

Nuorteva's Alleged Arrest in Russia

A STORY appears in the Times yesterday from Berlin which on its face bears so many evidences of improbability as to warrant at least suspension of judgment or even complete rejection of the story. It is said that Santeri Nuorteva, formerly connected with the Soviet Bureau in New York, has been arrested on charges of treason which "will probably be followed by Nuorteva's execution." It is said that Washington E. Vanderlip, the California capitalist, became suspicious of Nuorteva's activities and sent a complaining letter to Lenin. The letter was followed by an early morning raid upon Nuorteva's room, when "documentary evidence of alleged espionage and treason against the Soviet" was discovered. Nuorteva is also reported as having been a purchasing agent of the Soviet Bureau in New York, having "ordered millions of dollars' worth of locomotives in Philadelphia, rails in Pittsburg and grain and farm machinery in Chicago." It is now believed in Russia that Nuorteva "was the leading anti-Soviet spy in America and Russia."

In the abnormal conditions that prevail in Russia it is best to discount stories of this kind. From several sources it has been reported that Nuorteva is in jail, but this has not been finally verified. The improbability of the story above is apparent for a number of reasons, among which are the following:

Nuorteva from the very beginning refused to support a big faction of the Finnish Socialists under the leadership of the exiled Labor Premier, Oscar Tokoi, who proposed to join the Allies in Siberia against the Soviets. Correspondence passed between the two men, in which Nuorteva endeavored to persuade Tokoi from his mistaken course, the former taking the position that the German-Finnish reaction, which had massacred thousands of Finnish workers, would be recognized by the Allies whom Tokoi proposed to join. This the Allies actually did, the blood-stained Finnish Government established with the aid of German bayonets being recognized by all the allied powers today, while the Soviet Government is still placed beyond the pale.

Nuorteva took the initiative in establishing a bureau in New York to present the claims of the Labor Government of Finland. After it had been overthrown with the aid of German conscripts he opened a bureau to present the claims of the Soviet Government in the United States. Later Ludwig Martens was appointed by the Soviet Government as its representative in the United States and Nuorteva turned his office over to Martens and served as advisor to the latter. Nuorteva made frequent visits to Washington in the interest of Russia and was arrested on one occasion by order of an official of the State Department.

Nuorteva was never the purchasing agent of the Soviet Bureau. Furthermore, the statement that Nuorteva was arrested upon information supplied by an American capitalist is so in conflict with what we expect of a government representing rural and urban workers that we find it impossible to believe it. This aspect of the story reads something like the planting of evidence against the strikers at Lawrence some years ago and its "discovery" by the authorities after the agents of the manufacturers had given the "tip." An American correspondent aware of this practice in the United States might easily hit upon a similar idea and stage it in Russia.

All of Nuorteva's activities in the United States are in direct contradiction to this Berlin story and the rumor that he is a spy is incredible. During his work here in behalf of the former Labor Government of Finland and later in behalf of the Soviet Government Nuorteva's health was impaired. There is little doubt that by this work his life has been shortened and to credit the Berlin story of the Times in the face of all the facts is atrocious to say the least.

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MAY 24 1921

NUORTEVA REPORTED AN AMERICAN SOVIET SPY

Vanderlip Said to Have Exposed
Him to Lenin, Who Caused
His Arrest.

New York Times

EVIDENCE FOUND IN RAID

Red "Inquisition" Said to Have
Bared a "Gigantic Plot" to
Undermine Bolshevism.

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BERLIN, May 23.—Santeri Nuorteva, formerly Secretary of the Soviet mission in New York, has been arrested and held in Moscow by Lenin's order. The charge against him is treason, which will probably be followed by Nuorteva's execution.

The arrest has caused a sensation of the biggest sort in Russia and is of particular interest to Americans because it involves Nuorteva's activities throughout the United States.

Directly responsible for Nuorteva's arrest is Washington B. Vanderlip, the American financier and promoter, who is on his second trip to Russia for the purpose of obtaining concessions in Siberia estimated to be worth \$5,000,000,000 and, it is rumored, a military base in the Far East.

I learn from the most reliable non-Russian sources that Vanderlip wrote a letter to Lenin complaining of Nuorteva's tactics. Lenin called a conference of the leaders of the notorious Tcheka, which is the Russian equivalent of the Spanish Inquisition. The Tcheka raided Nuorteva's rooms at 4 o'clock in the morning, obtaining documentary evidence of alleged espionage and treason against the Soviet.

According to informed sources, Nuorteva, one of the trusted Bolshevik henchmen, is actually an anti-Soviet agent. It is alleged that Nuorteva's activities in America, when he was ordering millions of dollars' worth of locomotives in Philadelphia, rails in Pittsburgh and grain and farm machinery in Chicago were part of a gigantic plot within the Bolshevik ranks to undermine and upset the Soviet.

Nuorteva was so powerful that he became the head of the American section of the Russian Foreign Office immediately after his arrival in Russia less than a year ago. It was only when Vanderlip was on the verge of losing the closing of his deal with Lenin that he discovered Nuorteva's true character. Nuorteva, instead of secretly undermining Vanderlip's Siberian deal, had come into the open on account of Lenin's enthusiasm for closing with Vanderlip.

Vanderlip quietly investigated and obtained enough material for suspicion to warrant him in informing Lenin. Among Nuorteva's captured correspondence, it is alleged, was found conclusive evidence that he was the leading anti-Soviet spy in America and Russia.

The White Russian Bureau in Berlin is informed that the charge against Nuorteva is money swindling, but it also hears that he is accused of being an Entente agent.

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