intentions of maximizing Sweden's chances of staying out of shifting military alliances and conflicts (Brommesson et al. 2022), particularly during the World Wars and Cold War.

The preconditions for Sweden's approach towards the policy of neutrality was formulated and interpreted with a commitment to maintain sovereignty and further emphasize balance and caution in their international relations. However, these values of being neutral rapidly changed for the Social Democratic party during 2022 after Russia invaded Ukraine (Socialdemokraterna, 2022). The decision to eventually apply for Nato membership represented a profound transformation in Sweden's foreign policy. This can also be interpreted as an adaptation to the requirements of the modern security environment. Nevertheless, this shift has contributed to a great need for explanations and huge communication efforts for the politicians within the party.

Recently, Sweden achieved a significant milestone on March 7th 2024 when joining one of the world's largest international defense alliances encompassing countries from Europe and North America (Regeringskansliet, 2024), by officially becoming the 32nd member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (abbreviation used: Nato). Nato aims to contribute to global peace and stability, and safeguard the security and freedom of all the member countries through military and political means, including a collective defense ensuring that no member country need to rely solely on their own national capabilities in order to meet their security objectives in regards to article 5 (Nato, n.d).

The last time a Nato membership was outspokenly and widely considered by Sweden was during the Cold War, when all of its neighboring countries, except for Finland, joined the alliance (Nato, 2024). Despite this, Sweden chose to remain consistent, concluding that it was safer to remain unaligned. However, despite the Cold War directly affecting and involving more countries, Sweden has opted to join the alliance now. It is important to take into consideration that not joining previously has been a collective decision made by the Swedish parliament, despite the fact that other parties have argued in favor of the alliance well in advance. (Kiderlin, 2024)

The initial moves toward this membership were initiated under former Prime Minister Magdalena Anderssons governancy, part of the Social Democratic Party. This marked a significant shift from the earlier position of Sweden's Social Democratic government. Previously, in November 2021, former Defense Minister Peter Hultqvist, also from the Social Democrats, asserted that Sweden would not pursue such a path under their administration (see Appendix 1). Three months later, during a press conference on the 24th of February 2022, a journalist asked Magdalena Andersson if it were time for reconsideration regarding Sweden's position on a Nato membership. Andersson answered: "In this situation, it is important that Sweden's long-standing security policy remains firm. That we are predictable and clear about our security policy, this is not a time for any kind of wobbliness." (see Appendix 5). However, approximately one month later, on March 30th, 2022, she made it clear during an interview with Swedish television that she does not exclude a Nato membership in any way (SVT, 2022).

Two months later, on May 15th 2022, Andersson and the government completely shifted its stance and officially applied for Swedish Nato membership. The aggressive action of Russia's

invasion of Ukraine significantly deteriorated the security situation around Sweden, forcing the Swedish government to reconsider its security approach (CNN, 2022). This reevaluation ultimately determined that joining Nato would be the best alternative to ensure Sweden's security (Nato, 2024). This radical shift was defended by Peter Hultqvist stating, "I may not be known for changing my political position very often, but sometimes it is necessary. [...] 'You have one point of view until you have another'." (Dala-Demokraten, 2022).

On the morning show *Nyhetsmorgon* on March 8th, 2024, Magdalena Andersson was interviewed about the sudden shift towards a Nato membership. The hosts questioned her about the abrupt change in her party's stance on the issue, to which she acknowledged the sudden shift but cautioned against interpreting the situation in that manner (*Nyhetsmorgon*, 2024). It is both common and expected for politicians to change their opinions; however, the strategic manner in which this shift is communicated is of critical importance. The outcome of the situation and how it has been communicated will influence and determine the subsequent course of events following. This event represents an exceptional and profound incident that has significantly shaped the Swedish political landscape. It has also tested political communication strategies during a period of rapid change management, where quick responses, effective solutions and strategic communication are crucial. Even today, Andersson struggles to acknowledge the abrupt change in position. Magdalena Andersson and the Social Democrats did not win reelection in the subsequent election.

As a sudden shift like this is atypical in the realms of change management and political communication, the following study will delve into the radical shift from a communicative standpoint, exploring the complexity of the messaging, the strategic narrative evolution, and the implications for political discourse. Social movements like this one and known individuals in the public sphere are essential elements within a context where strategic communication is intentionally utilized. This type of communication is vital for the continuous survival and prosperity of these entities (Nothhaft et al, 2018), underscoring the significance of this phenomenon and the fundamental shift from how the Social Democratic policy has been communicated and its pertinence to strategic communication efforts.

## 1.2. Problematization



In recent years, society has navigated through a series of crises, ranging from climate change and a global pandemic to escalating conflicts around the world. These challenges have necessitated a dynamic shift in political agendas to adapt and respond at a pace commensurate with the urgency of each crisis. As we continue to face new challenges, it is imperative for political strategies to evolve rapidly to address the changing landscape of contemporary society. When examining the difficulties that emerge when politicians are forced to make swift decisions, there can be significant drawbacks in their communication strategies, which may lead to negative outcomes. The historical evolution within Sweden and the Social Democratic Party serves as a significant case study in this area, demonstrating the vital role of communication dynamics during sudden political changes in times of crisis. In today's rapidly digitizing society, with misinformation and information overload spreading faster than ever, the importance of what is said and how it is communicated has never been greater. This is particularly crucial when societal pressures demand swift action from politicians, necessitating effective management of political communication. Given these dynamics, it is essential for those in the field of strategic communication to understand how communication strategies unfold during significant political shifts, and how to effectively handle the communication in such change management scenarios that arise in these critical situations.

### 1.3. Aim of The Study

The objective of this qualitative study is to examine how two leading politicians communicated a significant political shift in strategy, using Sweden's Nato membership as the case study. This research seeks to enhance our understanding of the strategic choices made in the political communication surrounding this issue. The study will concentrate on two key figures: Magdalena Andersson, the former Prime Minister and current leader of the Social Democratic Party, and Peter Hultqvist, the former Defense Minister, who is also affiliated with the Social Democrats. The study will research how they communicated the total reverse of direction in their politics, from being a party who promoted military non-alignment to radically changing their politics when joining Nato. Furthermore, the study seeks to build upon existing research on political communication by examining how the change in policy was communicated to the public and identifying lessons from the choices made in this communication process. The research could also enhance our comprehension of the

argumentation tactics employed during transitions in political and public communication, which could be highly valuable in today's volatile and rapidly evolving political landscape.

#### 1.4. Research Questions

The following research questions have been formulated for the study:

1. *How did Magdalena Andersson and Peter Hultqvist discursively justify and frame the radical shift in their political stance on military alignment?*
2. *How have the tone and content by Magdalena Andersson and Peter Hultqvist changed as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24th, 2022?*

#### 1.5. Limitations

We have acknowledged some limitations during our research which will be outlined and discussed below. Understanding these constraints is crucial for interpreting the results accurately and for guiding future research in this area. We aim to provide a transparent analysis of the factors that may have influenced our findings and the potential areas where the study could be improved.

##### *1.5.1. Insufficient Data On the Official Website Of the Social Democrats*

In the course of the research, challenges were encountered when gathering data on the political shift from the official website of the Social Democratic Party. The primary issue revolved around the lack of comprehensive information regarding their former stance on military non-alignment and Nato membership, contrasting with the newly communicated positions that diverge from past viewpoints. Furthermore, the inadequacy of their communication strategies during this policy transition simultaneously has restricted the ability to substantiate claims of inconsistency between their current and previous statements. This limitation has been partially addressed by obtaining previous press conferences from government offices, which detail their earlier foundational stances on the topic. The press conferences that previously were easily accessed through their open archives have been removed. However, these press conferences, which appendices 4 and 5 are transcribed from,

are accessible by contacting [rk.arkiv@regeringskansliet.se](mailto:rk.arkiv@regeringskansliet.se), which also is how they were found for this study.

### *1.5.2. Finland's Nato Membership*

The choice for Sweden to seek a Nato membership was notably impacted by Finland's concurrent application, given the close alliance between the two nations. Nevertheless, this study concentrates exclusively on the manner in which Sweden's Social Democratic Party communicated this policy shift, thereby excluding the context of Finland's application (Jarl, 2023). This scope limitation is intentional, as the study is centered on strategic communication rather than on geopolitical dynamics, indicating that the geopolitical aspects would not contribute to addressing the study's research questions. The decision is also intentional as Finland has had their own, partly specific, circumstances which Sweden does not fully share. The time limit of this thesis has also impacted the choice to delineate Finland's stance to Nato.

## 2. Previous Research

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*In the upcoming chapter, an exploration of prior research related to the Fear of Abandonment as the explanation to the Social Democratic Radical Shift, Strategic Communication within International relations, as well as review previous studies on Angela Merkels' swift change of policy regarding nuclear power will be made. The purpose of this chapter is to showcase the existing body of work within the pertinent research area and to further elaborate on the identified research gap.*

### 2.1. Fear of Abandonment Explaining the Social Democratic Radical Shift

Previous studies have examined the Social Democrats' dramatic shift toward applying for Nato membership in Sweden. These studies primarily focused on different aspects, only briefly addressing the communication strategies involved. Despite this, the research has made several significant contributions to understanding the issue. The author Sizar Noori (2024) highlights the geopolitical nature of the shift in the light of the fear of abandonment theory, meaning that the Social Democratic Party's decision in one aspect originated from the fear of Sweden being left out of the alliance to fend for themselves. Noori (2024) also highlights that this fear of abandonment was strengthened by the new safety challenges that occurred during the international crisis of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The security dilemma Noori (2024) brings forward in the case of the Social Democratic Party's shift, is furthermore something that Glenn H. Snyder (1984) previously has researched. He argues that every state in an anarchic system will feel the need for a defense, not because they feel threatened, but for the sole reason of fear that another state's peaceful intentions might change. As a result, several states on the international arena will build up defenses, trying to match the power of each other, to not possibly end up in an unprecedented position (Snyder, 1984). Leaning on this theory, the alliance of Nato supports the idea of nations building up a greater security system during peacetime in case of a sudden change in the security landscape.

## 2.2. Strategic Communication in International Relations

A study conducted by the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence highlights the critical role of strategic communication in international relations, emphasizing the importance of rhetorical arguments. Frost and Michelsen (2017) further elaborate on this by explaining how these arguments are specifically crafted to manipulate by appealing to relevant emotions within a narrative, while strategically focusing on only parts of the story rather than presenting a complete picture. They also agree that this involves concealing the implications of a particular narrative or effectively suppressing other pertinent arguments that should be discussed. From this perspective, strategic communication can be viewed as the employment of rhetorical devices that result in contextual truths where definitive conclusions are unattainable. Frost and Michelsen (2017) further describe the international society of Sovereign states as a context where strategic communication is executed. This setting is recognized as a structured social arrangement, defining the participants, the claims they can assert, the claims they must acknowledge from others, and the actions they can undertake. These frameworks can also be manipulated through strategic communication in international relations to portray actions as more aligned with international norms compared to those of their counterparts. This could potentially allow the politicians to cover up their own (short-term) failures, or to reframe these failures in a more positive light (Frost & Michelsen, 2017). When examining how the radical shift has been communicated by the Social Democrats, this is an important aspect to keep in mind, as communication that does not align with a strategic sensitivity could lead to long lasting negative consequences for those involved. The previous research presented above showcases that fear of abandonment has been a crucial part in the Social Democratic radical shift. It is also evident that international relations and norms are critical factors that require to be strategically communicated correctly. This will further be explored to determine how, and whether, this has been achieved in the communication of this radical shift.

