



# SOVIETS' WORKER AT FAIR IS 'PURGED'

Matter-of-Fact Ironworkers  
Decapitate 79-Foot Statue  
With Aid of a Derrick

ACETYLENE TORCH USED

And When Crew Stops for Day  
Giant Headless Figure Still  
Holds Red Star Aloft

Joseph Stalin extended his purge to the United States yesterday and "Big Joe," the seventy-nine-foot statue of a Soviet worker atop the Russian Pavilion at the World's Fair, was decapitated by a derrick.

Joe's stainless-steel feet were planted in snow, a twenty-five-mile wind whistled around him, aggravating the subfreezing temperature and providing a fitting setting for the grim execution that was completed after four hours by members of the proletarian Ironworkers Union, Locals 40 and 361, A. F. of L.

At 10 A. M. the seven ironworkers—"roughnecks," they are called in the trade—stepped out on the wooden scaffold, nearly 200 feet above the ground, wearing wind-breakers, heavy gloves and leather helmets. Below them sprawled the empty, snow-covered Fair grounds, the frozen lagoons reflecting the bright sunlight.

#### Acetylene Torches Used

Carefully, the workmen swung out on a boom and gathered around Joe's gray neck, looking like Lilliputians around Gulliver as they fastened slings about the head. Then they applied their acetylene torches to the point where the head had been welded to the neck.

When the head was severed the men descended to the platform and began swinging the derrick into place. Reporters and photographers who wanted to be in at the kill decided to ascend to the platform with the workmen.

As they neared the roof of the pavilion a young man stopped them saying, "No pictures allowed. Only from the ground." Reporters protested they were not taking pictures. The young man was polite but firm.

He said he represented the Soviet pavilion but refused to give his name. When asked who had authorized him to forbid newspaper men from entering the thirty-ton statue, he replied:

"I am, very sorry. I don't understand. I don't speak English."

However, so far as the ironworkers were concerned their job was to remove Big Joe's head. So at 1:45 P. M. the "roughnecks" moved the derrick directly behind Joe's five-ton head.

#### Foreman Rides on Head

John Ryan, their foreman, swung onto the bared head, hanging to a big hook, from which was suspended an 800-pound iron ball. In a few minutes a crack appeared across the middle of the neck and the head swung free. Almost immediately another workman crawled from the neck.

With Ryan riding the head it was borne slowly down toward the platform. In three minutes it was lowered alongside the mighty feet. The statue seemed grotesque, frozen in midstride, with its right arm raised clenching the red star but minus a head.

But that's the way it remained when the men stopped work, not the least bit worried about symbolism or art. Later Albert A. Volk, head of the company of that name, which is partitioning Big Joe into his original thirteen segments, said the two-and-a-half-ton arm and its five-pointed red star would be removed either today or tomorrow.

Later, at the invitation of Leo Casey, commissar of publicity for the World's Fair, newspaper men gathered at a bar for a "wake." Showing no respect for the dead, Mr. Casey announced that Standard Brands had signed a contract for 1940.

"And say, fellows," added Mr. Casey, "would you try to mention that the Fair will open May 11?"

## RUSSIA 'LIQUIDATES' ITS WORLD'S FAIR STATUE

The huge monument of "The Worker" atop the Soviet Pavilion after the five-ton head had been removed yesterday. Both statue and buildings are being dismantled for shipment back to Russia.

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