

# ИЗВЕСТИЯ

Newspaper *Izvestiya*, July 1978, Author: Julian Semenov<sup>i</sup> (Yulian Semyonov)

[Comment: This is the first public mention of Martha Peterson's association with the CIA and her involvement in this spy operation. Author Julian Semenov (Yulian Semyonov) later wrote a novel based partly on this case and later produced an immensely popular 10-part TV series *TASS Is Authorized to Announce*, which is still shown on Russian TV]]

## ***Who Benefits?***

***Cui Bono? Who profits?*** This proposal was formulated by Cassius Longinus Ravilla, a lawyer of ancient Rome. He turned to the judges and said, "If you manage to give the correct answer to this question, it will become clear to you who the criminal is."

You don't need to be a lawyer to answer the question *who benefits* from another Soviet espionage campaign unleashed in the United States.

Truly, "slanderers" in hell are honorable serpents! What horrors are not described on the pages of the American press according to recipes of the CIA and the FBI. It's just that the subjects of the stories do not vary. But nowhere in the US press is there a single word mentioned about the plot that is of the highest interest, the plot - in its external expression - is truly a whodunit and deserves, in our opinion, to be reproduced.

Its essence is as follows - imagine a young diplomat, a smiling girl who speaks foreign languages, who works as vice-consul of one of the countries in Moscow.

Imagine this pretty girl in the evening when she got into her car and drove into the city center.

Just what did our heroine do there? Visit the theater? Friends? No. The vice-consul stopped her car in a place that was dimly lit, took off her white dress and

quickly changed into a black jumper, trousers, locked the car and, as they say, having carefully checked to make sure there was no surveillance, got on a city bus, then she rode the subway and only after that took a taxi.

What happened next? The vice-consul got out of the taxi at the embankment, strolled the lanes of a shady park, waited until there was no one in the area who at least raised a flag, then hurried to the bridge, humped with its fancy girders in the summer night. Having climbed up the flight of steps, the vice-consul put a stone in a porthole on the arch - an ordinary cobblestone, which in the villages they put in a bathhouse so that the heat lasts longer.

And it was here that they grabbed the vice consul. And detained her. She screamed at the top of her lungs:

- "I am a foreigner. Who are you? I am a foreigner!"

Apparently, the vice-consul was screaming so loudly to warn the spy of danger, the spy who was walking to the pre-arranged spot at the pre-arranged hour to take the very cobblestone left in the porthole. The diplomat tried to throw away the spy radio - still clear evidence. It did not work.

They seized the dead-drop cache, put the vice-consul in a car and brought her to the place detainees whose identity had to be ascertained should be brought. They called in an embassy counselor for identification.



***This is not where they would have liked to meet...***

He identified her.

They opened the drop cache in his presence. Inside the "cobblestone" lay ordinary espionage accessories - cameras, gold, a questionnaire, money,

instructions, in a word, everything that happens in such cases. However, there were objects in the drop cache that were perplexing - small inconspicuous black ampules. What's this? The answer to the question of what was in the small black ampules was given by a careful study of the instructions for the spy - they contained poison.

This caused the counterintelligence officers -- and these are very experienced people - an undisguised surprise.

"Who are the ampules of poison intended for?" they asked the vice-consul. She was silent.

"Ask your employee to answer your question," the embassy counselor said.

"Answer," he said, turning to his "vice."

"Shut up!" The vice-consul mumbled through clenched teeth, which in translation means "заткнись!"

We looked at the counselor. He spread his arms helplessly.

"Don't bother asking her." She does not know. She is only the delivery agent, that's all...

This time the pretty CIA officer literally barked, "Shut up!"

If a simple delivery agent speaks to the boss like this, then one might ask who is behind her? What is the LEVEL of her managers?

By the way, the moral criterion of these gentlemen is fine, if they, being far from the place where the events described took place, send a representative of the weaker sex to transmit poisons and to roam around the park at night.

