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# SWEDISH BOARD OF MIGRATION LOSES LANDMARK COURT CASE

**A year ago, Lennart Eriksson, an asylum unit manager at the Swedish Board of Migration was demoted because he had on his private website voiced support for Israel's right to exist, maintained that the US is a democracy and expressed admiration for US WW2 General Patton's achievements.**

Lennart Eriksson took his employer to court on the grounds of wrongful dismissal. Today the court reached its verdict: Lennart Eriksson has won his case on every count.

The court's verdict is as follows:

1. The court regards the demotion of Lennart Eriksson as a clear case of attempted dismissal and concludes that this dismissal is illegal.
2. The court orders the Swedish Board of Migration to pay Eriksson damages to the tune of 100,000 Swedish kronor plus interest.
3. The Swedish Board of Migration has been ordered to pay Lennart Eriksson's legal expenses in full, to the tune of almost 150,000 Swedish kronor plus interest.

### **Collapsed defence**

The court did not appear to find the defence arguments put forward by the Swedish Board of Migration to be valid. Manager Eugène Palmér had called into question Eriksson's ability to cooperate in the workplace, but all Eriksson's previous managers and colleagues had the highest praise for the ease with which he interacted with everyone at work.

### **Being a Conservative is "odd"**

Eugène Palmér had commented on the fact that Eriksson votes Conservative, saying that this was "rather odd". The ruling government coalition in Sweden is led by the Conservative party.

Eriksson had argued that he was demoted because he had in his private time expressed opinions in support of democracy and because he is a Conservative, two values that appeared to be at odds with those of his manager, Eugène Palmér. The court seemed to agree with Eriksson's claim that his demotion was an illicit discriminatory measure designed to coerce him into leaving his job owing to his private political beliefs.

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### **Discrimination and other illegal practices**

Eriksson had claimed that the Migration Board discriminated against him on the pay scale too, giving him a lower than normal salary. The fact that Eugène Palmér offered to buy out Eriksson with two years' full pay if he resigned was taken as a sign that the aim from the very outset had been to get rid of Eriksson.

### **Swedish Migration Board bases its policies on Hollywood movies**

In a move highly unusual by Swedish standards, Eriksson's request for compensation and full legal costs was ratified by the court without any reduction. This may be interpreted as an indication of the court's feelings about the Swedish Board of Migration and its top officer, Eugène Palmér. Palmér had said in court that Eriksson was unsuitable for his job because of his view that US WW2 general Patton was a great general, whereas Palmér knew for a fact that Patton was a disloyal and insubordinate officer because he "once saw a Hollywood movie about this".

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