

LOK SABHA DEBATES

1

LOK SABHA

Monday, March 3, 1986/Phalgun 12,
1907 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock.*

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

OBITUARY REFERENCE

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Prime Minister.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI) : Sir, It was with profound shock and deep distress that we heard of the heinous assassination of the Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Olof Palme. It was only a few days ago that he had been in Delhi, and we had met. He was a fighter for peace, for disarmament and for international cooperation. He had worked together with Indiraji on many occasions; and I had the pleasure of being with him when we signed the Delhi Declaration in January 1985.

He was the Chairman of the Independent Commission for International Security and Cooperation, known much better as the Palme Commission. He was also the author of many other initiatives on disarmament, and North-South issues.

The world has lost fighter for *detente*, and for an equitable world order. India has lost a friend.

2

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI (Adilabad) : I express our deep sense of sorrow on the brutal assassination of the Swedish Prime Minister. I share the feelings of the Leader of the House that we have lost a great friend and a greater fighter for peace and friendship. I express my homage on behalf of the Telgu Desam Party.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (Mahbubnagar) : I deem it a duty to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by the Hon. Prime Minister.

Mr. Palme was not merely the Prime Minister of a country, he was one of the genuine leading advocates of democratic socialism at the global level. His death did not merely take away a champion of peace. It also delivered a blow at the unique open society that has been built up in the Scandinavian countries, more particularly in Sweden.

It is very important to note that the Prime Minister of Sweden along with his wife was going about in the streets *inognito*; and when the policemen rushed after he was shot at, the wife of the Prime Minister had to shout that she was Lisbeth Palme, and the man shot at was none other than the Prime Minister of Sweden.

On this occasion, you will recollect that Palme was an unusual kind of politician.

Even as a Minister way back 1968, he had the moral courage to walk with a North Vietnam Diplomat in the streets of Sweden as a protest against the American outrages in South Vietnam. It is a matter of great concern for the whole humanity that such a man should have been felled a treacherous bullet.

SHRI SURESH KURUP (Kottayam) : The CPI (M) joins the agony of the world

and this House on the brutal assassination of Swedish Prime Minister, Mr. Olof Palme. This much more shocking in the sense that it happened in Sweden where political assassination is unheard of. I, on behalf of the CPI (M), express our deep sorrow at the passing away of this champion of peace and nuclear disarmament.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU (Gobichettipalayam) : On behalf of AIADMK, we express our deep sorrow at the demise of Olof Palme, who was a true friend actually of India. He was maintaining the good relationship between India and Sweden for a number of years. If my memory serves me well, when Madam, our mother Indira was in power, actually Palme once said, "Indira Gandhi is not only the mother of India, she is the mother of the world." He was a person who was in power for the fourth time as Prime Minister of Sweden. At the age of 59, he was shot dead. It is shocking news not only for India but for the entire world. We express our deep sorrow at his death and request you to convey our condolences to the bereaved family.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOO-WALIA (Sangrur) : On behalf of my Party, Shiromani Akali Dal, I share the sentiments expressed by our Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, at the sad death of the Swedish Prime Minister, Mr. Palme. He was a great and tried friend of India. He fought for the betterment of the down-trodden. He also fought against evil designs of the forces of expansionism and aggression. I take this opportunity to strongly condemn the violent and terrorist attitude an approach which is becoming more and more a grave danger to sane world. I express my deep grief and sorrow with the great people of Sweden.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI (Guwahati): On behalf of my Party and on my own behalf, I join the Prime Minister and my other colleagues in expressing our deep sense of condolences at the death of Mr. Palme. Whether he was in office or out of office, he was a vigorous fighter for world peace and for nuclear disarmament. At a time when few voices of protest were raised in Europe against the atrocities in Vietnam, he, in spite of the fact that Sweden was a neutral coun-

