

Bernadotte, Folke

(1895--1948), Swedish count and diplomat. During World War II, Bernadotte served as the representative of the Swedish Red Cross during prisoner exchanges between Germany and the Allies. In 1943 he was named vice president of the Swedish Red Cross, and president in 1946.

Bernadotte negotiated with ss leader Heinrich Himmler as a Red Cross representative. In March and April 1945 Bernadotte convinced Himmler to release over 7,000 Scandinavians who were imprisoned in Nazi concentration camps (including more than 400 Danish Jews interned in Theresienstadt). After Himmler met with the representative of the World Jewish Congress, Norbert Masur, in Sweden, Bernadotte also successfully organized the release of 10,000 women from the Ravensbrueck concentration camp, including 2,000 Jews. Most of the women were then brought to Sweden.

Just days after the establishment of the State of Israel, the United Nations appointed Bernadotte to negotiate between Israel and the Arab countries which had invaded the fledgling state. He worked out a settlement between the two sides, but was assassinated in September 1948 by the Fatherland Front, an organization associated with the Jewish underground group, *Lehi*.