

## Moscow role in Palme hit may rock New Yalta deal

by Göeran Haglund

The Soviet Union under *glasnost* champion Mikhail Gorbachov had foreknowledge of, and probably itself instigated, the 1986 assassination of Sweden's Premier Olof Palme. This is the conclusion drawn by officers of the Swedish Security Police (SÄPO), on the basis of taped transcripts resulting from night-and-day bugging of the private apartment of a Soviet "diplomat" and intelligence officer stationed in Stockholm.

In a four-page exposé published Aug. 24, Sweden's largest-circulation daily, the liberal tabloid *Expressen*, under the front-page headline, "The Soviets Knew That Palme Would Be Murdered," blew crucial elements of the plot. Although the Swedish cabinet is doing its best to cover up the truth, the political implications of any Soviet authorship of the murder of a Western head of government can hardly be exaggerated.

Particularly at a moment when the first cracks are already visible in the carefully cultivated facade of a more "civilized" Russia under Gorbachov, mere complicity in a political murder of a Western statesman portends an early end to Gorbachov's credibility—and to that of Gorbachov's condominium partners in the West.

The revelation of Soviet involvement in the murder of Palme is the culmination of years of intelligence warfare, submarine incursions, and related incidents which have strained relations between Sweden and the Soviet Union. In Sweden, a dividing line has been drawn between those who are willing to appease Moscow at all cost, and those who maintain a sense of national integrity.

But the significance of this extraordinary story goes further: The Soviet-instigated assassination of Palme was itself transformed, through one of the most astonishing international disinformation campaigns ever launched, into a *character assassination* of Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. Within hours after Palme was shot, Soviet officials, Irwin Suall of the Anti-

Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, and a host of media scribblers around the world rushed to pin blame for the assassination on Swedish associates of LaRouche—despite the lack of any evidence whatsoever. The charge was used to manufacture the sobriquet that has since become almost universal in media coverage: "political extremist Lyndon LaRouche." It also provided the phony "national security" underpinning for the U.S. Justice Department to accelerate its political prosecution of LaRouche, which was getting seriously under way during the same month that Palme was killed. When two associates of LaRouche won the Illinois Democratic Party primary just weeks after Palme's death, the disinformation campaign escalated with renewed fury.

### SÄPO's evidence

In its efforts to pin down Soviet spying on Swedish military secrets, SÄPO has been carefully monitoring the activity of Soviet embassy officials. In particular, the private apartment of one Soviet diplomat, some say the first secretary of the embassy, others say a third secretary and vice consul, was electronically surveilled by SÄPO between 1985 and 1987, with technical assistance from the CIA. The diplomat proved to be a very security conscious agent, who used to turn up the volume of his radio or TV set to obstruct any eavesdropping. It was only sometimes when talking to his wife in the bedroom, that the diplomat's caution was dropped.

According to the SÄPO interpreter who translated the tapes from the bugging, the circumstances and the intonation of some of the diplomat's words to his wife, proved that the Soviets not only had foreknowledge of Palme's murder, but that they were also the authors of the murder. According to some of the interpreter's superiors, lacking knowledge of Russian, the translator was reading too much meaning into the transcript, which did prove, they argued, Soviet fore-

knowledge, but not necessarily authorship of the murder.

The evidence from the tape recordings, in the evaluation of SÄPO, was combined with corroborating evidence, such as the strong increase in radio communications of the Soviet embassy in Stockholm, both immediately before and after the murder, as monitored and reported by the Radio Institute of the Armed Forces (FRA).

It is not known precisely when the transcript was made available to exactly whom in the hierarchy of SÄPO, other police, and government officials. What is known is that the hunt for Palme's murderer, from the first hour on, under the overall direction of then Stockholm Chief of Police Hans Holmér, was so flawed by bungling, mishaps, and sheer incompetence so as to seriously cast in doubt whether the actual killer was ever wanted at all.

### A three-year coverup

Conventional wisdom dictates that whoever seeks to wipe out the tracks of a criminal, or is caught knowingly planting false tracks, is also complicit in the crime. Thus, any serious investigation would have had to look into the Soviet role. This was also the vantage point of a meticulously documented special report issued in October 1986 by *Executive Intelligence Review*, under the title, "A classical KGB disinformation campaign: Who killed Olof Palme?"

