

SPOLANSKY IN NET AGAIN AS FACT JUGGLER

Tampers with Truth in the Salsedo Case

By MANUEL GOMEZ.

Who killed Andrea Salsedo? Was it, as Jake Spolansky affirms, fear of his own comrades, or was it hysteria induced by six weeks' torture under the brutal police "third degree" that finally, in May, 1920, caused this mild-mannered young Italian idealist to fling himself from a window high up in a building on Park Row, New York City?

Once again, Spolansky's financial interest in playing up "conspiracy" has led him into tampering with dangerous, double-edged facts.

The Labor Defense Council Happens To Know the Facts.

As revealed here in the DAILY WORKER, they present an indictment not only of Spolansky but of the whole degenerate police system, with its "confession" producing "goldfish rooms" in Chicago and its "chambers of horrors" in New York.

In the Chicago Daily News of yesterday, Spolansky tells of more fantastic plots; this time, for a change, they are anarchist plots instead of Communist plots. He presents no evidence whatever, but to make his story seem realistic, he goes into detail about the homicide of Salsedo, which is one of the best-known cases in the history of the department; he retails, with fancy flourishes of his own, the old yarn fabricated by former Attorney-General A. Mitchell Palmer, when under fire for his "red raids" of 1920. As usual, Spolansky pretends to be telling the story for the first time.

Spolansky's Tale.

Spolansky tells us how Salsedo, "an anarchist typesetter of Paterson, N. J.," was arrested on evidence given to the detectives by a fellow anarchist by the name of Elia, and remained, "by his own free will" in the custody of the police over a period of weeks, during which time (says Spolansky) he "confessed to everything" and gave

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Spolansky Juggles Facts Again

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out important information implicating anarchists in all parts of the country. Then (continues Spolansky) he became frightened that his comrades would punish him as a traitor; whereupon he jumped from a 14-story window, thus taking his own life.

Jake is forced to admit in his article, however, that "Elia never went so far as to make a full confession." What he does not tell us is that no arrests or discoveries of any sort have been disclosed as a result of evidence supposed to have been furnished by either Elia or Salsedo.

Following is the DAILY WORKER'S true story of the affair, compiled from information in the hands of the Labor Defense Council.

Unlawful Arrest.

Because he was an alien, and because Palmer had to have alien victims for his "red raids," Salsedo was unlawfully arrested for deportation, without a shred of evidence against him, on a warrant secured from the federal department of labor. The warrant required the official executing it to grant his prisoner a hearing—that is, to take him to an immigrant station where he could be examined and could defend himself according to law before a duly authorized examining immigrant inspector. This was not done. From the hour of his arrest to the moment of his death, Salsedo was in the custody, all unknown to the department of labor, of secret service detectives. He was given no hearing such as the law required and the warrant of arrest commanded.

An explanation of Sarsedo's captivity was adopted by Mr. Palmer and his gumshoe gang, to the effect that Salsedo and Robert Elia were detained by their own will in the Park Row building from which Salsedo's body tumbled. "Subsequent to the issuance and before service of the warrants could have been effected," Palmer declared, "Salsedo and Elia disclosed some very important information in connection with the bomb plot of June 2, 1919." The "important information" referred to by Mr. Palmer is still a secret.

Delivered After Two Months.

Both Salsedo and Elia were still in the custody of Mr. Palmer's detectives when the Salsedo homicide occurred, which was two months after the detectives received the warrants of arrest. Both were held by them

in secret custody until the homicide. No steps were taken meanwhile toward bringing the prisoners to an immigrant station for lawful custody and requisite legal hearing. But no sooner had the Salsedo homicide occurred than those same department of justice detectives hustled Elia out of their custody and into the custody of the immigrant officials at Ellis Island. This spasmodic delivery of Elia to his lawful custodians is not easily reconcilable with a whole-hearted acceptance of the theory that for the preceding two months he and Salsedo had been prisoners "by consent"—even if that kind of imprisonment were not a legal novelty.

And the pretenses of the department of justice dicks, which have gone the way of all the other thrilling pretenses about bomb plots, are hardly consistent with the refusal of the department of justice to prosecute Elia, nor for their urgency in demanding his speedy deportation.

"Third Degree" Caused Death.

That the long detention of Salsedo and Elia by secret agents of the department of justice in their building in New York was a gross violation of law is clear enough. It is also clear that this lawlessness on the part of the agents of capitalist law was accompanied with "third degree" cruelties culminating in Salsedo's dramatic death.

No investigation of the affair appears to have been made, either by federal or by state authority. Nothing is definitely known except that Salsedo was lawlessly a prisoner, that he was held incommunicado in a secret prison controlled by detectives of the department of justice, that his prison was fourteen stories above the street, and that his body struck the pavement with an impact that turned it to a pulp.

More on Spolansky Coming.

The Labor Defense Council will continue to expose, thru the medium of the DAILY WORKER, the further "anti-red exposures" that Spolansky may cook up for the Chicago Daily News. Moreover, the Labor Defense Council has in the last few days come into possession of additional information concerning Spolansky himself. All this will be made public in the DAILY WORKER.