

G.P.U. Murders Rebelling Agent

Reiss Broke With Stalin Thugs Take Him for Ride Bullet Riddled Body Found By Police in Switzerland

PARIS.—On September 4, 1937 the Swiss police discovered at Chamblandes, in the Swiss Canton of Vaud, not far from Lausanne, the bullet-riddled body of a thirty-eight year old man bearing a passport in the name of Hermann Eberhardt. The publication of photographs of the assassinated man made it possible promptly to establish his true identity and the very peculiar nature of the crime.

The victim was a Polish Communist militant, Ignace Reiss, who belonged to the Secret Service of the Communist International. At the beginning of this year, he had given the Dutch Communist Opposition, through the former deputy to the Hague Parliament, his personal friend of long standing, Henrik Sneevliet, an exact warning on the decision adopted in Moscow to employ all methods against the anti-Stalinist communists abroad. At the end of July 1937 he had published in the Nieuwe Fakkel of Amsterdam, Organ of the Revolutionary Socialist Party an open letter to the leaders of the Comintern and the Russian Government. The letter was a categorical break. Ignace Reiss wrote:

Broke With Assassins

"I began my activity as a socialist militant twenty years ago. ...I have behind me sixteen years of illegal work.... Now the question is to save socialism....I have remained silent before too many assassinations, thus burdening my conscience with a great error....I should have broken with you on the day when the Father of the Peoples had the Sixteen shot in the cellars of the Lubianka" (street on which the Moscow G. P. U. is located).

Reiss disclosed that several officials of the G. P. U., who the *Izvestia* announced, had just been given the decoration of the Order of the Red Flag, were compensated for having participated in the execution of the former leaders of the revolution. Himself decorated in 1928 with the Order of the Red Flag for services rendered the revolution, he sent back his medal, "finding it unworthy to bear the same decoration as the executioners of the best men in the working class of Russia."

Ignace Reiss soon learned that the G.P.U. had received the order to kill him. He informed his friends and took refuge in Switzerland under the name of Eberhardt.

G.P.U. Sets Murder Trap

The crime was minutely prepared. The Swiss police has established that five persons, at least, who immediately quit the country and several of whom must have taken refuge in France, participated in the crime. A sixth, an accomplice, has been arrested. The principal author of the crime is known. She was a secret agent both of the Executive Committee of the Comintern and of the G.P.U., Gertrud Schildbach (born Neugebauer), 43 years old. A long resident in Paris, she lived recently in Rome, from where she was sent to Switzerland to draw Ignace Reiss into

a trap, Schildbach is short, masculine in figure, rather homely, graying, wears glasses, dresses plainly. She succeeded in finding Reiss, visited him on the eve of the assassination, told him of her plan to break with Stalinism as he had broken, and invited him to supper. She was with him when he was assaulted, kidnapped into an automobile, and riddled with seven bullets, five of them in his head. In the hands of the assassinated man were found strands of hair of Gertrud Schildbach.

In the automobile there was also found a top-coat with a Madrid label, which leads to the supposition that the assassins of Ignace Reiss belonged to the organization which did away with Nin....

Schildbach has probably taken refuge in France or in Italy. The Swiss police being in possession of her photograph, it is not very likely that she tried to reach the Soviet Union by the land route.

Revolutionary Record

Reiss was born on January 1st 1899, in a middle class Jewish family of the Austrian part of Poland. From his adolescence in high school, he came into contact with the revolutionary labor movement. He studied law in Vienna, but did not complete his studies, having too closely allied himself with the revolutionary movement. He joined the Communist Party of Austria, collaborated in the Polish paper, *Swit*, and was sent to Poland by the Party in 1920. There he was arrested, tortured and condemned to five years in prison. After six months, however, he was released on bail, thanks to the special regulations applying to former Austrian Poland. In 1923, he went to Germany where he was in contact with Russians who were supporting the German Communists. Up to 1926, he worked in the Ruhr, then returned to Vienna where he spent some time in prison. In 1927, he went to the Soviet Union where he became a member of the Russian Communist Party. Later the party charged him with missions in various cities of Central and Western Europe. From 1929 to 1932 he was again in the U.S.S.R., then resumed his activity abroad. In 1936-1937, finally, the decline of Stalinism and of the Comintern convinced him that it was no longer possible to serve Stalin. He decided to return to Lenin and wrote his letter to the Russian Communist Party, for which he was to pay with his life. Honor to his memory!

STALINISM and BOLSHEVISM

10 C by
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Painters' Strike Settlement Arouses Dissatisfaction with Stalinist Leadership

Wednesday Sept. 15 marked the close of the 2½ weeks Painter's Strike. 12,000 painters, members of District Council No. 9, Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America returned to work, their major demands (the 6 hour day 50 per cent hiring through the union) ignored not only by the bosses but also by the union administration.

The new agreement calls for a wage increase (from \$9 to 10.50 per day), recognition of shop stewards and continuation of the 25 per cent hiring through the union. The Master Painters' Association, the union of the big painting contractors, in their efforts to secure from the real estate owners a considerable increase in contract prices on the grounds of higher costs in what promises to be the best painting season in several years, had indicated as early as last spring their willingness to agree to a wage increase. Recognition of shop stewards, as it is worded in the present agreement, means little or nothing because the union has no power to appoint stewards in those shops where the bosses, through the threat of dismissal or discrimination can control the steward elections. This gain is essentially the candy coating of the bitter fact that the union got exactly what the Master Painters had been willing to give—strike or no strike.

