

The “murder” of Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg

A planned 1953 show trial



Swedish Embassy building in 1944
1083 Budapest - Minerva Street – on Gellért Mountain

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Introduction



In Spring 1953 my father, Károly Szabó, technician, unexpectedly disappeared without any trace. He left for his workplace, where he didn't arrive. Our family didn't receive any information about him. In mid-November he returned home, just as unexpectedly without any prior notice. His suit and thick leather shoes were ripped and were falling apart. There were scars on his face and wounds which didn't heal until the end of his life. He didn't speak much about the “unfortunate misunderstanding” which led to his imprisonment. They threatened him until the end of his life, and he was haunted by the government's “good advice” and threats to keep silent.

The 2003 III law established the National Security Service (ÁVH¹) Historical Archive.

http://www.abtl.hu/index_h_start.html

Based on my request I received from the Archive in May 2011 documents about my father's imprisonment. His documents are in the Archive in the larger subject called “Péter ügy” (“Péter Affair”).

The Péter Gábor, once guard of the ÁVH, was purged from his post and the party in 1952 and was arrested on January 3, 1953. His and related group's trial was planned to follow the pattern of the Communist block's 1952 anti-Zionist, anti-semitic trials such as the Prague Rudolf Slansky show trial and the Leningrad “Doctor's Plot”. Few months later they arrested the Jewish Community's President and Secretary: Lajos Stöckler and Miksa Domonkos. The “inquiry” destroyed the older Miksa Domonkos' health and led to his death few months after his release. Lajos Stöckler's was in need of care until the end of his life, due to severe torture during his imprisonment. Because of their condition the originally selected accused were not “suitable” for the planned show trial. A new concept was invented. They arrested Raoul Wallenberg's last two dinner guests: my father Károly Szabó and my father's childhood friend Pál Szalai. The third dinner guest, Dr. Otto Fleischmann was already in the West. They were the last to see Wallenberg before he set out to the Soviet military headquarters in Debrecen to discuss providing food for those in the Budapest Ghetto.

Names of the ÁVH officers listed in the interrogation documents obtained from the Archive are not unfamiliar. On Internet I found further information about Béla Balázs, who led the “Wallenberg murder” investigation and played “historical” roles in the Rajk, Kádár and Imre Nagy trials.

The book “*Wallenberg's Kidnapping*” is the result of Maria Ember's 1990 research in Moscow. She tried to discover Wallenberg's fate in the Soviet Union.

eBooks (PDF format)

Történelmi dokumentumok, 1945-2011

Historical Documents, 1945-2011

<http://mek.oszk.hu/09400/09414/index.phtml>

Correspondence about people rescued in 1945

Munkaévek külföldön - informatikában, 1968-2008

Working Years abroad - with computers, 1968-2008

<http://mek.oszk.hu/08200/08236/index.phtml>

Family background and my working years

¹ *Államvédelmi Hatóság* – State Security Authority. It was the secret police of Communist Hungary

Amazon Kindle eBook

Who was the man in the leather coat?

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B004UB36KG>

About Károly Szabó in 1945 and 1953-ban (English)

Faded wounds, divided society in 2011

My father's, Károly Szabó's ordeal, the planned show trial and that he was not "rehabilitated" as Stalinist Communism faded led me to leave Hungary legally at first opportunity in 1969 on a tourist passport. I note that one could feel some easing after 1962. Still, I couldn't imagine that they call me "comrade" at work as they called almost everyone until 1990. Perhaps they would have left me in peace even outside the Communist party, but this is not certain. I never took part in politics after arriving in the West. No one was interested in this at my places of work and in any case it was not permitted to engage in politics at work.

I was sad to see that since 1990, over 20 years after the one party rule, how overly political and belligerently divided is Hungary's society. In my opinion wounds of the dark 1950-s faded on their own. My father, Károly Szabó, tried to avoid being ruled by his experiences during his incarceration. He knew that this would further damage his already weakened state. He frequently quoted for me, to calm me, what they told him at the beginning of his imprisonment:

"Look at this matter as an accident," said the examining officer *"as if a brick fell by accident on someone's head. This brick fell from very high and far, from Moscow."* This secret service officer was probably not the type who is frequently portrayed. He was probably living in fear as were his victims. Obviously such things couldn't be discussed openly until the Soviet army left Hungary.

It is still possible to hear revolting opinions stating that those who were arrested in the 1950-s deserved their fate. I heard such views from retired lawyers in company of György Moldova, from types who studied law at night. According to them the "betrayal of principles" began with loosening of strict controls – for example they feel that re-interment of Rajk, who was executed earlier and later rehabilitated, was a mistake. I suspect that Moldova is looking for such an environment. Maybe he'll write in his typical reporting style about the M... party? Perhaps I could be mistaken?

