

LAVAL SHOT AS ALL FRANCE SEETHES

Two Other Fascists Hit By Young Communist: "Part of Vast Plot"

SABOTAGE AND DISCONTENT RIFE IN OPPRESSED LAND

FRANCE'S cauldron of unrest bubbled to a head yesterday when the country's No. 1 Quisling, Pierre Laval, was shot by a young Communist in front of 2,000 anti-Russian volunteers.

Marcel Deat, a staunch supporter of unity with Germany against Britain, and Major Durvy, member of the French Fascist Party, were also wounded. Deat is said to be critically ill.

Earlier reported to be gravely wounded, Laval was stated last night to be in not so serious a condition as was first thought.

A bullet entered his right side above the liver, tore through the abdomen without tearing any intestines, and passed through his left side without seriously injuring any vital organs.

Laval, his colleagues and other prominent French and German officials were attending a Versailles ceremony of the mobilisation of anti-Communist volunteers.

It was just before the tricolour was raised over the Borignis-Desbordes barracks that a Communist stepped from the crowd and approached to within a few yards of the officials.

Then, without warning, several shots rang out, and Laval, Deat, and Durvy slumped to the ground.

Immediately there was uproar, and a man named Paul Colette, aged 29, member of the Communist youth organisation, who is believed to have volunteered for the Eastern front, was seized by hundreds of people in the courtyard, manhandled, and dragged to Versailles Prison.

His Aim Marred

Laval, holding his hands to his abdomen, walked to a car waiting nearby. His red-haired assailant, meanwhile had hidden under a porch, but the crowd of volunteers, chanting "death" found him there.

Colette, it is reported, carefully aimed four shots at Laval, but nearby spectators marred his aim.

After subjecting Colette to a gruelling, five-hour questioning, police concluded that Laval's shooting was part of a vast Communist plot, the climax of a wave of terrorism co-incident with the first verdicts against the Communist leaders in yesterday's speedy terrorist trials.

Ferdinand de Bonin, French Ambassador in the occupied zone, stated several hours before the shooting that "the Government possesses knowledge of a vast Communist plot, including a series of planned assassinations."

Meanwhile an investigation into the ranks of the anti-Communist legion has been started to discover whether Communists had honey-combed the legion with their own men.

In hospital, Laval was able to phone his wife and, after saying the bullets had been removed, declared, "I'll recover."

But in spite of this his wife and daughter are speeding to his bedside and were expected to arrive at dawn.

More than 2,000 so-called volunteers to fight against Russia were in the courtyard of the barracks when the shooting occurred and among those present were organisers of the "volunteer division," Jacques Doriot, himself a former Communist, Eugene Deloncle, the former Cagoulard leader, and several high German military and political authorities.

SIGNS OF GROWING REVOLT

The shooting is indicative of the growing unrest in France, and much of the news that came out of the oppressed country last night told of sabotage and discontent.

Radio Royal, quoting Berne radio, reports that demonstrators in the Latin quarter of Paris have been apprehended for marching through the streets singing French national songs. A hundred persons were arrested at Marseilles and accused of having organised a plot against Petain.

The German authorities have



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gate-General for North Africa, is still Commander-in-Chief, and the new men will be under his command.

General Nogues, however, is relieved of his military command in Morocco, though he remains Resident General. His place as military chief is taken by General Juin.

General Huntziger, Secretary for War in the Darlan Cabinet, and one of the delegates who signed the Armistice with the Germans, has been moved from Vichy and appointed C-in-C of the French troops in North Africa. General Koeltz is appointed Commander in Algeria.

Protest to Darlan

A written protest against the decision to evacuate members of the French Parliament from Vichy was made to the Vichy Cabinet yesterday.

It was made through M. Edouard Herriot as President of the Chamber of Deputies, and Senator Jules Jeanneney as President of the Senate. The protest declared that the order was a violation of the constitution of 1875.

Representatives from both Chambers were sent to see Darlan, who denied that the Government was intending to violate the constitution or to repress Parliament. Darlan insisted that the Government action was taken solely on the ground that it needed more space in Vichy which was filled by the Parliamentary staff. He refused to reconsider the decision before leaving Vichy for Narbonne but offered an alternative place at Chatilaugiron because Monte Dore, a ski resort, is extremely cold and snowbound throughout the winter.