## 2.3. Angela Merkel's "energiewende" on Nuclear Power

Following the Fukushima Nuclear disaster in March 2011, previous German Chancellor Angela Merkel changed her mind in 24 hours and chose to abandon Germany's use of nuclear power in the next three months (Federal Office for the Safety of Nuclear Waste Management, 2024). Merkel has long before this been highly advocating for the efficiency of the use of

nuclear power plants, both from a political standpoint and supported by her doctorate in quantum chemistry. Prior to the Fukushima disaster, a large part of the German population was strongly opposed to the use of nuclear power, but the disaster accelerated the need for reconsideration while reinforcing the anti-nuclear advocacy of the public. It can not be proven if it was the pressure of the public or the realization of negative consequences nuclear power might cause that made Merkel change her mind, but she made a swift and fast decision to start the phase-out. (Murray, 2020)

This swift action and radical shift in her policy would undeniably not go unnoticed and how she and the party chose to communicate this was by naming the change of direction as an “energiewende”, meaning “energy transition”. By characterizing the shift as a "transition" rather than acknowledging the strong reversal it represented, the phrasing obscured their previous inflexible position and infused the policy alteration with more favorable connotations. The use of rhetoric was an effective way to communicate the shift as something rather positive and illuminate their party’s new stance in their preferred way. However, Merkel was pressured by the opposing parties, in particular the Green Party, who had been advocating for this change long before the Fukushima disaster. In the wake of the Fukushima nuclear disaster, Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union was compelled to construct a novel rhetorical framework regarding their revised policy position on nuclear energy. This discursive strategy endeavored to not only counter opposing narratives, but to cultivate an authoritative ethos capable of maintaining public confidence and trust in the government's decision-making on this controversial issue. (Gross, 2011).

In conjunction with her communicative efforts she spearheaded a campaign of establishing several new wind farms facilities, emphasizing on her new agenda centered around new environmentally sustainable policies and use of renewable energy sources. Despite Chancellor Angela Merkel's decision to promptly decommission several nuclear reactors in the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear disaster, a portion of Germany's nuclear fleet remained operational during the phase-out period. This necessitated Merkel to accentuate her administration's endeavors to expand renewable energy capacity, underscoring the credibility of the nuclear exit strategy and precluding any perception of mistrust. In conclusion, Merkel succeeded with her communication of the radical shift fairly well using rhetoric, listening to the public opinion and combining it with highlighting her environmental efforts. However, her decisions and the reasons behind them are still being questioned today. (Gross, 2011)

The radical policy shift undertaken by German Chancellor Angela Merkel in the aftermath of a disastrous event, could serve as a resemblance in comparing communication strategies employed by the Swedish Social Democrats concerning Nato. Despite the divergent subject matter of these two cases, they have several striking resemblances. Both instances called for a sense of urgency and unfolded during a similar timeframe. Moreover, both parties pursued a radical shift that contradicted their previous policies. Therefore, we believe that valuable conclusions could be drawn from comparing the two different communicative strategies undertaken.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

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*In the following chapter, the theoretical framework that will be used during the analysis of this research is outlined. The framework will be defined and explained with a background from research within strategic communication, to help answer the research questions later on in the finding of this study.*

#### 3.1. Discourse

The term 'discourse' encompasses a broader concept than its more specialized applications, referring to a collection of related texts and the practices linked to their production, distribution, and reception that collectively construct an object (Bryman, 2021). Blommaert (2005) argues that traditional perspectives on discourse, which were once static and rigid, have evolved into more dynamic, adaptable, and action-oriented understandings. Discourse is now seen as language in motion, necessitating a focus on both linguistic elements and the actions they entail. He expands on this by arguing that discourse should not be limited to purely linguistic concepts but should also encompass all forms of meaningful semiotic human activities, viewed in relation to the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which they occur. (Blommaert, 2005)

#### 3.2. Framing

The analysis will partially utilize the framing theory, which explores how representations of reality influence individuals' perceptions of that reality. This theory is frequently applied in the field of political communication due to its effectiveness in shaping understanding and agreement with a particular viewpoint. Employing this theory highlights the communicator's intent regarding how they intend the message or situation to be perceived or comprehended by the audience (Strömbäck, 2014). One of the most commonly used definitions of framing was provided by Robert Entman (2007) which goes as follows,



“To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.”

According to Strömbäck (2014), Entman’s definition of framing suggests that within the realm of political communication, framing is strategically used through the deliberate selection of linguistics, factual representations, interpretative angles, sources and the nuanced modulation of emphasis by politicians. Strömbäck (2014) further suggests that framing is a strategic tool used in political communication to help politicians generate support for their political agenda, which is often influenced by their party’s ideology and political manifestos. When politicians employ framing in their communication strategies, they shape a version of truth and reality that suits their preferred narrative. This technique guides the listener to perceive a situation in a manner that aligns with the politician's objectives. Different ways of framing certain situations will therefore activate different ideas and associations within the audience's minds, leading them to adapt their mindset in a context that is advocated for by the politician. This could result in the recipient of the communication adopting a particular understanding of the situation that may not align with the most accurate or true reality. Consequently, this shapes the recipient's perception, leading them to develop attitudes and beliefs that are advantageous to the communicator's circumstances. Therefore, framing could be used as a very effective tool for politicians to strategically and deliberately shape the public's views and understanding of the society as well as the issues occurring within it. (Strömbäck 2014)

Political leaders will most often use framing in such a way that is permeated by their party’s political ideology and agendas, trying to gain a broader consensus in the public that their ideas should be the preferred ones. Strömbäck (2014) also posits that framing involves a significant role played by the media in determining which information is disseminated to the public. One often calls for the reality to be unlimited while the reporting in the media is limited, which could result in great amounts of information being left out. The consequences of this is that only certain issues or problems are raised to the public, which further leaves them deceived of what the reality in fact looks like. In addition to this, the media's reporting is also a vast attribute to what issues the politicians form their agendas around, and their responses to it is often framed in a way that consequently supports their beliefs in what has to be executed.

### 3.2.1. *Diagnostic, Prognostic & Motivational Framing*

Snow & Benford (1988) suggests three perspectives of framing in regards to ideology and participation mobilization, *diagnostic*, *prognostic* and *motivational* framing. These three viewpoints could further be described as; (1) diagnostic framing as a diagnosis of some event or aspect of social life as problematic and in need of alteration; (2) prognostic framing as a proposed solution to the diagnosed problem that specifies what needs to be done; and (3) motivational framing as a call to arms of rationale for engaging in ameliorative or corrective action (Snow & Benford, 1988). The initial two components focus on diagnostic and prognostic framing, whereas the third revolves around motivational framing. Snow and Benford (1988) contend that the greater the integration of these three elements, the more effectively the presented information will be supported.

Diagnostic framing primarily focuses on identifying and articulating a problem, often attributing causality or assigning blame to a person or entity. Prognostic framing, in contrast, involves proposing preferred solutions to the identified problems, typically outlining specific strategies, tactics, and targets. Consequently, there is generally a direct correlation between diagnostic and prognostic framing, as the problem identified influences the solutions proposed. The third perspective, motivational framing, is employed to encourage the audience to act on or believe in the previously communicated problems and proposed solutions. This step is crucial because simply persuading the audience to accept the identified issues and solutions does not ensure that they will act on them or sustain their agreement in the long term. Inducements used to motivationally frame the communication to the audience often involve emphasis on moral and highlighting positive possibilities of outcome. (Snow & Benford, 1988)

However, diagnostic framing contradicts the prognostic framing to some extent since it is more negative and focuses on who or what to blame the problem on. While the prognostic framing focuses more on the preferred solution to the alleged issue. These two aspects of framing presented by Snow & Benford (1988) is concentrated around the idea to frame something as a problem in need of repair, to blame and suggest preferred solutions in one's own interest. However, they argue that it is most efficient when one is able to activate a group of individuals already interested in the question and preferably even agree to most of it

already. This would facilitate the diagnostic framing of the problem or prognostic framing of the solution to be easier adapted with the target groups opinions. Regardless of the groups previous interest however, is both diagnostic and prognostic framing beneficial when trying to create an understanding and support for a preferred solution to something one sees as a problem. In conclusion, it is therefore more often than not used within the realm of politics.

## 4. Method

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*In the following chapter, the methodology of this study will be explored, highlighting the qualitative approaches used for data collection and analysis. This section will provide insight into the scientific approach, selection criteria, analytical techniques, and the rationale behind our methodological choices. The methodological considerations and restrictions of the research will be addressed. This chapter aims to offer a clear understanding of the methods that underpin our findings and their relevance to the broader field.*

### 4.1. Scientific Approach

The study is situated within the domain of strategic communication and seeks to enhance comprehension of the manner in which key individuals from the Swedish Social Democratic Party have navigated the ongoing debate concerning Sweden's potential Nato membership. It also examines the communication strategies employed by these figures in the media. Flick (2014) states that qualitative research is based on studying a phenomena in its natural context, preserving the rich contextual factors that shape and influence the phenomena. This with the goal of understanding the meanings that people ascribe to them, allowing freedom of interpretation. This approach enables researchers to delve deeper into discussions by interpreting and analyzing collected data, rather than only rely on quantitative measures. To this end, qualitative research methods are employed, as they are well-suited for detailing processes, characteristics, and the foundational elements that are crucial in interactive contexts. This approach will facilitate an in-depth exploration of the dynamics at play, addressing the how, what, and why of the subject matter (Bryman, 2021).

The research is further grounded in a social constructivist framework, consistent with the selected methodologies (Bryman, 2021). The findings will be derived from an analysis of data sourced from a variety of media platforms, focusing on the pronouncements of certain politicians. By adopting a social constructivist stance, the investigation employs a hermeneutic approach which perceives reality as influenced by what is actually portrayed. This involves a cyclical process of interpreting the empirical data in parts and as a whole, aiming to gain a fresh understanding of the collective content (Eksell & Thelander, 2014).

Craig and Muller (2007) further argue that the human perceptions and interpretations are shaped by social interactions among individuals, groups, and communities. This perspective suggests that the world we inhabit is not objective, as it cannot be detached from sociocultural influences. They further contend that our understanding of reality is constructed through the lens of our social and cultural contexts, which inevitably shape our interpretations and experiences. While the social constructivist approach aims to emphasize the ways in which groups or individuals create meaning in a socially constructed reality, the hermeneutic method aims to interpret how social realities are constructed and understood within their context (Craig & Muller, 2007). The purpose is not merely to comprehend the phenomena but also to explore its wider implications, importance, and the context in which it occurs. As such, we are aware that the analysis of the data will, to some extent, be influenced by our own interpretive lenses.

Additionally, an abductive methodology will be employed, which is characterized as a combination of inductive and deductive reasoning (Eksell & Thelander, 2014). The process involves a dynamic interplay between theoretical constructs and empirical observations, focusing on the evolving nature of the Nato membership debate as articulated by political figures. The aim is to dissect the interrelation between political narratives and theoretical frameworks within the context of Nato's enlargement discussions. Furthermore, the abductive approach allows for a fluid analysis where the categorizations and codes that structure the empirical evidence can be adjusted, redefined, or reorganized throughout the course of the research.

Conversely, employing a quantitative methodology would be inappropriate for this investigation because such methods aim to generate quantifiable, objective numerical data that measure the frequency, scope, and intensity of phenomena, typically with a broad generalization (Bryman, 2021). If a quantitative approach would have been adopted, it would necessitate altering the research questions to either concentrate on public perceptions of the Social Democratic Party's messaging about Sweden's Nato membership, or to conduct structured interviews with selected politicians. It could also have been concerning the party's advocacy/sampling of the Swedish citizens, to facilitate a more detailed analysis of the circumstances.

## 4.2. Case Study and Data Collection Methods

A case study methodology has been selected for its suitability in qualitative research, because it enables a thorough examination of the context in question (Simons, 2020). This approach can also be referred to as a within-case analysis, which is advantageous when the goal is to discern the origins of variations rather than the nature of the variations themselves, and to map out the distinct trajectory that has unfolded (6 & Bellamy, 2012).

### 4.2.1. *Sampling - Politicians*

The selection of politicians for our analysis employed a purposive sampling method, focusing on choosing samples that are pertinent to the research questions (Bryman, 2021). The primary focus was on identifying key figures who were instrumental during the period when Sweden's potential Nato membership was a central political issue, specifically under the leadership of the Social Democrats. Notably, former Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson and former Defense Minister Peter Hultqvist were central figures in this context, having considerable impact on Sweden's security policy decisions. Their significant roles in the timing and submission of the Nato application are the primary reasons for our study's focus on these particular politicians. While acknowledging that other Social Democratic politicians, such as former foreign minister Ann Linde, have played significant roles in this discourse (Riksdagen, n.d), the deliberate decision to focus our analysis solely on Andersson and Hultqvist is driven by the time limitations of this thesis. Another pivotal factor was the aim to concentrate on aspects that were most pertinent to our research, as well as limit the content analyzed to ensure the study remains focused and maintains high quality.