According to media accounts, the transcript from the bugging of the Soviet diplomat was not made available to the group allegedly looking for Palme's murderer until early 1988, after which then-Justice Minister Anna-Greta Leijon was briefed. A "scared" Leijon forwarded the information to the foreign minister and the defense minister, "as it involved Sweden's relations to a foreign power," but the cabinet decided to do everything to prevent the story from ever reaching the public. Leijon was briefed, not through normal channels available to a justice minister, but by the bizarre figure of Ebbe Carlsson, a Social Democratic intelligence insider and intimate of Holmér, who in effect, on a private basis, had continued the work of Holmér after Holmér was dismissed in the spring of 1987.

### The Ebbe Carlsson affair

Although without any official capacity or assignment, Ebbe Carlsson, a former press secretary of the Justice Ministry, had the full backing of the Social Democratic regime in working informally with some SÄPO officials, accessing classified information, in alleged pursuit of the so-called PKK track: the possible involvement of the terrorist Kurdish Workers Party in killing Palme. Ebbe Carlsson is an executive of the large publishing house of the Bonniers, the most prominent Jewish family in Sweden—and, incidentally, the owners of *Expressen*.

Ebbe Carlsson's private intelligence operation blew up in a scandal on June 1, 1988, in which connection one of Holmér's former bodyguards, now a bodyguard for Ebbe Carlsson, was caught in a customs check attempting to smuggle

very sophisticated illegal bugging technology into Sweden on Carlsson's behalf. Both Carlsson and several of his collaborators within SÄPO face trials for illegal bugging in the context of the Palme investigation, trials which are scheduled to begin within weeks.

On April 10, 1989, the government called the chairmen of the three non-socialist opposition parties to a meeting with the prosecutor in charge of investigating the illegal bugging. The prosecutor outlined how one part of the illegal bugging he was investigating had been conducted by the Russian Bureau within SÄPO's counterespionage division, targeting in particular the Soviet diplomat whose statements were of significance to the Palme murder. The line imposed by the government, and all too willingly accepted by its so-called political opposition, was that the SÄPO bugging of the Soviet diplomat, if ever made known, represented an acute threat to Sweden's relations to Moscow, and that therefore a conspiracy of silence had to be agreed upon.

In effect, the government and the opposition agreed that SÄPO's bugging of a Soviet diplomat, in violation of the Vienna Convention protecting the integrity of diplomats, was a greater embarrassment than the fact that the diplomat said things which revealed Soviet foreknowledge of the murder of Palme! So much for the concern to find Palme's killer.

Indeed, as the story was blown Aug. 24, the real scandal, if you believe the Swedish press, was not that the Soviets had a role in killing Palme, nor that the Swedish government has known this since at least March of 1988 without moving a finger, but—you guessed it—that SÄPO found out about it by "illegally" bugging a Soviet spy masquerading as a diplomat!

Of course, it is rather unfair to charge the Swedish government with "not moving a finger" regarding the murder of Palme; on the contrary, the determination with which a political conviction was pushed through during this summer against notorious criminal, alcoholic, and drug addict Christer Pettersson, bears testimony to the commitment of the government to try to close the Palme case once and for all with the proverbial hanging of a "lone assassin."

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## Documentation

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### KGB disinformation about the murder of Palme

The following are samples of the mass of evidence of KGB disinformation, with Western complicity, after Palme's murder:

**Feb. 28, 1986:** Palme gunned down in a street in Stockholm after leaving a cinema with his wife Lisbet.

**March 1, 1986:** Soviet Central Committee member

*Continued on page 38.*

*Continued from page 35.*

Georgii Arbatov, chief of Moscow's U.S.A.-Canada Institute and co-founder of the Palme Commission on Disarmament, tells the press: "I do not know who killed Palme, but I know all too well who hated him. . . . I saw demonstrations against him by fascist hooligans."

**March 2, 1986:** *Pravda* and *Izvestia* claim that "right-wing circles" and "Western circles," respectively, are behind the Palme murder.

**March 3, 1986:** Danish *Ekstra Bladet* journalist Paul Gazan, writing from Stockholm's *Expressen* offices, is the first Western journalist to quote Swedish "police sources" that they are "looking intensely at right-wing extremist groups such as the Swedish neo-Nazis and the so-called European Labor Party (ELP)."

**March 12, 1986:** A 32-year-old man, Viktor Gunnarsson, is arrested as a murder suspect.

**March 14, 1986:** Danish tabloid *BT* writes that Gunnarsson, according to sources in the Swedish Security Police (SÄPO), has been working for the ELP.