A false legend is conveyed by Moldova's statement *"The public wealth created by the working class."*

"In the 1990-s people hoped that with collapse of the socialism Hungary will immediately reach the standard of neighboring Austria economically and politically. Their expectations were not realized. They soon felt on their own skin what is capitalism. They could see how the Antall-Boross government hands over the public wealth created by the working class into the hands of its clients." In György Moldova, *"Az utolsó töltény 8"* (*The last cartridge 8*), 2007

According to two left-wing liberal sociologists of the 200 richest entrepreneurs the great majority, 156 already around 1983-1985, was in a "position". They were not politicians, but were part of the manager generation of the Kádár regime, with useful political connections². The quiet internal regime change of 1983 was to this date not noticed by many. This was the start of the so called "spontaneous privatization". The "public wealth" and social advantages were redivided already in 1983-1985 and not during the 1990 regime change. In 1983 everyone including "successful entrepreneurs" was called "comrade" and there was a strict one party rule.

The 40 year long one party rule was difficult to bear without an ideological basis. This led to emergence of a significant size segment of the population who explain their life based on being faithful believers in the "ideals of Communism". These were left out of the 1983 "spontaneous privatization".

There was a secret "rehabilitation" around 1962 for party members involved in show trials, such as János Kádár's life sentence. These matters were handled in secrecy. My father, Károly Szabó, a victim of the regime who was not a party member, was not rehabilitated. He died in 1964 at age 48.

It is known that after 1962 those who were involved with atrocities received separation payments, many obtained sought after civilian positions or received further "internal" assignments. Béla Balázs turned against János Kádár before the Wallenberg show trial preparations and after 1956. He was dismissed with disgrace, without separation payment and later committed suicide.

² Tamás Kolosi and Iván Szelényi *"Hogyan legyünk milliárdosok?"* (*How to become a billionaire?*), Corvina Press 2010

Echoes of the past sufferings are heard on both sides. Unfortunately even in 2011 we can hear the one party system's past functionaries accuse the regime change's "capitalism,"

For sake of peace I quote what was said to my father about "the brick which fell from Moscow". If many of us think of this then maybe it is possible to reconcile the two hostile factions of society. *"The brick came from very high and far, from Moscow."*

1948-1953 Events in Chronological Sequence

1948 January – Solomon Mikhoels, a Jew, leading Soviet actor and Chairman of the Jewish Anti-Fascist committee during WWII, assassinated in Minsk as Stalin's request. Members of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee were arrested between September 1948 and June 1949. All except two were eventually executed in the purges shortly before Stalin's death

1951 November 1 – Rudolf Slansky and 13 others Communist leaders and bureaucrats arrested in Czechoslovakia and accused of being “Titoists”. Eleven of the accused, including Slansky, were Jews. The trial started on November 20 and was noted for its strong anti-semitic nature. Slansky was found guilty of “Trotskyite-Titoist-Zionist activities in the service of American imperialism” and was hung on 1952 December 3. Ten other were hung and three received life sentence

1952 August 12 – Execution of thirteen Yiddish Writers in the Soviet Union (“*Night of the Murdered Poets*”)

1952 December – János Kádár received life sentence from the Supreme Court. He was released in July 1954. Béla Balázs's ÁVH career is on the rise. He arrested János Kádár in 1951. In 1953 promoted to major and in 1953 to colonel. He took part in every significant political “investigation”

1953 January 13 – leading USSR doctors accused of plot to poison Soviet leaders. Eventually hundreds of doctors were arrested, mostly Jews

1953 January 16 – Dr László Benedek, Chief physician of the Budapest Jewish Hospital, and Lajos Stöckler, are arrested in preparation for the anti- Zionist “Wallenberg murder” show trial

1953 March 1 – Jewish holiday Purim. Stalin collapses in his dacha

1953 March 5 – Stalin dies

1953 March 31 – Soviet doctors exonerated by Beria

1953 April 4 – Béla Balázs, director of the “Wallenberg Murder Investigation Department” promoted to major

1953 April 7 - Károly Szabó is arrested and accused of taking part in Raoul Wallenberg's murder

1953 June 13-14 – Hungary's party and government leadership in Moscow. Mátyás Rákosi and the four member delegation are reprimanded because of extreme industrialization, personality cult and atrocities. Imre Nagy is appointed Prime Minister

1953 June 17-18 – Soviet tanks put down the Berlin workers' revolt

1953 July – ÁVH is combined with the Interior Ministry

1953 July 25-26 – the Presidential Committee announces amnesty. The Ministerial committee stops arrests, interment camps and deportations

1953 August 1 – end of the “Wallenberg murder” show trial preparations. Those arrested are not released until November to improve the “suspects” health and appearance

