

RAJYA SABHA

Monday the 3rd March 1986/12 Phalgun
1907 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the
clock,

Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

HOMAGE TO THE MEMORY OF LATE MR. OLOF PALME, PRIME MINISTER OF SWEDEN

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon Members it is with a heavy heart that I report to the House the demise of Mr. Olof Palme, the Prime Minister of Sweden an eminent statesman and a friend of India. The House would like to pay its tribute. Now, I give the floor to Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh.

THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) : Sir, I rise with a sad heart and a sadness which we all share. The assassin's bullet has taken away another noble soul from amidst us. Perhaps the ways of history are strange that some of the noblest souls, be it Gandhi, be it Shrimati Indira Gandhi, be it Olof Palme, they have spilt their blood on this earth, this planet, which they served. Not that they have passed away, because we are accustomed to what death is and we are psychologically prepared; but we are not prepared for it when someone is snatched away from us. This is the shock that we received. But the blood spilt by these martyrs leaves a question mark on this earth the question mark that we have all addressed ourselves to, about the future, what should be our response? Will history be continued to be shaped by violence or are there any other alternatives to which we can rise? The manner and the circumstances in which Mr Olof Palme died were the same as the circumstances of Gandhiji and Indira-ji in so far as trust and trusting are concerned. He was coming back

home with his wife on foot, walking back in total confidence and total trust of all, when the assassin's bullets pierced the silence and took him away from us. He was one of the most admired leaders of the world, a fearless advocate of equality and peace. When it came to taking sides on causes that should be supported, it was testified that he was fearless and he carried the conviction of his faith. The Vietnam episode is ample testimony of the same. He was trusted by the people who are at war with each other, Iran and Iraq; both accepted him as their mediator. And so far as the future of humanity is concerned, he saw beyond the structures of the state, of the boundaries of the nation, of the contemporariness of present problems and issues. He saw much beyond in time and also in the total context of humanity and in this context his initiative of peace and disarmament is of great significance.

Recently, the initiative taken by him and our Prime Minister in the Six Nation Meet and the movement for the world peace, I think, was one of the greatest contributions, where both countries have come very very close to each other and in him we have not only lost a great friend of our country but humanity has lost a great soul.

With these words, Sir, I express my sorrow and sadness at his demise

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY (Karnataka): Mr. Chairman, Sir, what has befallen Sweden cannot be measured in words. It is a great tragedy that a man of peace, a man who was wedded and committed to disarmament, world security and more than anything else to democratic socialism has been assassinated by the dastardly hand of an assassin. Nobody believed that in a country like Sweden where comparatively peace prevailed for more than a century, such a ghastly tragedy would occur. We have to draw a lesson from

[Shri M.S. Gurupadaswamy]

this Sir, that in the modern world, the leaders of nations, the leaders of various countries had to face very great professional hazards. It also means that no country can be taken as a land of peace any more. Sir, Mr. Palme was in his middle age with a great future. He was the Prime Minister of a small but one of the most advanced countries of Europe. He has contributed, as the Leader of the House has said to the cause of world peace, to the cause of disarmament, and to the cause of resolving international conflicts. He was a patriot, he was a nationalist and he was a socialist. He was a man among men in his country who was liked by all, even by the Opposition.

Therefore, Sir, we mourn his assassination very deeply and we share the grief of that country also very much. We, on behalf of the Opposition, will remember his services always and we convey our deep sense of grief to the family of the bereaved.

श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी (मध्य प्रदेश) : मान्यवर, सभापति जी, सदन के नेता और मेरे साथी श्री गुरुदासस्वामी ने जो भावनाएं व्यक्त की हैं, मैं अपने को उनसे संबद्ध करता हूँ और स्वीडन के प्रधानमंत्री श्री ओल्फ पाम के प्रति अपनी श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ। श्री पाम के निधन पर भारतवासियों को, हम सब को शोक मित केवल इसलिए नहीं है कि वे भारत के मित्र हैं, किन्तु इस कारण विशेषरूप से उनसे संबद्ध अनुभव करते हैं क्योंकि जिस किनोमिता से आज भारत ग्रस्त है और जिससे वह जूझा हुआ है और अभी तक हम उस पर काबू नहीं पा रहे हैं उसमें यह संबंधित है और वह है उप्रवाद, आतंकवाद, जो कि विगत दशब्दी में भयंकर रूप से सारी स्थिति को विस्तृत करने में समर्थ हो पा रहा है और स्वीडन के प्रधानमंत्री का यह हत्या इस बात को उजागर करती है। क्योंकि अगर कोई घटना इंग्लैंड में होती है तो मान लिया जाता है कि आई०आर०ए० के कारण हुई, भारत