### 4.2.2. *Sampling - Media*

When collecting data, we choose to mainly focus on press conferences and official governmental documents and statements, in order to avoid information that could have been modified by other sources. This contributes to the authenticity of the chosen documents and materials analyzed, making the research and the outcomes of the conclusion more reliable. When choosing the press conferences and governmental documents as the main source of information, it evades and minimizes the risk of it being a mediated representation of a reality, since it is a primary source which therefore strengthens the authenticity even further

(Bryman, 2021). To manage information effectively and avoid overwhelming details, while still retaining essential context, we have exclusively selected statements related to Nato as the empirical material. This decision is influenced by the time constraints of this thesis and the focus on what is deemed most relevant to the research.

### 4.3. Thematic Data Analysis

The study will implement a thematic analysis, which is a prevalent technique in qualitative research, and can be conducted using a "framework" approach (Bryman, 2021). It stands out as a highly adaptable method because it is not confined to any specific epistemological or theoretical framework. This flexibility is enhanced by the use of a matrix-based system that organizes and structures data effectively. This system aids in identifying and delineating key themes and subthemes, as well as in highlighting recurring patterns within the dataset. The primary objective of thematic analysis is to discern themes that are pertinent to the research question or practical application, thereby interpreting and deriving meaning from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, Bryman (2021) suggests that in developing the framework, researchers should focus on transitions, linguistic connections, similarities and contrasts, gaps in the data, and theoretical content, which will serve as the basis for organizing thematic analysis.

### 4.4. Discourse Analysis

The case will further be analyzed throughout a discourse analysis, involving examining and interpreting texts to deconstruct social practices and expose the underlying social constructs that influence meaning-making. This is why it could be considered as a suitable method for the study, as it seeks to investigate the relationship between discourse and the construction of reality. (Bryman, 2021) The different forms of discourse that the analysis will examine are primary transcribed press conferences, party leader debates, and speeches. By using this method, the power dynamics, ideologies and social structures that are embedded within the communication can be revealed (Bryman, 2021). However, we recognize the intertextuality of our selected materials, indicating that they were crafted to frame and convey specific impressions that are subjectively advantageous for the Social Democrats which we consistently will have in mind.

#### 4.4.1. *Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis*

The discourse analysis will be based on Norman Fairclough's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which seeks to uncover the complex relationships between discourse and social reality (Gölbaşı, 2017). This approach is designed to reveal the fundamental power dynamics and ideological processes present within communicative events. It is characterized by its focus on the discourse as a form of social practice that is both shaped, and shapes the social environment, as it analyzes the discourse across various levels including the textual, discursive and sociocultural practices. Burr (2015) suggests that Fairclough's CDA both bear and mark the relationships and social structures, as well as help to construct and constitute these in both spoken and written words. The aim of using Fairclough's CDA is also to identify ideologies and power relations that are embedded in and being reproduced through discourse. Moreover, it examines how these discourses have struggled against and resisted interactions in order to expose the powerful ideologies that are transmitted via texts of all kinds. Additionally, it highlights the interplay between linguistic and social elements, which Fairclough considers crucial in the creation and perpetuation of social power relations. (Burr, 2015) The analysis will encompass three different interconnected dimensions; (1) Text analysis, focusing on an in-depth examination of the text's language, style, and structure. (2) Discursive practice, analyzing the creation, dissemination, and reception of the text, along with its various interpretations and impacts. (3) Sociocultural practice, investigating the broader social and cultural contexts and consequences of the discourse, including the underlying social relationships, knowledge systems, and identities involved. (Gölbaşı, 2017)

The objective with the usage of this approach is to understand and gain further knowledge how the language has been used, and not used, within the context and the meaning it conveys. It anticipates that the methodology will enable the research to delineate the various facets of the themes identified through thematic analysis, allowing an uncoverage and understanding of the relationships and distinctions in the communication strategies employed over the course of the time period. (Gölbaşı, 2017) By systematically mapping these dimensions, our aim was to construct a comprehensive picture of how communication has evolved, identifying patterns and shifts that may have occurred within the political discourse. After mapping out the three dimensions, we conducted an analysis of each pertinent statement made about Nato, highlighting examples of text, discourse, and sociocultural practices



observed. Subsequently, we compared elements within each dimension from the initial to the final statement to detect shifts in language, word selection, framing of similar practices, attitudes, tone, and other aspects over the designated period. After completing the initial analysis, we repeated the process multiple times and compared our findings with each other to ensure that we had thoroughly refined and validated our results. Finally, we identified patterns to outline the findings related to the fundamental shift under analysis.

This approach will not only provide a clearer understanding of the thematic landscape but also offer insights into the strategic choices made in political communication during a change management process within a specified timeframe. Particular attention will be paid to the inferences made, the tone within the text as well as the sociocultural implications of the discourse. Below is an example of how a framework matrix has been implemented within the course of CDA. Full framework analysis can be found in appendix 12.

**Example of CDA Framework Matrix used:**

Appendix #	TEXT	DISCURSIVE	SOCIOCULTURAL
1			
2			
...			

#### 4.5. Methodological Reflections

While some scholars argue that reliability and validity are more critical in quantitative research than in qualitative research, these concepts are essential in both fields (Bryman, 2021). We concur with this viewpoint and intend to elaborate on it in the subsequent chapter.

##### 4.5.1. *Validity and Reliability*

First and foremost, the goal of our research is not to attain complete objectivity, but rather to achieve intersubjectivity. To maximize the validity within this framework of intersubjectivity, we have taken steps to ensure that our study accurately assesses what it is designed to

measure. (Krippendorff, 2019). This has been done by employing a framework matrix (see Appendix 12), which systematically delineates each dimension of our findings with precise examples, supporting our results. To further enhance validity, our method allows other researchers and readers to assess and replicate our process effectively, and also give the reader the opportunity to interpret for themselves whether the study measures what it aims to investigate (Neuendorf, 2017). Furthermore, we have also narrowed the focus to a critical period when the topic was most relevant (Krippendorff, 2019). All relevant press conferences and statements made by Andersson and Hultqvist, who were the most prominent politicians in the Nato discourse during the time given, have been accurately analyzed. Our analysis encompasses all commentary related to Nato, and to maintain restricted and avoid information overload, we have consciously excluded sections of the press conferences that did not pertain to national-, international security or Nato-related matters.

Our study aims to ensure reliability through clear and transparent documentation, which includes detailed reporting on our methods for sampling and coding, as well as the incorporation of a subjective perspective (Bryman, 2021). This approach allows us to accurately represent and interpret the phenomena under investigation. Moreover, by documenting our methods comprehensively, we facilitate the replication of our study, enabling others to test our results and conduct similar research (Heide & Simonsson, 2014). As the events have already occurred, the documentation from the study is accessible for further research. However, it is crucial for other researchers to maintain an objective political stance to ensure their interpretations of the statements and management of the case remain unbiased, thereby achieving external reliability. If this objectivity is not maintained, the results could vary. (Bryman, 2021)

As qualitative research is conducted, critical reflexivity is emphasized in the collection of all relevant data and statements related to Nato. Palaganas et al. (2017) suggest that this involves the self-awareness of the researcher's active involvement in the research process, as well as directing analytical focus to the role of researchers. Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2018) propose that it can be conceptualized as interpretations of interpretations, initiating a critical self-examination of one's own interpretations of empirical data, including how it is constructed. They further contend that this involves a consistent consideration of the fundamental dimensions underlying and within the interpretative work, thereby enhancing its quality. Moreover, it entails an ongoing process of reflection concerning our values and

recognition, along with the examination and understanding of how our social backgrounds, locations, and assumptions might influence the research practice. Therefore, we acknowledge our existing knowledge on the subject but commit to transparency in our interpretations derived from critical discourse analysis and thematic analysis (Ödman, 2017). This commitment is based on our focus on analyzing the rhetoric rather than our personal interpretations of the context. Additionally, we affirm that our personal political views will not influence our study, as we endeavor to comprehensively include all statements made by the Social Democrats, approaching them with the utmost objectivity.

## 4.6. Restrictions

Certain restrictions within our methodology have been acknowledged, which are discussed below to demonstrate our awareness of these issues. The primary restrictions identified concerned the research bias and translations of the empirical material. Throughout the entire process, we have been conscious of these restrictions and have taken all possible measures to mitigate their impact on our results.

### 4.6.1. *Research Bias*

Möllerström and Sternberg (2014) disclosed that the constraints of a discourse analysis include the potential for researcher bias, which carries the risk of interpreting the material based on personal perspectives. Discourse analysis is recognized for its creativity and adaptability, offering multiple points of entry into a study. However, it has faced criticism for its approach to defining certain elements. Consequently, Möllerström and Sternberg (2014) advocate for caution in making assumptions and claims that suggest direct links between the discourse, the gathered data, and actual events. In the analytical efforts, we will exercise considerable caution. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge the possibility that our analysis itself might inadvertently influence the discourse.

### 4.6.2. *Translation Bias*

The data derived in this study has been from statements by Swedish politicians during press conferences, debates and speeches as well as from articles in Swedish news outlets, requiring the transcription of these texts to be translated into English when mentioned in the text.

Transcribing texts and statements from their original language carries the inherent risk of altering the tone and specific wording, which could affect the interpretations of the statements as it always carries the risks of loss of quotation. (Squires, 2009) However, this did not affect the researchers' interpretations of the statements as Swedish is our native language spoken, which also means that the interpretations of the empirical material is based on this. Considerable time and effort were dedicated to ensure that the translations were of high quality and maintained true to the original expressions used by the speakers, thereby reducing the likelihood of any interpretations to be made differently. This meticulous approach was crucial to preserve the nuances and integrity of the political discourse, providing a reliable basis for analysis.

## 5. Analysis

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*In the following analysis chapter, the findings derived from the qualitative data will be presented. Through a detailed examination of the collected material, interpretations and discussions of the patterns, themes, and insights that have emerged will be presented. The chapter will systematically break down the data in alignment with the research framework, providing a critical analysis that connects empirical evidence to the research questions.*

This research sought to provide a clearer understanding of the strategic tools used within the political communication of this matter, aiming to bolster future research on strategic communication amidst significant political transformations. Through the application of framing and Fairclough's CDA, the analysis seeks to reveal the complex interplay between language, ideology and social practice. By doing so, this approach intends to provide a deeper understanding of the political discourse that encapsulates the Social Democratic Party's fundamental shift in Sweden's stance on Nato membership.

### 5.1. From Me to We

The Social Democratic Party and Magdalena Andersson have, according to the collected material, changed their choice of wording and tonality during the period of the radical shift to applying for a Nato membership.

After analyzing the transcribed materials, with a stance from Fairclough's CDA, a notable shift has been noticed in Andersson's use of personal pronouns during her different statements. Primarily, she tends to use the first-person singular "I" and possessive "our" when referring to herself and the Social Democratic Party. However, as the transition toward a Nato membership progressed, Andersson's language has shifted toward communicating in a more inclusive first-person plural "we" and possessive "ours" when discussing Sweden and its citizens. This small change of pronoun shows a clear strategic change in her linguistics, trying to subtly frame herself and the party towards a different stance in the question of Nato. When shifting a few words, she has successfully shifted her rhetoric from a perspective centered on individual and party interests, to framing the political shift in a broader, more inclusive national context. This could represent an attempt to frame the dramatic shift and

decision to apply for Nato membership as a collective choice, rather than one arising solely from an isolated political decision. Andersson's clear shift of linguistics can for instance be reviewed and strengthened when comparing appendix (5) and (6) to (9), and Hultqvists shift by comparing appendix (1) and (11). These appendices underscore the phenomenon wherein the individualistic perspective represented by the pronoun "I" diminishes, while the collective identity using "we" transitions more towards the citizens instead of their political party. This is an example of a strategic move within their communication efforts, where they have tried to justify and favor their choice of the political shift.

In addition to this, the new angle on their communication also frames the decision in a way that it is for "our" country's collective wellbeing and safety, rather than in their political interest. How Andersson and Hultqvist have developed their communication into the application of Nato being for the common good of Sweden's safety, frames the situation in a more appealing manner. This has resulted in a very effective strategy in shaping more understanding and trying to form a new agreement within the party, their voters, and Sweden as a nation. By constructing a new framework that highlights Sweden's evolving security situation and emphasizing the potential threats, it has further contributed to fostering a sense of community among the audience regarding this matter. Moreover, this has resulted in a perception of a joint decision about Nato. This analysis exemplifies both their use of framing in their communication as well as demonstrating the sociocultural dimension in their discourse according to Fairclough's CDA.