1953 November 15 - Károly Szabó is released

1953 November 25 – the “century's soccer match” in London. England-Hungary 3:6

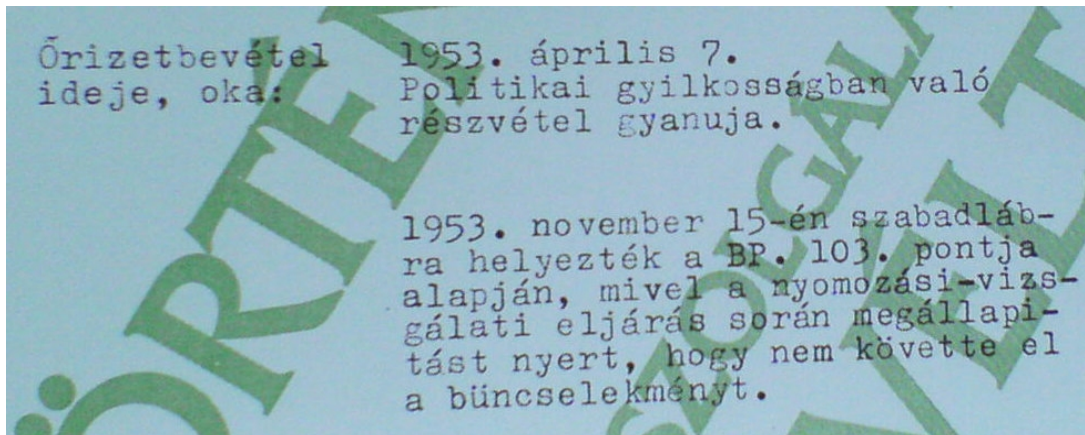
1953 December 23 – Beria executed

1953 December 24 – Gábor Péter and his group are arrested. He and Andor Csapó receive life sentence. István Timár, Márton Károlyi, Gyula Décsi, István Bálint, Gyula Prinz, etc. receive 2-15 year jail sentences. Gábor Péter was later released

1953 December 29 – Béla Balázs, ÁVH Investigation Department director, promoted to colonel

Documents

Károly Szabó investigative detention



ÁVH document: Károly Szabó's investigative detention: April 7, 1953 – November 15, 1953

His arrest was based on the following “admission” under severe recurring torture by Lajos Stöckler:

“In January 1945 Károly Szabó helped Pál Szalai murder Raoul Wallenberg, Secretary of the Swedish embassy.”

How can Stöckler, whose family of eight was saved by Károly Szabó on January 8, 1945, accuse in his confession his rescuer of participating in Wallenberg's murder? Initially Lajos Stöckler and Miksa Domonkos were accused. Miksa Domonkos didn't survive his torture by the ÁVH. Lajos Stöckler's mind was clouded by torture and he required care until the end of his life.

Who was Lajos Stöckler?



Lajos Stöckler (1897-1960) was a lace factory owner. From July 22, 1944 he was key member of the Jewish Council leadership. He was the de-facto leader of the Jewish Council during the Nyilas³ rule when Samu Stern and other leaders of the community went “illegal”.

He had major role in providing food and organization of the “Big” Ghetto in Budapest. He was the Community's President between 1945-1950. He was arrested on trumped up charges. One of the accusations against him was that he killed Raoul Wallenberg along with Miksa Domonkos. He ended his life in Australia in debilitated mental capacity due to the torture by the ÁVH.

Lajos Stöckler's letter of gratitude

Pesti Izr. Hitközség
VII. Síp-utca 12.

T. Szabó Károly úrnak
Svéd kir. követség tisztviselője
Budapest

Örömmel ragadjuk meg az alkalmat, hogy hálás köszönetünket tolmácsoljuk Önnek azokért a felejthetetlen szolgálatokért, amelyeket az elmúlt év december eleje óta az akkor oly szorongatott helyzetben lévő budapesti zsidóknak teljesíteni szíves volt. Mint azon idők tanúi tudjuk, hogy hamarjában számba sem vehető az a sok emberélet, amelyet megmenteni segített, amikor a zsidók melletti kiállítás tényleges életveszedelemet jelentett. Súlyt helyezünk rá, hogy ezt a mai levelünkkel kifejezésre juttassuk, hiszen Ön mindig önzetlenül és mindig a legnagyobb készséggel állt mellénk a legnagyobb baj idején.

Fogadju külön hálánkat azért a segítségért, amelyet 1945. év január 8-án azáltal nyújtott, hogy amikor az Üllői út 4. sz. alatt működő svéd követségi kirendeltség 154 főnyi személyzetével együtt Stöckler Lajos urat, a Zsidó Tanács tagját nyolc tagú családjával egyetemben elhurcolták, Szalai Pál úrral együtt rendőri riadóautóval és fegyveres karhatalommal sietett ennek a halálra ítélt csoportnak a kiszabadítására. — Ismétljük, hogy ezen idők tanúi vagyunk és tudjuk, hogy ez a kiállítás valóságos életveszéllyel járt, tehát a legkevésbé amit tehetünk, hogy formailag is tolmácsoljuk köszönetünket és a meggyötört emberek háláját.

Budapest, 1945. február 26.

Kiváló tisztelettel

Stöckler s. k. Földes s. k.

MOL/UMKL Gettó iratok 1. sz. doboz Másolat.

Letter dated February 26, 1943 about rescue of 154 people
and Lajos Stöckler's eight member family

Mr. Károly Szabó
Clerk, Royal Swedish Embassy

Budapest

We gladly using the opportunity, to express our gratitude for your unforgettable services, you kindly gave to the endangered Jews of Budapest starting from first days of December previous year. As witnesses of those times, we aware, that the numbers of human lives you helped to save are simply unaccountable, during those times when to save Jews was real danger. We point it out in this of our letter, that you did all this for no personal gain and voluntarily, to be on our side during the greatest danger.

