

From his childhood to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to his work as a Soviet Union KGB Agent, Viktor Bulatov's adventures and ventures take him to Brazil, Japan, South Africa, Angola, England, Cuba and the United States of America.

Cold War Shadows

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Cold War Shadows

George A. Kozlowski

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Chapter 1: Konstantin Bulatov

Captain Konstantin Bulatov watched as his Lieutenants supervised the unloading of the troops, equipment and horses from the train that stopped north of Mukden, Manchuria. Their final destination was Port Arthur on the Liaodong Peninsula. It was called Port Arthur by the English and most of the world, the Chinese had one name for the city and the Japanese had another name for the city. History calls the city Port Arthur.

Bulatov and his unit along with other military units had crossed Russia from the west to the east using the new Trans-Siberian railway. The men were weary from the long journey. Along the way they stopped periodically, exercised their horses and themselves. They were told to set up a camp north of the city of Mukden and await further orders. They moved their gear and horses along a muddy road. It was May of 1905, a warm day. Spring had melted the most of the snow and the water from the melted snow was not being absorbed because the ground was still hard from the freezing winter.

Captain Bulatov took his horse and rode to the brigade headquarters. He found his Commanding General, Prince Oleg Tikomirov. Prince Oleg had given himself the title of General. This was a usual custom of royalty to commission themselves as Generals. The Prince was asked to form a military unit to combat the Japanese at Port Arthur. He was able to form a brigade from several diversified units and then he called himself General.

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“You will wait for further orders. Keep your units camped where they are. When I am ready, I will convey my orders to you and to others. That is all Captain,” the General answered Captain Bulatov’s request for immediate orders. Captain Bulatov returned to his campsite with doubt and despondency.

Captain Konstantin Bulatov was born in 1870 in the city of Kazan in the Tartarstan region. He enlisted in the Russian army after he finished secondary school. He always wanted to be soldier. When he was a child he would play as a soldier.

In 1722, Peter the Great, Tsar (Czar) of Russia introduced the Table of Ranks which determined a soldier’s position and rank according to service to the Tsar of Russia rather than by birth. At the age of 25, after seven years of regular service, Konstantin’s dedication and loyalty was rewarded with an officer’s commission in the Russian Army.

Konstantin Bulatov grew to be a tall muscular and intelligent man. His leadership was recognized by his superiors and admired by his subordinates.

“Lieutenant Chaykovsky, get Corporal Petromir and a few days provision for the three of us because we are going on a sightseeing tour,” Bulatov commanded, “We are leaving early tomorrow. We will take the provisions as a precaution.”

The three men rode out of camp the next morning as soon as it was light. They rode across the rough terrain avoiding contact with anyone else. They found a high point on the Liaodong Peninsula. They were able to see the city of Port Arthur, battleships in the Bay of Korea and the fortress in the city. They witnessed canons shooting towards the water and warships firing their guns seaward and towards the land.

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Bulatov and his two men wondered why the Russian forces were not reinforcing the garrison and making it a more formidable and strong fortification to repel any Japanese Army.

“I think we should tell Prince Tikomirov what we see. With our unit and the others that are near Mukden we can reinforce the garrison and the entire city. We can prevent the Japanese from controlling the city and the peninsula,” Lt. Chaykovsky exclaimed to Capt. Bulatov.

“I came here to see for myself. I understand that the Prince has his own observers and advisors. He told us to remain at our camp and wait for further orders. I do not want to antagonize our General with suggestions,” Bulatov answered with a sardonic voice intended to be sarcastic towards the General.

The Lieutenant and the corporal smiled with understanding and followed the Captain as they proceeded northward towards their camp. They did not camp overnight but rode on to their unit’s campsite.

Bulatov and his men nervously waited for three days for orders. On the fourth day, early in the morning, a messenger came to Captain Bulatov and said, “I have orders for you, Captain Bulatov. Here they are. They are being delivered to all the units under the command of General Prince Tikomirov.”

