

Assassins Left Imprint on Russia

Terror and Purges Followed Attempts After Revolution

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MOSCOW, Jan. 23 — The shots that resounded in the Kremlin yesterday, presumed by some Western observers to have been intended for members of the Soviet leadership, recalled assassination attempts in pre-revolutionary Russia and under the Soviet regime since 1917.

Although threats or attempts against the lives of czars and Soviet leaders were probably not more frequent than in the United States or other Western countries, many of them have consequences that left a major imprint on history.

Among the several attempts in the latter part of the 19th century against Russian czars, only one of the attempts was successful. In 1881, a group of young terrorists fighting for democratic reform killed Alexander II with a bomb.

Two Attempts on Lenin

After the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, Lenin was the first leader to be exposed to assassins' bullets. Two attempts were made on his life in 1918.

In the first, made in February as he was riding in an auto in Leningrad, then called Petrograd, he escaped unscathed. A Swiss Socialist, Fritz Platten, was wounded. In the second, in August, 1918, Lenin was seriously wounded by a woman, Fanny (Dora) Kaplan, who was a member of the leftist Socialist Revolutionary party, a group that was more militant at the time than Lenin's Bolsheviks.

The second attempt was used by the Bolsheviks to unleash a campaign of reprisals against their enemies, which became known as the Red Terror.

Under Stalin, who took power in the mid-nineteen-twenties, the most important political murder was the assassination of Sergei N. Kirov, Stalin's lieutenant in Leningrad, in December, 1934.

Although it has been suggested that Stalin himself may have had an interest in Kirov's death as a way of eliminating a potential rival, the dictator used it as a pretext for a four-year period of terror in the Great Purges.

Millions Were Arrested

The purges, which included three show trials, ultimately resulted in millions of arrests, with many of the victims executed and most exiled to forced-labor camps.

No attempts against the life of Stalin were officially reported, but some Russians contend that such attempts were made and say that the attempts explained in part Stalin's suspiciousness and his reluctance to appear in public.

Two attempts to assassinate Nikita S. Khrushchev, deposed from power in 1964, have been reported, but both have been officially denied.

One, reported originally in the Italian Communist party newspaper, L'Unita, was said to



Associated Press

The ashes of Sergei M. Kirov, an assassinated aide to Stalin, being carried to the wall of Kremlin for burial in December, 1934. Pallbearers were from the left, Vyacheslav M. Molotov, the chairman of Council of People's Commissars; Marshal Kliment Y. Voroshilov, a Central Committee Presidium member; Stalin and Mikhail I. Kalinin, president of Russian Central Executive Committee. Mr. Kirov's death began a bloody four-year purge of party members.

Tass Statement

Following is the text of a statement by Tass on the shooting incident in Moscow as distributed here yesterday by the Soviet press agency:

A provocation took place on Wednesday, when the pilot cosmonauts were welcomed in Moscow. Several shots were fired at the car in which the cosmonauts, Beregovoy, Nikolayeva-Tereshkova, Nikolayev and Leonov were driven.

The driver of the car and a motorcycle driver who accompanied the motorcade were wounded. Not one of the cosmonauts was injured. The person who fired the shots was detained on the spot. The investigation is being conducted.



Associated Press

Maj. Gen. Georgi H. Beregovoy, Soviet astronaut, was reported slightly hurt in the shooting on Wednesday.

a crude grenade that exploded in his coat pocket.

He had been haranguing a small crowd about the six-day war in the Middle East earlier that month. All that could be understood from his largely unintelligible words was that he opposed a cease-fire that had been concluded between the Israelis and the Arabs.

have taken place in Minsk, capital of Byelorussia, or near the Soviet-Polish frontier in January, 1962. The other report was published in Amsterdam in January, 1964, and was also promptly denied by the Soviet authorities.

In the most recent incident that may have involved a potential assassin, an unidentified elderly man was killed in Red Square in June, 1967, by