Please accept our gratitude for your help, you gave at January 8th 1945, when from the Royal Swedish Embassy's building, Üllői street 4, 154 persons, including Mr. Lajos Stöckler, leading member of the Jewish Community and eight of his family members were abducted, together with Mr. Szalai Imre, police emergency car and armed policemen hastened to save this group condemned to execution. We repeat, as witnesses of those times, that your act was dangerous to your own live, and the minimum we can do is to express the gratitude of the tortured people.

Budapest, February 26th 1945.

Sincerely
Undersigned: Lajos Stöckler

Translation of Lajos Stöckler's letter

"Inventory" of items confiscated from Károly Szabó

Leltár.

Szabó Károly.

1. drb. Börtárca különböző iratokkal.
1. ". Nyakkendő.
1. ". Nadrág tartó.
1. ". Haver gyártmányu karóra.
1. ". Börtök benne egy lobál léc.
1. ". Autóbusz igazolvány vill. ig. nyal egyben bérlet
április, hóra száma 2016.
1. ". Használt bőrkesztyű.
1. ". Pénz tárcsa 5-drb. kulcsal.
1. ". Töltőtöl.
1. ". Rényképes ig. törzsasz, 1997. szám 302.
3. ". Állandó belépési engedély és egy megbízó levél.
1. ". Egy kabát öv.
1. ". Zsebkendő.
1. ". Iv papír különböző nevekkal.
1. ". Ellamervény.
45-forintról szóló ebéd jegy.
1. ". Börtök 88. forinttal és egy tantusz.
1. ". Fésű.
1. Pár. Boka fikszes zokni. egy pár cipő fűző. guml. ldrb.
1. drb. Használt blok tömb.
Budapest 1953. IV. hó. 8-án.
1. drb. Balen kalap
átvette.

