

## Northern Flank by William Jones

### A classical KGB disinformation scheme

*The new EIR Special Report on the Palme assassination shows why Moscow might have wanted to commit such a crime.*

**A**t a series of well-attended press conferences in northern Europe, *EIR* presented documentation of events before and immediately after the murder of Prime Minister Olof Palme on the night of Feb. 28, published in a recently issued *EIR Special Report*, "A Classical KGB Campaign. Who Killed Olof Palme?" Events surrounding the still-unsolved shooting of Mr. Palme on the streets of Stockholm include the disinformation campaign launched only hours after the murder, in which Moscow tried to implicate the Swedish organization associated with presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche, the European Labor Party, in the killing.

The speed with which the Soviets responded to the murder was, by their standards, uncharacteristic. Already on March 1, U.S.A.-Canada Institute chief Georgi Arbatov went out attacking "reactionary circles" whom he had seen demonstrating against Olof Palme. Days later Soviet propaganda channels in the West became more explicit, quoting alleged Swedish police sources that the European Labor Party was under investigation in connection with the crime. On March 12, police arrested Victor Gunnarsson, alleged to be a member of the European Labor Party, on suspicion of the murder. At this point the Soviet disinformation campaign shifted into high gear.

Two months later, Gunnarsson was cleared of suspicion and removed from the case by Chief Prosecutor K. G. Svensson, who issued a press release on May 16 revealing a major fight among the police over how to

proceed with the investigation. Police Chief Hans Holmér, heading the inquiry, wanted at all costs to pin Gunnarsson with the crime. Svensson attacked Holmér for trying to prejudice witnesses' testimony in order to make a case against Gunnarsson. Holmér clearly had an axe to grind against the ELP.

Despite Svensson's justified criticism of Holmér's behavior, Holmér, with the backing of the Social Democratic Party leadership, remained on the case, and Svensson was forced to resign from it.

The systematic coordination of the disinformation and harassment against the ELP, involving Soviet channels in Scandinavia, parts of the Swedish Social Democratic hierarchy, and possibly contaminated sections of the Swedish police, combined with open Soviet threats against the Palme government during the latter half of 1985 and early 1986 give more than enough basis for reorienting the investigation toward possible KGB complicity in the murder. But continued Russian manipulation of the Swedish government would tend to put the brakes on any such investigation.

The other little-regarded factor was increasing Soviet anger at the Palme government for not caving in to Moscow's increasing demands. During the last months of his life, Olof Palme was faced with growing criticism of his appeasement policies toward the Soviets by leading circles of the Swedish military. Even sections of his own party—old-line Social Democrats with a pro-defense leaning—were upset by

continuing Soviet submarine incursions in Swedish coastal waters.

The Soviet disregard for Swedish protests was even creating debate in Swedish military circles as to the feasibility of Swedish entry into NATO, a formerly taboo issue which had been sparked by the ELP's campaign for Sweden to join NATO. Palme could not ignore such high-level criticism, except at considerable political risk. The debate in Sweden on the submarines and the heated climate over the manifest Soviet arrogance was tending to create a shift to a more forceful defense policy. The Soviets responded by demanding that Palme put a lid on the submarine debate, or else they would make Scandinavia a new "trouble spot." Any shift in Sweden's defense policy could tend to neutralize what had become for the Soviets a key element in their nuclear war capability—the massive Soviet military concentration on the Kola Peninsula.

The same month Olof Palme was killed, the Swedish government made an about-face on technology transfer to the East bloc. In February, the Swedish government agreed not to export high-technology goods, produced in the United States and under export restrictions there, to the East bloc. Sweden was formerly an open window to the Soviets for such Western goods. Now, the Palme government, under pressure from the United States, was making things difficult for Moscow.

Did this threatened shift in political orientation in Sweden merit extraordinary measures on the part of the Soviets to regain control over Scandinavia, measures including killing the Swedish prime minister? And was Olof Palme, under these conditions, more useful to them as a martyr than as a politician being forced to buck the Soviets?