try, had the moral courage to raise his voice against the onslaught on Vietnam. His loss is a loss to humanity. I hope you will convey our sincere condolences to the people of Sweden and to the members of the bereaved family.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ (Baramulla) : Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference I join the Leader of the House Shri Rajiv Gandhi in expressing India's deep concern and sorrow over the sad assassination of Mr. Olof Palme, the Prime Minister of Sweden. Now, on this occasion one can ask a question : What is the religion of terrorists? What was the crime of Mr. Olof Palme, who wanted Sweden to play role in promoting peace and harmony in the world ? We in India know some dimensions of terrorism and we know how terrorism can pose a threat to the unity and integrity of the country, and therefore we despise and condemn terrorism whether it is found in India or elsewhere in the world. I deeply express sorrow on this occasion and whole heartedly join the Leader of the House in expressing India's deep shock at the demise of Mr. Palme.

SHRI EBRAHIM SULEMAN SAIT (Manjeri) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I on behalf of my party, the Indian Muslim League, join the Prime Minister and other Leaders of the Opposition in expressing deep pain and anguish at the brutal assassination of the Swedish Prime Minister, Mr. Olof Palme. Sir, he was essentially a man of peace and in him were concentrated all the hopes and aspirations not only of the people of Sweden but the entire peace-loving world. His relations with the leaders of our Government in seeking peace throughout the world. I express all sympathy to the people of Sweden, particularly Mrs. Palme at this hour of great tragedy.

SHRI GEORGE JOSEPH MUNDACKAL (Muvattupuzha) : Mr. Speaker, I join our leaders in the feelings expressed on the death of the Swedish Prime Minister. It is a great shock for the peace loving people of the world. I say, he was a good friend of our country. It is a great loss for our country also. Recently, he visited our country and he was also a champion of the peace-loving

world. Terrorism, whether in India or abroad, we have to condemn it.

Anyway, we lost a champion of peace. I am in sympathy with the family of the Swedish Prime Minister and I pray that his soul may rest in peace !

MR. SPEAKER : Hon'ble Members, we are meeting today under the shadow of tragic assassination of Mr. Olof Palme, the Prime Minister of Sweden. A distinguished world statesman, Mr. Palme was a great friend of India. In his death, the world has lost one of its wisest statesmen. An ardent advocate of peace and freedom, Mr. Palme joined hands with India in the six-nation call for nuclear disarmament, so that the six-nation call for nuclear disarmament, so that the world can live in peace and progress. Mr. Palme's death has once again brought into focus the imperative and urgent need to root out terrorism as a means to gain political ends. We know how tragic it is and how you feel the impact of terrorism. We have had the sad experience in 1984 when our own Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi was murdered and then again we had in 1985 a saintly person, a great humanitarian, Mr. Longowal, who fell at the hands of the assassins. Such a shocking act of violence needs to be condemned by the world community because violence and democracy or the freedom of humans do not co-exist. They are at variance. Mr. Palme was not only a great leader of the European socialist movement, he was also a staunch ally of the third world. He lost no opportunity to advocate

the cause of social justice, equality, human rights and world peace.

Mr. Palme was a well-known political figure in Europe for the last 30 years. He had won the admiration of people all over the globe for his fight for various causes ranging from world disarmament to democratic socialism. Mr. Palme was the U. N. Secretary-General's special envoy in efforts to end the war between Iran and Iraq and in the words of the U. N. Secretary-General, his contribution to international peace and cooperation would be "his lasting legacy". Mr. Palme was also a great champion of the cause of the people of Africa especially for the struggle against apartheid.

I trust the House will join me in conveying our deep sense of sorrow and grief at the death of this great leader, to Mrs. Palme and other family members as well as to the people of Sweden.

The House may now stand in silence for a short-while to mourn the sad demise of Mr. Palme.

*(The Members then stood in silence
for a short-while)*

11.17 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till
Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday,
March 4, 1986/Phalguna 13,
1907 (Saka)*