

Translation of a Decision in a Review Case

The Decision in Swedish, Case Number AMR-8123-25.

Decision

The prosecutor's decision is not changed in any way other than with regard to the ground for the decision.

Background

On 10 June 2020, Chief Prosecutor Krister Petersson decided to close the investigation on the murder of Prime Minister Olof Palme on 28 February 1986. The detailed ground for the decision was that the suspect was deceased.

I have on several occasions handled requests for review of the Chief Prosecutor's decision. The first decision was made on 30 September 2020. This decision, and the subsequent ones, have meant that I on formal grounds have abstained from making any substantive review. To the extent that my decisions have been requested to be reviewed, the Prosecutor General has seen no reason to change the decisions.

Current Request for Review

A journalist has now requested a review of the decision to close the investigation. He has pointed out the possibility of using modern forensic technology to obtain new evidence through a new DNA analysis of samples from Olof Palme's coat. The request is specific and raises the question of whether there is a basis for taking such investigative measures.

Review of the Suspicions against Stig Engström

The decision in 2020 to close the investigation is motivated by the fact that the suspect is deceased. The decision is brief, but the press conference held on the same day makes it clear on what grounds Stig Engström, who was employed by Skandia at the time of the crime, is suspected of being the lone perpetrator who killed the Prime Minister. It is also clear that it is Stig Engström's death that forms the basis for the motivation for the decision.

Measures of the kind that the journalist has now proposed require the investigation be resumed. However, this is not possible as long as Stig Engström's death is the reason for the investigation being closed; with him as the main suspect, there are no conditions for a resumed investigation to lead to prosecution and conviction.

I have therefore decided to submit the case for review as far as it concerns the suspicions against Stig Engström. I have examined the circumstances and statements that are considered to incriminate Stig Engström. I have also taken note of circumstances that speak against Stig Engström being the perpetrator of the crime.

My review has concerned the information contained in the investigation in the parts mentioned above, but I have also read some of the books that have accused or rejected Stig Engström as the perpetrator.

My Assessment

An assumption that Stig Engström is the perpetrator is incompatible with Lisbeth Palme's identification of Christer Pettersson, who is not interchangeable with Stig Engström in appearance.

Such an assumption is also incompatible with the witness statement that the perpetrator had been waiting for the Palme couple at the Dekorima corner for some time.

Stig Engström as the perpetrator is also difficult to reconcile with the information available about when he left Skandiahuset, and thus whether he had time to commit the act.

In addition, it is unexplained

- whether, and if so, how he could have known that the Palme couple would be outside Skandiahuset at that time
- how he had access to the type of weapon that was used
- why he was carrying such a weapon in a fully loaded condition when he left Skandiahuset
- what his motives were for killing Olof Palme.

I have weighed the circumstances that are incriminating for Stig Engström and that were reported at the press conference in June 2020 against the circumstances that in various ways speak in the opposite direction. It must also be acknowledged that the witness statements and other information that support an assumption that Stig Engström is the perpetrator are themselves marked by uncertainties.

Overall, it is my assessment that the available evidence is not sufficient to form the basis for identifying Stig Engström as the designated perpetrator. The decision to close the investigation cannot therefore be justified by the fact that he is deceased.

The Requested Investigative Measures

During the judicial review, I have had the prerequisites for obtaining new evidence from the coat in question using modern technology examined. I have had several meetings with the National Forensic Centre and have been able to establish that different technology is available today compared to what was available at the time of the closure decision.

My Assessment

The prospects of achieving a matching profile and thereby moving the investigation forward are considered to be extremely small. This applies to the probability that DNA residues on the coat at all come from the perpetrator, as well as to the lack of DNA profiles from any currently living potential suspects to compare with.

I have therefore found that I do not have grounds to resume the investigation in order to conduct renewed analyses and samplings of Olof Palme's coat.

Reasons for my Decision

Almost 40 years have passed since the murder of Olof Palme. The investigation was actively conducted for 34 years and followed a long series of theories. There are currently no circumstances known to me that have the potential to lead a reopened investigation to prosecution and conviction.

Consequently, there is no reason to change Krister Petersson's decision in any way other than regarding the ground for it.

The investigation shall therefore continue to be closed. However, the new justification for the decision reads: Based on the investigation material that is now available, it is not possible to prove who the perpetrator is and further investigation cannot be assumed to change the evidence in a decisive way.