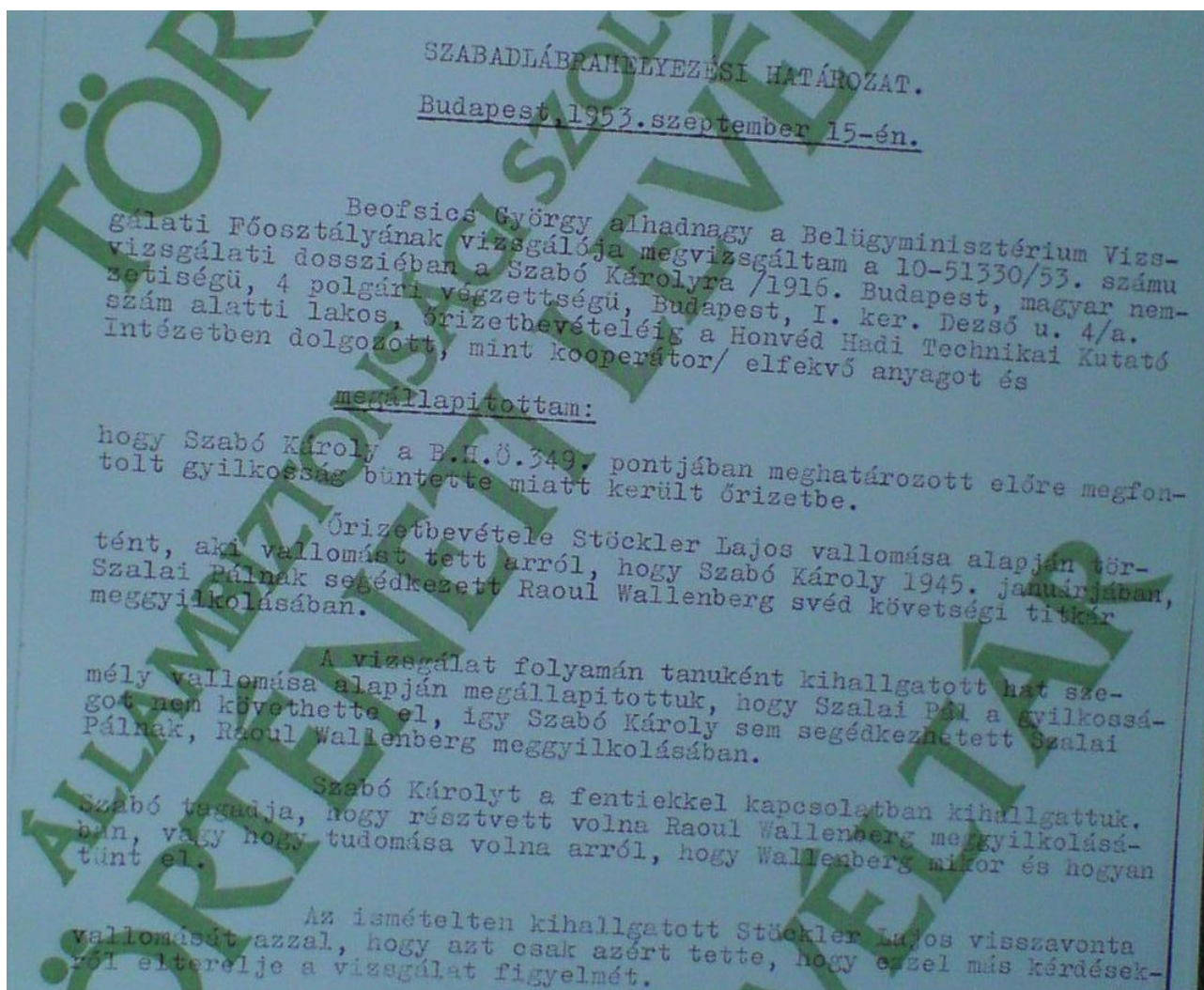
Átadta.
Szabó Károly.
Szabó Károly

„Leltár” – vagyis azoknak a tárgyaknak a jegyzéke, amelyeket letartóztatása
alkalmával (1953. április 8-án) „adott át” Szabó Károly

Two personal effects



September 15, 1953 decision about release from imprisonment



ÁVH document summarizing why Károly Szabó was arrested and orders his release. It notes that Lajos Stöckler withdrew his testimony.

Decision to release Károly Szabó took another month and a half and actual release took place only in mid-November.

In György Faludi's novel⁴ the ÁVH major's speech represents the Fall 1953 atmosphere in which the accused were released.

"I apologize to you in the name of the Hungarian People's Democracy for the injustice, lawlessness and indignity, which you had to suffer ... warned me that the law is six years in jail if we disclose anything about circumstances, location and reason for our imprisonment. The good advice which was received is that we should report anyone who asks us about the above and to our immediate family we should say that we were on a study trip to the Soviet Union."

⁴ From *Pokolbeli víg napjaim*, (My Joyful Days in Hell), György Faludi ISBN 963-7815-00-7, Budapest, Magyar Világ Kiadó, 1989 (Biography)

ÁVH Letter to Mrs Szabó Károly

Legfőbb Ügyészség.

071/1953. legf. ü. szám.


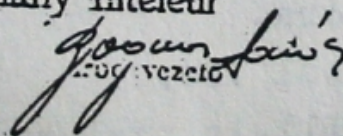
Tárgy: Szabó Károlyné kérelme.

Szabó Károlyné,
B u d a p e s t.
[REDACTED]

Beadványára értesitem, hogy férje szabadlábra lett
helyezve.

Budapest, 1953. október 6.

Bakos Pál s.k.
osztályvezető.

A kiadmány hiteléül


osztályvezető

ÁVH document advising Mrs Károly Szabó that her husband was released on October 6, 1953.
He was released only in mid-November 1953.

Contradictory Release Document

2. osztály

Szigorúan titkos!

Utasítás.
Fogda parancsnokának

Utasítom a fogda parancsnokot, hogy S z a b ó Károly
/: Budapest, 1916. anyja : Szabó Margit :/

őrizetéseket

helyezze szabadlábra 1953. évi szeptember hó 21 nap órákor.

Megjegyzés, egyéb utasítás: _____

Budapest, 1953. szeptember hó 21 nap.

államvédelmi alezredes,
osztályvezető

Balázs Béla
államvédelmi ezredes őrnagy.
főosztályvezető

Fenti utasítás alapján nevezetteket elbocsátottam 1953. évi október hó 21. nap órákor.