Magdalena Andersson's First of May speech in 2022, clearly confirming that Nato is on the agenda, was held for an audience of primarily Social Democrats, and it did not feature any questions from reporters. Analyzing this setting with Fairclough's approach, the discursive practice could suggest that the dissemination and reception of her statements are communicated in an environment that possesses very little risk of confrontation. In her speech, Andersson also conveyed a subtle tone of nationalism, expressing pride in her identity as both a Swede and a Social Democrat stating that, "[...] it makes me so proud to be the Prime Minister of Sweden." (see Appendix 9). This is something that in regards to the social practice in Fairclough's CDA strengthens the importance of the sociocultural context, where the audience's mutual political ideologies and Swedish nationality strengthens the social relationship. Therefore, when Andersson puts emphasis on the fact that, regardless if a Nato membership were to occur, Sweden would still stand strong as a country. Aligned with

this statement and setting, Andersson is framing the situation and is actively diminishing the intrusive thoughts a Nato membership might make the audience feel.

The First of May's speech in 2022 is an example where Andersson is using framing to shape understanding and agreement with her voters, along with the new Social Democratic stance regarding a Nato membership. It gets demonstrated clearly when she states, "I, as Prime Minister, and we, as Social Democrats, naturally base our decisions on what is best for the Swedish people and our security. And this, of course, also applies to the issue of Nato membership." (see Appendix 9). Andersson's deliberate change in linguistics from "me" to "we" underscores the strategic use of communication in a subtle way, departing the narrative and focus from the factual representations. Combining the narrative of what Sweden is today, and what has to be done, also supports a more comprehensive environment with an emphasis on the eventual decision about Nato being a joint and mutual decision. Andersson has therefore strategically framed the situation of an upcoming application for a Nato membership in a more salient way. This approach allows the public to form their own interpretations and gradually prepare for both the next steps in the process and the formal announcement of the eventual membership. In addition to this, Andersson's First of May's speech also emphasizes a use of motivational framing, exemplified by her statement:

"We have reintroduced conscription, we are opening new regiments and we are gearing up. And we are now seeing how many people are joining the Home Guard. People all over our country are standing up and saying, I'm ready, I want to do my duty, I'm ready to defend Sweden if necessary. It's proof that our country is strong, it shows that we have a lot to defend." (see Appendix 9).

Further in the speech she states:

"But whatever choice proves best for Sweden, one thing is certain. Swedish social democracy will always be a strong voice in the world against nuclear weapons, in favor of peace and freedom, because generations before us have gathered on the First of May in opposition to war and oppression, in solidarity with people who are still denied peace and democracy. We will carry that fight forward with pride." (see Appendix 9).

Andersson articulates these sentences with a smile, employing a motivational tone and radiating pride, which enhances the perception of a unified and positive atmosphere that

invites participation. This could further motivate the audience to feel more included and aligned with Andersson and her ideology, and could further contribute to them feeling more motivated embarking on everything the potential new era a Swedish Nato membership might entail.

## 5.2. Maintaining Trust Through Confident Communication

One of the key challenges for a Prime Minister and their government is to establish, gain, and maintain the trust of their voters. An event of this magnitude presents a significant test in this regard. Upon analyzing the period before and after the abrupt and profound change in stance by Andersson and Hultqvist, a noticeable change in their communicative confidence has been observed by the stance of the CDA Fairclough approach and framing as a strategic tool.

Since the Social Democrats have always been steadfast in their fundamentals and Sweden's stance on military non-alignments, a clear opposition to Nato prior to February 24th have been maintained. In their statements regarding Nato before this day, a defensive tone and choice of words were evident, with questions on the topic often addressed with dumbfounding explanations. Examples of this occurred when Hultqvist appeared on the SVT agenda debate and responded to a question about Nato by saying, “but you have to understand[...]”, concluding his response with a refusal to “tinker with this question”. Throughout his entire answer, he employed casual language like “tinker” and “mixturing”, which minimized the seriousness of the situation and dumbified the question giving Hultqvist and Social Democrats an advantage of the situation (see Appendix 3).

Andersson is also framing the security situation by stating that it does not need any kind of “wobbliness” (see Appendix 5), referring to the Nato membership as a potential source of instability for Sweden’s security situation. Both Hultqvist and Andersson have in these debates, and additional ones, pointed out that the Social Democrats have previously been very clear with their opinions, followed by views on whether a Nato membership would have adverse effects on Sweden and the European security situation. These statements serve as examples of moments where they communicated their positions with assertiveness and confidence in their perspectives. Although they never confirmed any clear communication strategy, they continued to frame their statements in a manner that portrayed control and



command of the situation. This is also exemplified in Andersson's speech to the nation where she repeatedly points out that she and the government is holding a clear line in this situation as she points out that the "[...]situation is now further aggravated". This is followed with a statement that leads: "My government is taking a clear line in this situation" (see Appendix 5) which is a situation where she frames her communication by showcasing the control and stance that she and her government is taking.

As Andersson is consistently framing her statements by communicating contextual angles, she is creating support for the Social Democratic problem statements and proposals. This is also essential for a politician, as it tests her ability to maintain voter confidence under scrutiny. Therefore, she communicates in a strategic manner in which she does not lose any trust. Despite also serving as the prime minister, her framing continues to be shaped and influenced by her political ideologies, action programs, and strategic interests as the leader of the Social Democratic Party. Another instance of this is highlighted in appendix 7, where she states, "I have been clear throughout this whole process[...] I can see a reason why we should conduct an updated analysis of the security situation". Although she does not specifically mention Nato, she reassures her voters of her control over the situation. Moreover, the case was highly prominent in the media during this period which is another aspect that she needs to have in mind while framing her statements, in order to address what has been mediatized. Being aware about the discussions in the media, the points raised in debates, and the opinions of other politicians and experts on the subject, she understands how to tailor her responses accordingly. Particularly because, as the prime minister and a leading figure in the debate, she is expected to respond in a confident and reassuring manner.

Furthermore, when the situation evolved, circumstances changed and a fear of the invasion extending to Sweden grew, the Social Democrats reassessed their approach to address the population's new concerns in order to maintain their trust in effectively managing the situation. Despite their longstanding commitment to their core principles over two centuries, they slowly released these, acknowledging the need for an updated security policy. Even in this transition, they maintained confidence in their handling by framing her statements with compassion and control. This is exemplified in appendix 9 where Andersson states that, "[...]a request from several of the center-right parties is that we should make an updated security policy analysis, and I think it is sensible and will also take such an initiative". This statement also serves as an example that the previously defensive tone used in their

communication to address these questions was changed to a more accommodating attitude. The language became less definitive, and rather than outright denying the possibility of a potential Nato membership, the topic was instead sidestepped with assured declarations of alternative strategies, emphasizing their command over the situation with confidence. Although Andersson initially described the Nato membership as potentially destabilizing the European security situation further (see Appendices 2 & 7), she consistently framed her perspectives clearly until the moment she announced that the Nato membership application was officially sent.

Although Andersson and Hultqvist consistently present their statements with confidence, the use of motivational framing is also evident within this timeframe. This strategy, which involves presenting confidently, may also be linked to the sociocultural context. During her speech to the nation on March 1st, Andersson is saying that: “Swedish defense army needs to be strengthened. The rearmament should be brought forward. Sweden must have a strong defense, a total defense of the Swedish people and for the Swedish people” (see Appendix 6). Her rhetoric aimed to inspire confidence among the population, assuring them of the military's commitment to advance and take all necessary measures for the protection of Sweden and its citizens. Andersson later strives to preserve the trust from her voters and population as the prime minister, particularly during the First of May speech in 2022. Here, she employs motivational framing when delivering her speech as she points out that “we are gearing up”, “our country is strong” and “we have a lot to defend” (see Appendix 9). Andersson once again draws on nationalistic themes within a sociocultural context to motivate the Swedish population by reminding them that Sweden is worth defending. Later in her speech, Andersson also highlights the Social Democratic perspective by stating: “Swedish Social Democracy will always be a strong voice in the world against nuclear weapons, for peace and freedom” (see Appendix 9), specifically appealing to her voter base by underscoring the enduring principles of Social Democracy in a rapidly changing world.

Despite the fact that a Nato membership contradicted the 200 century long fundamentals of a military non alignment, the Social Democrats were forced to abandon this foundational policy in order to meet the new security circumstances and the public's needs. They were forced to find a balance between their own agreement on a suitable solution and the preferences indicated by the population of Sweden, in which they had to frame their communicative choices strategically as to maintain the trust in their voters. This is also

evident in the press conference where Andersson announced the final decision on the application (see Appendix 10). She highlights that Sweden will be in a vulnerable position during the application period before acceptance, emphasizing the seriousness of the situation by conveying that Sweden might be subjected for desinformation and attempted intimidation. However, she assures with confidence that Sweden will still stay safe and supported during these upcoming turbulent times when she states that, “Sweden has also received clear security assurances from several key partner countries, including the US, UK, Germany, France and our Nordic neighbors.” (see Appendix 10). Andersson is now addressing the seriousness of this situation, while also noting that the Social Democrats have engaged in extensive discussions that informed their decision making process. By doing this, she is diagnostically framing a new problem formulation regarding Russians threats, while simultaneously prognostically framing the solution as a guarantee of protection from allied countries. This demonstrates their thorough understanding of proactive measures taken with allies for future strategies, aimed at reassuring and maintaining public calm by framing and activating a perception of compassion and understanding.

### 5.3. We Share Not Only Borders - But Also Firm Ideas

When Finland's potential Nato membership gained prominence, Sweden had to reconsider its stance more seriously. During a joint press conference between Andersson and Finnish former prime minister Sanna Marin, it was clear that a Swedish Nato membership was officially placed on the Social Democratic agenda and publicly announced for the first time. Andersson repeatedly stated her commitment as prime minister to treating the situation seriously, which includes taking any Finnish decisions into consideration when stating that “we share not only borders but also firm ideas” (see Appendix 8). Andersson acknowledged that Finland’s decision carries significant importance for Sweden's decision making, and that the governance was currently evaluating how a potential Nato membership would respond to the current security needs.

Although Andersson slightly hinted that a Nato membership was on the political agenda more than previously, she still refrained from directly answering questions about her desire to join Nato, reiterating her need to analyze the situation to determine what's best for Sweden's security. Andersson stated:

“No, I’m saying we have to analyze the situation to see what is best for Sweden's security, for the Swedish people in this new situation and you shouldn’t rush into that. You should make it very seriously. That is how I work as the Swedish prime minister.” (see Appendix 8).

This statement demonstrates that even when directly confronted with the question about the stance on Nato in the security analysis she, as stated previously, refused to respond directly to the question.

However, this approach is typical in framing, as framing works by triggering associations and thoughts in the receiver, leading the audience to draw somewhat predictable conclusions. In this case, the audience might naturally assume that Sweden would soon apply for Nato membership as she is giving several hints towards this decision. While not explicitly stating a Nato membership, Andersson clearly indicates that Sweden's decision-making process will be heavily influenced by Finland's decision stating that, “[...]the path that Finland chooses to take, and the potential choices that Finland makes should of course also be part of that analysis.” (see Appendix 8). This serves as an example of how she is prognostically framing her communication, as she presents the solution to the problem as depending on Finland, an external factor. This rationale could be used to explain their abrupt change in decision-making, arguing that due to the evolving circumstances, Sweden must make decisions that are in line with both the situational changes and the actions of neighboring countries. She affirms that the final decision will be taken together, without leaving either country behind, although the two processes may differ slightly due to their own circumstances (see Appendix 8). This is also supported by the previous research stated by Frost and Michelsen (2017), in which decision making is often prognostically framed and justified by international relations and norms.

