



DISPLAYS READIED — Racks of garden tools in the hardware department at Sears were all in order by the middle of last week. Here, Employee Clark Barker is shown putting shovels in their proper place.

Trotsky Assassin Will Go Free Next Year; Identity Mystery

Mexico City (UPI) — On Aug. 20, 1940, exiled Russian Revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky was murdered in Mexico with a rod that smashed his skull. His assassin was apprehended immediately. He has been in jail ever since. He is due to be released next year. And yet, neither his true identity, his nationality nor his motive has ever been definitely determined.

All that is known is that the killer claims to be a Belgian national named Jacques Mornard; that he had entered Mexico with a forged Canadian passport that once belonged to a soldier killed during the Spanish Civil War while fighting in an anti-Franco International Brigade.

He was introduced into Trotsky's closely guarded household by Sylvia Ageloff, a Russian-American Trotskyite, to whom he was apparently introduced in Paris and whom he subsequently wooed. Killed in Rage

Mornard claimed he killed Trotsky in a rage during an argument over doctrine. But the fact that he carried a .45 calibre pistol and a knife, in addition to the sawed-off alpenstock with which he murdered the old man, indicated the crime was not as spontaneous as all that.

And the consensus of police is that he had been sent by Joseph Stalin and his henchmen to gain Trotsky's confidence and then do him in.

One widely accepted theory about Mornard's true identity is that he is a Spanish Communist named Ramon Mercader del Rio, and that he was brought up on Communism by his Communist mother, Eustasia Maria Caridad del Rio. One leading Mexican criminologist, Dr. Alfonso Quirez, claims to have proven with Spanish police fingerprint cards that Mornard and Mercader are one and the same.

Got 20 Years
Mornard was sentenced to 20 years in prison on April 16, 1943, but the term was made retroactive to the day of the crime, the same day he was arrested. He will be released in August of 1960.

There was once speculation that Mornard preferred the security of his cell to liberty, where he might face vengeance at the hands of loyal Trotskyites or permanent lip-sealing by Kremlin agents.

But this theory was apparently squelched in 1954 when he launched a determined legal battle for parole. He lost out in his bid for early freedom when a judge ruled Mornard had failed to prove himself "no longer a menace to society."

During the parole procedure Mornard came as close as he ever did to expressing remorse for having killed Trotsky. "I am a reformed man," he said, "and I am entitled to return to normal life like any decent human, if I ever was delinquent, I no longer am." When the parole was denied February, 1957, Mornard signed himself to serving the rest of his sentence.

He has never disclosed his freedom plans. **Deportation Due**
The Mexican government also has apparently chosen to cross that bridge when it comes to it. Technically, Mornard is subject to deportation, since he originally entered the country with a forged passport. But that would pose the problem of where to send him. His true country of origin has never been determined to the satisfaction of Mexican officials.

The high point in Mornard's dreary prison existence came on March 19, 1958, when he was transferred from rat-infested Lecumberri Prison, Mexico's famous "Black Castle," to the modern, new Ixtalapa Penitentiary. Prisoners soon named the airy, well-lighted, white-walled institution the "Ixtalapa Hilton."

At Ixtalapa, Mornard continued to be the model prisoner. He has been all these years. He took charge of the penitentiary's power plant at the same job he had held at Lecumberri.

Warden Florentino Ibarra, who regards Mornard as an electrical genius, has given the 54-year-old prisoner a cell to himself, which he has made comfortable with a rug, an easy chair, a television set, a radio and a hot plate.

Makes Repairs
Mornard generally works from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the power plant. Sometimes he leads his eight-man crew around the prison to make electrical repairs. Occasionally he takes a mid-day siesta.

In his free time he repairs radios in the prison shop, which he also runs. This concession had been taken from him at Lecumberri, allegedly because of intra-prison "politics," but he got it back at the new penitentiary. He is allowed to keep the money he earns. As a "commissioned prisoner," equivalent to a trusty in the U.S., he enjoys the run of the prison.

