

Reiss Diary Exposes GPU Crimes

Young Communists, Murdered by Stalinist Firing Squads, Defiantly Cry Out: "Long Live Leon Trotsky!"

(Continued from page 1)

Slutsky's comment: "They (the Czechoslovak authorities) are in no hurry. After all, they have legionnaires in prison there."

(Note: The diary of Ignace Reiss, as well as statements made by him orally, establishes the fact that the "case" against the old Bolshevik-Leninist, A. Grylewicz, whom they attempted to accuse in Czechoslovakia of "espionage for Hitler," was wholly manufactured in Moscow by Stalin-Yezhov. Notwithstanding the compliance of Czechoslovak authorities, who acted in accordance with directives from the G.P.U., the case against comrade Grylewicz collapsed miserably.)

2. Toward the end of February, the well-known Czech journalist Ripka (of Narodny Listi, I believe) was called by phone from Paris. The conversation with him was in the name of a Hungarian friend of his, making him an offer of materials relating to the Trotskyist trial for use in the press. Ripka hung up. The individuals who made the call are known to me.

Slutsky's Trip Abroad

(Note: The individual who phoned is one of the resident G.P.U. agents abroad whose name is known to the Editors of the Russian Bulletin. He spoke under the dictation of Slutsky who was in Paris at the time. One of the aims of Slutsky's trip abroad was to spare no means in order to dispose of the press in favor of Stalin's trials. The conversation with Ripka centered around supplying the latter with some sort of G.P.U. forgeries intended to "prove" that the Piatakov-Radek trial was not a frame-up.)

3. Remark by Slutsky to the effect that X., holding an important official post in England was an agent of the I. S. (presumably, Intelligence Service). Sokolnikov, in his capacity of ambassador in London, had maintained business relations with him. The intentions of Agr (obviously, Agranov) to concoct a "case" out of these relations and Slutsky's fears lest this cause great unpleasantness to his department inasmuch as, *ibissima verba*: "Sokolnikov will, upon request, write so much more (accompanying gesture) about his relations with Trotsky but we'll be losers by the bargain."

(Note: Agranov and Co., like Slutsky, were equally well aware that Sokolnikov's relations with X. were of a purely business nature. But while Agranov, one of the direct stage managers of the trials, was interested in piling on as much as possible, Slutsky apparently tended more towards caution. He feared that X., being at liberty in London and not confined in the inner prison in Moscow, would begin refuting. It may also be that Slutsky had special plans with regard to X.)

4. Telephone conversation between Slutsky and A. Berman**.

* Slutsky—the head, at present writing probably the former head, of the Foreign Department of the G.P.U.

** Berman—an important G.P.U. functionary, brother of the People's Commissar of Posts and Telegraph.

"You keep talking there about a document transmitted to the Japanese ambassador. Why do you entangle me in this business. Where am I to get it?"

(Note: This conversation pertains to the preparatory stage of the Piatakov-Radek trial. Berman asked Slutsky to obtain, i.e., to manufacture, some sort of document as proof of the connection between the defendants and Japan. This "minor" circumstance alone ruthlessly exposes the behind-the-scenes mechanics of the Moscow trials.)

6. One E. Bekher or Brekher, alias Edek, also Petersen, member of the staff of the Polish paper *Tribuna Badziecka*, published in Moscow, has been operating as an agent provocateur (G.P.U.) for many years among the Polish comrades. He betrayed a great many comrades into the hands of the three letters (GPU); also, in the Ukraine. Poses as an author, with Lvov as his birth place. In his day, was arrested and sentenced (in Poland) for communist activity, but because of dishonorable conduct had been expelled from the party. He betrayed a comrade to the police.

"Long Live Trotsky!"

8. Slutsky's story about Leningrad Communists: "They die shouting, 'Long Live Leon Davidovich!'"

(Note: The above refers to a conversation in the G.P.U. last May when Slutsky, under the influence of fresh impressions, became confidential and recounted how the Leningrad Y.C.L'ers faced the firing squads with the cry: Long Live Trotsky!)

