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Trotsky, with Pistol at Hand Against Foes, Combats Invalidism to Spread His Doctrine

Mexico Guards Exile's Retreat; He's Hard at Work

By NEA Service.

MEXICO CITY, May 14.—Mexican housewives in sunny, sleepy Coyoacan pause on their way to and from market as they pass a plain blue-painted plaster house with faded red trim. They look at the barred windows, the closed gates, the police guard, the floodlights with a mixture of curiosity and apprehension.

They know that inside the closely guarded house is Leon Trotsky, who once commanded Russia's Red Army and sat at the right hand of Lenin and now works and writes and dreams inside the blue house, once more the exile he was before his meteoric career in revolution.

Suffering from a long-standing illness which has betted only slightly in the climate of the Mexican plateau, Trotsky keeps the rigorous schedule of semi-invalid who must make every minute count. He cannot go to the United States for a clinical treatment he needs. There is no present indication that he is going anywhere, and police are replacing their ramshackle wooden sentry boxes with permanent brick structures.

Trotsky is an erect, alert, white-haired man who helped make one great revolution and spends all his waking hours planning and work-

ing for its extension throughout the world.

With his pen, his only remaining weapon, he works methodically now for the revolutionary cause that has been his almost since he was born Lev Bronstein in 1879. He is in constant touch with friends and supporters in many countries. He works regularly at a new biography of Lenin, dictating and then making meticulous corrections in the typed copy.

It sounds like a pleasant retired life. But not entirely. That dark, heavy object weighing down the pile of papers on his desk is a pistol. Trotsky always carries it, and he can use it quickly and accurately, as befits a former militant and a confirmed hunter and sportsman.

But there is no more duck shooting and almost no more afternoon auto rides. Callers approach the door only under police escort. When it opens a crack the big automatic of the inside guard is the first thing seen. All Trotsky's secretaries go constantly armed.

From the Trotsky house have come recent stories of threatened assassination. There is a mysterious Poland Abbatie, one hears, who are professional cut-throats in the pay of Stalin's GPU and have been unleashed in Mexico to shed Trotsky's blood. Hence the elaborate electric-alarm system, the guns and guards, the floodlights that make the former home of Mrs. Diego Rivera stand out like a prize-ring in Yankee

Girl Learns Russian And Stenography In Year To Be His Aid

Stadium on a July night.

Careful inquiry seems to bear out that Trotsky has strictly adhered to the promise he made when he came to Mexico—to keep entirely out of Mexican politics. His secretaries insist he sees no one active in such affairs, and will not even discuss the local situation with them. His friend Diego Rivera, the painter, calls often and writes pieces in the local papers containing his own somewhat individualistic Communist views. Rumors that Rivera and Trotsky have cooled in their liking for each other are emphatically denied by Trotsky's aids.

His private secretary, Miss Rae Spiegel, of New York, was a happy solution to a difficult problem. To find a qualified secretary with a thorough knowledge of Russian who was not either a White Russian or a Stalinist, was difficult. So Miss Spiegel set to work and learned Russian and stenography in one year, filling the bill.

Mrs. Trotsky, a constant companion of her husband in the blue house at Coyoacan, is not well either. The death of their last son, Leon Sedoff, in Paris in February was a shock which hit both the exiles, but left especially severe marks with the mother.