Or maybe the question is not about moral criteria, but in intelligence methods. Maybe in the operation that was carried out, this lady was brought to the forefront in order to trip up counterintelligence to confuse it? Maybe the main organizers thought that a vice-consul like she would not fall into their field of view. Because the use of *top professionals* is assumed to be a global phenomenon, counterintelligence will pay attention only to them...

We interrupt, however, this story, reminiscent of a detective novel, because the events played out in the following hours and days outgrow the already political chronicle.

Everything described is not a fantasy of the writer, but an accurate document. There's no fiction here. The final scene is the embankment of the Moscow River, the bridge connecting Luzhniki with Lenin Hills, the good-looking consul - Martha Peterson, a U.S. citizen, a CIA officer who worked under the cover of the State Department; and the adviser called for identification, Mr. Gross, head of the Consular Section of the American Embassy in Moscow.



When Gross - after identifying her and a “conversation,” drove Peterson back to the embassy, and despite it being Saturday afternoon, a minister-counselor of the American embassy showed up at the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The minister-counselor<sup>ii</sup> asked the Foreign Ministry's duty officer a question that indicated not only that he was aware of the political seriousness of what had happened that night, but also his understanding of the seriousness of the evidence presented.

Would there be any objections, the counselor asked the minister counselor, if Peterson is called back to the USA on the first flight to the West?

He was told that there would be no objection - after all, diplomatic immunity was extended to the vice-consul.

"We hope," continued the minister counselor, "that this fact will not be brought to attention."

"We will consult on this issue," he answered.

Then, US Ambassador [Malcolm] Toon<sup>iii</sup> was called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was handed a note of protest, which said in part:

"On 15 July of this year Soviet competent authorities detained Marta D Peterson, an attaché of the US embassy in Moscow, caught red-handed during an espionage operation while laying a drop cache. During the detention, a portable radio was discovered on her.

"During the official examination held in the presence of the US embassy counselor, the container laid down by M. Peterson was opened and contained espionage instructions, miniature photo equipment, various items of jewelry, a large amount of Soviet money, and two containers with deadly poison along with instructions for its use.

"Thus, it is clear that the American intelligence services are conducting active subversive activities on the territory of the Soviet Union, using diplomatic cover in the person of the US Embassy and not stopping at such means as deadly poisons.

"The Ministry issues a strong protest and declares embassy employee M. Peterson *persona non grata*. At the same time, the Ministry draws the attention of the embassy to the fact that, as is clear from the preliminary investigation carried out by the competent authorities, First Secretary of the embassy, R. Fulton<sup>iv</sup>, and US State Department officials S. Karpovich<sup>v</sup> and J. Gruner<sup>vi</sup> were also involved in this espionage case. It is known that this is not the only case when American diplomats engage in activities incompatible with their official status.

"The Ministry insists that the American side take effective measures to stop this kind of activity, which is directly contrary to the task of constructive development of relations between our countries."

The ambassador listened to the note not only with attention; it seemed that Mr. Toon had not yet decided what to do.

... Diplomatic practice is a serious thing, each word has its own special value, for it may or may not give the possibility of double interpretation. If there had been less weighty evidence lying on the table, i.e. ampules with poison, the ambassador, correlating his words with the norms of diplomatic protocol and using every kind of subtlety, apparently could build some kind of positional defense.

But the undeniable evidence forced the ambassador to say:

“I have no questions about what happened last night, and I cannot comment on all this at all.”

Actually, you can't comment because Soviet counterintelligence established with all immutability that the poisons seized from the drop cache that Peterson handed over to the spy were not sent by the Central Intelligence Agency to Moscow for the first time. During the investigation, it turned out that the poison transmitted to the spy earlier was used by him on an innocent person who stood in the way of his criminal activity.

