
Interview: Gösta Söderström

‘The Palme investigation was initiated to protect the assassin’

Gösta Söderström was the first policeman to arrive on the scene where Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme was assassinated. As a superintendent, he was also the field officer with the highest rank in service during that night between Feb. 28 and March 1, 1986, and was therefore in charge of the initial part of the investigation on the murder scene.

After two days, Söderström realized that there was a cover-up under way, when the chief investigator, Hans Holmér, lied about the timing of the police work after the assassination. Since then, Söderström has fought to find out the truth about why there is a six- to seven-minute discrepancy between the time Söderström recorded that he arrived on the scene, and the official time, as given by police inspector Holmér, the first chief of the Palme investigation.

This lead in the case is crucial, because it shows that a cover-up was going on from the very beginning of the investigation. It also underscores the totally fraudulent nature of the accusations from the official investigators, led by Holmér, that the American politician Lyndon LaRouche, and the party affiliated with him in Sweden, the European Labor Party, assassinated Palme.

This interview was conducted by telephone by Dean Andromidas, on July 28.

EIR: Will you please introduce yourself?

Söderström: I have been a policeman for nearly 40 years. At the time of the assassination of Olof Palme, I was *Poliskommissarie* (superintendent); this is the highest grade in the ordinary police force in Sweden. I was the chief for the police forces out in the streets of Stockholm on the night of the murder. At the time of the murder, we had a special mission out, which aimed at stopping the nightly violence originating from groups of young people and drug dealers which disturbed the order for the ordinary people. I had about 15 constables under my supervision, divided into two groups, and I was the coordinator for both groups.

When Olof Palme was assassinated (at 23:21 on the 28th of February 1986), I was on patrol, together with a colleague, and we were driving our car along Kungsgatan. A man stopped us there and told us that some shots had been fired at the street-crossing Sveavaegen-Tunnelgatan, about 500

meters away from there. About ten seconds later, I heard an alarm on the police radio—a taxi driver had alerted the police about the shooting. When I arrived at the murder site, there were about 10 to 15 people standing around a man who was lying on the pavement. He was lying on his back and had blood all over his face and over his clothes. I looked at him at once, and I saw that his eyes were wide open and came to the conclusion that he was probably dead. Two people, who had witnessed the assassination, were trying to save his life.

One man in the crowd pointed at a street nearby and said that “they” had run that way. “They,” that is, that there probably had been more than one man running away from the place of the crime. The official investigation maintains that there was only one assassin.

Ten seconds after I had arrived, a police van with five ordinary constables and a chief arrived, and we told them to pursue the men who had run away. Among the people gathered around this dead man was a woman screaming hysterically, “You must save the life of my husband!” I tried to talk to her, but it was almost impossible. After about five minutes, and after three attempts to talk to her, she told me that it was the prime minister, Olof Palme, who was lying there.

After another minute, an ambulance arrived, which drove away to the hospital two minutes later, and the wife of Palme, Lisbeth Palme, went with them.

EIR: Can you tell us what happened after the night of the murder?

Söderström: I was on the scene of the crime, as the superintendent coordinating the first investigative attempts, for about 30 minutes; then I left.

After this, I heard nothing from the investigators until Mr. Lenninge called me three days afterwards. I talked with him for a quarter of an hour. Besides this, no one from the investigation has tried to contact me to hear what I have to say, but I have contacted them several times about things they should investigate.

EIR: So, you mean to say that, after you had coordinated

the work at the murder site, you just went home, and were asked to work the next night as if nothing unusual had happened the night before? Just as if it was an ordinary murder case? Nobody asked you to give a detailed after-action report? No investigators were interested to hear you?

Söderström: No, no! Nothing at all. We wrote up the ordinary report about the murder at the police station, of course, but besides that, we heard nothing. Nobody was interested.

EIR: You have noticed a difference between the officially registered time, when you are said to have arrived at the murder site, and the time you personally know you arrived there. Can you say something more on it?

Söderström: I first noticed this discrepancy after two days, when the chief of the Stockholm police [and head of the investigation], Hans Holmér, spoke to the press and said that I and my colleague arrived at the murder site two or three minutes after the shots were fired. I immediately realized that this was wrong. I arrived there eight or nine minutes after the shots, a difference of five or six minutes between the time I registered, and the official time.

I think it would be very important for the investigation to investigate this discrepancy, but up until this day, this has not been done. I think it is very important, because the officially recognized time is a big lie. I would be ready to defend this view in court with my hand on the Bible. I arrived at the place of the murder at 23:30, not 23:24 as it is claimed. It is a lie! How can they continue to uphold a big lie like this in such an important investigation like this, in the murder of a prime minister?

I have tried to get to the bottom of this problem for several years now. I have written to the police, to the chief of the board of prosecutors, and to many more about it. Everybody has the report I wrote about this problem, but nothing has been done about it; they are not interested. I am a nobody, they say. When I spoke to the head of the Palme murder investigation in 1993, Hans Ölvebro, he just stated:

“I don’t give a damn about what you policemen did at the place of the crime, I am investigating a murder.”

EIR: Let’s get back to the question of the six-minute discrepancy.

Söderström: At 23:29, the man I talked about stopped my car at Kungsgatan, and ten seconds after this, I get the alarm on my police radio. And, at 23:30, I was on the scene, with the police van arriving ten seconds later. After about one minute, I made a call on the police radio, at 23:31. In my report, and in the official documents, the time 23:31 is registered for my first contact with police central. At 23:35, I heard that it was Olof Palme who had been murdered, and I reported this on the police radio. And this is in the official documents.

EIR: What was the explanation from the investigators for this discrepancy?

Söderström: The explanation for this discrepancy from the side of the investigators, is that I had a bad mental health [problem], or something, and had been wrong about the time from the beginning. That there was something wrong with me. I took these accusations very hard, because I had never been “mentally confused” or in a state of shock before. I was not confused when I recorded the time. Of course, I became a bit confused later on, when I heard that it was the prime minister who had been killed, but this confused the whole population of Sweden at the time, not only me.

EIR: Can you prove the discrepancy?

Söderström: I have documents on this. The computer records from the “alarm central” that night, which contain all phone and radio communications pertaining to the murder that evening, have been destroyed. I have in my possession computer lists from these destroyed records, and they show that I called in to central and registered that I had arrived at 23:31. This is the only instance I know, of disappeared computer recordings from any Swedish “alarm central”; a very abnormal thing.

EIR: So you mean to say that important information pertaining to the assassination of Palme could have disappeared due to this discrepancy?

Söderström: Yes, important information was lost! Perhaps a real investigation would have found something which could have hurt the official authorities of the state itself. I think there would be a large political scandal, if the truth about what happened on the night of the murder comes out. The investigation was, from the very beginning, a cover-up. The investigation was not initiated to get the assassin, but to protect the assassin.

EIR: Why was there a cover-up?

Söderström: You have to look for that answer on a higher international level. I do not believe that the Swedish authorities could have acted as insanely as they did in this investigation, if they had not been influenced, or rather ordered, to impede the investigation, from abroad. Look at the international drug- and weapons-dealers around former U.S. President George Bush and Oliver North, that is what I mean. Look at the South African revelations, and—why not?—the Swedish part of the international illegal arms trade around Bofors. The people organized in these operations were nothing else than murderers. Do you think they want ordinary people to know the truth about what they have been doing? No, they want to suppress the truth with all means possible. It is in this light, that the suppression of the different facts about what happened on the scene of the murder should be seen.