

C24: 9500/1241

**FORMER PRISONER CLAIMS HEROIC SWEDISH DIPLOMAT STILL ALIVE**

New York City **NOVOYE RUSSKOYE SLOVO** in Russian 28 Jan 79 p 2

[Article by Abram Kalinski, former captain in the Polish Army and former permanent Polish representative in the USSR Ministry of Defense: "The Secret of Raul Valenberg"]

[Text] The author of this article, A. Kalinski, was a captain in the Polish Army and permanent Polish representative at the USSR Ministry of Defense. He was arrested in 1944 and freed in 1959.

During an interview on West German television in November 1978, I mentioned the case of Swedish diplomat Raul Valenberg, who was abducted by agents of the SMERSH-MKGB on 17 January 1945.

For certain reasons, I could not discuss this question more fully at that time. However, even what I did say aroused the interest of the Swedish authorities. In mid-December Mr. Leifland, Swedish deputy minister of foreign affairs, and Mr. Birdman, chief of the political division of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, came to the United States and on 20 December I met with them at the residence of the Swedish general counsel in New York. At this meeting, which lasted more than two hours, I passed on all the information I had about Raul Valenberg's fate to Mr. Leifland.

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SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2006

In 34 years the Swedish Government has done surprisingly little to rescue Vallenberg even though Sweden has had, for more than 30 years, irrefutable proof that he was abducted by Soviet Chekists and is now in their hands. I stated that "quiet diplomacy" could not help in this matter. The experience of the last 20 years has demonstrated that in relations with the Soviet authorities only broad publicity can help. It is common knowledge that criminals fear the light of day.

Unfortunately, even today the principle of "not upsetting the Kremlin" is fairly widespread in the free world even though its bankruptcy has been demonstrated many times.

I personally was a victim of this policy. In 1955, after I had already spent almost 11 years in solitary confinement, I managed to send a postcard secretly from Vladimir Prison to my sister in Haifa, Israel. I had not seen my sister since 1934, and she thought I had "died the death of the brave," which is what she was officially told. In the postcard I set forth the reasons for my arrest and long imprisonment without a trial. I said that I had been arrested on the basis of a report by my neighbor in the Moscow Matropole Hotel, an important official in the U.S. Embassy in the USSR (A. Harriman was Ambassador).

Upon receiving my postcard, my sister went to a journalist friend and together they paid a visit to the U. S. general counsel in Haifa (this was in 1955). Clutching the back of his head, the counsel exclaimed, "Keep quiet and don't do anything. It was only a mistake that your brother was not executed. There is still hope that he can get out some day, but if you make a fuss he will certainly be shot."

After such an "authoritative" statement my sister did not even want to listen to the arguments of the Israeli journalist who was with her and held precisely the opposite opinion. The counsel's answer, which was based on the same principle of not offending the Kremlin, cost me four and a half years of jail.

The Swedish diplomat Raul Vallenberg, 31 years of age, was sent to Budapest as first secretary of the Swedish Embassy in June 1944. At this time the Allies appealed to the Government of Sweden to help save the Hungarian Jews. Adolph Eichman himself, the master killer, was active in Hungary. When Vallenberg arrived in Budapest not more than 200,000 Jews were left in the country. In his very first days the young diplomat was able to get 4,500 men, women, and children out of the ghetto and locate them in rented or purchased apartments (Vallenberg was the son of a rich banker and had money). Associates of the embassy brought in thousands of Swedish passports and gave them out to Jews marked for trips to the death camps. Next Vallenberg and his helpers would wait for the trains at the Hungarian border and demand that the "citizens" of neutral Sweden be freed.

The ones who were saved returned to their apartments. However, there was no assurance at all that the Germans would not take them again. So Raul Vallenberg conceived a bold plan: to gather as many Jews as possible in one place where they would be under the protection of the Swedish Embassy.

In a very short time this tireless man rented more than 30 buildings and moved thousands of families into them. The area was called "Vallenberg City." Trucks flying the Swedish flag delivered food and

medicine to the "city." The Swedish diplomat did not forget the security of the inhabitants of his "city" either. He organized armed self-defense groups, secretly buying guns from Hungarian, Italian, and even German deserters.

The inhabitants of "Vallenberg City" simply adored the young, charming Raul and called him an angel of mercy. He visited his wards frequently, asked about their needs, and showed his personal concern for them.

Needless to say, such activities did not please the German authorities and the Nazis, led by Wesenmayer, the German Ambassador in Hungary, were looking for a way to get rid of Vallenberg. But they did not succeed. The Swedish diplomat operated with great skill and energy. However, what the Gestapo did not do was done by the Soviet Chekists.

The case of Raul Vallenberg recently caught the interest of the world community again when a street in Budapest was named after him. We should mention here that as early as 1946 the Hungarian Jews put up a monument to their rescuer in Stefan Park, but this memorial was removed on the order of the Stalinist lackey Matyas Rakosi.