fogdairoda vezető

fogdaparancsnok,
államvédelmi főhadnagy

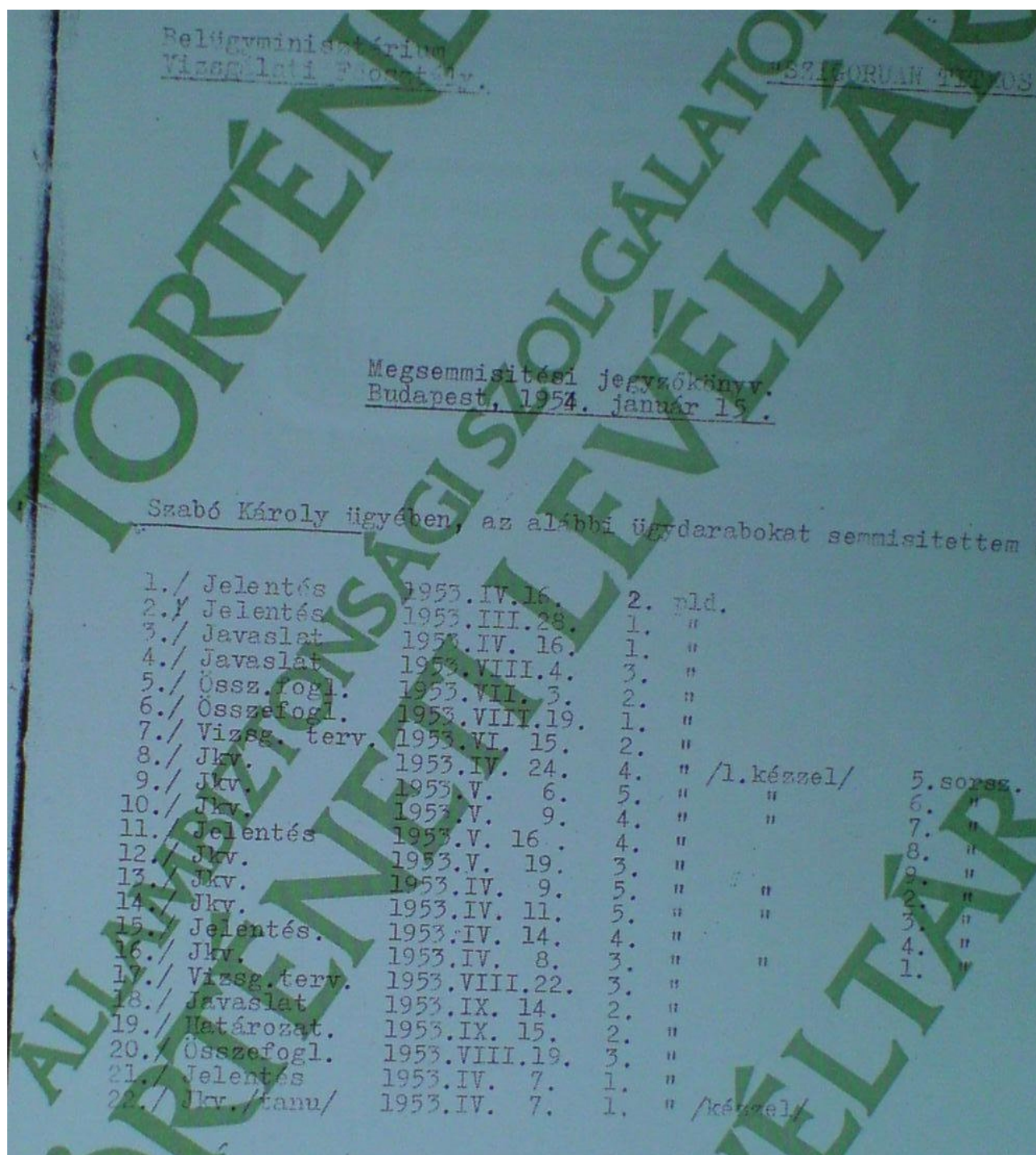
10444. fogdairoda vezető

ÁVH document to the prison warden ordering Károly Szabó's September 21, 1953 release.

November 15, 1953 was he actual date of release, not September 21 and not October 6.

Why was release delayed until mid-November? It required two months to hide the signs of the five month interrogation. The wounds remained until the end of Károly Szabó's life.

Destroying the minutes of the investigation – January 15, 1954



ÁVH document of destruction of records pertaining to Károly Szabó

György Beofsics AVH master sergeant tried to quickly destroy evidence of the “investigation”. According to the above list 22 items (minutes, investigation plan) were destroyed already on January 15, 1954.

György Beofsics, was an investigator in the Wallenberg show trial preparation and along with 76 others in the ÁVH with similar background was working for the Interior Ministry in 1962.

Dr. Erwin Korányi's testimony letter to Yad Vashem about Károly Szabó



uOttawa

ERWIN K. KORANYI, MD, FRCPC

Professor Emeritus, Psychiatry, University of Ottawa, Royal Ottawa Hospital
Professeur émérite, psychiatrie, Université d'Ottawa, Hôpital Royal Ottawa

Ottawa, February 1st, 2010

To the YAD VASHEM committee,
Jerusalem, Israel

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee: -

I am 86 years old retired physician, a survivor of the Shoah and I live in Canada. I turn to you with the request to give your kind re-consideration posthumously to a Mr. Mihály Szabo, a close coworker of Raul Wallenberg in Budapest, 1944-45.

As a young man, myself and my ex-wife had been surrounded with death at every moment between March 19, 1944 - January 18, 1945. For a few weeks we lived at the Jokal street 1, a Swedish Satellite Embassy until the tragic day when the entire population of the building had been herded to the shore of the Danube and executed. A few of us succeeded to hide and thus survive the incident. But nowhere else to go, on January 8, 1945, we went to another Swedish Satellite Embassy at the Üllői street. Only a few hours later the Arrowcross killers appeared there, and a portion of the basement's population was taken to the Arrowcross Headquarter at the Teréz Körút 41 (?) There they already begun to take away our clothing, and it was clear that they are going to execute us at the shore of the nearby Danube river.

At the last moment a group of policemen appeared led by two police officers: PAUL SZALAY and KÁROLY SZABÓ, holding revolvers in their hands and took us back to the Üllői street Satellite Embassy. My contact with Karoly Szabo (whom I believed then to be a police officer) was very short but I recall vividly in his black leather coat, standing up against the Nazi killers, risking his life and saving all of us from sure death. I knew only few people in our group, as we just arrived there but I seen Lajos Stockler, member of the Jewish Council, who's life has been also saved. Later I heard other heroic stories about Karoly Szabo, but this has been a direct experience of mine and of my ex-wife, Dr. Alice Breuer.