में होती है तो मान लिया जा है कि यह उप्रवाद यहाँ पर संशुद्ध है उसके कारण हुई, लेकिन जिस देश में उप्रवाद कम से कम जाना-सहजाना नहीं जाता था, चाहे समीपवर्ती देशों में था, वहाँ के प्रधानमंत्री श्री इस बात का शिकार हो जाएं तो वहाँ इस बात पर बल देते हैं कि उप्रवाद पर अगर काबू पाना है तो एक देश केवल नहीं पा सकता है सब देशों, सब राष्ट्रों को इस बात को स्वीकार करना पड़ेगा कि यह सम्पूर्ण मानवता के लिए चुनौती है, यह साधारण सिविलाइजेशन के लिए चुनौती है, डेमोक्रेसी के लिए चुनौती है ही। इसलिए मिल कर कहीं पर भी हम रत्ती भर रंचमात्र भी उसके लिए स्थान नहीं छोड़ेंगे, कहीं पर भी इसके साथ समझौता नहीं करेंगे और उप्रवाद को पूर्ण रूप से विश्व में से मिटाने के लिए सब लोग वचनबद्ध होंगे इस बात को यह घटना फिर फिर से उजागर करती है। मैं फिर से उनके प्रति श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ।

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPEN-DRA (Andhra Pradesh) : Sir, the whole world mourns the tragic death of the great statesman who was killed in the most horrifying fashion. He was one more victim of the politics of violence. He led his country remarkably well. He was a great leader, a great social democrat and very liberal in his outlook. A great believer in peace, freedom and equality, he contributed much to Sweden's development. Particularly his contribution in the world affairs in the field of nuclear disarmament is worth mentioning. He joined India in several joint moves particularly in regard to nuclear disarmament and also in the move for peace. India has lost a great friend because lately we have been establishing very good relations with Sweden in terms of transfer of technology and also several joint moves in the international field, in world affairs. I, on my own behalf and on behalf of my party, pay our humble homage to this great departed leader.

SHRI SUSHIL CHAND MOHUNTA (Haryana) : Sir, a great tragedy has befallen the world. A man of peace

a crusader for nuclear disarmament a friend of all peoples has fallen a victim at the hands of some misguided persons. They have robbed the world of a great man. He was a very great friend of India. He steered his country even in European politics to a very neutral and noble stand and was champion of the underdeveloped countries. Especially with our country, he had developed the most cordial relations.

I join my other friends in paying my homage to this great martyr. Throughout the century we have seen that the greatest men of peace have been fallen victims to suchlike acts. It has happened with him also. It is so sad. I only wish that the world could be rid of such terrorist acts and we would all realise the futility of such dastardly actions. It brings gain to none but it makes the world poorer for all. I on behalf of my party once again pay my homage to him and join this House in sending our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved people of Sweden and to the injured wife of this great leader.

SHRI MOSTAFA BIN QUASEM (West Bengal): I on behalf of myself and on behalf of my party, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) join the honourable Leader of the House and the other honourable Members who have expressed their concern at the dastardly, assassination of the Swedish Prime Minister. Mr. Olof Palme. In the death of Mr. Olof Palme the world has lost one of the foremost champions of the world peace and disarmament and his loss is not a case of loss for Sweden alone but for the entire world, a world which is being constantly threatened by imperialist war. I on behalf of my party and myself pay my homage to the departed statesman and leader.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM (Tamil Nadu) :

I share the deep feelings expressed by the Leader of the House on the assassination of the Prime Minister of Sweden. Mr. Olof Palme. On behalf of the Anna-DMK we strongly condemn violence and terrorism for political ends. The Prime Minister of Sweden was noted for his simplicity and humility. That he was not even identified when he was in the theatre shows how simple and unassuming he was. Sweden is the altar of democracy. Most of the democracies have derived their basic principles from the Swedish Constitution, apart from that of the U.K. Mr. Palme stood for world peace and world solidarity. The demise of this great leader is a great loss not only to all the democratic countries but the entire humanity. On behalf of the All India Anna-DMK we pay our homage to the departed leader.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI (Maharashtra): The news of the assassination of the Prime Minister of Sweden came as a deep shock to the people of this country. It is indeed a sad day for peace in the world and it is very sad that forces of terrorism are gaining an upper hand in all parts of the world. Sweden especially was known as a zone of peace. In the last over two hundred years there was no assassination of anyone in Government in Sweden and that it should have happened there now reflects the state of affairs in the world today. I think the most fitting tribute that we can all pay to the departed soul would be to take up his cause of disarmament and also the peaceful use of nuclear energy. I on behalf of my party, the Congress (S), would like to pay our homage to the departed Prime Minister of Sweden.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO (Jammu and Kashmir): I join the Leader of the House on behalf of myself and on behalf of my party, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, to pay tributes to the departed soul. He was a man of peace. It reminds me of the speech