In regards to the discourse and sociocultural aspect, the speech conveys an overall sense of warmth and cooperation between the neighboring countries where Andersson early points out that the countries have been, “working very closely on defense and security issues” (see Appendix 8). This could also potentially provide reassurance to the public that Sweden will not be isolated in the circumstances, regardless of the outcome. The joint press conference featuring Prime Ministers Andersson and Marin also serves as a sociocultural event where

their communication strategically creates a narrative of togetherness. They emphasize their close collaboration and mutual support, reinforcing their previous long alliance and shared sense of community during this critical period. This approach highlights the solidarity between the two nations, ensuring that neither country appears isolated. Applicable to also this finding, this marks the first instance where Andersson does not respond defensively but instead displays openness for the proposal. During the press conference, a Finnish journalist requested Andersson to respond to a question in Swedish rather than English, noting that, "The Finnish people enjoy Swedish so much" (see Appendix 8), which further and genuinely underscores the long and strong sociocultural ties between the two nations.

Andersson also addresses the final deadline for completing the updated security analysis, which was set for the end of May 2022 at the latest (see Appendix 8). She indicates that a final decision could potentially be announced earlier, not framing and communicating her statements with any fulfilled information but giving the audience space for their own associations and thoughts about the outcome of the process. This provides the public with a clearer timeline, translucently hinting at when the definitive decision will be announced. By holding this joint appearance and setting the specific timeline, Andersson conveys a sense of preparedness, signaling that Sweden is proactively addressing the evolving security landscape in coordination with its Nordic ally Finland. Additionally, holding the press conference outdoors conveys a message of greater accessibility to the public, contrasting with the more secluded atmosphere of an indoor government building setting.

Later in May 2022, just prior to the official announcement of Sweden's Nato application, Hultqvist addressed the situation by agreeing that Finland's membership would be decisive for Sweden's final decision making. He asserted that Sweden cannot remain the only Nordic country that's outside of Nato, as that would be an untenable position, leaving Sweden unable to participate in any meaningful defense policy (Strömberg & Nilsson 2022). Analyzing not only Hultqvist's choice of words, but also his stressed appearance and tone in these statements, it became evident that he was visibly anxious about the situation. In contrast to previous announcements, he suddenly appeared highly convinced of Nato membership to be the most suitable solution for Sweden's situation. However, this time, his focus shifted from Nato being the final decision regarding the government's updated security policy to the concern of Sweden being left isolated outside the alliance. This could further be justified by

the previously mentioned fear of abandonment theory that Sizar Noori (2023) suggested as a possible explanation of the Social Democratic fundamental shift.

Hultqvist's urgent rhetoric and demeanor suggested a growing realization that Sweden's long-standing policy of non-alignment was no longer tenable in the changing security environment, especially given Finland's forthcoming Nato membership. His statements reflected a sense of urgency and conviction that Sweden could not risk being the only Nordic country outside of Nato, as it would compromise its capacity to engage in a significant defense strategy. Instead of portraying the shift in policy as directly advantageous for Sweden's security strategy, he rather presented it as a necessity for Sweden not to remain isolated from the alliance, positioning this as the key reason behind their decision to seek Nato membership.

#### 5.4. We Are Not Talking About Nato, We Are Talking About Safety

The discourse analysis of the transcribed material disclosed that both Andersson and Hultqvist had a tendency of avoiding using the term Nato in their answers when asked about it, and instead addressed safety issues. Here, they employ a framing strategy that utilizes specific words to shape and present information in a deliberate manner. Their responses tended to circumvent the questions regarding Nato membership by providing broader answers in regards to Sweden's new security situation. Exemplified as early as on February 22nd, 2022, when Magdalena was asked about joining Nato, she answered, "In a very uncertain security situation, there is a great need for stability, and the Swedish government will stand for stability in this situation. This is what best favors Sweden and European security." (see Appendix 4). This showcases an example of where politicians are trying to disregard the question asked and instead frame the situation in regards to their own preference, that is rather beneficial for them. During the press conference on March 8th, 2022 (see Appendix 7), when directly asked about the possibility of membership and its status on the agenda once more, Andersson consistently replied by discussing the government's intention to conduct a security policy analysis, without directly confirming or denying whether Nato membership was being considered. Additional examples of similar statements are available in Appendices 3, 4, and 8. Both Andersson and Hultqvist were clearly unprepared or unable to discuss the issue of Nato and Sweden at that time, prompting them to shape the debate around Sweden's

changing security circumstances. It could therefore be assumed that their communication strategy was to deliberately frame the evolving issue surrounding Sweden's security situation as something to be discussed outside the context of Nato.

Furthermore, neither Andersson or Hultqvist did address the question regarding the membership themselves but only responded when they were directly confronted with the question. Based on the material analyzed in this study, the responses were framed negatively until March 30th, 2022, when Andersson first indicated that she was not ruling out a Nato membership (see Appendix 7). Previously, she maintained the stance that a Swedish Nato membership would rather destabilize and escalate the security tensions in Europe further (see Appendix 6) and, in contrast to other politicians, she did not concur that a Nato membership would serve as a resolution to the current security issue (see Appendix 5).

Onwards, Hultqvist has consistently portrayed Nato negatively from the beginning. During the Social Democratic Congress on November 21th 2021, he firmly guaranteed the public that as long as the Social Democrats were in power, Sweden would not apply for Nato membership. He employed a resolute language when using phrases such as “definitely not”, “guarantee everyone” and “everyone knows very well”, clearly expressing his and his party’s stance on Nato and emphasizing that it would not be considered under their governance (see Appendix 1). In selecting his language, Hultqvist established a non-negotiable and definitive position that aligned with the Social Democratic fundamentals and the prospect of a potential Nato membership. By using these specific choices of words, tones and emphasis he was consciously framing his expressions to structure the information given in a specific manner, as he wished for his audience to perceive it in a specific way. In the setting of a Social Democratic congress, the audience, already in agreement with Social Democratic principles, reflects the sociocultural backdrop that likely gives Hultqvist the confidence to use specific words and a defensive tone, aware that the audience's attitudes already are aligned with his. However, these statements were made during a time before national security was potentially threatened by the Russian invasion, which also might account for his selection of defensive language.

Both Andersson and Hultqvist consistently reference their longstanding commitment to this stance concerning Sweden's neutrality, which has historically safeguarded national security. To further maintain their authority and their party’s position in the political sphere, the

discourse shifted from the non-negotiable and defensive to a more accepting and accommodating approach. This since external threats and geopolitical realities changed, so did the necessity to adapt their communication strategy. While Andersson and Hultqvist reframed their stance on the Nato-option debate, they concurrently aimed to maintain a political credibility and authority while still responding to the new security challenges. Furthermore, this showcases a broader and more strategic purpose behind their statements, as they recognize the need to fulfill and preserve the relationships to their voters that they need to satisfy and maintain. Their supporters have consistently voted for them due to their principles, which have always been straightforward and clear, an argument that both Andersson and Hultqvist repeatedly emphasize. They commit to identifying a viable solution to the security challenge in Europe, ensuring that their actions do not breach prior commitments or present contradictions. By promising to choose the option that best serves Sweden's interests, they are framing their communication in a way where they are advocating for a proactive approach that addresses the issue without compromising earlier assurances.

### 5.5. “There Is a Clear Before and After The 24th of February”

When analyzing the empirical material, a recurring sentence has been noticed when Andersson and Hultqvist have sought to justify their shifts in politics which is, “There is a clear before and an after the twenty fourth of February ”, referring to the full scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia (see Appendices 8 & 9). They have both portrayed the situation and their subsequent decisions as being compelled by external circumstances, suggesting that these factors left them with limited room for autonomous decision-making. The framing of the situation, when analyzed from Fairclough's CDA perspective, is evident in the text dimension. For instance, the frequently used word "clear" underscores and asserts the unequivocal nature of the situation. When Andersson and Hultqvist are using the word “clear” as a linguistic tool, it also frames the decisions taken in regards to Nato in a way that it was necessary and logical. This helps construct a narrative of inevitability, something that has to be done in regards to external threats and factors. By framing the situation in this abdication of responsibility and with external pressure of threat, it helps legitimize their political shift while also deflecting responsibility away from themselves. In the dimension of discursive practice, this narrative aids in making their decisions more comprehensible and supported, as it shifts the responsibility away from themselves and onto external factors outside of their control. This instance and strategy is also supported by the similarities in the rhetorical strategies



undertaken by Angela Merkel's party, when using the word “energy transition” instead of change, deflecting from negative connotations.

According to Fairclough’s CDA, in regards to the sociocultural aspect, a clear implication and emphasis of the power dynamics and shift of security situation in Europe are also being communicated within this finding. They are continuously communicating the invasion of Ukraine as the prominent reason for their radical shift of their political ideology, while previously advocating a firm stance for military non-alignment. When framing the situation as unavoidable and out of their control because of external pressure, they are justifying their shift while maintaining their political power, as well as blaming their shift on the extreme event caused by the Russian invasion. This can be exemplified by Hultqvist's statement after applying for Nato when stating “Non-alignment has served Sweden well. But when war came to Europe on 24 February, the conditions, the balances, the threat picture changed, while the total unpredictability of Russia's actions became apparent” (Dala-Demokraten, 2022). The new narrative's portrayal of an "us versus them" mentality against Russia, supports the argument that Sweden requires assistance from Nato. This perspective emphasizes the need for Sweden to align with other nations that oppose the external threat posed by Russia.

What remains unspoken is that Russia has long been an implicit threat prior to February 24th 2022, and yet, historically, the Social Democrats have not perceived a necessity for Sweden to join Nato. Previously, the narrative suggested that Sweden did not require security assurances from Nato. However, the current perspective emphasizes the importance of Nato's Article 5 as a means to enhance Sweden's security. This shift is exemplified by Andersson's statement "Being a member of Nato, you do have the security of Article 5 within Nato, no question about that, which is not something you have in other arrangements" (see Appendix 8). This clearly demonstrates how Andersson is prognostically framing the situation, leaning on article 5 as a solution to the problem. This can be illustrated using the metaphor of the glass being perceived as half-full; the narrative surrounding Sweden's new security situation has transitioned to a half-empty viewpoint. Consequently, this shift highlights the critical role of Nato in enhancing Sweden's security and "filling up" the glass.

The focus on the date February 24th 2022 highlights how they are framing the justification of their sudden shift. Both Andersson and Hultqvist consistently use this date as a foundational reference in their statements, demonstrating their strategy to frame their actions in the context

of Russia's invasion. During a press conference, Andersson confirms the repetitiveness of the sentence herself when saying “As I have said so many times, this is a very important time in history. There is a clear before and after 24th of February, the security landscape has completely changed” (see Appendix 8). In addition, the framing could be argued as being of a prognostic character, as Andersson and Hultqvist present Nato as a necessary solution to Sweden's security challenges. However, the departure from previously labeling Nato as an unsuitable option casts doubt on the credibility of this newly proposed solution.

## 5.6. The Previous Success of the Alliance Freedom Strategy

When reflecting on Sweden's history, particularly that of the Social Democrats, it is evident that the party has long been advocating for a military non-alignment. See appendices 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 for examples where Hultqvist and Andersson have made statements that the Social Democratic party's political approach has, and will continue to be, in alignment with their previous doctrine. This has strengthened their previous stance of their political opinions, however, it has aggravated their argumentation for their radical shift of opinion in regards to Nato. Their new communication strategies around how they have framed their new political agenda has therefore met resistance with their previous statements.

Taking Fairclough's CDA approach in consideration and looking at the text dimension of their communication, one can distinguish loaded words from Hultqvist such as “definitely never”, “guarantee”, “stability” and “clear political stance” (see Appendix 1). Furthermore, several guarantees were communicated to the public ensuring that they would stand firm in their political opinion about Nato to assure stability. Subsequently, the previous statements lost credibility since their new ones contradicted the preceding ones. It induced a challenging position for the Social Democratic party, as they departed from portraying themselves having a strong opinion of Nato. Something that was previously rooted to their core and assured to always stay true to.

In the later stages, when Nato became more evident on the agenda, their communication efforts struggled to disseminate the information in a manner that was perceived as trustworthy. Initially, they presented a distinct argument supporting their longstanding commitment to military non-alignment, such as when Andersson on February 24th in 2022

stated that “In a situation like this, it is important that Sweden's long-standing security policy line remains firm. That we are predictable and clear with our security policy line” (see Appendix 5). However, as the situation evolved, they refrained from discussing this stance in their later communications. When Andersson was questioned whether she would like to join Nato on April 14th she responded by saying “No, I’m saying that we have to analyze the situation to see what is best for Sweden's security, for Swedish people in this new situation and you shouldn’t rush into that.” (see Appendix 8). In the light of the discursive dimension of their communication, it was therefore noticeable that Andersson and Hultqvist were attempting to reframe the Nato discussion in a new way when structuring their responses during press conferences.