Bulatov hastily opened the sealed envelope and read aloud to his immediate staff of officers, “To all Commanders, you are to gather all of your equipment, men and horses and evacuate this area. You are to proceed to the railway north of Mukden, board the train with all of your gear. Do not leave any equipment or horses behind. You will move northward and then board the Russian Trans-Siberian Railroad and proceed to

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return to your home station in Russia. In your case, Captain Konstantin Bulatov it is the military installation near Saratov. (Each Commander is given his home base). Do this immediately, our Tsar Nicholas and Russia thank you for your gallant effort. I remain his obedient servant and your Commanding General, Prince Oleg Tikomirov.”

“We have our orders. Let us go back to Russia. Our war is finished. Fortunately no one in our unit has died. I know, we would have preferred to help our comrades but we must follow orders and it is not our prerogative to question our leaders. I follow orders and you will do the same,” Captain Bulatov told his officers with reluctance as he bowed his head and then shook it from side to side.

The Japanese Navy attacked the Russian Navy in a preemptive strike. They sank several Russian warships and the Japanese Army was sending troops to occupy the city of Port Arthur. The ensuing battles did not go in favor of the Russians. The Russian Army and the Russian Navy found themselves overwhelmed by the greater Japanese forces. The Japanese had an integrated command of all their forces while the Russians did not have a unified command. Coordination between the various Russian units of the army did not exist. The Russian Navy was coordinated in a more favorable position but the Japanese had a superior Navy in tactics and strategy.

The cavalry unit of Captain Bulatov had approximately 300 horse mounted men with auxiliary support of 75 men and 450 horses. They were packed and ready to depart before noon. They marched north of Mukden and boarded a train to the north

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to Harbin. At Harbin they boarded the Russian Trans-Siberian Railroad.

As the train started the westward journey, Captain Bulatov met with his seven officers, all were Lieutenants. He said, "Lieutenant Chaykovsky, you are to be in charge of our Company because when we arrive at Ulan-Ude, I will not continue with you. We will stop and exercise the men and horses there. I will be staying at Ulan-Ude. My brother has a place nearby and I am going to visit with him and his family. He moved there many years ago because he wanted to raise cattle and horses. I will stay there for about a week and then I will take the next train which goes west once every week."

The train arrived at Ulan-Ude. Captain Konstantin Bulatov said goodbye to his troops, "I will see all of you when I return. Lieutenant Chaykovsky is in charge while I am away," Bulatov saluted his men and departed.

Bulatov took two horses. He rode one and the other horse carried two large packages straddling the horses back. He rode northward for about an hour then stopped to rest and to water his horses. It was a sunny warm day. An hour later, Konstantin could see a house and several large barns. This was his brother's home.

As he approached the house he could see several men on horseback. The horseman closest to Konstantin spotted him and turned his horse towards the other men. He appeared to be shouting to the others. There were two other riders. Two of the riders went in full gallop towards Konstantin but kept a distance away from him. They appeared to be circling him. The other two riders approached Konstantin.

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The bigger rider of the two shouted as he neared Konstantin, "It is you, Kostya (a nickname for his brother)."

"Yes, Borya (a nickname for Boris) who else do you expect?" Kostya answered his brother.

"I never expected to see you but I am so happy."

Konstantin had three brothers, Boris, Fyodor and Igor. Boris left his home town of Kazan after he married Alina and moved to the Baikal region. He wanted to raise cattle. He started to raise cattle and then added raising horses. The Russian Army was always in need of horses. He also sold horses to the Manchurians, Mongolians, Chinese and many others. His cattle herd and his horse herd grew and Boris Bulatov became a major supplier of cattle and horses.

Borya had a few problems with marauding bands of cattle and horse rustlers. He eventually hired two Manchurian horsemen to work as guards of his animals. The staling stopped after several marauders were shot. It was never known if they were killed. These were the two men that circled Kostya as he approached.

"Let's go to my house," Borya said as he turned his horse towards the house. Kostya and one of the boys followed and the three horsemen galloped towards the house. At the house they all dismounted and Borya and Kostya hugged each other and kissed each other on the cheek.

Boris and Alina had six children, 4 boys and two girls. The 4 boys were in their teens . One girl was 11 and the other girl was 2 years of age.

