

## Northern Flank by Göran Haglund

### Palme murder: back to square one

*A cosmetic reorganization of the investigation might save some faces, but will it help catch the murderer?*

**A** two-week brawl over the Palme murder inquiry, pitting Stockholm Police Chief Hans Holmér against a group of public prosecutors disagreeing with Holmér's bumptious conduct of the investigation, resulted in a reorganization on Feb. 4 of the unsuccessful murder hunt. A blatant cover-up of tracks leading to Moscow had combined with political abuse of the investigation, to create a situation in which the government's credibility was at stake unless it was seen intervening to "establish law and order" again.

The painful public controversy had been sparked by the miserable failure of Holmér's Jan. 20 police raid against the Stockholm offices and homes of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), a terrorist group operating in Sweden. The grand police-versus-prosecutor quarrel fueled strong calls for Holmér to resign from the investigation, the "PKK track" to be dropped, and the 145-man police task force to be reduced to a caretaker group of 20 men. Yet none of those demands was met in the reorganization finally announced by the government.

After prolonged crisis sessions on Feb. 4, the government was pressured into adopting a cosmetic reshuffle, saving Holmér's face, leaving him in a central leadership position, in charge of the investigation's "PKK track."

Reinforcing Holmér's standing, the only person to be removed from the investigation was Holmér's prime antagonist among the prosecutors, Stockholm High Prosecutor

Claes Zeime.

While the government transferred nominal responsibility for the investigation "upstairs" to Holmér and Zeime's respective bosses, National Police Chief Holger Romander and National Prosecutor Magnus Sjöberg, none of those figureheads will be directly involved in the day-to-day leadership of the manhunt.

The daily leadership, nominally, will be shared by Ulf Karlsson, department head at Romander's National Police Board, and Axel Morath, a deputy of Sjöberg, but in reality will be largely exercised by a newly created "reference group"—a troika of senior consultants drawn from the same group of people who have hitherto run the investigation: Holmér himself, his most loyal friend National Criminal Police Chief Tommy Lindström, and Per-Göran Näss from the Secret Police (SÄPO).

While ranking below Romander and Karlsson in the police hierarchy, Holmér, as Stockholm chief of police—and 1970-76 head of SÄPO—de facto remains the heaviest police official actively involved in the investigation, in terms of real resources.

Under a front-page headline, "The New Organization a Hoax," the Social Democratic *Aftonbladet* of Feb. 5 cited an unnamed member of the three-man Judicial Commission formed by the government last summer to look into the conduct of the murder probe, saying that "the reorganization is a hoax," that Romander and Sjöberg are only contributing their names, "in or-

der for Holmér not to feel like a failure."

In a six-page spread, the liberal *Expressen* of Feb. 6, using subheads like "Holmér's Threat Scared Carlsson," reported that Holmér had threatened Premier Ingvar Carlsson that, were he to be dumped from the investigation, he would also resign as police chief of Stockholm and create a scandal—no idle talk by a man who has spent 11 months compiling dossiers on everything Palme was involved in, from arms deals with Iran to love affairs with Soviet "peacenik" intelligence assets like Emma Rothschild.

The hunt for Palme's murderer is back to square one. A year has been lost already to bungling and political cover-ups, and there is little evidence that this "new start" will accomplish much else.

A national radio broadcast, "Kanalen," on Feb. 4 mooted that the "reorganized" investigation might revive early efforts to implicate the European Labor Party and U.S. presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. in the Palme murder—an effort first ordered by Soviet official Georgij Arbatov on March 1, 1986, but backfiring as fraudulent on March 19, 1986, as it turned out that the "evidence" Holmér had assembled to this effect was entirely fabricated.

One signal of Moscow's desire to revive this fraudulent "LaRouche connection," was the Jan. 26 Soviet prime time 55-minute TV feature, "Why Did They Kill Olof Palme?" which showed that the alleged LaRouche connection remains the foremost KGB disinformation track. Swedish TV announced plans to broadcast the Soviet TV feature on Feb. 27—oblivious to the political backfire created by the Kremlin's trumpeting that LaRouche is their main enemy in the West.