The argumentation of Sweden's stability depending on the country’s previous military non-alignment had to organically diminish, since the party was steering away from their previous opinions during the process. It could be argued that Andersson and Hultqvist were making efforts on reconstructing the Social Democratic identity in regards to them previously advocating for military non-alignment. Moreover, it is evident that their language became increasingly vague and ambiguous, as they avoided answering the question when the process was not yet completely done. This contributed to making their radical political shift appear more gradual and natural. For example, during Andersson’s First of May speech in 2022, she stated that “I, as the prime minister, and we, as Social Democrats, naturally base our decisions on what is best for the Swedish people and our security. And this of course also applies to the issue of Nato membership” (see Appendix 9). As she slowly admits to their fundamental shift by framing the situation differently than previously, the communication efforts could be perceived as less radical and more seamless, facilitating a smoother transition as they executed their change in opinion.

The research reveals their strategic communication in trying to navigate the party’s radical shift by trying to downplay and distance themselves from their previous strong linguistics, regarding their stance on advocating for military non-alignment. This illustrates the shift in their prognostic framing from maintaining military non-alignment as the optimal security strategy for Sweden, to abandoning the strategy of alliance freedom and acknowledging that Nato membership is currently the safest and most suitable solution for Sweden's security situation. Despite the significant role that the fear of abandonment also played in the final decision-making process, as stated in the previous research by Noori (2024), Hultqvist

conveyed this concern in his attempt to explain and justify the situation to a journalist, stating, “We cannot be the only country in the Nordic region not to join[...]That is not possible” (Strömberg & Nilsson 2022).

Additionally, the sociocultural aspect of this situation is embedded within a social framework that could impact trust levels, both internally within their party and among their voters, due to their exclusion from the decision-making process. The voters of the Social Democrats might have held negative views on Nato, given that the party they supported had long been opposed to the alliance. This left the politicians in a challenging situation in how to proceed with communicating this in a respectful and understandable manner, without losing their trust. When faced with increasing pressure from other government parties, the parliament and the Swedish population to join Nato, Andersson, Hultqvist and the Social Democrats found themselves compelled to make swift decisions due to the circumstances. Upon announcing the decision, Hultqvist acknowledged his significant shift in stance during an article he wrote himself, noting that it was an unusual but necessary action. He added, “I stand by my reassessment, but I knew that the far-right journalism would start heckling. You have to live with criticism” (Dala-Demokraten, 2022). While he recognizes the sudden shift in his position, he rationalizes this significant change as a response to pressure from parties with differing political ideologies, also using it as a defensive strategy to explain his change.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusion

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*In the following chapter, the key findings will be synthesized, implications will be discussed, and the study's limitations and future research avenues will be addressed. By integrating the findings with existing theories and literature, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter and highlight its contributions to sociocultural contexts and new insights.*

### 6.1. Discussion

The objective of this qualitative study was to research how two prominent politicians within the case of Sweden's membership in Nato have communicated an extreme political fundamental change of course. This has been done through a thematic discourse analysis, where material within a timeframe of seven months has been analyzed.

Firstly, the study aimed to answer how Magdalena Andersson and Peter Hultqvist discursively justified and framed the radical shift in their political stance on military alignment. The second research question was whether the tone and content by Magdalena Andersson and Peter Hultqvist changed as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24th, 2022. Consequently, the analysis identified six key findings.

Firstly, it has been demonstrated that Andersson and Hultqvist deliberately implemented strategies to alter their linguistics, tone and content they communicated throughout the shift. When transitioning from a more self and party-centered linguistics into a more inclusive linguistic and tone, the radical shift of politics has been framed in a more mutual and national perspective, aiming to foster a collective understanding of the decision. Secondly, another crucial insight from the research indicated a notable shift in their tone of confidence, where they went from dumbifying Nato membership as being suitable in the situation, to accepting it as the final solution. In addition to this, it is revealed that their justifying communication was heavily influenced by Finland's more rapid decision to apply for a membership, which forced them to accelerate the process. This did not only justify the Social Democrats choice to apply, but also abdicated themselves from the responsibility of the decision solely stemming from their own choices. During this radical shift, their communication strategies

also showed that their responses tended to circumvent questions directly addressing a Nato membership, by instead providing broader answers focusing on Sweden's new security situation. Furthermore, their change of linguistics resembles similar with previous findings, that the sentence “There is a clear before and an after the twenty fourth of February” nearly evolved into their definitive doctrine. This approach was undertaken to further justify their decision and to shape an understanding that makes the decision appear indisputable.

After examining the strategies undertaken by Andersson and Hultqvist it is evident that they have succeeded in fulfilling their mission of pursuing their Nato application, framing it as the most suitable solution for Sweden's security due to the circumstances. However, whether they have managed to retain their voters' trust remains questionable, as they were not reelected in the quadrennial election held four months after submitting the application. The compressed timeline leading up to the election was unprecedented for them as a party, as their conventional policy agendas were eclipsed by the discourse of Nato affiliations, potentially swaying the voters whose confidence in the party had been weakened. This could therefore have been a tremendous consequence of their voters feeling that their trust in them as a party had been mistreated after their latest radical shift of opinion in the Nato debate.

Given the significant nature of the event, it is crucial to consider the actions of Andersson, Hultqvist, and the Social Democrats in this context. Faced with external pressures and the fears of the Swedish populace, which were at odds with their previous political stance, it was understandable that they needed to make a swift decision. This led to the submission of Sweden's application for Nato membership, aligning with the expectations placed upon them. On the other hand, after maintaining a consistent stance for 200 years and promising never to deviate from it, their sudden shift to support the opposite position was abrupt. This argument gains further weight considering the parallel situation during the Cold War, when a larger number of countries were implicated, yet Sweden maintained their non-military alignment. Unlike Finland, all other Nordic neighbors chose to align themselves, which did not sway Sweden's position on the matter. However, this recent shift happened swiftly and was communicated in a way that seemed to lack full accountability for the abrupt change in stance. The remaining question is whether the Social Democrats could navigate this transition as smoothly as before, and if they should get away with it?

Moreover, what improvements could have been made? First of all, they were clearly strategically framing their statements to avoid directly addressing questions about Nato for an extended period. This approach was likely taken because they did not want to make premature promises or commitments before the decision to apply was fully confirmed. While some might argue that the government should have been more transparent, others contend that such transparency might not have been feasible given the sensitive nature of the situation, which pertains directly to Sweden's national security and required careful and meticulous handling. Although it is understandable that full transparency may not always be possible due to policies and principles, the communication could have been more strategically disengaging. This could have enabled addressing the national concerns while still maintaining a level of openness. By acknowledging that Nato membership was under consideration and promising to keep the public informed throughout the decision-making process and upon confirmation, they could have avoided the appearance of prevarications.

The strong use of framing as a communicative tool have been evident within this study, and furthermore analyzed as fairly successful since they managed to demonstrate that they were confident and in control of the situation. However, what needs to be taken in consideration in regards to this is what framing could contribute to if misused. The Social Democrats, Andersson and Hultqvist successfully executed a radical shift of policy within months, completely contradicting their previous political stance using framing combined with other methods of justification. Politicians aware of how to master communication could therefore execute rather disruptive changes more or less unnoticed as well as shaping agreement within the public opinion.

## 6.2. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study indicates that even amidst a historical and unprecedented political situation, tools of strategic communication, framing amongst them, can be useful to facilitate, rationalize and justify a new implementation within the short timeframe of seven months. Andersson and Hultqvist have, as shown by this research, found themselves in demanding communication challenges during this radical shift. The result and findings however, reveals that by implementing several communicative efforts, they have gradually framed the situation of the shift differently than previously. This has contributed to the shift being perceived as

less radical and more seamless, facilitating a smoother transition as they executed their change in opinion. The change of linguistic, tone and content reveals their strategic communication in trying to navigate around it, by downplaying and distancing themselves from their previous strong stance on advocating against Sweden joining Nato.

It is therefore stated that when long-standing political fundamentals require a shift, strategic communication and framing the discourse can help minimize harm within change management processes. Additionally, if future circumstances do not align with previous positions, this study illustrates the possibility of reevaluating and recommunicating strategies. However, the success and impact of the outcome will ultimately depend on how this process is carried out, an area where this study falls short in providing insight.

### 6.3. Further Research

Building on the findings of this study, several avenues for further research emerged that promise to further enhance our understanding of the topic. Firstly, the public's perception of Andersson and Hultqvist's Social Democratic communication could be quantitatively assessed through methods such as surveys or structured interviews. This could be done either by a randomized selection encompassing voters of various political affiliations, or specifically concentrating on the opinions of Social Democratic voters regarding the fundamental shift and how it has been communicated during the process. This could also involve examining the public's reaction to politicians disregarding public opinion before making their final decision.

Another aspect for future researchers to consider is the potential use of disengagement as a communication strategy taken by Andersson and Hultqvist in their statements. This involves their deliberate and consistent avoidance of responding to Nato-related questions over an extended period, despite these questions being prominently placed on the agenda and directly questioned by the audience. Instead of providing a direct response, they opt to sidestep the question. This could further contribute to the field within strategic communication by explaining if disengagement might be a useful tool within political communication and change management processes. This approach is commonly employed in public policy when a final decision is pending, and there is a desire to avoid initiating further debate on the topic. Additionally, this strategy prevents them from making definitive statements that could limit



future options. Finally, further research could explore the long-term effects of their communication strategy, assessing its success in shaping public perceptions and determining whether it resulted in the retention, loss, or gain of voters over this period.

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# Appendix

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\*Translated versions of the Swedish appendixes can be made on demand.

## APPENDIX 1

Peter Hultqvist, Socialdemokraternas Kongress 21 November 2021

Hultqvist: "Dom andra vet mycket väl vart vi står, och det blir inga ansökningar om något medlemskap så länge vi har en socialdemokratisk regering. Jag kommer definitivt aldrig, så länge jag är försvarsminister, att medverka i en sådan process. Det kan jag garantera alla."

## APPENDIX 2

Magdalena Andersson, Partiledardebatt i riksdagen 12 Januari 2022:

Andersson tillkännagav Nato-option och fortsätter: "Däremot är min uppfattning väldigt tydligt: just nu behövs stabilitet. Det är inte läge att ändra Sveriges säkerhetspolitiska linje just nu. Det skulle inte gagna stabiliteten i den här allvarliga situationen. Det är min uppfattning och den är väldigt tydlig"

## APPENDIX 3

Peter Hultqvist, SVT Agenda Debatt 30 Januari 2022:

Hultqvist svar på M försvarspolitiska talesperson fråga: "Du måste ju förstå att om ett land har haft en säkerhetspolitisk linje i många år, uttalat sig på samma sätt i många år som Finland har gjort, och vi har uttalat oss på vårt sätt i många år. Att börja mixtra med det här och ändra grundhållning i ett sånt här säkerhetspolitiskt klimat, det är klart att det bidrar till någon form av konsekvenser särskilt som vi nu egentligen borde koncentrera oss på hur klarar vi beredskaps anpassningarna och förberedelserna för en eventuell kris, som vi måste hantera påriktigt i samverkan med andra. Det kanske är en mer substantiell debatt än att pyssla med den här frågan"

## APPENDIX 4

Magdalena Andersson, Presskonferens 22 Februari 2022

Journalist (23:29): "Frågan om ett Natomedlemskap diskuterades på en presskonferens med Finlands president precis, så jag ställer den här frågan här också, att Sverige och Finland är likt inte Nato medlemmar. Påverkar det här Sveriges syn på ett Natomedlemskap, och förs det diskussioner om att söka om ett Natomedlemskap tillsammans med Finland för Sverige?"

Andersson (23:47): "I ett väldigt osäkert säkerhetspolitiskt läge så finns stort behov av stabilitet, och den svenska regeringen kommer att stå för stabilitet i det här läget. Det är det som bäst gynnar Sverige och den europeiska säkerheten."