"This is your Uncle Kostya," Borya said to his oldest boy, Anton, who was holding the four horses by their reins. Anton

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tied the horses to a hitching rail and he hugged his uncle. He did not kiss him but was kissed by his uncle.

They entered the house and were met by Alina, a woman in her mid-thirties. She still retained her youthful beauty even after the hardships of having six children and constant housework and field work. She maintained a small farm to supply family with vegetables and some fruit. Two girls were at her side. She introduced the youngest girl, a shy two year old Alisa, The other girl, Anna ran to Kostya and hugged and kissed him exclaiming her happiness in seeing her uncle after all these years.

“Go and find the other boys,” Alina said to Anton. Anton immediately ran out of the door to one of the barns to beckon his brothers.

“Quick, come to the house. Uncle Kostya is here. He just arrived,” Anton said in an excited voice to his three brothers who were working in the barn. The four boys ran to the house. At the doorway they removed their boots and entered the house in their stocking feet.

“This is Eduard, Filip and Ivan,” Borya introduced his three youngest boys. “I believe the last time you saw my brood was when Alisa was a month old. Yes, I know they have all grown. They are supposed to do that and they are good hard working helpers. Let’s get you settled and how long will you stay. You know there is no limit on your visit with us. Stay as long as you want. You are always welcome”

“I will be here for one week and then I will take the next westward bound train and rejoin my troops. I will tell you about our war after I get settled,” Kostya said with a sarcastic emphasis on the word war.

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The house was large with eight rooms on the upper level. Each of the children had their own bedroom. The other two upstairs rooms were used as guest rooms and for storage of odds and ends.

Borya and Alina had a bed room on the first floor. The house was built in stages. The first floor built with a large room used for cooking and eating, and a sitting room used as a sewing room. As the family grew, Borya added the second floor which he had planned in the original construction. He made all the rooms large because he felt that rooms and space is never large enough.

The entire family sat down for an evening supper of ham, potatoes and cabbage. Alina served tea and a white cake with a sugar frosting for desert. After dinner the boys went to the barn to do some evening chores while Alina and her two daughters cleaned up after the meal.

Kostya went upstairs to his room and returned carrying several packages of different sizes.

“I have some small gifts for the children,” he said as he opened the packages. He then continued, “ I have a ladies purse for each of the girls, which I bought in Germany. In each of the purses are some items that girls like for grooming. For the boys I have four hunting knives with a 23 millimeter blade (9 inches approximately). I bought these in Germany at a famous factory that specializes in knives of all sorts. I assume that your father has some leather and he can make some sheaths for the knives. Maybe you boys can make the sheaths yourselves. Now for you, Borya I have a pistol, an automatic pistol with a large supply of ammunition. And... for Alina, I have a box of assorted sewing

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threads. In Manchuria I was also able to find these beautiful silk scarves with pictures of flowers, one for each of the three lovely ladies.”

Everybody thanked Uncle Kostya, it seemed at the same time as did Alina and Borya. Uncle Kostya smiled with a broad grin and said they were all very welcome and was glad that they appreciated his small gifts.

The next morning after breakfast, Borya asked Kostya to take a ride. He wanted Kostya to see his entire place. They rode westward from the house towards Lake Baikal. Borya said that he owned thousands of acres and has a claim for thousands more. He showed his brother the beauty of the area, the forests, the rivers and the mountains. From a high vantage point they could see the enormous lake.

“I have plenty of land to grow and prosper. My cattle herd is expanding and my herd of horses is growing. I have a variety of horse for many functions, horses for military and civilian riding, and horses for military and civilian hauling. I never knew that there were so many different types of cattle and horse. When we grew up on our farm in Kazan, I only knew of one type of cow and one type of horse. My learning of the various types is constantly developing. We have plenty of wild animals for hunting and for furs and there are the streams, rivers and the lake for all sorts of fish. This place is abundant with everything. I like it here and I am grateful that my family is happy here. Yes, it is a great deal of work but no one is complaining. I will hire more people to help. I have the two Manchurian men as guards and I will hire several more to take care of the cattle and horses,” Borya said with pride.