**March 16, 1986:** London *Observer* writes, "Police hunting Palme's assassin are investigating a possible link between the killing and an extreme right-wing political group known as the European Workers Party" (sic). World media picks story up on alleged ELP-LaRouche links to the suspect.

**March 18, 1986:** LaRouche associates Mark Fairchild and Janice Hart win Illinois primary. Reuters runs statement by ELP chairman Michael Ericson, "There have been clear attempts by Moscow to lay the murder at our door."

**March 18, 1986:** Irwin Suall, head of the Fact-Finding Division of the Anti-Defamation League, appears on NBC-TV, saying it is conceivable that a person associated with LaRouche might have killed Palme.

**March 19, 1986:** Stockholm Chief of Police Hans Holmér announces he has been forced to release Gunnarsson for lack of evidence.

**March 19, 1986:** French senior journalist Jean Grandmougin writes syndicated column, picked up by regional *L'Est Eclair*, "But Who Killed Olof Palme?" Grandmougin writes of a 1985 incident where Swedish security police picked up Polish "art students" in Sweden mapping military targets. "The hypothesis has been raised that they were special commandos of the Soviet *spetsnaz* type. It is no longer a secret that submarines have regularly violated Swedish territorial waters. . . . Perhaps these are indications of the frame of the investigation into the murder of Olof Palme."

**March 21, 1986:** Soviet TV news *Vremya* airs attack on the ELP, deploring that the suspect was released only because "police and judicial organs operate within the framework of Swedish laws."

**March 23, 1986:** *Izvestia* laments release of Gunnarsson because of a "police blunder."

**April 11, 1986:** Arbatov told the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Washington, D.C.: "LaRouche is a

fascist." He refers to the Illinois primary victory of Fairchild and Hart as "reflecting a certain trend," adding, "It is very disturbing. . . . This is an event which should not be overlooked, it could be very serious."

**May 16, 1986:** Swedish Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Pierre Schori tells an American journalist that he is in favor of the press attacks on the ELP for links with murder suspect Gunnarsson. Schori admitted raising the issue of LaRouche's role in the Palme murder in his talks directly with Soviet officials, as well as in discussions with Henry Kissinger.

**Sept. 15, 1986:** Soviet weekly *New Times* runs five-page attack on LaRouche entitled, "Nazis without Swastikas," a title taken from ADL stringer Dennis King's pamphlet.

**Oct. 6, 1986:** FBI sends 400 armed men to the Leesburg headquarters of LaRouche-affiliated publications.

**Dec. 12, 1986:** Soviet Red Army paper *Krasnaya Zvezda* reports that "documents in which all details are reported about the circumstances of Palme's murder," were found by FBI in the Leesburg raid.

**Dec. 16, 1986:** U.S. Attorney in Boston John Markham in Boston is reportedly behind the NBC-TV story on the "LaRouche connection" to the Palme murder, cited by Soviet press.

**Jan. 4, 1987:** A British journalist in Sweden, Roy S. Carson, writes an article implicating Anders Hjelm, Bulgarian organized crime figure Roman Goutev, and one Alex Balmages, reportedly head of a KGB-controlled emigré organized crime network in Sweden. Carson reported that "Balmages and Goutev were the 'executives' who ordered the execution of Prime Minister Palme, using Trotsky dissident Anders Hjelm for the kill." Carson soon after is forced to leave Sweden, reportedly under direct pressure from the Swedish Foreign Ministry's Pierre Schori.

**Jan. 27-28, 1987:** Soviet TV airs 55-minute film, "Why Did They Kill Olof Palme?" accusing LaRouche and the ELP of involvement in the murder.

**March 1, 1987:** Richard Reeves in the *New York Times Magazine* writes that Palme's murder is related to his role in the Iran-Iraq war negotiations and illegal arms shipments to Iran. "The truth about the murder?" writes Reeves: "Most of the people in the government don't want it," said a Swedish official familiar with cabinet discussions." Reeves mentions Palme's extramarital affair with SIPRI member and daughter of Lord Victor Rothschild Emma Rothschild.

**March 6, 1987:** Swedish TV airs Soviet film, "Why Did They Kill Olof Palme?"

**April 13, 1987:** Three Swedish police investigators go to the U.S. to "investigate ELP connections" to the Palme murder. They meet with U.S. Attorneys involved in the "Get LaRouche" task force in Washington, D.C. and Boston.

**April 23, 1987:** NBC-TV reports that of all documents seized in the Leesburg raid, 45 documents deal with the Palme murder, and had been turned over to Swedish police.