## APPENDIX 5

### Magdalena Andersson svar på pressträff 24 Februari 2022:

Journalist (22:54): *“Det är flera ambassadörer och andra som skriver i en debattartikel att nu är det dags att ompröva Sveriges inställning till Nato medlemskap. Och det är flera partiledare också som tycker att det här är rätt tillfälle att ta ett steg, vad säger du om det?”*

Andersson (23:10): *“Jag har motsatt uppfattning. Nu i ett sånt här läge så är det viktigt att Sveriges, sen lång tid tillbaka säkerhetspolitiska linje ligger fast. Att vi är förutsägbara och tydliga med vår säkerhetspolitiska linje, detta är inte tillfälle för någon form av vobblighet.”*

Journalist (23:31): *“Skulle det inte ge Sverige bättre skydd?”*

Andersson (23:35): *“Sverige har ju varit alliansfria under en oerhört lång tid, det har tjänat Sveriges syften väl och har varit en trygghet och ett skydd för det svenska folket.”*

## APPENDIX 6

### Magdalena Andersson tal till nationen 1 Mars 2022

Andersson (3.05): *“Vad är bäst för Sverige säkerhet? För Svenska folket. Och min slutsats är att svensk säkerhet tjänas bäst av att vi hjälper Ukraina att försvara sig”*

Andersson (3.32): *“Säkerhetsläget i Sveriges närområde har försämrats sedan flera år tillbaka. Och nu skärps det ytterligare. Vi befinner oss inte under direkt hot om väpnat angrepp mot Sverige.”*

Andersson (4.20): *“Vi genomför också i bred politisk enighet en kraftig förstärkning av vårt lands försvarsförmåga. Och det är uppenbart att takten nu måste öka. Därför meddelar jag att regeringen kommer att ta initiativ till ytterligare resurstillskott till totalförsvaret. För Sveriges försvarsförmåga behöver stärkas. Upprustningen tidigareläggas. Sverige ska ha ett starkt försvar, ett totalförsvaret av svenska folket och för svenska folket.”*

Andersson (5.31): *“Min regering driver en tydlig linje i det här läget”*

## APPENDIX 7

### Magdalena Andersson, presskonferens 8e Mars 2022:

Journalist 1 (7.25): *“Den här säkerhetspolitiska analysen som ni vill göra, kommer den i likhet med Finlands säkerhetspolitiska analys också att se på för- och nackdelar med ett Natomedlemskap?”*

Andersson (7.36): *“Exakt det vi ska formulera det uppdraget i den säkerhetspolitiska analysen kommer vi att kunna återkomma till.”*

Journalist 1 (7.43): *“Men du uteslutar inte det?”*

Andersson (7.44): *“Huvudsaken är ju nu att se vad vi gör en bedömning av i hur det här påverkar säkerhetspolitiska läget i Sverige, och där finns det ju många saker att titta på. Syftet med detta är ju att göra en säkerhetspolitisk analys, inte ha en Nato-diskussion.”*

Journalist 1 (8.01): *“Men okej. Men det betyder ändå inte att du utesluter att man kan behöva titta på för och nackdelar med ett Nato-medlemskap, som Finland ju gör?”*

Andersson (8.12): *“Låt mig vara tydlig så här. Jag har ju varit tydlig under hela den här tiden med att min bedömning i vad som är bäst för Sveriges säkerhet i det här läget, och för*

säkerheten i den här delen av europa är att regering har en långsiktig och konsekvent och förutsägbar linje och det är ju min fortsatta uppfattning. Med det sagt, så ser jag att anledning till att vi gör en uppdaterad säkerhetspolitisk analys, så får vi se vad olika partier tar upp för diskussioner i det.”

Journalist 1 (8.44): *"Förändras det som är bäst för Sverige om Finland landar i att söka medlemskap i Nato?"*

Andersson (8.51): "Det är en hypotetisk fråga"

Journalist 2 (11.46): *"Kan du förklara varför det ligger i sveriges säkerhetspolitiska intresse att inte vara medlemmar i nato och att inte söka om medlemskap i det här läget"*

Andersson (11.57): "Därför att om Sverige skulle välja att skicka in en nato ansökan i det här läget så skulle det ytterligare destabilisera den här delen i europa, alltså öka spänningarna i Europa och Sverige skulle bidra till att destabilisera läget ytterligare"

Journalist 2 (12.25): *"Men är du öppen, trots det du säger, för att ompröva ditt partis och regeringens inställning till Nato?"*

Andersson (12.30): "Nej men jag jobbar ju utifrån vad som jag bedömer är säkrast för Sverige och här är min uppfattning i det här läget mycket tydlig, nämligen att Sverige fortsätter att hålla den konsekventa linje som vi har hållit under mycket mycket lång tid, i det som värnar Sveriges säkerhet allra bäst i det här läget."

Journalist 3 (17.08): *"Men varför vill du inte redan nu att det här ingår i försvarsberedningens uppdrag att titta på ett svenskt natomedlemskap?"*

Andersson (17.14): "Vi har ju bedömningen från regeringens sida att vi tror att en konsekvens i den svenska linjen är något som tjänar sveriges säkerhet väldigt väl, men med det sagt så ser ju vi precis som också varit ett önskemål från flera av dom borgerliga partierna att vi ska göra en uppdaterad säkerhetspolitisk analys, och jag tycker det är förnuftigt och kommer också ta ett sådant initiativ"

## **APPENDIX 8**

### Magdalena Andersson (+Sanna Marin), Press Conference about Nato 14e April 2022

Andersson: "We share not only borders, but also firm ideas that close corporation will benefit both of us"

Andersson: "We have to discuss different options, and that no option is without risk"

Marin (4.06): "We have deepened our nato partnership until now hand in hand with Sweden ever since Russia illegally invaded Ukraine"

Marin (4.56): "We need to assess how our possible nato membership would respond to our security needs"

Marin (5.57): "Both Finland and Sweden independently make their decisions regarding security policy arrangements. But we do that with a clear understanding that our choices will affect not only ourselves but our neighbors as well"

Journalist 1 (7.00) : "If there opens up a situation where finland and sweden moves at different paces in these processes we have a very very assertive neighbor on our borders in finland, Russia, how dangerous would you say that situation is because there will be massive

when we approach the decisions and how dangerous is it if we move at different paces that we are split up and also an additional follow-up. Do you see a possibility that Sweden will stay out if we are in? And it would be very nice if you could answer in Swedish because we like Swedish in Finland”

Andersson (7.41): “Ehm, jag kan säga såhär. Vi har ett nytt säkerhetspolitiskt läge, och det finns risker och möjligheter med alla olika handlingsalternativ och alla olika scenarier. Och därför tycker jag, som Sveriges statsminister, att det är oerhört viktigt att vi analyserar det här läget. Finland har ju precis gjort en redogörelse och vi arbetar ju just nu med utrikesministern och försvarsministern och sitter i överläggningar med alla partierna i Sveriges riksdag för att göra en analys av det nuvarande läget, men också över de olika möjligheter som står till buds och olika scenarier framöver. Och för mig så är det ju viktigt att den görs och är grundlig, inte för lång, det ska ju inte ta för lång tid, men att den är grundligt gjort. Och utifrån det så kommer ju vi i Sverige att fatta beslut för vad som är bäst för det svenska folket och för Sveriges säkerhet.”

Andersson (8.40): “Och i det så kommer naturligtvis också det vägval som Finland väljer att göra och potentiella vägval som Finland gör naturligtvis också vara en del av den analysen.”

Andersson (8.49): “Med det sagt så, varje land fattar ju sina beslut men precis som Sanna Marin också säger, det beslut som ett av våra länder fattar påverkar också det andra landet. Och det är därför som det är så viktigt att vi har kunnat haft den här väldigt nära dialogen under de här veckorna och den kommer naturligtvis också fortsätta.” - Magdalena

Journalist 2 (9.02): “How dangerous is the situation”

Andersson (9.11): “Situationen, vi ser ju ett ökat spänningsläge och en ökad hotbild i vårt närområde på grund utav att Ryssland, dels har hotat hela den europeiska säkerhetsordningen genom att vilja dela in Europa intressesfärer igen, det tillhör inte ett modernt Europa med olika intressesfärer, och sen därutöver den rena invasionen av Ukraina där vi ser de fruktansvärda övergreppen mot civila. Det är ju naturligtvis något som har ökat hotbilden i vårt närområde.”

Journalist 3 (10.01): “Have you already decided to join NATO, and if so, how come this has gone so fast, really fast”

Andersson (10.14): “I think as I have said so many times, this is a very important time in history. There is a before and after 24th of February, the security landscape has completely changed. Both with the demands from Russia in December, and then the invasion of Ukraine and given that situation we have to really think through what is best for Sweden and our security and our peace in this new situation. And of course what is happening and the discussion in Finland is important for us to follow therefore we need to have a very close contact. But we need to have a process in Sweden to think this through. Sometimes if you, uh, if you read, uh, some statements in Swedish media it's like you should be as quick as possible to make up your mind. I think you really must analyze the new situation. Do it very seriously, think about the consequences, the pros and cons of all potential ways forward and I think you have to be very serious in this work. This is exactly where we are right now, Finland just made their report and we are now having the discussion with parties in the Swedish parliament. We also have a dialogue within my party. I wanted to take this situation very seriously and then we make a decision.”

Journalist 4 (14.15): “But do you want to join nato”

Andersson (14.23) “No I’m saying we have to analyze the situation to see what is best for Sweden's security, for the Swedish people in this new situation and you shouldn’t rush into that. You should make it very seriously. That is how I work as the Swedish prime minister.”

Andersson (15.36): “I think we have been discussing the timetables when the process started in Finland and in Sweden and they are not that different and I think there is a good reason for that, we have the very serious analysis that Finland is doing the report, and then you will also have discussions within the parties and also in parliament, so that’s a very serious process we are having a similar, somewhat different but very similar process in Sweden right now. And I think it’s important to do a serious analysis and seriously think through this question in Sweden like they are doing in Finland, very serious jobs, and then draw conclusions from that, at the same time. I see no point in delaying this analysis or this process so, we also have elections in september so we also want to of course later in the year have more focus on that. But having said that, I think it’s important that we do an analysis, think through the pros and cons and then make up our mind on what is best for Sweden. Of course there are both pros and cons for being a member of nato as there are pros and cons of other security choices. Being a member of nato you do have the security with article five within nato, no question about that, that is not something you have in other arrangements. At the same time you also have another responsibility towards other countries.”

Andersson: (22.22): “Late may is the last time this report is supposed to be ready, but of course it’s possible to get ready before that. That’s the last date it’s, it doesn’t have to be the last date, so it would be possible if the work proceeds smoothly to make it earlier that’s not forbidden or anything so it depends on how much time they need to make this analysis.

Which is important to have a serious analysis behind any kind of decision that we will make. And of course during this process there could very well be different kinds of activities from other countries during this process, for instance different anonymous sources in the media.”

## **APPENDIX 9**

### Magdalena Andersson, Första maj tal, 1 Maj 2022

(4.40): “Alla antaganden om svensk säkerhetspolitik som gjordes före kriget har fått omprövas”

(4.48): “Det finns ett tydligt före och ett tydligt efter den 24 februari i år”

(4.55): “Det är därför vi snabbar på den historiska upprustningen av Sveriges totalförsvar. Och vi håller ju på att bygga ett starkt svenskt folkförsvar igen av svenska folket och för svenska folket.”

(5.10): “Vi har återinfört värnplikten, vi öppnar nya regementen och vi växlar upp. Och vi ser nu hur många söker sig till hemvärnet. Människor runt om i vårt land ställer sig upp och säger, jag är beredd, jag vill göra min plikt, jag är redo att försvara Sverige om det krävs. Det är ett bevis på att vårt land är starkt, det visar att vi har mycket att försvara och det gör mig så stolt att vara sveriges statsminister”

(5.50): “Nu har vi en dialog i vårt parti om det nya säkerhetspolitiska läget och vad det innebär för Sverige och för svensk säkerhet. Och jag som statsminister och vi som

socialdemokrater utgår naturligtvis utifrån vad som är bäst för svenska folket och vår säkerhet. Och det gäller såklart också frågan om medlemskap i Nato.”

