

men withdrew to the study. A few moments later Trotsky's screams echoed throughout the house.

The components required for the murder, the false naturalization certificate and the altered passport, and the actual mechanics of the operation ranging from the recruiting campaign for the Spanish War organized in Canada by the Communist Party, to the calculated introductions that ultimately made possible the death-blow, indicate once more the integration and intricate organization of the Communist international underground. Investigations by Dr. Quiroz, by various police forces, and by free-lance writers, reveal that del Rio's mother (a widow), was a long-standing member of the Spanish Communist Party, and that for a time she acted as a courier between France and Spain. Similarly, del Rio was a member of the Spanish Communist Youth Movement, and served with the International Brigade during the Spanish War. Thus, he was not only a professional revolutionary, but the son of a professional revolutionary. Just what part the mother played in the Trotsky operation is one of the many interesting sidelights of the case. However, it is known that she was in Mexico at the time of the murder, and that shortly after the event, she turned up in Moscow. According to Murray Teigh Bloom (*True Magazine*, October 1952) she was the first woman to be awarded the Order of Lenin, the Soviet Union's highest decoration. The citation for the award was

never made public. Conceivably she could have exerted great influence on her son, to the extent of persuading him to carry out the deed, knowing all the while that it would probably mean his death.

In the actual planning of the assassination, the role played by the Communist Party of Canada was probably negligible. Actually, at the time of the murder it was officially banned. However, the party's position within the framework of world Communism was, and still is, highly important. The method by which the passports and the false naturalization certificates were obtained show that conspiracy was then, as it is now, a permanent condition governing the actions of the party. It was, after all, the use of a Canadian passport that enabled the murderer to reach Mexico City. Without it he would not have been able to take advantage of the particular conditions that gave him access to Trotsky's household, and the conspirators would have had to resort to other plans.

Trotsky's murderer, del Rio, is still serving the remainder of his sentence at the Juarez Penitentiary in Mexico City. He lives there in the comparative luxury permitted by Mexican prison rules, provided with funds whose ultimate sources are unknown. In December he was eligible for parole, but whether he is prepared to leave the security of prison and expose himself to revenge by Trotsky's followers, or for that matter, the MVD, remains to be seen. ●●●

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## *Curling*

Overheard was a heated argument t'other day which threatened to spoil ice conditions in a rink, the crux of which centred on the origin of curling. Said the Irishman:

"Should be St. Patrick that receive the credit. Where do you think the game originated? 'Twas in Old Ireland in the Ice Age. St. Patrick found the land infested with ice snakes and to get rid of them cast smooth rocks along the ice the length of the land. The snakes being curious by nature poked their heads from their holes and the stones cut them off as St. Pat intended. Then taking his sporran he swept the land clear of snake heads and with such vigor that faith he melted the ice and left Ireland the fair isle she be. The Scotch, however, not knowing the technique, tried the same measure but unfortunately started sweeping in front of the stones with the result that they never completed the job and continue the game to cover their embarrassment."