

Soviets Reported Again Purging Top Party Leaders

By LEON DENNEN

NEW YORK, (NEA) — A new purge of top party officials is reported taking place in Soviet Russia under the personal supervision of Lavrenti P. Beria, chief of the all-powerful MVD and the latest leading contender for Stalin's job.

The purge seems to involve mostly friends and followers of the late Andrei Zhdanov. Only vague reports have reached usually well-informed Kremlin circles in Europe. It is attributed to a new struggle for power which has recently developed inside the Politburo.

Members of Stalin's immediate entourage have long been cautiously maneuvering for a place in anticipation of his death. The late Andrei Zhdanov generally had been regarded as a possible successor.

But now Zhdanov is dead and Molotov apparently is in eclipse. The two leading actors in this unfolding Soviet drama are Beria and Georgi M. Malenkov, one of the younger and more able members of the Politburo.

Beria Favored
For the moment the odds are on Beria, balding, stocky, former student of architecture. As head of the secret MVD, he wields unlimited power wherever the Kremlin's Agents Operate.

While Malenkov controls the party machine which is now being purged, Beria, in addition to the MVD, is said to have also the support of Stalin's "inner cabinet."

This includes Marshal Klementi Voroshilov and the Caucasian-born Armenian, Mikoyan — but not Malenkov and Molotov.

The son of a poor peasant, Lavrenti Pavlovich Beria was born 50 years ago in the Georgian village of Merkhouli in Sukhum region, which is also the birthplace of Stalin.

Poor though he was, his father scraped together enough money to send him to the Sukhum high school and the Baku Polytechnic.

He cast his lot with the Bolsheviks at the age of 18 — henceforth mixing his studies with conspiratorial activity. Science and engineering have always been Beria's

hobbies and he is generally credited with having procured the atom bomb for Russia.

Meteorite

Having started his political career by aiding Stalin in his fight against Trotsky, Beria's rise in the politburo hierarchy has been meteoric. He is perhaps the only man Stalin trusts completely. He knows more of the aged dictator's secrets than anyone else in Russia. Moreover, as the head of the Soviet secret police for many years, Beria has had access to the dossiers of everybody who is anybody in Russia.

Like his boss and hero, Stalin, Beria never forgets or forgives. Early in his career he was arrested by the anti-Bolshevik Mensheviks, who were then in control of his native Georgia. Since then Beria has been a bitter foe of all Mensheviks and even former Mensheviks, including the present foreign minister, Andrei Vishinsky.

He runs a vast espionage ring in the countries outside the Iron Curtain. He commands all of Russia's numerous forced labor camps, which supply most of the manpower for Soviet industry. He is in charge of security in the satellite states.

Secret Agent

Many chiefs of state behind the Iron Curtain and some of the top ministers — Erno Gero in Hungary, Anna Pauker and Bodnarenko in Rumania, President Bierut in Poland, Rudolf Slansky in Czechoslovakia, and Walter Ulbricht, vice premier of the recently-created Eastern German Republic — are actually Soviet citizens and long-time agents of the MVD and MGB (Soviet Ministry of State Security), responsible directly to Beria.

Beria has mild manners and even wears a pince-nez which makes him look like a pre-revolutionary divinity student. However, he is a firm believer in terror. After his visit to Germany in June, 1947, correspondents at once noted an increase in Soviet arrests, kidnapping of dissidents and other typical methods of "ideological persuasion."

The same was true of the other satellite countries visited by him.



OPERATION 'QUACK' — Lt. Gen. Clarence R. Huebner, Gen. Thomas T. Handy, and Lt. Gen. John K. Cannon, (l. to r.) of U. S. Forces in Europe, return from duck hunt near Bremerhaven.

But Beria himself never takes chances. Wherever he goes he usually drives a long black Packard with bullet-proof windows and is flanked by a host of MVD agents. In 1941, when Hitler was already knocking at the gates of the Kremlin, Stalin again put his confidence in Beria and appointed him a marshal of the Soviet Union and member of the supreme state defense committee.

Humming

By a combination of scientific planning, which he had learned as a student of architecture, and by the most ruthless disregard for human life, he kept the Soviet war

industries humming. By keeping the firing squads working overtime he assured the safety of the communist dictatorship.

Of all the members of the Politburo, Beria alone was recently singled out by Stalin for special honors. He was awarded the coveted Lenin Order "for outstanding services to the party and Soviet people."

Unlike Malenkov, who ostensibly represents a "moderate" wing of the politburo which believes in postponing the day of reckoning with the "capitalist democracies," Beria is a firm exponent of strong measures and direct action. His rise to

power, Kremlin circles in Europe believe, will soon be followed by Soviet military pressure against Yugoslavia and Finland.

With Moscow facing grave difficulties in the satellite countries and a showdown with Tito imminent, Lavrenti P. Beria seems the logical successor to Stalin.

Roasting meats at a low temperature helps keep shrinkage down. A roast that is cooked slowly from the very beginning will provide extra servings, the meat will be more juicy and tender, and the food value will be higher.

Boy Bull Fighter Tries an Elk

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. (AP) — Claude Robinson, 19, chased a tennis ball and wound up wrestling a bull elk. The elk, long antlers tossing, charged the youth when he climbed into its enclosure at the Lincoln Park zoo in quest of the stray ball.

Robinson grabbed the elk's horns near its head and hung on trying to dodge the sharp points. The elk battered him against the fence and had him pinned there, practically exhausted, when zoo attendants rescued him.

The youth was cut and bruised on the face and head. But after all, he explained, that ball cost 69 cents.

Beef Tasters Can't Tell Difference

DAVIS, Calif. (AP) — You would think that 26 experts all sitting around tasting roast beef would develop definite opinions on the subject. However, that many at the College of Agriculture recently sampled rib roasts from three different kinds of cattle and said at the end that it was a good dinner.

Competing for taste and tenderness were rib roasts from Hereford, Brahman and Braford cattle. The last is a crossbreed.

To keep apples or pears or bananas from discoloring when you are using them in a salad, sprinkle them with a little lemon or pineapple juice.

To score meat you make light cuts on the surface, usually in criss-cross fashion. Thin slices of round steak are sometimes scored when it is to be pan-fried to make more tender.

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