(6.14): “Men oavsett vilket vägval som visar sig bäst för Sverige, så är en sak säker. Svensk socialdemokrati kommer alltid vara en stark röst i världen mot kärnvapen, för fred och frihet, för generationer före oss har samlats på första maj i opposition mot krig och förtryck, i solidaritet med människor som fortfarande nekas fred och demokrati. Den kampen ska vi bära vidare med stolthet.”

## **APPENDIX 10**

### Magdalena Andersson 16e Maj 2022:

“Efter debatten i riksdagen så har vi haft ett extra regeringssammanträde och där har vi fattat två beslut. För det första så har regeringen beslutat att meddela Nato att Sverige vill upptas som medlem i alliansen och Sveriges Nato ambassadör kommer inom kort att framföra det till Nato. Det andra regeringen har beslutat idag är en proposition med förslag som gör det möjligt för Sverige att ta emot militärt stöd av samtliga EU- länder och samtliga nato länder. Sverige kommer befinnas i ett utsatt läge under tiden vår ansökan behandlas. Ryssland har meddelat att de kommer vidta motåtgärder om vi går med i Nato och vi kan inte utesluta att Sverige utsätts för till exempel desinformation och försök att skrämma och splittra oss. Men det är också tydligt att Sverige inte står ensamt. Jag och andra företrädare för regeringen har fört en lång rad samtal med ledare för Natoländer om den tid som vi har framför oss. Sverige har också fått tydliga säkerhets försäkringar av flera viktiga partnerländer bla. USA, Storbritannien, Tyskland, Frankrike och våra nordiska grannländer.”

## **APPENDIX 11**

### Peter Hultqvist Nyhetsmorgon 16e Maj 2022

Journalist (0.00): “Ja du, och ditt parti har alltså gjort en helomvändning när det kommer till Nato. Hur har processen varit hos dig och hos er när ni har kommit fram till det här historiska beslutet?”

Hultqvist (0.10): “Det är klart att det här kriget i Ukraina, och de där äkta hoten mot att rasera den Europeiska säkerhetsordningen, skapade ju en ny situation. Och det gjorde ju att, inte bara jag utan många andra också värderade, vad gör vi nu då? Och sen var ju Finland på väg in i Nato och vi skulle hamna som ensam icke-nato i Europa, eh eller i Skandinavien, och det skulle ju ha utsatt oss för en större exponering mot Ryssland. Samtidigt som vi hade fått svårare i alla de samarbeten som vi har tillsammans med Finland.”

Journalist (0.46): “Det finns faktiskt ett klockslag läste vi i Dagens Nyheter här, att det var den elfte april klockan åtta å femton, klockan kvart över åtta på morgonen.”

Hultqvist (0.54): “Precis”

Journalist (0.55): “Där och då, så så gjorde du ditt beslut. Vad föranledde det?”

Hultqvist (1.00): “Ja, jag hade ju gått och funderat under en längre period å också provat olika alternativ på ett rätt så grundligt och seriöst sätt. Och vi hade ju ett möte då, på det departementet och i samband med det så bestämde jag mig att, nu får det vara klart med det här och då var klockan faktiskt kvart över åtta på morgonen.”

Journalist (1.19): “Du tittade ner på.”

Hultqvist (1.20): “Ja, jag skrev upp det där i en bok också så att haha, så att det var så det var.

Det går ju inte att hålla på hur länge som helst och fundera utan man måste ju någonstans komma till en slutpunkt också”

## APPENDIX 12

### Framework Matrix According to Fairclough's CDA Approach

#	TEXT	DISCURSIVE	SOCIOCULTURAL
1	Dom andra vet <b>mycket</b> väl vart vi står, “ <b>definitivt</b> aldrig”, “ <b>garantera</b> alla”	“dumförklarar” frågan i att folk redan skall veta vart S står i frågan. Det är en tydlig riktlinje, defensiv ton och struktur. Slagstarka ord	S kommer, oavsett vad som händer, att hålla fast vid den fundamentalitet dom haft. Bevisar en självsäkerhet för sina väljare.
2	“min uppfattning, <b>väldigt</b> tydlig”, “inte läge att ändra just nu” “ <b>stabilitet</b> ” “allvarlig situation”	Håller fast vid S fundamentalitet i frågan, trots att säkerhetsläget i SWE börjar svikta. Defensiv och övertygande ton och ordval såsom “väldigt tydlig”	Visa på en självsäkerhet inför det svenska folket som ledare. Bevisa en trygghet i att sverige står fast vid en länge fungerande strategi och att ett skifte av strategi enbart skulle förvärra läget
3	“Du måste ju förstå”, “ <b>mixtra</b> med det här” “ <b>pyssla</b> med den här frågan” “ <b>många</b> år” “Det är klart” → Ger ej rum för motsättning	Defensiv och anklagande, dumförklarar och nedvärderar frågan i form av mindervärdiga ordval (“mixtra, pyssla”). Menar att en natoansökan skulle leda till försvarande konsekvenser av läget, och att fokus ist bör läggas på annan beredskap/gardering	Genom att nedvärdera/förlöjliga frågan om ett Natomedlemskap så visar han på S tydliga riktlinjer. Nato är inte ett väsentligt fokus utan frågan behandlas snarare som tramsig. Sverige ska jobba internt som alltid!
4	“väldigt <b>osäkert</b> läge” “stort behov av stabilitet” “ <b>stabilitet</b> i det här läget” → Nato inte stabilt	Undviker frågan en aning, väljer att svara med att hennes regering kommer stå för stabilitet och det uppfattas som att det är att inte gå med i Nato.	Sätter Sverige och Europas säkerhet i samma kontext. Frontar den svenska regeringen, hennes regering, som stabil.
5	“ <b>motsatt</b> uppfattning”, “tydliga och <b>förutsägbara</b> ” “ <b>vobblighet</b> ” “alliansfria under <b>oerhört</b> lång tid”	Står fast vid samma mentalitet som tidigare, och motsätter sig argumentet. Argumenterar mer som t.ex måste vara förutsägbara, ej tid för “vobblighet”.	Förklarar här hennes fundamentalitet mer, med att den fungerar länge och att Sverige måste stå på sig snarare än att vara osäkra och vika sig. Självsäker i hennes uppfattning i en osäker och läskig situation. Visar svenska folket att hon vet vad hon håller på med, och inte kmr att ändra på ett vinnande koncept

6	<p>“hjälper Ukraina försvara sig”,  “försämrats tidigare, nu skärps ytterligare”, “inte under direkt hot”,  “ytterligare resurstillskott”, “tydlig linje i det här”, “av svenska folket, för svenska folket”</p>	<p>Visar att regeringen agerar, att de har läget under kontroll samt bekräftar för ett oroligt Sverige att Sverige inte är under direkt hot. Meddelar att de kommer att agera, men i andra åtaganden än ett Nato-medlemskap -&gt; fokus snarare på Sveriges egna försvar. Nämner inte ens Nato, även fast det är underförstått.</p>	<p>Väljer att tala till nationen för att bekräfta en trygghet hos regeringens agerande. Vill bevara sitt rykte och förtroende hos folket, visa att det svenska folket är samlat och en enhet. Sverige kommer att klara sig på egen hand -&gt; nämner inget om Nato</p>
7	<p>“Jag har varit <b>tydlig</b>”  “<b>hypotetisk</b> fråga”  “<b>destabilisera</b> läget ytterligare”  “<b>mycket tydlig</b>”  “säkerhetspolitisk analys, <b>inte</b> ha en nato diskussion”  “långsiktig” → Blev inte så  “<b>mycket tydlig</b>”</p>	<p>En stressad ton under presskonferensen, undviker att svara på frågor med tydliga svar, väljer att kalla diskussionen om Nato för uppdaterad säkerhetspolitisk analys.</p> <p>Sätter ord i mun om att hon alltid varit mycket tydlig, och säger att ansökan till Nato hade destabiliserat läget.</p>	<p>Skapar ett vi mot de sett till socialdemokraterna jämfört med de borgerliga partierna → Att den uppdaterade säkerhetsanalysen ska talas om med dem. Ger utrymme för att folket ska känna att de drev fram Nato, inte hon och Socialdemokraterna.</p>
8	<p>Många “<b>We</b>” &amp; “<b>Us</b>”  “<b>risk</b>” "corporation"  “Benefit both of us”  “<b>We share not only borders</b>”  “assess how possible nato membership would respond to our needs”  “<b>before and after 24th february</b>”  “the discussion in finland is important for us to follow”  “det beslut en av våra länder fattar påverkar också det andra landet”</p>	<p>Ett tal som visar på en tydlig värme och ett tydligt samarbete mellan Sverige och Finland.</p> <p>Första gången Nato nämns som potentiella alternativ, duckar dock frf rakt ut ja till nato</p> <p>deras beslut och ideer kommer att påverka varandras beslut, vad finland gör är viktigt för sverige</p>	<p>Talet och settingen trycker på att Sverige och Finland är ett, men samtidigt som de delar åsikter så har de båda en självständighet.</p> <p>En finsk reporter ber Magdalena ta talet på svenska, för att finländare gillar svenska så mycket. Trycker ännu mer på ett community - och att vi är ett inte två länder.</p> <p>Första gången Magdalena nämner att SWE Nato medlemskap är på tapeten, men bekräftar ingenting. Bekräftar att SWE och FIN är allierade och att ingen avdera står ensamt. Öppnar upp för förslaget och visar sig inte längre motstridig.</p>
9	<p>Otroligt många “<b>vi</b>” &amp; “<b>vår</b>” och “<b>sverige</b>” &amp; “<b>svenskt</b>” “stark röst”  “för fred”  “Den <b>kampen</b> ska vi bära vidare med</p>	<p>Ett riktigt brandtal, där hon ler flera gånger, visar upp en stolthet och trycker på ett sammansvetsat Sverige som vill gott, oavsett om det hade inneburit ett medlemskap i Nato.</p>	<p>Bygger otroligt mycket på “vi” känslan och svensk nationalitet, kanske för att inte folk ska känna att svensk identitet går förlorad om vi är med i Nato. Första maj tal, så i princip hela publiken består av socialdemokrater.</p>



	<p><b>stolthet</b>  “Tydligt före...efter..”  “tydligt före och efter”,  “allt omprövas”,  “<b>såklart nato</b>”</p>	<p>Hon bekräftar att Nato diskuteras inom S, tonalitet har ändrats till mer tillmötesgående och Nato är inte längre ett orimligt förslag för S. Det är nu mer av en självklarhet i diskussionen “såklart”</p>	<p>Menar att tack vare 24 feb så har dem tvingats ompröva, och Nato är numera inte orimligt. Trycker på att högsta prio internt är sveriges säkerhet, och att landet står allierat.</p>
10	<p>“Vi” (som ett sverige vi)  “Kan inte” “Det går inte” “ensamma kvar”  “<b>riktig försvarsplanering</b>”</p>	<p>Stressad ton och ingen tydlig strategi i ordvalen heller. Panik efter insikten att han uttalat sig om Nato, fräser.</p> <p>Uttrycker sig inte som att det är av egen vilja nato hamnar på tapeten, utan snarare att det numera är ett måste med tanke på resterandes medlemskap</p>	<p>Han pratar om Sverige som ett vi, om ett land som hamnar utanför om vi inte är med “de andra”.</p> <p>Tydligt att han egentligen inte VILL vara med, utan känner sig snarare tvingad. En irritation som visar på att han ångrat sitt uttalande, antingen för att han inte håller med egentligen, eller för att information läckt för tidigt.</p>
12	<p>“Skrämna” “utsatt läge” “splittra” “<b>viktiga partnerländer</b>”</p>	<p>Hopsättning av ord: “Sverige inte står ensamt” “lång rad samtal” “säkerhetsförsäkringar”</p> <p>Försöker förklara det allvarliga läget, men också att socialdemokraterna fört flera långa samtal till beslut. Prata om beslutet i allvarlig, men bra/positiv bemärkelse. Tydliggöra att dem vet vad dem håller på med, och proaktivt redan tagit andra beslut med allierade.</p>	<p>Trycker på säkerhetsförstärkningarna från andra länder, och att Sverige skickar in ansökan till Nato. Inte hon som person eller socialdemokraterna, utan Sverige.</p> <p>Återigen, trycker på allvaret för att bevisa regeringens inställning till det samt i proaktivt syfte för vad som kan ske, men uppmanar till lugn.</p>