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“Are you trying to convince me to move here?” Kostya replied.

“No, but you are more than welcome to move here.”

“I have the Army and I am doing what I wanted to do, being a soldier. But I cannot always do what I would like to do. I haven’t expressed my feelings or thoughts to anyone and please do not repeat this to anyone, not even your family. Keep this between us. I said war, before, it wasn’t a war. We did not have any unity with the ground forces nor with the navy. The Russian Generals were all fighting for personal control. They did not like having to take orders from any one else except the Tsar. The Tsar was not aware of the full ramifications of the events. The garrison at Port Arthur had plenty of men, supplies and ammunitions to last for weeks and yet it surrendered. We also had reinforcements at Mukden and the Tsar could have sent more men but none of this happened. My General, Prince Tikomirov was afraid of a battle. He claimed that he was thinking of saving his men but I believe and others think that he was afraid of hurting himself or getting killed. I won’t say he is a coward but I think so and some of my men think so also. They won’t say it either. I am disappointed in the Prince, he does not belong in the army. When you are in the army you cannot express your opinions,” Konstantin said sadly as he slowly shook his head up and down.

Uncle Kostya stayed for the week and prepared to ride out alone to the train station. His nephews wanted to ride with him but Uncle Kostya said that would not be necessary and said his goodbyes with a hug to all the boys and his brother. He hugged

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and kissed the two girls on the cheek and hugged and kissed Alina. He quickly turned away for fear of crying.

He said, "Farewells are always sad for me."

He turned to his brother and said with a low voice, almost a whisper because he was holding back on the tears, "I will write to you and you and your family and you should write to me."

"Yes we will. We must keep in contact and our families should also. Good bye brother, good luck and good health," Boris answered.

Konstantin tied a long rein that was attached to his pack horse, to his saddle. He mounted his horse, turned away from the house and rode away with tears in his eyes.

Konstantin Bulatov took the train to the city of Kirov and then rode with his two horses to his military post near the city of Samara. His wife Galina, his two sons, Dmitri and Valery and his daughter Yelena greeted him at the door of his home on the post. They all hugged and kissed him and were talking at the same time.

"Please wait. I will answer everyone questions, one at a time. Now I will start with the youngest who is Yelena."

Konstantin had answers for each of the children and an assortment of gifts. He then turned to his wife and kissed and hugged her until she asked for relief from the strong hug.

The next day he returned to his company of men and resumed his military duties.

At this time, at the beginning of the twentieth century, there was a great deal of political and social unrest in Russia. Various factions were fighting among themselves, both physically and verbally. Then in 1914 a war started in Europe and this turmoil

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appeared to quiet the political and social protests. A brief period of patriotic unity emerged but soon vanished as wartime disaster occurred. Tsar Nicholas took direct command of the Russian army. His wife Alexandra and her advisor Grigori Rasputin, created resentment and anger within the country. Rasputin was believed to be a saintly mystic, a psychic, a faith healer, a prophet and a debauched religious charlatan. He came under the influence of the Tsarina Alexandra when he tendered some relief to her sick child, Alexei.

Captain Konstantin Bulatov and his men were sent to fight the Germans. He returned to Russia after suffering a 35 percent casualty rate because of lack of equipment and inept commanders.

He was given the process of forming another unit of soldiers and was promoted to the rank of Major. With his new cadre of men he was given the orders to quell some of the unrest and protests that were happening in Russia. Bulatov tried to calm the unrest but was uneasy about harming fellow Russians. At one time he refused to lead his men with sabers on a charge against the protesters. He ordered his men to ride among the protesters in order to disperse the crowd. Another time he refused to shoot at the rioting dissenters. He was reprimanded and sent to another military post. The turmoil that existed resulted in losing any paper work or records of his reprimand. He eventually rejoined his unit at the base near Samara. Confusion was prevalent in Russia. No one was certain of the future.

The chaotic events of 1917 led to the execution of the entire Romanov family and the emergence of the Bolsheviks as

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the dominant political party. It was led by Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, known as Vladimir Lenin. A new way of life was beginning in Russia. Political and social changes were occurring.

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