9. The confession of Kippenhauer or Kippenberg concerning a conversation with Bredow.

(Note: Kippenberger, a German communist, was recently arrested and accused of espionage. He "confessed" that he had once talked with Bredow (of the Reichswehr). But he had had this talk—in accordance with instructions from Moscow. Nowadays when it is a question of destroying the German emigre communists living in the U.S.S.R., the G.P.U., unable to seize on anything else, utilizes the conversation with Bredow to make a case against Kippenberger. He was shot.)

10. Examinations lasting 90 hours. Slutsky's comment on Mrachkovsky.

(Note: To break Mrachkovsky the G.P.U. subjected him to incessant examination, lasting 90 hours at a stretch! The same "method" was applied to I. N. Smirnov who showed the greatest resistance.)

11. December 1936. Primakov had not yet made any confessions at the time. Slutsky's comment.

12. Raid on Rakovsky's home. Kept 18 hours without food or rest. His wife wished to give him tea—was forbidden for fear that she might give him poison. Can't vouch for it. On Louis Fischer's say-so.*

(Note: The G.P.U. forbade Rakovsky's wife to give him tea, fearing that she might, in agreement with him, give poison. What other piece of evidence is re-

* Reference to the not unknown bourgeois-Stalinist journalist and agent of the G.P.U.—Louis Fischer.

quired to testify to the spiritual state of those arrested! Knowing the tortures that await them, they prefer instant death to arrest—Tomsy, Gamarnik, Chervakov, Lubchenko, etc.)

German C.P. Heads Shot

13. Felix Wolfe—no confessions (dead).

(Note: Felix Wolfe, a well known German communist was shot as were other former leaders of the German C.P.: Kemmele, Neumann, Werner Hirsh, etc.)

14. Interminable negotiations with Adolphe (Hitler)—Kandil. (Referred to here is perhaps Kandellaki, Soviet trade representative in Germany; and the fact that the behind-the-scenes negotiations of Stalin with Hitler went on through him.—Ed.) Slutsky's comment on a conversation with Rouat in 1935 and Dr. La. in Dec. 1936. (Details unknown—Ed.)

15. Remark by Yezhov—during a conversation in the Department—spring 1936 (1937): "Shot several score."

(Note: This is a familiar refrain of Yezhov's in settling any question.)

16. A rumor about Yagoda circulating in the G.P.U. that he is an agent of the Gestapo whom the Germans compelled by means of blackmail to work for them, inasmuch as he had allegedly served in the Czarist Okhrana. But Yagoda is only about 40 years old!

18. On the Spanish question—initial reaction, assistance, followed by a strict prohibition up to September 6 (1936) to undertake anything.

22. Mysterious Tsik case: Riainin and Cherniavsky.

(Note: The above reference is to a fictitious attempt against Stalin. Both of the men mentioned are army men.)

Trotsky and... Bauer

23. L. D's residence in Prinkipo burglarized, allegedly for the purpose of establishing ties between him and the Second International, and especially Otto Bauer. Cannot vouch for this.

(Note: The details of this rumor are as follows: Among the staff of the G.P.U. tales circulated of how Trotsky's home in Prinkipo (Turkey) was broken into in order to obtain Trotsky's secret correspondence with Otto Bauer. Trotsky is reputed to have succeeded in detaining the intruder. He proposed to the latter to put the gun aside, did the same himself and then invited the man to sit down and asked him why the burglary was arranged, and just what they wished to know. He himself was ready to tell anything of interest to the burglar. Then Trotsky said to him: "It would be best for you to tell me what is taking place in Russia." When our informant was told that this is all fiction and that there was no burglary in Prinkipo, he replied that the G.P.U. staff in Moscow believed it to be true, and that he considers this legend very indicative of the moods prevailing even in these circles.)

26. Yezhov on the vacillations of Djerzhinsky. (All the Polish collaborators of Djerzhinsky in

the G.P.U. and in the other departments have been arrested.)