I described the event in details in my Autobiography: "Dreams and Tears -chronicle of a life" in 2006 (pages:88,89,90) and I am sure that my book is available in the Yad Vashem. Just to be sure, I include a copy of it.

As to myself: I left Hungary by crossing the Iron Curtain in 1949, and never been back. I live in Canada since 12952; married in 1959. I was in private practice and taught at McGill; was invited as full professor by the University of Ottawa; lectured in Haifa, Jerusalem and Beer Sheva. In 1983 I went to Israel, worked at a tent-hospital in Mahanaim, in Kyriat Smona and in the Rambam.

You may obtain references from former Israeli Ambassadors of Canada: Amb. David & Adina Sultan (2-581-8298); Amb. Jitzchak & Malka Shelef 137-010-16424); Amb. Alan & Dalia Baker (2-534-0006) or from Prof. Emanuel & Nahama Guttman (4-337-473). My Rabbi is: Dr. Reuven Bulka (Machzikai Hadash (613-521-9701; my ex-wife: Dr. Alice Breuer (-418-215-868) Dobelnsgratan 15/III Stockholm 11140).

Sincerely yours:

Erwin K. Koranyi

1406 - 20 DRIVEWAY • OTTAWA • ONTARIO • K2P 1C8 • TEL: (613) 236-6353

Béla Balázsi – Head of the ÁVH Investigation Department

Interrogations of those arrested in context of the “Wallenberg murder” show trial continued after Stalin's death and stopped on September 15, 1953 without results after the victims were tortured for months. The “investigation” was led by Béla Balázsi who was promoted to colonel on December 29, 1953.

The first “suspect”, Miksa Domonkos, didn't survive the “investigation”. As a result of brutal torture “Suspect” Lajos Stöckler's mind became clouded until the end of his life. Károly Szabó and Pál Szalai were arrested based on Stöckler's “confession” after Domonkos and Stöckler were no longer “fit” to appear in the show trial. Pál Szalai was released at the end of his ordeal, with white hair at age 38. Károly Szabó didn't regain his health after his release and died young at age 48.

From Sándor Kopácsi's biography

“Béla Balázsi was a member of that brigade which arrested and tortured László Rajk and was member of the group whose assignment was to dispose of the executed Rajk's body. In 1951 he arrested János Kádár. Balázsi was a fanatic. He totally believed in his victims' guilt and regraded “rehabilitations” as some type of political comedy. When he became aware of Rajk's national reburial he destroyed all documents related to the body's whereabouts. In 1956 he was for a while distanced from the ÁVH, but after the revolution was put down he was reinstated due to request of the Soviet advisers. He was one of the organizers of the Imre Nagy and related trial. His greatest desire was to mix Kádár also into the trial. At the time Kádár was the the party's first secretary and was Prime Minister. In the 1960-s Kádár succeeded to finally remove him. Contrary to the custom Balázsi was not even compensated with a well paying position. After he lost his power, Balázsi fanatically attacked himself with a knife – at first unsuccessfully. In the 1970-s I met him at a market. He again had a knife in his hand with which he cut open watermelons, which he sold with his new wife. He persecuted his prior wife, who was the daughter of a kulák⁵. Bela Balázsi committed suicide in 1975.”

From György Moldova's book

Béla Balázsi in György Moldova's book: *Aki átlepte az árnyékát*. (Who stepped over his shadow) György Kardos' biography:

“They took me into a room, “ said Kardos, “where a lieutenant named Béla Balázsi received me. Lieutenant Balázsi rushed straight to Gábor Péter with the interrogation minutes. He gave the order in presence of Vladimir Farkas: “Kardos is arrogant! Give him a beating like no one else received before in this house! They beat Kardos unconscious and four people carried him back to his cell.”

Biographical Lexicon

Béla Balázsi (Budapest, 1921 – Budapest 1975): ÁVH colonel. Comes from working class family. Finished 9th grade. Studied tool making. He worked as apprentice at the screw manufacturing factory. Between 1935 and 1940 he was member of a young workers' group. He was called for military duty in 1942 and escaped in October 1944. He became leader of the Communist party armed resistance group guided by Pál Demény. They destroyed the attacking Nyilas group at Sashalom on the grounds of the Rex Film Factory. He was arrested on December 6, 1944 as a deserter. He attempted suicide in his prison cell. As a result he was transferred to a military hospital from where he escaped on January 2, 1945. He hid until arrival of the Soviet troops. On February 1 he was already an investigator for the Political Order Department, where he remained until 1947. Between 1947-1950 his assignment was counter espionage. He became head of the ÁVH investigation department. He became major on April 4, 1953, and was promoted to ÁVH colonel on December 29, 1953. Between 1947-1953 he participated in investigation of every important case

5 small landowner

deemed to be “against the country”. After start of the 1956 revolution and disbanding of the ÁVH he fled to the country side. After November 4 he took part in “revenge” related investigations. From January 1957 he collected material and confessions against Imre Nagy and those accused with him. On June 15, 1957 István Tömpe, a high ranking official of the Interior Ministry, suspended Balázs from his position due to disclosure of state secrets. He was dismissed from the Interior Ministry on October 1, 1957. Balázs opposed Kádár. He became a vegetable vendor and committed suicide in 1975.

