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Excerpts from: Geoffrey BAILEY's

The Conspirators, Chap. 4, "The End of the 'Trust'"

pp. 75-78

...Maria SCHULTZ and OPPERPOT crossed the Finnish border...as members of a six-man team of White terrorists who had been ordered into the USSR to carry out bombing attempts in Moscow and Leningrad.

According to the plan of operations (which had been drawn up in all its details by Maria SCHULTZ), as soon as they reached Soviet territory, the terrorists were to split up into two teams of three, one of which, headed by the young Captain Victor A. LARIONOV, would proceed straight to Leningrad, while the other, Maria SCHULTZ's personal leadership, pushed on to Moscow. OPPERPOT accompanied her. On no account was LARIONOV to go into action until he heard that the Moscow coup--the main operation--had already taken place.

The plan had one major flaw: if OPPERPOT happened still to be a Soviet agent and if he succeeded in giving his two companions the slip, chances were that he would promptly betray the presence to the OGPU before they reached their target and then lead it back to LARIONOV's hiding place, where the latter would still be waiting for news of the Moscow group. Whether this was indeed OPPERPOT's intention, we will doubtless never know. In any event, it would have misfired. For LARIONOV had taken an instant dislike to OPPERPOT and being a man of strong character and independent judgment, he now decided to ignore his instructions and to act as circumstances demanded.

The border was crossed without mishap. "They left us," LARIONOV writes, and followed a footpath into the forest...for a while we could see them as they moved fitfully through the fir underbrush. Presently they vanished from sight forever..."

For a week, LARIONOV and his two companions, Vladimir MONOMAKHOV and Sergei SOLOVYOV, hid out in a small forest clearing near Levashovo, some 20 kilometers from Leningrad, one man guarding the camp with the weapons and supplies, while the others went into town daily to study the lay of the land. Their targets--the choice and order of priority of which represented OPPERPOT's sole contribution to the planning of the venture--were first the Leningrad District Soviet, then the Central Party Club and lastly the headquarters of the Association of the Militant Atheists or School for National Minorities. Finally LARIONOV decided to wait no longer. By now his nerves were pretty much on edge. Besides, they couldn't hide out in Levashovo forever!

After lunch on July 6th [1922]*, therefore, he and his friends made their way to the Leningrad District Soviet. They found it so heavily

*Perhaps 6 June was meant here, as later in the book (p. 79) it was stated that on June 10 TASS announced an abortive bomb attempt on Moscow OGPU Hqs., and that a successful attempt had been made in Leningrad. - ed. note.

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guarded, however, and their bombs were relatively so small that chances of success seemed slim so LARIONOV decided to try the party club instead.

As they entered the club building, at No. 59 Moyka, a clock struck 8:45 pm. A woman receptionist was seated in the lobby, checking the passes of all visitors. This was a nasty surprise since it had been agreed among them that MONOMAKHOV would immediately open fire at anyone who happened to stop them, after which they would throw their bombs and make a break for it. But a woman! They had not reckoned with that!

"What do you want, comrades?" she asked tersely. She looked suspicious.

"Where is the meeting of the village agitators?" LARIONOV asked casually (having read about it in the morning paper).

"But who are you?" the woman insisted.

"Why, communists, of course!" he replied, acting surprised.

"Oh, I see! Very well then, second floor up. First door to the right. But first sign in here: your name and your party card number. You can leave your coats over there."

LARIONOV signed in: "FEDOTOV, No. 34," and then he could have kicked himself, for the number was obviously far too low. SOLOVIOV did worse: he pulled out his party card, a rather crude forgery, the cover of which was, moreover, the wrong color. The woman was quick to take notice.

"Have we such cards?" she asked with growing hostility.

"Sure," SOLOVIOV muttered hurriedly. "We're from Moscow..."

They had been told to leave their coats in the lobby, which meant that they would have to transfer the guns and the bombs from their coat pockets to their jacket pockets before the woman's very eyes. Just then, as luck would have it, a bunch of Young Communists came clattering down the stairs; for a split second the woman's attention was distracted. And that split second was all they needed. Bounding up the stairs, they opened the first door to the right and looked in. There were only six or seven people in the room, including several women; surely they hadn't come all the way from Finland for that! LARIONOV shook his head, beckoned to his companions to follow him and walked down the stairs and into the street. As they passed the woman in the lobby, she turned to them visibly surprised.

"So soon?"

"We must have come to the wrong address," LARIONOV replied. "You see, we're strangers here, we're country chaps..."

But as they boarded the tram back to the railway station, he whispered: "Tomorrow...same time...same place...and this time without fail!"

The following evening toward 8:45 pm, they were back inside the building of the Central Party Club. This time the woman at the desk was busy with talking to some other visitors and they were able to sign in without her seeing them. Hurrying up the stairs, they opened a door and peeped in. This looked like better pickings. The Rector of the Leningrad Communist University POZERN was presiding over a fairly large meeting, at which a comrade SCHIRWINDT was speaking on the subject "American Imperialism." At the sound of the opening door, a few faces turned in their direction.

"Now!" LARIONOV commanded.

Two bombs whipped past his head. The first one bounced along the floor without exploding, but the second burst with a roar, filling the room with acrid yellowish smoke. Someone lunged at MONOMAKHOV. Firing at his assailant point-blank, the latter /sig/ slammed the door shut and ran down the stairs after his fleeing companions. He could hear the sound of wailing behind him.

As they rushed past the woman jumped up from her desk.

"What's happened?" she cried out.

"Some one threw a bomb! Call the militia! Hurry!" LARIONOV shouted back and ran out into the street, where a crowd was already gathering.

Two days later they were safely back in Finland.

p. 81 footnote re the death of Maria SCHULTZ at the hands of the OGPU in the USSR.

During the Nazi occupation of Smolensk, Captain LARIONOV (the surviving leader of the Leningrad bombing coup) had the occasion to interview the German-appointed mayor of that city, a former Soviet lawyer by the name of MENSHAGIN. The latter related that some time late in 1927 he had been appointed to defend in court a railway switchman, who was accused of having given shelter to a "White Guardist." Shortly thereafter, the latter had been shot down in a neighboring factory by an OGPU patrol.

Chapt. 5, "The Kidnapping of General KUTIEPOV"
p. 93

On September 29, the Finnish authorities--acting, presumably, under strong Soviet diplomatic pressure--decided at last to put an end to KUTIEPOV's embarrassing activities. RADKOVICH, LARIONOV and MONOMAKHOV were expelled from Finnish territory and KUTIEPOV himself was discreetly advised to transfer the scene of his anti-Soviet intrigues elsewhere.

*[1922]

File in:

Notation taken from RI Index card; RI advises that the CS copy of document
has been destroyed:

LARIONOV, Viktor
Born 13 July 1897
St. Petersburg, Russia

200-7-229-716
SR-3
Encl 2
Pg 3

journalist by profession
member of KELGUNOV's group.