Real Demands Ignored

The press reports testify eloquently to the above. From the *New York Times* through the *Mirror* down to the *Daily Worker*, all accounts during the strike agree that the 6 hour and 50 per cent demands were hardly raised by the union negotiating committee, and since there was no disagreement on wages, the only point which the committee fought for was the recognition of shop stewards. Ignoring the real demands—the committee was interested only in securing its candy coating.

Finally, the bosses agreed to the innocuous shop steward clause and Louis Weinstock, Stalinist, and secretary of the District Council was reported in the press as hailing the agreement as a complete victory.

The reasons for such a "victory" in a period of unparalleled advances of workers throughout the country can be found in the policies and actions of an administration composed of Stalinists and their "united front" allies, mostly former members of the old Zausner machine.

Future issues of this paper will deal with these questions and the record of the administration during its 20-month rule in detail. For the present it is sufficient to point out that the Peoples Front policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy, translated into terms of the present political and trade union situation in N. Y. C. compel the C. P. members in the union to avoid any appearance of radicalism in order to appear respectable in the eyes of the "friends" of labor in the leadership if the local Republican Party and the labor bureaucrats. A militant strike (God forbid) would only compel labor's "Little

Flower" to call the cops, to break the strike and a lot of workers might get a wrong impression about Our Mayor. Beside such a situation might play into the hands of Tammany Hall which is the current "main danger." Only last Saturday a general membership meeting called primarily to explain the new agreement was turned into an election rally for Thomas Dewey. Still fresh in the minds of the membership are the remarks of Weinstock at a meeting of Local 3 of the Electrical Workers a few months ago. The meeting was called to protest Dewey's move to investigate the union's activities and Weinstock in no uncertain terms denounced Dewey

and his committee as a union-busting outfit.

A good section of the membership, long dissatisfied with the administration's conduct, are greatly disturbed by the new agreement and provide the possibility of building a genuine progressive movement in the union. A sufficient number of militant workers, not reactionary elements talking progressivism, to begin this work already exist. They must band together, adopt a program and decide on a line of strategy. The problems connected with this will be discussed in the columns of this paper. The road of class struggle is the only road to effective unionism. There is no other way.

W. Green Splits up Akron Labor

By Blake Lear

AKRON, Ohio.—Under orders of the callous bureaucrats of the A. F. of L., Wilmer Tate, progressive president of the Akron Central Labor Union, has been suspended from office and is to be placed on trial on Oct. 8.

The trigger man for the A. F. of L., was H. A. Bradley, a creature notorious in local labor circles. Bradley, who later announced, "I am not here to argue legality," seized the gavel at the September 23 meeting of the C. L. U., refused to show any mandate whatever for the action, arbitrarily ruled motions out of order, refused to entertain appeals from decision of the chair, threatened to lift the charter of the C. L. U., and refused to accept the democratic and vehemently expressed will of the majority of the delegates.

Majority Fights Bradley

The will of the majority, though distorted by the exigencies of a roll call vote demanded by the representatives of the building trades, who forced their rank and file to support the trial motion upon penalty of refusing to send them on jobs, and by the rulings of Bradley, who recognized only the building trades' formulations, was clearly expressed in a 68 to 54 vote to table action until the next meeting.

Progressives, led by Chalmers K. Stewart of the Federation of Teachers, and delegates from the barbers', truck-drivers', and machinists' locals waged a bitter fight against Bradley in a meeting that was a riotous uproar from the moment that Bradley usurped the chair.

Motions to obligate packed delegations were defeated three times, a letter to Green demanding an A. F. of L. representative for Akron affairs other than Bradley was whooped through, a letter to Green condemning Bradley's high-handed, undemocratic action passed 66 to 41, and a resolution of the Minneapolis central labor body condemning the A. F. of L. stand on the C.I.O. question was heartily endorsed.

By this action against one of the most progressive central labor bodies in the country, the A. F. of L. shellbacks have demonstrat-

ed that they will go to any length to preserve their interests at the expense of the working class.

This action is the culmination of a long period of sniping and open struggle between the muscle boys of the building trades and the progressive A. F. L.'ers grouped around the large rubber locals.

It was only late last August that the C.I.O. affiliates were expelled from the C.L.U. upon a direct order from Green. Previous letters seeking to drive a wedge between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. locals had always been perfunctorily filed. A joint board to mediate jurisdictional disputes was immediately set up in preparation for the maintenance of the unity of Akron labor.

Green Breaks Unity

This cooperation was rudely interrupted by Green, however, who utilized the initial advantage gained by the naive compliance to his letter (only one left-wing delegate having spoken against accepting Green's letter, the other delegates thinking that the joint board was the happy solution for everything) to begin his drive against progressive locals in the A. F. of L., a program that plainly seems to be heading towards expulsion from the A. F. of L.

An additional factor tending toward the wrecking of the C.L.U. is the activity of the supporters of Lee D. Schroy, present republican mayor of Akron, who are seeking control of the C.L.U. to split the labor movement and divert votes from Labor's Non-Partisan League's candidate, the self-styled New Dealer, Judge G. L. Patterson, who is endorsed by the democratic party, Akron labor generally, the Communist Party, and if we are to believe a speech of Earl Browder's last Thursday, by Thom Paine, Jefferson, Washington, Lincoln and Stalin—all good boys in their way too.

AKRON has come to be known as a barometer of the American labor movement, forecasting the political and trade union weather to come. Today the needle points to storms ahead. The Socialist Party of Akron, having also charted the correct course, can alone emerge with its prestige enhanced and all sails set.