Vallenberg fell victim to the newly formed 8th special division of SMERSH, which was led by Abakumov himself. This division engaged in large-scale abduction of people as Soviet forces advanced (I wrote about this in detail in my book "185 Months in the Torture Chambers of the NKGB, MGB, and KGB") and the head of the Chekists at that time, Merkulov, had a standing interest in its activities. And when they caught a "big fish," they reported directly to Stalin.

Raul Vallenberg disappeared on 17 January 1945. Millions of Swedes wrote to Stalin then asking for the release of their countrymen. The governments of Sweden, the United States, England, and other countries also addressed appeals to him. But Stalin remained silent. And when he did speak, he announced simply that "Soviet agencies know nothing of a man named Vallenberg." The protests continued. The Swedish Government sent 23 notes to the Kremlin, but there was no answer.

In 1956 Khrushchev visited Stockholm, where he was given a petition from Vallenberg's mother and the population of the country with a demand that the missing diplomats be returned. Khrushchev promised to "clear up this matter" and, indeed, four months later an answer arrived. It was officially announced that "a man by the name of Raul Vallenberg died of a heart attack in July 1947 in an internal prison of the NKGB of the USSR." But when the Swedes demanded the remains of the deceased man, they were told that he had been cremated. (All convicts in the Soviet Union know that prisoners who die are not cremated. The only possible exception is members of the Politburo who have been executed, but simple arrestees are buried with their number plate on their leg.)

Subsequently, correcting the mistake of the "blabbermouth" Khrushchev, Brezhnev's KGB thought up a new explanation: Vallenberg was supposedly killed by the Nazis or Hungarian fascists in revenge for saving Jews. This is the version that the Soviets continue to hold today. So, under Stalin there was no Vallenberg at all; under Khrushchev he died of a heart attack in Lubyanka; under Brezhnev he was killed by the fascists. All three are lies. The prisoners of Vladimir and Verkhneural'sk prisons and the Aleksandrov Central Prison know the truth about this crime.

I also know the truth, from primary sources, which means from many fellow prisoners I met during my more than 15 years of prison life who had formerly served with Vallenberg. On 20 December 1978 I turned this information with names over to Mr. Leifland, deputy Swedish minister of foreign affairs, and Mr. Girdman, chief of the political division of the ministry.

When the KGB wants to throw off people who are following the trail of Chekist crimes, it spreads widely varying rumors, creating great confusion. Unfortunately, Simon Wiesenthal, the well-known hunter of Nazi criminals, was taken in by this Goebbelsian tactic. In his appeal to the Swedish Government, Wiesenthal refers to stories by people who supposedly saw Raul Vallenberg in some kind of "special camp for foreigners." There are no such camps and never were. All secret prisoners serve in the special prisons, Vladimir, Novocherkassk, Oral, Verkhneural'sk, Aleksandrov Central, and others, in which I too served more than 15 years. No camp can be as rigidly isolated as a prison; in them isolation and secrecy can be raised to devilish perfection.

I first heard of Vallenberg from the Jewish writer David Vendrovskiy, who had once been a correspondent for the European Press Agency. This was in November 1951 at Verkhneural'sk Prison. Vendrovskiy was transferred to my room directly from a room in which three of them had been imprisoned: he, the former minister of foreign affairs of free Latvia Murters, and Raul Vallenberg.

David told me that he had been imprisoned with a "very interesting and extraordinarily likeable Swede," the former diplomat Vallenberg. Vallenberg was an "import," which is what the convicts called people

abducted from the West by the Chekists. Following the Swede's own words, Vendrovskiy told me this story. Vallenberg had appealed to the Soviet military authorities to allow him to take out the food bought for his wards, the rescued Jews, before the Soviet troops arrived. The next day 5-6 Soviet officers came to see the diplomat and invited him to come to their commander for talks. Vallenberg said that he had some kind of "bad feeling" about it. For an invitation one would have been enough, even a sergeant or enlisted man. And although he knew, he said, "Soviet ways," still he went with them.

When they arrived at the place Vallenberg was put in an empty room whose only furniture was one night table. The officers disappeared. Toward evening a dirty mattress was thrown in for the diplomat and weakened, tired, and hungry, Vallenberg fell asleep. In the morning he was awakened by the bitter cold in the unheated room and did some running to warm himself up. For breakfast he was given a tincan of hot water and a piece of doughy bread. Finally, on 20 January Vallenberg and a group of Hungarians were sent by plane to Moscow.

At Lubyanka the young Swede spent about one year "under investigation," then in 1946 was sent to Verkhneural'sk Prison in Chelyabinskaya Oblast. Before he left a judgement rendered in his absence by a special meeting of the OSO was announced: he was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment "for espionage."

Vendrovskiy, retelling Vallenberg's story, told how at Lubyanka the Swede tried to prove to the investigators that he had done nothing but save Jews from the Germans. Smiling bitterly, David remarked to me that the noble Swede did not realize that saving Jews was a much greater crime than espionage, to both the Cheka and the Gestapo.