29. Yevdokimov's report on those who remained after Brest-Litovsk. Yevdokimov—an inveterate drunkard.

(Note: So far as we know, the above refers to the fact that Yevdokimov (of the G.P.U.—not to be confused with G. Yevdokimov, an old Bolshevik, shot in the Zinoviev trial) compiled a report to the effect that all German, Austrian, and Hungarian military prisoners remaining behind in Russia after the Brest-Litovsk peace, the majority of whom were party members, remained in reality for the purpose of espionage. Yevdokimov's report was apparently intended to serve as a basis for reprisals against the foreign communist emigres who are now being destroyed wholesale in the U.S.S.R.)

"Not Taking Orders"

30. Messing-Kaganovich. Not taking orders. Can't vouch.

(Note: A story is current that at a certain session in Moscow at which under discussion was

the poor condition of the city's economic life, city finances etc. Kaganovich delivered a scurrilous speech. According to Kaganovich, those responsible for everything were wreckers who must be punished in an exemplary fashion. As he spoke he half-turned toward Messing. It is said that Messing replied, "Not taking orders," i.e., orders for staging wreckers' trials and that for this remark Messing was removed from his post in the G.P.U. At any rate, this was the rumor circulating in the G.P.U. to explain Messing's removal. It is characteristic that in the milieu of the G.P.U. all this was recounted with un concealed sympathy for Messing.)

32. Rykov and Bukharin brought from jail to the plenary session (of the C.C.) to defend themselves there. They categorically refused to admit themselves guilty. Stalin's rejoinder: Take them back to jail. Let them defend themselves from there!

33. According to unverified rumors, Piatakov was an opponent of the Stakhanovist movement.

Independent Group Built on Firm Base in Teachers Union

Although the Independent Group has made a good beginning and has in some instances compelled the Administration to make concessions, a number of important problems are pressing for solution. First of these is the question of what to do about Mr. Charles J. Hendley, the President of the Union, who was the joint candidate of both groups in the last election. Mr. Hendley is nominally an adherent of the Independents, but in practice he serves knowingly or unknowingly as a socialist front for the people's front administration. His recent undemocratic rulings against spokesmen and proposals of the Independents have become intolerable and raise the question of Mr. Hendley's adherence to that group.

Unity With "Progressives"

Another question pending before the Independents is the proposal for unity with the Progressives. Negotiations with this group have shown that they refuse to accept the position of the Independents in regard to the American Labor Party. We believe that for the Independents to compromise their program for the sake of unity with the progressives at this time would be suicidal for the young Independent Group. It would result in a repetition of the previous debacle within the "United Progressives." We hold that it would be far better and safer to follow a course of united fronts with them upon specific questions as they arise in the Union until such a time as events themselves will bring more clarification upon the question of independent political action and the American Labor Party.

The Independent Group, after conducting an excellent campaign against affiliation of the Union with the American League for Peace and Democracy, has instituted petitions for a referendum on this question. We believe that the Independent Group should also conduct forums for the education of its own membership as well as the Union mem-

bership on the war question. In addition it is necessary to train a group of speakers who are competent to speak upon this question before Union groups in the schools. In short, a persistent campaign conducted all year round is necessary. It is necessary to strengthen the Independent forces on the Union's Committee Against War and Fascism, which has in reality become a base for pro-war propaganda within the organization, a political base for people's front treachery.

Membership Must Be Reached

As the war clouds gather, the people's front administration will attempt to engage in still further repressions than hitherto. Already they have attempted to reduce the delegate Assembly, which next to the membership vote is second in authority, to a paper and rubber-stamp existence. It is almost impossible for the opposition to obtain a hearing for its views in the monthly organ of the Union, the New York Teacher. The Independent Group, through its monthly bulletin, has done a splendid job in acquainting a part of the membership with the Administration's attempts to suppress the opposition and with other issues. It is urgent to expand the size and circulation of the bulletin so that a greater portion of the membership is reached. Only in this way will the pressure of the membership force further concessions from the Administration.

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