<http://mek.niif.hu/00300/00355/html/ABC00523/00726.htm>

“They Wanted to Blame Us⁶...”

DRAFT

The story of a big conspiracy: “Who killed Wallenberg?”

By Tibor Farkas

For over forty years the following story remained one of the best kept secrets of the ÁVH.

By the early 1950-s, the international community intensified its campaign to discover the truth about the fate of Raoul Wallenberg. The pressure became so intense that the Russians felt compelled to do something about it. In a desperate effort to exculpate the Soviet leadership of any responsibility, a diabolical plan was conceived. It had been decided that “evidence” must be produced to prove that after 17 January 1945, when Wallenberg was last seen alive, he could not have been arrested by the Russian Army, because before being driven to Debrecen where he was planning to meet Marshall Malinovsky he was murdered in Budapest.

The ÁVH, the Hungarian secret police, was given the cruel task to prepare a show-trial⁷ to prove the assassination. Their plan was to serve a double purpose;

1. exculpate the Soviets of any responsibility for the disappearance of Raoul Wallenberg;
2. follow in the footsteps of Stalin’s resurgent anti-Semitic policies; the current accusations against the “Zionist doctors” in Leningrad, and the show-trials of Jewish members of Communist party leaderships in the Eastern European satellite states: Rudolph Slansky in Czechoslovakia, Anna Pauker in Rumania, etc.

The Russians and their over-zealous Hungarian counterparts conceived an absurd, and ridiculous plan lacking any common sense;

Who killed Wallenberg? Leaders of the Hungarian Jewish community;

Why? Because he didn’t do enough to save more Hungarian Jews;

Where? In the basement of the American embassy.

Having determined the objectives of the planned action and designated the individuals who were to become the principal defendants of the trial, the merciless mechanisms of the evil secret police started rolling ...

⁶ Based on book “*Ránk akarták kenni*” by journalist Ember Maria

⁷ The term “show trial” describes a type of public [trial](#) in which the [judicial](#) authorities have already determined the [guilt](#) of the [defendant](#): the actual trial has as its only goal to present the accusation and the verdict to the public as an impressive example and as a warning. Most of the time it involves a “sin” and a “planting of evidence”. Judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys and the victims themselves collaborate like trained seals. Lack of concrete evidence does not disturb the court. “Proof” boils down to the bare production of “confessions.”

Károly Szabó

In early 1944 Károly Szabó worked as a typewriter technician at the Swedish embassy in Budapest. During the prior two years he was a soldier on the Ukrainian front. He was in touch at the embassy with Dr. Otto Fleischmann, a psychologist and doctor, who convinced Károly Szabó to participate in rescue. His childhood friend and classmate, Pál Szalai, was by then in leadership position and was the liaison between the police and the Nyilas party. Szalai gave his friend police documents, which helped in his rescue work.

A Nyilas group occupied and robbed the Gyopár Street Swedish Embassy and dragged away the embassy's Jewish employees to the Ghetto. Károly Szabó was able to get back the embassy building and brought back the employees, which drew Wallenberg's attention. After this Károly Szabó set up a meeting between Wallenberg and Szalai. Szalai joined Wallenberg's rescue operation and had a significant role in rescue of Jews in the Ghetto.



On January 8, 1945 the Nyilas dragged away toward the Danube 154 Jews from the Swedish embassy's Üllői Street building. Under direction of Károly Szabó armed policemen rescued this group. Lajos Stöckler and his eight member family were among those rescued, as well as the Jakobovics family, Edith and László Ernster, Gábor Forgács, Jacob Steiner with his mother and siblings, Éva Löw and Anna Kleiber.

Later Lajos Stöckler became President of the Jewish Community from 1945-1948, László Ernster, a chemist, became member of the Nobel Foundation directorate, Jacob Steiner, biologist, taught at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Éva Löw and Anna Klaber became doctors in Basel. Professor Erwin Korányi writes about this rescue operation in his 2006 biography. He and his wife, Alice Brauer, were among those rescued. After the war he taught psychiatry at the University of Ottawa in Canada and Alice Breuer is a renowned psychiatrist in Sweden. Professor Korányi wrote *“Unexpectedly a group of armed policemen appeared and aimed their weapons at the Nyilas. A high ranking policeman was Pál Szalai who worked with Wallenberg. The other policeman in leather coat was Károly Szabó . I saw in the rescue group Lajos Stöckler.”*⁸

There were numerous requests to Yad Vashem to recognize Károly Szabó as “Righteous Among the Nations”. The request has been declined, for reasons which are not clear.



Károly Szabó

⁸ *Dreams and Tears: Chronicle of a Life*, Erwin K. Korányi, General Store Publishing House, 2006, ISBN 1897113471, ISBN 9781897113479 pp. 89 – 90