The question arises: who will answer for the death of this person? Only the spy to whom Peterson transmitted the poison? Or the CIA? And if so, then who exactly? By whose direction and whose authorization did the Soviet people perish? They may say CIA clerks who have no access to politics were behind the spy, sort of the "hounds" of intelligence, obsessed with professional hatred of the USSR. However, this kind of admission does not stand up to criticism, because now, during the study of the case of the American spy Peterson was contacting, it becomes clear that high-ranking politicians knew about his "work" and blessed the methods of his agent, sending him poisons and weapons and demanding information from him in order to falsify it to torpedo detente.

Consequently, the version of the "low-level CIA clerk" falls short. But recently, CIA Director Turner told the US Congress that American intelligence does not use poisons, that the current CIA leadership rejects political killings as a method of

“work,” that now everything going on with them is “very moral,” which means “according to the law.” How do you combine Turner's public statement with the practice of his office?

... Meanwhile, moving to the second position of the note, the ambassador still tried to go on the offensive. “As for the other persons mentioned by you, they are completely unknown to me. I don't know State Department employees with those names.”

Responding in this way, the ambassador apparently wanted to make it clear that Fulton, Karpovich <sup>vii</sup> and Gruner<sup>viii</sup> belonged to a “different agency” and he was not responsible for them, although Karpovich and Gruner wrote in their entry visas that they were “employees of the State Department and arrived in USSR for consultations with the embassy.”

However, there is another possibility: maybe the ambassador really did not know what Karpovich and Gruner were doing, but then it turns out that those people who were preparing his visit to the USSR Foreign Ministry misinformed Mr. Toon.

... Bidding farewell, after a long pause the ambassador said:

“The United States Government would be grateful if everything that happened the day before were not made public.

“We will bring your request to the attention of our government,” they promised him.

Assuming that the person representing the US government cannot give irresponsible assurances, the Soviet side did not publicize the matter.

However, it has now become clear that the American side has not taken steps to stop this kind of activity. But something else was undertaken - a scandal over “Soviet espionage” was given the green light. It is even visible to the naked eye that the performance, staged by the “stage directors” of the CIA and the FBI, was created only to justify in the eyes of the leadership the failures that occurred in Moscow. I underline - failures, for the Peterson case is far from the only one in the chain of those that the Soviet counterintelligence uncovered.

The provocative nature of the latest campaign is evidenced in the entire “operation” against Soviet citizens arrested in New York began in August 1977,

that is, a month after Peterson's expulsion. The prosecution witness was a navy officer, an FBI agent who was dispatched provocatively to the Soviet citizens. Rough work, I would say, a police state in its purest form.

The irrefutable facts, exposing the CIA and its agents, are contrasted with a kind of theatrical buffoonery, which, unfortunately, is aimed at the deterioration of Soviet-American relations. As they say, they want to add oil to the fire of anti-Soviet hysteria, which is now in the U.S.? They want to scare us.

Well, we're not easily scared.

But who benefits from the new round of anti-Soviet hysteria?

I believe that he thinks realistically and knows that confrontation is disastrous for the politicians.

Julian Semenov.

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<https://search.yahoo.com/search?fr=mcafee&type=E211US896G91295&p=julian+semenov>

<sup>ii</sup> Deputy Chief of Mission Jack F. Matlock [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack\\_F.\\_Matlock\\_Jr.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_F._Matlock_Jr.)

<sup>iii</sup> Ambassador Malcolm Toon - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malcolm\\_Toon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malcolm_Toon)

<sup>iv</sup> Robert Fulton <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/washingtonpost/obituary.aspx?pid=158161893>

<sup>v</sup> Jay Gruner *ibid.* <https://www.nytimes.com/1978/06/13/archives/soviet-retaliating-publicizes-case-against-woman-linked-to-cia-us.html>

<sup>vi</sup> Serge Karpovich <https://www.nytimes.com/1978/06/13/archives/soviet-retaliating-publicizes-case-against-woman-linked-to-cia-us.html>