[Shri Ghulam Rasool Matto]

he made at the six-nation summit meeting last year in Delhi when I had occasion to be present. He was a man of peace and, above all, of a very amiable nature. It also reminds me of the interview Mr. Palme gave only five weeks ago to a school-girl, Miss Mathur, in Delhi, the predominant factor of which is peace and disarmament.

A man of peace and a man who believed in nuclear disarmament has gone from our midst. As Mr. Advani has said, it was in the year 1772 that the last assassination took place in Sweden and, after more than 200 years, this terrorism has come to a country which is known for peace. This, indeed, is a very bad trend and what is disturbing is that there seems to be a nexus between some powers and the assassination of those of the Western countries who join the neutral nations and the disarmament campaign in the world because they are the targets for them. This has to be understood as all those leaders of the Western countries who show an inclination in disarmament and peace are the victims of this type of terrorism.

Again, Sir, on my behalf and on behalf of my Party, I associate myself in sending our condolences to the great people of Sweden and the peace-loving countries of the world. Thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I associate myself with the sentiments expressed by the Leader of the House as well as the leaders of the Opposition.

The tragic assassination of Mr. Olof Palme, the Prime Minister of Sweden, has caused a shock of dismay and grief throughout the world. Coming so soon after the assassination of our own beloved Prime Minister, the late Shrimati Indira Gandhi with whom Mr. Olof Palme had developed a close association in international affairs, our sorrow is even greater.

Mr. Palme was a man of peace and compassion and was assassinated in a country in which violence was unknown. That he was a man of peace and that he had no enemies to fear from gave him confidence to move about freely without even bodyguards. In his passing away India has lost a very close friend who tried and strove along with India to create a peaceful world to live in for present and future generations.

Mr. Olof Palme was Sweden's best-known statesman after the Second World War. Though born and brought up in an upper-class family of Sweden, he was a socialist at heart and belonged to the labour movement. He became known to the outside world in the late 'sixties' as a major critic of the US role in Vietnam was though still in the Swedish Government.

Mr. Palme was a man committed to peace and disarmament and for a world free from strife and tension. A Social Democrat, Mr. Palme was active in the international labour movement and disarmament negotiations and served on the Commission to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor nations. He served as the Prime Minister of Sweden from 1969 to 1976 and returned to power again in 1982.

Mr. Palme strongly condemned the policy of apartheid of the Government of South Africa and, in order to set an example to the other Western countries, he imposed a freeze on Swedish business investments in South Africa. Because of his identical views and approach to the problems facing the world, Mr. Palme had become a close friend and had developed a special rapport with our late Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi and, thereafter, with our Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi.

We would remember him in India as one of the signatories to the Six-Nation New Delhi Declaration of Peace and Disarmament. In the World in January, 1985. Recently, he

made a number of attempts to mediate in the Gulf War between Iran and Iraq. About two months ago, he was awarded the "Beyond the War Award" along with our Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi and Heads of four other States which was televised throughout the world. He had the distinction of delivering the first Indira Gandhi Memorial Lecture in January this year.

It is a matter of great sadness that such a man was felled by the bullets of hatred. India has lost a close and a good friend and the world one of its wisest and noblest statesman. He has left an indelible mark on the history mankind. Though dead, his life which was saga of devotion and dedication to mankind will continue to emit light and inspiration to all those who are in quest of peace.

His example will live on in the hearts of generations to come.

Personally I had the privilege of knowing him and have had the privilege of discussing many issues of international importance. And I have lost a personal friend.

We deeply mourn the passing away of Mr. Olof Palme and join the friendly people of Sweden in their hour of sorrow.

I request Members to rise in their places and observe two minutes' silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed leader.

[Hon. Member then stood in silence for two minutes.]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House stands adjourned till 11 A.M. on Tuesday, the 4th March, 1986, as a mark of respect to the memory of Mr. Olof Palme.

The House adjourned at twenty-seven minutes past eleven of the clock, till eleven of the clock, on Tuesday, the 4th March, 1986.