At the end of the day, the graying, bespectacled prisoner, who is no longer slim as he was in 1940, chats with fellow inmates before retiring to his cell. He has little to do with outsiders, however, particularly newsmen.

One free-lance woman correspondent, Miss Marion Wilhelm, apparently has gained Mornard's confidence, and visits him about once a month. She has not published anything of her talks with the murderer, presumably due to some mutual agreement.

The last time Mornard acceded to repeated United Press International requests for interviews was in 1954, when he disclosed he had secretly married a Mexican girl in 1944.

Visits Every Sunday
The wife, Roqueila Mendoza Mornard, now a 48-year-old stenographer, visits her husband every Sunday. (Incidentally, one of the most-appreciated features of the new prison is the "hotel," a block specially designed for the visits of wives.) She generally brings a picnic basket, guards say, and prepares Mornard a hot meal in his cell. Mornard has said he met her when she was still in Lecumberri and she visited a relative there.

Only one man knows what the steely-eyed killer will do when the prison gates close behind him a year from now. And that man, who has kept his silence for 19 years, seems determined to make it 20. Jacques Mornard is not talking.

WHY THEY CALL HELP
Minneapolis — (UPI) — Electrical failure was the number one cause of automobile breakdowns in 1958 according to a study made by the American Automobile Association (AAA). Flat tires and ignition troubles came next as the major causes of auto trouble. All told, the AAA reported receiving nearly 60 million calls for service last year. But it said that there were fewer cases of motorists running out of gas or getting stuck in the mud or snow because "drivers have become more intelligent."

Union Leaders Seek Softening Of Labor Bill

Unity House, Pa. — (UPI) — AFL-CIO leaders prepared Tuesday to make a last-ditch effort to persuade Congress to soften so-called "union-busting" provisions in pending labor reform legislation.

The federation's executive council was scheduled to issue marching orders to union lobbyists in Washington who are ready to relay labor's complaints to a Senate-House conference committee.

Objects to Curbs
The AFL-CIO has objected most strenuously to new curbs on picketing, boycotts and "bill of rights" provisions which it says would harm all unions instead of driving out labor racketeers.

The council also planned to discuss legislation and its decision to aid striking steelworkers at a session today at this union-operated resort in the Pocono mountains. Plans now are to recommend that the council set aside a "Steelworkers' day" at the AFL-CIO convention next month if the dispute is not settled by then.

Has Adequate Funds
Top AFL-CIO leaders were told that the union now sees no necessity for financial help because it has adequate funds to meet foreseeable emergency outlays.

The executive committee heard a first-hand report on the legislative situation from AFL-CIO chief lobbyist Andrew J. Biemiller, who arrived late today from Washington.

Meantime, AFL-CIO officials privately discussed Speaker Sam Rayburn's role in the battle against House adoption of the Landrum-Griffin bill by a 229-201 vote last Thursday.

They said that Rayburn had either lost some of his influence with southern Democrats or intentionally let labor down by not going all-out on the key vote.

BUSY BUSINESS
New York — (UPI) — The nation's food chain stores now do a whopping \$3-billion-dollar a year business, according to Chain Store Age magazine. That's an increase of 6 billion dollars since 1954. Meat accounts for 25 per cent of the total volume.

Negroes Held on Stabbing Charges

Birmingham, Ala. — (UPI) — Three Negro youth were held without bond Tuesday for the Jefferson County Grand Jury on charges they stabbed a white Minneapolis, Minn., truck driver to death here July 22.

Ernest Jones, 20, John Perry, 16, and Jewel Short, 17, pleaded innocent at a preliminary hearing and were ordered held for action by the Grand Jury during its October term.

They have been charged with the fatal stabbing of James P. Hannaher, 29, of Bloomington, Minn., and Minneapolis. Police said the three confessed to stabbing the truck driver of the Morgan Transportation Co., of Elkhart, Ind., after he made a proposal which angered them. Police said Jones allegedly was the one who wielded the pocket knife used in the slaying.

Hannaher, a former compositor for the Cedar Falls (Iowa) Record, was identified from fingerprints on his truck.

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