Seven years later prison life brought me together with Munters, Vallenberg's other cellmate. He confirmed everything said by Vendrovskiy and added to it. In 1953, Munters said, he, Vallenberg, and the former first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Karelo-Finnish SSSR [sic] Kupriyanov were sent to Irkutskaya Oblast, to Aleksandrovsk Central Prison. Other prisoners sent there in separate groups were also arriving. I was one of them. They said that the Verkhneuralsk Prison was being vacated to make room for Beriya's men.

In 1955 all the convicts were removed from the Aleksandrov Central Prison and put in two other prisons: Vladimir and Novocherkassk. To our Vladimir group, which included Munters and Vallenberg, the authorities added the Latvian pastors Freis and Dumis, the Lithuanian catholic priest Mikyal'kyavichus, and a likeable young fellow named Yuriy Shukhevich, son of the well-known Ukrainian nationalist. (I read somewhere recently that Yuriy Shukhevich is still in Soviet prison. If that is true, the unfortunate man has broken all "records".)

Our party was loaded in a "Stolypin" car and sent through Kirov and Gor'kiy to Vladimir. Because I had a "rank of honor," namely "specially dangerous state criminal," and was riding in a separate compartment watched by a guard with an automatic weapon, I could see the other prisoners, but I was unable to talk with them. My lonely trip with four guards headed by an officer of at least captain's rank (this is called a "special convoy") seems terrifying at first, but in reality these conditions were even comfortable compared to the way that they transported prisoners who were simply dangerous, for example "talkers" (Article 58<sup>10</sup>). They are shoved into the same kind of compartment, but 20-30 in each.

That is how the current Nobel Laureate Solzhenitsyn "traveled." Then if you consider that "specially dangerous state criminals" eat the hot food of the guards, not the usual rotten fish, you can wish with all your heart that all the members of the Politburo headed by Marshal Brezhnev could share this happy fate.

So we arrived at the Vladimir Prison of sad repute. After a bath and interrogation our entire party was led off to various wings and rooms. As was proper for my rank, I got a single room, No 21 of the second wing. In early 1956 I received a cell-mate, Simon Gogoberidze, a Georgian social democrat and former political emigre. He had earlier been in the third wing with Vallenberg and Mamulov, a man who just a short time before had been one of Beria's closest assistants.

Gogoberidze told me that those two had also been transferred to the second wing and were in the neighboring cell, No 23. Indeed, a few hours later we saw through the window Raul Vallenberg walking with the former Chekist ~~murderer~~ Mamulov. After that we often saw them. Our wing was considered the "sick wing," but in fact it was used for special isolation. In it, for example, were two mysterious physicists, a colonel-doctor who had formerly worked at some institute where bacteriological preparations for sabotage and military purposes were manufactured. Yevgeniya Alliluyeva, sister of Stalin's deceased wife, Ordzhonikidze's brother, Lyalikov who was an eye-witness to and testified for the Germans on the Katynskiy crime by the Chekists, and other "specially dangerous" prisoners also served there.

On 29 October 1959, two and a half years after my full rehabilitation (of which I had known nothing), I was freed from prison, but without the right to return to Poland, my native land.

At this time Raul Vallenberg was still in cell No 23, but Mamulov had been replaced by former secretary of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party Shariya. I saw them walking in the yard many times too.

In 1967 I learned from Butova, the chief doctor at Vladimir Prison, that after 25 years of imprisonment Simon Gogoberidze was freed and lived at home in Tbilisi. I went to see him and when we met, of course, asked him about those who had remained in prison after me. Simon said that Mamulov and Shariya were no longer at Vladimir, but that the Swede Raul Vallenberg was still in cell No 23 with some new fellow that wore a colonel's gray karakul papakha [fur hat].

Until recently this was my latest information on the tragic fate of the noble Swede, a victim of the cruel and lying murderers who enthusiastically support human rights in Chile and on the West Bank of the Jordan.

But just recently I received new information. Yan Kaplan, a 65-year-old Muscovite who was imprisoned for his desire to go to his only daughter in Israel, saw Raul Vallenberg in the hospital of Butyrskaya Prison in Moscow in the summer of 1975. There is no doubt of this. Yan Kaplan, who was freed for medical reasons after two years of imprisonment, talked to his daughter Anna Bilder, living in Tel Aviv, on the telephone. Wanting to reassure her, he said, "Don't worry about my health. I have only been in prison two years and I feel fine. At the hospital of Butyrskaya Prison I saw a Swede who has been serving more than 30 years and he looks alright."

Just recently I read a letter that Kaplan sent to one of his relatives in the United States where he repeats the same phrase about a "Swede who has been serving more than 30 years and he looks alright." On 2 January 1979 I gave a copy of this letter to Mr. Friedman, Swedish General Counsel in New York, to send to the Swedish ministry of foreign affairs.

In conclusion, I want to appeal to the readers of **NOVOYE RUSSEKOYE SLOVO**: those of you who were in Soviet prisons and know something about Raul Wallenberg, report it to the Swedish authorities through the general counsel or to me through the editors of the newspaper.

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CSO: 8044