

MASARYK'S DEATH LINKED TO STALIN

Czech Reported Slain in '48
on Dictator's Orders

PRAGUE, April 15 (AP)—Survivors of a wave of Communist trials 20 years ago say Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk was murdered in 1948 by Stalin's secret police.

They said the Soviet dictator had ordered Dr. Masaryk killed because he resisted pressure to surrender his post. He was a non-Communist member of the Communist Government of Klement Gottwald, which had seized power a month before.

A squad of Soviet agents led by Maj. Franz Schramm was guided to Dr. Masaryk's second floor bedroom on March 10, 1948, by a collaborator in the palace guard at the Czernin Palace, the informants said. Dr. Masaryk was dragged out of bed and, after a violent struggle, pushed out of a window, they said.

The Communist Government said he had committed suicide.

The informants said the anti-Communist underground plotted to kidnap Major Schramm and take him, along with documentary evidence, to the West to prove the assassination. Instead, they said, the underground ended up killing the major, leading to the trials of suspected underground members.

New Inquiry Opened

The new reformist Communist Government in Czechoslovakia has opened a new investigation of Dr. Masaryk's death but has reported that so far nothing has been discovered to refute the ruling of suicide.

Dr. Zenek Borkovec, the chief criminal investigator in Prague in 1948, says the Masaryk case was immediately taken out of his hands by the political security department.

The leader of the anti-Communists who were to kidnap Major Schramm was identified as Miloslav Choc, a 23-year-old student of political science.

The sources gave the following account:

On May 27, 1948, Major Schramm answered his doorbell and a man wearing a light raincoat killed him with two pistol shots and fled. Witnesses identified the killer as Mr. Choc. He was arrested June 7 at Olomouc and later put on trial with about 130 other alleged members of the underground.

After lengthy questioning, Mr. Choc said the gunman was a J. Bauer, who together with another unidentified man entered Major Schramm's house while Mr. Choc and Slavoj Sadek remained outside as lookouts. Neither Mr. Bauer nor the other man ever was found.

Mr. Choc and Mr. Sadek were executed Feb. 19, 1949, on charges of murder and attempting to overthrow the regime. The other defendants received prison terms.