The protest follows reports that about 100 Senators and Deputies, who lost their positions when Petain dismissed Parliament, had met in a "rump" session to form themselves in opposition to Petain.

threat on Kiev and towards Azov.

Twelve Killed When Planes Collide

Blackpool Station Set Ablaze

TWELVE people, including civilians—men, women, and children—were killed and sixteen injured when two planes collided less than 1,000 feet above the Tower at Blackpool yesterday.

One of the planes, its tail torn away, dived through the roof of the booking hall at Central Station.

As it fell its petrol tanks exploded, throwing fragments over a radius of nearly a mile.

The other plunged to earth in another part of the town, wrecking a house but causing no casualties.

The promenade was packed with people and the tailpiece of one plane missed the promenade railings by only a few feet.

As it plunged into the sea, the spectators saw the body of a man thrown into the water.

STATION VISITORS HIT

As the tailless plane crashed into the station, it burst into flames and the hall was soon a raging inferno, against which stood out the skeleton of the machine.

Travellers and others on the spot dashed for safety, but a number were struck by debris or by pieces of the burning plane.

By this time the left luggage office was ablaze, but in a remarkably short time the flames had all been extinguished.

Mr. L. H. Franceys, on whose house in Reads Avenue, the other plane fell, is a former chairman of the Blackpool Hospital Board of Management. His wife, Mrs. A. C. Franceys, is a Blackpool magistrate. The two rooms in which they were writing at the time were the only rooms left intact. The rest of the house collapsed about them.

UNOPENED PARACHUTE

The pilot had evidently attempted to bale out, but was killed. His body, attached to an unopened parachute, was found about 200 yards from the damaged house.

The engine of the plane fell in a roadway and embedded itself about a foot deep.

Mrs. Margaret Marks, a Nottingham visitor, who was at the station inquiry office with her sister said: "After the crash I saw a cloud of smoke and something came hurtling through the roof. There was a shower of burning wood and fragments fell on the pram of my two-year-old nephew."

"I snatched him out of the pram and put him into the arms of a man. My sister clutched her other child, who is three years old, out of another pram, and together we rushed out of the station. We left all our luggage. I suppose it is all lost."

BARNSELY VISITORS HURT

Among the injured are Mrs. J. A. Featherstone, of 117, St George Road, Barnsley, and her son, Percy Featherstone, aged 9.

They were on holiday, and with Mr. Wilfred Featherstone, who is a miner employed at Woolley Colliery, went away last Saturday for Barnsley feast week.

REDS BLAST D. DAM, SAYS REFUGEE

Budenny's Desperate Step After Talk With Stalin

NAZI TROOPS IN DANGER FROM FLOOD

From Our Own Correspondent

STOCKHOLM, Wednesday.

LEARN to-night from a source which is usually most reliable that Marshal Budenny, the Soviet C-in-C. in the Ukraine, after a personal telephone talk with Stalin in Moscow, has taken a desperate step which will have an immense strategical effect on the Southern battlefield.

Budenny's engineers, operating under cover of darkness, just before dawn dynamited and utterly destroyed the gigantic Lenin-Dniepropes dam at Zaporope, on which the whole of the industrial district of the Central Ukraine depends.

The Nazi forces are now in deadly peril of being swept away by the flood of pent-up waters.

Allied circles in Stockholm attach the greatest importance to the news of the deliberate wrecking of this might, barrage.

The Russians have thus ensured that, in the event of a possible retreat, no particle of the Ukraine's precious industries shall fall into Nazi hands, in working or workable order.

Zaporope means "beyond the rapids," and the whole Upper Dnieper, as far as Kiev, will now be turned into a torrential, swirling flood, unnavigable by men or boats.

This news was received here after Berlin had made the significant admission that in the Ukraine the left wing of the German Army was still held by powerful Russian fortifications.

Germans Baulked

In this sector Marshal von Bock is hurling every available man and tank into an attack at Gomel.

He aims at cutting of Marshal Timoshenko's forces in the centre from those of Marshal Budenny, which, to the South, are holding the Germans on the Lower Dnieper.

Gomel lies on the Upper Dnieper, rather more than half-



LATEST POSITIONS in the German drive on Russia.

August 21st 1942

Handwritten notes and signatures.