

ably altered to agree with the one on the certificate. There is no evidence available to indicate why the name was spelled without the "k"—i.e. Jacson—on both documents.

Part II

The actual planning, and the events that finally resulted in Trotsky's death, show, as far as they are known, the nature and the extent of the international Communist underground. In a sense his murder was a final act in the cruel process of consolidating the modern Russian dictatorship, for it came at the end of a period of intense internal flux, characterized by the great purge trials of the 1930's. As long as Trotsky lived, his very existence suggested an alternative leadership and policy for the Communist movement, and thus considerably lowered Stalin's prestige. More important, Trotsky was the nucleus of a growing opposition to the Stalin regime, an opposition known as the "Fourth International". Indeed, as an active revolutionary he had been denied asylum in the United States, Austria, Germany, Spain and Holland before finding his final haven in Mexico.

According to Louis Budenz, a former editor of the *Daily Worker* and now a professor at Fordham University, the slaying was planned by Dr. Gregory Rabinovitch, the Russian representative of the International Red Cross in New York. Rebecca West however, writing in the London *Sunday Times*, states that the murder was organized by Jacob Golos, the member of the Soviet Secret Police with whom Elizabeth Bentley lived. Whatever the truth of the matter, the scheme ultimately centred around one person, an innocent Brooklyn social worker named Sylvia Ageloff. Her sister Ruth was one of Trotsky's several secretaries, and because of this connection, Sylvia Ageloff became an important link in the series of events that finally resulted in Trotsky's murder.

As a preliminary step toward Trotsky's elimination, a trusted woman of the



Leon Trotsky

(From a photo taken about 30 years ago.)

American Communist underground, Ruby Weil, who was once Budenz' secretary, was given the task of winning the Brooklyn girl's friendship. By the summer of 1938, Ruby Weil and Sylvia Ageloff had become good friends, and holidayed together in Paris. There, Ruby Weil introduced the unsuspecting Sylvia to del Rio who, deceiving the Brooklyn girl about his origin and his political sympathies, pretended to fall in love with her. In August 1939, del Rio journeyed from France to the United States, and then proceeded to Mexico. Sylvia Ageloff joined him later and through her sister, introduced him to Trotsky. The two men met in April 1940, and during the interval before the assassination they became sufficiently well acquainted so that del Rio could see Trotsky virtually whenever he desired. On the day of the murder, late in the afternoon, del Rio visited Trotsky on the pretext that he wanted to show him an article he had written. Over his arm del Rio carried a coat, in which the piolet was concealed. When he arrived Trotsky was in the garden, so the two